

## CHAPTER 2            SIGNIFICANT ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT

### 2.1            Aesthetics

A visual resources/community character/growth induction analysis was prepared for the Warner Ranch Project by RBF (2014), in accordance with the County of San Diego *Guidelines for Determining Significance and Report Format and Content Requirements: Visual Resources* (County of San Diego 2007), and is included as Appendix C of this EIR.

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

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

Moderate visual quality is generally considered to be represented by views that are interesting, but not visually exceptional with regard to landforms or other physical characteristics. Such views may consist of dominant types of vegetation, water features, colors within the landscape, or other elements that visually unify a particular view or landscape. Contributing factors may include a varied composition that includes visual patterns created by landscape elements, enhancement of views from adjacent scenery, and/or a visual setting that is distinguishable from views within the surrounding area.

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

### 2.1.1 Existing Conditions

The project site is approximately 513 acres in size, composed of seven individual parcels. The project site supports diverse topography ranging from gentle to steep slope terrain. On-site elevations range from approximately 350 feet above mean sea level (amsl) to approximately 1,000 feet amsl. The northern portion of the site generally supports moderate to steep slopes, while the south-central areas consist of mostly level terrain with some gently rolling hills. Steep slopes, defined by the County of San Diego's Resource Protection Ordinance (RPO) as slopes having a natural gradient of 25 percent or greater and minimum rise of 50 feet, occur largely in the northern and eastern portions of the property. Approximately 87 percent of all steep RPO steep slopes on site are designated as Open Space in the County's General Plan. These areas currently support existing structures, orchards, an unnamed intermittent stream, and a network of unimproved roadways.

Approximately 77 percent of the site is undeveloped; the remaining 23 percent, or approximately 117.6 acres, is developed and presently supports active agricultural and ranch uses, as well as disturbed land. The undeveloped areas are located in the northern and eastern portions of the site. Areas supporting agricultural uses and ranch facilities are more centrally located in the southern portion of the property. Existing development on site includes the Warner Ranch Quarter Horses equestrian facility and associated support buildings such as an office, stables, and arena; equipment and feed garages; and irrigation equipment/storage (Figure 2.1-1A, Photo Location Map – On-Site Views).

The agricultural areas on site include two avocado orchards in the western portion of the property, two citrus orchards in the south-central portion of the site, and pastures for livestock. Several existing residences are adjacent to the orchards and pastures, as well as a main house and garage. There are also existing asphalt roads crossing throughout the agricultural and ranch areas to allow access for operation and maintenance (see Figures 2.1-1B through 2.1-1D, On-Site Views).

The San Luis Rey River, Pala Creek, and Gomez Creek are the main water bodies in the area of the project area. Gomez Creek flows north-to-south along the western side of the project site and converges with the San Luis Rey River further to the south. In addition, Pala Creek traverses the northeastern corner of the property.

The undeveloped portion of the site consists largely of coastal sage scrub and southern mixed chaparral with smaller but visually distinctive areas of coast live oak woodland, southern cactus scrub, scrub oak chaparral, and grasslands in the upland areas, and mulefat scrub, coast live oak riparian forest, southern cottonwood–willow riparian forest, and sycamore alluvial riparian woodland in wetland areas. Vegetation breaks for boulders outcrops and rocky ridgelines.

### **2.1.1.1 Historic Land Uses**

As detailed in Section 2.8, Land Use, RBF defined a study area including a 0.75-mile radius from the project boundary to ensure that the majority of lands on the Pala Indian Reservation where existing residential development is located were considered. Historical aerial photographs were reviewed to evaluate the historic development patterns and land uses over past decades on and around the Pala Indian Reservation (see Figures 2.8-1a–2.8-1k in Section 2.8). The Community Character Study (Appendix C) details development in the area from 1911 to 2012 and documents the gradual development of the area. Most of the early development was concentrated around the intersection of present-day Pala Road and State Route 76 (SR 76). Initially consisting primarily of single-family residential, it eventually included the following:

- The Southern California Tribal Chairmen’s Association (1972)
- Cupa Cultural Center (1974 and expanded in 2005)
- Initiation of construction of the of the Pala Casino Resort and Spa and the associated parking structure (2005)
- Higher-density residential developments, the Pala Reservation Shooting Range, a hazardous waste collection center, Oceanview Mine, and the Pala community park/civic center (2006–2009)
- The Pala Fire Station (2008)
- Additional residential development, a mining area just west of the shooting range, expansion of the Oceanview Mine, a community park just west of Henderson Road, and the Pala wastewater treatment plant east of Henderson Road (2009).

The 2012 aerial photograph (Figure 2.8-1k in Section 2.8) identifies present-day land uses within the Pala community. New development between 2009 and 2012 appears to be somewhat limited, generally consisting of single-family residential uses in areas where similar development is already present.

### **2.1.1.2 Surrounding Land Uses**

As noted above, the Pala Reservation abuts the site to the north, east, and south. Development on the reservation is not regulated by the County, but is overseen by the Federal Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA). Surrounding land uses in the project vicinity vary and include single-family and multifamily residential uses, retail commercial uses, sand mining operations, agricultural uses, and undeveloped lands. Land adjacent to the north and northeast of the project site is currently undeveloped. Agricultural uses are present to the west and south (Figures 2.1-2A and 2.1-2B, Surrounding Land Uses; Figure 2.1-3A, Photo Location Map –

Off-Site View; and 2.2-3B, Off-Site Views). Building sizes in the area surrounding the project site vary widely, due to the type of use. There are smaller residential structures and larger commercial, institutional, and industrial structures.

### Land Uses on the Pala Reservation

The Pala Band of Mission Indians has been funding and building homes exclusively for tribal members within the Reservation. The Pala Housing Authority (PHA) was formed in order to provide continued housing and assisted loan programs. Several new homes have been completed since then. The PHA has begun the planning and building of small master-planned communities in an attempt to ultimately ensure housing for every tribe member. Since 2004, the PHA has been designing new home plans, ranging from three-bedroom to five-bedroom homes on lots measuring approximately 3,000 to 6,000 square feet in size. Other small-scale retail and commercial uses in the area typically range from approximately 2,000 to 5,000 square feet in size.

The Pala Casino Resort and Spa is southeast of the project site and contains on-site facilities and amenities including shopping, a day spa, golfing, dining, entertainment, a resort hotel, and a small commercial center. The Pala Casino Resort and Spa also includes roughly 600 hotel rooms ranging from approximately 500 to 1,000 square feet in size. The main level of the casino was recently extended along the north and west sides, increasing the structure by approximately 68,300 square feet. The spa was also remodeled to increase the number of available treatment rooms, locker rooms, and lounge spaces, and the pool area was expanded. The parking area was expanded to accommodate approximately 1,930 new spaces in new parking structures to the north and west of existing structures. In addition, approximately 30,000 square feet of administrative office and storage space were constructed. With the recently completed expansion, the Pala Casino Resort and Spa, inclusive of the casino, hotel, and theater, now encompasses approximately 187,300 square feet. The Pala Casino Resort and Spa added a 100-unit recreational vehicle park directly west of the existing resort.

The Pala Raceway is approximately one and one-half miles east of the project. It offers a motocross track built to suit all skill levels and bike sizes. It has been closed since March 2014 and there is no date given for reopening. The Pala Shooting Range, operated by the North County Shootist Association (NCSA), offers a variety of shooting venues limited to club members and invited guests. The facility allows for shooting practice and recreational shooting, with shooting matches scheduled on the weekends.

An 8-acre mobile home park is north of SR 76, west of Portillo Road, and supports between 20 and 30 homes. Just north of SR 76 and south of Pala Mission Road, single-family residential development is present with approximately 50 lots estimated at 8,000 square feet (varied). Another cluster of units is present to the north of SR 76 along Robles Way with approximately

26 lots estimated to be between 9,000 and 12,000 square feet. Just to the northeast across Pala Temecula Road is another development with approximately 30 lots estimated to be between 11,500 square feet to 22,000 square feet. Further to the north along Sycamore Lane, additional development of 13 residential lots estimated to range from 12,000 square feet to 14,000 square feet is present. Additional single-family development on individual lots of similar sizes and larger-acre parcels is interspersed throughout the areas to the north and east of the reservation.

The Pala Reservation Wastewater Treatment Plant is located on approximately 1.8 acres east of the project site. Plans for treatment plant improvements would construct 9,630 additional feet of sewer line and a single lift station. The plant capacity would expand to serve approximately 210 of the 425 homes located on reservation land in 2012.

### Land Uses in the Unincorporated Area

Approximately 5 miles west of the project, there are a number development projects approved and in process, located east of Interstate 15 (I-15). The area around where I-15 and SR 76 meet is planned as development node with increased density and identified as a special use area by SANDAG (SANDAG – REDI – accessed 10/3/2014).

Other development projects within the study area (Figure 1-27, Cumulative Projects Map) and within the unincorporated areas of the County, include San Diego Gas and Electric's (SDG&E's) substation expansion, Rosemary's Quarry, and a number of road improvement projects along SR 76. The proposed Gregory Canyon Landfill would be located on SR 76, approximately 3 miles east of I-15.

One other institutional land use within the project's visual area of importance is the Palomar Observatory. It is located 12 miles to the northeast. This is a sensitivity area for light pollution and compatibility for the continued observatory's effective use (See Light Pollution Code in Section 2.1.2).

**Surrounding Average Parcel Size.** A comparative analysis between existing residential lot size and density on lands on the Pala Indian Reservation and on the proposed project site was also conducted by RBF. A more detailed discussion of this study is provided in Section 2.8, Land Use; also see Figures 2.8-5 and 2.8-6. The study area was determined at 0.75-mile radius from the project boundary based on review of residential development patterns within the area using aerial photography, windshield surveys of the Reservation lands, available land use data from SANDAG, and consideration for distance to existing residential uses, including the majority of lands on the Pala Indian Reservation where existing residential development is located. No multifamily residential land uses currently exist within a 0.75-mile radius of the project site on the reservation, and the overall average density within the study area is estimated to be 0.32

dwelling per acre. Residential lots on the reservation and County lands vary from large-acre parcels (outlying lands, ranging from 100 to 400 acres in size) to lower density and smaller parcels (largely concentrated on Pala Mission Road, Pala Temecula Road, and SR 76, as small as 0.16 acre in size).

### **2.1.1.3 Project Viewshed and Viewer Response**

The following definitions were provided in the visual resources/community character/growth induction conducted for the project (Appendix C).

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

The project site is located along the same valley floor as the adjacent Pala Reservation. The valley floor is visible from varied vantage points that occur from the valley and the surrounding mountains. As such, the viewshed is generally defined by the surrounding mountainous topography which encircles the valley floor and through which the SR 76 corridor traverses. Although this area is expansive, consideration of this viewshed provides the most comprehensive (largest) and conservative (worst-case) estimate of the area that could potentially be affected by the proposed project (Figure 2.1-4A, Key Views/Landscape Units).

Within the viewshed, varied views of the valley largely occur from vehicles as they travel along SR 76, which winds along the valley floor and is the main transportation corridor through the Pala community. Other intermittent views to the project site may occur from vehicles traveling along other area roadways within the valley; from mountains to the north/northwest, southeast/south/southwest, and west; and from public trails or other recreational facilities in surrounding public parks (Wilderness Gardens Park to the southeast). The viewshed includes the developed areas of Pala and surrounding, low-density development and undeveloped lands within the valley, generally bounded by the mountains rising from the valley floor. Due to the generally flat topography of the valley floor and varied hillsides, combined with established vegetation, views are somewhat restricted across the expansive valley from surrounding vantage points within the viewshed. Distance from the object being viewed and intervening geological features have the potential to reduce or restrict views.

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

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

It is likely that community members would be more sensitive to the project than would those who experience Pala as a tourist or visitor. The Pala Casino Resort and Spa draws a large number of visitors to the area on a daily basis, as compared to the relatively small number of permanent local residents in the Pala community. In addition, viewer sensitivity may be higher among those who would experience views of the site more frequently, such as area residents or employees of the Pala Casino or other local establishments who would travel along SR 76 on a daily basis. As views of the project components would also vary due to distance from the site, as well as attention to driving in traffic or the degree to which one chooses to make an effort to view the site (e.g., turning of one's head), viewer sensitivity would further be influenced.

**Viewer Groups.** Viewer groups would mainly consist of those individuals traveling east/west along SR 76 and other area roadways within the valley to the southwest/southeast of the project site. Additional viewer groups from public vantage points may occur along Lilac Road to the southeast of the proposed project; due to distance from the site (approximately two miles) and intervening topography, views of the proposed development would be greatly diminished. Views of the western boundary of the project site would also occur to travelers along Pala Temecula Road; due to the existing ridgeline and the proposed project design, views of the proposed development areas from this roadway would be limited to only a few homes in the southeastern portion of the site.

Additional viewer groups may include residents and/or occupants viewing the project site from surrounding residential uses to the north/northwest, south, southwest/southeast. In addition,

limited views from the casino and spa occur intermittently, depending on the viewing location; such views of the project site from these vantage points would generally occur from privately owned properties and are not considered as public viewpoints. Views from these private ownerships would occur at a distance from the project and would be decreased due to distance, topographical differences, and intervening vegetation and development.

**Viewer Exposure.** Views into the project site from vehicles traveling along SR 76 would vary due to attention to driving in traffic and the angle of the view with respect to the viewer (i.e., forward-looking versus turning one's head and looking back towards the subject property). In addition, views would be reduced by existing and/or proposed screening vegetation along the project frontage. Views of the site from other public roads at greater distances may also occur. Viewer exposure from these roadways would vary, due to distance from the site, intervening topography and vegetation, and length of time the project site is actually visible from a particular location along the roadway.

In determining the exposure of each viewer group, several factors are considered. These include the number of viewers experiencing visual changes to the resource as the result of the proposed development, how long views would last, the anticipated speed at which viewers would be traveling, and the relation and distance of the viewer to the particular site. Table 2.1-1, Viewer Groups and Anticipated Exposure, summarizes the anticipated viewer groups and the potential viewing experience of each.

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

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

#### **2.1.1.4 Landscape Units**

A landscape unit is an area that can generally be defined by visual and physical characteristics and may be composed of a limited area (i.e., meadow) or a larger area (i.e., portion of a mountain



range). The overall boundaries of a landscape unit may generally be defined by topography, natural vegetation, architectural design, landforms, or similar types of land uses. Each landscape unit can be described individually and as varying from other adjacent landscape units. Each landscape unit is a portion of the regional landscape that often corresponds to a place or district that is commonly known among local viewers.

Figure 2.1-4A shows the general limits of the viewshed and five landscape units considered within the viewshed. Three key view locations were identified by the County of San Diego Planning and Development Services Department and were analyzed to determine the proposed project's potential impacts on the existing visual setting. Key vantage points within the viewshed offering views to the site occur from eastbound and westbound SR 76 and from the Pala Casino parking garage. Representative photos were taken from these key viewpoint locations (Figures 2.1-4B through 2.1-4D, Key Views #1 through #3)

**Landscape Unit No. 1.** This unit consists of the highest density area of the Pala community comprised of residential and commercial development and is located along SR 76. The commercial uses are concentrated generally around the intersection of SR 76 and Pala Mission Road. This area supports the Pala Casino Resort and Spa, associated parking garages, a gas station and convenience store, a bus staging area, and various small-scale retail uses. A number of single-family residential uses are also present. This landscape unit supports limited native vegetation, with exception of street trees and ornamental landscaping associated with the Pala Casino Resort and Spa, as well as significant areas of paved surfaces. Building heights range from single-story structures (retail, residential) to the multistoried casino and spa. This landscape unit is generally bounded by the small-scale retail uses on the north, the Pala Casino and Spa to the southeast, and the existing ridge long the easterly project boundary to the west. As much of the vegetation and topography are similar throughout this area, landscape components do not generally offer strong, visually distinctive patterns to viewers, particularly when viewed at a distance.

**Landscape Unit No. 2.** This unit consists of the developed area to the east of the project site. This area transitions to largely single-family residential uses, with interspersed small-scale commercial and institutional uses, on the Pala Band of Mission Indians Reservation. Development generally consists of one- to two-story structures with intervening native and ornamental vegetation. This unit is generally bounded to the north by hillsides, to the east by agricultural lands, to the south by SR 76, and to the west by the project site. As much of the vegetation and topography are similar throughout this area and no visually significant structures or features are evident, landscape components do not generally offer strong, visually distinctive patterns to viewers, particularly when viewed at a distance.

**Landscape Unit No. 3.** This unit consists of lands further to the east of the proposed project site, on the Pala Band of Mission Indians Reservation. Such lands are generally large-acre ownerships or those supporting low-density, single-family development or agricultural operations. Topography is typically flat and vegetation is generally low-lying scrub vegetation, with few significant stands of natural vegetation or agricultural crops. This unit is generally bounded to the west/northwest by Henderson Road, to the north by hillsides, to the east by a sewer treatment plant, and, to the south by SR 76. This landscape unit largely supports agricultural uses which offer little visual diversity, but that visually contrast both in color and pattern with land uses to adjacent to the west and east, which include low-density residential and commercial development.

**Landscape Unit No. 4.** This unit consists of undeveloped lands or those supporting low-density, single-family development or agricultural operations to the southeast of the project across SR 76. These lands are on the Pala Band of Mission Indians Reservation. Topography is generally flat, and vegetation is generally low-lying scrub vegetation, with few significant stands of natural vegetation. This landscape unit is generally bounded by the San Luis Rey River and SR 76 to the north, sloping hillsides and Lilac Road to the east and south, and sloping hillsides to the west. As much of the topography is flat and unvaried, and limited vegetation is present, this unit does not support components that combine in visually unique patterns, but offers some visual diversity and contrasts with adjacent lands composed of the mountains and areas supporting much denser vegetation.

**Landscape Unit No. 5.** This unit consists of the sloping hillsides and distinct ridges to the west, north, and east of the proposed project and beyond. This unit supports limited development, although a few residential uses and a utility easement corridor are visible along the slopes and the ridgelines. Vegetation is largely native and consists of a variety of trees and low brush, interspersed with intermittent rock outcroppings. The limits of this unit are generally defined by the ridgelines to the north, east, and west of the project site, and the low lying portions of the project site to the south.

Although vegetation is visually similar to other lands within the surrounding area, this unit offers a contrast with adjacent flatter lands along the valley floor and helps to define a visual corridor along the nearby reach of SR 76.

Other visible and locally recognized landscape units occur at a greater distance from the project site and include the Wilderness Garden Park to the southeast, and the mountainous area to the south/southeast. Due to area topography, intervening development, vegetation within the landscape, and distance, the project site would not be highly visible from these locations. Although such landscape units are recognized as contributing to the overall character of the community, they were not analyzed for their potential to be affected by the proposed project.

### 2.1.1.5 Key Views

Figures 2.1-4B, and 2.1-4C, and 2.1-4D illustrate views of the project site from surrounding public vantage points. Impacts from the key view areas defined above would be as follows:

**Key View No. 1** is the view looking northeast along eastbound SR 76 to the project site, which shows existing views from this vantage point (Figure 2.1-4B). Viewers from this location would mainly be passengers in vehicles traveling along SR 76.

**Key View No. 2** is the view looking northwest along westbound SR 76 to the project site (Figure 2.1-4C). Viewers from this location would mainly be passengers in vehicles traveling along SR 76.

**Key View No. 3** is the view of the project site looking northwest to the site from the existing resort and spa. Figure 2.1-4D shows existing views from the second floor of the eastern parking garage. Viewers from this location would be patrons and employees arriving at or departing from the Pala Resort.

## 2.1.2 Regulatory Setting

### State

#### California Scenic Highway Law

The California Scenic Highway Law created the California Scenic Highway Program to preserve and protect scenic highway corridors from change that would diminish the aesthetic value of adjacent lands. The State Legislature established the program through Senate Bill 1467, which was then added to the Streets and Highways Code, Section 260-283. The program defines the process for the designation of official scenic highways. A legislatively appointed body, the Departmental Transportation Advisory Committee (DTAC), recommends program criteria, reviews applications, and advises the Caltrans Director to revoke scenic highways that are no longer in compliance with the program.

#### California Street and Highways Code

The California Street and Highways Code established standards for undertaking the development and designation of official scenic highways and assigns responsibility for the development of scenic highways to local jurisdictions. It establishes the State Scenic Highway system by designating highways that are either eligible for designation as a State Scenic Highway or have been designated as such. The code defines the criteria under which freeways may be designated a California Historic Parkway as a part of the overarching State Scenic Highway system.

## Local

### San Diego County General Plan

The General Plan, through elements established to address the various issues accompanying planning and development, provides guidance for the protection of visual resources (County of San Diego 2011a). Select policies within the Conservation and Open Space Element of the General Plan speak to the protection of existing visual character and/or quality of areas and contain general direction regarding the minimization of adverse impacts to visual resources. While existing visual resources can be preserved or enhanced, the urban growth anticipated by the General Plan provides opportunities to identify or even create new visual resources, both within existing communities and in new growth areas. Goals and policies within the General Plan Conservation and Open Space Element emphasize the protection of scenic corridors and dark skies within the natural environment and the recognition and enhancement of community character within the built environment. The General Plan's Scenic Highway Section includes objectives to: (1) establish a comprehensive County Scenic Highway Program, (2) protect and enhance scenic resources within both rural and urban scenic highway corridors (3) encourage and promote increased coordination and implementation of the program and (4) increase public awareness and involvement in the program. The goal of County's Scenic Highway Program is to protect and enhance the County's "scenic, historic, and recreational resources" within the viewshed of all scenic highway corridors. The Scenic Highway Program includes criteria to be used when reviewing and recommending changes to the County Scenic Highway System. Two officially designated state scenic highways exist in the County, one of which is in the unincorporated County. The rest of the routes in the County's scenic highway program are listed as First, Second, or Third Priority Scenic Routes. There are six (6) first priority routes, sixteen (16) second priority routes, and thirty-eight (38) third priority routes. Select applicable General Plan policies are listed below:

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

- COS-11.3, Development Siting and Design. Require development within visually sensitive areas to minimize visual impacts and to preserve unique or special visual features, particularly in rural areas, through the following:
  - Creative site planning
  - Integration of natural features into the project
  - Appropriate scale, materials, and design to complement the surrounding natural landscape
  - Minimal disturbance of topography
  - Clustering of development so as to preserve a balance of open space vistas, natural features, and community character
  - Creation of contiguous open space networks

Potential measures for promoting scenic compatibility may include limiting or avoiding sound walls, placing utilities underground, minimizing grading, and providing scenic vista points.

- COS 11.7, Underground Utilities. Require new development to place utilities underground and encourage “undergrounding” in existing development to maintain view sheds, 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.

- COS-12, Preservation of Ridgelines and Hillsides. Ridgelines and steep hillsides that are preserved for their character and scenic value.
- COS-12.1, Hillside and Ridgeline Development Density. Protect undeveloped ridgelines and steep hillsides by maintaining semi-rural or rural designations on these areas.
- COS-12.2, Development Location on Ridges. Require development to preserve the physical features by being located down and away from ridgelines so that structures are not silhouetted against the sky. A Resource Protection Plan would be completed for the proposed project and would serve as the functional equivalent of the County's RPO document, and would address ridgelines and steep hillsides on the project site.
- COS-13, Dark Skies. Preserved dark skies that contribute to rural character and are necessary for the local observatories.

## San Diego Forward

On October 9, 2015, SANDAG adopted “San Diego Forward” a Regional Plan that merged its RCP with the 2050 RTP and the Sustainable Communities Strategy (Regional Plan). The Regional Plan now serves as the blueprint for how the San Diego region will grow and how SANDAG will invest in transportation infrastructure to provide more choices, strengthen the economy, promote a healthy environment, and support thriving communities. The Regional Plan sets forth the following six general objectives: Habitat and Open Space Preservation, Regional Economic Prosperity, Environmental Stewardship, Providing Mobility Choices, Partnerships/Collaboration with neighboring entities and creating Healthy and Complete Communities.

## Pala/Pauma Subregional Plan

The Pala/Pauma Subregional Plan is intended to promote orderly development, protect environmental and man-made resources, and implement the County’s objectives for growth management and the structure of government for the Subregion. The Subregional plan supplements all existing elements of the San Diego County General Plan. It is not intended to supersede any one part of the General Plan. The Pala/Pauma Subregional Plan also identifies goals, recommendations, and policies that are reflective of the local residents’ desire for community development and organization, and identification of those issues and resources deemed important to the community.

The project was designated as an SSA within the Pala/Pauma Subregional Plan because the project’s proximity to Tribal Lands required a more focused planning and land use analysis to determine “the most compatible and consistent land uses” for the site. The project’s designation as a Special Study Area required that three additional land use planning analysis (studies) be conducted to determine the most compatible and consistent land uses for the project and whether a modification to the General Plan would be desirable. (The Feasibility Study, Infrastructure Study and Land Use/Community Character Study are provided in Appendix C to the EIR.) The Land Use/Community Character Study shall be used to provide a framework for development of a land use plan that would accommodate an appropriate level of residential and supporting civic uses based upon the analysis provided in the Infrastructure and Feasibility Studies. The Community Character Analysis and Visual Analysis concluded that there are no significant community character and visual impacts associated with the development of the project, including the proposed infrastructure necessary for development.

The Pala/Pauma Subregional Plan contains goals that guide the land use, commercial, public services and facilities, circulation, and conservation elements of the subregion. These goals include:

- Provide for orderly, planned growth as needs arise and essential services such as water, sewer, fire protection, and schools are made available.

- Provide for adequate amounts of commercially designated land without affecting the scenic, rural character of the community.
- Public services and facilities be provided in a planned and orderly fashion and will be phased in five-year increments in response to evolving and changing market demands.
- Plan for the orderly development of an ultimate highway and street network adequate to handle the subregional traffic at acceptable service levels and capable of accommodating automobile and truck as well as public modes of travel within the subregion.
- Protect the environmental resources designated as “resource conservation areas” in the conservation element.

### San Diego County Zoning Ordinance, Scenic Area Regulations

The Scenic Area Regulations of the County Zoning Ordinance serve to regulate development in areas of high scenic value in order to exclude incompatible uses and structures, and preserve and enhance the scenic resources in adjacent areas. The regulations apply to areas of unique scenic value including but not limited to: scenic highway corridors designated by the County General Plan; critical viewshed and prime viewshed areas as designated on the Local Coastal Program Land Use Plan; and areas adjacent to significant recreational, historic or scenic resources, including but not limited to Federal and State parks. The designation for scenic areas is identified on a parcel-by-parcel basis by the special area designator “S.”

### San Diego County Zoning Ordinance, Community Design Review Area Regulations

The County Zoning Ordinance (County of San Diego 2014) includes provisions to provide for the maintenance and enhancement of a community’s individual visual character and identity. The provisions require that a site plan be submitted for development within those areas have a “B” Community Design Review Area Special Designator. The provisions include exemptions to the site plan requirement for certain project types and provisions for granting a site plan waiver for Community Design Review. The “B” Design Review Area Special Designator also covers portions of Interstate 15 (I-15). The I-15 corridor has its own Scenic Preservation Guidelines and Design Review Board to review discretionary projects that are subject to the guidelines.

### San Diego County Zoning Ordinance, Historic/Archaeological Landmark and District Area Regulations

The County Zoning Ordinance (County of San Diego 2014) includes provisions intended to identify, preserve and protect the historic, cultural, archeological and/or architectural resource values of designated landmarks and districts and encourages compatible uses and architectural design. Areas designated by the Historic/Archaeological Landmark District have an “H” special area designator

while areas within a Specific Historic District are noted with a “J” special area designator. Where a “J” designator exists, these areas will be subject to the guidelines and review of the specific historic district. Where an “H” designator exists, the Historic Site Board may provide guidance, a board appointed by the Board of Supervisors, to advise the Director of the Department of Planning and Land Use on historical/archeological matters. The Historic/Archeological Landmark and District Area Regulations include the requirements for a site plan review for certain discretionary projects, site plan review criteria, and site plan waiver provisions.

### Resource Protection Ordinance (RPO)

The RPO (County of San Diego 2011b) protects a variety of resources. One of the resources the ordinance protects is steep slopes. The ordinance limits development on steep slopes through density restrictions on steep slope lands and through requirements for steep slope areas to be placed in easements. The requirements of this ordinance therefore will often result in the protection of slopes in their natural state, which provides the added benefit of protecting a potential aesthetic resource. In terms of the preservation of aesthetic resources, this policy encourages the preservation of the existing natural terrain, established vegetation, and visually significant geologic displays. Because the Resource Protection Ordinance is stricter in its requirements for preservation of steep slopes, it has become the main planning tool for preservation of this resource, and therefore generally supersedes the Hillside Development Policy described below.

### Board of Supervisors Policy I-73, Hillside Development Policy

The Hillside Development policy was adopted by the County of San Diego Board of Supervisors in 1979 to minimize the effects of disturbing natural terrain and provides for creative design of hillside developments (County of San Diego 2012). The Hillside Development Policy provides flexible guidelines for reducing the effects of disturbance of steep slopes. Specifically, the guidelines aim to “preserve, enhance or improve the physical features of the area consistent with providing building sites while at the same time optimizing the aesthetic quality of the final product.”

### Light Pollution Code

The Light Pollution Code (Section 51.201 of the County Code of Regulatory Ordinances) is intended to reduce potential adverse lighting effects on astronomical research at the Mount Palomar and Mount Laguna observatories in San Diego County. The Light Pollution Code identifies lands within 15 miles of either observatory as being within Zone A, and lands outside of the 15-mile radius, but within the unincorporated portion of the County of San Diego, as within Zone B. The closest observatory to the proposed project site is the Mount Palomar Observatory, located approximately 13 miles to the east; therefore, the project was developed by



the County Planning and Development Services and Department of Public Works in cooperation with lighting engineers, astronomers, land use planners from San Diego Gas & Electric (SDG&E), Palomar and Mount Laguna observatories, and local community planning and sponsor groups to address and minimize the impact of new sources light pollution on nighttime views. Section 51.204 includes general lighting requirements applicable to all unincorporated lands in the County and shielding requirements per fixture by lighting type (i.e., outdoor lighting used for outdoor sales, eating areas, or advertisements (Class I), security lighting (Class II), and decorative lighting (Class III)) and according to location (Zone A or B) (County of San Diego 1986). The proposed project is located within Zone A.

### **2.1.3 Analysis of Project Effects and Determination as to Significance**

#### **Guidelines for the Determination of Significance**

Per the County of San Diego's Guidelines for Determining Significance (County of San Diego 2007), impacts would be considered significant if the project:

1. Would result in introduction of features that would detract from or contrast with the existing visual character and/or quality of a neighborhood, community, or localized area by conflicting with important visual elements or the quality of the area (such as theme, style, setbacks, density, size, massing, coverage, scale, color, architecture, building materials, etc.) or by being inconsistent with applicable design guidelines.
2. Would 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.
3. Would substantially obstruct, interrupt, or detract from a valued focal and/or panoramic vista from a public road, a trail within an adopted County or State trail system, a scenic vista or highway, or a recreational area.
4. Would not comply with applicable goals, policies or requirements of an applicable County Community Plan, Subregional Plan, or Historic District's zoning.

Additionally, the CEQA Appendix G Threshold for light and glare was utilized. Therefore, a significant impact would result if:

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

### **2.1.3.1 Compatibility With Existing Visual Character**

#### **Analysis (Guideline 1)**

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

The visual character of the site would change from the existing undeveloped land and ranching operations, including equestrian support buildings, orchards, grassy pastures, and brush hillsides, to a gated residential community with some visible manufactured slopes, noise walls, public park, fire station, landscaping, and the remaining brush hillsides in open space. As designed, the project would concentrate development into the southern portion of the property, allowing the majority of the property (approximately 70 percent) to remain as undeveloped open space. The proposed development would be adjacent to the SR 76 corridor, where from the west there is a mixture of land uses; primarily agriculture and open space, with some extractive uses and major impact utilities. The project also abuts the Pala Indian Reservation to the east which supports higher-intensity uses including the Pala Resort Casino and Spa, a wastewater treatment plant, a charter elementary school, a shooting range, other facilities and services, and a mixture of single-family and mobile home residential uses; refer to Figures 2.1-2A and 2.1-2B (Surrounding Land Uses), 2.1-3A (Photo Location Map – Off-Site View), 2.1-3B (Off-Site Views), and 1-25 (Subregional Context Map). The existing residential uses on the Pala Indian Reservation show residential units that are clustered on a variety of lot sizes; see Section 2.8 and Figures 2.8-5 and 2.8-6 for a more detailed discussion of land use.

Although the proposed project would change a portion of the character of the existing on-site land use, there have been similar changes over the past several decades in the Pala community as undeveloped, rural lands become developed lands. Please refer to the discussion of the area's history above.

The proposed project concentrates development in the central and southeastern portions of the subject property, adjacent to SR 76 and the more densely developed areas of the Pala community. The project replicates the existing developments on the Reservation to the east and existing and planned developments to the west, whereby development is focused along the roadway (SR 76). The reaches of the property furthest from SR 76 transition to permanent open space, to maintain a ranch feel to the proposed community and aligning with the surrounding community character. The focused residential density of the project would be similar to the high and medium density residential uses in the immediate vicinity and less intensive and less visually

striking than the adjacent Pala Casino Resort and Spa. The clustering of development in the central areas also allows for reduced disturbance across the property as a whole compared and allows for the preservation of 70 percent of the property as open space as compared to spaced individual lots and associated infrastructure branches that would result in development of a larger area of the site. This design approach would allow the open space portions of the project site to transition and buffer surrounding undeveloped and rural lands with a County General Plan land use designation of RL-40, which occur to the northwest/west of the site. This pattern of development keeps the proposed development adjacent to existing infrastructure and developed elements of the surrounding community.

While the proposed project would require a change to the existing General Plan land use and zoning, the intent is to allow a development respective of the surrounding community character, focusing on clustering development within a portion of the site and allowing the majority to remain as undisturbed open space. Views of the majority of the site would not be changed. The proposed project is designed to accommodate residential development clustered on site closest to SR 76 that would be shielded by landscaping, allowing the more visible majority of the site to be preserved in open space for the long-term. The proposed landscaping, on-site open space, park lands, site topography, and layout of the residential units within the property as proposed reduces the visibility of the project components within the landscape.

Warner Ranch is adjacent to the Pala Reservation where the highest density and greatest variety of land uses currently exists. Table 2.1-2, Proposed Structural/Lot Design Characteristics, provides a summary of design characteristics for each of the housing types and supporting facilities proposed with the proposed project. The project includes a variety of residential lot sizes, residential housing sizes, and large areas of biological and agricultural open space which would provide varied visual character within the site. While the project would be visually different from the varied visual character exhibited by residential lot and housing sizes found in the surrounding Pala community, it would not substantially contrast with the existing character of other uses found in the surrounding area, as discussed in the sections below.

**Architectural Design.** The Pala/Pauma Subregional Plan Area does not implement any formally adopted design guidelines. Architectural design of structures within the study area (approximately a 0.75-mile radius from the project boundary) surrounding the proposed project is varied, due to a mixture of use types. Residential uses in the Pala area typically exhibit ranch-style features with wooden exteriors and roofing, and generally non-decorative elements. Other visible residential uses are constructed in the Spanish Colonial style, with stucco exteriors, tile roofing, and arched features. Surrounding commercial, institutional, and industrial uses generally exhibit more utilitarian features with limited architectural design or ornate style (Figures 2.1-1B through 2.1-1D).

In contrast, the Pala Casino Resort and Spa exhibits a distinct architectural character within the landscape. The multistoried buildings are of significant scale, bulk and mass, as compared to other surrounding commercial and other land uses within the community. The buildings are generally constructed of red and tan brick, with architectural details and other adornment visible on the exterior. The two multilevel parking structures are generally unadorned and utilitarian in nature, and are constructed of concrete of a grayish tone.

The Specific Plan prepared for the proposed project outlines goals to preserve the rural character of the area through the use of open space throughout the development, including public and private parks. Smaller multifamily housing has been designed to appear free-standing with inconspicuously shared walls, within the central portion of the property. On more visible perimeter portions of the development, single-family homes, on 3,000- to 8,000-square-foot lots maintain a single-family home neighborhood feel.

The architectural character of each housing type is intended to be simple with an emphasis on the authenticity of form and materials. Figures 1.17A through 1.17C illustrates the proposed estate, duplex, and six-plex housing types. Building materials, colors, and detailing would be similar among the housing types to achieve a visually cohesive product.

As detailed in the Specific Plan, the architectural details of nonresidential land uses, such as the neighborhood clubhouse and fire station, would be designed to integrate with the surrounding setting. Materials and colors for such buildings, accessory structures, walls, and fences would be selected to minimize their visual impact and to imitate the color and texture of the natural environs to the extent possible. A mixture of stone veneer, plank siding, stucco, and composite shingles would be used on site (Figures 1-9 and 1-10). The proposed project would be subject to the County's design review process for consistency with the Warner Ranch Specific Plan and implementation of the "D" Special Area designator, as proposed with the rezone for the subject property.

Additionally, the proposed public and private parks are envisioned to be memorable places to encourage social gathering. The proposed parks are intended to reinforce a sense of community, connect a variety of public spaces, and facilitate and encourage pedestrian use and movement. They would include active recreational uses, such as basketball and/or tennis courts, as well as open areas for passive recreation and relaxation.

Architectural styles would also be consistent with the design guidelines identified in the Specific Plan to ensure that the intended character of the development is achieved and to minimize potential conflicts with the existing character of the Pala community. Through compliance with the Specific Plan, the architectural design of the proposed project would not introduce physical elements within the visual landscape that would significantly differ in architectural style or

create a dominant new visual feature within the existing landscape that would adversely affect or significantly contrast with the existing character of other uses found in the surrounding area.

**Height/Square Footage.** The existing residential, commercial, and industrial uses in the surrounding area generally range from one to two stories in height and thus are low-lying within the landscape. In contrast, various structures associated with the casino and spa are multistoried and are visually dominant within the landscape as a result (Figures 2.1-1D and 2.1-3B). The Pala Casino Resort and Spa is classified as a high-rise per the California Building Code (Chapter 4, Section 403.1.1).

Residential uses within the surrounding community are generally one to two stories in height (average of 15 to 30 feet). The proposed residential units would be similar in height to these existing uses. Table 2.1-2 identifies the anticipated height of the proposed on-site structures. All residential units would be a maximum of two stories in height. Single-family units would range from approximately 23 feet 5 inches to 24 feet 2 inches in height. The multifamily units would range from approximately 20 feet 7 inches to 30 feet in height. The proposed heights of the residential units would be consistent with typical heights of similar residential structures within the surrounding Pala community. In addition, other structures such as the clubhouse (24 feet 2 inches) and guard house (28 feet 5 inches) would be consistent with similar one- to two-story recreational and commercial uses found within the adjacent Pala Reservation (Figures 2.1-2A and 2.1-2B). The existing Pala Fire Station is an estimated 23,000 square feet in size and 30 to 35 feet in height (generally two stories) with a four-story training tower with live fire burn rooms (Figure 2.1-2A); the proposed fire station is expected to be 10,000 square feet and reach a height of 37 feet, although final design is dependent on requirements of the San Diego County Fire Authority (SDCFA). The proposed residences, clubhouse, guard house and fire station would reflect standard heights of other similar residential, commercial, and institutional uses within the community.

Square footage of buildings in the area surrounding the project site varies widely, due to the type of use, with residential uses generally of smaller size, and commercial, institutional, and industrial uses supporting structures of greater square footage. The reservation supports a wastewater treatment plant, a shooting range, and other civic facilities and services, as well as the casino (Figure 2.1-2A). Residential uses include mobile/manufactured homes and conventional single-family homes. As previously described, the existing residential uses on the Pala Indian Reservation include residential units that are clustered on a variety of lot sizes; see Section 2.8 and Figures 2.8-5 and 2.8-6 for further details. Housing types range in square footage and density from visibly planned “clusters” of higher density to individual structures on larger-size lots or on lots where agricultural uses are also present. While no multifamily residential land uses currently exist within a 0.75-mile radius of the project site, there are dense areas of residential uses within the 0.75-mile study area, which has an estimated density of 0.32

dwelling units per acre. The project includes a proposed density of 2.33. Despite the differences in density, the proposed structures would be respective of structural sizes of similar corresponding uses within the Pala Pauma Subregional Plan Area. The proposed single-family units on site would range in size from approximately 2,012 to 3,809 square feet in size; the multifamily units would range from approximately 1,863 to 2,027 square feet in size. As stated above, on-site grading, berming, and landscaping would be applied to reduce the visibility of building surfaces within the landscape. The proposed project has also been designed to locate the higher-density multifamily units and the neighborhood clubhouse (Figure 1-10) in the central portion of the site in order to distance the larger proposed structures from public views (e.g., SR 76). The Specific Plan provides an in-depth discussion of the specific design details proposed for each use type.

**Bulk and Scale.** An evaluation of bulk and scale includes an analysis of the visual appearance of structures, relative to other existing development in the surrounding area. Visual bulk and scale of surrounding structures varies depending on the type of use.

Residential, agricultural, and commercial uses within the Pala/Pauma Subregional Plan Area or the study area tend to be of smaller scale, of lesser square footage, and visually horizontal in nature with the exception of the Pala Casino and Spa. Due to their height, scale, and square footage, the hotel, casino, and parking structures visually dominate the landscape within the Pala Community compared to other surrounding uses. These structural components within the landscape generally restrict views to the southeast/southwest from vantage points along SR 76 and from lands adjacent to the development on all sides (Figures 2.1-3A and 2.1-3B).

The apparent visual bulk and scale of the proposed project would be consistent with that of surrounding uses, due to proposed project design requirements set forth in the Specific Plan. As shown in Table 2.1-2, residential units would not be excessive in square footage, ranging from 1,900 to 3,800 square feet, and would be limited to two stories in height. The units would reflect typical single-family homes on a range of lot sizes, and would not represent elements of significant bulk or scale within the landscape. Integrated landscaping along the perimeter and within the interior of the site would further contribute to a reduction in the visual bulk and scale of the proposed structural elements.

The two-story multifamily units, which would be of larger bulk and scale than the single-family homes, would be set back from SR 76 and would integrate design and layout measures, such as inconspicuously shared walls and varied facades and roof lines, to facilitate the appearance of freestanding units and reduce visual bulk and scale. These would be within the project's interior, surrounded by the single-family units of lesser scale and bulk. Integrated landscaping throughout the development would also reduce the visual bulk and scale of the proposed structural elements on site by providing screening and blending the structures into the surrounding landscape.

The two-story fire station would be approximately 37 feet in height (two stories) and up to 10,000 square feet in size (Figure 1-9 in Chapter 1, Project Description). SDCFA will determine the ultimate station size necessary to accommodate emergency vehicles and personnel. Landscaping, setbacks, larger structures within the viewshed (casino and associated structures, SDG&E facility), and proposed fire station's limited height and size, would reduce the potential elements of significant bulk or scale within the landscape.

Of similar size to the proposed fire station, the two-story neighborhood clubhouse would be located in the northern part of the proposed development footprint, approximately 1,000 feet away from SR 76, and shielded by surrounding residential development and proposed landscaping. Similarly, the guard house would be appropriately sized to accommodate security operations (approximately 525 square feet). As the guard house would be about 400 feet north of the main entry from SR 76, views of the guard house would not be visible to passengers traveling in vehicles along SR 76 and thus would not result in a substantial change in existing views.

The proposed project design would introduce new visual elements to the project site and to the viewshed. A residential community would replace the existing agricultural area. The project would share the viewshed with the Pala Casino and the western edge of the reservation development and it would contribute to the varied bulk and scale and therefore would not be inconsistent with the bulk and scale of the surrounding land uses.

**Building Coverage.** Building coverage is generally expressed as a percentage and represents the area of land covered by the footprint of a building. Building coverage is calculated as the building area divided by total lot area. The building footprint does not include paved areas, such as driveways or parking areas or walkways around structures, as defined by Section 1110 of the County Zoning Ordinance. Undeveloped lands are present in the area surrounding the project site (Figure 2.8-5). The majority of surrounding lands are large-acre parcels that are either undeveloped or developed with structures of varied square footage, depending on the use (i.e., single-family residential, commercial, agricultural). As lot sizes generally decrease to the east and southeast of the project site within the study area and development becomes denser, building coverage increases.

Building coverage proposed with the proposed project is summarized in Table 2.1-3, Proposed Building Coverage. The proposed project building coverage varies for each proposed land use type and ranges overall from approximately 5 percent to 67 percent. Additionally, it should be noted that the project as designed allows approximately 70 percent of the overall property (359 acres) to remain as dedicated open space that would not support any structures, thereby protecting existing views of these areas. The proposed project also would include approximately 26 acres of recreational/aesthetic open space on site, including a private park and clubhouse, a public park, private landscaping lots, and other on-site open space within residential lots.

**Overall Project Design.** The project design concentrates the proposed lots within the southern portion of the site, rather than proposing larger lots throughout the entire site that may result in reduced building coverage, thereby allowing the majority of the property to remain undeveloped as protected open space. As shown in Table 2.1-3, project design allows for housing that, even at the highest percentage of building coverage proposed (67 percent) would still allow more than 30 percent of the lot (proposed single-family residential homes on the 3,000-square-foot lots) to remain without structures. Although a number of large-acre parcels surrounding the project site to the west, north, and south support rural single-family uses wherein building coverage would be low, the building coverage proposed with the project generally reflects the higher-density uses adjacent to the east and southeast within the Pala Reservation.

Additionally, as listed in Chapter 1, Project Description, the following design features from Appendix C have been incorporated into the project to avoid and/or minimize adverse impacts to aesthetics and ensure visual compatibility to the extent feasible.

- **PDF-AE-1: Signage**

- a. The main entrance would be secured and gated and would incorporate monument signage (described below) and landscaping materials consistent with the surrounding natural landscape character. Typical gateway entry elevations are shown in Figure 1-7.
- b. One monument sign is proposed to identify the entrance to the project development. The gated entryway would be set back from the main entry off of SR 76 and would not be visible to those traveling along the roadway.
- c. Roof signs or any sign extending above the highest point of a building, pole signs, temporary advertising devices and displays, and rotating, revolving, flashing, or moving signs would be prohibited.

- **PDF-AE-2: Streetscape.** All on-site roads are proposed to be private roadways, designed consistent with the County's Private Road Standards and requirements of the Pala/Pauma Subregional Plan, San Diego County Fire Authority (SDCFA) requirements, and design measures given in the Community Design Element of the Warner Ranch Specific Plan. Primary roads would integrate streetscape elements for vehicular circulation lanes, bike lanes, pedestrian walkways, parkway plantings, traffic control devices, and street safety lighting and signage design.

Pedestrian amenities would also be provided in the form of shade tree canopies and appropriate street furnishings. Where walls are unavoidable, particular attention would be given to a comfortable pedestrian scale and to the provision of pilasters, plan offsets, and landscaping to relieve visual monotony.



- **PDF-AE-3: Landscaping.** The landscape design guidelines encourage an overall design concept that visually enhances and blends with the surrounding built and natural environments. The overall theme for project landscaping is intended to create a visually unified community reflective of historical landscape traditions that are respective of the natural landscape found within the surrounding area. All proposed landscaping plants would be consistent with the County's landscaping requirements and measures included in the Warner Ranch Specific Plan, as applicable. Drought-tolerant, deer-tolerant, and native species shall be used wherever possible to minimize water usage and maintain the visual and rural character of the natural environment. Landscaping would be provided along the project frontage and elsewhere within the interior to enhance the entryway and provide project screening from off-site locations, in addition to creating a natural landscape that visually blends the development into the existing setting. Landscaping would also be used around on-site structures to visually reduce the surface area of larger buildings and enhance their appearance within the setting. In addition, landscaping would be provided within the interior of the property, along the private roadways, and within recreational open space areas to enhance views of the development and to reflect existing vegetation types in the surrounding rural community. Vegetation of varying heights and textures would be placed along perimeter walls and fences to soften hard planes by creating interest and variety.
- **PDF-AE-4: Grading.** Project engineering design for manufactured slopes would be required to meet the requirements of the County's Grading Ordinance. The visible surface area of on-site structures would be minimized through grading and landscaping techniques and consideration of building massing, use of earthen berms, and/or use of plant materials to minimize the overall visual mass or bulk of such structures.
- **PDF-AE-5: Lighting.** All exterior lighting proposed with the project would adhere to Division 9 of the County's Light Pollution Code, or "Dark Skies" Ordinance, to reduce potential adverse lighting effects on the Mount Palomar and Mount Laguna observatories. The project would comply with Zone A lighting design requirements. The project would require compliance with lighting design standards identified in the Warner Ranch Specific Plan with implementation of the "D" Special Area designator proposed as part of the project zoning to ensure that all outdoor lighting is consistent with the character of the surrounding Pala community.

The proposed project would be subject to County design review, prior to issuance of development permits, as part of the "D" Special Area designator.

Low-level lighting would be installed with the project to allow for ongoing maintenance and purposes of public safety. All project lighting types (e.g., landscaping, interior streets, private and public parks) and locations are shown on the Illustrative Street and Park Lighting Plan (as part of the Site Plan).

Installation of project lighting would be required to be installed with that shown on the Site Plan approved by the County to ensure that it would not adversely affect adjacent lands or the existing character of the Pala community. The height, materials, colors, and configuration of proposed lighting fixtures would be designed to blend with the natural backdrop to the extent practical and to avoid potential lighting impacts on adjacent land uses. All outdoor lighting would be designed consistent with County outdoor lighting standards and would be energy-efficient, shielded, and screened to prevent direct rays from reaching adjacent properties.

Unique lighting features may be used to accentuate architectural elements, landscaping, entrances, or pedestrian areas; however, if proposed within visually sensitive areas or adjacent to on-site open space, such treatments would be minimized to the extent possible. All project lighting would be shielded to minimize the potential for glare or spillover onto adjacent ownerships and/or designated open space lands. Uplighting may be proposed for selected trees and landscape feature; however, such features shall be softly uplit with light sources that produce less than 4,050 lumens in light fixtures that are carefully aimed and fitted with glare shields and louvers, and in compliance with Zone A of the Light Pollution Code.

As the proposed project would be required to conform to the Conditions of Approval, measures given in the Specific Plan are considered to be design measures and not mitigation measures. Design measures previously described establish design prescriptors for signage, gates, streetscape, landscaping and access to mimic ranch rural themes and patterns, variation, and use of existing resources including topography and native vegetation, or recent historical landscape traditions.

The design measures intended to minimize visual elements of the project design include:

- **PDF-AE-6: Design Review: Require** County design review prior to issuance of development permits in compliance with the design standards identified in the Specific Plan with implementation of the “D” Special Area designator proposed as part of the zoning. The design review would ensure that the Site Plan, access and circulation, lighting, landscape design, grading (e.g., manufactured slopes), public utilities, and architectural design, are consistent with the character of the surrounding Pala community, natural features, and site topography.
- **PDF-AE-7: Bulk and Scale:** Locate structures of greater bulk/scale within the interior of the site, away from public views.
- **PDF-AE-8: Open Space:** Provide a large portion of the site as open space, with some agricultural lands to reduce effects of the proposed development on existing views and to reduce the potential for development to adversely affect a viewer’s experience when viewing the site.

The Visual Simulations shown in Figures 2.1-4B through 2.1-4D illustrate the visual changes that would result from implementation of the proposed project. As shown in Figure 2.1-4B and 2.1-4C, the visual changes from key views 1 and 2 would include the introduction of residential structures into the foreground while retaining many rural attributes such as the vegetation along the roadway and ridges and landforms unbroken in background. The simulation from Key View 3, shown in Figure 2.1-4D, shows proposed development following existing topographical characteristics and the view remaining dominated by the parking lot in the foreground, hills and ridgelines in the background to the west and middle distance to the north. The proposed project is visible, though not dominant in the simulations for key views 1 and 3. In Key View 2 the proposed project brings to the foreground a residential element that under existing conditions is only visible as a distant component of the view. The distant views remain generally rural because of the larger setting and the dominance of surrounding topographical features.

The project has been made compatible with adjacent reservation uses, buildings, and structures with consideration given to harmony in size, location, scale, bulk, and coverage. The project has included a variety of lot sizes and residential housing sizes which will provide varied visual character and pattern, but elements will be visually different from the existing project site and from the varied visual character exhibited by the residential lot and housing sizes found to the east.

The appearance of the project within the landscape would detract from the natural elements in the landscape to the west of the site. Views of the dense single and multifamily development and the 10,000-square-foot, two-story fire station would contrast with the visual character of the natural views of the San Luis Rey River and the Monserate, Palomar, and Pala Mountains (including Mount Olympus) and views of rural agriculture west of the project. This would be considered **significant (Impact AE-1)**. While design measures have minimized the impact to a great extent by its location, size, design, and operating characteristics of the proposed uses, they have not reduced the impact to less than significant because conflicts with important visual elements of the natural and rural environment remain.

### Applicable Design Guidelines

The proposed project would not conflict with any existing design guidelines, as none have been adopted for the Pala community. Project construction would be required to occur consistent with the design measures identified in the Warner Ranch Specific Plan.

#### **2.1.3.2 Effects on Landmarks, Historic Resources, Trees, and Rock Outcroppings**

##### Analysis (Guideline 2)

No designated landmarks occur on site. The proposed project has been designed to locate the development along the lower elevations of the site. The site currently supports several areas with

citrus and avocado groves, a portion of which will remain on the upper hillsides following project implementation. Rock outcroppings are visible in certain areas on site, particularly in the northeastern portion along the hillsides. The proposed project would preserve the majority of the steep slopes occurring on site, and would permanently dedicate approximately 359 acres, or 70 percent, of the overall site as natural open space, allowing these areas to remain undisturbed.

As detailed in Section 2.4, two historic buildings are located on site. The gate house and main house were determined to have limited historical significance. The 1870's era adobe interior wall of the historical building, as well as all building components including the concrete slab foundation, shall be retained and utilized as a part of the proposed public park area. The interior wall and other building components are not be visible from off-site properties or SR 76, and therefore, removal of such elements would not cause an adverse effect on or change of one or more features that contribute to the valued visual character or image of the community or localized area. Impacts associated with changes to historic resources would be reduced to less than significant.

While the majority of the ridgelines, steep slopes, and rock outcroppings would be preserved in on-site open space, the proposed project would require manufactured cut and fill slopes of varying heights to allow for site development. The majority of these manufactured slopes would be obscured from view from SR 76 and other public locations within the surrounding community, due to the proposed residential units, existing site topography, and/or existing and proposed vegetation, and further influenced by differences in the elevations between the slopes and the location of the vantage point (e.g., from SR 76 or areas to the south within the valley).

A number of manufactured cut/fill slopes of substantial height (greater than 30 feet) will still be required along portions of the northern, eastern, and southeastern perimeters of the site, as well as in some interior locations (Figure 2.1-5, Manufactured Slopes/Retaining Walls). These slopes would be on the following lots: 254–255; 258–260; 401–406; 409–416; 425–430; 435–444; 548–550; 601; 603; and 618 (Figure 2.1-5). These slopes could potentially result in a change in the natural landscape that would adversely affect existing views to the site from off-site public vantage points. Due to topography of the site, and distance from both SR 76 and off-site public vantage points, particularly from across the valley, views of many of these larger slopes would be reduced or obscured by on-site development, existing intervening topography, and proposed landscaping.

A large fill slope (2:1 ratio) is proposed in the northeastern portion of the site (Lots 435–444, Figure 2.1-5). The estimated maximum height of the fill slope would be 50 feet. This slope would be adjacent to proposed on-site open space areas to the northwest/west and may be partially visible from undeveloped reservation lands to the west at a higher elevation. Views from the north of these fill slopes would be obscured due to site topography and differences in

elevation between the slope and the viewing angle. Lands to the north would remain as undeveloped open space.

Several manufactured cut slopes (1.5:1 ratio) would also be required in the northwestern portion of the site (Lots 254–255; 257–260; 601; and, 603). The majority of these slopes would range from 50 to 65 feet, although one large cut slope reaching an approximate height of 150 feet would be required on Lot 603. These slopes would be obscured from view to westbound travelers and generally to eastbound travelers along SR 76 due to the topography of the site and the proposed development layout (Figures 2.1-4B through 2.1-4D). Limited views of these slopes may be intermittently visible from public vantage points within the river valley to the south and southeast of the site. Views of these slopes from these locations would occur at a distance of greater than half a mile from the site and would be restricted due to existing development and existing and proposed vegetation within the visual landscape.

If left untreated and/or exposed, these manufactured cut and fill slopes could adversely change the existing visual character of the hillsides and image of the project site. This would be considered a **significant** impact (**Impact AE-2**), and mitigation measures would be required.

One water tank is proposed in the northwestern portion of the project site along the hillside. An existing water line located within Jeremy Way that terminates just north the project's northwestern boundary would be extended to connect to the on-site water tank. The tank would have an estimated capacity of four million gallons. It would be approximately 135 feet in diameter and would be approximately 42 feet in height above finished grade, once installed. It would be approximately one mile north of SR 76 at its closest point. Therefore, due to the height of the tank and distance from the nearest roadway, the tank would generally not be visible from SR 76, and any views from SR 76 would be limited and intermittent due to intervening vegetation and site topography. Similar water tanks are presently found along the hillsides within the Pala community (2.1-4), and the proposed tank would not result in a new visual element within the landscape. Although the proposed tank may be visible from certain off-site vantage points to the south/southeast across the valley, the limited height of the tank and viewing distance would reduce visibility of the tank within the visual landscape, and no landscape screening is proposed. The tank could potentially have significant impacts to the area's visual quality (**Impact AE-3**).

Minor grading is proposed for an existing dirt access road leading northward from the residential development area to the proposed water tank location (Figure 1-3, Warner Ranch Specific Plan). The existing road is largely obscured from view by established vegetation (tree canopy) although limited segments of the road may be visible from vehicles traveling along SR 76. Potential views to the road from SR 76 would be across the proposed developed portion of the site and would be reduced by distance, site topography, and existing and proposed

landscaping. As only minor grading improvements are proposed for the roadway, no significant changes to the existing visual setting of the road would result. Therefore, such improvements would not result in a substantial adverse change in the visual features or character of the site, and impacts would be **less than significant**.

### **2.1.3.3 Effects on Focal and/or Panoramic Views**

#### Analysis (Guideline 3)

The project site is not located near and is not visible from any state-designated scenic vistas or State Scenic Highways. Therefore, the proposed project would not substantially obstruct, interrupt, or detract from a valued focal and/or panoramic vista related to an existing state resource.

The Pala-Pauma Community Planning Group has proposed the designation of SR 76 from I-15 to SR 79 as a State Scenic Highway, and the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) has determined that the roadway is eligible for such a designation, but it is unknown when any official designation would be made, should the application for designation be approved. Development is planned or is present within this length of the proposed roadway segment (e.g., Meadowood, Campus Park, Campus Park West, Gregory Canyon Landfill, Orange Grove Power Plant) and may affect its future eligibility; refer to Figure 1-25, Subregional Context Map, which shows the location of these projects relative to SR 76.

Views of the project site along the project frontage (0.5 mile) experienced by travelers along the SR 76 corridor from I-15 to SR 79 (approximately 34.5 miles) would only be visible for a short duration of the total travel time along this segment (approximately 1.5 percent). As described above, due to the site topography, in addition to proposed project design which distances the development from SR 76 and provides a landscaped buffer, as well as the public park and detention basins, near the roadway, limited views into the site would occur from SR 76 and be those occurring along the project frontage and of the mountain landscape in the background which would be protected in open space. Further, Tribal Lands, which would include the Pala and Pauma Indian reservations along the segment proposed for designation, would not be subject to scenic highway designations and/or regulations. Therefore, views from the east of the site where the roadway crosses through the Pala Reservation, would not be considered impacted under this threshold. For the reasons above, development of the proposed project would be less important to making the designation of SR 76 as a State Scenic Highway.

SR 76 is also designated as a County Scenic Highway from I-15 east to SR 79. The analysis of potential impacts would be similar to the State designation above.

The proposed project would construct an all-way traffic signal at the intersection of the main entry along SR 76. The proposed project also includes frontage improvements to the existing

120-foot-wide Pala Road/SR 76 right-of-way easement that would include widening the existing 24-foot-wide pavement to 52 feet, two 12-foot-wide drive lanes, a 12-foot-wide painted center median, and 8-foot wide shoulders that also include a painted bike lane in each direction. Additionally, a 350-foot-long and 12-foot-wide acceleration/deceleration lane is proposed adjacent to the project's main entry. Improvements would also be made to three off-site intersections to mitigate project traffic impacts. These include the intersections of SR 76 and East Pala Mission Road, SR 76 and Lilac Road, and SR 76 and Cole Grade Road. Precise improvements are being developed with Caltrans and may include additional turn lanes and traffic signals.

Impacts from key views are shown in Figures 2.1-4B through 2.1-4D and would be as follows:

**Key View No. 1 (Figure 2.1-4B).** SR 76 is a two-lane, paved public roadway, running east–west adjacent to the south of the project site. Viewers traveling east along SR 76 would have brief and intermittent views into the project site due to established natural vegetation along the roadway, site topography, and attention to driving in traffic. Traveling east, the primary views would be of the mountains or river bed or to the casino development, however due to the traffic congestion, most attention would be directed to the road. Visual quality and character from this vantage point are considered to be medium.

The visual simulation prepared from this location is shown without the proposed landscaping that would be planted along the project perimeter and within the interior of the property to provide screening of structures and/or walls and further blend the development into the visual setting. Thus the view shown in the simulation is a worst-case scenario of views of the project experienced by drivers traveling east along SR 76.

**Road Improvements.** The improvements proposed to SR 76 would be visible to those traveling east along the roadway past the project frontage. As described above, the project would widen the existing pavement to 52 feet and add an acceleration/deceleration lane, among other improvements. These changes would be most noticeable to those familiar with the existing roadway, but construction of these improvements is not expected to adversely affect views experienced by passengers in vehicles traveling along the roadway, or to significantly alter views of the roadway when viewed from off-site public vantage points within the valley. Views would occur from a distance or would be minimized or obscured due to the level viewing plane of the valley floor wherein intervening development or vegetation would restrict views of development at similar elevations. Those views experienced of the improvements would be reduced as one approaches the site from the west due to curvature of the existing road alignment, and further reduced by intervening landforms (varied area topography), existing vegetation and landscaping, and/or existing development along the corridor. Further, as the road currently carries large traffic volumes and attention would be focused on driving and on safety. Viewer response to the proposed improvements is anticipated to be low once constructed.

**On-Site Views.** Views from this location would be of the proposed residential units in the southwestern portion of the site. As shown in Figure 2.1-1A through 2.1-1D, a number of homes would be visible from this vantage point along the perimeter of the proposed development footprint; these residences would be distanced from the roadway and further buffered by existing and proposed landscaping, thereby reducing the visibility of the structures. Additionally, the proposed fire station would not be visible to travelers along the road until within close proximity, as the proposed residences would block such views.

A 6-foot-high sound wall is proposed along the outer perimeter (rear boundary) of the residential lots in the southern portion of the site. Limited portions of the wall would reach seven to nine feet in height where required in order to reduce potential noise levels resulting from traffic along SR 76 (Figure 1-18). At the nearest point, the wall would be approximately 75 feet from SR 76 (edge of pavement), thereby reducing the appearance of the height of the walls from vantage points along the roadway due to distance. The varied height of these walls would create visual interest and reduce visual dominance, but they would have the potential to substantially interrupt or detract from views from SR 76, thus resulting in a **significant** impact requiring mitigation (**Impact AE-4**).

The proposed project does not incorporate elements of significant height or scale and has been designed to distance the higher-density, multifamily residential uses from SR 76 and to locate the single-family residential uses along the outer perimeter of the development. In addition, other residential and commercial uses are presently visible on developed lands to those traveling east along SR 76, and the project would not introduce a new type of land use into the existing visual setting. Project design, viewing angle, and other viewing conditions as described above would reduce the visibility of the proposed project within the landscape. Project design measures establish design prescriptors for signage, gates, streetscape, landscaping and access to mimic ranch rural themes and patterns, variation, and use of existing resources including topography and native vegetation, or recent historical landscape traditions. The measures are proposed to reduce the potential for the proposed development to introduce elements that would substantially obstruct, interrupt, or detract from views experienced while traveling eastward along SR 76 within the project vicinity. With implementation of the proposed mitigation, impacts would be reduced to **less than significant**.

**Key View No. 2 (Figure 2.1-4C).** Similar to those views of the site for eastbound travelers, views of the site from this vantage point would be brief and intermittent, due to established natural vegetation along the roadway, site topography, and attention to driving. At vantage points along the southeasterly project frontage on SR 76, brief views into the southern portion of the site are afforded from the roadway. Visual quality and character from this vantage point are also considered to be medium.



This visual simulation also shows the proposed project without the proposed landscaping that would be planted along the perimeter and within the interior of the property to provide screening of walls and other structures, providing a worst-case scenario of views experienced by drivers traveling west along SR 76. Improvements proposed to SR 76 would be visible to those traveling west along the roadway past the project frontage. Again, these changes would be most noticeable to those familiar with the existing roadway, but they would not adversely affect views experienced by passengers in vehicles traveling along the roadway, or significantly alter views of the roadway when viewed from off-site public vantage points within the valley. These views of the on-site improvements would occur from a distance or would be minimized or obscured due to the level viewing plane of the valley floor, curvature of the road alignment, and/or intervening landforms, vegetation, and/or existing development. As the road currently carries large traffic volumes, the attention to views of the improved portions of the street would be reduced as one travels through the valley, and the viewer response to the improvements proposed with the project is anticipated to be low once constructed. Additionally, project improvements would be limited to the vicinity of the project site, allowing the remainder of the travel corridor to remain in its existing visual state.

Intermittent views into the proposed project from this location would be of the residential uses in the southeastern portion of the site, although the slope in the southwestern portion of the site adjacent to the road would partially block views of the units as one approached the site. As one travels along westbound SR 76, views of the public park and fire station would occur intermittently; similar residential and commercial uses are also visible within the landscape to westbound travelers along SR 76. As stated above, project design includes landscaping along the SR 76 frontage to blend the project into the surrounding setting and reduce views into the project's interior.

The project design includes a variety of landscaping along the SR 76 frontage to blend the project into the surrounding natural setting and reduce views into the interior of the property from the roadway per the Landscape Plan. Additionally, the public park and the on-site detention basins would integrate perimeter landscaping to further enhance the visual appearance of the site from this viewing angle, while distancing development areas from the roadway. As stated above, landscaping is also proposed along the southern side of the proposed manufactured slopes in the southeastern portion of the property to blend the slopes into the natural landscaping and provide a natural transition between the project site and adjacent off-site properties to the southeast/east.

The water tank would be approximately one mile from SR 76 at the closest point along the project's frontage. Views would largely be blocked by the existing hill in the southeastern portion of the site and the ridge along the southeastern/eastern boundary (Figure 2.1-4C). Views of the tank and road would not be visible from lands within the reservation due to these topographic features. Views from farther west along SR 76 would be intermittent and limited due to intervening topography and vegetation, and distance. **Impact AE-3** notes that there is a potential for the water

tank to impact views from SR 76, and mitigation is required. The proposed project does not incorporate elements of significant height or scale and has been designed to distance the higher-density, multifamily residential uses from SR 76, and locate the single-family residential uses along the perimeter of the development. In addition, other residential and commercial uses are presently visible on developed lands to those traveling west along SR 76, and the proposed project would therefore not introduce a new type of land use into the existing visual setting. Project design, attention focused on driving in traffic, viewing angle, and other viewing conditions as described above would reduce the visibility of the proposed project within the landscape. Project design measures establish design prescriptors for signage, gates, streetscape, landscaping and access to mimic ranch rural themes and patterns, variation, and use of existing resources including topography and native vegetation, or recent historical landscape traditions. These proposed measures are designed to reduce the potential for the proposed development to introduce elements that would substantially obstruct, interrupt, or detract from views experienced while traveling eastward along SR 76 within the project vicinity. With implementation of the proposed mitigation, impacts would be reduced to **less than significant**.

**Key View No. 3 (Figure 2.1-4D).** Key View 3 is from the Pala Casino. Views of the project site looking northwest from the existing Pala Casino Resort and Spa would be limited. Key View #3 shows existing views from the second floor of the easterly parking garage. Viewers from this location would be patrons and employees arriving at or departing from the Pala Resort complex. Although views from this vantage point would occur on private property and not public viewing locations, views from this location were evaluated herein. From this vantage point, views of the project site are limited due to intervening topography, distance from the site, and natural on-site vegetation. Views generally consist of the large ridge in the southeastern portion of the site, along with the lower-lying lands and gently sloping mounds within the southern portion of the property.

Views of the project from this vantage point would include the limited views of the residential uses located in the southern portion of the site. On-site topography and proposed landscaping along the frontage along SR 76 would substantially reduce such views into the interior. As noted, the higher density residential uses are further away from the roadway. Views of the project site may also contribute to a valued panorama or image of the Pala Tribal community and therefore, the impact from this viewpoint would be potentially significant. However, the viewing conditions also include the considerable development within the Pala Reservation, and therefore, it is not anticipated that the development would introduce elements that would significantly detract from or contrast with the existing visual character and/or quality of the community. Additionally, the proposed design measures proposed to reduce impacts with regard to other key views to the site (including project landscaping and project conformance with the Specific Plan design guidelines), would reduce the visual change in views of the site from this location. Impacts would be **less than significant**.

**Other Vantage Points.** Viewer response from other public vantage points within the valley or from public roadways located at a distance is anticipated to be low. Views of the proposed development from locations within the community would generally be reduced or blocked due to intervening development and vegetation, differences in elevation, site topography, and project design. Viewer response from more distant locations would be low, as the project would not represent a significant visual feature within the landscape due to distance and existing and proposed vegetation, as well as placement of the development largely along the lower portions of the site where they would be less visible than if placed along the slopes or ridgelines.

**Other Views.** Other views may occur from surrounding public vantage points, such as hiking trails within the Wilderness Gardens County Park, approximately three miles to the southeast. Views of the site from higher elevations in the Park would be blocked by the north to south ridgeline and associated hill in the southeastern portion of the project site. Similarly, although glimpses of the project site may occur along Lilac Road approximately two miles southeast of the site, views to the proposed project would be limited by intervening development and vegetation, as well as distance from the site and site topography. Views from other surrounding residential, agricultural, and commercial uses on private lands along the valley floor would largely be obscured due to a relatively flat viewing plane, intervening vegetation and/or development, distance to the site, and/or topography. As the proposed project would not significantly change existing views from these locations, an in-depth analysis of the potential visual effects of the project on these view locations was not performed.

The project site may be visible from other public and private vantage points across the valley to the south and southeast/southwest from higher elevations along the hillsides. These views would be visually reduced due to distance from the site, vegetation, topography, and elevational differences (Figure 2.1-4A). Views to the site from public roadways to the east would largely be blocked by the existing ridgeline and further by project design that would locate the proposed residential units below the top of slope, thereby placing them out of the line of sight.

As described above, the water tank is proposed approximately one mile north of SR 76 at its closest point. Potential impacts have been identified (**Impact AE-3**).

Views from established public recreational areas in the project area would not be obstructed or interrupted with development of the site as proposed. although views of the proposed project elements would be limited and/or reduced through project design and siting of structures, the project would have the potential to introduce structural elements and changes to the visual landscape that could detract from a valued focal and/or panoramic vista from a public road or scenic highway (i.e., SR 76). As such, impacts would be considered **significant (Impact AE-5)**.

The design measures intended to minimize the project's substantially obstruction, interruption, or detract from a valued panoramic vista or from a scenic highway include:

1. There would be County design review prior to issuance of development permits in compliance with the design standards identified in the Specific Plan with implementation of the "D" Special Area designator proposed as part of the zoning. The design review would ensure that the Site Plan, access and circulation, lighting, landscape design, grading (e.g., manufactured slopes), public utilities, and architectural design, are consistent with the character of the surrounding Pala community, natural features, and site topography
2. Locate structures of greater bulk/scale within the interior of the site, away from public views, and
3. Provide a large portion of the site as open space, with some agricultural lands to reduce effects of the proposed development on existing views and to reduce the potential for development to adversely affect a viewer's experience when viewing the site.
4. Provide a landscaping buffer along SR 76.

#### **2.1.3.4 Compliance With Applicable Regulations**

##### Analysis (Guideline 4)

**Resource Protection Ordinance.** The proposed project would provide protection of on-site sensitive RPO lands to the extent feasible, although it could encroach into steep slopes protected by the County's RPO on a total of 10 lots: seven lots within the northwestern portion (Lots 253, 254, and 256–260) and three lots within the northeastern portion (Lots 428 to 430). The percentage of encroachment into steep slope areas for these lots would range from approximately 2.2 percent to 15.5 percent. Per Section 86.604(e)(2) of the RPO, and based upon the area of steep slopes within each lot and the percentage of each lot within RPO steep slopes, all proposed project encroachment into RPO steep slope areas would be in conformance with the encroachments specified in the RPO. There are no impacts related to compliance with the RPO.

An opportunities and constraints analysis prepared for the proposed project identified all significant wildlife and sensitive habitats, canyons, rock outcroppings, steep slopes, and ridgeline features on site. As a result, the proposed project has been designed to preserve approximately 359 acres, or 70 percent of the entire property, as dedicated biological open space for long-term protection. The proposed project avoids RPO resources, providing specified encroachments allowed by the RPO. There are no impacts related to compliance with the RPO.

**Grading Ordinance.** Project grading would require compliance with all applicable standards and requirements of the County's Grading Ordinance. Natural drainages within proposed on-site open space areas would be retained in their natural state whenever possible. Measures for the protection of native on-site trees, rock outcroppings, and other natural features were considered in the grading design. Grading methods used to preserve the natural contours of the site to the extent possible include creating variable slope gradients with smooth rounded cuts; rounding off toe and crest of slope; blending graded slope contours with the natural topography; utilizing native vegetation to visually alleviate sharp, angular slopes; preserving natural and significant geologic features; and designing drainage courses to blend with the natural setting. There are no impacts related to compliance with the Grading Ordinance.

#### San Diego County General Plan and Pala/Pauma Subregional Plan.

Although the project proposes a change to the existing General Plan land use and zoning, the project has been designed to be consistent with the surrounding community character and minimize visual impacts to the surrounding area, consistent with COS-11.3. The project focuses development within a small portion of the site, allowing the majority of the property to remain as undisturbed open space. The project's densities allow residential units and supporting facilities (e.g., public park and fire station), to be concentrated within the central and southeastern portions of the property, with the remaining 70 percent of the site left undeveloped as protected open space. Additional design measures, including architectural design, landscaping, on-site open space, and park lands, as well as natural site topography and layout of the residential units within the property as proposed, would further reduce the visibility of the project components, maintain a ranch feel to the proposed community and align with the surrounding community character.

The Pala Subregional Plan determined that the project's unique location contiguous to the Pala Reservation should be taken into consideration when determining the most compatible and consistent land uses for the site. Topographically, the proposed project is connected to the Pala Reservation in that it is part of the same valley floor in which the project is located and is generally bounded by the same mountain ranges rising from the valley floor. Also, the project is part of the same drainage basin and valley floor viewshed. The project has been designed to consider existing development patterns in the adjacent and surrounding communities. In proposing a variety of lot sizes and residential housing sizes, the project reflects the existing varied visual character and pattern exhibited by residential lot and housing sizes found in the surrounding Pala community. The focused residential density of the project would be similar to the high and medium density residential uses in the immediate vicinity of the Pala Reservation and less intensive and less visually striking than the adjacent Pala Casino Resort and Spa. Similar to the Community Development Model, the project's density is located in the southern central portions of the site contiguous to Pala

Reservation's densest residential uses and central commercial and civic core, and then transitions into lower density residential development and open space.

While the majority of the ridgelines, steep slopes, and rock outcroppings would be preserved in on-site open space, the proposed project would require manufactured cut and fill slopes of varying heights to allow for site development. The majority of these manufactured slopes would be obscured from view from SR 76 and other public locations within the surrounding community, due to the proposed residential units, existing site topography, and/or existing and proposed vegetation, and further influenced by differences in the elevations between the slopes and the location of the vantage point (e.g., from SR 76 or areas to the south within the valley).

The project would comply with Zone A lighting design requirements. The project would require compliance with lighting design standards identified in the Warner Ranch Specific Plan with implementation of the "D" Special Area designator proposed as part of the project zoning to ensure that all outdoor lighting is consistent with the character of the surrounding Pala community. Therefore, the project would be consistent with COS-12.2 and COS-13.

As discussed under Issue 2 and 3, above, the project site is not located near and is not visible from any state-designated scenic vistas or State Scenic Highways. Therefore, the proposed project would not substantially obstruct, interrupt, or detract from a valued focal and/or panoramic vista related to an existing state resource. The project would have the potential to introduce structural elements and changes to the visual landscape that could detract from a valued focal and/or panoramic vista from a public road or scenic highway however design measures have been required that reduce the project's intrusion into panoramic views or vistas from scenic highways' impact to less than significant. Therefore, the project would be consistent with COS 11.1 and COS 11.2.

#### **2.1.3.5 Light and Glare**

##### **Analysis (Guideline 5)**

##### **Light**

As previously described in Section 2.1.2.1, the project includes PDF-AE-5, which requires that all exterior lighting proposed with the project adhere to Division 9 of the County's Light Pollution Code, or "Dark Skies" Ordinance, to reduce potential adverse lighting effects on the Mount Palomar and Mount Laguna observatories. The project would comply with Zone A lighting design requirements. The project would require compliance with lighting design standards identified in the Warner Ranch Specific Plan with implementation of the "D" Special Area designator proposed as part of the project zoning to ensure that all outdoor lighting is consistent with the character of the surrounding Pala community. Low-level lighting would be installed with the project to allow for ongoing maintenance and purposes of public safety. All

project lighting types (e.g., landscaping, interior streets, private and public parks) and locations are shown on the Illustrative Street and Park Lighting Plan (as part of the Site Plan).

Installation of project lighting would be required to be installed with that shown on the Site Plan approved by the County to ensure that it would not adversely affect adjacent lands or the existing character of the Pala community. The height, materials, colors, and configuration of proposed lighting fixtures would be designed to blend with the natural backdrop to the extent practical and to avoid potential lighting impacts on adjacent land uses. All outdoor lighting would be designed consistent with County outdoor lighting standards and would be energy-efficient, shielded, and screened to prevent direct rays from reaching adjacent properties.

Unique lighting features may be used to accentuate architectural elements, landscaping, entrances, or pedestrian areas; however, if proposed within visually sensitive areas or adjacent to on-site open space, such treatments would be minimized to the extent possible. All project lighting would be shielded to minimize the potential for glare or spillover onto adjacent ownerships and/or designated open space lands. Uplighting may be proposed for selected trees and landscape feature; however, such features shall be softly uplit with light sources that produce less than 4,050 lumens in light fixtures that are carefully aimed and fitted with glare shields and louvers, and in compliance with Zone A of the Light Pollution Code.

### Glare

As indicated in the Specific Plan, the materials and colors for all buildings, accessory structures, walls, and fences should be selected to minimize their visual impact and to imitate the color and texture of the natural environs as much as possible. Wall hues should consist of earth tones, such as off-white and beige. The visible area of the buildings should be minimized through grading and landscaping techniques, and careful consideration of the building massing, use of earth berms, or use of plant materials will minimize the visual impact of structures. No highly reflective materials are proposed in conjunction with any permitted on-site use. The project, however, would install at least 9,605 solar panels on site. The project would be developed to meet all applicable County Code requirements in regard to the provision of solar facilities. The County regulations for solar electric power usage established within County Zoning Ordinance Section 6952 provide permitting requirements and required findings to assure that the solar energy system does not have harmful effects. The conformance of individual solar energy systems with the County process and standards would further assure that solar panels would not be made of highly reflective or other harmful materials. Therefore, the project would result in less than significant visual impacts due to the glare from highly reflective building materials.

### 2.1.4 Cumulative Impacts

Figure 1-27 identifies the projects considered for the cumulative analysis and the surrounding limits of the viewshed. The study area selected for the project generally includes those lands within proximity to the parcels affected by the project and those located within the surrounding viewshed that would have views to the site from public locations (e.g., public roadways). Topography within the project area is highly varied and ranges from the flatter portions of the valley floor to the hillsides to the north and west of the project site, as well as those located at a greater distance to the east and south/southeast. Views of the site on the downslopes of these hillsides (not facing the project site) would be obscured, and therefore, such locations would be outside of the project viewshed and would not contribute to a cumulative effect on aesthetics when considered with the proposed project. Therefore, the study area boundary generally follows the ridgelines which form the limits of where views of the project site would be experienced. For aiding analysis, Figure 2.1-6, Visual Analysis Context Map, provides a breakdown of the different visual landscapes along the SR 76 corridor that are determined by topography and the curvature of the roadway which can limit views as one travels east or west. As shown on the figure, the project is located in the identified Visual Landscape E, which is associated with a visual environment influenced by the Pala Casino, varying densities of residential land uses, commercial uses, and hillside agriculture.

The Gregory Canyon Landfill project is approximately three and a half miles east of I-15 off SR 76 and is located within Visual Landscape D on Figure 2.1-6, which is influenced by sand mining, utility infrastructure, and a commercial nursery. The northern reaches of the site are approximately 0.65 miles to the southwest of the project site. The landfill is designed as a Class III municipal solid waste landfill which could accept municipal solid waste, inert waste, and dewatered sewage sludge. The project site covers approximately 1,770 acres adjacent to the San Luis Rey River. The landfill footprint is approximately 183 acres with a design capacity of approximately 46 million cubic yards (or 31 million tons) of waste and an expected service life of approximately 30 years. The site is along the south side of SR 76. To the west of the Warner Ranch site, SR 76 curves to the south, obscuring views from the landfill to the project site due to intervening vegetation and development. Additionally, the main refuse disposal areas are generally at a lower elevation than the project site, and views looking down to the project site from the landfill would therefore not occur. Several areas within the landfill site would reach approximately 600 feet, but due to the distance from the project site and intervening development and vegetation along the valley floor, views to the project site would be obscured. Additionally, due to the operating nature of a landfill, the site is not considered to have high scenic value that would contribute to the overall visual enhancement of the SR 76 corridor or the Pala community.

The Orange Grove Power Plant was built along SR 76 to the west of the project site. The project consists of a 96 megawatt (MW) simple-cycle electric generating plant and ancillary facilities.



The plant is designed as a peaking facility to serve loads during peak demand and to increase reliability for San Diego Gas & Electric (SDG&E). The project is located on SDG&E-owned land approximately four miles east of the I-15 and two miles west of Pala Reservation. A new 10-acre photovoltaic solar facility is proposed on the site with landscape screening and would contribute to the visual setting along the roadway.

Two telecommunication facility projects are approximately two and a half miles to the north of the project site. Due to intervening topography, these projects are outside of the project viewshed and would not be visible from the project site. Therefore, they would not be considered to contribute to potential cumulative impacts on aesthetic resources in the area (Figure 1-27). Construction of currently approved and pending projects in the project vicinity would permanently alter the nature and appearance of the area as future development occurs over upcoming years; refer to (Figure 1-27). Gradual buildout of the projects considered in the cumulative analysis would result in a change in the existing conditions over time; however, the change would not result in a significant impact as it would not substantially alter the overall visual landscape of the community.

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

Future development of projects in the project vicinity could permanently convert existing off-site open space or undeveloped lands to developed lands, potentially resulting in the incremental loss of visible open space within the Pala community. Such future development could also contribute to the alteration of views to designated visual resources. All future development on County lands within the Pala community would be subject to an evaluation of the significance of potential cumulative visual and aesthetic changes on a site-specific, project-by-project basis, with consideration for its scope and contribution to a change in the overall visual pattern or character within the Pala community. Additionally, development within the Pala Reservation is not subject to the same regulatory standards established by the County. Adherence to applicable General Plan policies and goals and any appropriate County design standards would further reduce potential cumulative impacts relative to the long-term alteration of views to designated scenic resources.

The addition of the cumulative projects considered would not remove or create a substantial adverse change to the features that represent a valued visual resource in the area. The valley floor would still be visible from higher elevations and would still appear to have a scattered development pattern once the cumulative projects are constructed. Neither of the projects is anticipated to significantly alter the mountain views from the valley floor from places where they are currently observed within the project viewshed. The cumulative projects would not remove or replace any local or state-designated landmarks.

All lighting proposed with future development within the cumulative study area, such as street lighting, security lighting, or exterior illumination, would potentially result in increased light and glare impacts within the Pala community. The Warner Ranch Specific Plan includes design measures intended to control project lighting in order to minimize adverse effects on dark skies and/or the community character. All applicable regulations (Division 9 of the County's Light Pollution Code ("Dark Skies" Ordinance)) have been incorporated into the project to avoid and minimize light pollution.

Projects within the cumulative study area would be evaluated by the County and the Pala-Pauma Valley Community Sponsor Group on a project-by-project basis to determine the extent of such lighting necessary and any appropriate site-specific measures to reduce potential impacts on surrounding areas (i.e., shielding, use of low-level lighting, directing lighting away from adjacent properties and open space areas). Thus, it is anticipated that the cumulative effects of increased lighting and/or glare associated with future development in the cumulative study area would be reduced to less-than-significant levels. As the proposed project would adhere to applicable County lighting requirements, and include design measures to reduce the potential impact of lighting associated with the development (shielding, directed downward, etc.) and require minimal lighting for the purposes of security and maintenance, the proposed project would not contribute to significant cumulative impacts relative to light and/or glare. Impacts in this regard would be **less than significant**.

Several residential/mixed use projects are proposed or have been approved by the County in the area just east of I-15 (Figure 1-25, Subregional Context Map). The Campus Park, Meadowood, Campus Park West, and Lake Rancho Viejo projects are adjacent to I-15 and when developed, would represent a large concentration of residential uses, in combination with other supporting uses, in one location. As a result, as one travels in the vicinity of I-15 and SR 76, the existing landscape (currently undeveloped) would be altered and would appear largely developed with the planned projects. The proximity of these four projects to one another would further increase the apparent visual density of the developed areas, versus if the projects were distanced from one another by undeveloped open space lands (Figures 1-25 and 2.1-6). As shown on Figure 2.1-6, the project site is located in a substantially different visual landscape zone and would not contribute to the same visual changes as the projects adjacent to I-15. The proposed project is

located within an visual landscape that is more developed, being adjacent to the Pala Reservation, than the cumulative projects located adjacent to I-15. Taking into account the differences in topography and the curvature of SR 76, the project would be visually separated from other cumulative projects along the corridor, and more visually integrated with development of the Pala Reservation.

Direct views of these projects in combination with the proposed project would not occur simultaneously, but the proposed project would contribute to future development activity east of I-15 along SR 76. The Campus Park, Meadowood, Campus Park West, and Lake Rancho Viejo, with the Orange Grove Power Plant Solar, Gregory Canyon Landfill and the proposed project, would individually change the views experienced by passengers traveling along the SR 76 corridor east of I-15. However, these projects together have the potential to contribute to an overall visual change in views experienced by passengers traveling along the SR 76 corridor east of I-15. Over time, such affected lands would change from undeveloped to developed with construction of the projects as proposed.

As a viewer leaves the area near I-15/SR 76 where this concentration of residential and mixed-use development projects is planned and travels the five miles east to the project site (estimated travel time of 12 minutes at an average of 60 miles per hour, without consideration of the road configuration), the viewer would experience views that would consist largely of single-family residential development, industrial-type uses (e.g., landfill, power facilities, mining operations, etc.), small-scale and large-scale agricultural uses, and undeveloped lands (in combination with established natural vegetation) along the corridor, thereby creating a substantial separation (both physical and as visually perceived) between those planned uses adjacent to I-15 and the project site. The proposed project would still contribute to a permanent change to the overall visual character of the views experienced along the SR 76 corridor, as lands are altered from undeveloped to developed over future years.

The project would place development in an area that is adjacent to the “core” of the Pala Reservation, where higher-density uses are already present and where the majority of residential, commercial, recreational, and institutional uses are concentrated. Furthermore, the project design locates development within the southern portion of the site, allowing the majority (approximately 70 percent) to remain as undeveloped open space, thereby providing a buffer to surrounding off-site lands and largely maintaining the existing natural setting of the hillsides and ridgelines, which are the important visual elements of the site.

The project’s proposed improvements to SR 76, although distanced from the I-15 and the 1.5 miles of improved portions of SR 76 (from I-15 to the entrance to Rosemary’s Quarry) by approximately four miles, would contribute to the potential cumulatively considerable impact to a more urban-type road design. The project proposed road improvements would be along

the project frontage and are necessary to increase safety and allow for efficient ingress/egress off/onto SR 76 (e.g., signalized intersection, turn lanes, etc.). Because of the length of the frontage improvements is small compared to the overall length of the scenic road segment (between I-15 and SR 79), viewer response to the change in appearance of the overall road would be considered to be intermediate and it would not substantially or adversely change the potential scenic value of the roadway. However, part of the project is to reconcile additional 8.1 miles of failing level of service for SR 76 as a result of the Warner Ranch project at General Plan buildout. This would increase the look of urban traffic through the area. This change would contribute to a substantial change to the potential scenic value of the roadway.

The project would have the potential to contribute to a change in the overall visual setting experienced along the roadway segment from I-15 to SR 76, when considered with other approved and future development projects within the corridor. The result would be a change in the overall visual character of the views experienced along the SR 76 corridor, as lands are altered from undeveloped to developed over future years due to the project and other cumulative projects in the area. Such impacts would be considered cumulatively **significant (Impact CUM-AE-1)**.

The design measures intended to minimize potential cumulative impacts include the following measures.

1. To reduce the visibility of the development experienced by those on surrounding public lands or those travelling along SR 76, the proposed project has been designed to maintain the majority of the site in undeveloped open space, thereby allowing such lands to remain in their natural state contributing to the scenic value found along the SR 76 corridor.
2. The project design would locate the majority of the development area at a distance away from SR 76 and buffer such improvements from view of the roadway, with the proposed detention basins and public park along the frontage. Such an approach would allow the residential uses, and in particular, the higher-density residential uses, to be located away from SR 76 within the project interior to minimize visibility of such development.
3. The installation of landscape screening, consistent with that shown on the Landscape Plan, would be implemented along the SR 76 frontage and within the developed area to further diminish the potential visibility of the proposed project for vehicle occupants traveling in either direction along the SR 76 corridor and from other public vantage points within the community.
4. Manufactured slopes would be treated to reduce their visibility and blend them into the surrounding visual landscape to respect the existing natural setting and minimize the potential for disruption of existing views of the property that would be experienced by viewers.

5. Design guidelines given in the Specific Plan would ensure that the proposed project elements would remain of an appropriate height, bulk, and scale, as well as use of building materials, to avoid the introduction of inappropriate visual elements within the viewshed that would conflict with the existing community setting; refer also to Section 2.8, Land Use.

Through project design and mitigation described in Section 2.1.6, the visibility of the proposed improvements would be minimized to the extent feasible. The proximity of the project to existing development of the Pala Reservation would reduce the project's contribution to the impact because the viewer/driver would not be likely to recognize the project as separate from the Reservation development, as an interruption to the natural setting.

### 2.1.5 Significance of Impacts Prior to Mitigation

- Impact AE-1** The appearance of the project within the landscape would detract from the natural elements in the landscape to the west of the site. Views of the dense single and multifamily development and the 10,000 sf two-story fire station would contrast with the visual character of the natural views of the San Luis Rey River and the Monserate, Palomar, and Pala Mountains (including Mount Olympus) and views of rural agriculture west of the project. This would be considered significant.
- Impact AE-2** The manufactured cut and fill slopes could adversely change the existing visual character of the hillsides and image of the project site. This would be considered a significant impact.
- Impact AE-3** The proposed water tank may be visible from certain off-site vantage points to the south/southeast across the valley and change the existing visual character of the hillsides and image of the project site. The tank could potentially have significant impacts to the area's visual quality.
- Impact AE-4** The perimeter walls would have the potential to change the existing visual character and image of the project site, thus resulting in a significant impact.
- Impact AE-5** Components of the proposed project design would have the potential to substantially obstruct, interrupt, or detract from a valued focal and/or panoramic vista from a public road or a scenic vista or highway.
- Impact CUM-AE-1** As the proposed project would contribute to a change in the overall visual character of the area through development of the site as proposed, in

combination with increasing traffic on SR 76, the proposed project would have the potential to contribute to cumulative impacts with regard to aesthetics.

### 2.1.6 Mitigation

**M-AE-1** The project would detract from the natural elements in the landscape.

- Project grading shall be designed to retain the natural landform and reflect the existing topographic features of the site to the extent feasible. Continuous straight manufactured cut or fill slopes with hard edges and/or no transition areas at the top or toe of slope shall be avoided. Grading techniques, such as the blending of graded slope contours into the natural topography or use of varying slope gradients with smooth cuts, shall be utilized, as appropriate and approved as part of the Grading Plans.
- To maintain the natural setting of the site, approximately 70 percent of the site will be dedicated in protective open space easements. Grading shall be prohibited within the dedicated open space lots, with the exception of minor grading required for trail improvements and/or for purposes of access to/maintenance of project utilities.

**M-AE-2** Manufactured cut and fill slopes could adversely change the visual character.

- The maximum slope ratio allowed for manufactured fill slopes shall be 2:1; the maximum slope ratio allowed for manufactured cut slopes shall be 1.5:1. Slope ratios for all manufactured slopes shall be consistent with recommendations of the landscape architect and as identified by the geotechnical engineer in the Geotechnical Report prepared for the proposed project. All slope ratios shall also be subject to approval as part of the Grading Plans.
- Where the construction of manufactured slopes requires cutting into native rock, the slope and texture of the cut face shall be varied and subject to site specific special measures for installing enhanced visual blending submitted and approved by the Director of PDS. If rock catchment netting or fencing is installed on manufactured slopes of greater than 30 feet in height, it shall be included in the study with measures such as painting to reflect the color of the surrounding rock to reduce its visibility. The measures recommended in the approved study shall be made part of the major use permit for the project.

**M-AE-3** The Water Tank could adversely change the visual character.

Upon completion of construction of the on-site water tank, the exterior surface shall be painted, to reduce to visibility of the water tank. The color shall be

earthtoned in color (e.g., muted tan or green) in order to blend the structure into the surrounding natural setting.

**M-AE-4** The Perimeter Walls and Fences could adversely change the visual character.

- As part of the construction phase, all walls (including sound walls) shall be constructed consistent with the wall type and height shown in the Wall and Fence Plan (part of the Landscape Plan; Figure 1-18). All walls constructed along the development perimeter facing SR 76 shall be earth-toned in color and textured to reduce their visual appearance. The walls shall not exceed 9 feet in height.
- Upon completion of their construction, landscape screening shall be provided along the exterior of the perimeter walls along the façade facing SR 76, consistent with that shown on the final Landscape Plan adopted by the County, to reduce their visibility and to create visual interest. A combination of shrubs, trees, and/or vines shall be utilized consistent with that shown on the Landscape Plan to ensure adequate screening is achieved, to enhance the visual setting, and to blend the walls into the existing visual environment.

All landscaping shall be installed consistent with County landscaping design and irrigation requirements. Maintenance of all project landscaping shall be the responsibility of the Homeowners Association and maintained in perpetuity for the life of the project.

- As part of the construction phase, all sound walls shall be constructed of materials similar to that used for the perimeter wall proposed along the southern boundary of the development footprint, adjacent to State Route 76, to visually blend them into the adjoining perimeter wall. All sound walls shall be constructed consistent with that shown on the Wall and Fence Plan (part of the Landscape Plan) as adopted by the County.

**M-AE-5** The project could impact a valued panoramic vista from a scenic road.

Implement mitigation measures **M-AE-1** to **M-AE-4**.

**M-AE-CUM-1** The overall visual character of the area would be changed through development along the SR 76 corridor.

Implement mitigation measures (**M-AE-1** to **M-AE-4**), in combination with design measures (**PDF-AE-1** to **PDF-AE-8**).

### 2.1.7 Conclusion

This section presents the rationale for the conclusion of the level of impact that would result after implementation of the project with the mitigation measures. Where mitigation measures do not reduce impacts to less than significant, this section would focus on the feasibility of mitigating the impacts.

The proposed project would have the potential to result in the removal of or substantial adverse change to one or more features that contribute to the valued visual character or image of the project area, including but not limited to designated landmarks, historic resources, trees, or rock outcroppings, as the proposed project would require construction of manufactured cut/fill slopes of substantial height (greater than 30 feet) that, if left unmitigated, could result in a significant impact. Furthermore, certain project features could potentially obstruct, interrupt, or detract from a valued focal and/or panoramic vista from a public road, trails within an adopted County or state trail system, scenic vista or highway, or recreational area. Mitigation measures are proposed to reduce potential project impacts to a less than significant level, described as follows.

Changes in the proposed project have been required to avoid or substantially lessen **Impact AE-2**. Implementation of **M-AE-2** reduces impacts to steep slopes to less than significant because grading techniques would be used to make manufactured slopes appear more natural and because steep slopes have been preserved (as noted in Chapter 1, only 10 of the proposed lots would encroach into steep slopes) in their natural state to maintain the varied visual interest characteristic to the site in compliance with the approval of grading and/or improvement plans.

Alterations in the proposed project have been required that avoid or substantially lessen **Impact AE-3**. Implementation of **M-AE-3** would reduce the impact to less than significant because it would require the proposed project be designed to minimize the visual impact of the water tank through tank coloring to blend in with the surroundings, in compliance with the approval of grading and/or improvement plans.

Alterations in the proposed project have been required that avoid or substantially lessen **Impact AE-4**. Implementation of **M-AE-4** would reduce visual impacts for those SR 76 to less than significant because it would minimize impacts through blending manufactured slopes with the existing topography, staining exposed rock surfaces, and installing and maintaining appropriate landscaping for the noise walls, as required during review for approval of grading and/or improvement plans and final landscape plans.

Alterations in the proposed project have been required that avoid or substantially lessen **Impact AE-5**. Implementation of **M-AE-1** through **M-AE-4** would reduce the project's intrusion into panoramic views or vistas from scenic highways' impact to less than



significant because these mitigation measures would grading techniques would be used to make manufactured slopes appear more natural, the water tank would be painted to blend in the surroundings, and require wall treatments and landscaping to soften views of the project, which would maintain compatibility with the existing character of the site and surroundings and reduce aesthetic impacts.

Alterations in the proposed project have been required that avoid or substantially lessen **Impact CUM-AE-1**. Implementation of **M-AE-1** through **M-AE-4** and **PDF-AE-1** through **PDF-AE-7** would reduce the project's portion of the cumulative impact to less than significant because these mitigation measures would maintain the important visual features of the site and reduce aesthetic impacts. Taking into account the differences in topography and the curvature of SR 76, the project would be visually separated from other cumulative projects along the corridor. The project's proximity to existing mixed development in the Pala Reservation also reduces the potential for the project to have a more considerable contribution to the cumulative impact.

**Table 2.1-1**  
**Viewer Groups and Anticipated Exposure**

Anticipated Viewer Group	Number of Anticipated Viewers	Key Views	Distance to the Project Site	Anticipated Views with Project Implementation	Sensitivity	Duration of View
Drivers along SR 76	Estimated 10,000 people per day <sup>1</sup>	No. 1 and No. 2	Close Distance / Adjacent to Project Site	Intermittent views of project site	Medium	Estimated 10–20 seconds
Occupants of Pala Casino Resort and Spa	Varied	No. 3	Close Distance / Approximately 0.15 mile	Limited views of project site	Low	Average of 10 hours per day
Drivers along Pala Temecula Road	Estimated 8,300 average daily vehicle trips	—	Medium Distance Approximately 0.0 to 0.65 mile	Limited views of project site	Low	Varied / Estimated 0–20 seconds
Private residences in surrounding area	Varied / Not Public Views	—	Varied	Limited views of project site	Low	Average of 10 hours per day

Source: Appendix C.

<sup>1</sup> Traffic Analysis prepared by KOA Corporation, May 2013. Average daily traffic (ADT) along SR 76 from I-15 eastward to the project site (Pankey Road) ranges from 11,031 to 8,821.

**Table 2.1-2**  
**Proposed Structural/Lot Design Characteristics**

Use	Lot Numbers	Lot Size (Typical) in Square Feet	Structure Size in Square Feet	Height
Single-Family Residential	1–133; 319–333	3,000	2,012	23 feet 5 inches

**Table 2.1-2**  
**Proposed Structural/Lot Design Characteristics**

Use	Lot Numbers	Lot Size (Typical) in Square Feet	Structure Size in Square Feet	Height
Single-Family Residential	134–260; 478–592	4,000	2,324	23 feet 9 inches
Single-Family Residential	334–418	5,000	2,583	23 feet 11 inches
Single-Family Residential	419–423; 439–477	6,000	2,731	23 feet 11 inches
Single-Family Residential	424–438	8,000	3,809	24 feet 2 inches
Multifamily Duplex	289–318	Varies	1,933/1,863	20 feet 7 inches
Multifamily Six- Plex	261–288; 593–600	Varies	1,996, 2,011, 2,027	30 feet 0 inches
Clubhouse	601	4.1	9,346	24 feet 2 inches
Fire Station	652	1.2	10,000 (approx.)	28 feet 0 inches (estimated)
Guard House	634	—	525 (approx.)	28 feet 5 inches

Source: Appendix C.

**Table 2.1-3**  
**Proposed Building Coverage**

Housing Type	Lot Numbers	Lot Size (Typical) in Square Feet	Structure Size in Square Feet	Building Coverage
Single-Family	1–133; 319–333	3,000	2,012	67%
Single-Family	134–260; 478–592	4,000	2,324	58%
Single-Family	334–418	5,000	2,583	51%
Single-Family	419–423; 439–477	6,000	2,731	46%
Single-Family	424–438	8,000	3,809	48%
Multifamily Duplex	289–318	Varies	1,933/1,863	—
Multifamily Six-Plex	261–288; 593–600	Varies	1,996/2,011/2,027	—
Clubhouse	601	178,596 (4.1 acres)	9,346	5.2%
Fire Station	652	52,272 (1.2 acres)	10,000 (approx.)	19%
Guard House	634	—	525 (approx.)	—

Source: Appendix C.





FIGURE 2.1-1A  
Photo Location Map - On-Site Views



INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK



PHOTO 1: Existing onsite support building.



PHOTO 2: View looking east to existing onsite corral.



PHOTO 3: Existing onsite parking support structure.

INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK





PHOTO 4: View looking northeast to southeast across existing onsite orchard/livestock grazing uses.



PHOTO 5: View looking north to northeast across Project site of existing ranch uses.

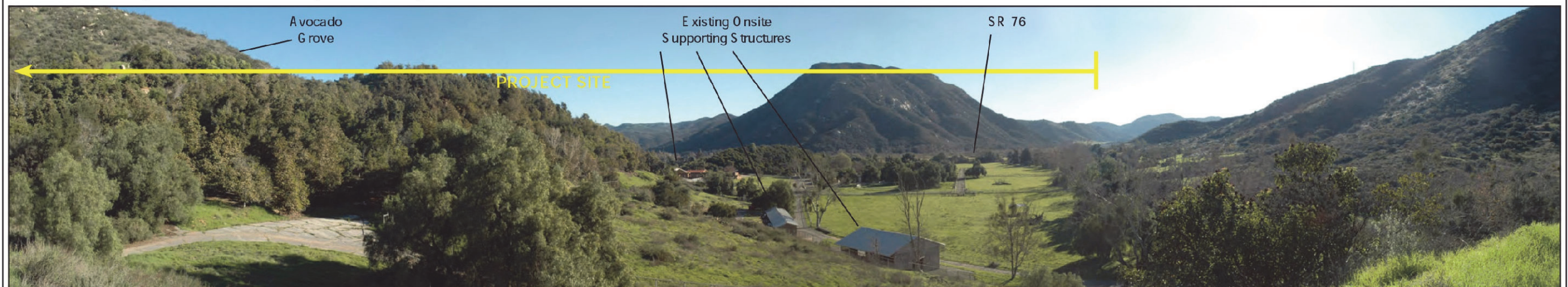


PHOTO 6: View looking southeast to southwest across Project site from onsite avocado grove.



INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK