

CHAPTER 2.0 SIGNIFICANT ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT

2.1 Aesthetics

The assessment of the Project's potential to have an adverse effect related to aesthetic resources is based on the technical study prepared for the Project. The results of the analysis presented below are included as appendices to the DSEIR.

- Appendix C: *Visual Resources Impact Report, the Chinese Bible Church of San Diego* (TRS Consultants, 2016) and *Chinese Bible Church of San Diego, Addendum to Visual Study* (TRS Consultants, 2017)
- Appendix D: *Chinese Bible Church of San Diego (Photometric Study)* (Rock Electric, 2015) and *Addendum to Dark Skies and Glare* (Rock Electric, 2017)

The Santa Fe Valley Specific Plan (SFVSP) EIR (SP95-001) was also reviewed. The SFVSP EIR identified potentially significant impacts related to aesthetic resources, specifically relating to impacts to visually sensitive portions of the SFVSP. Mitigation was included to adopt Design Special Area Regulations for sensitive portions of the plan area to reduce impacts to below a level of significance.

Comments received in response to the Notice of Preparation (NOP) that addressed visual and aesthetic topics included:

- Views onto building rooftops from the east
- Change in view for trail users
- Light pollution
- Compatibility with community character
- Provision of photosimulations
- Analysis of the bulk, mass, scale, coverage, and density of the Project
- Project consistency with MUP and General Plan

These concerns are addressed in the attached reports and summarized in this section. Copies of the NOP and comment letters received in response to the NOP are included in Appendix A.

2.1.1 Background

2.1.1.1 Previous EIR Analysis

Visual quality/aesthetics impacts were addressed in the SFVSP EIR. Mitigation measures aimed at reducing significant visual quality and aesthetic impacts were identified as follows:

- The project shall be required to comply with the "D3" design designator

- Contour or landform grading techniques shall be used onsite to create undulations and variety in the grades of major slopes, closely matching the naturally occurring landforms. The tops and toes of slopes shall be rounded to blend into the surrounding area. Grading methods that enhance plant establishments and ensure long-term viability are recommended. Rock outcrops shall be preserved whenever possible. Tops and toes of slopes shall be rounded where they meet the existing natural grade.
- All areas disturbed or cleared of vegetation for construction shall be revegetated upon completion of construction activities. The selection of plant materials shall be compatible with the character of the landscape unit (e.g., native vegetation).
- The residential and commercial structures within designated viewsheds shall be designed utilizing materials, colors, textures, and scale that are compatible with the vegetation and rock outcrops on the surrounding slopes.
- Screening techniques shall include a combination of planted berms (where possible) to minimize direct views of the site development and the planting of trees and shrubs to block views of incompatible structures or man-made slopes.
- All construction on designated slopes and ridgelines shall be developed in compliance with the “D1” Designator for Visually Sensitive Hillsides/Ridgelines.
- All non-single-family residential development including but not limited to tentative maps, major use permits, and Administrative permits shall be implemented in compliance with the Santa Fe Valley Specific Plan Area Design Guidelines.

As appropriate, the mitigation measures identified above are applicable to the Proposed Project and implementation of these measures will be required as a condition of project approval. The “D” designator does not apply to the project site.

2.1.1.2 *Changes Requiring New Analysis*

Portions of the Project site were identified as being visually sensitive in the previously SFVSP EIR. Since the project proposes a different use than what was assumed in the SFVSP EIR, additional analysis is required.

2.1.2 Existing Conditions

The following sections address the current conditions at the Project site, including the existing environmental setting, viewer sensitivity with regard to visibility of the Project site, and the regulatory framework currently in place.

2.1.2.1 *Existing Setting*

The Project site is located in the southeastern corner of the SFVSP in the unincorporated area of west central San Diego County. The planning area is generally south of Lake Hodges and the Del Dios Gorge, west of 4S Ranch, north of Black Mountain Ranch, and east of Fairbanks Ranch. The east and central parts of the planning area have been developed whereas northern and western areas are more sparsely developed or are undeveloped.

The Project site is surrounded by suburban development on the north, east, and south. The local area also encompasses some open space and undeveloped land. The Project site's general visual environment is composed of an open field with a dense grove of trees in the center of the site. It is generally lower in elevation than the areas to the north, east, and south. It is characterized by a slight rise on the western third of the site. Two residential structures and mature trees occupy this portion of the Project site. Elevations on the property range between approximately 485 feet AMSL in the northwest to 516 feet AMSL near the center of the Project site. The eastern portion consists of flat open land that was once used for agriculture but now supports scrub vegetation. A riparian creek runs north of the Project site in an east-to-west direction and is protected from development by the open space easement. Vegetative cover near the creek consists of scrub and bushes and a few trees. There are no ridges, steep slopes, or rock outcroppings on the Project site.

There are no officially designated scenic vistas, highways, or corridors in the area. Four public roadways occur in the area: Campania Avenue on the north, Rancho Bernardo Road to the southeast, Camino Del Sur to the southwest, and Four Gee Road to the west. While these are not officially designated as scenic roads, the San Dieguito Community Plan calls for all public roadways in the planning area to be considered scenic.

2.1.2.2 Project Site Visibility/Viewshed

On-site Uses and Views

The two residential structures on the Project site are single-story buildings that are screened amidst a dense stand of mostly non-native eucalyptus and palm trees. The density of the trees partially blocks views through the central part of the Project site.

Lighting on the Project site is restricted to a single occupied residence, which has porch and security lighting. Light around the site is generated from the houses located in the north, east, and south. The vicinity is densely developed for miles in eastern, southern, and western directions. As such, there is a general nighttime glow from the development in the region, particularly on nights where cloud cover reflects ambient light back to ground level.

Viewshed

A viewshed is composed of all the surface areas visible from an observer's viewpoint. The viewshed encompasses the locations of viewers likely to be affected by visual changes brought about by Project features. Three types of viewsheds are discussed: existing, topographic, and composite.

Existing Viewshed

The existing viewshed comprises the areas visible from an observer's point of view, taking into account existing buildings and vegetation.

The land uses to the north consist of a 13-acre open space wetland preserve and 63 single-family large-lot residences within the walled Salviati Homes development across Campania Avenue. The open space is a restricted area and there will be no viewer

sensitivity from this perspective toward the Project site. Sidewalks along Campania Avenue are included on both sides of the street and an informal dirt trail parallels the sidewalk on the south side of the street. Some trees and bushes in the open space screen views from the roadway toward the Project site; however, it remains visible from Campania Avenue. Drivers and pedestrians would have a view of the Project site from this perspective. The main entrance to the Salviati Homes development is also located along this roadway.

The backyards of approximately nine homes on the southern periphery of the Salviati Homes development look across Campania Avenue and the existing open space toward the Project site. Three additional homes in the development are adjacent to the Project entry at Castello Circle and face south toward the open space and Project site. The Salviati Homes development is higher in elevation than the Project site; however, it is also surrounded by an approximately six-foot-high solid wall, and the exterior slope supporting the wall is extensively landscaped. Therefore, ground level views to the south towards the Project site are highly restricted. Three homes are opposite the main entrance where there is no solid wall. The homes are set back from the entrance by approximately 300 feet, and two entry buildings, pilasters, a wrought iron gate, and two landscaped "islands" screen the ground level view to the south. The views from these residences look across the biological open space area. There are currently tall bushes or scrub trees directly across from the Project entry at the open space boundary that block views further south. These residences could have a distant, obscured view of the Project site from a second story window.

The area to the northeast and east of the Project site is within the County of San Diego's 4S Ranch Specific Plan. The 4S Ranch land uses within the vicinity of the Project site primarily include single-family residential development, but at higher densities than the single-family estate residential development that lies to the north and northwest of the Project site. The single-family units to the east are on approximately 4,000 square foot lots and the units to the northeast are on approximately 6,250 square foot lots. The rear yards of approximately 15 houses adjacent to the Project site have views into the site. The ground view from these residences looks past wrought iron fencing and a landscaped embankment into the Project site. The second stories have an unobstructed view into the Project site. These houses screen views from further east. There are no roadways or trails in the easterly direction. A paved private easement road runs north/south near the base of the embankment. An undeveloped hill trends north/south approximately 1.2 miles east of the Project site and forms a prominent feature on the eastern horizon. An unmarked trail leads from Rancho Bernardo Road to the crest of this hill. Parts of this trail have a distant view of the Project site.

The southern boundary is formed by Tallus Glen and Wild Horse Glen. To the southeast, a three story multi-family building faces the Project site. The ground floor view of these residences is screened by vegetation and walls, and a parking area. Second and third stories have an unobstructed view into the site. The backs of eight single family residences along Tallus Glen and Wild Horse Glen line the southern boundary. An approximately five-foot high wooden fence partially obstructs views toward the Project site to the north. The buildings along Tallus Glen and Wild Horse

Glen screen full views into the Project site from points farther south, although an oblique and more distant view of the Project site may occur from homes located along a north/south segment of Saintsbury Glen, which intersects Wild Horse Glen at the Project site's southern boundary. The La Viña HOA governs housing in this area. A trail runs parallel to the southern boundary in the buffer between Tallus Glenn/Wild Horse Glen and the site.

Southeast of the three-story building, a segment of Rancho Bernardo Road affords a brief view of the Project site. The San Diego County Sheriff's 4S Ranch Substation is situated here at an elevation of 520 feet, approximately 16 feet higher than the Project site. The main entrance to the substation faces Rancho Bernardo Road and does not have a view of the Project site. The rear of the building and parking area have views into the Project site. The area beyond the substation is within the 4S Ranch community and is developed with multi-family residential uses. Beyond this area is the 4S Commons containing mixed commercial land uses.

Black Mountain is visible approximately two miles southeast of the Project site. Trails and a transmission tower complex are located at the top of the mountain. Panoramic views taken from the mountaintop show the Project site would not be distinguishable from existing development at this distance.

Moving to the southwest, Camino Del Sur, a major east/west public road, intersects Four Gee Road, a north/south public roadway, approximately 500 feet from the southwest Project boundary. Del Sur Town Center, a commercial component of Black Mountain Ranch North Village, is south of this intersection. The Project site would be briefly visible from Camino Del Sur, primarily by eastbound travelers on this roadway.

The area directly west of the Project site is part of a biological open space easement. The width of the open space varies from approximately 200 feet on the north to 220 feet on the south. Approximately 0.3 acres of the easement would be vacated to allow for the Project's proposed access road. The access road would be directly across from the main driveway of the Rancho Santa Fe Fire Station and Training Facility which is located on the west side of Four Gee Road. The view from the fire station into the Project site is partially screened by existing landscaping.

Past Four Gee Road to the west and northwest is Planning Area IV of the SFVSP area. The large open space area along Four Gee Road north of the fire station is reserved for a park and an elementary school. North of the proposed school site at a distance of approximately 0.3 miles is an existing single-family estate residential development. Similarly, there is an existing single-family estate residential development known as Bel Etage Homes along Camino Del Sur west of the Project site and the fire station. Some of the homes in this area have a backyard view of the Project site. Backyards are fenced and landscaping is mature.

Topographic Viewshed

The topographic viewshed is the landform without the screening effect of structures and vegetation. The topographic viewshed is determined by topography absent development and vegetation. As shown in Figure 2.1-1, Topographic Viewshed, the viewshed is largely defined by surrounding hillsides on the north, east, and west. Views

from the south have been determined by the landform modification related to construction of Black Mountain North Village.

Composite Viewshed

The composite viewshed is a compilation of overlapping areas that are visible from a series of viewpoints, such as along a road or trail. The composite viewshed combines information from both the existing and topographic viewshed analysis, as shown in Figure 2.1-2, Key View Index.

2.1.2.3 Visual Character

A viewer observes the visual environment as a whole, not one object at a time. The viewer's understanding of that environment is based on the visual character of objects and the relationships between them. Visual character is the order and combination of patterns that are created by visual elements in a scene. Defining visual character for analyzing impacts under CEQA is an objective process based on a hierarchy of elements, pattern, and order.

Pattern Elements

Elements consist of form, line, color, and texture. Form is of vertical masses of varying density, surrounded by flat areas. The overall form is determined by bulk, mass, size, and shape. The Project site exhibits minimal bulk. The on-site trees are prominent and partially block views through the Project site, particularly from the south. While they occur in clumps, with some breaks, their long vertical shapes do not appear bulky or massive. The Project site is small in size in contrast to surrounding uses and has little mass due to its flatness. The exception is the clumps of trees, which are dense enough in places to appear as a solid mass. The groves are also bulky due the height of the trees. Dense development is located to the north, east, and south, making the Project site seem less in form than its surroundings.

The line of sight consists of short horizontals in the form of palms and underbrush broken by occasional verticals in the form of trees and brush. The lines suddenly go sharply vertical at the grove. It is these vertical elements that dominate the view of the Project site from a distance. The existing color and texture transition from the fallow fields that make up the west and east portions of the site to the heavy concentration of trees in the center. The color is primarily brown and olive green in tone, with a white accent of plastic fencing. The existing buildings are surrounded by vegetation and do little to alter the color and texture of the area. Overall texture is rough, defined by the weedy fields and unmaintained vegetation.

Pattern Character

The Project site's pattern character can be defined by dominance, scale, diversity, and continuity. The Project site does not represent a dominant feature in the landscape of the region due to development to the north, east, and south, most of which is at a higher elevation than the Project site, diminishing the site's overall dominance. Within the Project site, the clumps of eucalyptus and palm trees dominate other features. The scale of the Project site is small when viewed against the scale of surrounding and nearby development such as the Salviati Homes and 4S Ranch developments to north

and east, and the Del Sur Town Center to the southwest. Within the Project site, the existing trees establish the scale, while residences and fields are visually subordinated and obscure.

The Project site exhibits diversity when compared to offsite uses. That is, it represents a different kind of use than is commonly found in the area. The surrounding area either is already developed with suburban uses, or is slated for development. The Project site also contrasts with open space to the north because it is fully developed, in contrast to the flat, undisturbed nature of the open space. Within the Project site there is little diversity due to the trees that diminish the visibility of other uses. There is some continuity along the northern boundary where fields blend with existing open space; however, the site as a whole seems visually out of place due to the contrast with existing uses, which present a unified visual impression of having been planned, with all visual elements coordinated through architecture and landscaping. The on-site uses of the Project site exhibit few coordinated elements. The site is rough in contrast to the visual elements around it and continuity is low.

The interplay of pattern elements and pattern character at the Project site initially create the visual sense of a rural setting; however, the small scale of the site, the dominance of the trees and their unmaintained nature and the lack of extensive open land around the grove work against this image. The surrounding suburban setting that dominates the region further diminishes this effect. As a consequence the Project site appears visually isolated.

2.1.2.4 Visual Quality

Visual quality is evaluated by identifying the vividness, intactness and unity, each defined below, present in the viewshed. In general, the visual quality of the site is typical of the surrounding area, as explained below.

Vividness

Vividness is defined as the visual power or memorability of landscape components as they combine in distinctive visual patterns. According to the Visual Resources Impact Report, the overall effect of the Project site from off-site is disjointed and not unified; therefore, the overall impression of the Project site's vividness is low to moderate.

Intactness

Intactness is defined as the visual integrity of the natural and man-made landscape and its freedom from encroaching elements. According to the Visual Resources Impact Report, the Project site's intactness is diminished by the proximity of development on the north, east, south, and southwest. The Project site is moderately intact.

Unity

Unity is the visual coherence and compositional harmony of the landscape considered as a whole. Viewed as a complete landscape, the existing Project site has a moderate level of unity.

2.1.2.5 Viewer Response

Viewer response is composed of viewer sensitivity and exposure. Viewer sensitivity is defined both as the viewers' concern for scenic quality and the viewers' response to change in the visual resources that make up the view. Viewer exposure is typically assessed by measuring the number of viewers exposed to the resource change, type of viewer activity, duration of the view, the speed at which the viewer moves, and position of the viewer. A viewer's response is also affected by the degree to which he/she is receptive to the visual details, character, and quality of the surrounding landscape.

Four viewer groups have been identified, as described below.

Residents

Residents in the surrounding developments to the north, east, and south would be the most sensitive to the development of the Project site. Viewers to the east and south potentially have the most exposure to the Project site as a result of their proximity to the site. Viewer sensitivity and exposure for residents to the north is moderate due to distance and existing walls, landscaping, and vegetation. Viewer sensitivity for residents from the northwest is low. The potential visual impacts from residences along Wild Horse Glen to the east are high. Overall awareness of residents is moderate to high.

Motorists

The sensitivity of motorists traveling east and west along Campania Avenue north of the Project site would be limited by distance to the Project site, the transitory nature of automobile travel, and the speed with which views change and overlap. Sensitivity, exposure, and viewer awareness would be moderate.

Drivers heading south along Four Gee Road would have a direct view of the Project site across open space. Drivers heading north would have an oblique view before they are past the site. As along Campania Avenue, sensitivity and exposure of these viewers would be limited by distance to the Project site, the transitory nature of automobile travel, and the speed with which views change and overlap. Sensitivity would be high for southbound travelers and moderate for northbound travelers. Exposure and viewer awareness would be moderate.

Motorists on Camino Del Sur heading northeast would have a brief view of the Project site. Motorists traveling on Rancho Bernardo Road to the southeast and Camino Del Sur to the southwest would not have prominent views of the Project site due to distance, existing obstructions, and speed of travel. Viewer sensitivity and exposure are low.

Motorists along Wild Horse Glen parallel the Project site's southern boundary. Viewer sensitivity is high.

Pedestrians and Recreationalists

Pedestrians on the north, south, and west of the Project site would be the most sensitive to the development of the Project site. Pedestrians walking on the sidewalk and trail along Campania Avenue would have an oblique view of the Project site, looking across existing open space. Viewer sensitivity, exposure, and awareness are moderate.

The sidewalk along Four Gee Road would also have views into the Project site, but from a closer vantage. For recreationalists near the proposed main entry, viewer sensitivity, exposure, and awareness would be high, reducing to a moderate level as one proceeds north. For recreationalists using the southern boundary trail along Wild Horse Glen, the Project site boundary would be located approximately 40 feet away and views would be unobstructed. Viewer sensitivity, exposure, and awareness would be high.

Public Facilities

Views from the sheriff's substation on Rancho Bernardo Road are provided from the rear parking lot. The substation itself faces away from the Project site. Separation from the Project site, functional priorities at the substation, and a high, opaque fence indicate viewer sensitivity, exposure, and awareness are low.

Views from the fire station are across Four Gee Road and over open space to the Project site. The main entry to the Project would be across from the fire station. Separation from the Project site and functional priorities at the fire station result in moderate viewer sensitivity and exposure, and moderate to high viewer awareness.

An unnamed neighborhood park is located at the intersection of Campania Avenue and Camino San Thomas approximately 0.17 mile from the Project site. The park has views of treetops located on the Project site. Visual interest is focused on the major activity areas of the park, including a ball field, the immediate landscaping, parking, and suburban streets bordering the park. Tall vegetation associated with the nearby creek blocks views to the southwest. The trees on the Project site are a minor visual detail in the park surroundings. Viewer sensitivity, exposure, and awareness are low. An OMWD recycled water facility has low viewer sensitivity, exposure, and awareness because the site is not directly visible and all facility activities take place behind a six-foot solid brick wall.

2.1.2.6 Key Viewpoints

The selected key views from public viewpoints were identified based on the number and frequency of views, the potential sensitivity of viewers, and the types of Project-related features that would be visible. These locations were selected where viewer sensitivity, exposure, or awareness was high or moderate and include the residential areas immediately surrounding the Project site, the streets that border the Project site on the north, south, and west, sidewalks and trails, and public areas where activities were focused in such a way as to afford prolonged or vivid views of the Project site. Ten key views were selected to analyze potential impacts to visual resources. Figure 2.1-2, Key View Index, identifies the perspective and location of each view. Existing perspectives at each key view are illustrated in Figures 2.1-3 through 2.1-12. Refer to the Visual Resources Impact Report for a description of existing views. An analysis of visual changes at each key view is presented in Section 2.1.3.1, below.

2.1.2.7 REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

Local

County of San Diego General Plan Conservation and Open Space Element

The Conservation and Open Space Element (COS) of the County General Plan combines what formerly were four separate elements (Open Space, Conservation, Scenic Highway, and Energy) and describes the natural resources within the County and goals and policies to preserve them. The COS provides direction for future growth and development in the County with respect to the conservation, management, and utilization of natural (biological, water, agricultural, paleontological, mineral, visual, dark sky, and cultural resources; protection and preservation of open space; and provision of park and recreation resources. The following policies identified in the County of San Diego General Plan (August 2011) Conservation and Open Space Element are applicable to the Project:

1. **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.
 - a. **Policy 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.
 - b. **Policy 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:
 - i. Creative site planning
 - ii. Integration of natural features into the Project
 - iii. Appropriate scale, materials, and design to complement the surrounding natural landscape
 - iv. Minimal disturbance of topography
 - v. Clustering of development so as to preserve a balance of open space vistas, natural features, and community character
 - vi. Creation of contiguous open space networks
 - c. **Policy COS-11.7: Underground Utilities.** Require new development to place utilities underground and encourage “undergrounding” in existing development to maintain viewsheds, reduce hazards associated with hanging lines and utility poles, and to keep pace with current and future technologies. The concept of “undergrounding” in the initial phases of a project not only increases the aesthetic value of the surrounding viewshed, but can also reduce costs in the long run since less infrastructure is exposed to the elements.

2. **Goal COS-13: Dark Skies.** Preserved dark skies that contribute to rural character and are necessary for the local observatories.
 - a. **Policy 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.
 - b. **Policy 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.

San Dieguito Community Plan

The San Dieguito Community Plan (SDCP) (August 2011) augments the 2011 General Plan and contains goals and policies specific to the San Dieguito community planning area. Guidance related to aesthetics is contained in several elements of the SDCP, including the Community Character, Land Use, Circulation, Conservation, Scenic Highways, and Open Space elements. The SDCP designates the Project site as an SPA with an assigned residential density of 0.4 dwelling units per acre. Goals and policies are thereby deferred to the adopted Specific Plan for the site.

Santa Fe Valley Specific Plan

The SFVSP provides direction for the design of projects so that they are consistent with and have minimal impacts on the planning area's visual resources. Policies and guidelines are described in the Conservation and Open Space Element (Chapter 3) and the Community Design Element (Chapter 7) of the SFVSP.

San Diego County Zoning Ordinance

Section 6320 of the Zoning Ordinance has performance standards for glare for all commercial and industrial uses in residential, commercial, and industrial zones. All commercial and industrial uses subject to this section shall be operated in a manner that does not produce glare, which is readily detectable without instruments by the average person beyond the stated zones in this section. Section 6322 controls excessive or unnecessary outdoor light emissions, which produce unwanted illumination of adjacent properties by restricting outdoor lighting usage. Section 6324 establishes limitations upon lighting permitted in required yards by Section 4835. Of particular importance is the limitation upon light trespass (not to exceed a value of 0.2 foot-candles measured five feet onto the adjacent property).

The property is zoned Specific Plan (S88). The site carries a "G" height designator, which allows buildings to be a maximum of 35 feet and two stories.

San Diego County Light Pollution Code

The Light Pollution Code (LPC) (County of San Diego Code of Ordinances, Title 5, Chapter 2), also known as the Dark Sky Ordinance, was adopted "to minimize light pollution for the enjoyment and use of property and the night environment by the citizens of San Diego County and to protect the Palomar and Mount Laguna observatories from the effects of light pollution that have a detrimental effect on

astronomical research by restricting the permitted use of outdoor light fixtures on private property” (Sec. 59.101). The LPC regulates applicants for any permit required by the County for work involving outdoor light fixtures, unless exempt. The LPC was established to limit harmful effects of outdoor lighting on the Palomar and Mount Laguna Observatories. The LPC designates all areas within a fifteen (15) mile radius of each observatory as Zone A, with all other areas of the County designated as Zone B. Zone A has more stringent lighting restrictions, including limits on decorative lighting, so that night skies are dark enough for clear viewing through the telescopes at the observatories.

2.1.3 Analysis of Project Effects and Determination as to Significance

2.1.3.1 Visual Character and Quality

Guidelines for the Determination of Significance

A significant impact to visual resources would occur if the Project would:

1. Introduce 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.

Guideline Source

The significance guideline is taken from the *County of San Diego Guidelines for Determining Significance and Report Format and Content Requirements - Visual Resources* (July 30, 2007).

Analysis

Project site design elevations are presented in Figures 1-3 through 1-6. As shown, the overall site design locates the tallest buildings in a loose cluster near the center of the Project site, with lower buildings and low profile uses such as parking and recreation uses arrayed around the periphery. Varied building heights and setbacks are also used to avoid a monolithic appearance and reduce building mass. The tallest building in the center is accented by three towers¹ that break long horizontal lines and add variety to the roofline.

The concept landscape plan prepared for the Project provides for three or four planting zones in each direction to provide screening of all buildings and place multiple visual layers between off-site viewers and the Project site, particularly to the south, east, and west. Landscape details are shown in Figure 1-7, Conceptual Landscape Plan, and Figure 1-8, Conceptual Landscape Plan Detail. The planting palette is provided in

¹ The three towers would be over 35 feet high, which is the current limit allowed by the Zoning Ordinance for the Project site. The Project is applying for an exception to this regulation that would permit the main sanctuary to be 40 feet in height and allow for three towers, two at 48 feet and one at 53 feet.

Figure 1-9, Conceptual Landscape Plan Notes. Additional information about proposed landscaping is presented in Section 1.2.2, Project's Component Parts.

The Project will incorporate solar panels on the rooftops of some buildings. Solar panels would be shielded behind building facades and the surface of the solar panels would incorporate a non-glare finish.

Key Viewpoints

An analysis of the change in visual character and quality at each key view is presented below. Additional detail is provided in Appendix C.

Key View 1

Figure 2.1-3, Key View 1, Looking from Southeast Corner of Site, illustrates the Project at completion. The view is of established vegetation prior to full maturity. As shown, buildings and rooflines would be visible above a range of landscape elements, presenting a low visual profile. The buildings would present a varied roofline and some would be more distant than others. The red barrel tile roofs with high window elements break the mass of the buildings and add interest, as do the towers. Mass is diminished by landscaping, particularly the citrus lining the fence in the foreground. Scale is diminished by the development design, which calls for construction at five to ten feet below the existing grade.

A six-foot high vinyl-coated chain link fence that would be landscaped with vines would replace the existing chain link fence, and citrus trees and other trees and shrubs would line the Project site boundary and the parking area beyond. The parking area would be near the fence, shown in brown.

Existing mature eucalyptus trees would be removed and replaced by a range of drought-tolerant trees that would grow to varied heights. As a result, a vegetative cover that is less intense and more dispersed would replace the density of vegetation in the existing condition. This varied vegetative cover over most of the site would replace the tall cluster of vegetation surrounded by flat fields. The overall change would be from a single mass of vegetation with tall trees to a broadly landscaped area with smaller but varied trees, in addition to a range of bushes and vines. The view of northern foothills would be relatively unchanged. The western view would open up as a result of removal of the eucalyptus grove.

The primary viewer group from this perspective would be pedestrians and recreationalists using the trail along the southern Property boundary. The view would shift from a grove of tall trees along a chain link and plastic white fence and open field to a view of red roofs, intermittent building facades, landscaped vinyl coated fencing, parking areas, and an extensive landscaped area stretching to the north.

While the Project would result in a different visual experience at this key view, it would present a high quality visual impression due to unity and quality of design, and would not detract from the visual quality of the trail.

Key View 2

Figure 2.1-4, Key View 2, Wild Horse Glen at Intersection, Looking North, shows the central part of the Project site and is the most comprehensive view of the proposed

buildings. The plantings shown are portrayed as being established but not fully mature. As shown, the entry drive to the left is obscured by landscaping. The circular entry plaza and three main buildings converge at a point near the center of the view. The tower at the approximate center of the complex is the tallest feature of the Project, has sides 16 feet wide, and remains visible above the trees. A second tower element is visible to the right although trees would block the view of the lower parts of the structure. The higher elements are in harmony with the overall appearance of the buildings in terms of style, design, building material, and scale. The towers complement the overall visual impression by varying the building profile and breaking mass of the structures. The increased height of building walls and towers would be less obtrusive than the existing barriers. The overall visual experience is harmonious.

Decorative fencing consisting of a six-foot vinyl-coated fence with pilasters and wrought ironwork atop a solid earth toned wall between one and 12.4 feet in height would replace the white fence. This southern wall would support a cut slope on the Project site, so only the top two or three feet would be visible from off site. Fences would also be landscaped with vines and shrubs.

The overall change is from a dense wall of vegetation and a rustic fence to a lower profile of varied rooflines, a decorative fence, and dispersed vegetation. The intensity is dispersed and flattened. The view would acquire more depth because the large trees, a current barrier to views northward, would be removed.

Three viewer groups would be affected from this key view. Stationary viewers living in the apartment and residences fronting Wild Horse Glen would have an unobstructed view of the Project site. Existing views provide a close-in view of rustic elements, while the after view would provide a deeper view of developed elements (architecturally varied buildings, a varied roof line of red tile, and landscaping) against a sparsely developed horizon. Wild Horse Glen serves as access to parking along the back side of residences in the area. As such, it gets little through traffic. Motorists would have an oblique view of the Project site. When parking, the view would be similar to the stationary view but would be more fleeting. Recreationalists' views would change from a line of tall eucalyptus trees and a dense grove bordered by a rustic white fence to a view of a developed site with a landscaped parking area and extensive landscaping.

The change in views from this key view would not be adverse because the Project would not dominate the visual scene. The overall visual experience for viewer groups would not be significantly degraded.

Key View 3

Figure 2.1-5, Key View 3, Looking Northeast from Southwest Property Corner, shows the Project entry on the left and decorative fencing. The center of the photo shows the focal point of the Project, consisting of the sanctuary and two other buildings. The tallest tower provides visual interest because it breaks the horizontal of the sanctuary building with textured verticals. As shown, landscaping associated with the main entry and central plaza obscure most of the building elements. The distant view to the north would be obscured by trees at the entry. Some of the hillside beyond the site to the east would be visible through the trees.

This key view also shows a shift from a rustic setting in the foreground, bracketed by development, to a developed site. The Project provides visual continuity between developed areas. The visual shift from clumps of prominent trees to a lower canopy of vegetation reduces visual dominance and creates consistency. The simulated view maintains key visual features, consisting of vegetative cover, the hillsides, depth of view, and the strong horizontals of the original view. Where a key visual feature is removed, as in the case of the trees, other visual features replace it to maintain visual quality. The simulation shows that vegetative cover is more extensive and variation is maintained by a variety of tree types, some of which have color elements. The view is consistent with surrounding development, presents a different but visually interesting visually experience, and maintains key visual features.

Three viewer groups would be affected from this key view. Stationary viewers living in the residences fronting Wild Horse Glen and Tallus Glen have an unobstructed view of the Project site, which appears open on the west and vegetated with tall trees on the east. These viewers would see a shift from rustic elements bordered by development to developed elements screened by a canopy of vegetation.

Motorists along Wild Horse Glen and Tallus Glen would have an oblique view of the site and the view would shift from a dirt road entry to a paved entry with decorative fencing and landscaping. Wild Horse Glen and Tallus Glen primarily provide access and parking for the neighborhood and get little through traffic. When parking, the view would be similar to the stationary view but would be more fleeting. Motorists on Tallus Glen would have a fleeting view of the Project site because only a short segment of the road has a view of the Property before it veers south away from the site.

Recreationalists' views would change from a view of trees and fields lined with a white fence to a view of a more extensive developed site of high quality architectural features and landscaping. Views would retain a high level of interest and variation, as well as maintain key features of the view, or replacing them with visually interesting elements. Views to the northern foothills would be partially obscured while views toward the eastern hills would open up with removal of trees on the east.

The overall visual experience for viewer groups would not be degraded. The change in views would not be adverse because the Project would maintain key visual elements or replace them with visually interesting features.

Key View 4

Figure 2.1-6, Key View 4, Looking Northeast from Intersection, features the entrance road to the Project. The dirt entry road with white fence is replaced by natural stone and earth-toned elements, as well as a manufactured landscaped bank two to 10 feet in height. Monumentation adjacent to the road identifies the Project site. The entry leads to the main campus, seen beneath the trees on the right. The central mass of the buildings, including the higher tower elements, is located in the center of the simulation and is obscured by landscaping. Views to the north, seen right of and above Four Gee Road, are opened slightly. The Salviati Homes development becomes visible through the trees. Trees border the entranceway and enhance the view of the barren field and the extensive vegetative cover is maintained with Project implementation. The eastern hills appear unobstructed in the background.

Three viewer groups would be affected from Key View 4. Stationary viewers living in the residences fronting Tallus Glen have an unobstructed view of the Project site, which appears vegetated with tall trees. Motorists on Four Gee Road would have an oblique view of the Project site. For recreationalists, the view would change from a view of trees and fields lined with a white fence to a view of a developed site with buildings, an entry road lined with trees, and landscaping that is more dispersed and less dense. Views to the northern foothills would become intermittently more visible. Pedestrians and recreationalists using the sidewalk would experience retained visual elements including the open space and distant views. Tree elements would be visually effective in screening buildings, and the tree-lined road would be a new and prominent visual addition. The view would present a high quality visual impression.

Key View 5

Figure 2.1-7, Key View 5, Looking East from Four Gee Road, shows that the Project would maintain the biological open space in the foreground. The dense, tall vegetation onsite is replaced with lower, but more dispersed, vegetative cover. A line of decorative native trees is seen along the property line. A retaining wall with landscaping is visible in the center mid-ground. The view looks past a decorative wrought iron fence toward the varied roofline of the buildings. The main building, which is visible from this vantage point, is approximately 550 feet from the roadway and is not obtrusive. The foothills in the background are visible through existing trees. Overall shape appears as a dome that curves with the land. Visually the site is less prominent but better integrated into the setting. The overall visual quality is maintained and not severely disrupted.

Three viewer groups would be affected from Key View 5. Fire station staff would look across the open space and fields toward the Project site and would see a view that is unchanged in the foreground, and a landscaped campus-like development in the mid-ground. The Project would exhibit strong horizontal lines atop a gradually curving ground surface. Building verticals would be screened by vegetation. In depth views are not affected. It presents a visually harmonious impression, with unifying visual features such as red tiled roofs, varied building angles, and extensive landscaping.

Motorists on Four Gee Road would have an oblique view of the Project site, and would primarily see the open space in the foreground, which would be unchanged. A fleeting view of the interior of the Project site would reveal a visually consistent Project and hillsides beyond. Key elements of the view are maintained and new elements are visually well designed and of high quality. For pedestrians along Four Gee Road the view would change from one of fields and a clump of mature trees to one of a landscaped area, red tile roofs, an entry road lined with trees, and landscaping that is more dispersed and less dense. The experience would be similar to that of the motorists, but viewing time would last longer. The Project provides many features to sustain visual interest from this direction, including decorative earth toned fencing, natural stone pilasters, covered walkways, varying roof angles, and towers of varying heights. Views to the eastern foothills would remain intermittently visible. Minimal changes to key features are evident and the overall design is of high quality.

Key View 6

Figure 2.1-8, Key View 6, Looking South from Campania Avenue, shows the retained trees and open space in the foreground and the sanctuary and towers against the horizon line. The roof of Building A is seen on the right and the roof of Building D is seen on the left. One of the towers is also visible. The main building is approximately 600 feet away. The highest elements of the Project remain below the horizon line. Visual attention to the horizontals of the building design elements is diminished by the towers, which are more prominent. The higher building wall of the sanctuary is visible and appears bracketed by the towers, providing an interesting visual feature that modifies the impression of mass. Landscaping adjacent to the sanctuary, visible as dark verticals, effectively modifies the building mass. The higher building elements provide visual interest from this perspective and do not interfere with distant views. Views in the central part of the site would open to afford a view of Black Mountain. The overall quality of the view is maintained.

A fence and line of landscaping would be located atop a solid retaining wall varying in height from approximately six to 11 feet. The wall would not be readily apparent from this distance. Landscaping along the perimeter fence and parking area is visible in the left mid-ground and obscures views of the apartment building south of the Project site. Buildings on the Project site would be lower than the apartment building visible on the left.

Three viewer groups would be affected from Key View 6. Stationary viewers in the Salviati Homes development would not be significantly impacted in this view because the varied and colorful foreground dominates and remains intact. The Project site is approximately 600 feet away and would not be visually dominant. Visual interest is heightened due to the many design elements visible from this perspective, including towers, building orientation, trellises, and landscaping. Motorists on Campania Avenue would have an oblique view of the Project site. For pedestrians along the road, the view would change from one of trees and bushes interspersed in an open field to one of red tiled roofs with buildings screened by existing and proposed vegetation. Visually the Project would be less noticeable in terms of vertical mass, but the site coverage would be more extensive. The predominant features of the immediate landscape would not change and the middle distance view would be altered but not degraded by the Project. Views to Black Mountain would not be obstructed.

A lower, smoother, and longer line of development and vegetation, which has visual continuity, replaces the varied horizon created by the existing onsite trees in the mid-ground. The overall visual impression of the horizon to the south remains intact because of the distance of the Project from the viewer. The Project creates strong horizontals that are not present in the existing view, primarily from the retaining wall and fence seen below the buildings and landscaping. Landscaping is proposed as part of the Project design to screen the wall and fence from views north of the open space. These measures would help soften views and reduce visibility of the retaining walls; however, the long horizontal created by the retaining wall and fence would detract from or contrast with the existing visual character and/or quality of the area (**Impact VIS-1**). Impacts are potentially significant and require mitigation.

- **Impact VIS-1** The Proposed Project would introduce a retaining wall and fence that would detract from or contrast with the existing visual character and/or quality of the area.

Key View 7

Figure 2.1-9, Key View 7, Looking Southwest from Northeast of the Site, provides a view of the proposed parking area for the Project, seen as a beige area on the left. A vinyl coated chain link fence with landscaping borders the parking lot. Red tiled roofs and towers are visible in the mid-ground. Landscaping screens the apartments on the left. The open space area on the right remains undisturbed. The fire station tower can still be seen on the west side of Four Gee Road. The sanctuary and towers on the Project site define part of the horizon line. For the sake of reference, the white training tower of the fire station, which is visible in the distance, is 53 feet in height. The 53-foot tower element of the Project, in comparison, is less obtrusive than the white, stand-alone training tower, even though it is closer to the viewer. The Project towers have been integrated into the overall design, are surrounding rooflines at different angles, and benefit from the screening of extensive landscaping.

Two viewer groups would be affected from Key View 7. Westbound motorists on Campania Avenue would have a brief view of the Project site through existing vegetation. For pedestrians along Campania Avenue, the Project would introduce a new visual element in the middle ground. Tree cover is not as high but is more extensive. While closer to the viewer, the Project provides extensive landscaping and screens views to existing development to the south. The overall integrity of the view remains intact. The view would change from one of an open field extending west and south to one of an open field to the west and a landscaped parking area toward the south. The red tiled roofs with buildings screened by existing and proposed vegetation would be visible above trees in the mid-ground. The background would remain unchanged for this group. While the nature of the view changes from this key view, the new view presents strong visual elements that do not degrade the view.

Key View 8

Figure 2.1-10, Key View 8, Looking from East of Project, shows the effect of replacing the field with development. Foreground landscaping remains, but the Project dominates the mid-ground. As shown, the most immediate view of the Project site would be the landscaped parking area, vinyl-coated fencing, and landscaping along the Project boundary. These low-profile uses would allow views of Buildings D and E, which are 265 and 235 feet from the off-site property lines, respectively. The sanctuary and tower elements are clearly visible left of center. For reference, the apartments on the left are 40 feet high built on a pad approximately 10 feet above the site, giving them an effective height of 50 feet. The towers incorporate vertical elements and building walls at contrasting angles from the main walls, relieving the bulk that the buildings would otherwise project. Window elements in the higher wall and tower designs break surface mass and add visual interest. The overall effect can be contrasted with the existing apartments, which are more obtrusive. The view of the apartments on the left remains unchanged. More of the Black Mountain North Village construction area is visible in the background.

The stationary viewer group would be residents in the homes adjacent to the site, which would see a changed visual environment. Extensive design measures have been incorporated into the Project and include a high quality and visually effective design, setbacks, dense landscaping at four levels along the perimeter fence, and four layers of landscaping between the property boundary and buildings. These measures would be effective in diminishing impacts; however, this visual change represents a significant impact (**Impact VIS-2a**) and mitigation is required.

- **Impact VIS-2a** The Proposed Project would result in a change that contributes to the valued visual character of the area (**Impact VIS-2a**).

Key View 9

As shown in Figure 2.1-11, Key View 9, Looking Northeast from Camino Del Sur, the Project site would be screened by existing vegetation and buildings. The horizon line is not affected by the design. The ridgeline behind the Project site is clearly visible, though broken in places by the proposed buildings.

Two viewer groups would be affected from Key View 9. Motorists on Camino Del Sur would have a brief view of the Project site in the distance. It would appear as a continuation of the development around it. The Project's red tiled roofs would be apparent, as would a tower and mature landscaping. The red tile roofs and consistent color treatment make it visually interesting. Pedestrians would have a similar view but it would be prolonged. The Project design, evident in the varied rooflines, building surfaces, and towers, provides visual interest while deeper views to the horizon remain open to the viewer.

Key View 10

As shown in Figure 2.1-12, Key View 10, Looking Northwest from Rancho Bernardo Road, the Project site appears in the gap between the sheriff's station on the left and the 4S Ranch development on the right. Horizon trees, seen as dark shapes on the left of the gap, are replaced by a lower, broader shape with varied color elements. Red tile roofs and some building walls are seen in the distance. The use complements structures in the foreground in color and roofing materials. The Project site is distant and appears in conjunction with existing development.

The key viewer groups affected from this point are motorists, pedestrians/recreationalists, and users of the public facility on the left. Motorists traveling on Rancho Bernardo Road would have a fleeting view of the Project through the narrow gap in existing development. The Project remains lower than the roadway and located in the distance, in contrast to existing features in the foreground. Pedestrians and recreationalists would have similar views, but they would last longer. The visual focus from this point is on the facilities in the foreground, and trees in the mid-ground, which would remain. The distant view would change, but it is a small part of the overall appearance of the area, and the design and landscaping of the Project would render it unobtrusive. Recreationalists using the trail that leads toward the site would have a direct view, but from this point it would provide a point of visual interest in the distance.

Solar Panels

The Project will incorporate solar panels on the rooftops of some buildings. Solar panels would be shielded behind building facades and the surface of the solar panels would incorporate a non-glare finish. The Addendum to the Visual Resources Impact Report (TRS Consultants 2017) included three photo simulations to illustrate the visual effect of including solar on the rooftops of the proposed buildings. As shown in Figure 1, 2 and 3 of Appendix C of the DSEIR, solar panels would be screened by proposed building facades and rooflines and would not be visible from mid-distance, distant and close-distance views. No impact is identified due to the use of rooftop solar.

Visual Character

Overall, pattern elements of form, line, color, and texture would change on the Project site. Form would be altered from large rectilinear masses represented by existing vegetation, to a dome-like appearance of red tiled roofs, building walls and towers, and some trees at the high point, with lower buildings, low profile uses, and vegetation around the periphery. The effect of the Project on form is low.

Line would transition from the existing rigid verticals to a mix of verticals, created by buildings and trees, and horizontals, created by landscaping, retaining walls, and trellises along walkways. The Project would also introduce some curves to the visual impression through use of a curved entry, placement of buildings around a curved central plaza, and through the use of landscaping. The overall visual effect of the Project on line would be low to moderate.

Color would change from the existing brown and olive green to a range of earth-toned shades and green with color accents. The overall color effect would be a shift from dark to light. The visual effect of the Project on color would be moderate to high.

The Project would change site texture to a more fine-grained texture of building surfaces broken by vertical and horizontal elements and partially screened by maintained vegetation. The effect of the Project on visual texture is moderate.

Pattern character would change in terms of dominance, scale, diversity, and continuity. The Project site is not visually dominant when compared to other uses in the area, which tend to be larger or visually more prominent. The towers of the Project, proposed to be in excess of 35 feet, interrupt the horizon line from some views, but do not dominate the horizon or block vistas. The Project would remove the local dominance of trees and replace it with a planned use that would have harmonized rather than dominant elements. The effect of the Project on dominance is low.

The Project scale would remain consistent with other uses in the area such as the three-story apartments to the southeast. Two of the proposed buildings would be two stories, and three would be one story in height. The Project encompasses a total building area of 89,234 square feet across five buildings. As documented in the Visual Resources Impact Report, this scale is within the range of buildings found throughout the area, which range from 63,000 to 893,000 square feet. Additionally, the Project's site coverage is 13.6 percent. Average coverage for area buildings is 27.6 percent, so the Project's site coverage is generally below what is common in the area. The Project is consistent with the scale of use and site coverage in the area. Building mass would

be set back from the Project boundary on all sides, providing a reduction in the visual effect and allowing adequate area for additional landscaping along sidewalks and in front of structures. The open space on the north of the Project site would not be disrupted with Project implementation. Project orientation and the retention of existing vegetation would maintain visual scale. The effect of the Project on scale is moderate.

The diversity of the Project site would be increased with Project implementation. The Project would introduce structural elements, along with vegetative cover. Buildings and landscaping would be varied in texture, color, and shape. The overall result would be a varied view of an extensively landscaped area with some buildings visible among the trees and lower profile landscaped parking, sitting, and recreation areas along the periphery of the Project site. Project orientation and the retention of existing vegetation would maintain a balanced visual diversity. The effect of the Project on diversity is low.

The Project site's internal continuity is diminished when surrounding development is considered. From the visually prominent points on the Project site, offsite suburban development is readily visible. The overall effect is one of isolation of the site's rural character rather than continuity with surrounding areas. The Project is in scale and would have complementary visual features to surrounding uses. The overall landscaping plan further unifies the design and gives the site a high level of continuity. Project effects on continuity are low to moderate.

Visual Quality

Visual quality is defined by the changes in vividness, intactness or unity.

Vividness

The Project would result in a visual change in that the dominant grove would be eliminated and buildings would be constructed and grouped over a more extensive area. The Project is planned so that plazas and walks between buildings would allow views through the Project site to horizon lines beyond the Property. The Project site would be extensively landscaped. The Project site's vividness would be reduced due to the elimination of the dominant grove of trees; however, the unifying characteristics, particularly the site plan, architectural continuity, and the landscaping's canopy effect, would project a vivid impression of quality. The Project site would be vivid and unified by design. The effect on vividness would be moderate.

The construction period would result in a temporary visual effect that would reduce the Project site's vividness. Specifically, the tall trees on the Project site would be eliminated while new buildings and landscaping would not be installed yet. This temporary effect, expected to last up to nine months, would result in a high effect on vividness during this time; however, given the limited duration of the change impacts remain less than significant.

Intactness

The Project would flatten the central part of the Project site and establish a consistent architectural and landscape design over the Site. The Project would implement a theme and style reflective of visual elements that predominate in the area. These include a unifying theme of a campus-like setting and a consistent Mediterranean/Tuscan architectural design style for all structures. Surrounding areas would not detract from

the intactness of the Project site because it would be visually unified by its architectural design and landscaping.

Unity

The Project would have a high level of unity. The Project site, building, and landscaping have been designed congruently to provide a high level of integration of elements and a feeling of consistency, quality and permanence as well as avoid dominance. Landscaping would protect and enhance the views.

Consistency with Design Regulations

The Project design has been developed in conformance with the policies and design guidelines in the SFVSP. Consistency with design regulations is discussed in Section 2.1.3.4 below.

2.1.3.2 Valued Visual Features

Guidelines for the Determination of Significance

A significant impact to visual resources would occur if the Project would:

1. 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.

Guideline Source

The significance guideline is taken from *the County of San Diego Guidelines for Determining Significance and Report Format and Content Requirements - Visual Resources* (2007).

Analysis

The Project site at currently consists of two residential structures screened by a grove of trees, and tilled fields with some weeds growing in them. The visual character of the site would change as a result of Project implementation to a more extensively developed area with five buildings and parking areas, walkways, and a plaza.

There are no designated landmarks on the Project site. The large vacant residence onsite would be removed as part of the Project. It was evaluated in a historical resources report for its potential historic value in terms of its architect and design. According to Section 2.3, Cultural Resources, the house does not have historical value in these respects.

There are no prominent rock outcroppings or other geologic features on the Project site. Biological open space is present on the Project site's northwest corner. Although biologically significant, this small area has low visual prominence, consisting of dense brush and scattered eucalyptus. In addition, this area would be left intact by the Project.

Large eucalyptus trees and smaller palm trees and bushes would be removed during Project construction. The trees occur in clumps primarily in the center of the site, but also along the southern and western boundaries. They are not maintained. The trees

were evaluated for biological significance in Section 2.2, Biological Resources. While the trees on the Project site are not designated as a significant visual resource in the SFVSP or the environmental document for that specific plan, they are a noticeable visual feature of the area.

The existing trees represent a visual amenity in the area. For views from the north, they screen residential development to the south. From the east, the groves are visible at a distance. For residents to the south, the trees in the center of the site dominate views to the north because they are close to the boundary and are particularly dense. As a result, they largely block views to the foothills on the north. The grove is visible from the west, across open space.

During Project implementation, the grove would be replaced by buildings and extensive landscaping. The extent of vegetated area of the site would increase because landscaping would be used throughout the developed area. New trees would be shorter but would cover a wider area, providing a canopy effect. Shape would change from clumps of tall verticals with sprays of palm leaves to a more domed shape characterized by a canopy effect, with some red roofed building elements rising above the canopy. Predominant tree color would change from the characteristic dull olive of eucalyptus to bright and light green with colored accents from tree flowers. The buildings on the site would be integrated into this overall design, so that the visual experience would involve a combination of elements rather than a single element.

The overall visual appearance of the site with respect to the trees would change from tall, unmaintained vegetation to a canopy of trees with a broader color palette and consistent screening effects. This change in tree cover, which contributes to the valued visual character of the area, represents a significant impact (**Impact VIS-2b**). Mitigation is required.

- **Impact VIS-2b** The Proposed Project would result in a change in tree cover that contributes to the valued visual character of the area.

2.1.3.3 Substantial Obstruction, Interruption or Detraction From a Valued Vista

Guidelines for the Determination of Significance

A significant impact to visual resources would occur if the Project would:

1. Substantially obstruct, interrupt, or detract from a valued focal and/or panoramic vista from a:
 - a. Public road,
 - b. Trail within an adopted County or State trail system,
 - c. Scenic vista or highway, or
 - d. Recreational area.

Guideline Source: The significance guidelines are taken from the *County of San Diego Guidelines for Determining Significance and Report Format and Content Requirements - Visual Resources* (2007).

Analysis

Public Roads

As identified above, while the County of San Diego has not designated the public roadways in the area as scenic, the San Dieguito Community Plan calls for all public roads in the area to be considered scenic. Public roads with a view of the Project site include Rancho Bernardo Road, Camino Del Sur, Four Gee Road, and Campania Avenue. Views from Rancho Bernardo Road and Camino Del Sur are fleeting and/or distant. The Project site blends with existing development and remains consistent with existing development in the area. The Project site does not dominate views from these roadways, but is instead a background detail.

Four Gee Road has both direct and oblique views of the Project site. The visual experience from this roadway would be changed with implementation of the Project, but the view would retain interest due to its design. The Project site would appear to integrate into the other developed elements along Four Gee Road, specifically the fire station and residential areas to the south. The Project would present quality development features, evidenced by towers, architectural detail, hardscape, and landscaping. The Project entry onto Four Gee Road would appear of high quality, with understated entry monumentation and tree-lined road of stone pavers. Distant views would be maintained or improved.

Campania Avenue has both direct and oblique views of the Project site. These views are less immediate than on Four Gee Road due to an open space area between the road and the Project site. Implementation of the Project would change the visual experience, but the view would retain interest due to Project design. The Project site would appear to integrate into the developed elements behind it, specifically the residential areas to the south and the Del Sol Town Center. The Project would present a unified whole of a campus-like collection of buildings set amongst landscaped elements. The overall shape would be integrated into the existing topography. Views to the distance would be maintained.

In summary, while the visual experience for vehicular travelers would be different than at present, the change would not significantly degrade the visual experience. The Project as designed would be visually coherent and of high quality, while retaining visual interest. Vehicular views of the Project site from public roads are fleeting and existing screening visual elements along the public roadways, such as roadway landscaping and riparian open space, would be retained. The Project site would present a visually unified whole that would not appear out of place with the existing surrounding uses or neighborhoods that drivers experience on a regular basis. Therefore, the Project would not substantially obstruct, interrupt, or detract from a valued focal and/or panoramic vista from a public road. Impacts to views from public roads would be **less than significant**.

Trails

Pedestrians and recreationalists along Four Gee Road would walk along an existing open space area, which would be retained, so views into the Project site would be in the mid-ground. The views into the Project site would contain a range of visual elements,

including decorative fencing with landscaping, parking areas that have been visually screened, and three buildings arrayed at varying angles around the central plaza. The main entry to the Project site would present a high quality, visually coherent whole of natural stone, stone pavers, and a tree-lined street with landscaped median. The overall visual experience would be different, but the post-Project views would present high quality features that are coherently designed while being visually varied. Therefore, impacts along Four Gee Road would be **less than significant**.

Pedestrians and trail users along Campania Avenue would look across an existing open space area toward the Project site. Major natural features in the foreground would be retained. The Project site from this distant view is well integrated into its setting. Minimal earthwork and effective landscape design would create a harmonious overall shape at this distance. The Project also presents varied visual features that can sustain interest; however, the long horizontal of the proposed retaining wall would modify views from the trail along Campania Avenue (**Impact VIS-3a**). Impacts are significant and require mitigation.

- **Impact VIS-3a** The Proposed Project would obstruct views from the Campania Avenue trail.

Trail users on the south would have a close view of the Project site. The overall design would present an aesthetically unified and high quality visual experience along the trail. A range of features, including towers, articulated building surfaces, plazas, and decorative fencing would be visible from this perspective. Parking areas along the south would be slightly below grade in the central part of the Project site and would be landscaped and screened throughout. The Project would modify views from this vantage point (**Impact VIS-3b**). Impacts are potentially significant and require mitigation.

- **Impact VIS-3b** The Proposed Project would modify views from the trail to the south.

Scenic Vistas

There are no officially designated scenic vistas in the area. The foothills that comprise the northern horizon, between 0.75 and one mile away, could be interpreted as scenic. Ranging in height from 990 to 1,100' in elevation, the foothills are partially developed and present a unity of mass and color as a moderately dominant feature. The oblique view of these hills is unobstructed from the east and west. Views from the south are currently largely obstructed by the dense clumps of trees on the Project site. Implementation of the Project would partially open this view (see Figure 2.1-4). Public views from the foothills are limited due to a lack of development and access. From the water tower on the hillside above Four Gee Road, the view is dominated by 4S Ranch on the east and Black Mountain Ranch North Village on the west.

Other ridges and hills in the area are either more distant or lack the unity and mass of these northern hills. Black Mountain, to the southeast, at an elevation of 1,300 feet, is the largest feature in the region. At over three miles from the Project site, however, it is a small feature on the horizon. Views from the north toward the mountain would be maintained with implementation of the Project (see Figure 2.1-8). As shown, the Project

site is not discernable from atop the mountain. The hill to the east is approximately 890' to 1,100' in elevation and 1.25 miles away. It lacks visual unity due to its distance, topographic orientation, and surrounding development. Distant views of the hill from the east are preserved by the Project (see Figure 2.1-7). From the top of the hill, views of the Project site are not distinctive or readily discernable.

In summary, implementation of the Project would not substantially obstruct, interrupt, or detract from a valued focal and/or panoramic vista from a scenic vista. Impacts would be **less than significant**.

Recreational Areas

One recreation area is near the Project site, a community park located at the intersection of Camino San Thomas and Campania Avenue. It consists of a ball field, tot lot, and sitting areas, and is surrounded by dense vegetation on the west associated with the nearby creek. The park has no direct views of the Project site, but some treetops are visible on the horizon. The absence of these trees would not significantly affect the park due to the park's distance, intervening topography and vegetation. The Project would not substantially obstruct, interrupt, or detract from a valued focal and/or panoramic vista from a recreational area. Impacts would be **less than significant**.

2.1.3.4 Inconsistency with Applicable Goals, Policies or Requirements of an Applicable County Community Plan, and Subregional Plan

Guidelines for the Determination of Significance

A significant impact to visual resources would occur if the Project would:

1. Not comply with applicable goals, policies or requirements of an applicable County Community Plan, Subregional Plan, or Historic District's Zoning.

Guideline Source: The significance guidelines are taken from the *County of San Diego Guidelines for Determining Significance and Report Format and Content Requirements, Visual Resources* (2007).

Analysis

General Plan

The Project is located in within an area of existing infrastructure and development and reinforces the sense of quality and continuity in the existing community. Therefore, the Project is consistent with the Guiding Principles of the General Plan (GP).

The Project complements the community in an area that has transitioned from rural to suburban over the last 20 years. Open space is preserved and buffered with implementation of the Project. The Project also incorporates wide setbacks ranging from 40 to 230 feet as a buffer to soften views of the Project site. Grading differentials, landscaped walls, and extensive landscaping consistent with community standards, are used. Therefore, the Project is generally consistent with the Land Use Element of the GP.

The internal roads of the Project are integrated into the overall design so they are not obtrusive. The main entry design reinforces a feeling of arrival in the community. Views

from area roadways are protected by setbacks, site design, landscaping, and wall treatments. Therefore, the Project is generally consistent with the Mobility Element of the GP.

The Project preserves scenic resources in the area and improves some views of distant hills from the south. Groves of tall trees would be removed, but will be replaced with a more extensive, better integrated canopy of trees that would be maintained to provide an interesting and varied visual experience. Dark sky resources are respected by adherence to the County's LPC. The Project would not operate late at night and nighttime lighting would be restricted to pathway lightings. Therefore, the Project is generally consistent with the Conservation and Open Space Element of the GP. Impacts would be **less than significant**.

San Dieguito Community Plan

The San Dieguito Community Plan calls for a network of scenic roadway corridors in the area. While none of the roads in the area have officially been designated as such, Project design would preserve the scenic resources along area roadways through a system of setbacks, high quality materials, and visual screening. Impacts would be **less than significant**.

Santa Fe Valley Specific Plan

The SFVSP provides a range of visually-related guidelines in Chapter 7, Community Design Element. The specific community design goal, objectives, and policies of SFVSP Chapter 7.3 are addressed in detail in Appendix A of the visual study (Appendix C of the DSEIR). The goals and policies call for protection of scenic resources and visual compatibility. Scenic resources would be protected with implementation of the Project because views to the northern foothills would remain unchanged or would be improved. The Project would provide a high degree of visual consistency through its architectural and unifying landscape design. The shared features are a unified Mediterranean/Tuscan architectural style, loosely clustered buildings, and canopy-like landscape design, result in a high level of intactness and continuity. The structural elements on the Project site are also consistent with the surrounding community, which is largely developed with high quality buildings that also incorporate unifying architectural and landscaping features.

The Project's consistency with the Community Design Guidelines of the SFVSP are presented below.

Grading

Creative grading techniques are proposed to minimize wall structures to the south and locate the most visible walls toward the north, where there are no close up views of the site. Overall grading would lower buildings from 5 to 10 feet below current grade, thereby reducing visual massing and the overall profile of the buildings.

Streetscape Plan

Public and private streets would include landscaping, sidewalks, and a decomposed granite parking area. Bike racks are also provided to encourage bicycle use.

Monotonous and impersonal walls along Specific Plan Theme Roads have been avoided through design and mitigation to provide surface treatments, verticals, and landscaping. The effect is to break up mass and long horizontals and reduce visibility to integrate these features into the overall setting.

Entry Treatments

The Project's entry would meet the recommendations for a Neighborhood Entry as spelled out in the SFVSP. As shown in Figure 2.1-6, the entry treatment has been conceptually designed to be understated. Stone monumentation would identify the Project. Related features including trees shading the monumentation, a tree-lined entry road, and lower growing shrubs on both sides of the road reinforce the sense of entry and unity. The entry would complement the features of the Rancho Santa Fe Fire Department station across the street because similarly scaled entry monumentation and compatible landscaping is proposed.

Pedestrian Circulation

The planned circulation network provides pedestrian access from Four Gee Road into the Project site. Space for adequate walkways throughout the Project site has been provided, and walkways have been enhanced with hardscape, trellises, and desirable destinations such as plazas and fountains to encourage walking.

Parking Lots

Parking areas have been located around the Project perimeter while larger building elements are located in the center, so that views are not blocked. A large impersonal parking lot is avoided. Multiple layers of plantings are included along all parking areas and boundaries to screen cars and break up the mass of paving or decomposed granite when cars are not present. Where a parking lot is located adjacent to a public or private right-of-way, as on the south, design methods including decorative fencing and extensive landscaping have been used.

Service and Loading Areas

Service and loading areas are integrated into the overall design. Major loading infrastructure, such as loading docks, is not required. A single trash enclosure on the northwest would be walled and gated, and the area around it would be landscaped.

Architecture

Architectural features have been used to reduce scale, provide continuity, and create an overall intact and unified Project. Key features are described in Section 2.1.2.1, above, and illustrated in Figures 1-3 through 1-6, the elevations for the Project.

Walls/Fences

Walls and fences avoid a monotonous appearance through the use of pilasters to break up long horizontals. Surface treatments and natural color reduce the visual presence of walls. Landscaping serves to integrate walls and fences more into the overall design, or to blend with the existing setting. However, the north facing retaining wall presents a long horizontal in conflict with applicable planning documents. Therefore, the Project

would not comply with applicable goals, policies, or requirements of the SFVSP (**Impact VIS-4a**). Impacts are potentially significant and require mitigation.

- **Impact VIS-4a** The Proposed Project would not comply with applicable goals, policies, or requirements of the SFVSP due to the proposed retaining wall.

Site Lighting

The Project would use outdoor light fixtures that conform to the lamp type and shielding requirements described in County regulations. The Project would not operate at night, so it would not operate Class I or Class III outdoor lighting between 11:00 PM and sunrise. However, safety lighting such as pathway lighting would be employed to allow safe movement to and from parking areas and sidewalks. The Project would not generate significant light due to shielding of outdoor lights. The Project conforms to applicable Federal, State, or local statutes and regulations related to dark skies or glare, including but not limited to the San Diego County LPC.

Signs

Signage is limited to the entry monumentation discussed above, and a church logo, which would be placed on the main sanctuary building. Small directional signs for traffic, parking, or building identification may be used, but these would be designed in keeping with the understated nature of the Project as a whole and would not be readily visible from off site. Temporary signage related to special events may be used on a case by case basis and in conformance with the County of San Diego Zoning Ordinance which regulates this issue.

Landscaping

Landscaping is proposed throughout the Project site to provide continuity and a range of lines, colors, and textures. The overall plan is designed to present a unified visual impression to the community. Native and drought tolerant plants are used in the plan, and transitions are provided. Screening is extensive and achieved by a layering effect where multiple lines of landscaping are provided in each direction to complement structures, add interest, and screen elements from view. While the Project would remove the on-site trees, they would be replaced with a canopy of trees and other vegetation that provides more coverage, is internally consistent, and better integrated with existing uses in the area.

Transitions to open space are respected with setbacks and non-invasive vegetation. Landscaping edge zones have been used in every direction to minimize impacts to off-site viewer groups. The range of elements used in conjunction with landscaping is noted in Section 2.2.2.1, above, and illustrated in Figures 1-7 and 1-8. Informal grouping is used throughout to give specific areas of the site a varied visual appearance. This includes dense groupings along the eastern boundary which has views down into the Project site, in parking areas, along the southern fence line, in plazas and sitting areas, and near building elements where screening is important. The changed view from viewers along Campania Avenue and south of the Project site are in conflict with applicable goals, policies, and requirements of the SFVSP. This represents a significant impact (**Impact VIS-4b**) and mitigation is required.

- **Impact VIS-4b** The Proposed Project would not comply with applicable goals, policies, or requirements of the SFVSP due to obstruction of views from the Campania Avenue trail and the trail south of the Project site.

In summary, the Project generally conforms to the applicable regulations of the County of San Diego GP and San Dieguito Community Plan; however, the Project would conflict with the SFVSP. Mitigation is required to reduce impacts.

2.1.3.5 Dark Skies and Glare

Guidelines for the Determination of Significance

A significant impact to dark skies or from glare would occur if the Project would:

1. Install outdoor light fixtures that do not conform to the lamp type and shielding requirements described in Section 59.105 (Requirements for Lamp Source and Shielding) and are not otherwise exempted pursuant Section 59.108 or Section 59.109 of the San Diego County LPC.
2. Operate Class I or Class III outdoor lighting between 11:00 PM and sunrise that is not otherwise exempted pursuant Section 59.108 or Section 59.109 of the San Diego County LPC.
3. Generate light trespass that exceeds 0.2 foot-candles measured five feet onto the adjacent property.
4. Install highly reflective building materials, including but not limited to reflective glass and high-gloss surface color, that will create daytime glare and be visible from roadways, pedestrian walkways or areas frequently used for outdoor activities on adjacent properties.
5. Not conform to applicable Federal, State, or local statutes or regulations related to dark skies or glare, including but not limited to the San Diego County LPC.

Guideline Source: The significance guidelines are taken from the *County of San Diego Guidelines for Determining Significance and Report Format and Content Requirements – Dark Skies and Glare* (January 15, 2009).

Analysis

Consistency with LPC Requirements

The Lighting Site Plan (Attachment B of Appendix D) identifies the location of all onsite lighting fixtures. All of the fixtures shown on the Lighting Site Plan are designed with shielding provided by the manufacturer. Such shielding shall be placed on site during installation as needed to avoid light trespass to the adjacent properties. Attachment D of Appendix D provides descriptions of each site lighting fixture, including the manufacturer, model, type, image, Dark Sky and Title 24-compliant notes, shielding and angle requirements, bulb, lumens, wattage, and height. Detailed Light Fixture Specification Sheets are also provided. Therefore, the Project would install outdoor light fixtures that conform to the lamp type and shielding requirements described in Section 59.105 (Requirements for Lamp Source and Shielding) of the San Diego County LPC.

The church's operating hours vary but are generally anticipated to occur between 8 AM and 10 PM on weekdays and weekends. Occasional nighttime activities including prayer meetings, youth lock-ins, and other church-related meetings would also occur between the hours of 10 PM and 8 AM. These special nighttime activities would take place indoors to minimize outdoor lighting necessary for security purposes. Therefore, the Project would not operate Class I or Class III outdoor lighting between 11:00 PM and sunrise that is not otherwise exempted pursuant Section 59.108 or Section 59.109 of the San Diego County Light Pollution Code).

In summary, the Project would be consistent with the LPC. Impacts would be **less than significant**.

Light Trespass

As identified above, all site lighting fixtures are noted to have shielding placed on site during installation as needed to avoid light trespass to the adjacent properties. Attachment C of Appendix D, Parking Lot Lighting Levels Site Plan, identifies the spill light at the Project boundaries and five feet beyond. As shown, some potential light spillage is observed, the noted shielding to be placed on site when the fixtures are installed would eliminate potential any light spill on to adjacent properties to any significant level. The Project would not generate light trespass that exceeds 0.2 foot-candles measured five feet onto the adjacent property. Impacts would be **less than significant**.

Glare

The Project's architectural design includes standard earth-tone stucco walls with mission tile roofing similar to the surrounding area structures. These materials would not reflect light to have any negative impact on the neighborhood. The Project will incorporate solar panels on the rooftops of some buildings. The solar panels would incorporate a non-glare finish.

The Project would not install highly reflective building materials, including but not limited to reflective glass and high-gloss surface color that would create daytime glare and be visible from roadways, pedestrian walkways, or areas frequently used for outdoor activities on adjacent properties. Additionally, the solar panels that would be placed on rooftops would have a non-glare finish. Impacts would be **less than significant**.

Conformance to Regulations

In addition to compliance with the LPC as summarized above, the Project's outdoor lighting also conforms to Title 24 of the California Energy Code. Title 24-conforming features of the Project include appropriate wattages, automatic controls, and cut-off fixture angling. The Project proposes LED lighting fixtures, which would decrease the lighting to below 4050 lumens, an acceptable level per Section 59.106 of the LPC, Requirement for Lamp Source and Shielding. The use of these fixtures could assist the project in meeting LEED criteria for lighting.

The Project would also incorporate the following design features, as listed in the LPC and Zoning Ordinance:

- Use full cutoff luminaires, as defined by the Illuminating Engineering Society of North America (IESNA), to minimize the amount of light emitted upward directly from the luminaire. A fully shielded outdoor light ensures that light rays emitted from the fixture are projected below the horizontal plane passing through the lowest point on the fixture from which the light is emitted (LPC Section 59.105)
- Restrict the hours of operation of outdoor lighting to hours of active use (LPC Section 59.107 and Zoning Ordinance Section 6322)
- Require low-pressure sodium light sources², which allow astronomers to filter the line spectra from telescopic images (LPC Section 59.105)
- Condition new development projects to prohibit the post-construction addition of outdoor lighting that was not included in the Project
- Select luminaires that control the intensity (candela) distribution (LPC Section 59.105)
- Use well-shielded luminaires (LPC Section 59.105)
- Keep floodlight angles aimed low enabling the entire beam to fall within the intended area to be lit.
- Use full cutoff and semi-cutoff lighting. Cutoff designations limit the intensity values in the glare zone and provide shielding (Zoning Ordinance Section 6324)
- Adjust mounting height to reduce spill light (Zoning Ordinance Section 6324)
- Focus exterior illumination, including floodlights and spotlights, downward and into the Project site. A combination of shielding, screening, and directing the lighting away from off-site areas shall be used to minimize spillover effects onto off-site roadways, properties, and open space areas
- Use landscaping to serve as filtering devices to soften the impact of direct exterior, reflected exterior, and building interior lighting
- Limit signs with flashing, mechanical, strobe, blinking lights, moving parts, or lighted monument signs.
- Use low-level pedestrian lighting (e.g., bollards) on the site for pedestrian pathways
- Use lowest intensity Project lighting necessary for security and safety purposes while still adhering to the recommended levels of the IESNA

In summary, and as concluded in the Photometric Study (Appendix D), the Project conforms to all applicable Federal, State and local statutes and regulations related to dark skies and glare, including but not limited to the San Diego County LPC. Impacts would be **less than significant**.

² The Project proposes LED lighting that provides an equivalent or better lighting benefit.

2.1.4 Cumulative Impact Analysis

The cumulative study area for visual resources is the viewshed of the Project. The topographic viewshed is shown in Figure 2.1-1. A total of six projects occur within the cumulative aesthetics study area. These are shown in Figure 2.1-13, Cumulative Study Area. These projects are:

Project Name/Description	Project Location
6—TPM 21205, Two residential parcels located in the southeast part of the viewshed. Relies upon analysis in previously approved TM.	Adjacent to residential neighborhood with major road (Rancho Bernardo Road) and developed commercial area intervening. Approximately 0.55 miles from the southeast corner from the Project.
8 – MUP 11-018, cell tower. CEQA exempt.	Located in the foothills north of the Project approximately 0.58 miles away and at a higher elevation. Single cell tower in association with an existing water tank.
9 – MUP 87-036, -2, -4, cell tower. CEQA exempt.	Located south and east of the Project approximately 0.7 miles away. Residential neighborhood, Camino Del Sur, and commercial area intervening.
10 – MUP 08-003, cell tower. CEQA exempt.	Located near the foothills north and west of the Project approximately 0.65 miles distant. Located at higher elevation than Project. Residential neighborhood intervenes.
13 – L-15026, Grading for medical facility.	Construction within already developed industrial/commercial area south and east of the site approximately 0.55 miles distant. Located near Camino Del Norte and Dove Canyon Road.
16 – Black Mountain Subarea Plan Amendment. Increases commercial area in North Village, moves hotel and senior housing, deletes golf course in favor of open space.	Located south of the Project approximately 600 feet. The western part of the Project and some towers are visible from the North Village. View looks north along Four Gee Road to main entrance.

Three of the cumulative projects (TPM 21205, MUP 87-036, and L-15026) are located in already developed areas of 4S Ranch and the viewshed between these projects and the

Project is fully developed. The Project would appear as a distant component of an already developed landscape. Therefore, the relationship between these projects and the Project is visually tenuous and not cumulatively significant.

Two projects (MUP 11-018 and MUP 08-003) are cell towers located in the foothills north and northwest of the Project site. Both cell projects were designed to provide camouflaged towers. The existing visual character of the area would not be altered in a significant way because the uses occur in scattered locations, are visually screened, and have a very small footprint. They are isolated from the Project site and other cumulative projects and are located in a topographically different setting. When considered with the Project they do not contribute to a visual pattern that would be disruptive.

The Black Mountain Subarea Plan Amendment, which includes alterations to North Village, is closest to the Project site. North Village was envisioned over 15 years ago and as such the visual alterations expected with the development have long been anticipated. The amendment rearranges some uses but does not fundamentally alter the expected visual character of the area. A proposed golf course becomes open space, presenting a low profile and existing rather than landscaped vegetation. Some building locations and uses would change but the visual character of the site as a commercial and community hub remains unchanged. The narrow view of the Project site from North Village occurs along Four Gee Road. The road curves to the west as one moves north from the Camino Del Sur/Four Gee Road intersection so direct views of the Project site are obscured. Towers on the Project site would be visible above houses, however. This alteration would appear as a continuation of existing development that is already visible from North Village. The overall viewshed is not altered by the juxtaposition of these two uses and cumulative impacts are not significant.

The six projects taken together with the Project represent either fully mitigated impacts, minor changes to long-planned uses in the area, or are minor additions to the already complex and intensely developed viewshed. They are also widely scattered and represent a range of uses that provide different visual impressions. From vantages where cumulative projects occur, the prominent visual impression is one of developed uses. This impression is not significantly altered by the construction of the cumulative projects. Where less development is currently evident, on the Project site and in the foothills to the north and west, the alterations are either fully mitigated, as with the Project, or are minor in character, as with the cell towers. They are also widely separated and are located in differing topographic settings that present varying visual experiences. Considering the overall scale of the viewshed and its current visual character, the cumulative projects, in conjunction with the Project, do not have a significant cumulative impact. Impacts would be **less than significant**.

2.1.5 Significance of Impacts Prior to Mitigation

As described above, the Project would have the following significant impacts:

- **Impact VIS-1** The Project would introduce a retaining wall and fence to the north that would detract from or contrast with the existing visual character and/or quality of the area.

- **Impact VIS-2a** The Project would result in a change that contributes to the valued visual character of the area.
- **Impact VIS-2b** The Project would result in a change in tree cover that contributes to the valued visual character of the area.
- **Impact VIS-3a** The Project would obstruct views from the Campania Avenue trail.
- **Impact VIS-3b** The Project would modify views from the trail along the southern boundary.
- **Impact VIS-4a** The Project would not comply with applicable goals, policies, or requirements of the SFVSP due to the proposed northern retaining wall.
- **Impact VIS-4b** The Project would not comply with applicable goals, policies, or requirements of the SFVSP due to obstruction of views from the Campania Avenue trail and the trail south of the Project site.

2.1.6 Mitigation

Implementation of the following mitigation measures will be required to address the identified significant impacts to aesthetic resources. The Project would be conditioned to incorporate these measures into the major use permit.

For Impacts VIS-1, VIS-2a, VIS-3a, and VIS-4a

- **M-VIS-1** To screen the retaining wall along the northern site boundary, the Project shall:
 - o Paint or clad the wall with a non-reflective earth-toned material that is matched in color to the surrounding and planned vegetation along the wall.
 - o Incorporate vertical elements from the base of the wall to break the horizontals of the wall. These elements can be constructed elements or vegetation. Constructed elements shall be of a type and quality that complements the existing design. Vegetation elements shall be able to attain a height that would reach the top of the fence along the wall so as to integrate these two structures.

For Impacts VIS-2a, VIS-2b, VIS-3b, and VIS-4b

- **M-VIS-2** Install 36" boxed citrus, 10 gallon shrubs, and 10 gallon vines at the earliest possible point during Project construction. At corners of the eastern boundary, the proposed California peppers shall be 48" box size. Along the east-facing sidewalk, the proposed crepe myrtle shall be 48" box size.

For Impacts VIS-2a, VIS-2b, VIS-3b, and VIS-4b

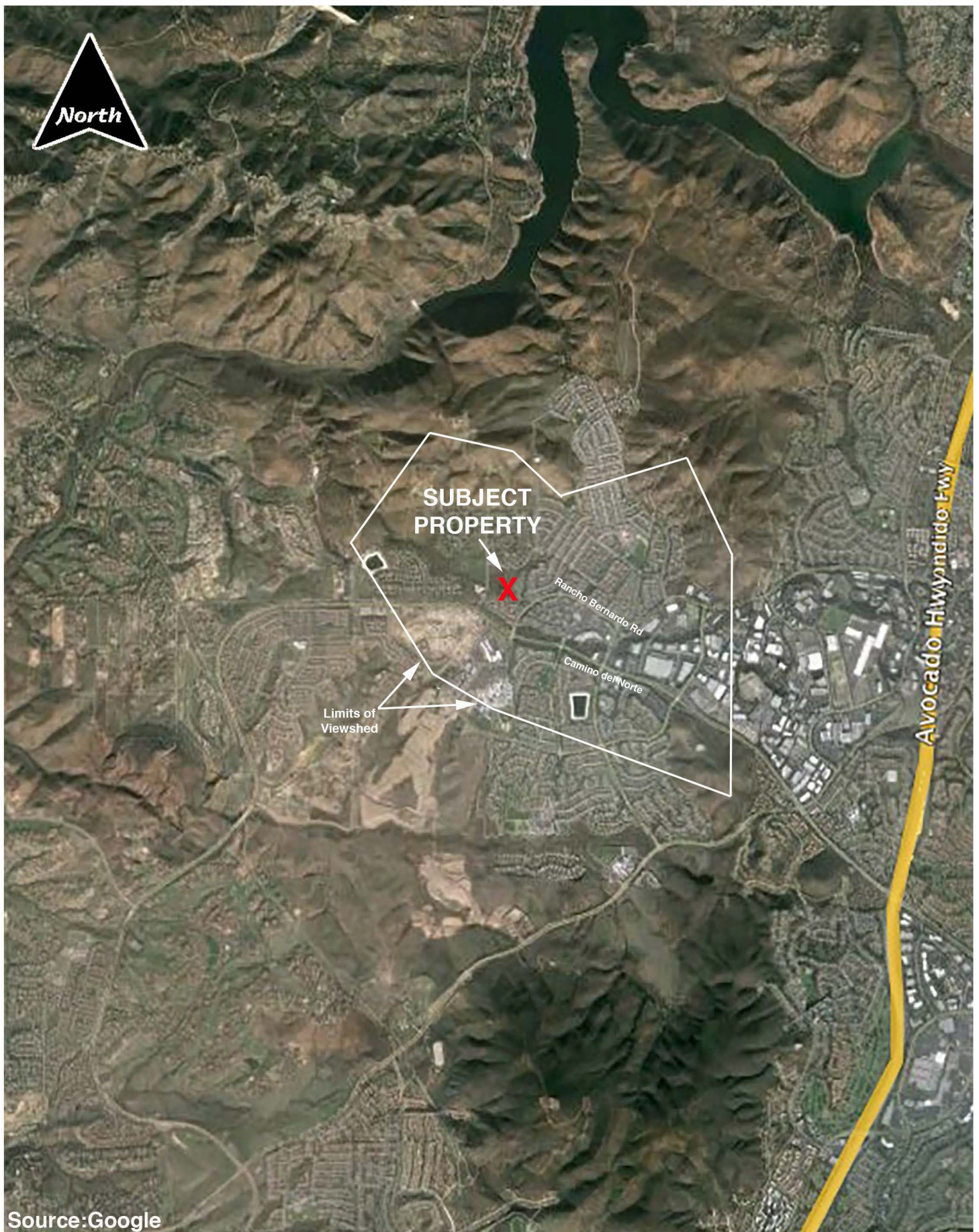
- **M-VIS-3** Install 48" trees and 10 gallon shrubs along the decorative fence line.

2.1.7 Conclusion

Impacts related to dark skies and glare would be less than significant. Additionally, the Project, in conjunction with other cumulative projects, would not have significant cumulative impacts because the key features of the viewshed would be left intact after cumulative projects have been considered.

The Project would, however, introduce a retaining wall that would detract from or contrast with the existing visual character and/or quality of the area, result in a change that contributes to the valued visual character of the area, obstruct views from area trails, and would not comply with applicable goals, policies, or requirements of the SFVSP. Measure M-VIS-1 would fully integrate the retaining wall along the northern boundary into the proposed and existing visual landscape. M-VIS-2 would provide vegetative cover that is large enough to provide screening for residential and recreational viewers and early enough in the process to prevent extended unshielded visual exposure to the site. M-VIS-3 would provide vegetative cover that is large enough to provide screening for recreational viewers to the south and early enough in the process to prevent extended unshielded visual exposure to the site. Impacts VIS-1 through VIS-4b would be reduced to below a level of significance with the incorporation of M-VIS-1 through M-VIS-3.

In summary, impacts to aesthetic resources would be reduced to below a level of significance.





Key View Index

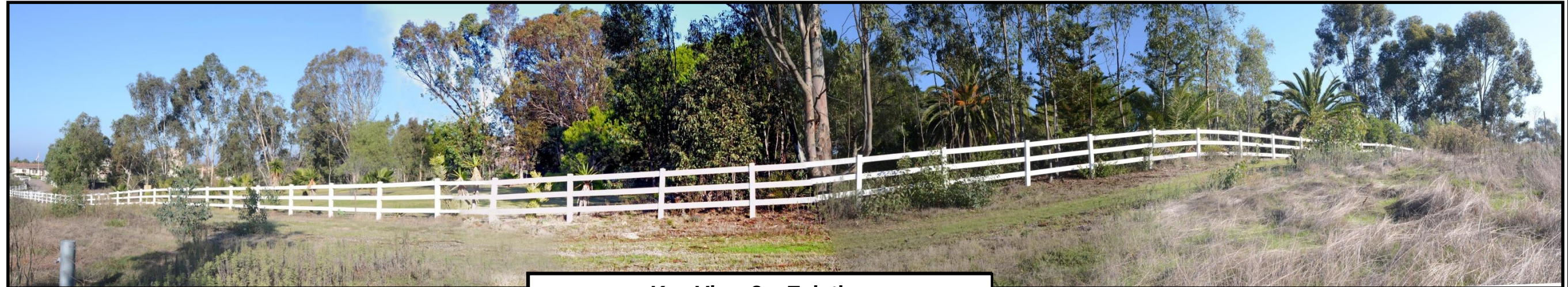
Figure 2.1-2



**Key View 1 – Existing
Looking From SE Corner of Site**



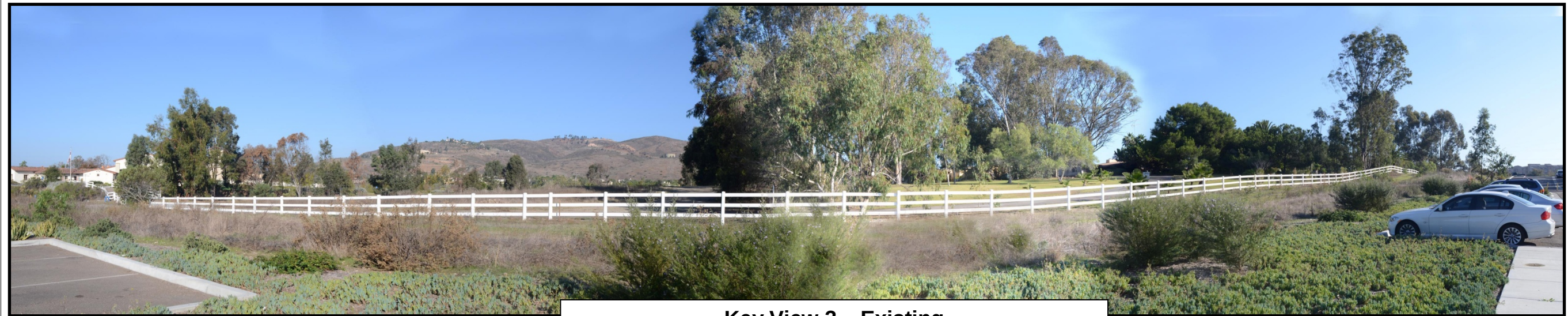
**Key View 1 – Proposed
Looking From SE Corner of Site**



Key View 2 – Existing
From Wild Horse Glen Looking North



Key View 2 – Proposed
From Wild Horse Glen Looking North

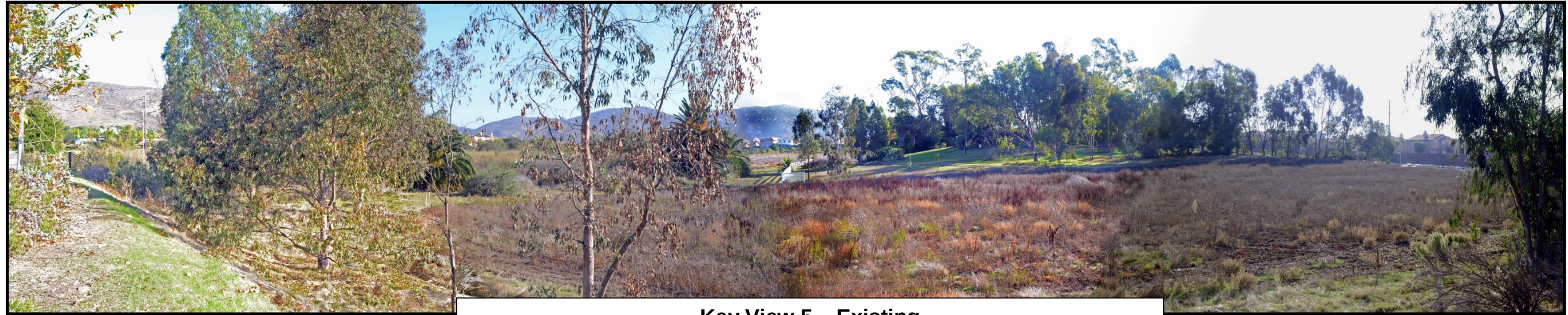


Key View 3 – Existing
Looking Northeast from SE property corner



Key View 3 – Proposed
Looking Northeast from SW property corner





**Key View 5 – Existing
Looking East from Four Gee Road**



**Key View 5 – Proposed
Looking East from Four Gee Road**

**Key View 5
Looking East from Four Gee Road**

**Figure
2.1-7**



