

**DAI DANG MEDITATION CENTER
VISUAL IMPACT ANALYSIS
P04-016**

Prepared For:

**Vietnamese Buddhist Meditation Congregation
6326 Camino del Rey
Bonsall, California 92003**

Prepared By:

**RBF Consulting
9755 Clairemont Mesa Blvd., Suite 100
San Diego, California 92124**

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CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

The Dai Dang Buddhist Meditation Center project proposes a religious meditation center that will facilitate the training of Buddhist monks in the school of Patriarch (Zen) Meditation, and the practicing of same for the lay people (“parishioners”) living in the surrounding area. This visual impact analysis is meant to provide supplemental information regarding the proposed development’s potential for significant impacts on the existing land use and character of the Bonsall community. This analysis has been prepared in response to the request originally made by the County of San Diego Department of Planning and Land Use (DPLU) in their July 12, 2004 scoping letter to the Dai Dang Meditation Center, Inc. and revised per subsequent comments received.

The proposed site for the Dai Dang Meditation Center project is located in the community of Bonsall, in the unincorporated area of northerly San Diego County. The site is bounded on the southerly edge by Camino del Rey, which provides primary access to the site (see Figure 1, Regional Map, and Figure 2, Project Location Map). The project is located within the County of San Diego’s Bonsall Community Plan Area. The Assessor’s Parcel Number (APN) is 127-460-14.

The property is zoned A70 (2) (Limited Agricultural Use – 2-acre minimum lot size), with a General Plan Land Use Designation of (19) Intensive Agriculture. Typically, the A70 Use Regulation is applied to areas throughout the County to protect moderate to high quality agricultural land. The proposed activities involve two Civic Use Types, as defined in the County Zoning Ordinance: Religious Assembly and Group Residential. These uses are permitted in the A70 zone by Section 2705 of the Zoning Ordinance with approval of a Major Use Permit from the County of San Diego. The project must be deemed consistent with the findings required to approve a major use permit, as set forth in Section 7538 of the Zoning Ordinance. Special requirements for these uses must be addressed, which include architectural design, landscaping and parking standards.

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CHAPTER 2. PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND PROJECT SETTING

2.1 EXISTING USE

The Dai Dang Meditation Center site is located in the community of Bonsall, within the unincorporated area of San Diego County (see Figure 1, Regional Map). The approximately 9.0-acre project site is located along Camino del Rey, between Via Maria Elena and Via del Margarita (see Figure 2, Project Location Map).

The current owners, Vietnamese Buddhist Meditation Congregation, purchased the property in 2001. Existing structures on-site consist of an approximately 2,589 square foot (SF) one-story house with a three-car garage. The residence will remain on the site.

Approximately 50 feet to the north of the main house is a converted horse stable, consisting of approximately 5,705 SF. The building is now used for storage purposes. A 2,126 SF equipment storage building/workshop is located approximately 30 feet north of the converted stables and will be demolished and replaced with a parking lot. To the east of the storage building is a two-bedroom trailer, previously used as a caretaker's residence. With the proposed project, this building will also remain in its current use. A groundwater well is located in the southwesterly portion of the property and is used for irrigation of a variety of plants and vegetables presently grown on-site. However, with the proposed project the use of the groundwater well on-site will be discontinued and the project will be conditioned to require a Well Destruction Permit from the Department of Environmental Health (DEH).

2.2 PROPOSED PROJECT

The proposed project is an application for a Major Use Permit to allow for construction of facilities to support a Buddhist meditation center and monastery, totaling approximately 22,796 SF. The project will involve the demolition of one existing building to be replaced with a parking lot, the retention of four existing on-site structures and will include the construction of a meditation hall, residence quarters/ library/kitchen, and a main worship hall. Accommodations will be provided for approximately 30 guests at any one time.

At ultimate build-out, the proposed facilities will consist of three new main buildings, landscaped outdoor areas, 81 improved on-site parking spaces, and an overflow parking area

(see Figure 3, Site Plan; Figure 4, Conceptual Grading Plan; and, Figure 5, Conceptual Landscape Plan). A conceptual architectural rendering of the proposed new buildings are shown in Figure 6, Cross-Sections. This figure shows the separation of the three proposed buildings and their orientation on the project site.

The major components of the proposed project are the following:

- **Meditation Hall** – The meditation hall is proposed as a partial two-story building (7,664 SF) with architectural features having a maximum height of 29 feet. This building will have a large main room with an altar at the east end for congregational assembly and meditation. The building will include approximately 1,725 SF of space designated as a multi-use room. This area will serve as a weekend food warming kitchen and a weekend dining hall. This portion of the building will also contain separate men’s and women’s restrooms. The second floor will contain approximately 2,430 SF of conference room area for scripture translation and study area for the Second Vice Abbot, in addition to a restroom.
- **Main Worship Hall** – The main worship hall is proposed for use by the monks and other visitors to the center. This building will be approximately 6,196 SF and will be 35 feet in height. With addition of a steeple that is proposed over the altar area, the building height is extended to 40 feet, which will extend five feet above the zoned height limitation of 35 feet. This will require an exception as allowed by Section 4620g of the Zoning Ordinance as part of approval of the Major Use Permit. The building will house a large room for congregational assemblies, a centrally-located altar, daily administrative use office space, and one restroom. The second story will contain approximately 1,440 SF of study area and private meditation area for the Abbot and First Vice Abbot, plus one restroom.
- **Residents’ Quarters** – The residence quarters will total approximately 8,936 SF. The first story will house six double-occupancy bedrooms (approximately 220 SF each), three multi-purpose rooms totaling approximately 900 SF, a laundry room, locker room and communal bathroom.

The second story will support a library, six double-occupancy bedrooms (approximately 900 SF), a communal bathroom, and an isolation bedroom with a private bathroom (150 SF total). The east end of the building will contain a 450 SF office and reception area, and a 325 SF kitchen connected to a 1,055 SF dining area. The kitchen will have additional areas such as smaller rooms to be used for storage, pantries and refrigeration.

With the project, the existing monks' quarters and administrative operation in the main house will be relocated to the new facility. The main house will be converted into a guest room/library and study rooms for the monks. These various facilities are necessary for the meditation, study, and other religious exercise of those residing at the Center, as well as visitors.

**TABLE 1
PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT**

Use	Square Footage (SF)
Main Hall	6,196
Meditation Hall	7,664
Monk Residence Hall	8,936
81 parking spaces	--
Total Proposed Building Area	22,796 SF

2.2.1 GRADING

Grading activities for the proposed project site will include a total grading quantity of 14,400 cubic yards of cut and 13,400 cubic yards of fill with an export of 1,000 cubic yards of cut material. The total grading quantity includes the movement of 3,400 cubic yards of cut and 4,900 cubic yards of fill as a result of relocating the driveway. Relocating the driveway is necessary for safety reasons to meet the County of San Diego sight distance requirements. The largest cut slope onsite has a ratio of 1½:1, with an elevation difference of 13 feet. The largest fill slope onsite has a ratio of 2:1 with an elevation difference of 28 feet. As a result of the cut and fill slopes, several retaining walls will be located on the project site. Two retaining walls will be constructed behind portions of the residence hall and the main hall and will range from two feet to six feet in height. Only a portion of these walls will be visible from offsite because they will be screened by the buildings. In addition, several retaining walls three feet in height will be constructed in front of the main hall and the meditation hall. A 6-foot tall retaining wall will be constructed along the southern side of the meditation hall as part of an access ramp. The overall height of the wall will be screened by the southerly wall of the ramp. A 1- to 2-foot high retaining wall will also be constructed between the two parking lots in the northerly portion to create the handicap ramp. The maximum height of any visible retaining wall on-site will be six feet; refer also to Figure 5, Conceptual Landscape Plan, and Figure 6, Cross-Sections.

As shown in Figure 5, Conceptual Landscape Plan, the on-site buildings will be connected by walkways, gardens, courtyards and landscaping. A landscaped garden feature is also proposed between the main hall and meditation hall.

Main access to the development will be provided by a 24-foot wide paved driveway from Camino del Rey. Emergency access will be provided from Wrightwood Road at the northerly boundary of the site. This road will provide the North County Fire Protection District with emergency access to the property, and will not be utilized by visitors or guests of the facility. A dry stand pipe system has been added to the project design, with a connection next to each building. On-site parking lots will provide 81 on-site parking spaces, including six handicap accessible spaces.

2.2.2 PROJECT OPERATION

The purpose of the proposed meditation center is to create a non-stressful environment open to all people, Buddhists and non-Buddhists, who are interested in practicing the religion. There are no choirs or children's activities that will take place during the week or after normal business hours. Visitors generally arrive at the facility on weekends and holidays for a one-hour meditation period, a silent communal lunch, and a question and answer period with the headmaster. The center will operate from 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. on weekends and holidays. There is no retail component (e.g., gift shop or other sales program) proposed with the project.

During the week, the Meditation Center is an instructional facility for the resident monks onsite. Resident monks maintain a Spartan lifestyle, consistent with the Buddhist teachings and adhere to a daily regiment of studying, silent meditation, silent communal meals, and maintenance of the facility. Resident monks live onsite until their studying is finished. The monks do not drive cars, watch TV, or listen to the radio, and they are discouraged from creating loud noises while staying at the monastery. No visitors are allowed after 5:00 p.m. For these reasons, the proposed meditation center and monastery does not function in the same way as a typical church or temple.

On the typical weekend (Sunday) service the facility will be open to visitors who come to the facility for worship, meditation, a silent communal lunch, and a question and answer period with the headmaster. The normal weekend meditation activity generally attracts up to 300 people. These typical Sunday services will occur weekly.

2.3 EXISTING CONDITIONS

2.3.1 PROJECT SETTING

The site is located in the northerly portion of San Diego County in the Bonsall Community Plan Area. The area generally supports agricultural uses, as well as rural residential uses, often combined with small-scale agricultural or equestrian operations.

The site slopes generally from the northeast to the south, with on-site topography ranging from approximately 410 feet above mean sea level (amsl) in the northeasterly portion of the site to approximately 202 feet amsl along Camino del Rey. Vegetation on-site includes non-native grassland, although the majority of the site is either developed or disturbed. No wetlands are present on-site and no prominent features are visible.

Existing development on the property is set back from Camino del Rey on top of the south-facing slope, which limits views into the site from the adjacent roadway. Limited views of the site are offered from the west along Camino del Rey, as well as from the south, west, and northwest of the site from surrounding properties. However, these views are often limited due to surrounding topography, mature vegetation, the project site being secluded, and the speed at which vehicles travel on the adjacent roadway, Camino del Rey. In addition, landscaping has been planted on-site around the existing structures, and several clusters of large or dense trees are adjacent to the west and east of the existing buildings further limiting the views into the project site. The northerly portion of the parcel, north of the existing development, presently supports a large graded parking area (which was graded prior to the purchase of the project site by the current owners) for guests of the center, just to the west of the location of where the new facilities are proposed.

2.3.2 SURROUNDING LAND USE

In general, the North County area of San Diego County in the vicinity of the project site is known for agricultural production. Single-family, rural residential uses on lots of two acres or larger are typical, with limited small-scale commercial uses and larger agricultural and recreational uses interspersed. As shown in Figure 7, Surrounding Land Uses, many of the single-family residential lots in the project vicinity also support small-scale agricultural uses, such as avocado groves and citrus crops. The project site functions as a transitional property from larger equestrian uses west and south of the site to smaller single-family residential use north and east of the site. At 11 acres, the proposed project site is over twice the size of most residential properties in the surrounding area.

Land uses surrounding the proposed project site are described below:

The subject property is bordered directly to the west by an undeveloped parcel of land. Just north of this parcel is a single-family residence, located uphill from the project site, along the slope. This residence is the closest residential use to the proposed project, and is located approximately 400 feet from the northern boundary of the project site and approximately 590 feet from the nearest building proposed on the project site (Residence Hall). Wrightwood Road, which will provide future emergency access for the proposed project, presently dead-ends at the northerly border of the site. Immediately to the northwest, north and northeast are rural residential uses and undeveloped land designated as residential acreage. Lots in these areas generally range from two to four acres in size, with a number of lots supporting secondary agricultural uses. Further to the northwest of the site is an extensive equestrian (thoroughbred) training facility that includes numerous stables and supporting equestrian-related facilities.

Adjacent to the east of the site is a single-family residential use with supporting citrus and avocado crops. Further to the east and southeast (immediately across Camino del Rey) are similar single-family rural residential uses on two- to four-acre lots.



View looking northeast
towards proposed development area.

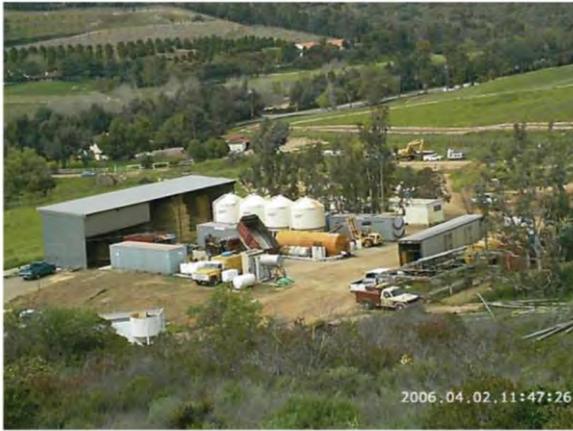


View looking north
from existing parking area.

Also to the southeast of the site, across Camino del Rey, is another large equestrian operation with several stable complexes, exercise arena and other supporting facilities. The property is comprised of several parcels that also support a single-family home, as well as agricultural uses. Further to the southeast are residential estate uses on lots generally ranging from four to nine acres, many of which also support small-scale agricultural uses.

Further to the south and southwest of the site are residential estate uses, with lots generally ranging in size from four to fourteen acres. Many of these parcels also support agricultural crops. Additionally, across Camino del Rey and west of Via Maria Elena, to the southwest of

the site, are large-acre agricultural uses with single-family residential uses and structures associated with the agricultural uses.



View looking southwest
to adjacent agriculture operation



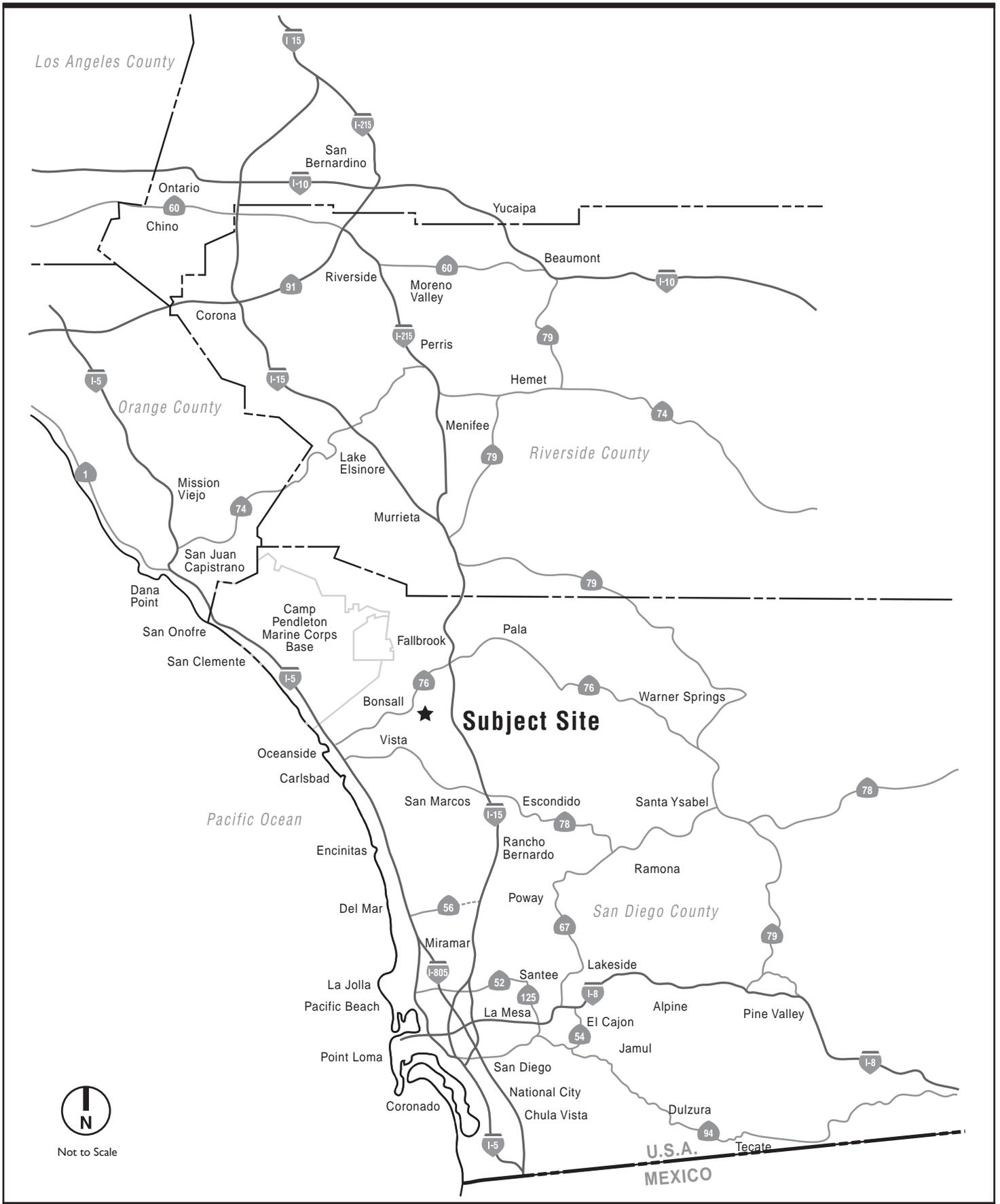
View looking south
toward existing equestrian facilities

Adjacent to the west of the project site is land used for agricultural production, associated with the thoroughbred training center located to the northwest of the project site. Crops produced and stored are utilized for animal feed (equestrian). Operation of this facility requires the transport of goods to and from the site via large trucks that enter and exit the site from Camino del Rey. Large trucks are often parked on the site to await the transport of products. Further to the west is a single-family rural residential use.

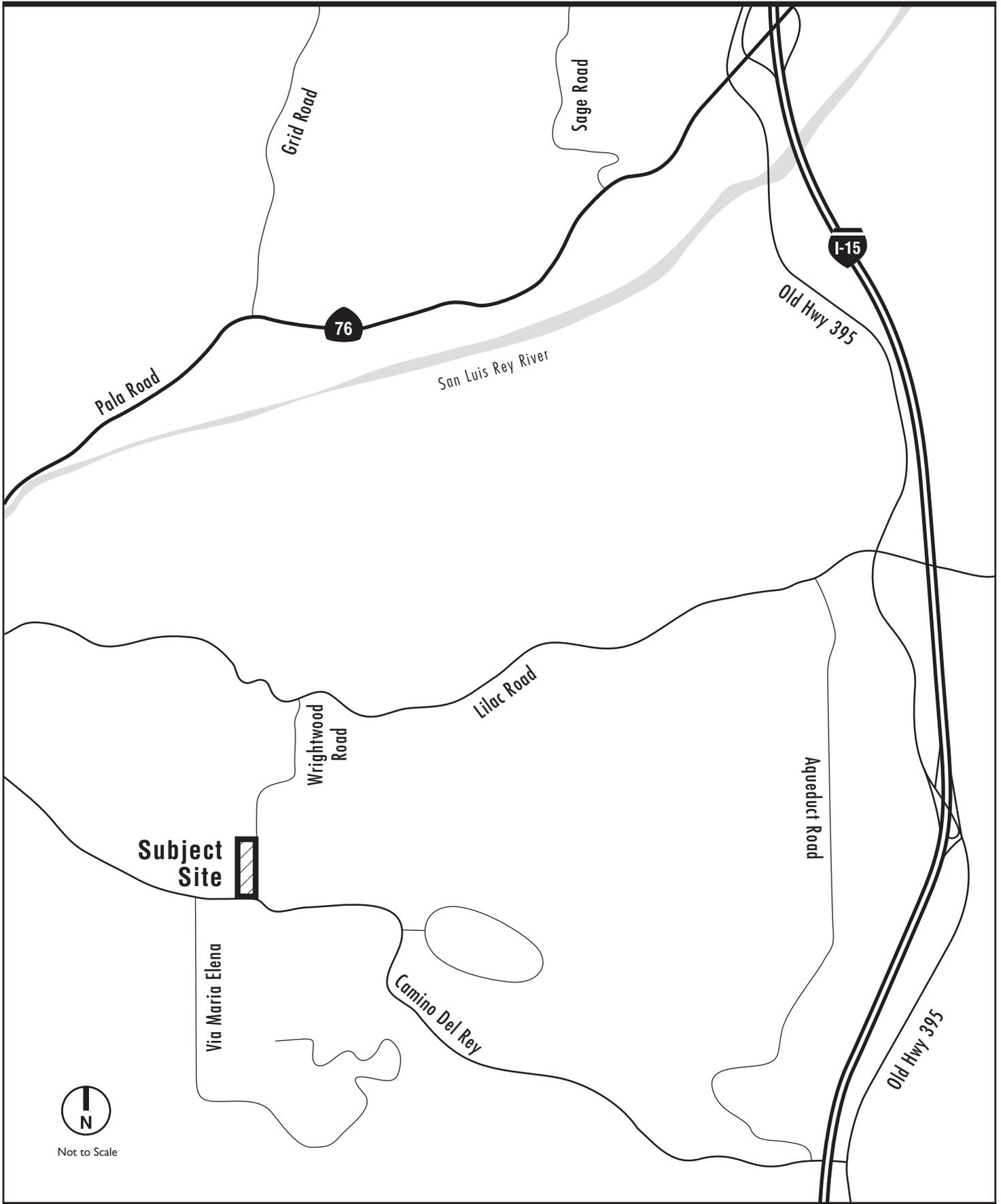
2.3.3 PROJECT VICINITY TOPOGRAPHY

The proposed project site is located on the slopes above the Moosa Creek Valley. The surrounding area offers varied topography, consisting of rolling hills and intervening lower elevations. These topographical features, combined with mature landscaping, result in a great deal of variability in locations from where the project site is visible. In general, roads and residences on higher elevations of ridges facing the proposed project have views of the subject parcel, while residences and roads on the lower elevations of the same ridges may not, due to intervening topography or existing buildings and mature landscaping.

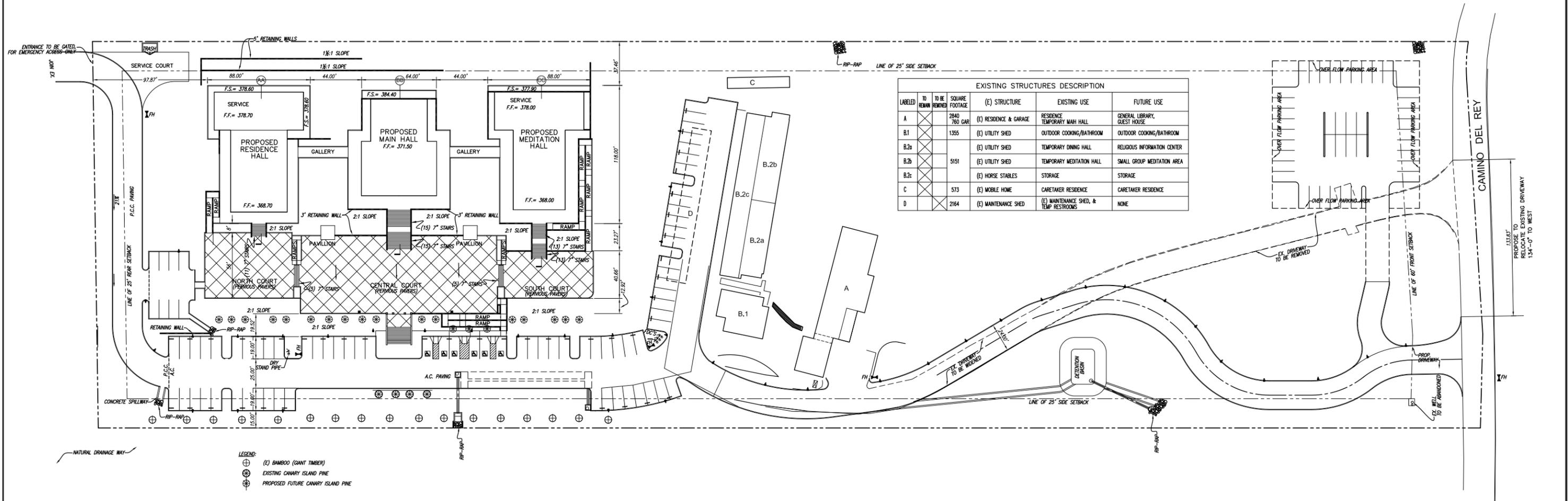
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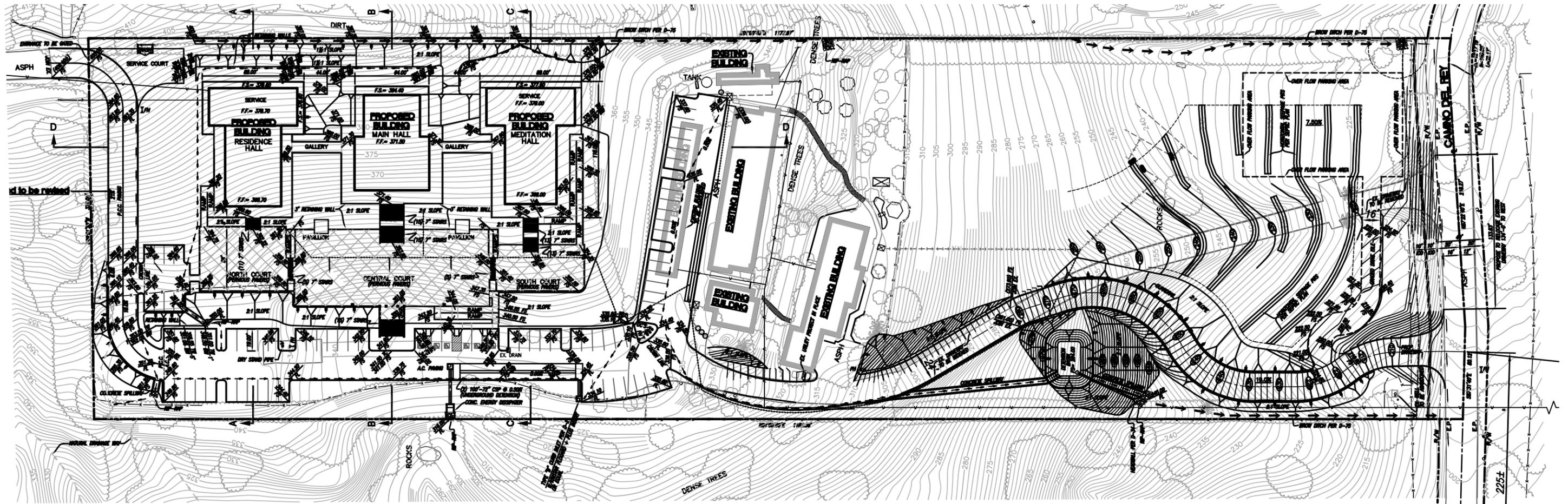
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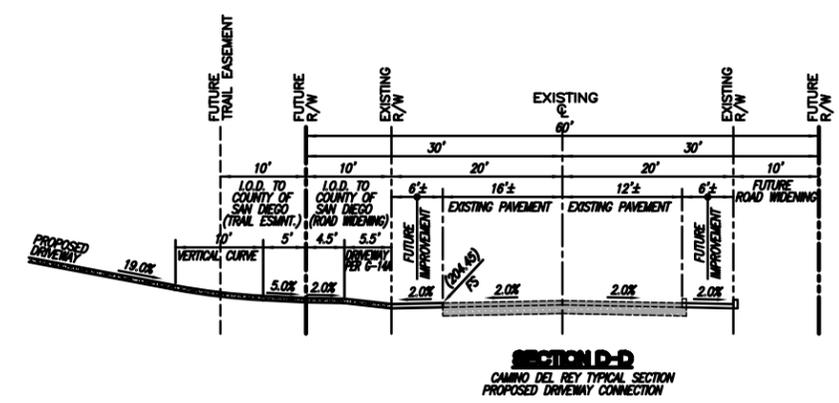
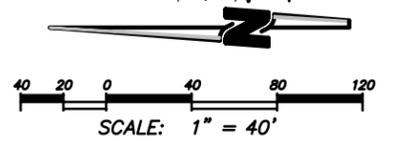
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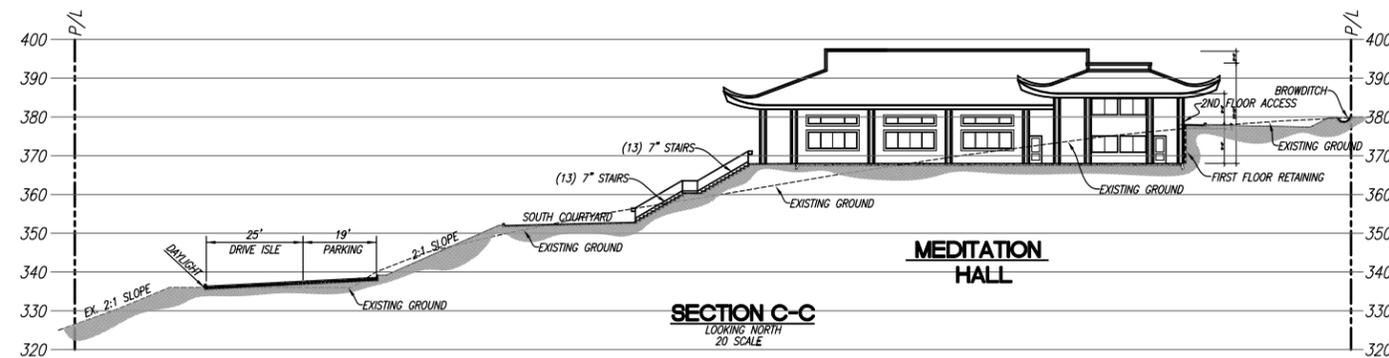
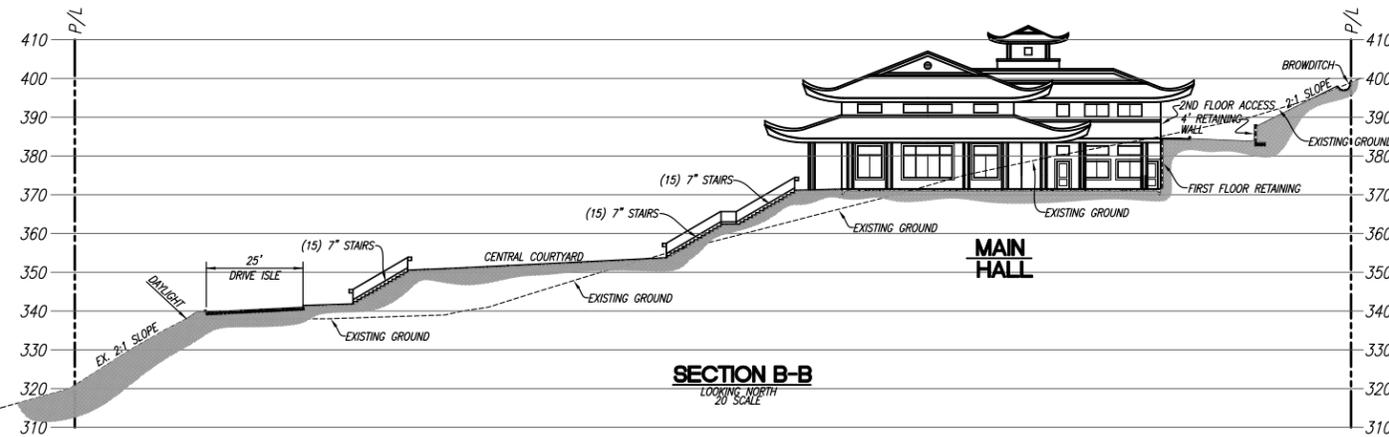
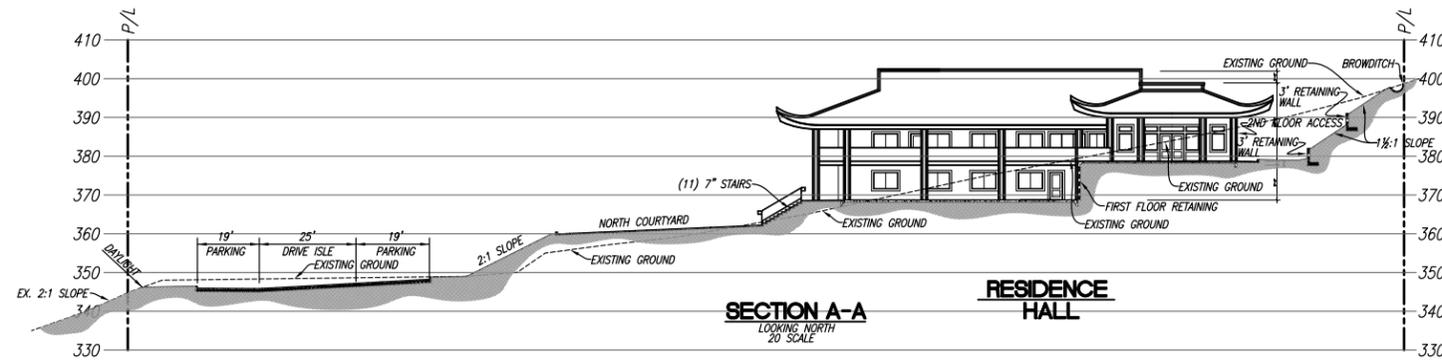
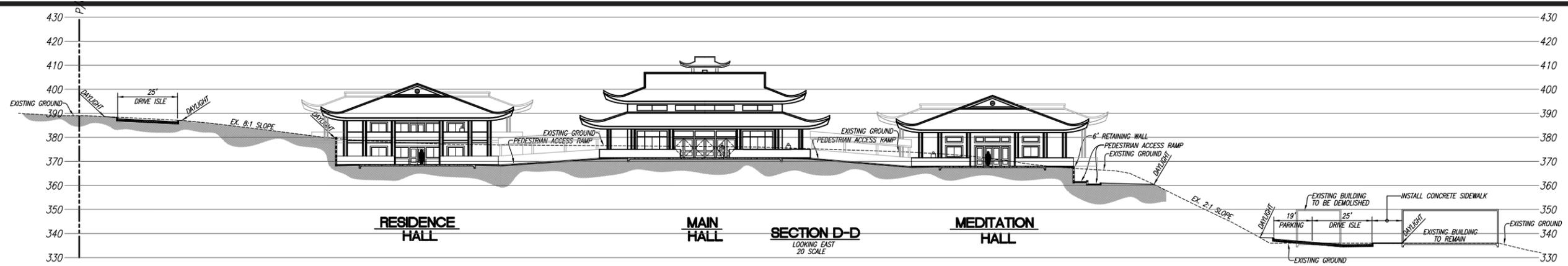


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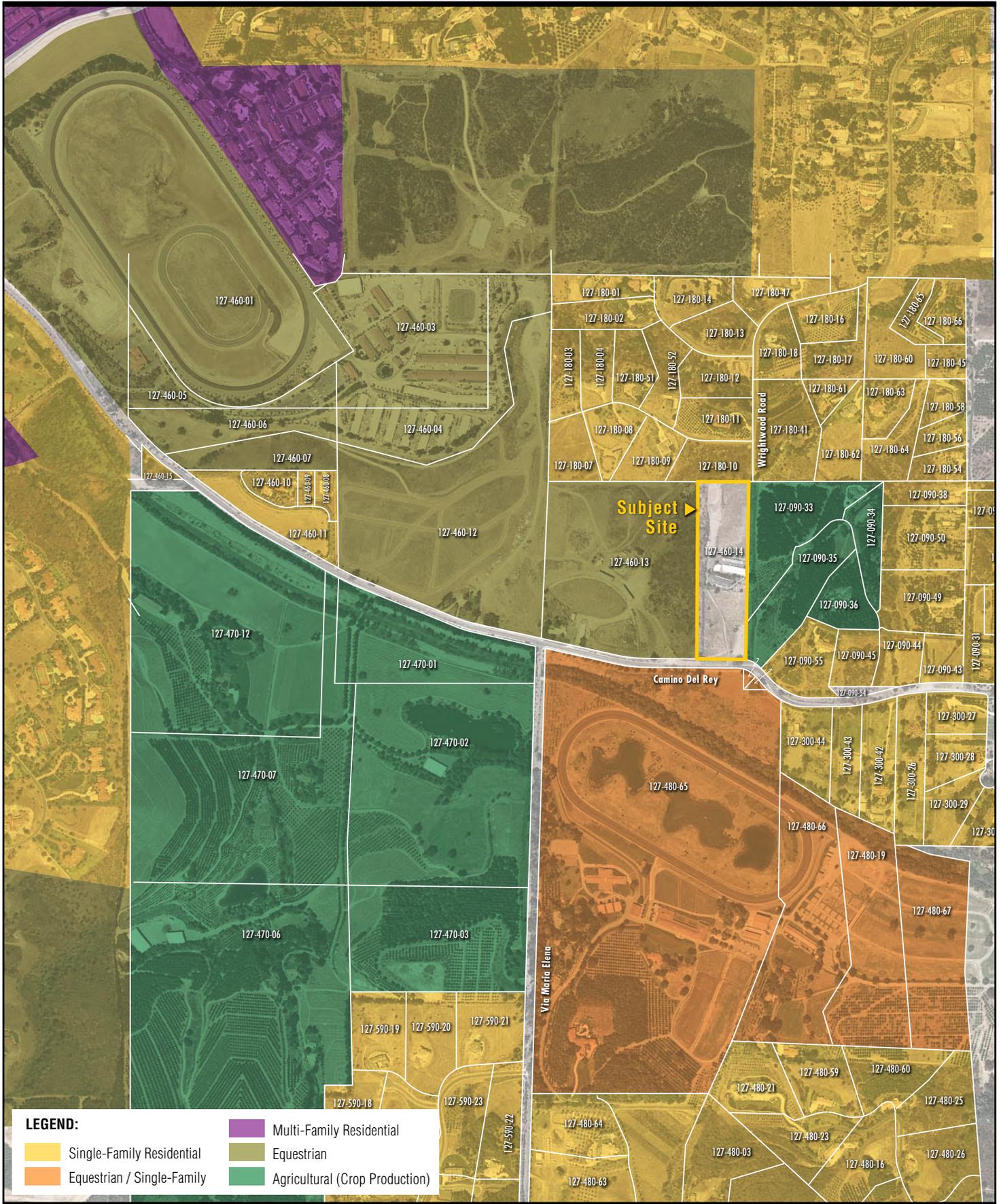


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CHAPTER 3. VISUAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

3.1 EXISTING CONDITIONS

3.1.1 PROJECT SETTING

The site is located in the northerly portion of San Diego County within the Bonsall Community Plan Area. The area generally supports agricultural uses, as well as rural residential uses, often combined with small-scale agricultural or equestrian operations.

The proposed project site is located on the slopes above the Moosa Creek Valley. The surrounding area offers varied topography, consisting of rolling hills and intervening lower elevations. These topographical features, combined with mature landscaping, result in a great deal of variability in locations from where the project site is visible. In general, roads and residences on higher elevations of ridges facing the proposed project have views of the subject parcel, while residences and roads on the lower elevations of the same ridges may not, due to intervening topography or existing buildings and mature landscaping. The property generally slopes from the northeast to the south, with on-site topography ranging from approximately 410 feet above mean sea level (amsl) in the northeasterly portion of the site to approximately 202 feet amsl along Camino del Rey. Vegetation on-site includes non-native grassland, although the majority of the property is either developed or disturbed.

Existing development on the property is set back from Camino del Rey on top of the south-facing slope, which limits views into the site from the adjacent roadway. The northerly portion of the parcel, north of the existing development, supports a large graded parking area that was previously graded prior to the purchase of the project site by the current owners, for use by guests of the center. Refer to Chapter 2, Project Description and Project Setting, for a more detailed description of the project setting.

3.1.2 SURROUNDING LAND USE

North San Diego County in the vicinity of the project site is known for agricultural production activities. Single-family, rural residential uses on lots of two acres or larger are typical, with limited small-scale commercial uses and larger agricultural and recreational uses interspersed. Chapter 2, Project Description and Project Setting, provides a detailed

description of the existing land uses in the area surrounding the subject property. As shown in Figure 7, Surrounding Land Uses, many of the single-family residential lots in the project vicinity also support small-scale agricultural uses, such as avocado groves and citrus crops.

3.2 THRESHOLDS OF 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.

Impacts to visual resources will be considered significant if any of the following occur:

- Degradation of an identified visual resource;
- 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 consistent with applicable design guidelines;
- Substantial obstruction, interruption, or detraction from a valued 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;
- 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; or,
- Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area.

3.3 COMPATIBILITY WITH EXISTING DEVELOPMENT

3.3.1 VIEWS FROM SURROUNDING USES

According to the significance thresholds, a significant impact would occur if the project were to result in any one of the following:

- Degradation of an identified visual resource;

- 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 consistent with applicable design guidelines; or,

As stated previously, the area surrounding the project site generally supports agricultural uses, as well as rural residential uses, often combined with small-scale agricultural or equestrian operations. Existing development on the property is set back from the Camino del Rey on top of the existing slope and is screened with vegetation, thereby limiting views of the site from the roadway. Intervening vegetation and topography, as well as distance of the roadway from the site, further reduce views of the property; refer to Figure 11, Existing View of Project Site (Looking Northeast from Camino del Rey).

Limited views of the site occur from surrounding private properties; refer to Figure 8, Views from Off-Site, for views from off-site locations. Several residences to the north and northwest presently have limited views into the site; however, mature landscaping and topography reduce views from these locations. The residence directly to the north of the site is located at a higher elevation than the proposed development area and has views toward the south across the subject property; however, dense landscaping around the residence minimizes views into the project site. As such, no significant adverse visual impacts with regard to these private properties are anticipated with implementation of the proposed project. Views into the site from the east and the south along Camino del Rey are restricted, due to site topography and mature vegetation. As the subject site slopes up from the roadway and development is proposed toward the rear of the lot, views of the proposed development area are not afforded from the roadway from the east and the south. In addition, views to the site from homes located to the east of the project site are blocked by an existing orchard and other established vegetation, in addition to topography. Potential impacts from these viewpoints are less than significant.

Further to the south and southeast, across Camino del Rey, the proposed area of development is not visible from the existing equestrian facilities. These equestrian uses are located at a lower elevation than the proposed development, and due to site topography, views to the proposed area of development do not occur. Some residential uses located further to the southwest, south and southeast on higher elevations along the hillsides will have limited views of the site; however, these residences are located across the valley from the proposed project site, with the closest residence over ¼-mile away. Potential views of the proposed development area will therefore be reduced by distance to the site and intervening vegetation. Potential impacts from these views would be less than significant. Furthermore,

the significance criteria utilized in the determination of significance is not applicable to private viewsheds. Therefore, views from offsite onto the proposed project site from private viewsheds are not considered in the visual impact analysis. As such, no impacts in this regard will occur from implementation of the proposed project. The project site is visible from the adjacent agricultural use to the west and from occasional vantage points along Camino del Rey. Further to the west, the proposed development area will also be visible from the equestrian facility located to the northwest of the site; however, these uses are located at a distance of over 1,000 feet from the project site, with the closest structures being horse stables. Topography and intervening vegetation also reduce the visibility of the project site from this facility. Motorists traveling on Camino Del Rey will have brief views of the site from distances or approximately 1,000 feet or greater. Views would be limited due to intervening topography and vegetation. The duration of the views would be limited to approximately 1 to 3 seconds due to the speeds at which cars travel on Camino del Rey as well as the curves in the alignment along the roadway. The project would only be visible to motorists traveling east on Camino del Rey. Potential impacts from these views are less than significant.

A series of visual simulations have been prepared to illustrate existing views of the site and how such views would be altered following implementation of the proposed project; refer to Figure 9, Photo Simulation(s) – Off-site View; Figure 10, Viewshed Map; Figure 11, Existing View of Project Site; and, Figure 12, Visual Simulation (0.25 Mile from Site). In Figures 9 and 12, the visual simulations display the current appearance of the proposed project site, the simulation of the proposed project at the completion of construction, and a simulation of the projected appearance, including mature landscaping, after five years from the completion of construction. As can be seen, landscaping is proposed to minimize views into the site from off-site locations. Trees were planted along the western property boundary several years ago. As shown in the photo of the existing site, these trees have grown and will provide some screening of the project site, even as construction begins. The landscaping will be planted to shield views of the site, in particular the new facilities along the slope in the northern portion of the property.

Figure 9, Photo Simulation – Off-site View, shows a visual simulation looking northeast from off-site Camino Del Rey. Because the proposed project has been divided into three separate buildings with varied architectural facades, the proposed project appears to have a similar development profile of three single-family homes and the same bulk, scale, mass as the surrounding developments. Many of the surrounding properties support large multi-story buildings. The terra-cotta clay tile rooftops proposed for the project are similar to the rooftops of the surrounding residential area. In addition, the proposed landscaping will blend the structures with the rural natural landscape of the surrounding area. As discussed earlier in this report, the buildings have been set into the hillside to minimize grading and the visibility

of manufactured slopes. This visual simulation shows that the top of the proposed buildings will not extend higher than the slope behind the buildings. The existing trees on top of the hill are still visible behind the buildings after construction. As such, the proposed development will substantially alter the hillside or change the character of the community or surrounding area.

A view looking northeast from Via Maria Elena to the project site is shown in Figure 9, Photo Simulation – Off-site View. This visual simulation illustrates what the proposed development will look like as seen looking down from the hill across Camino del Rey. The most visible element of the proposed project in this view is the rooftops. Located in the lower portion of the view is a residence with a similar multi-level terra-cotta clay tile rooftop. The proposed landscaping will screen the majority of the proposed project from view, blending the proposed project with the surrounding rural character of the area.

Figure 12, Visual Simulation (0.25 Mile from Site), shows a view of the proposed buildings and landscaping of the proposed project looking northeast from Camino del Rey. This visual simulation displays the amount of screening landscaping vegetation that will decrease the project's visibility from off-site areas, especially looking northeast from Camino del Rey, after construction and at five years following construction. This view also shows in greater detail the building profile of a red tiled multilayered roof that is a prominent building profile in the surrounding area. This simulation provides an architectural rendering of what the proposed development will look like. The buildings will be painted a neutral color, and will have terra-cotta clay tile roofs that are common throughout the area.

As shown in the visual simulations, Figures 9 and 12, the proposed project shares many architectural and landscaping characteristics as the surrounding area. As designed, the three separate buildings of the proposed project appear to have a similar development profile as many single-family homes with the same bulk, scale, and mass within the surrounding area. As shown in Figures 9 and 12, the multi-tiered terra-cotta clay tile rooftops along with the proposed neutral color of the buildings will blend with the building characteristics of the surrounding community. As shown in Figure 9, the surrounding developments are screened by large amounts of landscaping. Figures 9 and 12 display the similarity of the screening capabilities of the proposed landscaping to the surrounding area. As shown through visual simulations, the visual qualities of the proposed project from surrounding areas are consistent with the existing characteristics of the surrounding developments. As such, the proposed project development is compatible with existing and planned land uses of the community and impacts would be less than significant.

Figure 11, Existing View of Project Site, and Figure 12, Visual Simulation (0.25 Mile from Site), show views of the project site from Camino del Rey looking northeast. As shown in

Figure 12, following construction, the proposed onsite structures would be somewhat visible from the roadway; however, views would be limited, due to the proposed height of the structures, distance from the site, and intervening landscaping and topography. As illustrated by Figure 12, the proposed manufactured slopes would not be visible from this vantage point, and the structures would be set within the onsite topography, thereby reducing visibility of the development. Following construction, the red rooftops of the proposed structures would be somewhat visible from the roadway; however, this feature is consistent with the architectural character of surrounding development, as seen in Figure 12. The proposed structures would not obscure the existing ridgeline, and views to the existing landscaping to the east of the site would remain visible. In addition, at approximately five years following completion of construction, views to the site from this location would be obscured, as proposed landscaping will have matured to a height where the structures would be largely blocked. It should be noted that although limited views of the site traveling east along Camino del Rey would occur, as evidenced by Figures 11 and 12, views to the site traveling west along the roadway would be blocked, due to site topography and location of the proposed structures on the property. Potential views would be considered less than significant from this vantage point, and no mitigation measures are required.

In addition, Figure 13, Landscape Screening – View Locations; Figures 14 and 15, Landscape Screening View A and View B (After Construction); and, Figures 16 and 17, Landscape Screening (5 Years) show views of the project site with the proposed project after construction and with landscaping at a mature level after five years of growth. Figures 14 and 15 show that only the upper portions of the building will be visible upon construction completion. The parking lot and lower portions of the buildings are screened from view by existing vegetation.

As seen in Figure 16, views at a distance of approximately 2,500 feet looking east to the site would be largely obscured by intervening landscaping, as well as being diminished by distance from the site. Views of the site from this location to west of the property (and from other similar public vantage points in the immediate vicinity) would also be minimized through proposed project landscape screening and the use of architectural design elements that would reflect other developments within the existing community.

As seen in Figure 17, views to the site at a distance of approximately 1,400 feet looking northeast from Camino del Rey would be largely obscured. Views of the residence hall, main hall, and meditation hall would generally be blocked from view by landscaping planted along the onsite slopes, generally ranging in height from approximately 31-43 feet at five years from completion of construction of the proposed buildings. As seen in Figure 17, varied rows of landscaping (trees) planted on either side of the parking area and drive aisle would provide a

“layered” screening effect, thereby restricting views of the proposed buildings to travelers along Camino del Rey. As such, the proposed landscaping would effectively reduce views to the site from the roadway, and visual effects of the proposed structures within the surrounding setting would be less than significant.

For the reasons above, the project is not considered to result in the introduction of features that would detract from or contrast with the visual character and/or quality of the existing 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. These design elements are discussed in greater detail in Chapter 3.0 with regards to the Bonsall Design Guidelines. Furthermore, no documented visual resources have been identified on the project site. As such, the proposed project would not result in the degradation of an identified significant visual resource. Potential visual impacts from the proposed project are considered to be less than significant.

CHANGE IN VISUAL FEATURES

According to the significance thresholds, a significant impact would occur if the proposed project were to result in the following:

- 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.

No designated landmarks or historic resources exist on the project site. In addition, no rock outcroppings are present on the property. The on-site area proposed for development is presently largely void of trees, due to past disturbance. Areas of dense trees are visible on-site near the existing facilities and off-site on adjacent properties to the northeast. These trees will not be disturbed by the proposed project. Additionally, several individual trees located on-site along Camino del Rey will not be disturbed by the proposed development. Additional trees will be planted on-site as part of the project. As such, development of the site 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, including but not limited to landmarks (designated), historic resources, trees, and rock outcroppings. As shown in Figure 12, the proposed project does not adversely change the visual character of the neighborhood. The project does not result in a development that visually or physically divides the neighborhood. The project does not result in substantial landform modification that would remove a prominent landmark in the area. The project

does not alter the visual landscape in such a manner that the neighborhood no longer retains its existing equestrian, agricultural, and residential setting. Impacts would be less than significant.

DEGRADATION OF A VISUAL RESOURCE

According to the significance thresholds, a significant impact would occur if the proposed project were to result in the following:

- Degradation of an identified visual resource.

Although this area of San Diego County offers numerous scenic natural elements throughout the landscape, the project site is not within a scenic corridor, nor is the project area of unusual scenic quality. As described above, area motorists experience brief views to the site from Camino del Rey and other surrounding public vantage points; however, the project would not substantially obstruct any scenic vistas, nor would the project detract from the visual setting of the area. Design features are incorporated into the project design to reduce views of the project from surrounding viewpoints, as well as to strengthen visual compatibility with existing development in the community. The proposed buildings have been sited on the property so as to minimize grading requirements and the need for retaining walls. In addition, the buildings have been designed to fit into the hillside to further reduce grading requirements, and the parking area has been designed to respect the existing topography to avoid the need for grading, or retaining walls along the western edge of the property where the project would be the most visible from offsite vantage points. The proposed courtyards have also been designed in a tiered fashion to minimize grading and the use of retaining walls. Where possible, the project has been designed to leave the natural slope of the site intact. In addition, potential views to the site from off-site vantage points across the valley to the south, as well as from certain locations to the west, southwest and northwest will also be reduced due to distance and existing topography.

IMPACTS TO A VALUED OR PANORAMIC VISTA

According to the significance thresholds, a significant impact would occur if the proposed project were to result in:

- Substantial obstruction, interruption, or detraction from a valued 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.

The site is not visible from a trail within the County's or the State's railway system; therefore, no views to the site from such recreational amenities would be affected as the result

of the proposed project. The project site is also not located along a designated scenic highway or vista. Additionally, no local, County or State recreational areas are located within the project vicinity, and therefore, no views to the site occur from such areas. The closest recreational area to the site is the Guajome Regional Park, located approximately five miles to the southwest of the project site, and across SR 76; however, due to distance and intervening topography, views to the project site are insignificant. As such, the project would not result in significant visual impacts due to the obstruction, interruption, or detracting from a valued 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. Potential impacts are considered less than significant.

PROJECT LIGHTING

According to the significance thresholds, a significant impact would occur if the proposed project were to:

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

As stated previously, lighting in the area surrounding the project is generally low-level lighting limited to providing for ingress/egress and for safety purposes. Similarly, the proposed project includes the minimum night lighting necessary to allow for mobility and safety. All proposed lighting would be consistent with the County Light Pollution Ordinance. Low-level lighting is proposed within the on-site courtyards and parking areas, and along pathways. Exterior low-level lighting for structures will also be of the minimum necessary to allow for visibility and safety. All exterior lighting would be shielded and directed downward to prevent glare or spillover into adjacent properties. Based on these design measures, project lighting is considered to be consistent with existing lighting in the surrounding area, as well as County lighting requirements. The project would not create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area. Impacts would be less than significant.

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Photo 1A. View looking northwest to the site from Camino Del Rey.



Photo 2A. View looking north up driveway into site from Camino Del Rey.



Photo 3A. View looking northeast to project site from Via Maria Elena.



Photo 4A. View looking northwest from Via Maria Elena to project site.

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Design: DLA Design Center & TPA Architects



Existing



Project with Mature Landscaping

View looking North to Project Site from Via Maria Elena



Not to Scale

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Photo Simulation - Off-Site View

Dai Dang Meditation Center

Figure 9

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Source: Dai Dang Meditation Center 2008.

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After Construction



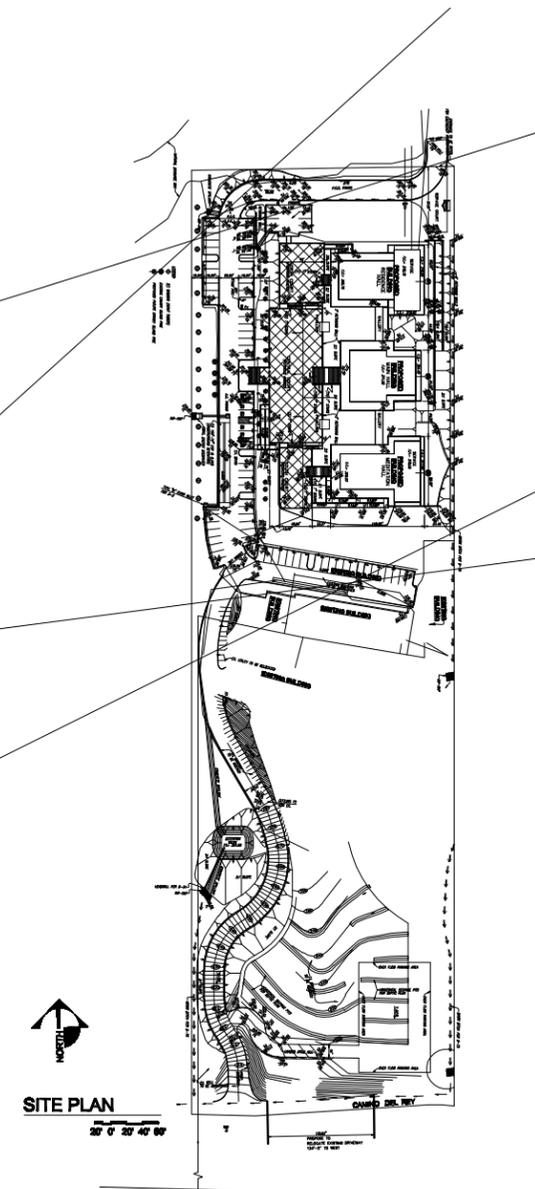
Five Years After Construction

Source: Dai Dang Meditation Center 2008.

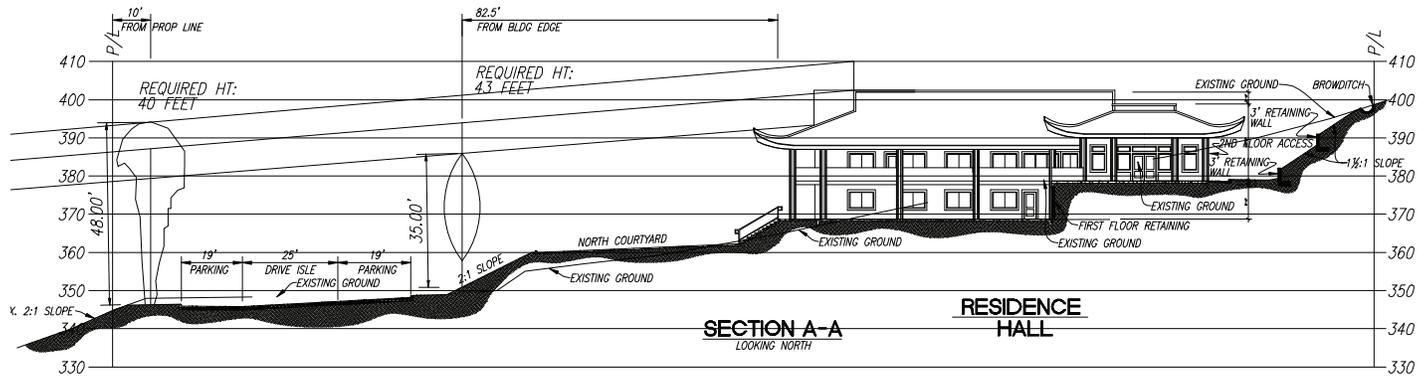
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POINT A:
APPROX 2500' AWAY

POINT B:
APPROX 1400' AWAY

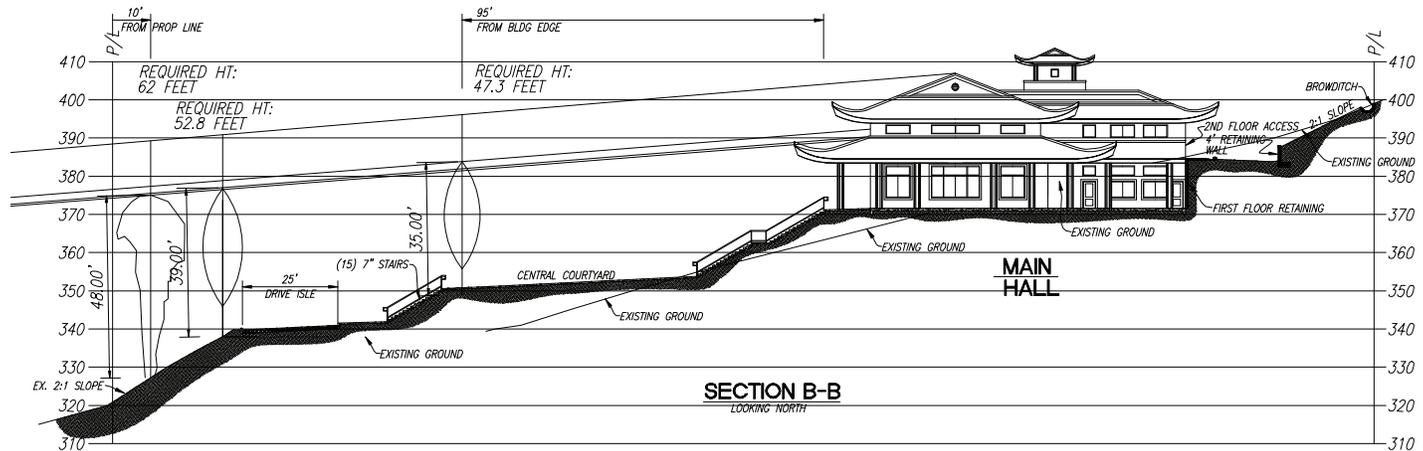


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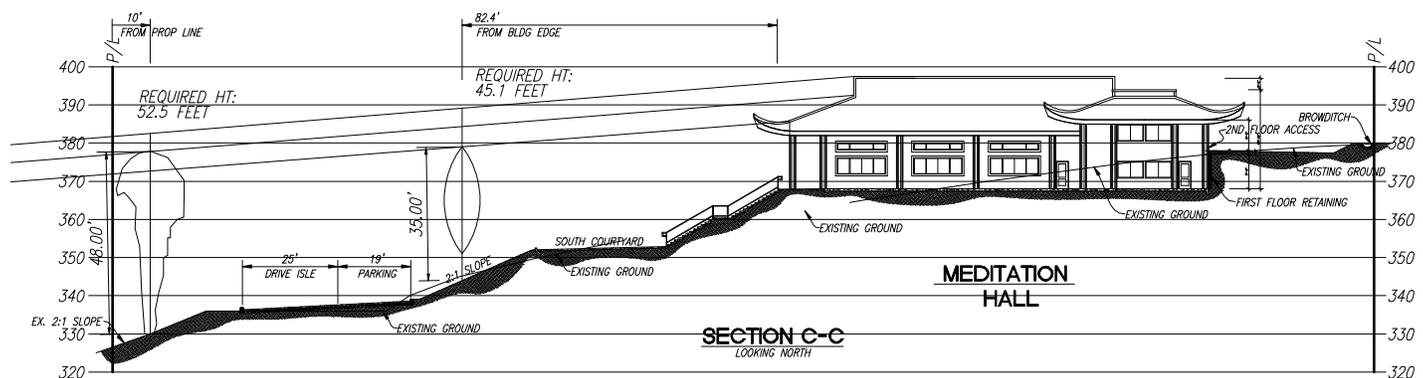
Plane A

Plane B



Plane A

Plane B



Plane A

Plane B

LINE OF SIGHT
FROM POINT A
2500' away

Source: D.L.A. Design Center, 2009



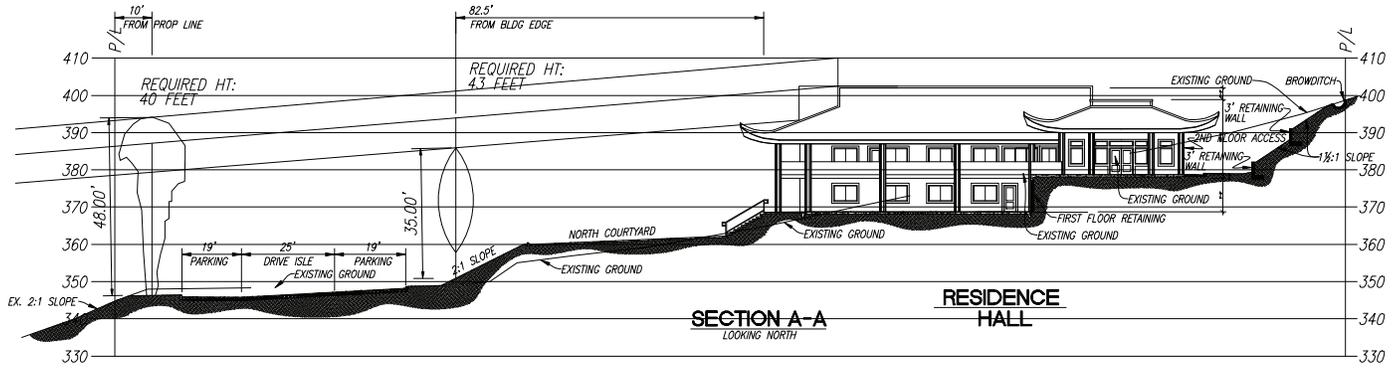
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Landscape Screening - View Location A (After Construction)

Dai Dang Meditation Center

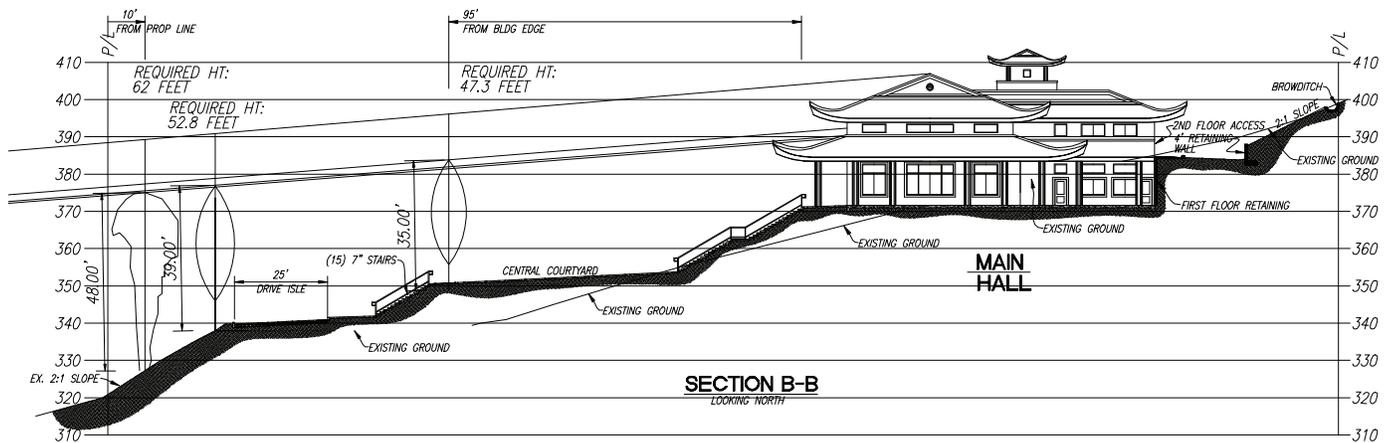
Figure 14

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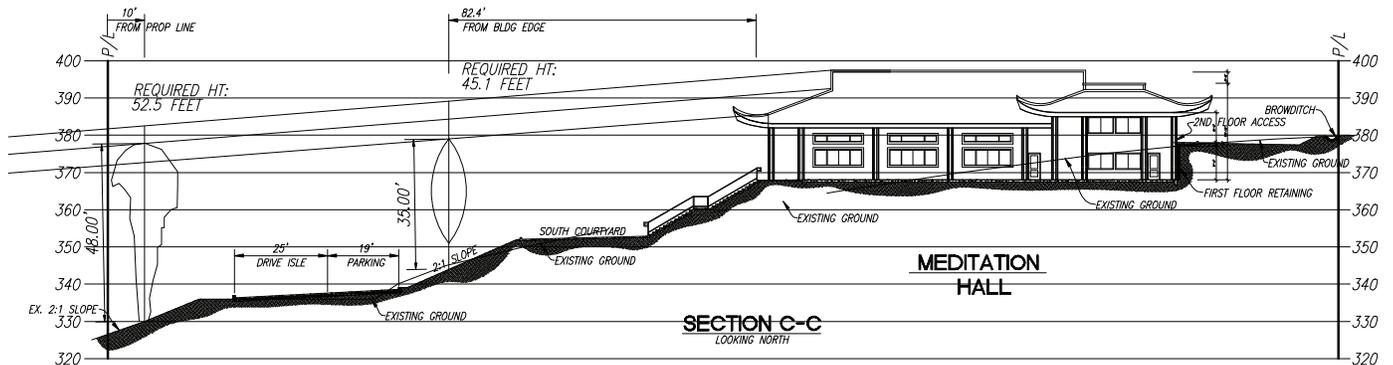
Plane A

Plane B



Plane A

Plane B

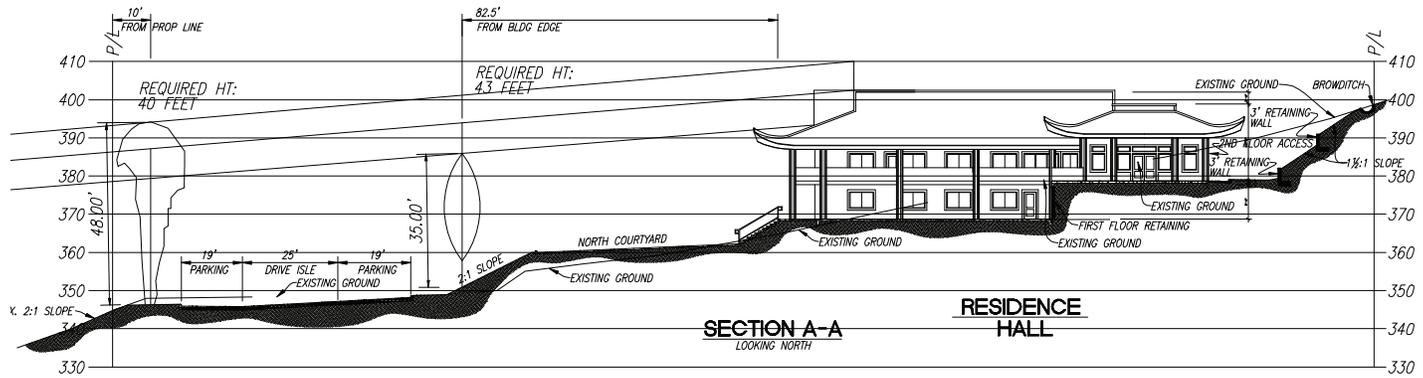


Plane A

Plane B

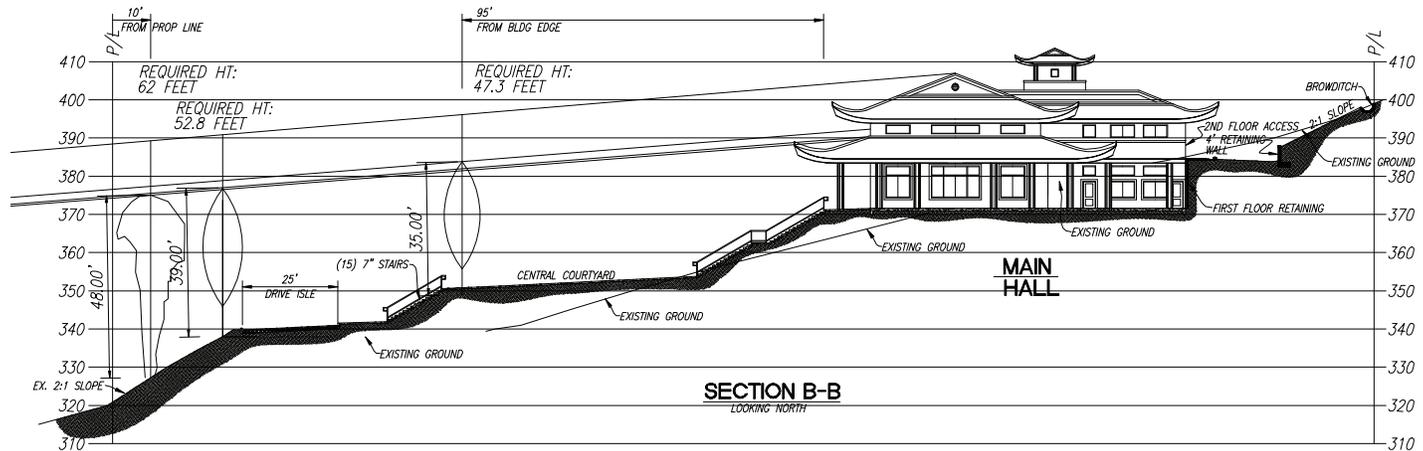
LINE OF SIGHT
FROM POINT A
2500' away

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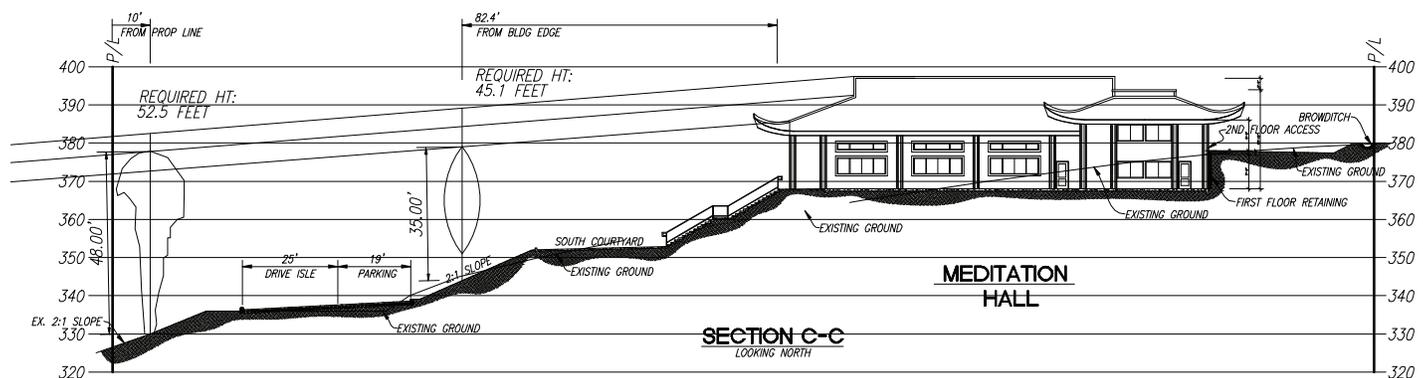
Plane A

Plane B



Plane A

Plane B



Plane A

Plane B

LINE OF SIGHT
FROM POINT A
2500' away

Source: D.L.A. Design Center, 2009



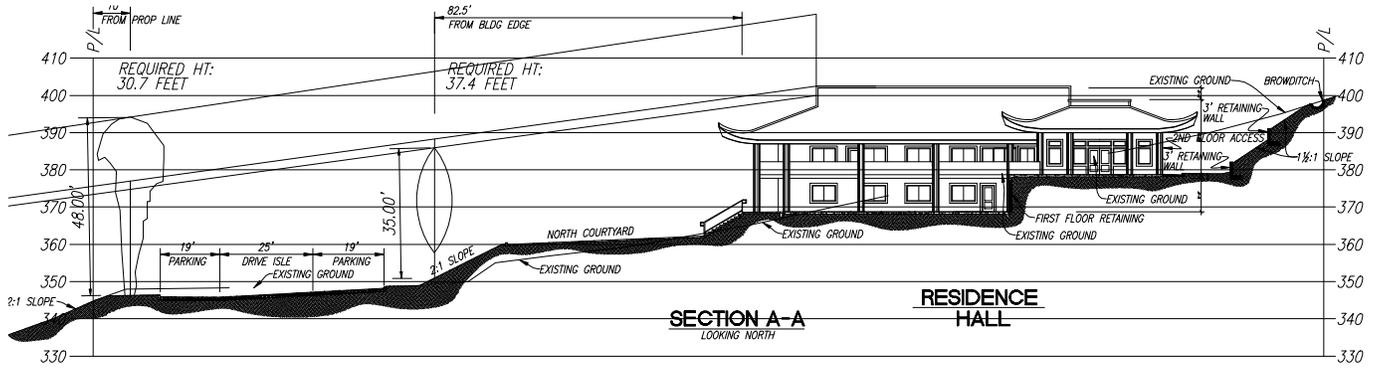
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Landscape Screening - View Location A (After Construction)

Dai Dang Meditation Center

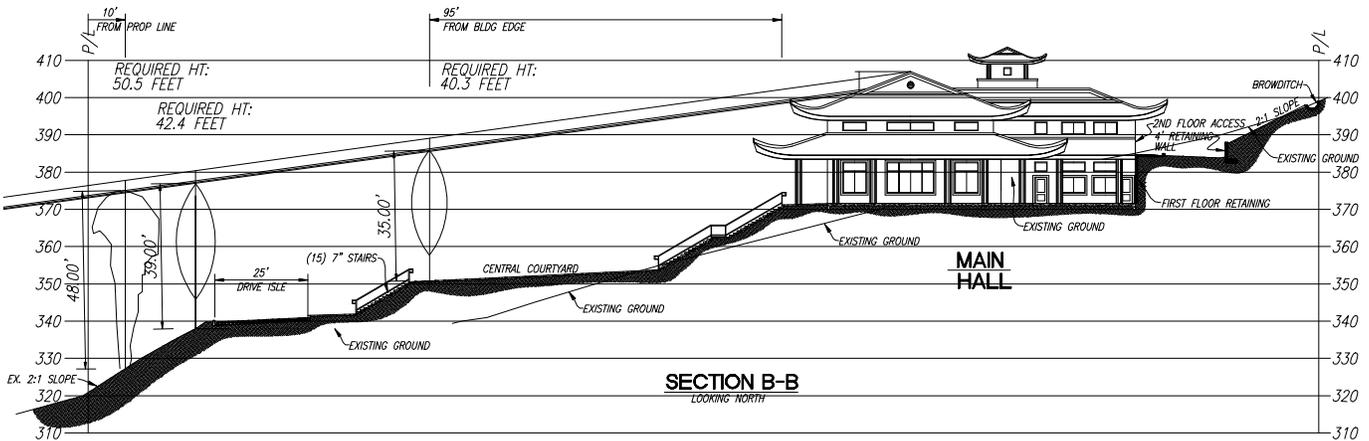
Figure 16

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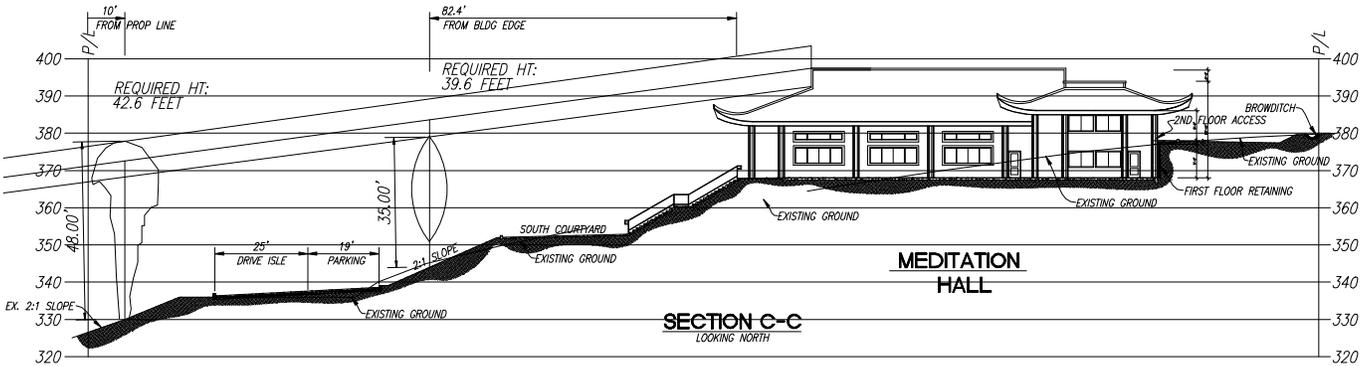
Plane A

Plane B



Plane A

Plane B



Plane A

Plane B

LINE OF SIGHT
FROM POINT B
1400' AWAY

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Existing View of Surrounding Area
(Looking Southeast Across Camino Del Rey)
Dai Dang Meditation Center

Figure 18

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Not to Scale

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Existing View of Surrounding Area
(Looking South Across Camino Del Rey)
Dai Dang Meditation Center

Figure 19

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CHAPTER 4. RECOMMENDED MITIGATION MEASURES

The proposed project would not result in the degradation of an identified visual resource or introduce features that would detract from or contrast with the existing visual character of the surrounding area. No significant public views will be restricted or obstructed as the result of project implementation. In addition, no valued visual resources will be removed as part of the project, and no significant sources of light or glare will result from operation of the proposed facilities. As such, no significant visual impacts will occur as the result of project implementation. No mitigation measures are required or proposed.

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CHAPTER 5. CONCLUSIONS

The proposed Dai Dang Meditation Center has been designed for compatibility with the existing development within the surrounding community. The project buildings and layout have been designed such that grading on the site will be minimized and the need for retaining walls will be minimized as well. The buildings have been designed to be set into the hillside rather than on building pads which would require additional grading into the hillside. The proposed Residence Hall, the largest proposed building, has been designed as a split-level pad to minimize the need to grade into the existing hillside. The proposed parking lot has been designed to take advantage of the existing topography so that no grading or retaining walls are required along the western edge of the property where the project would be the most visible from offsite. The proposed courtyards have been designed in tiered fashion to minimize the grading and use of retaining walls that would otherwise be required if they were located at the same elevation as the proposed buildings. Where possible the project has been designed to leave the natural slope of the site intact.

Changes along the project frontage will be minimized because the proposed development is located at the rear of the property. The front portion of the property currently supports agricultural activities that consist of growing eucalyptus which is sold to the local florists. This agricultural activity will continue on the property. The project will realign the existing driveway to meet minimum safety requirements for access. As such, the existing character of the project site as it is visible along the frontage of Camino Del Rey will experience little change.

Potential views to the site from off-site vantage points across the valley to the south, as well as from certain locations to the west, southwest and northwest will be reduced through both distance and topography. Proposed landscaping will blend development on the project site into the natural landscape and will minimize views into the site from off-site locations. The project has been designed such that any required retaining walls or manufactured slopes will be located within the interior of the development and away from the property edges to reduce their visibility. No significant impacts to visual resources were identified for the project, and no mitigation measures are required.

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CHAPTER 6. REFERENCES

Bonsall Design Guidelines, Bonsall Community Planning Area (1991)

County of San Diego Zoning Ordinance

County Resource Protection Ordinance (RPO)

Land Use Element of the General Plan (County of San Diego, 1986)

Bonsall Community Plan (County of San Diego, 1990)

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