

**VISUAL RESOURCES ANALYSIS
RIVERWAY PLANNING AREAS 8 & 9
REZONE AND SPECIFIC PLAN AMENDMENT
LAKESIDE, CALIFORNIA**

PDS2015-SPA-15-003
PDS2015-REZ-15-009

OCTOBER 2015

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Executive Summary

The RiverWay Planning Areas 8 & 9 Rezone and Specific Plan Amendment (SPA) Project (“Project”) Visual Resources/Aesthetics Analysis provides an evaluation of potential Project impacts on existing visual resources and the visual character of the surrounding community of Lakeside, California, located in northeastern San Diego County.

The Project proponent is preparing an application to request a Rezone and Specific Plan amendment of Planning Areas 8 & 9 of the RiverWay Specific Plan area. The Specific Plan provides specific measures for future implementation of the Upper San Diego River Improvement Project (USDRIP), of which the Project site is a part. The RiverWay Specific Plan identifies the area as representing “a significant opportunity to create both a community amenity and a marketing focus which will set RiverWay apart as a highly desired “address” for new industrial growth within east San Diego County.”

The Project proposes a rezone of the affected parcels to change the current building height designator in order to allow for an increase in building height for future onsite development. The proposed increase in building height would allow for future light industrial-type development that would better meet current industry demands for structural height in order to accommodate typical daily operations and storage needs generated by such uses. An amendment to the RiverWay Specific Plan, which applies to the subject site, would be required to reflect the proposed rezone.

With regard to visual resources, the Project would not result in the introduction of features that would significantly detract from or contrast with the visual character of the surrounding community by conflicting with visual elements or quality of an existing area (i.e., through conflicting style, size, coverage, scale, building materials, etc.). The Project would not result in the removal of or substantial adverse change to one or more features that contribute to the valued visual character or image of the Project area, including but not limited to designated landmarks, historic resources, trees, or rock outcroppings. Furthermore, the Project would not substantially obstruct, interrupt, or detract from a valued focal and/or panoramic vista from a public road, trails within an adopted County or State trail system, scenic vista or highway, or recreational area.

The Project as designed would also not result in an inconsistency with any goals, policies or objectives related to visual resources as given in the County General Plan or Lakeside Community Plan. With County approval of the rezone and amendment to the RiverWay Specific Plan, the

Project would be consistent with the County Zoning Ordinance, as well as the Specific Plan, and no conflicts would occur.

For the above reasons, it was determined that the Project would not result in potentially significant impacts on visual resources in the Lakeside community. Future development on the Project site by others would be subject to the Lakeside Design Guidelines and RiverWay Specific Plan to reduce potential effects of future development with regard to visual and aesthetic resources to the extent feasible; however, these are considered to be design measures, not mitigation measures that would be required with adoption of the final conditions of approval. No significant impacts on visual resources would occur with Project implementation, and no mitigation measures are required or proposed.

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Purpose

The purpose of this Visual Resources/Aesthetics Analysis is to assess the potential visual impacts of the proposed Project; determine the significance of the impacts under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA); and, to identify, as appropriate, specific measures to avoid, minimize, or mitigate potential adverse visual impacts associated with the proposed RiverWay Planning Areas 8 & 9 Rezone and Specific Plan Amendment (SPA) Project (“Project”) on the surrounding visual environment.

The RiverWay Specific Plan applies to the Project site and “envisions a high quality industrial and business park bordered on the west by residential uses that provide housing for industrial tenants, and a transition to buffer existing residential areas. Development as proposed is intended to accomplish land use, flood control, native habitat, and recreational goals in a manner which benefits the entire Lakeside community, as well as property owners within the project.” The RiverWay Specific Plan identifies the area as representing “a significant opportunity to create both a community amenity and a marketing focus which will set RiverWay apart as a highly desired “address” for new industrial growth within east San Diego County.”

The Project proposes a rezone of the affected parcels to change the current building height designator in order to allow for an increase in building height for future onsite development. The proposed increase in building height (from a maximum of 35 feet to 45 feet) would allow for future light industrial-type development that would better meet current industry demands for structural height in order to accommodate typical daily operations and storage needs generated by such uses. An amendment to the RiverWay Specific Plan, which applies to the subject site, would be required to reflect the proposed rezone.

1.2 Key Issues

Key issues to be evaluated in this analysis are whether the Project has the potential to adversely impact the existing visual character or quality of the affected properties and/or the physical or natural surroundings. Potential visual effects are considered from public roadways and other public vantage points in and around the Lakeside community. Project design attributes; the potential to remove, change, or add features that contribute to the existing quality of the visual

landscape; and, potential conflicts with applicable plans or policies relating to visual resources are considered.

1.3 Principal Viewpoints to be Covered

The proposed development area and associated offsite lands where improvements would occur for access purposes would be potentially visible from several principal viewpoints within the Lakeside community, as follows:

- ☞ San Diego River Trail Looking West/Southwest
- ☞ Riverford Road Looking South (from just North of Mast Boulevard/Riverside Drive)
- ☞ Mast Boulevard Looking South
- ☞ Riverford Road Looking North (from just South of North Woodside Avenue)
- ☞ Westbound SR 67 Looking West/Northwest
- ☞ Eastbound SR 67 Looking East/Northeast

Other views may occur from surrounding public vantage points, such as the San Vicente Highlands Open Space Preserve in northern Lakeside, the El Capitan Reservoir in eastern Lakeside, or Mount Woodson in the northern portion of the community, or the Cleveland National Forest further to the east; however, due to distance from the site and intervening topography, views to the Project site would be greatly diminished. As the Project site lies along the valley floor, views to the site are somewhat restricted from other vantage points at similar and/or lower elevations (i.e. flat viewing plane). Limited views may occur from surrounding residential and/or commercial, light industrial uses on private lands within the valley or on hillsides surrounding the valley floor, but would generally be visually reduced due to intervening vegetation, development, and/or elevational differences, in addition to distance from the Project site.

The key views identified above are considered herein, and the Project's potential to alter or affect existing views from these surrounding public vantage points within the viewshed are analyzed in depth. It should be noted that no physical development is proposed as part of the Project. All future development onsite would occur with specific applications for development, and the ultimate design of any structures on the site would be determined at such time (and subject to County review); however, to support the analysis herein, visual simulations were prepared to illustrate potential structural elements that could be constructed on the site and the visibility of such elements within the landscape. The visual simulations were prepared to evaluate the most visually impactful conditions (e.g. building height of 45 feet maximum as measured from the ground surface), although varying conditions (i.e. buildings of lesser height) may occur with

future development when proposed. In doing so, the environmental analysis herein considers the “worst case” scenario to demonstrate the most potentially adverse visual effects that the Project could have on the existing setting and on views from surrounding public vantage points; refer also to Figures 7A to 7F, Visual Simulations.

2.0 Project Description

Project Location

The proposed RiverWay Planning Areas 8 & 9 Rezone and SPA Project (proposed “Project”) site is located in the community of Lakeside, California in eastern San Diego County. The subject site is located to the north of State Route 67 (SR 67), just south of Mast Boulevard/Riverside Drive in the community of Lakeside, California. The property is comprised of twenty-three individual parcels, which include County Assessor Parcel Numbers (APNs) 379-010-0800; 379-010-1200; 379-010-3900; 379-010-4000; 379-010-4200; 379-010-4300; 379-010-4400; 379-142-010-0; 379-142-0300; 379-142-0400; 379-142-0500; 379-143-0400; 379-143-0500; 379-192-2600; 379-192-2700; 382011-0500; 382011-1000; 382011-1700; 382011-2700; 382011-2800; 382011-2900; 382011-3000; and 760-141-7300. Refer to Figure 1, Regional Location; and, Figure 2, Local Vicinity/Surrounding Land Uses.

Project Description

The Project proposes a rezone of twenty-three parcels located within the RiverWay Specific Plan area. The rezone would change the existing height designator that currently applies to the twenty-three parcels from a G-Designator (35 feet, two story maximum) to an M-Designator (45 feet, no story limit). Additionally, the succeeding 50 feet from all front yard centerline setbacks shall have a 35-foot maximum height buffer. All development located outside of this 50-foot buffer would be subject to the “M” height designator. An amendment to the RiverWay Specific Plan to change the height designator for Planning Areas VIII and IX of the RiverWay Specific Plan would also be required as part of the Project to correspond with the proposed rezone. As stated above, no physical development is proposed with the Project.

Grading

The Project site has been previously graded and is relatively flat. Existing onsite elevations range from approximately 365 feet above mean sea level (amsl) in the southwestern portion of the site (west of Riverford Road) to approximately 390 feet amsl in the northeastern portion of the site (east of Riverford Road).

No physical improvements are proposed as part of the Project. Therefore, the existing onsite topography would remain in its present state with Project implementation; however, minor

grading would occur with future project-specific development proposals made by others to accommodate proposed structures.

Lighting and Glare

The Project does not propose any physical development. No new lighting would be installed on the Project site. As no physical structures would be constructed, the use of materials that would have the potential to result in glare (i.e. glass, reflective materials, etc.) would not occur. All future development onsite would be consistent with design measures identified in the RiverWay Specific Plan and Lakeside Design Guidelines for exterior lighting and use of building materials (i.e. non-reflective) to reduce the potential for glare effects.

Signage

As the Project does not propose any physical development, no new signage would be installed on the Project site. All future signage onsite would be required to comply with signage design requirements of the County Zoning Ordinance, Lakeside Design Guidelines, and RiverWay Specific Plan, as applicable. It is anticipated that minimal signage would be installed onsite in the future, largely for the identification of individual businesses and for safety and security purposes. Further, in accordance with applicable design regulations, any illuminated signage for future development onsite would be designed to minimize adverse nighttime lighting or glare effects.

Access / Circulation

No onsite or offsite roadway improvements are proposed as part of the Project. Permanent access to the site would occur from Riverford Road, Mast Boulevard, Marathon Parkway, and/or Riverside Drive, although additional roadways within the interior of the site may be constructed with project-specific development in the future to provide access to individual businesses, as needed. All future roadways would be constructed to County roadway design standards, or as otherwise required by the RiverWay Specific Plan and/or Lakeside Design Guidelines.

Project Schedule / Phasing

No physical development is proposed at this time as part of the Project. Future development by others on the subject property would occur consistent with the RiverWay Specific Plan, as allowed under existing development regulations at the time when an application is made. It is anticipated that buildout on the Project site would occur over the next five years; however, all

future development would be dependent upon economic conditions and demand for light industrial-type uses.

Trails

The San Diego River floodplain represents a valuable natural, visual, and recreational resource for both the community of Lakeside and the region. Recreational uses planned for the River corridor are intended to be compatible with habitat management and preservation goals, and are therefore proposed as low-intensity uses such as pedestrian paths, equestrian trails, interpretive signage along the trails, and lookout areas offering opportunities for passive recreation.

The RiverWay Specific Plan proposes a riding and hiking trail that runs along the length of the River. An existing segment of the San Diego River Trail runs generally east/west along the eastern and southern boundaries of a portion of the Project site; refer to Figure 2, Local Vicinity Map/Surrounding Land Uses, and Figures 5E and 5F, Offsite Photographs. The construction of trails and/or dedication of easements for future development of trails is not proposed or required as part of the Project; however, as indicated in the RiverWay Specific Plan, development proposals are subject to review to determine if dedication and improvement of pedestrian or equestrian trail easements and/or access thereto are required.

2.1 General Plan Land Use Designations and Zoning

The site is subject to the County of San Diego General Plan Regional Category of Village and the General Plan land use designation of Specific Plan Area (S88). No change to the existing land use designation is proposed as part of the Project. Existing General Plan land use for the affected parcels is shown in Figure 4A, Existing General Plan Land Use.

Current zoning for the Project site is S88 (Specific Plan Industrial/Business Park). No change to the existing S88 zone is proposed; however, as stated above, the Project would change the existing height designator that currently applies to the 23 parcels from a G-Designator (35 feet, two story maximum) to an M-Designator (45 feet, no story limit); refer to Table 1 which shows existing and proposed zoning for the Project site. Additionally, an amendment to the RiverWay Specific Plan to change the height designator for Planning Areas VIII and IX of the RiverWay Specific Plan would be required as part of the Project to correspond with the proposed rezone. Existing zoning for the affected parcels is shown in Figure 4B, Existing Zoning.

TABLE 1 EXISTING AND PROPOSED ZONING

Regulation	Existing	Proposed
USE REGULATIONS	S88	No change.
NEIGHBORHOOD REGULATIONS	S	No change.
DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS		
Density	--	No change.
Lot Size	--	No change.
Building Type	W	No change.
Max. Floor Area	--	No change.
Floor Area Ratio	--	No change.
Height	G*	M**
Coverage	--	No change.
Setback	E	No change.
Open Space	--	No change.
SPECIAL AREA REGS	B	No change.

* Maximum allowed height of 35 feet; two-story maximum.

** Maximum allowed height of 45 feet; any number of stories is permitted, provided that all Building Code requirements and floor-area ratio limitations are met. Additionally, the succeeding 50 feet from all front yard centerline setbacks shall have a 35-foot maximum height buffer. All development located outside of this 50-foot buffer would be subject to the "M" height designator.

2.2 Regulatory Framework

2.2.1 State of California Guidelines

The Project is subject to technical and environmental review pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), in conformance with applicable regulatory guidelines established by the County of San Diego.

Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines states that a project has the potential for a significant impact if it will:

- a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista;
- b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to: trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic route;
- c) Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings; or,

- d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views of the area.

In addition, CEQA Section 15064 (b) states "...the significance of an activity may vary with the setting ... an activity which may not be significant in an urban area may be significant in a rural area." This statement is applicable to the determination of the significance of a visual effect for the Project.

2.2.2 San Diego County Plans and Policies

The Project is subject to development regulations provided in the San Diego County General Plan, Lakeside Community Plan, RiverWay Specific Plan for the Upper San Diego River Improvement Project, and the County Zoning Ordinance. Applicable goals, objectives, and policies identified in these documents are identified below. A detailed discussion of Project conformance with such measures is included in Appendix A of this document.

San Diego County General Plan

The County of San Diego General Plan (General Plan) was adopted August 3, 2011 by the County Board of Supervisors. The General Plan is intended to provide guidance for the long-term development of San Diego County and includes various Elements that provide guidance for accommodating future growth while retaining or enhancing the County's rural character, its economy, its environmental resources, and its unique communities. Goals, policies and objectives are provided within each of the Elements to guide future land development and ensure consistency with the County's intended vision for the future of San Diego County.

The Guiding Principles of the General Plan are to:

- ☞ Support a reasonable share of projected regional population growth;
- ☞ Promote health and sustainability by locating new growth near existing and planned infrastructure, services, and jobs in a compact pattern of development;
- ☞ Reinforce the vitality, local economy, and individual character of existing communities when planning new housing, employment, and recreational opportunities;
- ☞ Promote environmental stewardship that protects the range of natural resources and habitats that uniquely define the County's character and ecological importance;
- ☞ Ensure that development accounts for physical constraints and the natural hazards of the land;
- ☞ Provide and support a multi-modal transportation network that enhances connectivity and supports community development patterns and, when appropriate, plan for development which supports public transportation;

- ∞ Maintain environmentally sustainable communities and reduce greenhouse gas emissions that contribute to climate change;
- ∞ Preserve agriculture as an integral component of the region’s economy, character, and open space network;
- ∞ Minimize public costs of infrastructure and services and correlate their timing with new development; and,
- ∞ Recognize community and stakeholder interests while striving for consensus.

Chapter 3 - Land Use Element

Planning for Sustainability

Policies

- ∞ **LU-6.9 Development Conformance with Topography.** Require development to conform to the natural topography to limit grading; incorporate and not significantly alter the dominant physical characteristics of a site; and, to utilize natural drainage and topography in conveying storm water to the maximum extent practicable.

Villages and Town Centers

Policies

- ∞ **LU-9.3 Village and Community Core Guidelines and Regulations.** Support the development and implementation of design guidelines, Village-specific regulations for roads, parking, and noise, and other planning and regulatory mechanisms that recognize the unique operations and character of Villages, Town Centers, and transportation nodes. Ensure that new development be compatible with the overall scale and character of established neighborhoods.

Commercial, Office, and Industrial Development

Goal LU-11

- ∞ **Commercial, Office, and Industrial Development.** Commercial, office, and industrial development that is appropriately sited and designed to enhance the unique character of each unincorporated community and to minimize vehicle trip lengths.

Policies

- ∞ **LU-11.1 Location and Connectivity.** Locate commercial, office, and industrial development in Village areas with high connectivity and accessibility from surrounding residential neighborhoods, whenever feasible.

- ⌘ **LU-11.2 Compatibility with Community Character.** Require that commercial, office, and industrial development be located, scaled, and designed to be compatible with the unique character of the community.
- ⌘ **LU-11.11 Industrial Compatibility with Adjoining Uses.** Require industrial land uses with outdoor activities or storage to provide a buffer from adjacent incompatible land uses (refer to Policy LU-11.9 for examples of buffering).

Chapter 5 – Conservation and Open Space Element

Visual Resources

According to the Conservation and Open Space Element, a highway corridor generally includes the land adjacent to and visible from the vehicular right-of-way. A “scenic highway” may include “any freeway, highway, road, or other vehicular right-of-way along a corridor with considerable natural or otherwise scenic landscape.” A highway may be designated as “scenic” depending on how much of the natural landscape can be seen by travelers, the aesthetic quality of the landscape, and the extent to which development intrudes upon the traveler’s enjoyment of the view.

The Conservation and Open Space Element designates several roads as County Scenic Roads within the Project vicinity. Table 2, below, identifies the distance to the Project site and the potential visibility of the site from the roadway. Refer also to Figure 6, Viewshed/Landscape Units Map, which shows the visibility of the Project site from these roadways (areas shaded in green would have views to the Project site).

**TABLE 2
COUNTY DESIGNATED SCENIC ROADWAYS**

Roadway	Distance from Project Site (at Closest Point)	Visibility of Project Site
State Route 67 - from Santee City limits to State Route 78 (excluding portion within the City of Poway)	Approximately 0.1 mile south/southeast of Project site (at closest point)	Project site intermittently visible from various locations along the roadway within the Project vicinity; Project site partially obscured due to intervening vegetation, development, and/or elevational differences.
El Monte Road - El Capitan Reservoir to Lake Jennings Park Road	Approximately 2.3 miles east of Project site (at closest point)	Project site not visible due to distance and intervening topography which obscures the site from view.
Willow and El Monte Roads – State Route 67 to Southern end of El Capitan Reservoir	Approximately 1.2 miles northeast of Project site (at closest point)	Project site not visible due to distance and intervening topography which obscures the site from view.

Goal COS-11

∞ **Preservation of Scenic Resources.** Preservation of scenic resources, including vistas of important natural and unique features, where visual impacts of development are minimized.

Policies

∞ **COS-11.1 Protection of Scenic Resources.** Require the protection of scenic highways, corridors, regionally significant scenic vistas, and natural features, including prominent ridgelines, dominant landforms, reservoirs, and scenic landscapes.

∞ **COS-11.2 Scenic Resource Connections.** Promote the connection of regionally significant natural features, designated historic landmarks, and points of regional historic, visual, and cultural interest via designated scenic corridors, such as scenic highways and regional trails.

∞ **COS-11.3 Development Siting and Design.** Require development within visually sensitive areas to minimize visual impacts and to preserve unique or special visual features, particularly in rural areas, through the following:

- Creative site planning;
- Integration of natural features into the project;
- Appropriate scale, materials, and design to complement the surrounding natural landscape;
- Minimal disturbance of topography;
- Clustering of development so as to preserve a balance of open space vistas, natural features, and community character; and,
- Creation of contiguous open space networks.

GOAL COS-13

∞ **Dark Skies.** Preserved dark skies that contribute to rural character and are necessary for the local observatories.

Policies

∞ **COS-13.1 Restrict Light and Glare.** Restrict outdoor light and glare from development projects in Semi-Rural and Rural Lands and designated rural communities to retain the quality of night skies by minimizing light pollution.

∞ **COS-13.2 Palomar and Mount Laguna.** Minimize, to the maximum extent feasible, the impact of development on the dark skies surrounding Palomar and Mount Laguna

observatories to maintain dark skies which are vital to these two world-class observatories by restricting exterior light sources within the impact areas of the observatories.

- ⌘ **COS-13.3 Collaboration to Retain Night Skies.** Coordinate with adjacent Federal and State agencies, local jurisdictions, and tribal governments to retain the quality of night skies by minimizing light pollution.

Lakeside Community Plan

The Lakeside Community Plan is supplemental to the County General Plan and provides goals and policies to guide development of the Lakeside area of eastern San Diego County, which includes the Project site.

2. LAND USE

VILLAGE/RURAL VILLAGE BOUNDARIES

Commercial Goal

- ⌘ Provide for the orderly growth of well-designed and located commercial areas that are necessary and convenient for shopping needs and compatible with the character of the community.

POLICIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- ⌘ 4. Encourage commercial activities that would not interfere either functionally or visually with adjacent land uses or the rural atmosphere of the community.
- ⌘ 15. Require commercial and industrial land uses to minimize adverse impacts, such as noise, light, traffic congestion, odors, dust, etc.
- ⌘ 16. Diligently enforce the landscaping requirements for commercial structures and parking areas.
- ⌘ 17. Require landscaping of all future commercial structures and parking areas to assure visually attractive commercial developments.

Industrial Goal

- ⌘ Provide for the kind of industrial development that does not detract from the existing rural character of the community.

POLICIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- ⌘ 1. Industrial development should be clean, non-polluting, and complementary to Lakeside's rural environment.

- ⌘ 2. Provide for the kind of industrial development that will expand the tax base, while not triggering significant population growth.
- ⌘ 3. Allow existing industries to remain and expand in Lakeside.
- ⌘ 4. Encourage new and existing industrial facilities to blend with their surroundings by utilizing harmonious architectural design, undergrounding utilities, landscaping, and a high standard of maintenance.
- ⌘ 6. Prohibit new industrial operations from locating in existing non-industrial facilities or on small parcels outside of areas designated for industrial usage through vigorous enforcement of existing codes.
- ⌘ 7. Locate industrial operations only where they will be compatible with surrounding land uses, accessible to major transportation facilities, and capable of being served with all necessary utilities.
- ⌘ 8. Provide for a concentration of industrial uses in attractive, well-designed industrial developments.
- ⌘ 10. Ensure that a concentration of limited impact industrial and commercial uses is provided for during the formulation and implementation of the San Diego River Plan.
- ⌘ 11. Require adequate landscaping to screen unsightly industrial uses from surrounding properties and roadways through the use of the "D" Design Special Area Designator.
- ⌘ 12. Industrial development that detracts from the rural character of Lakeside shall not be approved.

RIVERWAY SPECIFIC PLAN/UPPER SAN DIEGO RIVER IMPROVEMENT PROJECT SPA (0.99)

The RiverWay Specific Planning Area, through adoption of the RiverWay Specific Plan, will implement the Redevelopment Goals by allowing the following land uses:

1. Mixture of residential uses with an overall density not to exceed 0.99 dwellings units/acre.
2. Public facilities, including but not limited to flood control structures and other required improvements to the San Diego River Channel.
3. Open space and recreational uses that are found to be compatible with the environmental resources identified in the required environmental review.
4. Commercial and industrial uses that contribute to the economic viability of the redevelopment project and conform to Lakeside Design Guidelines.

The RiverWay Specific Plan shall include design criteria directed at meeting the objectives of the Redevelopment and Community Plans. The RiverWay Specific Plan shall also address the transition of existing land use to those envisioned/allowed by the Redevelopment Plan.

3. CIRCULATION

Goal

- ∞ MEET THE PRESENT AND FUTURE NEED FOR MOVING PEOPLE AND GOODS WITH A BALANCED TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM THAT PERPETUATES LAKESIDE'S RURAL ATMOSPHERE.

POLICIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- ∞ 10. Discourage visual pollution along all public roadways by creating and periodically reviewing sign, landscaping, architecture, and utility standards in the Zoning Ordinance.

6. CONSERVATION

Environmental Goal

- ∞ PROVIDE A DESIRABLE, HEALTHY, AND COMFORTABLE ENVIRONMENT FOR LIVING, WHILE PRESERVING LAKESIDE'S RURAL ATMOSPHERE AND UNIQUE RESOURCES.

POLICIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- ∞ 2. Preserve the best natural features of the area in their natural state and avoid the creation of a totally urbanized landscape.
- ∞ 4. Ensure that land uses within or adjacent to recreational, natural preserve, agricultural, or industrial areas are compatible with those areas.
- ∞ 7. Minimize visual pollution by creating and periodically reviewing sign, landscaping, architecture, and utility standards.
- ∞ 9. Encourage the preservation of mature trees on public and private property, and require equitable replacement of those removed.

RiverWay Specific Plan – A Specific Plan for the Upper San Diego River Improvement Project

The RiverWay Specific Plan – A Specific Plan for the Upper San Diego River Improvement Project (USD RIP) was adopted by the County on August 9, 2000. The Specific Plan provides guidance for development of approximately 592 acres located along the Upper San Diego River within the community of Lakeside. Referred to as the Upper San Diego River Improvement

Project (USD RIP), the project proposes future development of a mixture of residential, commercial, and light industrial uses, combined with flood control, recreational amenities, and public facility improvements. To ensure that future development of the area is reflective of the intended land uses and character, the Specific Plan provides certain goals, policies, and design measures for implementation.

The RiverWay Specific Plan Area is bounded to the west by the City of Santee; to the south and east by State Highway 67 (SR 67); and, to the north by portions of El Nopal, Riverside Drive, and Lakeside Avenue. Limited portions of the project area extend to the south of SR 67 along Woodside Avenue, as well as east of SR 67 just south of the San Diego River, and north of Riverside Drive.

III. Land Use Plan

1. Community Character

Goal

- ☞ Foster development which will preserve a rural atmosphere and enhance a sense of spaciousness. (Lakeside Community Plan)

Objectives

- ☞ Site development plans, architecture, and landscaping shall conform to the Lakeside Design Guidelines as well as the requirements of this Specific Plan.
- ☞ Review and approval of development plans should consider the natural and manmade setting of the Project Area and its surroundings, and such plans should be compatible with this setting.

2. Industrial Development

Goal

- ☞ Provide for the kind of industrial development that does not detract from the existing rural character of the community. (Lakeside Community Plan)

Objectives

- ☞ Carefully integrate new industrial development with the existing landscape and minimize its visual impact on the community's residential neighborhoods and scenic resources. (Lakeside Design Guidelines)
- ☞ Permit the continuation and expansion of existing industrial and extractive uses, subject to compliance with the Lakeside Design Guidelines, while encouraging and facilitating development to conform to development standards of this Specific Plan.

- ∞ Preserve industrially-designated areas primarily for manufacturing and distribution, with incidental office and sales facilities, and for business/office parks; rather than for retail sales or other commercial uses.
- ∞ Require that new development within a "Planning Area" designated for industrial use be designed to establish, or conform to existing, landscape, wall, and street layout, so that visually and functionally compatible redevelopment occurs within each Planning Area.

3. Commercial Development

Goal

- ∞ Provide for the orderly growth of well-designed and located commercial areas which are necessary and convenient for the shopping needs and compatible with the character of the community. (Lakeside Community Plan)
- ∞ Require comprehensive site, architectural, and landscape design for all "Planning Areas" designated for commercial use on the Specific Plan.

D. Planning Area Regulations

The Specific Plan provides specific regulations for each of the individual Planning Areas. These regulations specify applicable Land Use regulations, Design Guidelines, and Zoning for each of the Planning Areas within RiverWay. Permitted land uses within the SPA are required to conform to such measures, which may differ from conventional Use Regulations of the County's Zoning Ordinance. The S88 Specific Planning Area Use Regulations are applied to the majority of the Planning Areas. All future applications for development within the SPA are subject to review for compliance with such standards and guidelines. As such, Use Regulations in the Zoning Ordinance not specifically omitted or modified in the Specific Plan would remain applicable to each Planning Area.

Planning Area VIII

Design Guidelines

Development of Planning Area VIII shall be in conformance with the RiverWay Design Guidelines. All buildings shall exhibit a common architectural and landscape theme including a comprehensive landscape and signage design. Landscaping and building location and design shall attenuate potential offsite noise impacts.

Particular attention shall be paid to architectural and landscape design as viewed from Highway 67 and Mast Boulevard. Comprehensive landscape, wall and signage design is required. In addition, development adjacent to the floodplain shall be in conformance with the RiverWay Design Guidelines for development within or adjacent to The River Corridor. In particular, for

areas adjacent to reserved or restored floodplain habitat, requirements for setbacks, landscaping, fencing and access control, and noise attenuation shall be strictly adhered to in the development and use of property within Planning Area VIII. Access shall be coordinated with other Planning Areas on the opposite side of Mast Boulevard/Riverford Road.

Planning Area IX

Design Guidelines

Development of Planning Area IX shall be in conformance with the RiverWay Design Guidelines. Office or light industrial land uses are required adjacent to the existing mobilehome park to the east. Interior streets which provide access from Riverside Drive shall be designed to discourage through traffic between Mast Boulevard and Riverside Drive.

Comprehensive landscape, wall and signage design is required. In addition, development adjacent to the floodplain shall be in conformance with the RiverWay Design Guidelines for development within or adjacent to The River Corridor. In particular, for areas adjacent to preserved or restored floodplain habitat, requirements for setbacks, landscaping, fencing and access control, and noise attenuation shall be strictly adhered to in the development and use of property within Planning Area IX.

Setbacks. The "E" setback designator shall apply except for interior side yards adjacent to developed or residentially zoned areas. In such cases, the industrial use shall provide a 10 foot landscape buffer and noise attenuation wall adjacent to employee parking or inaccessible building side; or a 35 foot buffer with a 15 foot landscape strip and noise attenuation wall structure adjacent to loading areas or building accesses.

San Diego County Zoning Ordinance

Portions of the County Zoning Ordinance that may affect the assessment of visual impacts are generally zoning overlay designators. Relevant designators include:

- ⌘ B – Community Design Review Area
- ⌘ D – Design Review Area
- ⌘ G – Sensitive Resource
- ⌘ H – Historic/Archaeological Landmark or District
- ⌘ J – Special Historic District
- ⌘ S – Scenic Area

As also shown in Table 1 above, the Project site is subject to the “G” Designator for building height, the “S” Designator for scenic resources, and the “B” Designator which requires Community Design Review.

2.3 Design Policies and Guidances

2.3.1 Lakeside Design Guidelines

The proposed Project would not directly result in any physical development onsite. As such, a detailed discussion of Project conformance with the County of San Diego Lakeside Design Guidelines (Adopted July 17, 1989) for the Lakeside Planning Area is not included in Appendix A of this document. No other changes to the manner in which development would occur on the site, other than the increase in building height, would occur with the Project.

All future development within the Project area would be subject to the Design Review process to evaluate conformance with the Lakeside Design Guidelines on a project-specific basis, once a development application is submitted. In instances where conflicts may occur between the RiverWay Specific Plan and the Lakeside Design Guidelines, the RiverWay Specific Plan would take precedence in guiding how such development would be designed.

The following provides a brief outline of the design elements addressed within the Lakeside Design Guidelines. Refer to the Lakeside Design Guidelines for a detailed discussion of the design measures.

PART 2. COMMUNITY DESIGN OBJECTIVES

1. Protect the character of the existing natural setting by preserving important natural features, land forms, and historic sites.
5. Preserve and enhance the quality of scenic roads throughout the Community Planning Area.
6. Carefully integrate new industrial development with the existing landscape, and minimize its visual impact on the community’s residential neighborhoods and scenic resources.

PART 3. THE DESIGN GUIDELINES

A. General Guidelines Applicable to All Development Projects

- A1. Site Design Process
- A2. Preservation of Significant Trees

- A3. Old and New Design Relationships
- A4. Architectural Character
- A5. Landscape Character
- A6. Design for Climate and Energy Conservation
- A7. Signage
- A8. Site Lighting
- A9. Building Equipment and Services
- A10. Preservation of Historic Buildings

B. Guidelines by Development Type and Area

- B4. Industrial Development
 - 1. Site Planning
 - 2. Architecture
 - 3. Screening
 - 4. Planting

3.0 Visual Environment of the Project

3.1 Project Setting

3.1.1 Surrounding Land Uses

The Project area is located within the community of Lakeside in eastern San Diego County, approximately 21 miles northeast of downtown San Diego. Interstate 8 (I-8) runs through the southeastern portion of the community and provides regional east/west access to other areas within San Diego County. State Route 67 (SR 67) traverses the Lakeside community and runs just south of the Project site. To the northwest lies the City of Poway; to the southwest, the City of El Cajon; and, further to the east, the community of Alpine. The City of Santee borders the community of Lakeside to the west/southwest.

The San Vicente Reservoir and San Vicente Highlands Open Space Preserve are located in northern Lakeside, and the El Capitan Reservoir is located in eastern Lakeside. Mount Woodson is also located within the northern portion of the community. These resources represent key natural, visual, and recreational resources within the community as well as the region. The Cleveland National Forest and Capitan Grande Reservation are located further to the east of the community.

Portions of the Lakeside community retain a rural character; however, areas where a more urban-type character with higher-density residential uses, commercial, and industrial uses are present and are largely focused along the I-8 and SR 67 corridors, Woodside Avenue, Riverford Road, Mast Boulevard/Riverside Drive, and other major roadways within the community. Land uses generally become more rural as one travels into the surrounding outlying lands where larger-acre, lower-density single-family residential uses mixed with large- and small-scale agricultural and equestrian-type uses become more common.

The USDRIP (within which the Project site lies) is also key element in both present and future development of Lakeside. The area was formerly mined for sand used for construction purposes; however, such activities have ceased within the Project vicinity. As identified in the Lakeside Community Plan and RiverWay Specific Plan, the area is planned for a variety of single-family residential, commercial, and light industrial/business park uses, as well as public facilities, flood control, and recreational improvements.

West of Riverford Road, adjacent land uses generally include Mast Boulevard and single-family residential, vacant land, and light industrial uses to the north; Riverford Road, light industrial uses to the east; the San Diego River corridor to the south; and, open space/undeveloped lands

within the City of Santee to the west. East of Riverford Road, adjacent land uses generally include Riverside Drive, single-family residential, commercial, and light industrial uses to the north; a mobilehome park, San Diego River Trail and the Willowbrook Country Club/Golf Course to the east; San Diego River Trail and San Diego River corridor to the south, and Riverford Road and light industrial uses to the west. Refer also to Figure 2, Local Vicinity Map/Surrounding Land Uses.

The Project site is located along the valley floor, with hillsides of varying elevation rising upward on lands surrounding the site, particularly to the north, west, and south/southeast (across SR 67); refer to Figure 3, Area Topography. Undeveloped and disturbed lands are interspersed with urban-type development (commercial, industrial, higher-density residential) throughout the valley floor within the community of Lakeside. Land uses along the hillsides are generally represented by single-family rural-residential uses.

The San Diego River generally runs east/west just to the south of the Project site. The San Diego River corridor supports a variety of mature trees and well-established vegetation, including riparian and other aquatic habitat, along its length. The River serves as an important biological, aesthetic, and recreational resource both within the Lakeside community and the surrounding region. The San Diego River Trail runs within the River corridor and adjacent to portions of the eastern and southern boundaries of the Project site.

Palomar Observatory lies approximately 34 miles to the northeast of the Project site. The Laguna Mountain Observatory lies approximately 30 miles to the east. Light pollution generated from existing and future development within San Diego County has the potential to substantially affect viewing conditions from these facilities.

3.1.2 Project Site

Under current conditions, the subject property is generally undeveloped; however, a number of building pads within RiverWay Planning Areas 8 & 9 have been developed to date; refer to Figure 2, Local Vicinity Map/Surrounding Land Uses. The majority of the site has been previously graded and is therefore highly disturbed. The affected lands are generally devoid of vegetation or have minor cover of ruderal species (with exception of where ornamental landscaping has been planted with existing light industrial uses onsite). Refer to Figures 5A, Photo Location Map; Figures 5B to 5D, Onsite Photographs; and, Figures 7A to 7F, which show existing and proposed conditions onsite.

Several pads within both the western and eastern portions of the site have already been developed and support light industrial uses at present; refer to Figure 2, Local Vicinity Map/Surrounding

Land Uses. The Lakeside Baseball Park is present in the western portion of the site and offers four sports fields and supporting infrastructure for recreational use by the community.

The Project site is located along the valley floor, and onsite topography is generally flat. Onsite elevations range from approximately 365 feet above mean sea level (amsl) in the southwestern portion of the site (west of Riverford Road) to approximately 390 feet amsl in the northeastern portion of the site (east of Riverford Road).

The affected parcels do not contain any County-defined steep slopes (defined as having a slope with a natural gradient of 25 percent or greater and a minimum rise of 50 feet) or other significant topographical features. No hillsides (with exception of a large hill to the west of the site), or areas prone to landslide or subsidence occur onsite or on adjacent lands. Although the Project site is located in southern California, which is a known seismically-active area, no known existing fault lines or other conditions resulting in potential geologic instability occur onsite or on adjacent lands.

3.1.3 Visual Quality Definitions

Visual quality is affected by the aesthetic characteristics of a particular area. Such aesthetic elements may include physical characteristics, as well as the perception of the viewer. Physical characteristics influencing the visual quality of an area may include such features as topography, landform, natural vegetation, water bodies, visual diversity, and visible coloring. Viewer perception is generally influenced by vividness, intactness, harmony, visual integrity, adjacent scenery, and/or visual unity. These elements all influence the overall evaluation of the quality of a particular view.

High Visual Quality

Areas with high visual quality may offer physical characteristics such as varying vertical relief; established natural vegetation with visually pleasing form, color, texture or pattern; water features; or, other elements that create a visually unified landscape. Particular views with high visual quality may include those with distinct focal points or patterns; enhanced or existing natural scenery; compatibility with the character of the surrounding landscape; and/or, a unique visual setting within the surrounding area.

Moderate Visual Quality

Moderate visual quality is generally considered to be represented by views that are interesting, but not visually exceptional with regard to landforms or other physical characteristics. Such views may consist of dominant types of vegetation; water features; colors within the landscape; or,

other elements that visually unify a particular view or landscape. Contributing factors may include a varied composition that includes visual patterns created by landscape elements; enhancement of views from adjacent scenery; and/or, a visual setting that is distinguishable from, as well as visually similar to, views within the surrounding area.

Low Visual Quality

Low visual quality may be represented by areas with limited or no existing landforms or changes in topography; sparse or indiscernible vegetation types, due to density; absence of water features; monotonous color palettes; or, limited visual elements of varying visual interest. Visual quality may be considered to be low if views are varied, but visually disconnected; lack perceivable visual patterns; are adjacent to views that devalue the existing scenic quality; or, do not generally represent a visual setting that is common and/or valued within the surrounding area.

3.2 Project Viewshed

The viewshed is generally the area that is visible from an observer's viewpoint and includes the screening effects of intervening vegetation and/or physical structures. Viewsheds may occur from designated scenic viewpoints or from singular vantage points where an unobstructed view of visual components within the landscape exists. The viewshed is composed of such elements as topography and natural land features (i.e., hillsides, mountains) and other physical features within the landscape, such as buildings, vegetation, or water features. Potential visual impacts within the viewshed may be affected by distance of the viewer from a site, the frequency and length of views, the personal perception of the viewer, and physical and/or atmospheric conditions at the time viewing occurs.

The Project site is located along the valley floor which is visible from a variety of vantage points within the surrounding area. As such, the viewshed is generally defined by the surrounding mountainous topography that encircles the valley floor. Although this area is expansive, consideration of this viewshed provides the most comprehensive (largest) and conservative (worst-case) estimate of the area that could potentially be affected by the proposed Project. Refer to Figure 6, Viewshed/Landscape Units Map, which shows the viewshed in the area surrounding the Project. An approximate four-mile radius from the Project site was considered; however, as shown on Figure 6, views of the Project site (assumes an ultimate future building height of 45 feet as measured from the ground surface) would only occur from limited vantage points within this area (shown as shaded in green), due to area topography.

Within the viewshed, varied views of the valley generally occur from vehicles as they descend (or ascend and look back to the valley) and passengers in vehicles traveling within the valley. Visitors utilizing trails or other recreational facilities within the surrounding area (i.e. San Vicente Highlands Open Space Preserve or Mount Woodson in northern Lakeside) may also have limited views to the Project site. The Project viewshed includes the surrounding urban and rural-type development and undeveloped lands along the valley floor and the San Diego River corridor, generally bounded by the surrounding hillsides. The generally flat topography of the valley floor and the limited, low-lying vegetation typical of the environment generally limit views across the expansive valley from surrounding vantage points within the viewshed. Although views do occur, distance from the object being viewed and intervening development and geological features have the potential to further reduce and/or restrict such views.

Figure 6, Viewshed/Landscape Unit Map, shows the general limits of the viewshed and the landscape units considered within the viewshed as part of this analysis. To characterize the visual pattern elements that occur within the Project viewshed, a number of key view locations within the valley were identified and representative photographs taken. Key viewpoints are described in detail in Section 5.2, Key Views. Key vantage points within the viewshed offering views of the site occur from SR 67 (looking west and east); Riverford Road; Riverside Drive; and, Mast Boulevard. In addition, a public recreational trail (San Diego River Trail) also runs east-west adjacent to portions of the Project site, and affords views into the property.

Additionally, State scenic highways are highways that are either officially designated by the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) or are eligible for designation. This Statewide system of scenic highways is part of the Master Plan of State Highways Eligible for Official State Designation as Scenic Highways. Designation of a highway as “scenic” is dependent upon the visibility of the natural landscape to travelers, the aesthetic quality of the landscape, and the extent to which development intrudes upon the traveler’s enjoyment of the view. A highway’s designation may change from “eligible” to “officially designated” if a local jurisdiction adopts a scenic corridor protection program, applies to Caltrans for scenic highway approval, and Caltrans subsequently designates the road as an official State Scenic Highway. With regard to the Project, no designated State scenic highways are located within the vicinity of the site.

As stated previously, within the viewshed, the County General Plan Conservation and Open Space Element identifies several roads as County Scenic Roadways in the vicinity of the Project site. Refer to Table 2, County Designated Scenic Roadways, above.

3.3 Landscape Units

A landscape unit is an area that can generally be defined by visual and physical characteristics and may be composed of a limited area (i.e., meadow) or a larger area (i.e., portion of a mountain range). The overall boundaries of a landscape unit may generally be defined by topography, natural vegetation, architectural design, landforms, or similar types of land uses. Each landscape unit can be described individually and as varying from other adjacent landscape units. Each landscape unit is a portion of the regional landscape that often corresponds to a place or district that is commonly known among local viewers.

Several landscape units that may potentially be affected by future onsite construction have been identified. These landscape units are shown in Figure 6, Viewshed/Landscape Units Map, and are further described below.

3.3.1 Landscape Unit #1

Landscape Unit #1 consists of the SR 67 corridor located to the southwest/southeast of the Project site. The SR 67 corridor is generally defined by the mountains that rise along its alignment at a distance to the north and south. As stated above, SR 67 from the Santee City limits to State Route 78 (excluding the portion within the City of Poway) is a designated County Scenic Highway, and is therefore considered to be an important visual resource.

Within the surrounding viewshed, topography within this Landscape Unit is visually flat along the valley floor within the vicinity of the Project site; however, as the roadway trends north (to the northeast of the Project site), the mountains rise up better defining the travel “corridor;” refer to Figure 6, Viewshed/Landscape Units Map. This Landscape Unit supports a variety of vegetation, including low-lying scrub, groundcover, and annual grasses, combined with ornamental landscaping on developed lands.

3.3.2 Landscape Unit #2

Landscape Unit #2 consists of the mountains that generally encircle the valley in which the community of Lakeside and the Project site are located. The mountains are readily visible within the landscape and support visual components that combine in distinctive visual patterns; refer to Figure 6. The mountains serve as a somewhat dominant visual feature within the landscape and define the valley below; however, due to their height and distance from the valley below, details within this landscape unit are somewhat diminished when viewed from public vantage points along the slopes and/or ridgelines; refer also to Figure 3, Area Topography. Vegetation along

the hillsides is generally low-lying scrub, groundcover, and annual grasses, combined with ornamental landscaping on developed lands. Rock outcroppings are also present in a sporadic pattern along portions of some slopes.

3.3.3 Landscape Unit #3

Landscape Unit #3 consists of the developed areas along the valley floor which comprise the unincorporated community of Lakeside. This Landscape Unit is generally defined by the surrounding mountains that rise from the valley floor to the north, east, and south.

Within the Lakeside community, the valley floor is generally characterized by a mixture of areas supporting higher-density development (i.e. residential, commercial, and industrial/manufacturing uses) interspersed with undeveloped lands, lands utilized for agricultural/equestrian uses, and lands with lower-density development. Uses are generally one to two stories in height and low-lying within the landscape; however, structural elements of greater size and scale occur relative to industrial and manufacturing uses, as well as some commercial/business park-type uses. Vegetation largely consists of a mixture of ornamental landscaping on developed lands interspersed with undeveloped lands supporting natural vegetation. As one moves outward to more rural-type lands away from the more urban “town center,” developed lands support more small-scale agricultural/equestrian type uses; refer also to Figure 2A, Local Vicinity Map/Surrounding Land Uses.

3.3.4 Landscape Unit #4

Landscape Unit #4 consists of the San Diego River corridor. The San Diego River runs east-west just south of the Project site and represents a valuable visual, biological, and recreational resource within the Lakeside community, as well as on a regional basis. The River originates near the Santa Ysabel area in eastern San Diego County and extends westward approximately 40 miles to the Pacific Ocean.

Although the character of the River corridor changes along its length, within the study area, this Landscape Unit is generally bounded by Woodside Avenue and SR 67 to the south, and the Project site to the north, with hillsides rising upward from the valley floor further to the north, east, south, and west.

This Landscape Unit supports a variety of natural vegetation, including low-lying scrub, groundcover, and annual grasses, as well as a mixture of established oaks, willows, and other riparian vegetation. Although topography of this Landscape Unit is generally similar throughout this area (flat, low-lying floodplain), landscape components generally offer strong, visually distinctive patterns to viewers, particularly when viewed in contrast with surrounding development.

4.0 Existing Visual Resources and Viewer Response

4.1 Existing Visual Resources

Land affected by the proposed Project is generally lacking in significant visual resources. The majority of the site has been previously graded and is therefore highly disturbed. The affected lands are generally devoid of vegetation or have minor cover of ruderal species (with exception of where ornamental landscaping has been planted with existing light industrial uses onsite).

Under current conditions, the subject property is generally undeveloped; however, a number of building pads within RiverWay Planning Areas 8 & 9 have been developed to date with light industrial or recreational (Lakeside Baseball Park) uses; refer to Figure 2, Local Vicinity Map/Surrounding Land Uses. Existing structures onsite have been previously constructed in compliance with the existing 35-foot maximum building height limit. Additionally, several parcels adjacent to the Project site to the north (both west and east of Riverford Road) support similar light industrial uses; refer to Figure 2A, Local Vicinity Map/Surrounding Land Uses; and, and, Figure 2B, USGS Quad Map.

The Project site is located along the valley floor, and onsite topography is generally flat. Onsite elevations range from approximately 365 feet above mean sea level (amsl) in the southwestern portion of the site (west of Riverford Road) to approximately 390 feet amsl in the northeastern portion of the site (east of Riverford Road).

No existing drainages, hillsides, mature tree stands, or rock outcroppings are present on any lands affected by the Project. The affected parcels do not contain any County-defined steep slopes (defined as having a slope with a natural gradient of 25 percent or greater and a minimum rise of 50 feet) or other significant topographical features.

4.1.1 Visual Character/Visual Quality

The dominant visual character of the majority of the Project site is that of generally level topography supporting limited, if any, vegetation, and is therefore somewhat visually barren. In their present state, the undeveloped portions of the site do not exhibit views of high visual character or quality; however, portions of the site have been developed and support various structures, landscaping enhancements, and infrastructure improvements, providing contrast to those undeveloped areas of the property. Such lands contribute to a higher visual quality and character within the existing visual landscape.

Landscape Unit #1

As stated above, Landscape Unit #1 consists of the SR 67 corridor located to the southwest/southeast of the Project site. The SR 67 corridor is generally defined by the mountains that rise along its alignment further to the north and south with the roadway running along the flatter portions of the valley floor.

Within the surrounding viewshed, topography within this Landscape Unit is visually flat along the valley floor, with the mountains rising up to define the travel corridor. This Landscape Unit supports a variety of natural vegetation typical of the environment, including low-lying scrub, groundcover, and annual grasses, combined with ornamental landscaping on developed lands. Landscape components do not generally offer strong, visually distinctive patterns to viewers, particularly when viewed at a distance or when traveling along the roadway. Varied structural elements of visual bulk, dominance, and scale occur within this Landscape Unit.

The components within this Landscape Unit do not offer a high degree of visual contrast, due to the nature of lands along the roadway alignment, and therefore, do not combine to create highly distinctive visual patterns. This Landscape Unit has a moderate degree of intactness, as it is generally free from competing visual elements.

Landscape Unit #2

Landscape Unit #2 consists of the mountains that generally encircle the valley in which the community of Lakeside and the Project site are located. The mountains are readily visible within the landscape and support visual components that combine in distinctive visual patterns.

The topography of this Landscape Unit offers visual forms with varied visual bulk, mass, and shape. Colors are also varied, based upon viewing distance to the forms, and time of day, and texture of the surfaces. This Landscape Unit offers a sense of vividness and creates a memorable visual impression through varied geologic forms, particularly when influenced by sunlight.

The mountains create a sense of visual dominance within the valley and offer a visually diverse pattern of elements within the landscape. This Landscape Unit supports landscape components that combine in distinctive visual patterns and provide visual contrast to other surrounding lands, including the relatively level valley floor. The mountains offer a unified and generally coherent visual pattern with few encroaching elements as they rise from the valley floor.

Landscape Unit #3

Landscape Unit #3 consists of the developed areas along the valley floor which comprise the unincorporated community of Lakeside. Within the Lakeside community, the valley floor is generally characterized by areas of higher-density development (i.e. residential, commercial, and industrial/manufacturing uses) interspersed with undeveloped lands, lands utilized for agricultural/equestrian uses, and lands with lower-density development.

This Landscape Unit supports expanses of natural vegetation typical of the environment, including low-lying scrub, sparse groundcover, and annual grasses, as well as a mixture of agricultural crops. Ornamental landscaping is generally present on developed lands. Topography within this Landscape Unit is visually flat along the valley floor, creating a pattern with limited variation. Structural elements of varied visual bulk, dominance, and scale occur within this landscape, due to a variety of land uses.

This Landscape Unit does not offer strongly contrasting landscape components that combine to form striking or distinctive visual patterns, and therefore, a memorable visual impression is generally not created. The landscape is largely free from encroachment of competing visual elements, due to the nature of the topography and existing vegetation, and is therefore visually intact. A sense of visual unity is achieved, as components combine to form a generally visually coherent pattern. A limited number of built components within this Landscape Unit contribute to a sense of substantial bulk or mass.

Landscape Unit #4

Landscape Unit #4 consists of the San Diego River corridor. This resource is largely defined by the floodplain and the flatter portions of the valley floor through which the River flows.

As a natural resource, no structures are present (e.g. residential units) within the defined corridor. Varied vegetation, including riparian and oak woodland habitat is present along the River, and such natural habitat visible along the length of the alignment creates a recognizable element within the surrounding landscape setting of the valley floor.

No visual elements of significant mass, bulk, or scale are present within this Landscape Unit, due to the nature of the setting. Colors are generally of natural hues (greens, browns, etc.), with elements offering varied visual diversity and textures. The components within this Landscape Unit offer a medium degree of visual contrast, particularly when viewed in combination with the higher-density, more urban-type development adjacent to portions of the corridor. The landscape has a moderate degree of intactness, as it is generally free from competing visual elements.

4.2 Viewer Response

Viewer response is based on both viewer sensitivity and viewer exposure. These elements influence how a viewer may potentially respond to a change in the visual landscape, particularly with regard to development of a site from a generally undeveloped condition. Viewer response varies based upon the type of viewer and the characteristics of the visual environment that would ultimately be affected (i.e., urban versus rural environment, established large-scale commercial area versus low density residential uses, etc.). Viewer response is largely influenced by viewer sensitivity and viewer exposure, as described in greater detail below.

4.2.1 Viewer Sensitivity

Viewer sensitivity to a change in the visual environment can be influenced by a number of factors, including the awareness of the viewer, personal interest in a particular visual resource, and/or viewer activity during the time that views of a resource occur (i.e., vehicle driver versus passenger, active versus passive viewing). In addition, the particular goals or values of a community can influence the sensitivity of viewers to a particular site, land area, or viewshed. Viewer sensitivity may vary between those with a vested interest in a community (i.e., residents) versus those traveling through an area with little or no knowledge of the community or existing visual landscape. Based on these conditions, viewer sensitivity can be assigned a value of low, medium, or high.

It is likely that community members would be more sensitive to the Project than would those who experienced Lakeside as a visitor. In addition, viewer sensitivity may be higher among those who would experience views of the site more frequently, such as area residents (particularly those to the northwest/north/northwest of the site, due to proximity). As views of structural elements on the site would also vary due to distance from which they are viewed, as well as travel speed along area roadways and the degree to which one chooses to make an effort to view the site (e.g. turning of one's head), viewer sensitivity to a visual change within the landscape occurring as a result of the Project (increase of 10 feet in building height) would further be influenced.

4.2.2 Viewer Groups

Viewer groups would mainly consist of those individuals traveling along area roadways within the vicinity of the site, in particular, SR 67, due to the large number of vehicles utilizing the roadway on a daily basis. Additionally, travelers along Riverford Road, Mast Boulevard/Riverside Drive, and North Woodside Avenue in the proximity of the Project site would have views to the site. Additional viewer groups may include travelers along other public roadways in the vicinity,

particularly where views occur at a higher elevation than the Project site; however, such views would generally be distanced from the property. Visitors to public recreational areas in the surrounding area may also experience very limited views to the site from varied vantage points; however, such views would occur at a distance and would be intermittent.

Additional viewer groups may include residents and/or occupants viewing the Project site from surrounding residential or commercial uses (particularly at a higher elevation than the site) to the north, northwest, and northeast, as well as to the south across SR 67 along the hillsides. Additionally, properties directly adjacent to the Project site (i.e. existing commercial and light industrial uses) may have views into the site; however, such views of the Project from these vantage points would generally occur from privately-owned properties and not public viewpoints. With exception of those properties immediately adjacent to the site, views from surrounding private ownerships would generally be decreased due to intervening vegetation and development.

4.2.3 Viewer Exposure

Potential views into the Project site from vehicles traveling along adjacent public roadways would be influenced by distance to the proposed onsite development areas, height of the Project components, travel speeds, intervening development, and the angle of the view with respect to the viewer (i.e., forward-looking versus turning one's head and looking back towards the subject property). Views of the site from other public roads at greater distances from the site would also occur, and would be affected by similar conditions.

In determining the potential exposure of each viewer group, several factors are considered. These include the overall number of viewers experiencing visual changes to the resource as the result of the proposed development; how long views would last; the anticipated speed at which viewers would be traveling; and, the relation and distance of the viewer to the particular site.

Table 3, Viewer Groups and Anticipated Exposure, summarizes the anticipated viewer groups and the potential viewing experience of each.

**TABLE 3
VIEWER GROUPS AND ANTICIPATED EXPOSURE**

Anticipated Viewer Group	Number of Anticipated Viewers	Key Views	Approximate Distance to the Project Site	Anticipated Views with Project Implementation	Sensitivity	Duration of View
Drivers along SR 67 (County Scenic Highway)	Estimated greater than 25,000 people+ per day (County Major Road)	#5 and #6	Approximately 0.1 mile to the south (at closest point)	Intermittent views of future onsite development	Medium	Varies / 0-15 seconds
Drivers along Riverford Road	Estimated 7,000-10,000 people per day	#2 and #4	Adjacent	Intermittent views of future onsite development	Low to Medium	Varies / Estimated 0-10 seconds
Drivers along Mast Boulevard/Riverside Drive	Estimated 5,000-7,000 people per day	#3	Adjacent	Intermittent views of future onsite development	Low to Medium	Varies / Estimated 0-10 seconds
San Diego River Trail	Varies daily / Estimated less than 100 people per day	#1	Varies / Adjacent to east and south of Project site	Direct and intermittent views of existing and future development onsite	Low to Medium	Varies
San Vicente Reservoir and San Vicente Highlands Open Space Preserve / El Capitan Reservoir / Mount Woodson Cleveland National Forest / Capitan Grande Reservation	Varies daily	N/A	Far Distance / All over 3 miles from Project site	Limited and/or obscured views	Low	Varied
Surrounding Private Residential/Commercial/ Light Industrial Uses	Varied	N/A	Adjacent / Varied	Intermittent views of light industrial development and associated landscaping and surface parking	Low to Medium	Varied

4.2.4 Viewer Awareness

Viewer response is affected by the degree to which a viewer is receptive to visual details, character and quality of the surrounding landscape. A viewer's perception is affected by his/her activity and the degree to which he/she actively participates in noticing a change in the visual environment.

Viewer awareness to potential visual changes in the setting that may occur with the Project would be varied. A viewer would first need to be in a location within the surrounding area where the Project site was visible (e.g. from a higher elevation), then actively notice that a change in the visual landscape has occurred. Viewer awareness would also vary between local residents and those who are experiencing the area as a tourist, wherein the local residents would likely be more aware of a change in the visual environment. In addition, viewer awareness would also vary due to distance from the Project site, as views occurring at a greater distance would diminish the visibility of the onsite structures within the visual landscape.

5.0 Visual Impact Assessment

5.1 Guidelines for Determining Significance

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines define “environment” to include “objects of...aesthetic significance (Section 15360).” As such, the County of San Diego has identified thresholds of significance to assess potential impacts resulting from proposed development.

The following significance guidelines are intended to provide guidance in the evaluation of whether a significant impact to visual resources would occur as a result of project implementation. A project will generally be considered to have a significant effect if it proposes any of the following:

- ∞ Introduction of features that would detract from or contrast with the existing visual character and/or quality of a neighborhood, community, or localized area by conflicting with important visual elements or the quality of the area (such as theme, style, setbacks, density, size, massing, coverage, scale, color, architecture, building materials, etc.) or by being inconsistent with applicable design guidelines;
- ∞ Removal or substantial adverse change of one or more features that contribute to the valued visual character or image of the neighborhood, community, or localized area, including but not limited to landmarks (designated), historic resources, trees, and rock outcroppings;
- ∞ Substantially obstruct, interrupt, or detract from a valued focal and/or panoramic vista from a public road, a trail within an adopted County or State trail system, a scenic vista or highway, or a recreational area; or,
- ∞ The project would not comply with applicable goals, policies or requirements of an applicable County Community Plan, Subregional Plan, or Historic District’s zoning.

5.2 Key Views

Six key views of the Project site from surrounding public vantage points were identified for the Project; refer to Figures 7A to 7F, Visual Simulations, which illustrate existing and proposed views of lands affected by the Project. No physical development is proposed with the Project (limited to a rezone and Specific Plan Amendment) at this time. In order to illustrate potential views of future development onsite following County approval of the proposed building height increase to 45 feet, a representative structure was prepared, respective of the design guidelines identified in the RiverWay Specific Plan and Lakeside Design Guidelines, and placed on various

vacant development pads within the Project boundaries. Other required design elements such as landscaping, surface parking, and/or other improvements are not modeled in the visual simulations. As such, the visual simulations included herein in Figures 7A to 7F are aimed at providing a visual massing of potential future structures with limited architectural detail, articulation, or fenestration. Rather, the simulations are intended to enable a visual comparison between existing similar light industrial development onsite and on adjacent properties (previously constructed to maximum building height of 35 feet) and potential future structures constructed to the proposed building height of 45 feet. Actual future development on the site would be designed in conformance with the RiverWay Specific Plan and Lakeside Design Guidelines and would be subject to the community design review process to ensure that all development achieves the intended overall character for the RiverWay Specific Plan area.

As the Project site is located along the floor of the San Diego River valley where terrain is generally flat, views to the site from surrounding locations along the valley floor would generally be reduced or restricted, due to similarity in viewing elevation. As one begins to ascend the surrounding hillsides, the potential for the Project site to become more visible would increase; however, hillsides in the Project area are generally distanced somewhat from the site, and therefore, views of structural elements on the property would decrease and would further be influenced by intervening development, topography, and established landscaping and/or natural vegetation.

Key views considered in this analysis are those that would be experienced by travelers along adjacent roadways of Mast Boulevard and Riverford Road, as well as from surrounding public roadways (i.e. SR 67) looking down to or across the valley to the site. Additionally, views from the adjacent San Diego River Trail are also evaluated for the potential for the Project as proposed to adversely affect existing views from this recreational resource. As described below, views of the Project from these public vantage points would be generally limited by distance from the site, travel speeds, angle of the view (i.e., looking directly to the site or turning one's head to look back to the site), and intervening vegetation or development.

5.2.1 Key View #1 – View from San Diego River Trail

Viewers from this location would be pedestrians utilizing the San Diego River Trail. Existing trailheads are located adjacent to the eastern property boundary (refer to Figure 5A, Photo 12) as well as near the southwestern boundary of the eastern portion of the Project site (east of Riverford Road); refer to Figure 5F, Photo 15.

Figure 7A, View 1 (Visual Simulation) – View from San Diego River Trail, shows the existing view from this Key View location. Existing views looking north into the site from this vantage

point are of existing light industrial uses on the property. The existing RiverRun Business Park East development is present onsite in the far eastern portion of the Project site and is highly visible from this vantage point along the Trail due to proximity; refer to Figure 5C, Photos 4 and 5). As one continues westward, intermittent views of the undeveloped portions of the site are experienced by users of the Trail. As one nears Riverford Road along the Trail, existing onsite light industrial development is again visible; refer to Figure 5F, Photo 15.

As shown in Figure 7A, views into the site from this vantage point would be intermittent and somewhat limited. As stated above, light industrial/business park type uses are currently visible along the Trail alignment. With Project implementation, the addition of future similar land uses, potentially constructed to a height of 45 feet as opposed to 35 feet, would not substantially change existing views. Additionally, existing natural vegetation along the River corridor, combined with ornamental landscaping installed with both existing and future land uses on the Project site, would further screen views from this vantage point; refer to Figure 5F, Photo 15. Future development on the site would also be distanced to the north of the Trail within the Project boundaries, thereby making the height increase in new structures less discernible within the visual landscape.

Although views to the site would change as one travels along the Trail, viewer response is anticipated to be low to medium, depending on the familiarity of the viewer with existing conditions, angle of view, and active participation in viewing the Project site (i.e. turning one's head). As such, it is not anticipated that the proposed increase in building height of 10 feet would substantially alter views from the public vantage point.

5.2.2 Key View #2 – View from Riverford Road (Looking South)

Key View #2 is the view of the Project site looking south along Riverford Road to the site from just north of the intersection of Mast Boulevard/Riverside Drive; refer to Figure 7B, Key View 2 (Visual Simulation) – View from Riverford Road (Looking South), which shows existing and proposed views from this vantage point. Viewers from this location would mainly be passengers in vehicles traveling along Riverford Road.

Views along this roadway within the Project vicinity generally consist of existing commercial and light industrial/business park uses in the middleground, with the hillsides south of SR 67 rising in the background. Views from this vantage point are generally restricted due to the lack of elevation change between the viewing location and other properties along the roadway, in addition to intervening development and mature landscaping; refer to Figure 7B.

From this vantage point, and as shown in Figure 7B, only limited views of future development on the Project site would be afforded. Future development would be somewhat distanced from the Riverford Road frontage (refer to Figure 2, Project Vicinity Map/Surrounding Land Uses), and therefore, only limited visibility of such elements (if any) would be experienced. As shown in Figure 7B, a building height of 35 feet was used to illustrate a future structure closer to Riverford Road of lesser height (i.e. administrative offices); however, a height of 45 feet was assumed for a taller structure that would adjoin the front building and accommodate the light industrial operations. Such a design would allow the taller structure to be set further back from the roadway. A similar design may be utilized with future development onsite to reduce the potential visibility of onsite structures from the adjacent roadway.

As shown in Figure 7B, limited views of future development on the site west of Riverford Road would occur from this vantage point. Portions of any new development may be visible; however, existing structures, combined with mature landscaping, would generally reduce views of future onsite development from this vantage point along the roadway. Additionally, any future development in this portion of the site would be similar in visual character to the light industrial/business park uses present to the north on adjacent lands.

As shown in Figure 7B, existing similar light industrial/business park development on adjacent lands, combined with established landscaping, would obscure views of future development within the portion of the site to the east of Riverford Road. Further, the eastern portion of the Project site has only limited frontage along Riverford Road, thereby further minimizing views into this portion of the property from the roadway; refer also to Figure 2.

As such, views of the proposed development would be limited from this location following Project implementation; refer to Figure 7B. Although views into the property from this vantage point would vary, viewer response is anticipated to be low to medium, based on angle and length of the view, as well as similarity to other surrounding properties that exhibit similar land uses and landscaping treatments.

5.2.3 Key View #3 – View from Mast Boulevard (Looking South)

Key View #3 is the view of the Project site looking south from Mast Boulevard; refer to Figure 7C, Key View 3 (Visual Simulation) – View from Mast Boulevard, which shows existing and proposed views from this vantage point. Viewers from this location would mainly be passengers in vehicles traveling in either direction along Mast Boulevard within the vicinity of the western portion of the Project site (west of Riverford Road).

Views from this vantage point would be to the south across the site. As can be seen in Figure 7C, existing light-industrial type development is present onsite to the west, with the Lakeside Baseball Park in the background. As such, views from this vantage point presently offer views of developed lands. Topography is generally flat across the site, as seen in the foreground, and supports limited vegetation. Views of the hillsides in the background are also afforded. As such, a lack of visual detail or coherence of the landscape components is not experienced; refer to Figure 7C. Therefore, the visual quality and character of this Key View are considered to be low.

As stated above, it should be noted that the visual simulations do not include associated surface parking, landscaping, or other features that would likely be constructed to support future onsite light industrial uses. As such, although shown as vacant land in Figure 7C, it is anticipated that such elements would be visible from this vantage point, reducing visual focus on the structures, and providing some level of visual screening.

Views from this vantage point of structural elements onsite would occur due to the scale of the proposed elements; however, it is anticipated that future development would be somewhat distanced from the roadway, thereby reducing direct views of onsite development to some degree. Further, experiencing views of the Project site from this vantage point along the roadway would also require the viewer to physically turn one's head and look southward to the site within the surrounding visual setting. Viewer response is anticipated to be low to medium.

5.2.4 Key View #4 – View from Riverford Road (Looking North)

Key View #2 is the view of the Project site looking north along Riverford Road to the site from just south of the intersection of Riverford Road and North Woodside Avenue; refer to Figure 7D, Key View 4 (Visual Simulation) – View from Riverford Road (Looking North), which shows existing and proposed views from this vantage point. Viewers from this location would mainly be passengers in vehicles traveling along Riverford Road.

Views from this vantage point would occur at a distance of approximately 0.09 mile to the south of the site. Views are generally dominated by the San Diego River and established vegetation along the River corridor. Limited views of the hillsides in the background also occur. The existing visual landscape offers somewhat memorable landscape components and distinctive visual patterns, and therefore, visual quality and character are considered to be medium.

From this vantage point, views of the Project site would be obscured, as shown in Figure 7D. Future development on the site would therefore not be visible from this intersection, and the existing visual setting would not be altered.

As the Project site would not be visible from this vantage point, viewer response to the visual change in the landscape is anticipated to be low. Although limited and brief views of future development onsite may be experienced as one travels further to the north along the roadway, views would continue to be influenced by travel speeds and intervening development, as well landscaping. Therefore, it is not anticipated that the Project would detract from the existing visual quality or character from this vantage point.

5.2.5 Key View #5 – View from SR 67 (Westbound)

Key View #5 is the view of the Project site looking west/northwest from westbound SR 67, south of the Project site; refer to Figure 7E, Key View 5 (Visual Simulation) – View from SR 67 (Westbound), which shows existing and proposed views from this vantage point. Viewers from this location would mainly be passengers in vehicles traveling westward within the vicinity of the site along SR 67.

Views along this roadway within the Project vicinity are varied and consist of a mixture of land uses both adjacent to the roadway and further to the north and south within the community, surrounding hillsides, vacant lands, and both natural and ornamental vegetation. From this vantage point, the foreground largely consists of the road right-of-way and the existing roadside vegetation. The surrounding hillsides are visible in the background. Although SR 67 is considered a County Scenic Roadway, views from this particular vantage point do not offer a high degree of visual quality or contrast with adjacent lands or distinctive visual patterns; refer to Figure 7E.

Existing views from this vantage point to the Project site are somewhat restricted by intervening development and mature landscaping, as shown in Figure 7E, and further influenced by travel speed and angle of the view. From this particular vantage point, the Project site would not be visible; however, glimpses of future development onsite may be experienced along portions of the roadway as one travels further to the west. As shown in Figure 7E, established vegetation along the roadway would partially screen views looking northward to the site. The density and visible depth of such roadside vegetation varies and affects the extent to which views would be afforded.

As such, views of future onsite development would be obscured and/or limited from this location following Project implementation; refer to Figure 7E. Although overall views into the property from this vantage point (westbound SR 67) would vary, viewer response is anticipated to be low, based on similarity of future structural elements other surrounding properties that exhibit similar uses and landscaping treatments. Further, as future development on the Project site would be distanced from this vantage point, the increase in building height as proposed with the Project would not be readily perceivable to travelers along the roadway, and future development of land

uses on the site would be similar in appearance and character as those structures visible from the roadway at present. As such, viewer response is anticipated to be low.

5.2.6 Key View #6 - View from SR 67 (Eastbound)

Key View #6 is the view of the Project site looking west/northwest from eastbound SR 67, south of the Project site; refer to Figure 7F, Key View 6 (Visual Simulation) – View from SR 67 (Eastbound), which shows existing and proposed views from this vantage point. Viewers from this location would mainly be passengers in vehicles traveling westward within the vicinity of the site along SR 67.

Similar to Key View #5, views along this roadway within the Project vicinity are varied and consist of a mixture of land uses both adjacent to the roadway and further to the north and south within the community, surrounding hillsides, vacant lands, and both natural and ornamental vegetation. From this vantage point, the foreground largely consists of the road right-of-way and a variety of existing land uses. The background is comprised of the mountains which rise to the east of the community. As shown in Figure 7E, although SR 67 is considered a County Scenic Roadway, views from this particular vantage point do not offer a high degree of visual quality or contrast with adjacent lands or distinctive visual patterns, and a memorable landscape is not experienced by the viewer.

Existing views to the Project site from this vantage point are obscured by intervening development, and further limited by elevational differences (i.e. road elevation is higher than the Project site). Additionally, travel speed and angle of the view (i.e. actively turning one's head to look north/northeast) also influence the views experienced.

From this particular vantage point, future development onsite would not be visible, as shown in Figure 7E; however, glimpses of future development onsite may be experienced along portions of the roadway as one travels further to the east. Additionally, due to the distance from the Project site and the relative height of other existing structures onsite and on adjacent lands, the increase in building height that would be exhibited by future onsite structures is not anticipated to substantially change existing views to viewers traveling eastbound on SR 67. Further, intervening landscaping and natural vegetation, combined with existing development within the visual landscape, would also reduce potential views to the Project site, thereby minimizing visibility of onsite structures. Viewer response to the potential change in the visual landscape with the Project is therefore considered to be low.

5.3 Assessment of Visual Character and Visual Quality

5.3.1 Assessment of Visual Character

As stated above, the lands affected by the proposed Project are generally lacking in significant visual resources. The majority of the site has been previously graded and/or otherwise disturbed. The affected lands are generally devoid of vegetation or have minor cover of ruderal species (with exception of where ornamental landscaping has been planted with existing light industrial uses onsite).

Under current conditions, the subject property is generally undeveloped; however, a number of building pads within RiverWay Planning Areas 8 & 9 have been developed to date with light industrial or recreational (Lakeside Baseball Park) uses. Existing structures onsite have been previously constructed in compliance with the existing 35-foot maximum height limit. Additionally, several parcels adjacent to the Project site support similar light industrial uses.

Future development of the site would change the character of the property from (largely) undeveloped lands to a developed condition; however, as can be seen from Figures 7A to 7F, it is not anticipated that the increase in building height as proposed with the Project would result in an adverse change to the overall character of the existing visual pattern through the introduction of elements that would create visual dominance or scale. The increase in building height may be noticeable when new structures are viewed immediately adjacent to previously constructed buildings (at a 35-foot height); however, this height increase would be less apparent when viewed at a distance or within the larger visual context (i.e. refer to Figures 7B and 7C). As demonstrated by the visual simulations provided, with consideration of varied views to the site from offsite public roadways, the visual changes resulting from the Project (increase in building height of 10 feet) would not dominate or substantially change the existing visual character of the area, nor would the Project incorporate elements that would substantially obstruct or diminish existing views from offsite public vantage points. Although the allowable building height would increase with Project approval, all other applicable development regulations (i.e. maximum building square footage, scale, massing, lot coverage, setbacks, landscaping, etc.) that currently influence the potential character of development onsite would remain unchanged. Additionally, all future development would be subject to the community design review process to ensure consistency with the overall character intended for the RiverWay Specific Plan area. As such, it is not anticipated that the Project as proposed would substantially change the visual character of the existing landscape.

5.3.2 Assessment of Visual Quality

The visual quality of a view is partially influenced by the viewing location from which public views occur. The viewing location can allow for views that are generally either expansive in nature or focused on a specific view of a site or particular feature within the landscape. In addition, visual quality is influenced by the particular characteristics of the viewing corridor within which a view occurs. Visual quality is also affected by the quality of the overall viewshed area being viewed. Areas identified as having high visual quality are those which are identified as being subregionally important and possessing high scenic value.

The area of Lakeside in which the Project site is located is largely urbanized, with the majority of lands surrounding the site currently in a developed state. No regionally significant vistas, prominent ridgelines, or dominant landforms are present on the Project site or on immediately adjacent lands; however, the hillsides that surround the community on outlying lands define the valley and contribute to the overall visual character of Lakeside. No regionally significant natural features, designated historic landmarks, or points of regional historic or cultural interest occur onsite or in the immediate Project vicinity. As such, the Project is not anticipated to affect the quality of any such resources.

Under current conditions, the subject property is generally undeveloped; however, a number of building pads within RiverWay Planning Areas 8 & 9 have been developed to date with light industrial or recreational (Lakeside Baseball Park) uses; refer to Figure 2, Local Vicinity Map/Surrounding Land Uses. The majority of the site has been previously graded and is therefore highly disturbed. The affected lands are generally devoid of vegetation or have a limited cover of ruderal species (with exception of where ornamental landscaping has been planted with existing development onsite). The affected lands are generally considered to have a low visual quality and are not considered to be subregionally important or possessing a high scenic value.

Future development of the site by would change the character of the property from a (largely) undeveloped to a developed nature; however, such development can occur under existing conditions and would not be a result of Project implementation. Further, existing light industrial uses are present on portions of the site, and new development would be similar with regard to land use and visual appearance to that which is presently visible on the site and several adjoining properties.

All future development onsite would be required to conform to the RiverWay Specific Plan and Lakeside Design Guidelines, as applicable, to ensure overall consistency with the character and quality intended for the property. As the site now largely exhibits vacant lands with limited topography and natural vegetation, it is anticipated that future development, consistent with such

design guidelines for architecture, landscaping, and other associated improvements, would enhance the existing visual quality of the site, rather than substantially degrade it.

It is therefore not anticipated that the Project would significantly degrade the existing visual quality of the lands affected by the Project or of surrounding lands.

5.4 Assessment of Viewer Response

Viewer response to visual changes on the site with Project approval is anticipated to be low to medium. The Project would not directly result in physical development on the subject site; however, it is anticipated that viewers of future light industrial type development occurring on the property would be varied and generally dependent upon the structural elements being viewed, the location of the public vantage point, and distance to the onsite structures, as well as viewer familiarity and/or frequency of the view being experienced (i.e. area residents versus visitors).

Viewer response would likely be greater from those who are familiar with the character of development that presently exists on the site and may be more sensitive to noticing an increase in building height, as allowed by the Project. Additionally, viewers in closer proximity to the site (i.e. direct views along Mast Boulevard, Riverside Drive, or Riverford Road) may be more likely to actively engage in visual comparison between those structures previously constructed to a height of 35 feet and those constructed to a height of 45 feet as a result of the Project.

Views to the Project site from offsite vantage points within the community would generally be reduced or blocked due to intervening development, established vegetation, and minimal differences in elevation (generally flat viewing plane), and therefore, viewer response from such vantage points is anticipated to be low. Viewer response from more distant locations is also anticipated to be low to medium, as well as from other vantage points from higher elevations, such as from the hillsides located to the north of the site and to the south across SR 67 due to distance. Further, the increase in building height resulting with the Project would not represent a significant visual change within the visual landscape as compared to other development present along the valley floor, and would not result in structural elements that would substantially contrast with existing views or increase viewer response to such changes within the visual setting.

Overall, future onsite improvements would mainly be visible from locations along Mast Boulevard, Riverside Drive, Riverford Road, SR 67, and other public roadways within the Project area; however, due to the limited degree of visual change that would result with the Project as proposed, viewer sensitivity, and therefore response, to the change in the visual setting would likely be low and further influenced by the height of the structural components onsite, viewing angle, and intervening development and vegetation.

5.5 Determination of Significance

- 1) Introduction of features that would detract from or contrast with the existing visual character and/or quality of a neighborhood, community, or localized area by conflicting with important visual elements or the quality of the area (such as theme, style, setbacks, density, size, massing, coverage, scale, color, architecture, building materials, etc.) or by being inconsistent with applicable design guidelines.

The Project would not directly result in any physical development onsite; however, Project approval would allow for future development to be constructed at an increased height of 45 feet, as opposed to 35 feet under current conditions. Therefore, the Project would have the potential to introduce a feature that could ultimately contrast with the existing visual character and/or quality of the neighborhood, community, or localized area, by conflicting with important visual elements or the quality of the area. No other changes to existing regulations (i.e. lot coverage, scale, color, setbacks, architectural design, etc.) that currently apply to development of the site would occur as the result of Project implementation.

Location / Lot Size

The Project site is located within the boundaries of the USDRIP and the RiverWay Specific Plan area, and is intended by the County for development with light industrial-type uses. Although the Project does not propose any physical development at this time, it is anticipated that future development onsite would be light industrial-type land uses, consistent with that allowed under the existing General Plan land use designation and zoning, and similar to existing uses both onsite and in the surrounding area. The location of such future uses on the Project site would therefore be considered appropriate and would not be anticipated to conflict with any applicable plans or policies relevant to development of the site.

Within the Project vicinity, lot sizes are generally varied and are reflective of the land use supported. Single-family residential uses to the north, northwest, and northeast of the site are relatively small in size, while those lots supporting commercial and light industrial uses tend to be larger, depending on the size of the structures (i.e. small-scale commercial versus larger light industrial).

The Project (rezone and SPA) does not propose to subdivide or change the existing size of any of the parcels affected within RiverWay Planning Areas 8 & 9. Therefore, the Project would not create lot sizes that are inconsistent with the existing visual character of lands onsite or in the surrounding area.

Architectural Design / Theme

Architectural design of structures on parcels surrounding the Project is varied, due to a mixture of use types. Residential uses in the area typically exhibit ranch-style features with wooden exteriors and roofing, and generally non-decorative elements. A number of residential uses are constructed in the Spanish style, with stucco exteriors, tile roofing, and arched features. Surrounding commercial and light industrial-type uses generally exhibit more utilitarian features with limited architectural features/accents.

The Project would not result in physical construction on the subject property. No physical structures that would require architectural design would result with Project implementation. In addition, development of the project site would require a subsequent discretionary action due to the existing zoning regulation B-Designator.

As stated in the RiverWay Specific Plan, the overall concept for the area is for a “high quality industrial and business park bordered on the west by residential uses that provide housing for industrial tenants, and a transition to buffer existing residential areas.” All future development within RiverWay Planning Areas 8 & 9 would be designed and constructed in conformance with the design measures identified in the Specific Plan (and the Lakeside Design Guidelines, as applicable). The Specific Plan provides design measures for architecture, streetscape, parking areas, lighting, walls, fences, and signage, as well as landscape guidelines, among other elements, to ensure that all future development within the Specific Plan area occurs consistent with the intended theme and overall character for the area. Future light industrial development onsite may be somewhat utilitarian in nature; however, architectural design and other measures would ensure that structural elements and design achieve an appropriate level of visual enhancement. Architectural design of future structures onsite is therefore not anticipated to significantly contrast with the visual character of other uses currently found onsite or on adjacent lands. The architectural design of future structural elements onsite would therefore not result in features that would be visually dominant within the visual landscape, or that would represent a scale that would significantly contrast with the existing visual character of the area.

Materials and Colors

Development on lands within the surrounding area generally exhibit a range of materials and colors, depending on the land use considered. Materials generally range from metal, wood, stucco, and concrete block for residential, commercial, and institutional uses. Colors for such uses are varied and range from more muted, natural colors often integrating a variety of brighter colors for accent purposes. Metal and/or concrete structures are typical of area industrial,

manufacturing, and agricultural-type uses. Exterior colors of such structures are typically earthtoned in nature (grays, tans, browns, etc.).

Project implementation would not result in physical development. As such, no development would occur that would be inconsistent with the RiverWay Specific Plan and Lakeside Design Guidelines with regard to allowable materials or colors for building construction.

Overall, it is anticipated that future development within the Project area would occur in conformance with applicable design guidelines, and would be subject to County review and approval, thereby resulting in structural elements that are respective of the existing visual character and visual quality with regard to materials and color. No design features that would sharply visually contrast with surrounding elements, or that would create a visually dominant feature within the landscape, are anticipated.

Height / Square Footage

In general, small-scale, single-family residential and varied commercial uses are present within the immediate Project vicinity. Such structures are generally one to two stories in height. Light industrial and manufacturing-type uses are present both onsite and on surrounding lands and generally support structural elements that range from two to three stories in height, with various elements of greater height, depending on their function.

Square footage of buildings in the area also varies, due to the type of use, with residential uses generally of smaller scale (one to two stories) and commercial and industrial/manufacturing-type uses supporting structures of greater square footage.

Under existing conditions, a maximum building height of 35 feet is allowed within the Project boundary. With the proposed Project, the maximum building height allowed would be increased by 10 feet to 45 feet. Existing structures present on the Project site (light industrial) have previously been constructed consistent with the 35-foot height limit. Refer to Figures 5B to 5D and Figures 7A to 7F, which illustrate existing light industrial-type uses onsite.

The Project would result in an increase in the allowable building height by 10 feet above existing conditions. All other design aspects of future land uses on the site would remain as currently allowed under the existing zoning, and as regulated by the RiverWay Specific Plan and Lakeside Design Guidelines. The increase of 10 feet in building height with the Project is not anticipated to result in a substantial change in the visual appearance of onsite structures. Future development onsite would be placed on individual building pads within the Project site and thereby distanced from one another within the Project boundaries; refer to Figure 2, Local Vicinity Map/Surrounding Land Uses. As such, it is anticipated that the proposed increase in building

height would be generally not be perceivable to viewers on surrounding public roadways or other public lands, as buildings 45 feet in height would generally not be constructed immediately adjacent to buildings previously constructed to a height of 35 feet. The visibility of future structures within the visual landscape would be further reduced by required building setbacks (distancing of structures from public roadways), installation of surface parking lots, and landscaping improvements to enhance the visual appearance of the development.

Additionally, future development fronting directly onto more highly visible public roadways (i.e. Riverford Road, Mast Boulevard, or Riverside Drive) may be designed to provide a lesser building height closer to the street frontage, thereby allowing for the building massing to be stepped back, with buildings of greater height distanced from the roadways. This may include providing administrative or office uses (i.e. 35-foot height) towards the front of the building, with the structural elements of greater height (45-foot height) distanced further away from the roadway. This feature is demonstrated in Figure 7B, Key View 2 (Visual Simulation) – View from Riverford Road (Looking South), which shows placement of a 35-foot tall structure closer to Riverford Road, and elements of greater height in the background.

In addition, the Project does not propose any change to building square footage as allowed under the existing S88 zone, as applicable to the subject site; refer also to Table 1, Existing and Proposed Zoning. Therefore, a substantial change in the visual landscape would not occur in this regard as a result of the Project. It is anticipated that all future development onsite would occur consistent with existing zoning regulations and the design requirements provided in the RiverWay Specific Plan with regard to building size, unless otherwise approved by the County.

Bulk and Scale

An evaluation of bulk and scale includes an analysis of the visual appearance of structures, relative to other existing development in the surrounding area. Visual bulk and scale of surrounding structures varies depending on the type of use. Residential uses tend to be of smaller scale (generally one to two stories in height) and visually horizontal in nature. Many of the residential uses in the Project area are single-family homes of average square footage, and therefore, are of limited scale and bulk. Similarly, the majority of commercial uses within the area, which are generally located to the south and north of the Project site, are similar in scale and bulk to that of a single-family home, and are generally low-lying within the visual landscape (generally one story). Agricultural, commercial, service-type, and industrial-type uses generally support structural elements of greater bulk and scale within the visual landscape (e.g. storage facilities, sheds, barns, churches, schools, community facilities) that are generally of a greater square footage and height than a single-family home.

The Project does not propose any physical development onsite, and no change to the allowable building square footage of onsite structures or setbacks from property lines, or other design regulations affecting the character of onsite development, would occur with the Project. As such, it is anticipated that the apparent visual bulk and scale of any future development onsite would be consistent with that of existing onsite and surrounding uses, due to required development regulations of the applicable zone. Therefore, the proposed increase in allowable building height from 35 to 45 feet would not be considered to substantially alter the ultimate bulk or scale of buildings constructed onsite in the future, following Project approval. Additionally, as shown in Key Views 1 to 6 (Figures 7A to 7F), views of proposed development onsite from surrounding vantage points would generally be obscured and/or somewhat limited, due to existing surrounding development and landscaping, viewing angle, and distance from the site.

The proposed Project would therefore not result in structural elements that would detract from the existing visual character or quality of the site or that would substantially dominate or differ in size from existing components within the visual landscape. Furthermore, the visibility of the Project components would be reduced due to existing vegetation and proposed landscaping integrated with future onsite development, relatively level topography of the valley floor (i.e. flat viewing plane), and distance of the site from potential public vantage points in the surrounding area.

Lot Coverage

The *building footprint* is the amount of structural development (in square feet) at ground level. *Lot coverage* is generally expressed as a percentage and represents the area of land covered by the building footprint (building area divided by total lot area). The building footprint does not include paved areas, such as driveways or parking areas, nor walkways around the proposed structures, as defined by Section 1110 of the County Zoning Ordinance.

The majority of lands in the Project vicinity support a mixture of higher-density single-family and multi-family residential uses, as well as lower density rural-residential uses, interspersed with retail commercial and light industrial type uses; refer to Figure 2. Other lands are undeveloped and therefore, do not support built elements. On the surrounding parcels where development has occurred, the majority of such lands are small-acre parcels with structures of varied square footage, depending on the use (i.e., single-family residential versus light industrial).

The proposed Project would not result in a change to the building coverage allowed under existing conditions. The rezone would only apply to a change in allowed building height, and would therefore not affect other aspects of future development on the property. It is anticipated

that all future development within the RiverWay Planning Areas 8 & 9 would be required to demonstrate conformance with the allowed building coverage, unless otherwise approved by the County. As such, the Project would not result in lot coverage that would be inconsistent with that allowed and/or conflict with lot coverage exhibited by similar light industrial uses onsite and on adjacent parcels.

Lighting and Glare Effects

The Project does not propose any physical development, and therefore, no interior or exterior lighting would be installed on the site. Additionally, no building materials that would have the potential to result in glare effects would be utilized as part of Project implementation.

All future development onsite would be subject to the County of San Diego's outdoor lighting requirements, and any specific requirements identified in the RiverWay Specific Plan, Lakeside Community Plan, and/or Lakeside Design Guidelines, as appropriate, to ensure that potential light pollution effects are minimized and that dark skies are maintained. It is anticipated that all future lighting onsite would be low-level lighting installed for purposes of security and identification purposes, as well as to facilitate circulation/access and would be required to comply with the County Light Pollution Code. Additionally, all future lighting onsite would be shielded and directed downward to minimize the potential for glare or spillover onto adjacent ownerships, including open space lands (i.e. San Diego River corridor).

As noted, the Project would not directly result in physical construction within RiverWay Planning Areas 8 & 9. The development of light industrial type land uses is presently allowed onsite under current conditions. The Project would not introduce new land uses that would be inconsistent with that presently allowed, or result in a substantial change in the appearance of such development. The Project would be limited to increasing the allowable building height by 10 feet. Such an increase, as evaluated herein and as illustrated in Figures 7A to 7F, would not substantially change the visual character of uses onsite or adversely affect views from surrounding offsite lands.

The appearance of the above-described elements within the landscape is not anticipated to significantly detract from or contrast with the existing visual character and/or quality of the surrounding neighborhood, community, or localized area. The location, size, design, and operating characteristics of the proposed Project would be compatible with adjacent uses, residents, buildings, and structures with consideration given to harmony in scale, bulk, and coverage. Further, based upon the above discussion, the Project would not result in impacts with regard to lighting or glare. As such, impacts would be less than significant, and no mitigation measures are required.

- 2) Removal or substantial adverse change of one or more features that contribute to the valued visual character or image of the neighborhood, community, or localized area, including but not limited to landmarks (designated), historic resources, trees, and rock outcroppings.

None of the parcels or adjacent offsite lands support designated landmarks, federally-, State-, or locally-designated historic resources, or rock outcroppings; refer to Figures 5A to 5D. Although the San Diego River corridor supports extensive habitat, including a number of mature trees, the Project would not result in any physical changes or potential disturbance to such resources. Further, existing light industrial development is already present on the Project site adjacent to the corridor, and future development onsite would reflect similar conditions. Future development on the Project site would be distanced from the River corridor due to required setbacks (and further enhanced by landscaping improvements), and the proposed structural height increase would not result in a substantial adverse change to the visual character or image of this resource.

Project implementation would not directly result in any physical development. Additionally, the Project does not propose a change to the existing General Plan land use or zoning designations that affect the subject site, with exception of changing the height designator to allow for an increase in building height. Therefore, no land uses are proposed that would be inconsistent with the land use intended for the property by the County, or that would conflict with the character of the existing visual setting or surrounding community character.

Although future development of the site by others with light industrial type land uses others (as allowed under the existing General Plan and RiverWay Specific Plan) would change the onsite use from (largely) undeveloped lands to a developed condition, design measures would be implemented (i.e. landscape screening; setbacks; scale, massing, and height requirements; building materials and colors, etc.) to ensure that such development does not result in a significant effect on the existing visual setting, and that the existing character or image of the neighborhood is not adversely altered.

As such, the Project as proposed would not result in the removal or substantial adverse change of one or more features that contribute to the valued visual character or image of the neighborhood, community, or localized area. Impacts would be less than significant, and no mitigation is required.

- 3) Substantially obstruct, interrupt, or detract from a valued focal and/or panoramic vista from a public road, a trail within an adopted County or State trail system, a scenic vista or highway, or a recreational area.

As identified in Table 3 above, several County Scenic Roadways are located within the vicinity of the Project site; however, it is anticipated that only SR 67 would afford views to the site, due to surrounding topography, intervening development and vegetation, and distance of these roadways to the Project site. From SR 67, intermittent views into portions of the Project site would be afforded from the roadway; however, as shown in Figures 7E and 7F, existing development and established vegetation along the roadside and on intervening lands would further reduce or restrict views to the site.

Additionally, portions of the site would generally be visible from public roadways in the surrounding area at a higher elevation than the Project site; however, due to the relatively level valley floor, views occurring from public roads at elevations similar to or lower than the Project site would be restricted and/or obscured (with exception of those roads onto which the Project would front). Views of the site may be experienced from higher elevations along the surrounding hillsides; however, such views would generally be distanced from the Project site, and the visibility of the proposed increase in building height of 10 feet would be diminished within the visual landscape as a result. Existing development and established vegetation would also reduce or restrict views to the site from offsite public roadways. Additionally, future development on the Project site would require installation of landscaping that would mature over time, further blending such development into the surrounding visual setting, reflective of the character of other developed parcels along the valley floor, thereby reducing the visibility of structural elements within the visual landscape.

For the above reasons, the Project is not anticipated to substantially obstruct, interrupt, or detract from a valued focal and/or panoramic vista from a public road, a trail within an adopted County or State trail system, a scenic vista or highway, or a recreational area.

With consideration for the limited increase in building height, combined with viewing distance, the increase in building height of 10 feet would not substantially change views of structural elements that would occur onsite under existing conditions. Additionally, the succeeding 50 feet from all front yard centerline setbacks shall have a 35-foot maximum height buffer. All development located outside of this 50-foot buffer would be subject to the “M” height designator. Future development onsite would be viewed in combination with other built elements visible along the valley floor, thereby further reducing the potential visual effect resulting with the Project. As such, it not anticipated that existing views would be significantly changed with Project implementation, or that the Project would substantially obstruct, interrupt, or detract from a valued focal and/or panoramic vista from a public road or a scenic vista or highway.

As discussed previously, the San Diego River Trail runs adjacent to the eastern boundary of the site, and within the vicinity of a portion of the southern Project boundary, east of Riverford Road. Due to proximity, views of existing and future development onsite would be afforded by users of the Trail. Although viewers would experience intermittent views into the property, it is not anticipated that the addition of future development constructed to a height of 45 feet, in comparison to those existing buildings onsite constructed to a height of 35 feet, would cause a substantial change in the viewer's experience. Those pedestrians familiar with views from the Trail (i.e. frequent users) would be more likely to be aware of the potential difference in building height. Additionally, per applicable fire code requirements, future development would be set back from the southern property line by a minimum of 100 feet to reduce the potential risk of wildfire, and therefore, reducing views of future development from the Trail. Further, the installation of ornamental landscaping with future development, combined with existing natural vegetation along the River corridor, would also reduce the visibility of structural elements on the site; refer also to Figure 5F, Photo 15; and, Figure 7A, which show viewing conditions from the Trail. For these reasons, it is not anticipated that the Project would substantially obstruct, interrupt, or detract from a valued focal and/or panoramic vista from an adopted trail within the County's trail system.

As stated previously, the San Vicente Reservoir and San Vicente Highlands Open Space Preserve are located in northern Lakeside, and the El Capitan Reservoir is located in eastern Lakeside. Mount Woodson is also located within the northern portion of the community. The Cleveland National Forest and Capitan Grande Reservation are located further to the east of the community.

Visitors utilizing these recreational areas may experience limited views to community of Lakeside, including the Project site; however, such views would be diminished by distance to the site, as all of these areas are greater than three miles from the site. From such a distance, the proposed increase in building height of 10 feet would be indiscernible to viewers. Further, future development onsite would be anticipated to be viewed in combination with other built elements visible within the landscape along the valley floor, and therefore, the visual effect of the Project would be minimal, and views would not be significantly changed with Project implementation. Additionally, views of the site, if afforded from these recreational areas, would be intermittent and brief, and further limited by intervening topography and vegetation.

As such, it is not anticipated that the Project would substantially obstruct, interrupt, or detract from a valued focal and/or panoramic vista from a public road or a scenic vista or highway. In addition, views from established recreational areas would not be obstructed or interrupted as a result of the Project as proposed. Impacts would be less than significant, and no mitigation is required.

- 4) The project would not comply with applicable goals, policies or requirements of an applicable County Community Plan, Subregional Plan, or Historic District's zoning.

The Project as proposed has been designed to conform to the requirements of applicable goals, policies, and requirements of the County General Plan, Lakeside Community Plan, and Lakeside Design Guidelines. With County approval of the proposed rezone (to change the building height designator to allow for an increase in building height) and Specific Plan Amendment, the Project would be consistent with the RiverWay Specific Plan and County Zoning Ordinance. Refer to Appendix A, Project Conformance with Applicable Plans, which provides a discussion of Project conformance with these documents, as appropriate.

Additionally, the Project does not propose a change to the existing General Plan land use. Therefore, no land uses are proposed that would be inconsistent with the land use intended for the property by the County, or that would conflict with the character of the existing visual setting or surrounding community. Further, all future development onsite would be subject to County review for consistency with applicable plans and policies intended to guide development of the RiverWay Specific Plan area.

The Project is not located within the boundaries of a Historic District or a Subregional Plan, and is therefore, not affected by such a plan. Project impacts with regard to the significance criteria would be less than significant, and no mitigation measures are required.

5.6 Cumulative Impact Analysis

Table 4, Cumulative Projects, and Figure 8, Cumulative Projects Map, identify the projects considered for the cumulative analysis. The study area, or viewshed, identified for the Project includes those projects within a four-mile radius of the site. The cumulative study area was determined based upon the surrounding topography, the degree to which distance from the site would reduce or limit views of future onsite development, and potential public viewing locations (i.e. roadways, recreational areas, etc.).

Any projects located on any downslopes facing away from the Project site would not have views of the Project site. Additionally, locations within the valley may have views to the site, but such views would generally be decreased by distance and intervening topographic conditions, as well as existing development and established vegetation. Locations at or below the elevation of the Project site would generally not have views to the Project site, or views may be limited to only the upper portions of any structures constructed onsite.

Locations within the Project viewshed that would have potential views of the Project site (assuming an ultimate building height of 45 feet), and therefore may be viewed at the same time

as the Project, are shown as shaded in green on Figure 8. Those areas not shaded would not offer views of the Project site, and therefore, would not contribute to a cumulative impact. It is anticipated that views to the site would largely occur due to area topography that allows for unobstructed views and/or vantage points located at a higher elevation than that of the Project site.

Table 4 provides a list of discretionary projects that were approved within the last five years or that are currently being processed by the County of San Diego Department of Planning and Development Services (PDS) and are considered to have a potential to contribute to a cumulative impact on visual resources within the Lakeside area. The projects considered represent a range of use types including residential, commercial, and industrial-type uses.

**TABLE 4
CUMULATIVE PROJECTS**

Project Number*	Permit Type	Project Reference
1	Major Use Permit	Lakeside Tractor Supply Company
2	Major Use Permit	SD0723 Lakeside Heights
3	Major Use Permit	SD0436 Eucalyptus Hills
4	Major Pre-Application	Lakeshore Apartments
5	Site Plan	Settlers Point
6	Major Use Permit	El Capitan Townhome Apartments
7	Major Grading Permit	Laurel Street Apartments
8	Major Grading Permit	Americo Express Fuel
9	Site Plan	Wintergardens Apartment Homes
10	Tentative Parcel Map	Peter Rios Estates Apartment Complex
11	Major Use Permit	Lemon Crest
12	Tentative Map	Marilla Drive TM (7 lots)
13	General Plan Amendment, Rezone, Tentative Map, Site Plan	Lake Jennings Market Place
14	Tentative Map	Riker Ranch
15	Tentative Map, Major Use Permit	Marilla Park
16	Tentative Map	Lakeside Land
17	Tentative Map	Lake Jennings Park Road
18	Tentative Map	Riverview Courts

* Project numbers correspond to locations identified on Figure 8, Cumulative Projects Map.

Future project construction activities within the cumulative study area would occur on various sites and at varied times, when an application for development is made. Such construction-related impacts would be short-term and would cease upon completion. In addition, all new discretionary projects within the cumulative study area would be subject to environmental and design review on a site-specific, project-by-project basis to ensure visual aesthetic impacts are limited to the extent possible during the construction process. All future construction activities would also be required to be consistent with the County's regulatory requirements and applicable conditions of approval to reduce potential cumulative effects of construction to less than significant or to the extent feasible.

As the Project does not propose any physical development onsite, it would not directly contribute to a cumulative impact on visual resources; however, with approval, the Project would allow for building height to be increased for all future development onsite, thereby resulting in taller buildings within the visual landscape that may have the potential to contribute to a cumulative effect on the visual setting.

If proposed, future development along the valley floor would have a similar visual effect as other existing development in that it would generally change undeveloped land to developed land (i.e. as with future development of the Project site), resulting in an incremental loss of such lands within the Lakeside community; however, some redevelopment activities on previously-developed lands may also occur. Such future development may also contribute to the alteration of existing views to designated visual resources. All future development would be subject to an evaluation of the significance of potential cumulative visual and aesthetic changes on a site-specific, project-by-project basis, with consideration for project scope and contribution to a change in the overall visual pattern or character within the community.

It is anticipated that future development along the valley floor and/or surrounding hillsides within the Lakeside community would occur sporadically on available parcels as independent development applications, rather than concentrated in one area. Thus, the cumulative visual effects of such development would be reduced within the visual landscape, and a range of small-scale to larger-scale projects would likely be proposed, depending on available land, appropriate zoning, and the nature of the development application.

Over time, it is anticipated that development within the Lakeside community and surrounding areas will continue to occur. As the valley floor is extensive, and the proposed Project site represents a minimal overall percentage of such lands, future development on the Project site is not expected to result in a substantial visual change in the appearance of the valley floor. Due to the limited increase in building height resulting with the proposed Project (and no other changes to existing development regulations or land use), the Project is not anticipated to contribute to a

substantial effect on existing views from locations within the valley, as such views would generally be limited by relatively level topography, and intervening development and vegetation.

Assuming a complete buildout of all the projects considered for the cumulative analysis, potential aesthetic cumulative impacts are considered to be less than significant for the following reasons:

It is not anticipated that the projects considered would not result in the introduction of features that would detract from or contrast with existing visual features found in the surrounding area. Existing development in the Lakeside area largely consists of a range of uses that include single-family and multi-family residential and commercial uses, mobile home parks, industrial and manufacturing uses, and public recreational/open space areas. The inclusion of the proposed Project in the land use mix (particularly as limited to a rezone and SPA) would not conflict with the visual quality of the area because the Project is generally distanced from the other projects considered and would be installed on lands generally surrounded by similar light industrial and manufacturing-type uses; refer to Figure 8, Cumulative Projects Map. Additionally, the proposed Project would not disrupt the pattern of development adjacent to existing homes or businesses or substantially conflict with any adopted design guidelines or thematic development requirements in the area.

The addition of the cumulative projects would not remove or create a substantial adverse change to the features that represent a valued visual resource in the area. The valley floor would still be visible from higher elevations and would still appear to have a scattered development pattern once the cumulative projects are constructed. None of the projects would significantly alter the mountain views from the valley floor from places where they are currently observed. It is not anticipated that any of the cumulative projects would remove or replace any local or State designated landmarks.

The proposed Project would not substantially obstruct or detract from valued lookouts or panoramic views from public roads, scenic highways, or recreational areas. Buildout of the cumulative projects would not have an adverse effect on these public viewsheds because the projects are anticipated to match the existing development pattern present within the community. From a vantage point where all of the developments would be visible, it would appear as the continuation of the existing development pattern in the area. In order to see all of the proposed projects, the viewpoint would need to be located at a higher elevation than the valley floor, and would be distanced from the proposed Project site. As such, the cumulative visual effect of the projects considered would not be considered to substantially obstruct views from scenic vistas or public roads.

Moreover, the cumulative projects would be required to comply with applicable goals and policies of the County General Plan, Lakeside Community Plan, Lakeside Design Guidelines, RiverWay Specific Plan, and County Zoning Ordinance, as applicable. If deviations from, or changes to, the existing development regulations or allowed uses are proposed with future projects, project-specific analysis would be required to justify such changes, prior to approval by the County through a subsequent discretionary action.

In addition, all lighting proposed with future development within the cumulative study area, such as street lighting, security lighting, or exterior illumination, would potentially result in increased light and glare impacts within the Lakeside community. Projects within the cumulative study area would be evaluated by the County on a project-by-project basis to determine the extent of such lighting necessary and any appropriate site-specific measures to reduce potential impacts on surrounding areas (i.e., shielding, use of low-level lighting, directing lighting away from adjacent properties and open space areas). As such, it is anticipated that the cumulative effects of increased lighting and/or glare associated with future development in the cumulative study area would be reduced to less than significant levels. As no physical development would occur with the proposed Project, the Project would not result installation of lighting or use of potentially glare-inducing building materials that would have the potential to contribute to significant cumulative impacts relative to light and/or glare.

As appropriate, future development within the Lakeside community would be subject to an evaluation of the significance of potential cumulative visual and aesthetic changes on a site-specific, project-by-project basis, with consideration for its scope and contribution to a change in the overall visual pattern or character within the community. Adherence to applicable General Plan and Lakeside Community Plan policies and goals, as well as the RiverWay Specific Plan and Lakeside Design Guidelines, as applicable, would further reduce potential cumulative impacts relative to the long-term alteration of views to designated scenic resources. Although the Project would indirectly result in a permanent visual change in the existing landscape with industrial-type development of a greater height than that currently allowed, no other change to future development as currently allowed under existing conditions is proposed. The Project is not considered to contribute to a significant cumulative effect with regard to the loss of views or adverse effects on scenic resources. Impacts would be less than significant, and no mitigation measures are required.

5.7 Summary of Project Impacts and Significance and Conclusions

The Visual Analysis was prepared to provide an evaluation of potential Project impacts on existing visual resources and character of the surrounding community of Lakeside, California. The Project does not propose any physical development on the subject site; however, the Project would allow for an increase in overall height from 35 feet to 45 feet for future onsite development in order to meet current operational demands of industrial-type uses within the affected Planning Areas of the RiverWay Specific Plan area.

The Project would not result in an inconsistency with any goals, standards, or policies related to visual resources as given in the County General Plan or Lakeside Community Plan. The Project would be consistent with the County Zoning Ordinance and the RiverWay Specific Plan upon County approval of the proposed rezone and the Specific Plan Amendment. Additionally, all future development onsite would occur consistent with the RiverWay Specific Plan and Lakeside Design Guidelines, unless otherwise approved by the County, to ensure that the overall visual quality and character intended for the site is achieved, and that adverse effects on visual resources of the Lakeside community do not occur.

Due to the nature of the proposed Project, with regard to visual resources, the Project would not result in the introduction of features that would significantly detract from or contrast with the visual character of the surrounding community by conflicting with visual elements or quality of an existing area (i.e., through conflicting style, size, coverage, scale, building materials, etc.). The Project would not result in the removal of or substantial adverse change to one or more features that contribute to the valued visual character or image of the Project area, including but not limited to designated landmarks, historic resources, trees, or rock outcroppings. Furthermore, the Project would not substantially obstruct, interrupt, or detract from a valued focal and/or panoramic vista from a public road, trails within an adopted County or State trail system, scenic vista or highway, or recreational area.

For the above reasons, it was determined that the Project would not result in potentially significant impacts on visual resources in the Lakeside community. As such, impacts would be less than significant, and no mitigation measures are required or proposed.

6.0 Visual Mitigation Measures / Design Considerations

6.1 Visual Impact Analysis

The Project would not result in the introduction of features that would significantly detract from or contrast with the visual character of the Lakeside community by conflicting with visual elements or quality of an existing area. In addition, the Project would not result in the removal of or substantial adverse change of one or more features that contribute to the valued visual character or image of the Project area, including but not limited to designated landmarks, historic resources, trees, or rock outcroppings.

Furthermore, the Project would not substantially obstruct, interrupt, or detract from a valued focal and/or panoramic vista from a public road, trails within an adopted County or State trail system, scenic vista or highway, or recreational area. The Project as designed would also not result in an inconsistency with any goals, standards, or policies related to visual resources as given in the County General Plan, Lakeside Community Plan, or Lakeside Design Guidelines. Although the Project proposes a rezone to allow for an increase in building height, and therefore, would require an amendment to the RiverWay Specific Plan, the proposed increase in height, as evaluated herein, is not anticipated to adversely affect existing views from surrounding public vantage points.

Although the Project would result in a change to the visual character of the affected parcels (increased building height of 10 feet above current conditions), future development onsite would remain consistent with development intended for the affected properties, as indicated by the existing General Plan land use and zoning designations (i.e. light industrial), and would be visually compatible with other existing uses in the surrounding area which support similar structural elements or design characteristics (i.e. materials, colors, square footage, scale, massing, etc.).

Additionally, future development on the Project site by others would be required to conform to the design requirements provided in the RiverWay Specific Plan and Lakeside Design Guidelines, as applicable. Such measures are intended to ensure that development within the Project area remains consistent with that intended by the County, and compatible in nature with the existing community character of the Lakeside community. Design measures such as architectural style; setbacks; roadways design; building materials; building height, massing, and scale; streetscape, landscaping, and other such measures would reduce visibility of structural elements within the visual landscape while enhancing the existing setting.

Through this Visual Resources/Aesthetics Analysis, potential effects of the Rezone and SPA Project were evaluated against the thresholds of significance developed by the County of San Diego. The Project is considered to be compatible with the existing character of the surrounding Lakeside community and would be consistent with applicable County and community land use and design regulations with regard to visual and aesthetic resources. No significant impacts were identified with regard to visual/aesthetic resources. As such, Project impacts would be less than significant, and no mitigation measures are required or proposed.

7.0 References

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RiverWay – A Specific Plan for the Upper San Diego River Improvement Project. Brian F. Mooney Associates. Adopted May 12, 2000.

Upper San Diego River Improvement Project (USDRIP) Final Programmatic Environmental Impact Report. Certified July 2000; Revised August 2000.

8.0 Report Preparers

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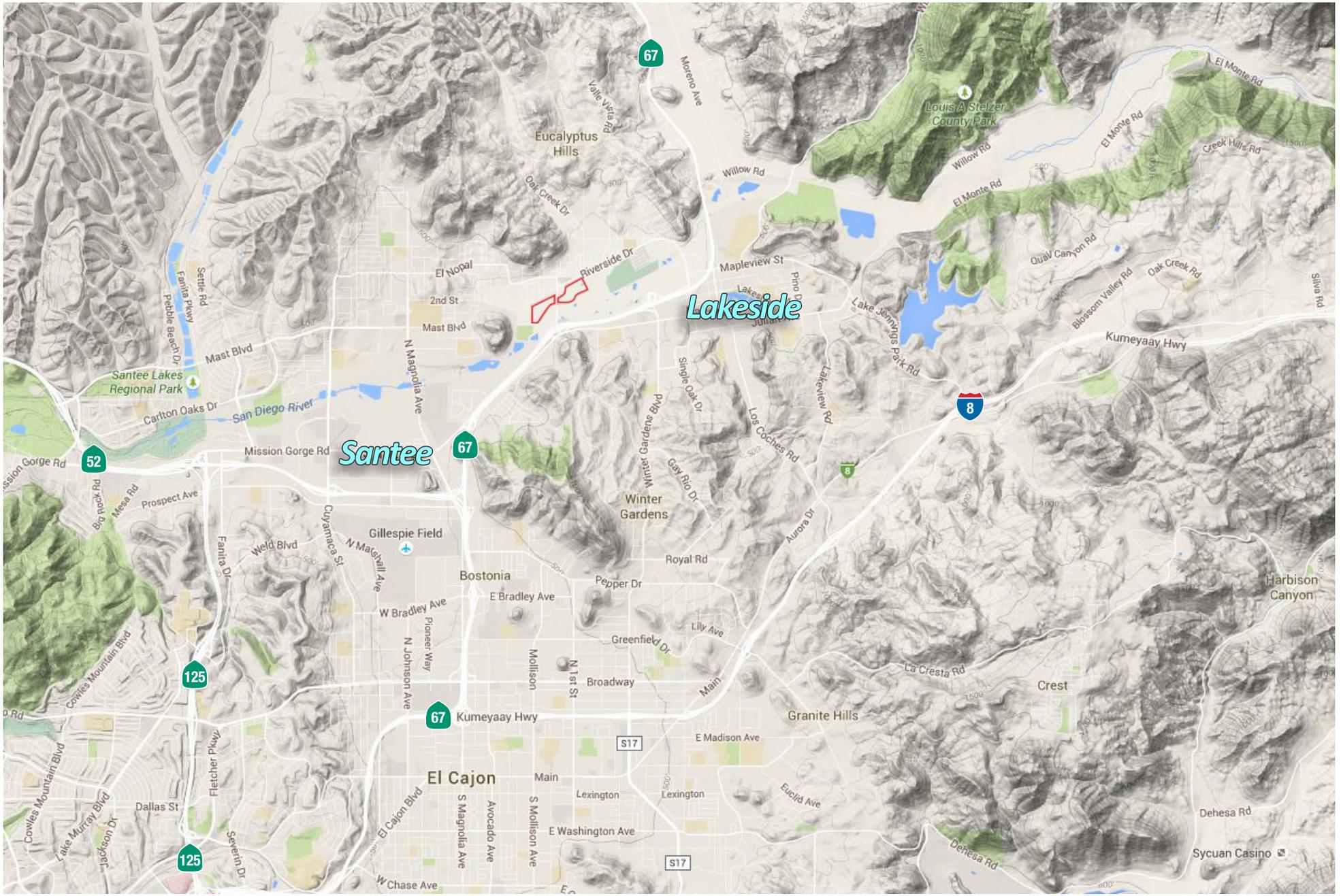
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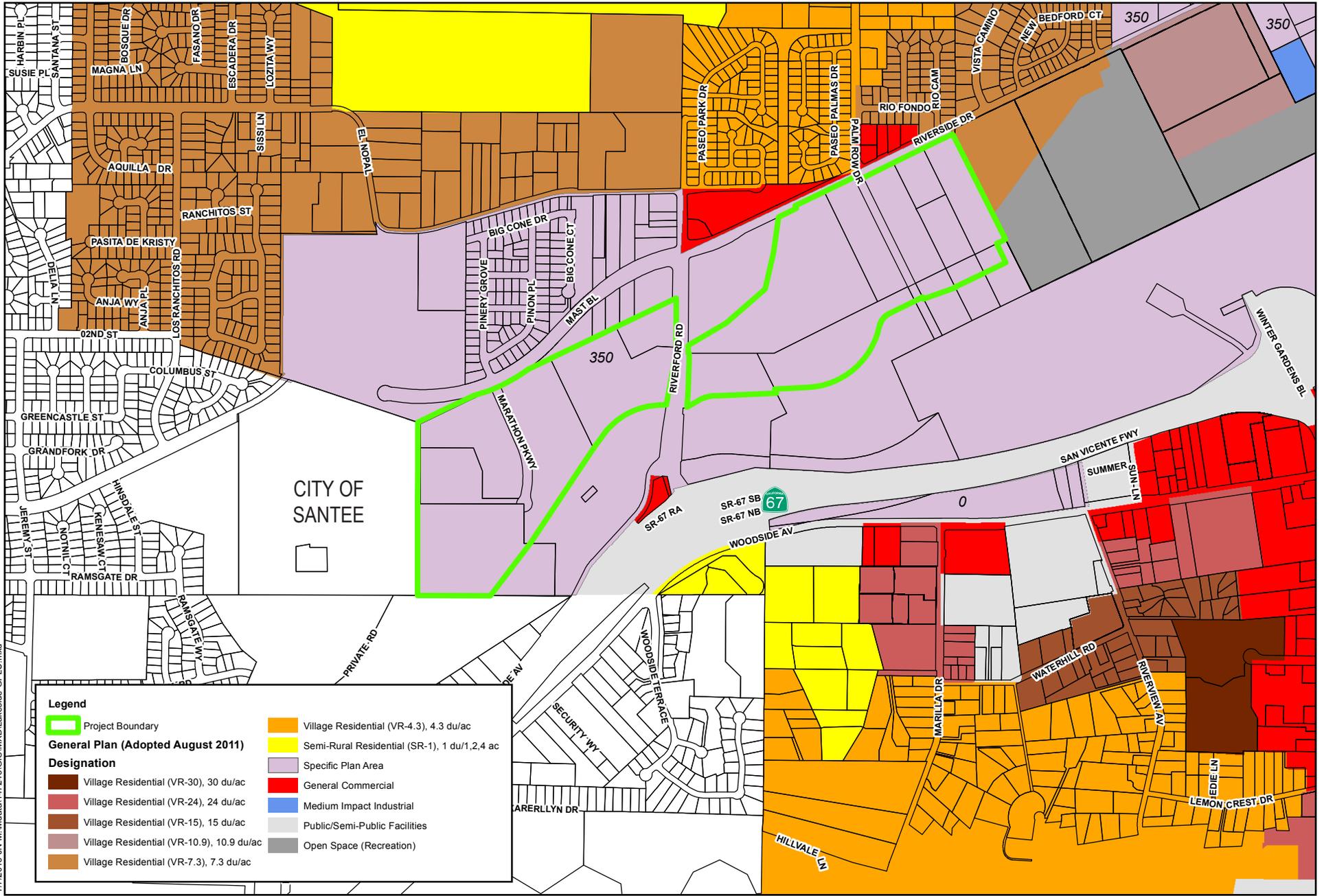




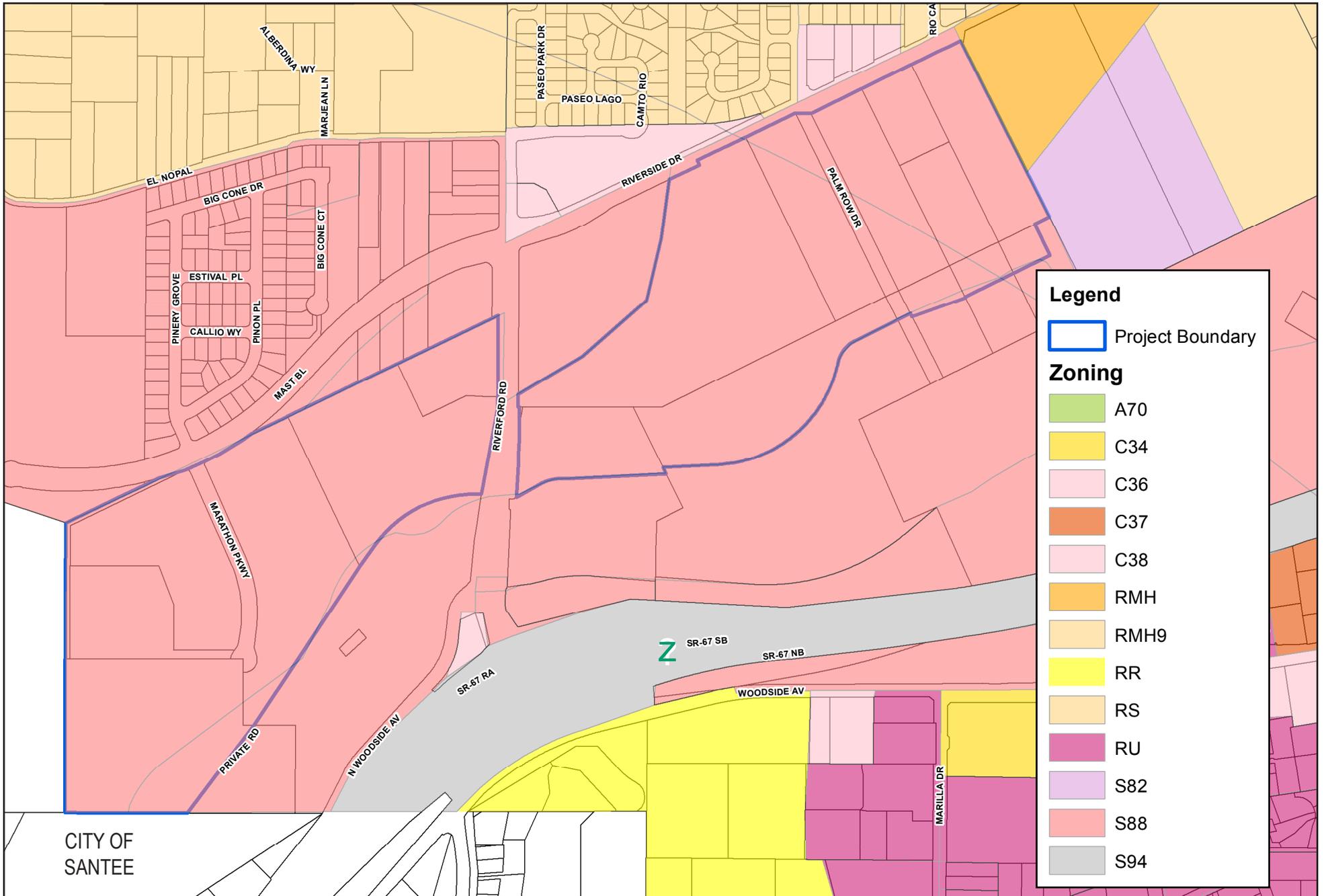
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- Project Boundary
- City Limits





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 Project Boundary

Zoning

-  A70
-  C34
-  C36
-  C37
-  C38
-  RMH
-  RMH9
-  RR
-  RS
-  RU
-  S82
-  S88
-  S94





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Photo 1: View from Mast Boulevard/Marathon Parkway looking southeast into Project site.



Photo 2: View from Marathon Parkway cul-de-sac looking southwest to existing Lakeside Baseball Park.



Photo 3: View from Marathon Parkway cul-de-sac looking west to existing onsite light industrial development.



Photo 4: View looking southeast from Riverside Drive to existing (River Run) light industrial development.



Photo 5: View looking south from Riverside Drive into Project site.



Photo 6: View from Riverford Road looking west into Project site.



Photo 7: View from Riverford Road looking east into Project site.



Photo 8: View from Riverford Road looking west into Project site.



Photo 9: View from Riverside Drive looking southeast to Project site and northeast to existing single-family residential uses



Photo 10: View from Mast Boulevard/Marathon Parkway looking north to existing single-family residential uses.



Photo 11: View from Mast Boulevard looking northeast/east to Riverford Road to existing single-family residential and commercial uses.



Photo 12: View from Riverside Drive looking south to existing mobilehome park and San Diego River Trail (trailhead), adjacent to the eastern Project boundary.



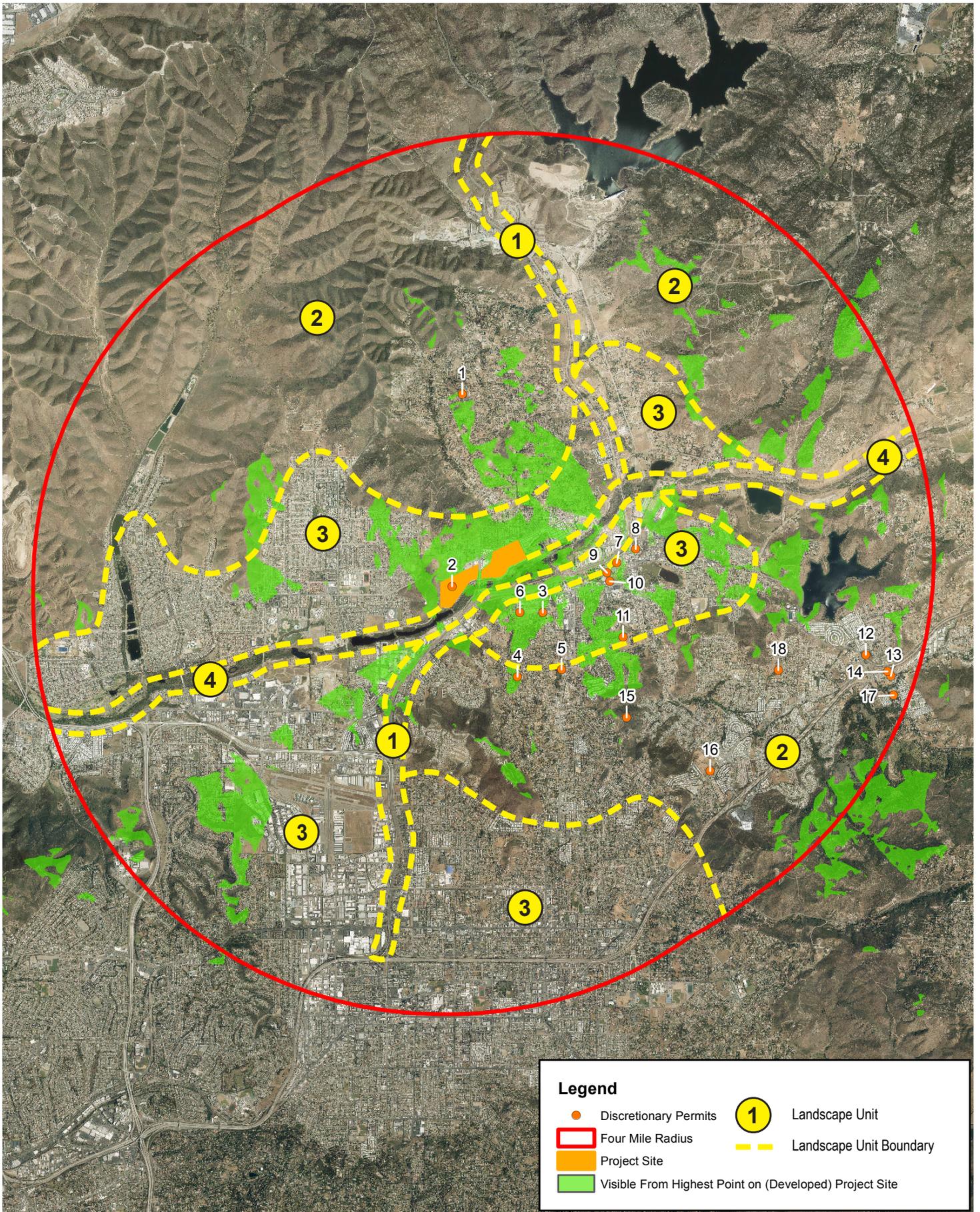
Photo 13: View from Riverside Drive looking northeast to existing educational and single-family residential uses.



Photo 14: View from Palm Row Drive/Riverside Drive looking northeast to existing commercial uses.



Photo 15: View from Riverside Drive/San Diego River Trailhead, adjacent to southern boundary of Project site (east of Riverford Road).



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- Discretionary Permits
- Four Mile Radius
- Project Site
- 1 Landscape Unit
- Landscape Unit Boundary
- Visible From Highest Point on (Developed) Project Site



Source: SanGIS, Eagle Aerial - 2013



Existing view looking west/southwest from San Diego River Trail (located just south of eastern portion of site).



Proposed view looking west/southwest from San Diego River Trail (located just south of eastern portion of site).



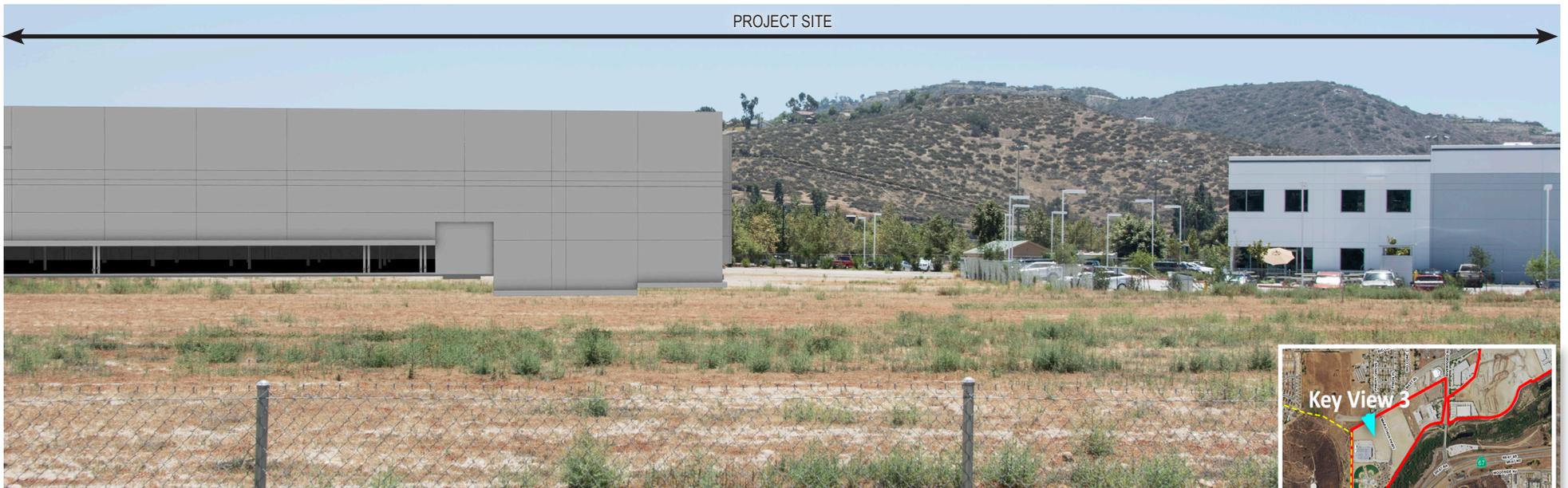
Existing view looking south from Riverford Road (just north of Mast Boulevard/Riverside Drive).



Proposed view looking south from Riverford Road (just north of Mast Boulevard/Riverside Drive).



Existing view looking south from Mast Boulevard (just west of Marathon Parkway) into Project site.



Proposed view looking south from Mast Boulevard (just west of Marathon Parkway) into Project site.



Existing view looking north from Riverford Road just south of North Woodside Avenue.



Proposed view looking north from Riverford Road just south of North Woodside Avenue.



Existing view looking west/northwest to the Project site from westbound SR 67.



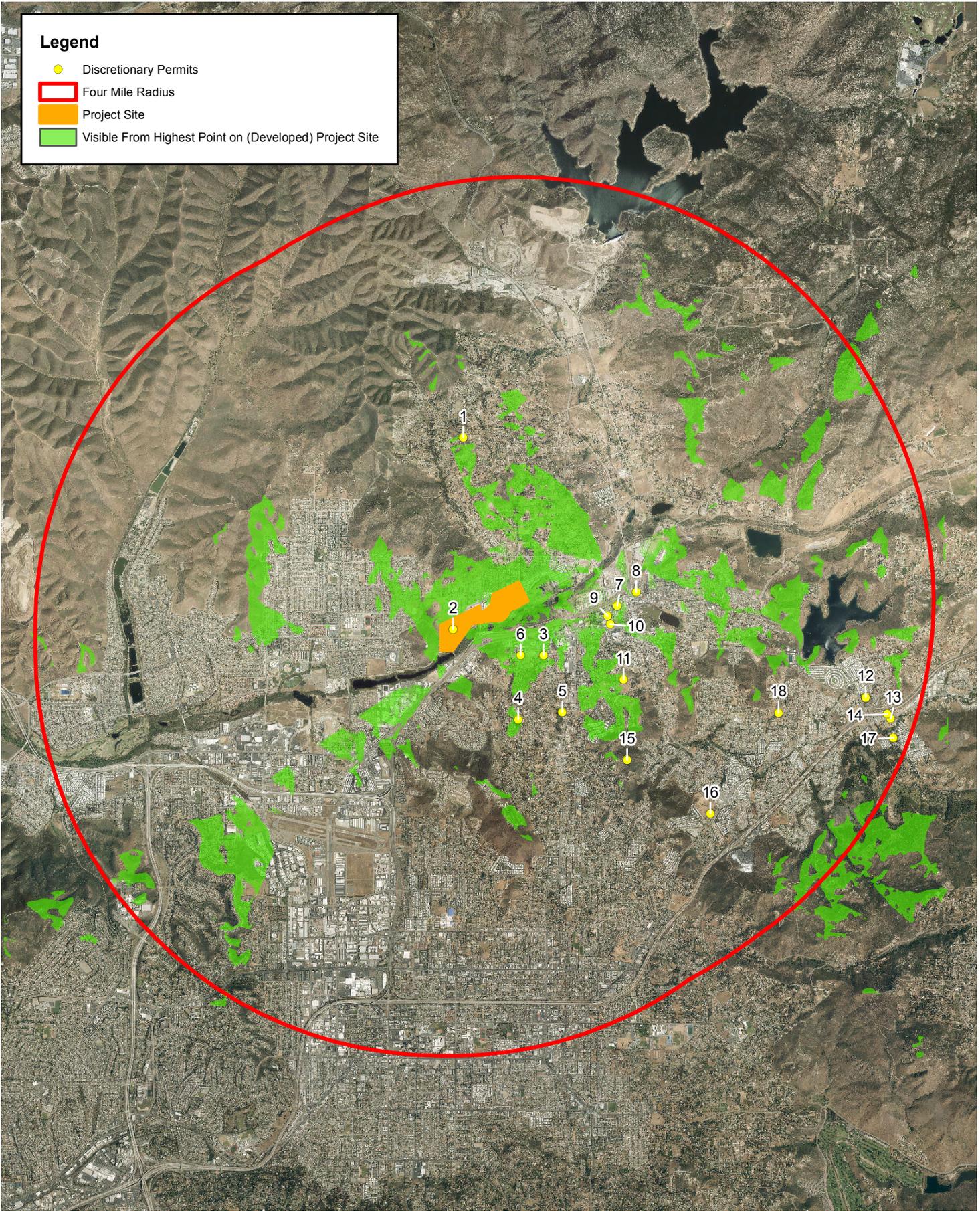
Proposed view looking west/northwest to the Project site from westbound SR 67.



Existing view looking east/northeast to the Project site from eastbound SR 67.

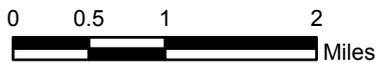


Proposed view looking east/northeast to the Project site from eastbound SR 67.



Legend

- Discretionary Permits
- Four Mile Radius
- Project Site
- Visible From Highest Point on (Developed) Project Site



Source: SanGIS, Eagle Aerial - 2013

APPENDIX A

Project Conformance with Applicable Plans

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RiverWay Planning Areas 8 & 9 Rezone and Specific Plan Amendment Project Conformance with Applicable Plans

County of San Diego General Plan

The County of San Diego General Plan (adopted August 3, 2011) is intended to provide guidance for the long-term development of San Diego County. The General Plan includes various Elements that provide guidance for accommodating future growth while retaining or enhancing the County's rural character, its economy, its environmental resources, and its unique communities. Goals, policies and objectives are provided within each of the Elements to guide future land development and ensure consistency with the County's intended vision for the future of San Diego County. The Guiding Principles of the General Plan are to:

- ∞ Support a reasonable share of projected regional population growth;
- ∞ Promote health and sustainability by locating new growth near existing and planned infrastructure, services, and jobs in a compact pattern of development;
- ∞ Reinforce the vitality, local economy, and individual character of existing communities when planning new housing, employment, and recreational opportunities;
- ∞ Promote environmental stewardship that protects the range of natural resources and habitats that uniquely define the County's character and ecological importance;
- ∞ Ensure that development accounts for physical constraints and the natural hazards of the land;
- ∞ Provide and support a multi-modal transportation network that enhances connectivity and supports community development patterns and, when appropriate, plan for development which supports public transportation;
- ∞ Maintain environmentally sustainable communities and reduce greenhouse gas emissions that contribute to climate change;
- ∞ Preserve agriculture as an integral component of the region's economy, character, and open space network;
- ∞ Minimize public costs of infrastructure and services and correlate their timing with new development; and,
- ∞ Recognize community and stakeholder interests while striving for consensus.

Chapter 3 - Land Use Element

Planning for Sustainability

Policies

- ∞ **LU-6.9 Development Conformance with Topography.** Require development to conform to the natural topography to limit grading; incorporate and not significantly alter the dominant physical characteristics of a site; and, to utilize natural drainage and topography in conveying storm water to the maximum extent practicable.

The Project does not propose any physical development onsite, and therefore, no land disturbance would occur. The majority of the Project site has been previously graded and is therefore relatively flat. As future development is proposed on individual lots, site-specific grading would be required to accommodate structures and associated infrastructure improvements; however, it is anticipated that only limited grading would be required to accommodate such development. Therefore, the topography of the site would largely remain in its current state.

Although future development would be evaluated at the time when development is proposed in the future, it is not anticipated that a significant increase in storm water runoff or treatment needs from the areas affected development would occur. Storm water runoff from the site in areas where facilities would be installed, as appropriate, would remain generally unchanged following construction, due to applicable local and State storm water regulations. It is anticipated that storm water runoff and treatment for future development would be adequately handled through the implementation of onsite best management practices (BMPs) and/or other design measures, and that such development would not result in or require significant changes to existing offsite storm drain facilities.

Villages and Town Centers

Policies

- ∞ **LU-9.3 Village and Community Core Guidelines and Regulations.** Support the development and implementation of design guidelines, Village-specific regulations for roads, parking, and noise, and other planning and regulatory mechanisms that recognize the unique operations and character of Villages, Town Centers, and transportation nodes. Ensure that new development be compatible with the overall scale and character of established neighborhoods.

The Project site currently has a County Regional Category designation of Village. The County General Plan Land Use designation of Specific Plan (S88) also applies to the subject property.

The Project would result in a rezone to allow for an increase in building height for future development onsite. No other change to existing design regulations that govern the type and/or character of development onsite are proposed. Therefore, all other aspects of design would remain the same as that which apply under the current zoning regulations.

No physical development is proposed with the Project; however, all future development within RiverWay Planning Areas 8 & 9 would be subject to the County General Plan, Lakeside Community Plan, Lakeside Design Guidelines, and RiverWay Specific Plan, as applicable. As appropriate, future development onsite would be required to conform to applicable design measures identified to ensure compatibility with the scale and character of surrounding land uses, as well as to ensure that overall use and character of the affected site as intended by the County is indeed achieved over the long-term.

Commercial, Office, and Industrial Development

Goal LU-11

- ∞ **Commercial, Office, and Industrial Development.** Commercial, office, and industrial development that is appropriately sited and designed to enhance the unique character of each unincorporated community and to minimize vehicle trip lengths.

Policies

- ∞ **LU-11.1 Location and Connectivity.** Locate commercial, office, and industrial development in Village areas with high connectivity and accessibility from surrounding residential neighborhoods, whenever feasible.

The Project applies to Planning Areas 8 & 9 of the RiverWay Specific Plan area. The Specific Plan provides measures for future implementation of the Upper San Diego River Improvement Project (USDRIP), of which the Project site is a part. The RiverWay Specific Plan “envisions a high quality industrial and business park bordered on the west by residential uses that provide housing for industrial tenants, and a transition to buffer existing residential areas. Development as proposed is intended to accomplish land use, flood control, native habitat, and recreational goals in a manner which benefits the entire Lakeside community, as well as property owners within the project.” Additionally, the RiverWay Specific Plan identifies the area as representing “a significant opportunity to create both a community amenity and a marketing focus which will set RiverWay apart as a highly desired “address” for new industrial growth within east San Diego County.”

Although the Project does not propose physical development, future development of the site with light industrial/business park uses would be consistent with land uses intended for the property by the County. The Project would not result in a change in allowed land use on the

subject site, and is rather intended to attract new light industrial type uses to locate on the property. Similar existing light industrial/business park uses are currently present onsite as well as on adjoining lands. Additionally, both single-family and multi-family uses are currently located on lands in the vicinity of the subject property, and are accessible from the Project site via existing area infrastructure (i.e. roadways, sidewalks, etc.).

- ⌘ **LU-11.2 Compatibility with Community Character.** Require that commercial, office, and industrial development be located, scaled, and designed to be compatible with the unique character of the community.
- ⌘ **LU-11.11 Industrial Compatibility with Adjoining Uses.** Require industrial land uses with outdoor activities or storage to provide a buffer from adjacent incompatible land uses (refer to Policy LU-11.9 for examples of buffering).

Refer to Responses LU-9.3 and LU-11.1, above.

It is unknown at this time whether any businesses that would require outdoor activities or storage would locate on the site; however, if such conditions were to occur with future development of the Project site, a subsequent discretionary permit would analyze and ensure adequate buffers be provided, as appropriate (i.e. adjacent to residential neighborhoods) and consistent with the RiverWay Specific Plan and Lakeside Design Guidelines to ensure that any adverse effects on sensitive land uses are minimized to the extent feasible. All future development would be subject to design review to ensure that such buffers are adequately provided and appropriately located. Additionally, as proposed, rezoning of the Project site would change the existing height designator that currently applies to the twenty-three parcels from a G-Designator (35 feet, two story maximum) to an M-Designator (45 feet, no story limit). Additionally, the succeeding 50 feet from all front yard centerline setbacks shall have a 35-foot maximum height buffer. All development located outside of the 50-foot buffer would be subject to the “M” height designator. Such measures are intended to ensure that future development onsite is appropriately located, scaled, and designed to achieve compatibility with adjoining land uses and to respect the existing character of the surrounding community.

Chapter 5 – Conservation and Open Space Element

Visual Resources

Goal COS-11

- ⌘ **Preservation of Scenic Resources.** Preservation of scenic resources, including vistas of important natural and unique features, where visual impacts of development are minimized.

The site does not support any designated scenic vistas. No other natural or unique features of scenic value are found onsite, as the affected lands have been previously graded and are therefore highly disturbed.

State Route 67 (SR 67) is a designated County Scenic Roadway and trends generally east-west in the vicinity of the Project site. The road is located approximately 0.1 mile to the south of the site and affords potential views looking north to the subject property; however, the visibility of the Project site within the visual landscape is influenced by intervening vegetation and development, elevational differences between the road and the site, travel speed, and angle of the view). The increase in allowable structural height (10 feet above existing conditions) proposed with the Project would not substantially or adversely affect any scenic resources, including scenic vistas, as the change in visual conditions onsite would generally not be perceivable by travelers along this roadway. Additionally, all future development onsite would be subject to community design review to ensure that any potential adverse effects on existing scenic views are avoided and/or reduced to the extent feasible.

Policies

- ⌘ **COS-11.1 Protection of Scenic Resources.** Require the protection of scenic highways, corridors, regionally significant scenic vistas, and natural features, including prominent ridgelines, dominant landforms, reservoirs, and scenic landscapes.
- ⌘ **COS-11.2 Scenic Resource Connections.** Promote the connection of regionally significant natural features, designated historic landmarks, and points of regional historic, visual, and cultural interest via designated scenic corridors, such as scenic highways and regional trails.

No regionally significant vistas, prominent ridgelines, dominant landforms, or reservoirs are present on the Project site or on immediately adjacent lands; however, the hillsides that surround the community on outlying lands define the valley and contribute to the overall visual character of Lakeside. No regionally significant natural features, designated historic landmarks, or points of regional historic or cultural interest occur onsite or in the immediate Project vicinity. The Project as proposed is not anticipated to adversely affect any such resources.

As stated above, SR 67 lies to the south of the Project site and is designated as a County Scenic Roadway. As evaluated in the Visual Resources/Aesthetics Analysis prepared for the proposed Project, the Project (rezone and SPA to allow for an increase of 10 feet in building height) is not anticipated to significantly affect views from this roadway due to distance, degree of visual change that would occur, travel speeds, intervening development and vegetation, and viewing angle. Additionally, all future development onsite would occur consistent with the RiverWay Specific Plan, Lakeside Design Guidelines, and other relevant plans and development regulations, as applicable, to ensure that development does not adversely affect existing views from this roadway.

Portions of the Project site are located adjacent to the San Diego River Trail, located to the south of the subject property. Future development within this area of the site would be required to observe applicable setback requirements in order to distance development from the resource (as well as to reduce potential hazards relative to wildfire occurrence). Views into the site of future development from the Trail would be further reduced by intervening development and vegetation/landscaping. No adverse environmental or visual effects on this resource would occur with the Project as proposed. Additionally, all future development onsite would be evaluated for potential impacts and consistent with applicable plans and regulations.

80 **COS-11.3 Development Siting and Design.** Require development within visually sensitive areas to minimize visual impacts and to preserve unique or special visual features, particularly in rural areas, through the following:

- o Creative site planning;
- o Integration of natural features into the project;
- o Appropriate scale, materials, and design to complement the surrounding natural landscape;
- o Minimal disturbance of topography;
- o Clustering of development so as to preserve a balance of open space vistas, natural features, and community character; and,
- o Creation of contiguous open space networks.

The Project would not result in physical development on the site. No unique or special visual features are present on the property that would be affected by Project implementation.

The RiverWay Specific Plan and Lakeside Design Guidelines identify specific measures to address site planning; preservation of natural resources; setbacks; use of building materials; architectural design; grading; and, appropriate building size, scale, massing, and other design features. Additionally, as stated above, rezoning of the Project site would change the existing height designator that currently applies to the twenty-three parcels from a G-Designator (35 feet, two story maximum) to an M-Designator (45 feet, no story limit). Additionally, the succeeding 50 feet from all front yard centerline setbacks shall have a 35-foot maximum height buffer. All development located outside of the 50-foot buffer would be subject to the “M” height designator. Such measures are intended to ensure that future development on a particular site is properly sited and designed to minimize potential conflicts with existing uses and the visual character of the surrounding area. All future development onsite would be subject to design review to ensure that the overall appearance intended for the RiverWay Specific Plan area is achieved and that such development remains compatible with surrounding uses and the existing character of the Lakeside community.

GOAL COS-13

Dark Skies

- ∞ Preserved dark skies that contribute to rural character and are necessary for the local observatories.

Policies

- ∞ **COS-13.1 Restrict Light and Glare.** Restrict outdoor light and glare from development projects in Semi-Rural and Rural Lands and designated rural communities to retain the quality of night skies by minimizing light pollution.
- ∞ **COS-13.2 Palomar and Mount Laguna.** Minimize, to the maximum extent feasible, the impact of development on the dark skies surrounding Palomar and Mount Laguna observatories to maintain dark skies which are vital to these two world-class observatories by restricting exterior light sources within the impact areas of the observatories.
- ∞ **COS-13.3 Collaboration to Retain Night Skies.** Coordinate with adjacent Federal and State agencies, local jurisdictions, and tribal governments to retain the quality of night skies by minimizing light pollution.

The proposed Project would not result in any physical development onsite. As such, no nighttime lighting would be installed, and no structures would incorporate building materials (i.e. reflective glass, metal, etc.) that would have the potential to result in a substantial increase in glare, or that would produce reflective light that would create adverse disability or discomfort glare.

All lighting installed with future onsite development would conform to County of San Diego outdoor lighting requirements to avoid negative effects on viewing capacity at the County's two observatories and to maintain the County's dark skies for the long-term. Additionally, all lighting and would be shielded and directed downward to minimize the potential for glare or spillover onto adjacent ownerships or open space areas. All exterior lighting and use of building materials use in future construction onsite would be installed in conformance with the design measures given in the RiverWay Specific Plan and Lakeside Design Guidelines.

2. LAND USE

VILLAGE/RURAL VILLAGE BOUNDARIES

Commercial Goal

- ∞ Provide for the orderly growth of well-designed and located commercial areas that are necessary and convenient for shopping needs and compatible with the character of the community.

The Project site is intended for light industrial/business park type uses by the County. Future development of the site as part of the USDRIP and consistent with that identified in the RiverWay Specific Plan is appropriate. Lands surrounding the Project site presently support a mixture of commercial uses and businesses that are accessible by area residents within the Project vicinity.

All future development onsite would be required to conform to design measures provided in the RiverWay Specific Plan and the Lakeside Design Guidelines, as applicable, and would be subject to community design review to ensure that the intended architectural style is achieved, and that such uses are compatible with the existing character of the community.

POLICIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- ∞ 4. Encourage commercial activities that would not interfere either functionally or visually with adjacent land uses or the rural atmosphere of the community.
- ∞ 15. Require commercial and industrial land uses to minimize adverse impacts, such as noise, light, traffic congestion, odors, dust, etc.

As stated above, the Project site is intended for light industrial/business park uses. The site is located in an urban-type setting and currently supports several light industrial type uses. Similar land uses are also present on adjacent offsite lands to the north of the site to the east and west of Riverford Road. Additionally, a variety of commercial uses and businesses are also present on lands surrounding the Project site that presently serve the community.

All future development onsite would be subject to community design review for conformance with the RiverWay Specific Plan and Lakeside Design Guidelines, as well as County processing requirements, to ensure that potential visual and environmental impacts (i.e. noise, air quality, lighting effects, traffic generation, etc.) are evaluated on a project-specific basis, as appropriate, and avoided or minimized through implementation of design measures and/or mitigation.

- ☞ 16. Diligently enforce the landscaping requirements for commercial structures and parking areas.
- ☞ 17. Require landscaping of all future commercial structures and parking areas to assure visually attractive commercial developments.

As stated previously, all future development occurring onsite would be required to conform to design measures provided in the RiverWay Specific Plan and the Lakeside Design Guidelines. Landscaping would be installed with future onsite land uses for purposes of visual enhancement, as well as to screen potential views into the site from offsite public vantage points, as appropriate. Similarly, future parking areas constructed in support of such uses would be required to conform to applicable parking standards, and may include installation of interior and perimeter landscaping, visual screening, and/or other design requirements, as given in the Specific Plan and Lakeside Design Guidelines to ensure that visual effects of such areas are reduced and/or minimized within the visual landscape.

Industrial Goal

- ☞ Provide for the kind of industrial development that does not detract from the existing rural character of the community.

POLICIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- ☞ 1. Industrial development should be clean, non-polluting, and complementary to Lakeside's rural environment.
- ☞ 2. Provide for the kind of industrial development that will expand the tax base, while not triggering significant population growth.
- ☞ 3. Allow existing industries to remain and expand in Lakeside.
- ☞ 4. Encourage new and existing industrial facilities to blend with their surroundings by utilizing harmonious architectural design, undergrounding utilities, landscaping, and a high standard of maintenance.

Planned land uses for Planning Areas 8 & 9 include light industrial/business park uses that are anticipated to be clean and non-polluting, as opposed to heavy industrial type uses. Future development of the site would occur consistent with those land uses allowed by the RiverWay Specific Plan for the affected land areas. Additionally, the RiverWay Specific Plan identifies the area as representing “a significant opportunity to create both a community amenity and a marketing focus which will set RiverWay apart as a highly desired “address” for new industrial growth within east San Diego County.” Existing light industrial and recreational uses onsite would remain with Project implementation. All development onsite would be subject to community design review and would be designed in conformance with design guidelines provided in the RiverWay Specific Plan and the Lakeside Design Guidelines, as applicable.

- ⌘ 6. Prohibit new industrial operations from locating in existing non-industrial facilities or on small parcels outside of areas designated for industrial usage through vigorous enforcement of existing codes.
- ⌘ 7. Locate industrial operations only where they will be compatible with surrounding land uses, accessible to major transportation facilities, and capable of being served with all necessary utilities.
- ⌘ 8. Provide for a concentration of industrial uses in attractive, well-designed industrial developments.
- ⌘ 10. Ensure that a concentration of limited impact industrial and commercial uses is provided for during the formulation and implementation of the San Diego River Plan.

Refer to the above response. Future development of the site with light industrial uses would be appropriate and consistent with the County's intended use of the site. Similar uses are present onsite and in the surrounding area and are compatible with adjacent residential and commercial uses. Ultimate buildout of the RiverWay Specific Plan area would support the intent to concentrate industrial uses having a limited impact in certain areas of the community where adequate transportation facilities and necessary utilities are available.

- ⌘ 11. Require adequate landscaping to screen unsightly industrial uses from surrounding properties and roadways through the use of the "D" Design Special Area Designator.

All future development onsite would be subject to community design review. Landscaping would be installed consistent with design requirements of the RiverWay Specific Plan and Lakeside Design Guidelines. Future onsite development is intended to be designed with sensitivity for the character of the surrounding area and to minimize any adverse visual effects on surrounding properties. As such, development is not anticipated to result in unsightly uses that would detract from or degrade the existing visual setting.

- ⌘ 12. Industrial development that detracts from the rural character of Lakeside shall not be approved.

Refer to the above response. The Project site is located within a highly developed portion of Lakeside that is generally urban in nature. Future development onsite would occur in compliance with the RiverWay Specific Plan which is intended to ensure that land uses do not adversely affect the existing character of the Lakeside community. Design measures provided in the Specific Plan and Lakeside Design Guidelines would be implemented to reduce potential effects on the existing visual setting.

*RIVERWAY SPECIFIC PLAN/UPPER SAN DIEGO RIVER IMPROVEMENT PROJECT
SPA*

The RiverWay Specific Planning Area, through adoption of the RiverWay Specific Plan, will implement the Redevelopment Goals by allowing the following land uses:

1. Mixture of residential uses with an overall density not to exceed 0.99 dwellings units/acre.
2. Public facilities, including but not limited to flood control structures and other required improvements to the San Diego River Channel.
3. Open space and recreational uses that are found to be compatible with the environmental resources identified in the required environmental review.
4. Commercial and industrial uses that contribute to the economic viability of the redevelopment project and conform to Lakeside Design Guidelines.

The RiverWay Specific Plan shall include design criteria directed at meeting the objectives of the Redevelopment and Community Plans. The RiverWay Specific Plan shall also address the transition of existing land use to those envisioned/allowed by the Redevelopment Plan.

The Project would not result in physical development on the site. The Project proposes a rezone of the affected parcels to change the current building height designator in order to allow for an increase in building height for future onsite development. The proposed increase in building height would allow for future light industrial-type development that would better meet current industry demands for structural height in order to accommodate typical daily operations and storage needs generated by such uses. As such, the proposed rezone would allow for future development in support of the community's identified Redevelopment Goals.

3. CIRCULATION

Goal

- ∞ MEET THE PRESENT AND FUTURE NEED FOR MOVING PEOPLE AND GOODS WITH A BALANCED TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM THAT PERPETUATES LAKESIDE'S RURAL ATMOSPHERE.

POLICIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- ∞ 10. Discourage visual pollution along all public roadways by creating and periodically reviewing sign, landscaping, architecture, and utility standards in the Zoning Ordinance.

All future signage, landscaping, architectural design, and infrastructure improvements on the Project site would be designed in conformance with applicable plans, policies, and regulations (i.e. RiverWay Specific Plan and Lakeside Design Guidelines) to ensure a quality visual environment consistent with the intended character of the RiverWay Specific Plan area. All such development onsite would be subject to community design review to ensure that the potential for "visual pollution" is minimized or avoided.

6. CONSERVATION

Environmental Goal

- ☞ PROVIDE A DESIRABLE, HEALTHY, AND COMFORTABLE ENVIRONMENT FOR LIVING, WHILE PRESERVING LAKESIDE'S RURAL ATMOSPHERE AND UNIQUE RESOURCES.

POLICIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- ☞ 2. Preserve the best natural features of the area in their natural state and avoid the creation of a totally urbanized landscape.
- ☞ 4. Ensure that land uses within or adjacent to recreational, natural preserve, agricultural, or industrial areas are compatible with those areas.
- ☞ 7. Minimize visual pollution by creating and periodically reviewing sign, landscaping, architecture, and utility standards.
- ☞ 9. Encourage the preservation of mature trees on public and private property, and require equitable replacement of those removed.

The site has been previously graded and is generally devoid of vegetation. No mature stands of trees are present onsite as part of the natural landscape. No hillsides, steep slopes, or other similar features are present onsite. Additionally, as the site is generally flat, minor grading is anticipated to be required to accommodate future development and would therefore not substantially change the existing site topography. As such, future development is not anticipated to disturb significant natural features found onsite.

As stated above, all future signage, landscaping, architectural design, and infrastructure improvements on the Project site would be designed in conformance with applicable plans, policies, and regulations to ensure a quality visual environment consistent with the intended character, and would be subject to design review. Additionally, development setbacks from adjacent areas where sensitive natural resources are present (i.e. San Diego River corridor) would be observed to minimize potential adverse visual and environmental effects and to ensure compatibility of uses.

Lakeside Design Guidelines

All industrial development within the Lakeside community is subject to design review. The County's Department of Planning and Development Services (DPS) administers design review as part of the development review process, and the Lakeside Design Review Board (appointed by the County Board of Supervisors) is responsible for evaluating proposed development projects. The Design Review Board acts as an advisory board to County authorities, including

the Director of DPS, Planning and Environmental Review Board, Zoning Administrator, Planning Commission, and County Board of Supervisors. All such authorities may participate in decision-making on proposed development.

All future development within the Project area would be subject to the Design Review process to evaluate conformance with the Lakeside Design Guidelines on a project-specific basis, once a development application is submitted. In instances where conflicts may occur between the RiverWay Specific Plan and the Lakeside Design Guidelines, the RiverWay Specific Plan would take precedence in guiding how such development would be designed.

The following provides a brief outline of the design elements addressed within the Lakeside Design Guidelines. Refer to the Lakeside Design Guidelines for a detailed discussion of the design measures.

PART 2. COMMUNITY DESIGN OBJECTIVES

1. Protect the character of the existing natural setting by preserving important natural features, land forms, and historic sites.
5. Preserve and enhance the quality of scenic roads throughout the Community Planning Area.
6. Carefully integrate new industrial development with the existing landscape, and minimize its visual impact on the community's residential neighborhoods and scenic resources.

PART 3. THE DESIGN GUIDELINES

A. General Guidelines Applicable to All Development Projects

- A1. Site Design Process
- A2. Preservation of Significant Trees
- A3. Old and New Design Relationships
- A4. Architectural Character
- A5. Landscape Character
- A6. Design for Climate and Energy Conservation
- A7. Signage
- A8. Site Lighting
- A9. Building Equipment and Services
- A10. Preservation of Historic Buildings

B. Guidelines by Development Type and Area

- B4. Industrial Development
 1. Site Planning

2. Architecture
3. Screening
4. Planting

RiverWay – A Specific Plan for the Upper San Diego River Improvement Project (USDRIP)

The RiverWay Specific Plan for the Upper San Diego River Improvement Project (USDRIP) applies to an approximately 592 acres located along the Upper San Diego River corridor within the community of Lakeside. The project, also referred to as RiverWay, proposes future development consisting of a mixture of residential, commercial, and industrial uses, combined with flood control measures, recreational uses, and infrastructure improvements.

III. Land Use Plan

1. Community Character

Goal

- ☞ Foster development which will preserve a rural atmosphere and enhance a sense of spaciousness.

Objectives

- ☞ Site development plans, architecture, and landscaping shall conform to the Lakeside Design Guidelines as well as the requirements of this Specific Plan.
- ☞ Review and approval of development plans should consider the natural and manmade setting of the Project Area and its surroundings, and such plans should be compatible with this setting.

The RiverWay Specific Plan has been adopted by the County to guide development of the Project site in order to achieve the overall appearance and character intended. The Project as proposed would not result in any physical development, and the increase in building height of 10 feet over that allowed under existing conditions would not adversely affect any sense of a rural atmosphere or sense of spaciousness. The Project site is located within an area of Lakeside that is developed and generally urban in nature.

All development plans, architecture, and landscaping for future development onsite would be designed to conform to the Lakeside Design Guidelines, as well as the requirements of the RiverWay Specific Plan. All future development would be evaluated at the time when project-specific designs are prepared to assess potential effects on the natural environment, as well as the visual setting, to ensure compatibility with the existing surroundings and the visual

character of the setting. As appropriate, additional design and/or mitigation measures may be required to minimize potential effects of such development.

2. Industrial Development

Goal

- ∞ Provide for the kind of industrial development that does not detract from the existing rural character of the community.

As stated above, the Project site is intended for light industrial/business park type uses. The site is located in an urban-type setting and currently supports several light industrial type uses. Similar land uses are also present on adjacent offsite lands to the north of the site to the east and west of Riverford Road. Additionally, a variety of commercial uses and businesses are also present on lands surrounding the Project site that presently serve the community.

All future development onsite would be subject to community design review for conformance with the RiverWay Specific Plan and Lakeside Design Guidelines, as well as County processing requirements, to ensure that potential impacts on the existing character of the community and/or significant visual resources are reduced to the extent feasible.

Objectives

- ∞ Carefully integrate new industrial development with the existing landscape and minimize its visual impact on the community's residential neighborhoods and scenic resources.
- ∞ Permit the continuation and expansion of existing industrial and extractive uses, subject to compliance with the Lakeside Design Guidelines, while encouraging and facilitating development to conform to development standards of this Specific Plan.
- ∞ Preserve industrially-designated areas primarily for manufacturing and distribution, with incidental office and sales facilities, and for business/office parks; rather than for retail sales or other commercial uses.

The Project applies to Planning Areas 8 & 9 of the RiverWay Specific Plan area. The RiverWay Specific Plan provides measures for future implementation of the USDRIP, of which the Project site is a part. The RiverWay Specific Plan “envisions a high quality industrial and business park bordered on the west by residential uses that provide housing for industrial tenants, and a transition to buffer existing residential areas. Development as proposed is intended to accomplish land use, flood control, native habitat, and recreational goals in a manner which benefits the entire Lakeside community, as well as property owners within the project.” Additionally, the RiverWay Specific Plan identifies the area as representing “a significant opportunity to create both a community amenity and a marketing focus which will set RiverWay apart as a highly desired “address” for new industrial growth within east San Diego County.” As such, the development of the site with light industrial uses is appropriate and consistent with the intent of the RiverWay Specific Plan and USDRIP.

Although the Project does not propose physical development, future development of the site with light industrial/business park uses would be consistent with land uses intended for the property by the County. The Project would not result in a change in allowed land use on the subject site, and is rather intended to attract new light industrial type uses to locate on the property. Similar existing light industrial/business park uses are currently present onsite as well as on adjoining lands.

- ⌘ Require that new development within a "Planning Area" designated for industrial use be designed to establish, or conform to existing, landscape, wall, and street layout, so that visually and functionally compatible redevelopment occurs within each Planning Area.

The RiverWay Specific Plan provides specific development regulations for each of the Planning Areas defined within the boundaries of the Specific Plan area. Design measures are provided in the Specific Plan to address landscaping, walls, and circulation, among other design features, as appropriate to the individual Planning Areas in order to ensure overall consistency and quality of visual elements within the landscape over the long-term.

3. *Commercial Development*

Goal

- ⌘ Provide for the orderly growth of well-designed and located commercial areas which are necessary and convenient for the shopping needs and compatible with the character of the community.
- ⌘ Require comprehensive site, architectural, and landscape design for all "Planning Areas" designated for commercial use on the Specific Plan.

As stated previously, the RiverWay Specific Plan identifies the USDRIP as an area representing "a significant opportunity to create both a community amenity and a marketing focus which will set RiverWay apart as a highly desired "address" for new industrial growth within east San Diego County." The RiverWay Specific Plan is intended to guide future growth within the affected area to ensure overall visual quality and consistency with the surrounding community character, and provides design measures specific to development of each Planning Area within its boundaries.

The Project proposes a rezone of the affected parcels to change the current building height designator in order to allow for an increase in building height for future onsite development. The proposed increase in building height would allow for future light industrial-type development that would better meet current industry demands for structural height in order to accommodate typical daily operations and storage needs generated by such uses. An amendment to the RiverWay Specific Plan would be required to reflect the proposed rezone; however, no other change in allowed land use or design regulations, or that apply to the site under current conditions are proposed with the Project.

D. Planning Area Regulations

The Specific Plan provides specific regulations for each of the individual Planning Areas. These regulations specify applicable Land Use regulations, Design Guidelines, and Zoning for each of the Planning Areas within RiverWay. Permitted land uses within the SPA are required to conform to such measures, which may differ from conventional Use Regulations of the County's Zoning Ordinance. The S88 Specific Planning Area Use Regulations are applied to the majority of the Planning Areas. All future applications for development within the SPA are subject to review for compliance with such standards and guidelines. As such, Use Regulations in the Zoning Ordinance not specifically omitted or modified in the Specific Plan would remain applicable to each Planning Area.

Regulations specific to Planning Areas VIII and IX, relative to the proposed Project, are provided below.

Planning Area VIII

DESIGN GUIDELINES

Development of Planning Area VID shall be in conformance with the RiverWay Design Guidelines. All buildings shall exhibit a common architectural and landscape theme including a comprehensive landscape and signage design. Landscaping and building location and design shall attenuate potential offsite noise impacts.

Particular attention shall be paid to architectural and landscape design as viewed from Highway 67 and Mast Boulevard. Comprehensive landscape, wall and signage design is required. In addition, development adjacent to the floodplain shall be in conformance with the RiverWay Design Guidelines for development within or adjacent to The River Corridor. In particular, for areas adjacent to reserved or restored floodplain habitat, requirements for setbacks, landscaping, fencing and access control, and noise attenuation shall be strictly adhered to in the development and use of property within Planning Area VIII. Access shall be coordinated with other Planning Areas on the opposite side of Mast Boulevard/Riverford Road.

The Project does not propose any physical development onsite. All future development would occur in conformance with the goals, policies, and objectives identified in the RiverWay Specific Plan to ensure that the overall character intended for the area is achieved, and that any potential adverse effects of development on the surrounding environment or on the community as a whole are minimized to the extent feasible. All future development would be designed consistent with applicable design regulations specific to the Planning Area of the RiverWay Specific Plan affected. Additionally, all such development onsite would be required to demonstrate conformance with the County General Plan, Lakeside Community Plan, and Lakeside Design Guidelines, as applicable, unless otherwise approved by the County.

Planning Area IX

DESIGN GUIDELINES

Development of Planning Area IX shall be in conformance with the RiverWay Design Guidelines. Office or light industrial land uses are required adjacent to the existing mobilehome park to the east. Interior streets which provide access from Riverside Drive shall be designed to discourage through traffic between Mast Boulevard and Riverside Drive.

Comprehensive landscape, wall and signage design is required. In addition, development adjacent to the floodplain shall be in conformance with the RiverWay Design Guidelines for development within or adjacent to The River Corridor. In particular, for areas adjacent to preserved or restored floodplain habitat, requirements for setbacks, landscaping, fencing and access control, and noise attenuation shall be strictly adhered to in the development and use of property within Planning Area IX.

Setbacks. The "E" setback designator shall apply except for interior side yards adjacent to developed or residentially zoned areas. In such cases, the industrial use shall provide a 10 foot landscape buffer and noise attenuation wall adjacent to employee parking or inaccessible building side; or a 35 foot buffer with a 15 foot landscape strip and noise attenuation wall structure adjacent to loading areas or building accesses.

Refer to the Response for Planning Area VIII, above.

San Diego County Zoning Ordinance

Portions of the County Zoning Ordinance that may affect the assessment of visual impacts are generally zoning overlay designators. Relevant designators include:

- ⌘ B – Community Design Review Area
- ⌘ D – Design Review Area
- ⌘ G – Sensitive Resource
- ⌘ H – Historic/Archaeological Landmark or District
- ⌘ J – Special Historic District
- ⌘ S – Scenic Area

None of the above designators apply to the Project site, with exception of the S designator relative to scenic resources and the B designator relative to Community Design Review. The table below shows the existing and proposed zoning for the Project site.

Regulation	Existing	Proposed
USE REGULATIONS	S88	No change.
NEIGHBORHOOD REGULATIONS	S	No change.
DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS		
Density	--	No change.
Lot Size	--	No change.
Building Type	W	No change.
Max. Floor Area	--	No change.
Floor Area Ratio	--	No change.
Height	G*	M**
Coverage	--	No change.
Setback	E	No change.
Open Space	--	No change.
SPECIAL AREA REGS	B	No change.

* Maximum allowed height of 35 feet; two-story maximum.

** Maximum allowed height of 45 feet; any number of stories is permitted, provided that all Building Code requirements and floor-area ratio limitations are met.

As shown in the Table above, the Project would result in a change to the existing zoning to allow for a 10-foot increase in building height. Additionally, as previously stated, rezoning of the Project site would change the existing height designator that currently applies to the twenty-three parcels from a G-Designator (35 feet, two story maximum) to an M-Designator (45 feet, no story limit). Additionally, the succeeding 50 feet from all front yard centerline setbacks shall have a 35-foot maximum height buffer. All development located outside of the 50-foot buffer would be subject to the “M” height designator. All other development regulations applicable to the site would remain unchanged with Project implementation. With County approval of the proposed rezone and Specific Plan amendment, the Project would be consistent with the County Zoning Ordinance and RiverWay Specific Plan.

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