3.1 Aesthetics

As a result of the analysis undertaken in the Initial Study for the Master Plan, the LACCD determined that the proposed project may result in environmental impacts to Aesthetics. Therefore, this issue is being carried forward for detailed analysis in this EIR. This analysis was undertaken to identify opportunities to avoid, reduce, or otherwise mitigate potential significant impacts to aesthetics and to identify potential alternatives.

The analysis of Aesthetics consists of a summary of the regulatory framework that guides the decision-making process, the existing conditions at the proposed project area, thresholds for determining if the proposed project would result in significant impacts, anticipated impacts (direct, indirect, and cumulative), mitigation measures, and level of significance after mitigation. Detailed information regarding the approach and technical analysis supporting this section are provided in SEIR Volume 2, Appendix B.

3.1.1 Setting

3.1.1.1 Regulatory Setting

Guidelines, plan provisions, and codes that pertain specifically to Aesthetics are identified below. A review of the regulatory setting is helpful in assessing the sensitivity of potentially affected views. Where aesthetic values are protected by laws, regulations, policies, and planning documents, such views are treated as highly sensitive.

State

Los Angeles Mission College Campus Aesthetic Guidelines and Design Manual

The Aesthetic Guidelines for LAMC includes guidelines for architectural design, landscape design, signage and graphics design, and lighting design, among other aspects of campus development.

Government Code Section 53094

As regards local zoning ordinances in the State of California, the state’s Government Code, Section 53094, gives the governing board of a school district, by a two-thirds vote of its members, the authority to render a city zoning ordinance inapplicable to a proposed use of property by the school district, provided that the use is for classroom facilities. The LACCD previously exercised this option during the adoption of the 2007 Master Plan and may exercise this provision again in its consideration of the proposed 2009 Master Plan.

Local

City of Los Angeles General Plan

The City of Los Angeles General Plan is a legal mandate that governs both private and public (city) actions. It is a document comprising 10 Citywide Elements, including a Conservation Element that addresses protection of scenic resources and a Transportation Element that addresses protection of scenic highways. Please see Government Code, Section 53094, above for the applicability of the City General Plan to the 2009 LAMC Master Plan.
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3.1 Aesthetics

Conservation Element

This element lists laws, requirements, and procedures that have been established for protection of natural resources. Section 15, Chapter 2 of the Conservation Element, Land Form and Scenic Vistas (City of Los Angeles 2001), specifically states as an objective the protection of natural and scenic vistas and a policy encouraging the preservation of existing landforms and unique scenic features:

Section 15: Landforms and Scenic Vistas

Objective: To protect and reinforce natural and scenic vistas as irreplaceable resources and for the aesthetic enjoyment of present and future generations.

Policy: Continue to encourage and/or require property owners to develop their properties in a manner that would, to the greatest extent practical, retain significant existing land forms (ridge lines, bluffs, unique geologic features) and unique scenic features (historic, ocean, mountains, unique natural features), and/or make possible public views or other access to unique features or scenic views.

The Conservation Element defines “scenic views or vistas” as follows: “Scenic views or vistas are the panoramic public view access to natural features, including views of the ocean, striking or unusual natural terrain, or unique urban or historic features.”

Transportation Element

Appendix E of the City General Plan Transportation Element (City of Los Angeles 1999a) designates as a “Scenic Highway” Interstate 210 (Foothill) Freeway, which is within approximately one mile southwest of the project site.

City of Los Angeles Planning and Zoning Codes

The Los Angeles Planning and Zoning Code contains two lighting-related requirements applicable to the proposed project:

Section 93.0117: Illumination of adjacent residential properties by exterior light sources shall not exceed 2-footcandles (fc) and shall not be a source of direct glare on said uses; and

Section 12.21A5(k): All lights used to illuminate a parking area shall be designed, located, and arranged so as to reflect the light away from any streets and adjacent premises.

Sylmar Community Plan

Chapter III, Land Use Plan Policies, of the Sylmar Community Plan area identifies land-use goals, objectives, policies, and programs for the Sylmar Community Plan area of the City of Los Angeles. The policies that relate to aesthetics, views, or light and glare include the following:

1-3.3: Preserve existing views of hillside and mountainous areas;
1-6.4: Require that any proposed development be designed to be compatible with adjacent development;

1 City of Los Angeles, August, 1997. Sylmar Community Plan, A Part of the General Plans
3.0 Setting, Environmental Impact Analysis, Mitigation Measures

3.1 Aesthetics

1-6.7: Development to the extent feasible shall preserve the view of the hillsides and the community’s scenic highways viewshed;

5-1.1: Encourage the retention of passive and visual open space, which provides a balance to the urban development of the Community; and

6-2.1: Encourage compatibility in school locations, site layout and architectural design with adjacent land uses and community character and, as appropriate, use schools to create a logical transition and buffer between different uses, (e.g., multiple family residential vs. single family residential or commercial vs. residential).

Chapter V, Urban Design, of the Sylmar Community Plan lays out general policies for community design and identifies broad design standards directed at individual projects. The design standards and guidelines also advise projects, including public development projects, to incorporate specific elements of good design. The intent is to promote a stable and pleasant environment, with desirable character, for the residents and use of the community. In addition, these standards ensure that new development makes a positive aesthetic contribution to the built environment. The design standards establish the minimum level of design that should be observed within the Community Plan area. Applicable standards include those provided below.

3.1.1.1 Visual Setting

Screening of Features

- Standard 1: Screen trash storage areas from the view of public streets by solid walls or fences that are not less than 6 feet high.
- Standard 2: Design wall material to be compatible with exterior building material.
- Standard 3: Screen all heating, ventilation, air-conditioning equipment and ducts, and any other equipment or appurtenances located on roofs from the view of any adjoining public street, unless such appurtenances are used as integral elements of the project’s design.
- Standard 4: Locate and/or screen all loading areas from view of any adjoining public streets or walkways in residential or commercial zones.

Exterior Elevations, Wall and Fences

- Standard 1: Provide full architectural treatment, similar in architectural style, materials, and details with the main building façade, on all sides of buildings that are visible from adjacent lots or streets.

Graffiti

- Standard 1: Minimize places for graffiti by planting shrubs or surface-clinging vines in front of solid fences and walls (excluding building walls) facing public rights-of-way.
- Standard 3: Paint solid walls or fence surfaces accessible to public view with a washable “graffiti-proof” paint or other protective materials.
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Parking Lot Landscaping

- Standard 1: Plant 24-inch-box shade trees at a ratio of 1 tree for each 4 parking spaces on a surface parking lot. These trees should be distributed throughout the parking lot so as to shade at least 50 percent of the parking lot within 10 years of planting.

- Standard 2: Provide a three-and-one-half-foot wall and a five-foot landscaped area on surface parking lots as a buffer from the public right-of-way.

- Standard 3: Provide a minimum wall height of 6 feet where surface parking abuts a residential area, to buffer the parking from the residential use.

Parking Structures

- Standard 1: The walls of any parking structure and that portion of any structure used for parking, shall substantially screen vehicles in the structure from public view from a public street; (e.g., through the use of planters and berms).

- Standard 2: The walls of the parking structure shall be compatible in color, material, and architectural detail with the building it serves and with adjacent existing buildings.

3.1.1.2 Environmental Setting

The environmental setting, as it applies to the assessment of visual impacts, is the “existing visual condition” of the landscape, which also includes conditions of lighting and glare. Existing visual condition is assessed in terms of the degree to which features and sources of lighting within “critical public views” appear to be consistent with the established character of the physical setting and is also a function of the conditions under which the features are viewed. Critical public views are those: 1) that are readily available to the public, including a private views from a substantial group of people; 2) where there are indications the public would be substantially concerned over adverse changes to the views; and 3) in which the proposed project would be substantially visible.

Critical Public Views

Technical Approach

Identifying critical public views starts with identifying the most sensitive of public views which would be substantially exposed to the project. The degree of sensitivity was based on a list of commonly used indicators presented in Table 3.1-1. The indicators of public sensitivity have been drawn from the methodologies for visual resource management in use by several federal agencies. These agencies relate sensitivity to viewer expectations, activity, awareness, values, and goals (USDA–Forest Service [USFS 1974, 1995]; USDI–Bureau of Land Management [BLM 1978]; and USDOT–Federal Highway Administration [USDOT 1981]). Certain activities—or formal designations indicating aesthetic importance—tend to heighten viewer awareness of aesthetics and visual resources. Or, landscapes, particular views, or certain features may be protected through policies, goals, objectives, standards, regulations, or ordinances in public planning documents—and the general public is aware of the protections.

Public sensitivity is not necessarily related to the number of people experiencing a view, nor is it consistently a function of obvious aesthetic appeal. It may be more related to the intensity, determination, and organization with which the public’s concern might be expressed. Or the public
may be sensitive to potential threats to the condition of landscapes that are aesthetically unexceptional by common standards (USDOT 1981). Additionally, areas may have regional or national cultural significance, but may not be especially scenic; nonetheless, their visual character may be important to their cultural value (FHWA 1981).

The degree of visual sensitivity is treated as occurring at four levels:

- **High Sensitivity.** A highly sensitive public can be expected to react strongly to any lessening of visual quality. This may be because the affected views are rare, unique, or in other ways are special and highly valued in the region or locale.

- **Moderate Sensitivity.** The potential for public concern over adverse change in scenic/visual quality is appreciable. Affected views tend to be secondary in importance or similar to views commonly found in the region or locale.

- **Low Sensitivity.** There is some indication that at least a small—but vocal—minority of the public values the potentially affected view and would be concerned over impacts on its condition (quality).

- **No Sensitivity.** There is no sensitivity where the potentially affected views are not “public” (not accessible to the general public) or because there are no apparent indications that the affected views are valued by the public.

A review of literature, maps, county planning documents, and an inspection of the project site and the potentially affected environs was conducted in order to identify indicators of public sensitivity. Sensitive public views in which the proposed facilities would be most noticeable were selected for detailed analysis. “Noticeability” is a function primarily of proximity and visibility of project features.

### Table 3.1-1  Indicators of Visual Sensitivity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HIGH SENSITIVITY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Views of and from areas the aesthetic values of which are protected in laws, public regulations and policies, and public planning documents.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Views of and from designated areas of aesthetic, recreational, cultural, or scientific interest, including national, state, county, and community parks, reserves, memorials, scenic roads and trails, interpretive sites of scientific value, scenic overlooks, recreation areas, designated open space, and historic structures, sites, and districts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Views of and from areas or sites of cultural/religious importance to Native Americans.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Views from national or state-designated scenic highways or roads, or designated scenic highways or roads of regional importance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Views from resort areas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Views from urban residential subdivisions and segments of roads near them that serve as their primary access route.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Views from segments of travel routes, such as roads, rail lines, pedestrian and equestrian trails, and bicycle paths, that are near, and are the primary access to, designated areas of aesthetic, recreational, cultural, or scientific interest and which lead directly to them. Views seen while approaching an area of interest may be closely related to the appreciation of the aesthetic, cultural, scientific, or recreational significance of that destination.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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#### 3.1 Aesthetics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MODERATE SENSITIVITY</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Views from segments of travel routes near highly sensitive-use areas of interest serving as a secondary access route to those areas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Views from highways or roads locally designated as scenic routes and are of importance only to the local population, or informally designated as such in literature, road maps, and road atlases.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Views from a major aggregation of rural residences and the proximate stretch of the roadway serving as their primary access route (within one mile of the homes).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Views of and from undesignated but protected or popularly used or appreciated areas of aesthetic, recreational, cultural, or scientific significance at the local, county, or state level.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Views from segments of travel routes, such as roads, trails, bicycle paths, and equestrian trails, that are near, and are the primary access to, protected or popularly used undesignated areas important for their aesthetic, recreational, cultural, or scientific interest, and which lead directly to them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Views of and from religious facilities and cemeteries.</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LOW SENSITIVITY</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Views from travel routes serving as secondary access to moderately sensitive areas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Views from a minor aggregation of rural residences (a group of at least four homes) and the proximate stretch of the roadway serving as their primary access route (within one mile of the homes).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- A small minority of the public demonstrably has an interest in the quality of scenic/visual resources within potentially affected views and a concern over adverse impacts on those resources.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NO SENSITIVITY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- The views are not public.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- There are no identifiable indications of public interest in the quality of scenic/visual resources within potentially affected views or concern over adverse impacts to those scenic/visual resources. For example, such views would occur along travel routes serving solely commercial, industrial, or agricultural traffic, business parks, research, development, and manufacturing sites.</td>
</tr>
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In the case of this assessment, exposure to the project’s features was determined first by field inspection and then by visual simulations (computer-modeled views of project features relative to specific viewing positions).

**Critical Public Views of Athletic Fields**

Figure 3.1-1, Viewing Position Location Map, is an aerial photo showing the proposed 2009 Master Plan location in relation to surrounding land uses and the viewing positions selected to represent critical public views. The most critical public views, relative to this assessment, are those from three residential areas, proximate stretches of roads that are their primary access routes, and certain recreation land uses (El Cariso Golf Course and a pedestrian path leading from El Cariso County Regional Park). Sensitivity of views of these areas is considered to be high.
Figure 3.1-1 Viewing Position Location Map
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The proposed Athletic Fields would be fully exposed to views from the Mountain Glen Terrace subdivision to the southeast and seen to a lesser degree from Santiago Estates to the east. The closest viewing distances for these two subdivisions is about 900 feet, and 1,400 feet from the nearest playing field in the proposed complex, respectively. Additionally, it would be within the foreground of views from part of El Cariso Golf Course and its perimeter pedestrian path connecting El Cariso County Regional Park with Eldridge Avenue. Sensitivity for these views is high.

The views most critical to the assessment are those that are closest and most exposed to the proposed Athletic Fields. These are Viewing Positions (VPs) 1, 3, and 5 (Figure 3.1-1, Viewing Position Location Map). Views from VPs 2, 4, and 6 are included in the analysis to provide the context for those from VPs 1, 3, and 5. The lower image in Figure 3.1-2, Visual Context for Athletic Fields Site shows the site of the Athletic Fields Complex as seen from Maclay Street from a point about 1,200 feet south of the nearly completed Health, Fitness and Athletic Complex building at the East Campus. Mountain Glen Terrace, Santiago Estates, and the site for the proposed Athletic Fields are noted in this image. The upper image is a view of Mountain Glen Terrace, and is a photograph taken from a point near where the diamond for the baseball field would be located.

The view in Figure 3.1-3, Existing View of Athletic Fields Site from Mountain Glen Terrace, VP 1, is the panorama from the southwest to the northeast seen from VP 1, looking across the Pacoima Wash toward the site for the proposed playing fields. The softball and baseball fields would be about 900 feet and 1,200 feet away in this view, respectively. It is a largely unobstructed view used to represent views from points closest to the proposed Athletic Fields that are along Harding Street, the entrance roads serving the Mountain Glen Terrace subdivision, and from homes within the subdivision. The view from Maclay Street is considered less critical to the analysis inasmuch as the site for the Athletic Fields is hidden and the views more distant than those noted. The Maclay Street viewing position is over 1,900 feet from the site for the nearest playing field. Therefore, in-depth analysis of this view is not warranted. VP 1 is located north of Vista del Sol Drive, the south entrance to the subdivision, at the top of a landscaped bank above the road and next to a screen wall protecting the privacy of the first floor of the adjacent homes. Eye level is about 13 to 15 feet above the road and about 10 feet lower than the second floor of the closest tier of homes. This viewing position was selected as a compromise in elevation to represent not only the views from Harding Street and Vista del Sol Drive, but also those from the second floor of these residences (the screen wall protects the first floor of these homes from views toward the proposed project). Note that views from an individual home are considered to be private, not public, views. However, the collective views from a group of homes are treated as public views.

Figure 3.1-4, Existing View of Athletic Fields from Mountain Glen Terrace, VP 2, Figure 3.1-4 Existing View of Athletic Fields from VP 2 Mountain Glen Terrace, shows the panorama from VP 2, situated similarly to VP 1. It is also at the top of the landscaped slope along the east side of Harding Street and at the base of the screen wall providing privacy for the nearby homes. The difference in the two views is the extent to which a grove of trees blocks views of the site for the playing fields. Accordingly, this view would not be considered to be critical, and is therefore not analyzed further. It was included to provide context for the critical view from VP 1.
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Views from recreation land uses for which the public routinely expects aesthetic physical surroundings such as the El Cariso Golf Course, are treated as highly sensitive. This category includes the pedestrian path that leads from and to El Cariso Regional County Park and which flanks the northerly side of the proposed Athletic Fields. Views from recreation trails and paths serving as a primary pedestrian access to designated areas of recreational interest are highly sensitive. VPs 3, 4, 5, and 6 represent views from along the part of the path closest to the site for the proposed Athletic Fields. Given that this path flanks the golf course, views from these points also represent the most critical views from within the golf course. Figure 3.1-5, Existing View of Athletic Fields Site from Pedestrian Path VP 3, shows the panorama from VP 3, looking northeast to southeast; the lower image is a continuation of the view shown in the upper image. These images also serve to show the extent of residential development to the east and northeast of the proposed Athletic Fields, particularly including Mountain Glen Terrace, best shown in the lower image and in Figure 3.1-2. Figure 3.1-6, Existing Views of Athletic Fields from Pedestrian Path, VPs 4 and 5, shows views from the pedestrian path looking east (top) and southeast (bottom), respectively. The playing field facilities seen from VP 4 (SIBL) abut the northern boundary of the proposed playing fields, which would be in the immediate foreground of the view from VP 5. Figure 3.1-7, Existing Views of Golf Course, VPs 6 and 7, upper image, is a view toward the golf course from VP 6. The views shown for VPs 4 and 6 have been included to provide context for the critical view from VP 5 but will not be analyzed further.

**Eldridge Avenue**

Foreground views of the proposed Eldridge Avenue Streetscape Improvements would occur from both lanes of Eldridge Avenue, between the southeast side of the parking structure on the Main Campus and where Eldridge Avenue intersects Harding Street. These views are highly sensitive because the street serves as the primary access to the residential area flanking it to the southwest. As well, views from all streets within that residential area are highly sensitive for the same reason, particularly Gridley Street and Cranston Avenue. Along these two streets, motorists approaching the intersection with Eldridge Avenue would directly face the site for the Streetscape. Given the high sensitivity for the subject views and the proximity and exposure to the Streetscape site, such views are considered to be critical public views. Figure 3.1-7, Existing Views of Golf Course, VPs 6 and 7, bottom image, shows the view looking to the northeast from Gridley Street at its intersection with Eldridge Avenue, Viewing Position 7.

**Nursery Property**

Public views of the Nursery Property occur from Hubbard Street, between Eldridge Avenue and Lexicon Avenue. While this street serves as access to many land uses, it is the primary access to residential development as well. Hence, views from this street are treated as highly sensitive. Views of the Nursery Property from Aztec Street and Lexicon Avenue, while highly sensitive for the same reason, are obscured by residences, orchards, and residential landscaping. Likewise, views of the site from Eldridge Avenue are also blocked by residences and landscaping, and, as well, by structures and landscaping associated with the Main Campus. Note that views of the Nursery Property from within the backyards of the two large-lot homes flanking the northwest side of the parcel are private views, and are therefore not considered in this assessment of the project’s impact on public views.
Figure 3.1-2 Visual Context for Athletic Fields Site

(Top) View of Mountain Glen Terrace from Athletic Fields Site; (Bottom) View of Athletic Fields Site from Maclay Street, driving north.
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Figure 3.1-3 Existing View of Athletic Fields Site from Mountain Glen Terrace, VP 1
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Figure 3.1-4 Existing View of Athletic Fields Site from Mountain Glen Terrace, VP 2
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Figure 3.1-5 Existing View of Athletic Fields Site from Pedestrian Path, VP 3
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Figure 3.1-6 Existing Views of Athletic Fields from Pedestrian Path, VPs 4 and 5
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Figure 3.1-7 Existing Views of Golf Course, VPs 6 and 7
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Given their high sensitivity and proximity to the Nursery Property, VPs 8 and 9 are treated as critical public views. Figure 3.1-8, Existing Views of Nursery Property, VPs 8 and 9, top image, shows the view to the north toward the Nursery Property from VP 8 along Hubbard Street. The bottom image is the view to the southeast toward the Nursery Property from VP 9, also from Hubbard Street.

3.1.1.3 Existing Visual Conditions

Visual conditions are evaluated using a Visual Modification System. The existing visual condition of the landscape is assessed in terms of the character of features and sources of night lighting within public view, the degree to which such features as lighting sources are congruent with the dominant character of the setting, the coherence and harmony of the pattern of these features and lighting, and the extent to which historically available scenic views are blocked or are inaccessible to the public. Visual conditions are evaluated as being within one of four Visual Modification Classes, as described below.

- **Visual Modification Class 1** conditions, the highest-quality landscapes, occur where all features and their distribution, as well as sources of lighting, appear to be characteristic of the established setting, and past actions have not introduced incongruous changes, altered viewing conditions, or adversely affected the coherence of the landscape and its night lighting. The highest-quality landscapes are those that are Visual Modification Class 1.

- **Visual Modification Class 2** conditions occur where adverse changes in the landscape and/or night lighting are noticeable but subordinate to the features characteristic of the area; these changes may attract some attention, but they do not compete for it with other features in the field of view, and/or historically available scenic views may have become partly blocked or less inaccessible.

- **Visual Modification Class 3** conditions occur where adverse changes in the landscape and/or night lighting are distracting to the point that they compete for attention with other features in view, and/or historically available and scenic views have become largely blocked and/or inaccessible.

- **Visual Modification Class 4** conditions occur where incongruous features and/or night lighting introduced by past actions dominate attention, or patterns natural to the area have been altered to the point of incoherence, and/or historically available scenic views have been totally blocked or made inaccessible, and/or lighting has been altered to the point of dominating attention or causing glare.

**Existing Visual Conditions within Critical Public Views: Landscape Features**

Figures 3.1-3 through 3.1-8 are a photographic inventory of the existing visual conditions relative to the critical public views assessed. Figure 3.1-1 is an aerial photograph showing the location for the viewing positions referenced in these figures. Viewing Positions 1, 3, 5, 7, 8, and 9 are the critical viewing positions referenced earlier.

**Natural Features**

Across most of the vicinity of the three sites for the proposed project, the topography appears relatively flat, with no distinctive or noticeable slopes. The exceptions are the river basin for the Pacoima Wash, the elevated residential terraces to the southeast (Mountain Glen Terrace) and
3.0 Setting, Environmental Impact Analysis, Mitigation Measures

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northeast (Santiago Estates), and the distant San Gabriel Mountains, which form an important aesthetic backdrop for some points within the urban landscape in the project’s vicinity.

Vegetation across the Pacoima Wash is sparse (Figure 3.1-5), but two coposes of trees are notable along Harding Street as seen in Figures 3.1-3, 3.1-4, and 3.1-5. These serve to screen views of the wash from some points along Harding Street and Mountain Glen Terrace, such as for VP 2 (Figure 3.1-4). Plantings within and at the perimeter of El Cariso Golf Course are particularly notable, forming part of the skyline in Figure 3.1-3, and variably screening views toward the golf course from the pedestrian path and Eldridge Avenue (Figure 3.1-7). Street trees and residential ornamental landscaping characterize the balance of vegetation in the project’s vicinity.

No water surfaces are consistently visible from the selected viewing positions; the stream within the Pacoima Wash was observed to be flowing during the period of investigation, but this is an intermittent flow and does not represent a distinguishing natural feature in the landscape.

Cultural Modifications

The Athletic Fields Complex site is bordered to the northwest by the approximately 85-acre El Cariso Golf Course, to the north by the SIBL playing fields, and to southeast and south by the Pacoima Wash and the Mountain Glen Terrace residential area of single-family homes. To the southwest is the East Campus, the nearly completed LAMC Health, Fitness and Athletic Complex building there being prominently in view (Figures 3.1-3 and 3.1-4).

The Eldridge Avenue development site is flanked for its entire length to the northeast by the El Cariso Golf Course and to the southwest by a single-family residential development.

The Hubbard Street Nursery Property is an enclave of commercial property set mid-block between Eldridge Avenue and Lexicon Avenue in the vicinity of single-family and multi-family structures (condominium and apartments) along Hubbard Street.

VP 1 and 2: Harding Street and Mountain Glen Terrace

Viewing Position 1 represents the most critical public viewing positions along Harding Street and Mountain Glen Terrace (Figure 3.1-3, View of Existing Athletic Fields Site, VP 1, from Mountain Glen Terrace). It is at the top of the landscaped slope along the east side of the street, at the base of a screen wall. Note that the screen wall ends after the fourth house south of Vista del Sol Drive, so the view from VP 1 represents what may be seen from the ground floor of some homes. For the rest, this view represents second-floor views.

The frame of reference for this view is the residential character type for the lands in which the viewing positions are located. The character of what is viewed from there, however, is predominately the natural appearance of the Pacoima Wash. El Cariso Golf Course is noticeable only due to its peripheral groves of tall trees, so it complements the natural character in view. The wash and golf course present a visual buffer between the residential land uses and the Public Facilities/Institutional land uses of LAMC to the west. That buffer is complete, but for the new building (Health, Fitness and Athletics Building) at the East Campus, which is variably apparent, depending on the viewing direction.
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Figure 3.1-8 Existing Views of Nursery Property, VPs 8 and 9
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Relative to a residential character type, a natural-appearing landscape within a field of view of, and/or from, a development is not treated as incongruous. It would bear a positive visual relationship to the residential area similar to that of a passive recreation park. The institutional appearance of the East Campus building, though, is inconsistent with both the residential character of Mountain Glen Terrace and the natural-appearing setting. In considering the panorama as a whole, as shown in Figure 3.1-3, this building attracts considerable attention, being the only substantial structure in view. One’s attention is drawn to it about as much as to other features in view (the wash, the skyline of trees, and the San Gabriel Mountains) and is co-dominant with those features.

The features inherent to the natural character of the area seen in Figure 3.1-3 are coherently arrayed, and one can readily apprehend the organization of the landscape. The open field in the foreground ends perceptibly at the Pacoima Wash; the edge of the fields west of the wash is defined by a bluff and a grove of trees on the far side that mark the transition to the golf course; and the distant San Gabriel Mountains frame the northern extent of the panorama. Past actions have not perceptibly detracted from the established pattern of these features.

Regarding visual access, past actions appear not to have impeded views of the Pacoima Wash and the San Gabriel Mountains. Available public vantage points have, if anything, been afforded by the residential development and streets in the area.

Conclusions regarding VP 1: The landscape features inherent to the character type are coherently arrayed, and visual access has not been adversely affected by past actions. However, the existing condition for the view from VP 1 shown in Figure 3.1-3 is rated as **Visual Modification Class 3** due to the co-dominance of the new East Campus building seen to the southwest; this building is incongruous with the prevailing natural character of the panorama shown.

**VPs 3 and 5: Pedestrian Path and Golf Course**

Where the path is near Eldridge Avenue, it is elevated above the Pacoima Wash and views from there are panoramic and distant, embracing the residential developments to the east and northeast, as well as the San Gabriel Mountains defining the horizon (Figure 3.1-5, Existing View of Athletic Fields Site from Pedestrian Path, VP 3). The primary impression of the wash and distant mountains is that they are natural appearing. However, the disturbance to the distribution of vegetation in the foreground of the view in Figure 3.1-5 and the residential development within Mountain Glen Terrace and Santiago Estates has perceptibly lessened the natural appearance of the area. Relative to the San Gabriel Mountains and the Pacoima Wash, the residential areas and the foreground disturbance compete for attention with the natural-appearing features, and are co-dominant with those features.

The features seen in Figure 3.1-5 are coherently arrayed in a readily apprehended composition. Attention is dominated by the San Gabriel Mountains to the northeast, with a secondary focus being the linear band of residential development at the base of the low hills to the east, followed by the floodplain of the Pacoima Wash in the foreground. The mountains, hills, residential development, and wash are discretely arrayed, the edges of each feature being well defined. There is no ambiguity as to the sequence in which attention is directed toward this landscape.
Regarding visual access, past actions appear not to have impeded views of the Pacoima Wash and the San Gabriel Mountains. The vantage point for VP 3 has, in fact, been afforded by the development of the pedestrian path.

Conclusions relative to VP 3: The landscape features in view are coherently arrayed, and visual access has not been adversely affected by past actions. However, the existing condition for the view from VP 3 shown in Figure 3.1-5 is rated as Visual Modification Class 3 due to the co-dominance of the residential development to the east, particularly Mountain Glen Terrace. Residential development is incongruous with the prevailing natural character of the panorama shown.

Regarding the view from VP 5, those from VPs 4 and 6 show the context for the consideration of the existing condition for views from the stretch of pedestrian path leading to the northern end of the Athletic Fields where VP 5 is located. From VP 4, El Cariso Golf Course is on one side and the SIBL playing field facilities are on the other (Figure 3.1-6, Existing Views of Athletic Fields from Pedestrian Path, VPs 4 and 5, top image), both being an expression of active recreation. The golf course, however, is park-like in its setting, while the SIBL fields are more urban in their development. Further to the south, at VPs 5 and 6 (Figure 3.1-6, bottom and Figure 3.1-7, top), landscape character changes abruptly: the partially visible undeveloped lands adjacent to the Pacoima Wash characterize the setting to the east-southeast and the golf course is in the foreground to the west. The expanse of turf and copses of trees within the golf course is substantially compatible with undeveloped open space on the other side of the path. However, the fence separating the golf course from the path, golf-cart paths, and tee-off areas are considered incongruent with the natural-appearing character to the west. These features, though noticeable, would be subordinate in views including the golf course and the open space associated with the Pacoima Wash.

The coherence of the pattern of landscape features would be relevant solely to the view from VP 5. They are in a simple arrangement in these views: the golf course lines one side of the path, the undeveloped lands line the other. Nothing is distracting in this configuration.

Regarding visual access, development of the SIBL playing fields has obstructed views across the Pacoima Wash to the east, and the hills that otherwise would be visible have been substantially blocked from view. However, for points along the pedestrian path south of VP 4, past actions have not impeded views of the hillsides to the southeast. To the contrary, development of the path has afforded access to such views for the part of the public not using the golf course.

Conclusions relative to VP 5: The landscape features in view from VP 5 are coherently arrayed, and visual access has not been adversely affected by past actions. However, the existing condition for the view from VP 5 shown in Figure 3.1-6 (bottom) is rated as Visual Modification Class 2 due to the noticeable, but subordinate, facilities within the golf course (shown relative to VP 6, Figure 3.1-7, top image).

**VP 7: Eldridge Street Residential Area**

Viewing Position 7 (Figure 3.1-7, Existing Views of Golf Course, VPs 6 and 7, bottom image) was chosen to represent highly sensitive public views for residents arriving to and departing from the residential area southwest of Eldridge Avenue. The frame of reference for evaluating the potentially affected visual conditions, then, is the residential character of that area. The area of interest is the length of the proposed streetscape improvements along the street, extending from the southeast side...
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of the parking facility on the Main Campus southeast to Harding Street. Along this stretch, the park-like setting of El Cariso Golf Course dominates the views to the northeast. Homes along the street are oriented northwest-southeast and, except for two homes, do not face Eldridge Avenue and the site for streetscape. Therefore, the views experienced while arriving at and departing from these homes suggest providing reader orientation judged to be more important. The appropriate context for characterizing visual conditions, then, would be the mobile views from Eldridge Avenue and from Gridley Street and Cranston Avenue where they intersect Eldridge Avenue.

The character of views from Eldridge Avenue between Hubbard Street and Harding Street, for somewhat less than half the distance, is residential to one side and institutional to the other (Main Campus). The character of the large buildings of the campus is incongruous with that of the single-family homes across the street, dominating views. Such is also true of views from the southeast end of Eldridge Avenue near its intersection with Harding Street. The LAMC Health, Fitness and Athletics Building is equally incongruous with the residential context, and dominant. However, between the parking structure and Harding Street the low-activity, park-like qualities of the golf course are substantially compatible with the residential area. Views from the streets noted, which primarily include the golf course and the residences, have not been unfavorably modified by past actions.

The coherence of the juxtaposition of the golf course with the residential area, separated by Eldridge Avenue, is an easily apprehended configuration that is not distracting and does not detract from existing visual conditions.

Concerning visual access, the groves of trees associated with the golf course, as they have matured, have substantially obscured what is assumed to once have been clear views of the San Gabriel Mountains.

Conclusions relative to VP 7: The features in view from VP 7 are coherently arrayed. Visual access to views of the San Gabriel Mountains has been substantially affected by past actions, the impairment of such a distinctive feature of the landscape by itself leading to Visual Modification Class 3 conditions. As regards the congruence of features in view, the existing condition for views from Eldridge Avenue along the Main Campus is judged to be Visual Modification Class 4, in the context of the residential area to the southwest. The institutional campus buildings are not in character with the single-family residential area there. Views from the southeast end of Eldridge Avenue near the LAMC Health, Fitness and Athletic Building are also rated as Visual Modification Class 4 due to the foreground views of this East Campus facility. In between the parking structure and Harding Street, though, the existing visual condition is Visual Modification Class 1. The passive park-like qualities of the golf course (small groups of golfers moving quietly about the course) are substantially compatible with the residential area. Progressively, as one approaches the Main and East Campuses, the quality of the views progressively changes to Class 2, Class 3, and finally, to Class 4, as noted, as incongruous features become more apparent and finally dominate the views.

**VPs 8 and 9: Hubbard Street Residential Area**

Viewing Positions 8 and 9 were chosen to represent highly sensitive public views for residents arriving to and departing from the residential area northwest of Hubbard Street in the vicinity of the Nursery Property. As for the homes along Eldridge Avenue, the frame of reference for evaluating
the potentially affected visual conditions is the residential character of that area. The area of interest is the length of Hubbard Street extending from Eldridge Avenue to Lexicon Avenue. Here, land uses are incompatible with one another, as discussed below.

Along the northwest side of the street, the middle of the block is characterized by the commercial nursery. Rows of container plants line the parcel along the street, largely screening from view the interior of the site. However, views to the interior occur across the two entrances along Hubbard Street at the northwest and southwest sides of the parcel. Former residential structures have been converted to serve the nursery and are in poor repair: the entrance is boarded up; blue plastic protects the roof. Its prominent position along the middle of the city block occupies about half the street frontage and dominates views. Across the street, the institutional character of LAMC dominates views in that direction.

The factor of “coherence” is not relevant where incongruous features dominate views, as noted in the discussion of the methodology (SEIR, Volume 2, Appendix B). As for visual access, public views of the San Gabriel Mountains are assumed to have been available prior to the development of the college, and past actions have blocked those views. Views toward the mountains looking northeast along Hubbard Street and to the north across the Nursery Property have been partially to substantially obstructed by street trees and residential landscaping.

Conclusions relative to VPs 8 and 9: The consideration of the coherence of views from VPs 8 and 9 is not relevant, given the degree to which the character of the residential area around the Nursery Property has been modified. Visual access to views of the San Gabriel Mountains toward the east has been blocked by campus buildings (Visual Modification Class 4). Mountain views along Hubbard Street and across the Nursery Property have been partially to substantially obstructed (Visual Modification Class 2 and 3). As regards incongruous land uses, the institutional character of the campus buildings is inconsistent with residential character and dominates the available views (Visual Modification Class 4).

Existing Visual Conditions within Critical Public Views: Light and Glare

**VP 1: Harding Street and Mountain Glen Terrace**

In the project vicinity there is a mix of nighttime illumination from sources associated with an urban area. This includes illumination associated with residential land uses along Hubbard Street, Eldridge Avenue, Maclay Street and Harding Street, such as are emitted from the homes in the area, streetlights, and vehicles. The existing LAMC facilities produce ambient lighting from parking lots, security facilities, and building signage. Additionally, the playing fields at the county park are equipped with ball-field lighting, and the tennis courts there are routinely lighted in the evening. The El Cariso Golf Course driving range is illuminated for play until closing (6:00 p.m. on Tuesdays and 7:00 p.m., Wednesdays through Mondays).

Figure 3.1-9, Existing Night View of Athletic Fields from Mountain Glen Terrace, VP 1, shows the existing nighttime view of the proposed playing fields from VP 1. As noted, this viewing position was chosen to represent the most critical views (the sensitive public views most exposed to proposed project features) from the neighboring streets and residential areas. As demonstrated, the
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Figure 3.1-9 Existing Night View of Athletic Fields from Mountain Glen Terrace, VP 1
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principal source of night lighting is the array of streetlights along Harding Street in the foreground, as well as vehicle headlights. Note that the technical limits of night photography are such that streetlights are shown as emitting glare when they do not. In the scene depicted, the streetlights glow brightly but their lamps are clearly visible.

The site for the proposed Athletic Fields, except for one source of lighting associated with the SIBL playing fields (far right side, lower image), has no on-site source of night lighting. The largely blocked lighting for the El Cariso Golf Course driving range is barely visible (center-right, lower image), and security lighting at the Health, Fitness and Athletic Complex is apparent to a minor degree. Finally, distant residential development along the foothills of the San Gabriel Mountains is noticeable but unobtrusive. The net impression of the proposed site for the playing fields is that it is devoid of night lighting and not appreciably affected by sources of light in its vicinity. The type of lighting in the vicinity of the Athletic Fields site is characteristic of an urban environment and is distributed in a coherent pattern consistent with the land uses observed from each Viewing Position. Night lighting from adjoining land uses does not appreciably intrude on the unlighted site for the playing fields. The existing night-lighting condition for all portions of the project site, therefore, is considered to be Visual Modification Class 1.

**VPs 8 and 9: Hubbard Street Residential Area**

By design, the proposed facilities for the Hubbard Nursery Property (temporary and permanent buildings and their associated parking lot and security lighting) and the Eldridge Streetscape Improvements (lighting for the pedestrian and bicycle path) would not spill light off-site or introduce glare. Such lighting would be effectively hooded to prevent direct off-site visibility of the luminaire, and lighting would be directed away from off-site public viewing positions. Specifically, lighting would be designed to meet the City of Los Angeles Planning and Zoning Code sections applying to night lighting. Therefore, existing conditions of lighting at the Nursery Property and Eldridge Avenue site are not relevant.

3.1.2 Significance Thresholds

Appendix G of CEQA (Environmental Checklist) identifies four specific circumstances under which a project's potential impact on aesthetics would be considered to be significant:

- Substantial, adverse effects on a scenic vista;
- Substantial damage to scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway;
- Substantial degradation of existing visual character or quality of a site and its surroundings; and
- Creation of a new source of substantial light or glare that would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area.

In addition, an impact could be considered significant if it would:

- Result in substantial inconsistency with laws, ordinances, regulations, and standards applicable to the protection of visual resources; and/or
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- Adversely affect shadow-sensitive uses, as specified in the City of Los Angeles Thresholds Guide.

As noted in the Initial Study for this EIR, since none of the roadways adjacent to or in the near vicinity of the project site are designated as a scenic highway, no impact upon scenic resources would occur, and further discussion of this issue in the EIR is not necessary.

Adverse impacts on aesthetics and visual resources would occur when, relative to a sensitive public view:

- Features would be altered, introduced, made less visible, or be removed such that the effect would be noticeably inconsistent with the established character of the landscape.
- Access to public views would be substantially diminished or eliminated.

To be significant, visual quality must be noticeably reduced and the impact must endure for an appreciable period of time, most usually defined as longer than one year. Whether adverse changes in visual quality are noticeable depends on the public’s sensitivity to adverse visual impacts and the level of intensity of the adverse change (that is, the degree of reduction in Visual Modification Class). Table 3.1-2 shows the relationship of public sensitivity, impact intensity, and significance.

**Table 3.1-2   Relationship of Impact Intensity and Visual Sensitivity to an Effect’s Being Perceived as a Substantial Reduction in Visual Quality (significant impact)³**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intensity of Impact²</th>
<th>Visual Sensitivity²</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 1</td>
<td>PS³</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 2</td>
<td>PS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 3</td>
<td>PS</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Table H-2, Appendix B

Notes:

1) **High Sensitivity (H):** The potential for public concern over adverse change in scenic/visual quality is great. Affected views are rare, unique, or in other ways are special and highly valued in the region or locale. Any perceptible change in visual conditions would be considered to be a significant lessening of visual quality.

   Moderate Sensitivity (M): The potential for public concern over adverse change in scenic/visual quality is substantial. Affected views are secondary in importance or similar to views commonly found in the region or locale. A moderately to highly intense visual impact would be perceived as a significant lessening of visual quality.

   Low Sensitivity (L): Generally, there may be some indication that a small minority of the public has a concern over scenic/visual resource impacts on the affected area. Only the greatest intensity of adverse change in the condition of aesthetics/visual resources would have the potential to register with the public as a significant reduction in visual quality.

   No Sensitivity (None): The views are not public, or there are no indications of public concern over, or interest in, scenic/visual resource impacts on the affected area.

2) **Intensity of Impact:**
   - (Level 1) A reduction in Visual Condition by one Visual Modification Class rating.
   - (Level 2) A reduction in Visual Condition by two Visual Modification Class ratings.
   - (Level 3) A reduction in Visual Condition by three Visual Modification Class ratings.

3) PS: Potentially Significant Impact on Visual Quality, if the effect persists for an appreciable duration, generally one year or more. Note that the temporal viewing context may indicate that temporary impacts (lasting less than one year) may represent a substantial (significant) impact.

   LTS: Less than Significant Impact on Visual Quality, regardless of duration.
3.1.3 Environmental Impact Analysis

3.1.1.4 Methodology

The analytical approach complies with the requirements of CEQA, and addresses the Los Angeles CEQA Thresholds Guide (City of Los Angeles, 2006) for determining impact significance. Appendix B presents the technical approach for the assessment in greater detail. The methodology reflects the concepts and principles of the Visual Resource Management methodologies in use by the following federal agencies: U.S. Department of Agriculture; Forest Service (USFS 1974, 1995); U.S. Department of Interior; Bureau of Land Management (BLM 1978); and U.S. Department of Transportation – Federal Highway Administration (USDOT 1981).

The intensity of an impact is addressed as the degree to which visual conditions change adversely relative to existing (baseline) conditions (April 2009). Visual conditions are described in terms of Visual Modification Classes (VMC). For example, a reduction from existing (baseline) conditions of VMC 1 to VMC 2 is a level 1 impact intensity; a reduction from VMC 1 to VMC 3, is a level 2, and a reduction from VMC 1 to VMC 4 is a level 3 impact intensity. The intensity of a visual impact is a function of how apparent the proposed project’s features may be within their context (e.g., barely noticeable versus visually dominant). The significance of the impact depends on the degree to which visual conditions change, the duration of the change, and the sensitivity of the view affected (Table 3.1-2).

In estimating the intensity of potential visual impacts, several factors affecting the context of views are considered: viewer activity; primary viewing direction(s); viewing distance; project exposure; duration of any given viewing “event” (as distinguished from the overall period of time an impact would endure); relationship of the subject view to the sequence available; the presence of existing features of competing visual interest; and established features tending to draw attention toward the proposed project facilities (focal point sensitivity).

Photo-simulations (visual simulations) are used to assist in determining the intensity of visual impact. These are realistic computer-generated three-dimensional images of a proposed project. They simulate project features as they would be seen in the context of critical views and under specific viewing conditions matching baseline photographs of the same views. Baseline photographs were taken to represent the maximum exposure of the proposed project within critical public views and which would occur under the better viewing conditions within the range prevailing for the potentially affected views. For the subject analyses, baseline photographs were taken on relatively clear days without substantial fog or haze. Details regarding the camera used for the base photograph were recorded and later emulated by the computer program used for the simulation. A Global Positioning System was used to identify the location of the camera lens in order to correlate the computer-simulated image with the baseline existing-condition photograph.

Based on visual simulations, the proposed project’s physical attributes were considered in relation to those for the features of the affected landscape. The level of contrast potentially exhibited by the proposed project and its compatibility with its context were thereby evaluated.
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3.1.3.1 Campus Impacts

Construction

Nursery Property
The installation of the temporary bungalows and, later, the construction of the future campus building would entail the presence and movement of a work force and heavy equipment at this site. The construction of both phases of development at the Nursery Property would be incongruous with the established character of the neighborhood and would dominate attention. Given the line of sight to the San Gabriel Mountains (see Figure 3.1-8, Existing Views of Nursery Property, VPs 8 and 9, top image), construction activities, relative to eye level from a vehicle, would not interfere with views of the mountains. The impact of construction of the temporary and permanent phases would be adverse but would be temporary, each ending in less than 12 months. Therefore, since the duration of the impacts would be less than one year, the impacts would be less than significant.

Eldridge Avenue
Similar to the Nursery Property, the presence and movement of a work force and heavy equipment would be incongruous with the established character of the Eldridge Avenue neighborhood and would dominate attention. Views of the San Gabriel Mountains are substantially blocked by trees at the periphery of El Cariso Golf Course. Construction activities involving heavy equipment, relative to eye level from a vehicle, could not further block these views noticeably. The impact of construction at this site would be adverse but would be temporary, ending within twelve months. Therefore, since the duration of the impact would not be greater than one year, it would be less than significant.

Operation

Nursery Property

View Obstruction
Existing views and simulations of future views of the Nursery Property with temporary modulars are shown in the visual simulations in Figures 3.1-10 and 3.1-11, relative to Viewing Positions 8 and 9 along Hubbard Street. Figures 3.1-12 and 3.1-13 show those existing views in conjunction with simulations of the permanent facilities, the College Programs and Activities Center. Neither the temporary nor the permanent facilities would intercede in views of the San Gabriel Mountains, as is demonstrated by the simulations. There would be no impact as regards view obstruction.

Visual Character and Quality
The project would replace a commercial land use (the nursery) with an institutional land use. Simulations of the temporary modulars and permanent facility are shown in Figures 3.10 – 3.1-13, as noted. Regarding the temporary bungalows, they would be small and in scale with the neighboring residences. In character, however, their utilitarian appearance would be incongruous with the residential setting. The 30,000 square-foot permanent facility would be designed to be compatible with the architecture of the Main Campus, yet in character and scale it would also be incongruous with neighboring residences.
Figure 3.1-10 Existing and Simulated Views of Temporary Bungalows, Hubbard Street Nursery Property
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Figure 3.1-11 Hubbard Street Nursery Property – Looking Southwest – Temporary Bungalows
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Figure 3.1-12 Hubbard Street Nursery Property Looking North – College Programs & Activities Center
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Figure 3.1-13 Hubbard Street Nursery Property Looking Southwest – College Programs & Activities Center
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Landscaping similar to that occurring throughout the campus and along the LAMC’s prominent landscape feature, the arroyo, would be installed as part of the project. The plantings would provide a buffer between the proposed temporary and permanent facilities and the neighboring residences on each of its three sides. However, such landscaping would not screen views of the facilities for residents arriving to and departing from their neighborhood via Hubbard Street, and the facilities’ inconsistency of character relative to the residential context would remain apparent.

Since the proposed 2009 Master Plan would replace a commercial land use with an institutional land use, one incongruous land use would be supplanted by another. Because visual condition of the neighborhood has been affected by the introduction of incompatible land uses in the past that dominate the available views, there would be no further perceptible change in visual condition. The existing visual condition is now **Visual Modification Class 4**, and the future visual condition would also be **Visual Modification Class 4**. Therefore, there would be no impact due either to the temporary or to the permanent phases of the project.

**Light and Glare**

By design, the proposed facilities for the Nursery Property, including both temporary and permanent buildings and their associated parking lot and security lighting, would not spill light off-site nor introduce glare from night lighting. Such lighting would be effectively hooded to prevent direct off-site visibility of the luminaire, and lighting would be directed away from off-site public viewing positions. Specifically, lighting would be designed to meet the City Los Angeles Planning and Zoning Code sections applying to night lighting:

- **Section 93.0117**: Illumination of adjacent residential properties by exterior light sources shall not exceed 2 fc and shall not be a source of direct glare on said uses.

- **Section 12.21 A 5(k)**: All lights used to illuminate a parking area shall be designed, located, and arranged so as to reflect the light away from any streets and adjacent premises.

Concerning daytime glare, no building materials for the temporary and permanent structures planned for the Nursery Property would be inherently reflective, other than windows. The buildings would be single-story, low enough to the ground such that there would be no sun angle at which objectionable reflected solar glare could occur. Moreover, the buildings would be located to the side and toward the back of the parcel where reflection, if any, could not reach the street or nearby residences. Therefore, there would be no impacts from light or glare.

**Shadow Effects**

The *City of Los Angeles CEQA Thresholds Guide* requires the consideration of the potential impact of shading by project-related structures. However, the Guide addresses project structures in excess of 60 feet in height above the ground elevation, and the proposed temporary and permanent structures would be single-story buildings. Since the proposed facilities would not reach this height, there would be no significant adverse impacts due to shading.

**Consistency with Applicable Regulations**

Table 3.1-3 provides an analysis of the campus portion of the proposed project’s consistency with the policies of the Sylmar Community Plan.
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### Table 3.1-3 Analysis of Campus Projects’ Consistency with the Sylmar Community Plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Sylmar Community Plan Policy</th>
<th>Analysis of Consistency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-3.4</td>
<td>Preserve existing views of hillside and mountainous areas.</td>
<td><strong>Consistent.</strong> The development would not obstruct views of hillside and mountainous areas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-6.5</td>
<td>Require that any proposed development be designed to be compatible with adjacent development.</td>
<td><strong>Not Consistent.</strong> Development would not be compatible with the residential development along Hubbard Street, as seen by residents using that road.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-6.8</td>
<td>Development to the extent feasible shall preserve the view of the hillsides and the community’s scenic highways viewshed.</td>
<td><strong>Consistent.</strong> Development of the project would not substantially affect hillside views and would not be within the viewshed of the nearest scenic highway, Interstate 210, approximately one mile from the site.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-2.1</td>
<td>Encourage compatibility in school locations, site layout and architectural design with adjacent land uses and community character and, as appropriate, use schools to create a logical transition and buffer between different uses, (e.g., multiple family residential vs. single-family residential or commercial vs. residential).</td>
<td><strong>Not Consistent.</strong> Development, while similar to existing development on the LMC Campus, would not be compatible with the residential development along Hubbard Street, as seen by residents using that road.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Screening of Features

| Standard | Screen trash storage areas from the view of public streets by solid walls or fences, not less than 6 feet high. | **Consistent.** Designs would address this topic. |
| Standard | Design wall material to be compatible with exterior building material. | **Consistent.** Designs would address this topic. |
| Standard | Screen all heating, ventilation, air conditioning equipment and ducts and any other equipment or appurtenances located on roofs from the view of any adjoining public street, unless such appurtenances are used as integral elements of the project’s design. | **Consistent.** Designs would address this topic. |
| Standard | Locate and/or screen all loading areas from view of any adjoining public streets or walkways in residential or commercial zones. | **Consistent.** Designs would address this topic. |

### Exterior Elevations, Wall and Fences

| Standard 1 | Provide full architectural treatment, similar in architectural style, materials and details with the main building façade, on all sides of buildings which are visible from adjacent lots or streets. | **Consistent.** Designs would address this topic. |

### Graffiti

| Standard | Minimize places for graffiti by planting shrubs or surface clinging vines in front of solid fences and walls (excluding building walls) facing public rights of way. | **Consistent.** Designs would address this topic. |
| Standard | Paint solid walls or fence surfaces accessible to public view with a washable “Graffiti-Proof” paint or other protective materials. | **Consistent.** Designs would address this topic. |

### Parking Lot Landscaping

| Standard | Plant 24-inch-box shade trees at a ratio of 1 tree for each 4 parking spaces on a surface parking lot. These trees should be distributed throughout the parking lot so as to shade at least 50 percent of the parking lot within 10 years of planting. | **Consistent.** Development of the Nursery Property and Eldridge Avenue Streetscape Improvements would include landscaping and trees for surface parking lots in order to provide shade. The LMC Design Guidelines do not specify the ratio of trees to parking spaces on surface parking lots, but parking lot landscaping will be basically compatible with this policy. |
| Standard | Provide a three and one-half foot wall and a five foot landscaped area on surface parking lots as a buffer from the public right-of-way. | **Consistent.** Surface parking lots will include landscaping as a buffer; however, walls may not be constructed for visual access for security and safety. |
Introducing temporary and permanent college facilities to a residential area is not consistent with Policy 6-2.1 of the Sylmar Community Plan:

“Encourage compatibility in school locations, site layout and architectural design with adjacent land uses and community character and, as appropriate, use schools to create a logical transition and buffer between different uses, e.g., multiple family residential vs. single family residential or commercial vs. residential.”

The institutional appearance of the proposed temporary and permanent facilities would not be compatible with the character of the residential community along Hubbard Street. The proposed development intercedes in a city block of single-family homes and does not create a transition and buffer between different land uses. The inconsistency with Policy 6-2.1, in the context of an analysis of impacts on aesthetics and visual resources, would be considered to be a significant adverse impact.

**Eldridge Avenue**

Proposed improvements of the existing streetscape include new landscaped street medians along Eldridge Avenue, re-paving and widening the sidewalk, incorporating a sidewalk bike lane, providing resting areas with seating, trash receptacles, drinking fountains, informational kiosks, low pedestrian lighting, and designated crosswalks. The analysis below is based on conceptual landscape designs since the specific species and sizes of plantings have not yet been determined.

**View Obstruction**

The proposed Eldridge Avenue Streetscape Improvements would not appreciably block views of the San Gabriel Mountains. Figure 3.1-7, Existing Views of Golf Course, VPs 6 and 7, bottom image, shows the existing view across Eldridge Avenue from VP 7. The San Gabriel Mountains have already been substantially blocked from view by the peripheral visual conditions, as related to visual access, are judged to be **Visual Modification Class 3**, as noted earlier. The residual glimpses of the mountains are therefore not considered to contribute substantially to the quality of the available views from Eldridge Avenue and the streets serving the nearby subdivision.

Conceptual landscape plans call for plantings along a new street median, as well as trees along the proposed pedestrian and bicycle way. The addition of these trees would further obstruct views of the mountains. Doing so would be an adverse impact, but since the mountains today are already substantially screened and no longer a major feature of the available views, their additional screening would not represent a substantial further reduction in visual access. Therefore, the impact would be less than significant.

**Visual Character and Quality**

The existing visual conditions along the length of the proposed Eldridge Avenue Streetscape Improvements pertaining to the landscape character are rated as **Visual Modification Class 1** for much of this area, as noted earlier. Near the Main and East Campuses, visual conditions progressively change to **Class 4** as one approaches LAMC buildings there. Figure 3.1-7, Existing Views of Golf Course, bottom image, represents the **Class 1** views, the park-like setting of El Cariso Golf Course in view being compatible with the residential area across the street from it.
Based on the preliminary design concept, the proposed landscaping along the street median and pedestrian/bicycle way would be compatible with the existing setting. It should establish a pleasing transition from the golf course to the residential area, contributing to the aesthetic value of the golf course. There would be no unfavorable contrast with the setting; no existing aesthetic features would be removed; no natural open space would be affected; and proposed facilities would be well integrated into the scene. To summarize: there would be no adverse impact on landscape character as a result of implementing the proposed Eldridge Avenue Streetscape Improvements.

**Light and Glare**

By design, the proposed Eldridge Avenue Streetscape Improvements (lighting for the pedestrian and bicycle path) would not spill light off-site nor introduce glare. Such lighting would be effectively hooded to prevent direct off-site visibility of the luminaire, and lighting would be directed away from off-site public viewing positions. Specifically, lighting would be designed to meet the same City of Los Angeles Planning and Zoning Code sections applying to night lighting listed above in the discussion of the Nursery Property. For the reasons that apply to the Nursery Property, there would be no impacts of light and glare at the proposed Eldridge Avenue Streetscape Improvements.

**Shadow Effects**

The *City of Los Angeles CEQA Thresholds Guide* issue regarding the potential impact of shading by project-related structures does not apply to development of the proposed Eldridge Avenue Streetscape Improvements. No project structures would be greater than 60 feet in height above the ground elevation, unless tall trees are planned for the site. However, the intended function of such plantings would partly be to afford shade for the street and adjacent pedestrian and bicycle way. Therefore, there would be no impact as relates to shading by project-related structures.

**Consistency with Applicable Regulations**

Development of the streetscape at the proposed Eldridge Avenue Streetscape Improvements would introduce no impacts that would be inconsistent with Sylmar Community Plan policies (see Table 3.1-3 above), LAMC design guidelines, or other regulations. There would be no impact.

**Cumulative Impacts**

No other projects are planned near the Nursery Property or proposed Eldridge Avenues Streetscape Improvements that would cause cumulative aesthetic impacts. None would be within any views, or sequence of related views, that would also include these sites. Accordingly, there is no potential for the project to contribute to the cumulative visual impacts or light or glare impacts associated with these projects. Completion of any or all of the projects listed, in addition to the proposed project, would therefore not result in a cumulative aesthetic impact.

**3.1.1.5 Athletic Fields**

**Construction**

Construction activities would entail the presence and movement of a workforce and heavy equipment during the day. Typical construction equipment would include excavators, backhoes, skip loaders, dump trucks, bottom dumps, gradalls, bobcats, hydraulic hammers, roll-off bins, cranes, pick-up trucks, concrete ready-mix trucks, delivery vehicles, paving machines, and assorted power
operated hand tools. Staging areas would be located within the area of construction. Parking for workers would occur either on-site or at an off-site lot, not along residential streets or at El Cariso County Regional Park or El Cariso Golf Course. Nighttime construction is not planned, so there would be no emission of night lighting or glare.

Figures 3.1-15, 3.1-16 and 3.1-17 are simulations of facilities planned for the Athletic Fields, as they would be seen from VPs 1, 3, and 5. If cranes are required to install the playing field lights, the tallest facilities to be constructed, it would be possible for them to intercede in views of the distant hillsides and mountains from VPs 1 and 5. The interruption would be temporary, occurring briefly during the 9-month period of construction. While adverse, due to its temporary time frame the impact would be less than significant.

The workforce and heavy equipment would be distractingly dominant in the views from VPs 1, 3, and 5. However intense the visual impacts may be, though, they would be temporary, ending at the completion of the 9-month construction period. While adverse, the brevity of the impacts would be such that they would be considered to be less than significant.

Operando.

View Obstruction

For the Maclay Street viewing position (Figure 3.1-2, Visual Context for Athletic Fields Site, bottom image), the angle of view to 70- and 90-foot-tall light standards at the baseball field (the closest field) would be approximately 2.6 degrees. The angle of view to the foothills at the upper reach of residential development in line with that field is 3 degrees. Therefore, the tallest feature of the proposed Athletic Fields, the field-light standards, could not intercede in views of the lowest undeveloped hillsides, as seen from Maclay Street. Concerning the obstruction of views of open space, this is not an issue for views from Maclay Street as regards the development of the Athletic Fields site. The open space within the site and the rest of the Pacoima Wash are not visible (Figure 3.1-2).

The existing Athletic Fields site is shown in Figure 3.1-14 as it would be seen during the day from VP 1 (representing the views from Harding Street and Mountain Glen Terrace). A visual simulation of the proposed Athletic Fields, as it would be seen from this position, is shown in Figure 3.1-15. The simulation demonstrates that the 70-foot-tall light standards planned for the soccer field, would project into views of the San Gabriel Mountains. These structures are slender and relatively inconspicuous, not measurably obstructing these views.

Regarding the obstruction of views of open space, the proposed development of the Athletic Fields site would occur along the northwest side of the Pacoima Wash stream basin and floodplain, which is the “far side,” as seen from Harding Street and Mountain Glen Terrace (VPs 1 and 2). The issue in this case is not the obstruction of views of open space but the loss of some existing open space with development of the playing fields, as discussed later. (Refer to Figure 3.1-3 to better understand the open space context for the simulation shown in Figure 3.1-15.) The question of view obstruction, as it pertains to open space, is moot relative to this view and those from Harding Street and Mountain Glen Terrace.
3.0 Setting, Environmental Impact Analysis, Mitigation Measures

3.1 Aesthetics

The Athletic Fields facilities, as they would be seen from VP 3 (pedestrian path), are shown in the visual simulation presented in Figure 3.1-16, bottom image. The existing conditions for this view are shown in the upper image. The simulation shows that the 90-foot-tall light standards planned for the baseball field in the foreground, and the more distant 70-foot-tall light standards planned for the softball and soccer fields, would minimally intercede in views of the distant San Gabriel Mountains or nearer hillsides. The light standards, being slender and presenting little visual mass, cannot be said to materially obstruct views of the hillsides and mountains.

The open space within the Pacoima Wash stream basin and floodplain west of the Athletic Fields access road would be supplanted by the proposed playing field facilities. The issue is not view obstruction, it is the loss of open space, as discussed below.

East of the access road (the far side, relative to VP 3), the existing open space would be substantially blocked, over time, by landscaping along the west side of the access road, as shown in the visual simulation (Figure 3.1-16, bottom image). The landscaping is shown as it would appear about 20 years after installation. The tallest plantings would be Fremont's cottonwood, projected to reach 50 feet by then (http://plants.usda.gov/java/charProfile?symbol=POFR2). Arroyo Willows and Mulefat, planted as an understory to the cottonwoods, are estimated to reach up to 35 feet (http://plants.usda.gov/java/charProfile?symbol=SALA6) and 10 feet (http://plants.usda.gov/java/charProfile?symbol=BASA4), respectively, in 20 years, which are also their mature heights.

Given the foregoing, there would be a substantial adverse impact as regards the issue of obstruction of the view of the east side of the Pacoima Wash. The existing conditions are such that views of the mountains, hillsides, and the Wash have not been obstructed by past development. In terms of this issue area, the conditions are now Visual Modification Class 1 but would change to Visual Modification Class 3. This would represent an impact of intensity level 2 (Table 3.1-2). Within a highly sensitive view, the visual impact would be significant.

Concerning VP 5, the natural topography blocks sight of the lower reaches of hills southeast from this position along the pedestrian path, but sight of the hills has not been obstructed by past actions. A visual simulation of the Athletic Fields, as seen from VP 5, is shown in the bottom image in Figure 3.1-17, while the existing conditions for this view are shown in the upper image. The development of this site would supplant open space in the foreground with the playing fields, as addressed later, and not represent an obstruction of visual access to open space. On the other hand, landscaping ranging from 10- to 50-feet tall, intended to substantially screen the Athletic Fields from views from the southeast (VP 1), would, to a small degree, interrupt sight of the hills relative to views from the northwest (VP 5). Note that the softball and soccer fields are to be constructed on pads graded down to the level of the pedestrian path, as shown in Figure 3.1-17, bottom image. Therefore, 10- to 50-foot-tall plantings would not screen the hills from view to the extent that they would were the fields established at the higher existing level of the topography. As shown in the simulation, the visibility of part of the hillsides is increased, while along the left and right sides of the view it is diminished. On balance, obstruction of views of the hillsides is not substantial. Concerning the light standards, they would extend well above the skyline and would intercept the hills in the background until the screen plantings approach maturity. However, they would be slender structures with little mass and would not materially interrupt sight of the hills.
Figure 3.1-14 Existing View of Athletic Fields Site from Mountain Glen Terrace, VP 1
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3.0 Setting, Environmental Impact Analysis, Mitigation Measures

3.1 Aesthetics

Figure 3.1-15 Visual Simulation of Proposed Athletic Fields Facilities, VP 1
3.0 Setting, Environmental Impact Analysis, Mitigation Measures

3.1 Aesthetics

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Figure 3.1-16 Existing View toward Athletic Fields Site and Visual Simulation of Proposed Facilities, VP 3
3.0 Setting, Environmental Impact Analysis, Mitigation Measures

3.1 Aesthetics

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Figure 3.1-17 Existing View toward Athletic Fields Site and Visual Simulation of Proposed Facilities, VP 5
3.0 Setting, Environmental Impact Analysis, Mitigation Measures

3.1 Aesthetics

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In the context of view obstruction, the existing condition for the view from VP 5 is **Visual Modification Class 1**. While the project would noticeably obstruct from view part of the hillsides, the net obstruction is not substantial and the impact, while adverse, would be less than significant.

**Visual Character and Quality**

Site clearance and grading activities would occur across the currently open and natural-appearing 14.6-acre site for the Athletic Fields Complex. This would result in the removal of all vegetation from this area but would not noticeably alter the topography, as it is already comparatively flat. Three playing fields and their supporting site facilities and amenities would be developed in this area, replacing the open and natural-appearing site with an urban recreational facility. As such, the proposed facilities and structures cannot be designed to “integrate” with a natural character that is eliminated and would not be compatible with the existing setting.

As noted, Figure 3.1-14 is the existing condition of the Athletic Fields site, as seen from VP 1. Figure 3.1-15 shows a visual simulation of the playing fields and facilities as they would be seen from this position. Relative to VP 1, the current visual condition of the site and its vicinity is rated as **Visual Modification Class 3**, due to the highly visible and incongruous Athletics, Health and Fitness Complex building at the East Campus. The proposed Athletic Fields development entails the installation of substantial screen plantings (the taller plantings being 35- to 50-feet high), as shown in the simulation in Figure 3.1-15. The fields and supporting facilities and amenities would eventually be nearly entirely screened from view after 20 years of growth. Only the tall field lights would be partly visible, and they would not appreciably affect the condition of the view. By themselves, they would be noticeable but subordinate to the natural features remaining in view. Together with the Health, Fitness, and Athletics Complex building, they would not dominate the view, and visual conditions would remain **Visual Modification Class 3**. While adverse, the impact of the Athletic Fields 20 years after development would not represent a substantial reduction in visual quality. It would, therefore, represent a less-than-significant visual impact.

However, for a number of years the screen plantings would not block sight of the playing fields and support facilities. These features would attract considerable attention such that, in conjunction with the Athletics, Health, and Fitness Complex building, they would dominate the view from VP 1. Visual conditions would change to **Visual Modification Class 4**, representing an intensity level 1 impact (changing from Class 3; Table 3.1-2). Within a highly sensitive view, the impact would be considered to be significant; it would be direct and long-term.

Relative to VP 3, the existing condition of the view (Figure 3.1-16, upper image) is rated **Visual Modification Class 3**. This is due to the co-dominance of the Mountain Glen Terrace and Santiago Estates subdivisions and the disturbance of natural vegetation in the foreground, seen in the context of the otherwise natural-appearing Pacoima Wash and its floodplain. With the completion of the Athletic Fields Complex, the playing fields, parking lot (with its canopy of solar cells), and other support facilities and amenities would be in the immediate foreground, as shown in the visual simulation in Figure 3.1-17 (lower image). These project features would be incongruous with the partially natural-appearing existing character of the site and would dominate attention. The visual condition would change from **Visual Modification Class 3 to Class 4**. Such a level 1 intensity of impact (a change of one class rating; Table 3.1-2) seen within a highly sensitive view would represent a direct and long-term significant visual impact.
3.0 Setting, Environmental Impact Analysis, Mitigation Measures

3.1 Aesthetics

Seen from VP 5, the existing visual condition of the view (Figure 3.1-17, upper image) is rated **Visual Modification Class 1**. From there to the riparian area that would remain protected under the proposed project, open, natural-appearing space occurs to the left and the compatible park-like setting of El Cariso Golf Course is to the right (Figure 3.1-7, Existing Views of the Golf Course, upper image). Once the facilities are completed, the soccer and softball fields, bleachers and support facilities, parking lot and solar cell canopies, and the 70- to 90-foot-tall field lights would be in the foreground of views from this stretch of pathway. The currently natural character in views to the east and southeast would therefore be supplanted by these project features, dominating attention in the foreground. Visual conditions would therefore change three class ratings to **Visual Modification Class 4**, representing an intensity level 3 impact (Table 3.1-2). Within a highly sensitive view, this would be considered a direct and long-term significant visual impact.

**Nighttime Light and Glare**

Advanced field and parking lighting systems with no over-spill technology would accommodate games extending into the evening hours. The lighting design has not yet been finalized. Based on conceptual plans and the architectural night-view rendering in Figure 3.1-18, Aerial View of Athletic Fields – Lighting Design, lower image, there would be the following:

- **Field Lighting**: a total of 19 floodlights for the three playing fields, 8 for the baseball field that would be 90 feet tall, and 11 for the softball and soccer fields, 70 feet tall;

- **Access Road Lighting**: a total of 18 streetlights, each 20-feet tall, 12 for the access road from Maclay Street to the SIBL playing fields, 3 for the baseball access road, and 3 for the softball/soccer parking lot turnaround;

- **Parking Lot Lighting**: a total of 80 fluorescent lights, 54 for the baseball parking lot, and 26 for the softball/soccer parking lot. All fluorescent lights would be mounted to the underside of the solar canopy structures.

The consideration of night lighting produced by the Athletic Fields focuses on critical viewing positions located in an arc from the east to the southwest. Views from El Cariso County Regional Park were not considered inasmuch as the night lighting at the Athletic Fields Complex would be well shielded by intervening trees. Views from within El Cariso Golf Course and the pedestrian path at its periphery are not relevant, as there is no provision for their use by the public at night, except for the golf course driving range, which is open seven days a week until 8:00 p.m. The driving range is not near the Athletic Fields, so night-lighting impacts were not considered relative to the public using this facility.

The plan for the field lights for the Athletic Fields has not yet been designed. However, the potential effect of night lighting for the development of playing fields there was addressed in a previous analysis of the LAMC Master Plan and Public Recreation Improvement Program (LAMC, 2005). For that project, there was a completed lighting plan. That project included four softball fields, bleachers, two concession/restroom facilities buildings, a maintenance office and supply storeroom, and parking and associated infrastructure. A total of 20 field light poles were to be installed, each 70-feet tall and each with from 6 to 20 light fixtures.
3.0 Setting, Environmental Impact Analysis, Mitigation Measures

3.1 Aesthetics

Figure 3.1-18 Aerial View of Athletic Fields – Lighting Design
3.0 Setting, Environmental Impact Analysis, Mitigation Measures

3.1 Aesthetics

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By comparison, the proposed project analyzed in this assessment entails development of three playing fields (a baseball field, softball field, and soccer field) and support facilities and amenities similar to those analyzed previously. Based on a preliminary concept plan, 8 of the field lights would be 90 feet tall for the outfield of the baseball field. Taller lights better direct lighting downward and, therefore, better control off-site light spill (Paul Austad, Musco Lighting, personal communication June 2009). This is because taller lights may be directed outward at a lesser angle than that needed by shorter lights to illuminate the same area of playing field. For the softball field, lights would be 70-feet tall, as stipulated for the softball fields addressed in the previous study.

The field lighting to be used for the proposed project would be the latest in a succession of designs by Musco Lighting that improves on efficiency and control of off-site light spill, vertical illumination, and glare. Since 2005, fewer light fixtures are required for any given level of illumination, as compared to earlier Musco designs. The analyses for the 2005 study were conducted prior to the latest design advances (Paul Austad, Musco Lighting, personal communication June 2009). Therefore, the project analyzed in 2005 addressed lighting that would have introduced more off-site and vertical light spill and glare on a per-field light basis. Moreover, the shorter softball field field lights would have had a greater potential for horizontal spill, compared to the taller lights that would be used for the proposed baseball field, as noted above. The findings for the 2005 study accordingly would be “worst case” compared to the current project. In the absence of a lighting plan for the proposed Athletic Fields, this analysis applies the 2005 study findings as a reasonable worst-case assessment.

The unit used to measure illumination, or light intensity, is the footcandle (fc). A fc is defined as the amount of light received by one square foot of a surface that is one foot from a point source of light equal to one candle of a certain type. Illumination is dependent on the illuminated surface’s distance from, and angle with respect to, the light source. The lighting system would be designed in accordance with performance criteria. Typical of lighting for a sports field, lighting for the Athletic Fields would be designed with a light-loss percentage factor to account for dimming of lamps over time. Initial fc values would therefore exceed what is required of the playing fields. The 2005 analysis addressed this higher initial fc value and was a worst-case analysis as a result.

Due to the technical advances in lighting, field lights would be shielded and directed to preclude the nighttime illumination from directly spilling off-site. Although the lighting would be visible from off-site locations (see below), the light would be directed to the playing fields. Due to the design of the proposed lighting, no portion of the arc tube (lamp) would be visible from the critical off-site viewing locations identified for this EIR, particularly Harding Street and Mountain Glen Terrace. (There would be a direct line of sight available from these areas.) To a lesser extent, the lights would be seen from Maclay Street. However, the view from Harding Street (VP 1) was chosen to represent the most critical street-based views that would include the playing fields. Santiago Estates is at a distance and elevation such that views from there are not considered critical to the assessment.

The light and glare analysis in the 2005 study determined that the field lights would have emitted 0.01 fc at points 500 feet from the softball fields. A direct light level of 0.01 fc is too small to be detected by the human eye as glare, according to that analysis. VP 1 is approximately 1,000 feet, 850 feet, and 830 feet away from the locations of the nearest field lights at the proposed baseball field, softball field, and soccer field, respectively. Therefore, there would be no glare introduced by this worst-case lighting on the closest of the critical views evaluated.
Although the lamps would not be directly visible offsite due to the light-control visors, the introduction of the playing field lighting could have some effect on surrounding land uses. Sports-field lighting, due to its elevated nature and contrast with the dark sky and surrounding landscape, is typically noticeable for extended distances from the point of origin. For field lights directed toward the viewer, light would be reflected from the lower part of the reflector housing that would be seen from off-site points lower than the 70- to 90-foot-tall lights. Additionally, moisture in the night air close to the lights is illuminated such that it may become noticeably bright for those lights oriented to the east toward VP 1. Finally, the surfaces illuminated by the field lighting would be visible from many points off-site. These surfaces include not only the playing fields, bleachers, and support facilities, but also the light standards themselves. Such lighting would create a source of noticeable ambient lighting in what is now an area devoid of light sources.

Figure 3.1-19, shows the existing visual conditions at night, seen from VP 1. This position is located along Harding Street and close to the screen wall in front of the first tier of residences in the Mountain Glen Terrace subdivision. The existing condition of night lighting for this project site is considered to be Visual Modification Class 1.

Figure 3.1-20 shows a visual simulation of the Athletic Fields seen at night from the same position. Field lights would introduce ambient lighting that, in the absolute darkness of the existing site, would appear noticeable but subordinate to the existing streetlighting in the foreground were it to be visible from VP 1. However, the taller screen plantings proposed for the west side of the access road for the Athletic Fields, ranging from 35- to 50-feet tall, would substantially block the ambient lighting from view, as shown. The glow of illuminated atmospheric moisture close to the light fixtures, though visible, would be relatively inconspicuous compared to the existing streetlights in the foreground. Note that technical limitations affecting night photography accentuate night lighting. What appears to be glare emanating from the streetlights is seen on-site as a soft, but bright, glow. Nonetheless, streetlighting would be substantially brighter than the visible part of the field lighting. Compared to the absolute darkness of the existing site, the field lights would be noticeable. However, such lighting would be subordinate to the streetlighting in the foreground. The impact would be adverse; being noticeable but subordinate, the change in night lighting would change the existing conditions to Visual Modification Class 2. The intensity of impact would be level 1 (a change of one class rating). Seen within a highly sensitive view, it would be considered significant. In conclusion, the indirect glow visible for some of the lights introduced to the site for the Athletic Fields Complex would be a direct and long-term significant impact.

An additional consideration is that the screen plantings referenced will require a number of years to mature to the point of affording substantial screening. Until that point in time, the ambient field lighting noted would be within view, being noticeable to the point of being co-dominant with the nearby streetlights, given the nearly absolute absence of existing on- or near-site lighting. As such, night lighting conditions would change to Visual Modification Class 3, representing an intensity level 2 impact. Within highly sensitive views such as VP 1, this would represent a significant impact. This would lessen, over time, to an intensity level 1 impact, as noted above.
Figure 3.1-19 Existing Night View of Athletic Fields from Mountain Glen Terrace, VP 1
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3.0 Setting, Environmental Impact Analysis, Mitigation Measures

3.1 Aesthetics

Figure 3.1-20 Visual Simulation of the Nighttime View of the Proposed Athletic Fields Facilities, VP 1
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3.0 Setting, Environmental Impact Analysis, Mitigation Measures

3.1 Aesthetics

Daytime Light and Glare

The materials of construction for all Athletic Fields support facilities and amenities are such that they would have an inherently low potential for reflection of sunlight upon ground positions in the vicinity. The PV solar-cell installations to be installed over the parking lots would be made of a type of glass, which might intuitively seem to be highly reflective. However, the concept of efficient solar power is to absorb as much sunlight as possible while reflecting as little light as possible. Specifically, solar panels use "high-transmission, low-iron" glass, which absorbs more light, producing about half the glare and reflectance of standard glass, plastic, and Plexiglas, and about 10 percent of that for steel.

A separate consideration is whether the solar cells would be oriented such that they could reflect any degree of sunlight upon ground-based positions. There would be two PV system installations, mounted over the two playing field parking lots. For this analysis, the one mounted over the baseball field parking lot would be termed the “lower PV system,” while the one mounted over the softball/soccer field parking lot would be referred to as the “upper PV system.” While the two installations have not yet been designed, it is envisioned that the solar cell panels would be mounted on a number of panels, each basically a long, narrow rectangle. They would be mounted as shown in the simulation shown in Figure 3.1-16, Existing View Toward Athletic Fields Site and Visual Simulation of Proposed Facilities, VP 3, tilted up and angled to the southeast. Specifically, all of the panels would be tilted up at a 15-degree angle. For the baseball field parking lot, the east-west oriented panels would be directed 68 degrees from true north, while the one north-south row of panels would be angled 90 degrees south of true north. The solar panels installed in the parking lot for the softball/soccer fields would be angled 54 degrees from true north.

Possible reflection has been considered relative to the critical viewing positions around the Athletic Fields site considered for detailed analysis. These would be VPs 1, 3, and 5. Relative to VP 1, reflection from the lower PV system toward that point could not occur until the early evening when the sun would be due west of the solar cells. The upper PV system (at the softball/soccer fields parking lot) is well to the northeast and could not, at any time of the day, reflect sunlight on VP 1. Figure 3.1-21, upper image, shows graphically how reflected sunlight from the lower PV system would be directed skyward over, not at, VP 1 at 5:00 p.m. on August 21, 2009. The sun on this day and at this time would be approximately 20 degrees above the horizon. This day and time would present the maximum opportunity for solar reflection upon VP 1; as shown, there would be none.

Regarding VP 3, the relevant PV system is the lower one. This array of solar panels would be immediately below the bluff and in the foreground (see the simulation in Figure 3.1-16). The upper PV system would be minimally in view from there and incapable of reflecting sunlight toward VP 3. Figure 3.1-21, lower image, shows graphically how reflected sunlight from the lower PV system would be directed skyward over, not at, VP 3 at 7:00 a.m. on August 21, when the sun is due east of the solar panels and approximately 20 degrees above the horizon.

Figure 3.1-21, lower image, shows graphically how reflected sunlight would be directed skyward over, not at, VP 3 at 7:00 a.m. on August 21, when the sun is due east of the solar panels and approximately 20 degrees above the horizon.

VP 5, and all points along the pedestrian path to and just beyond the riparian area separating the sites for the upper and lower playing fields, would be lower than the PV system, which would be elevated 9 feet above the softball/soccer fields parking lot, and there could be no possibility for solar reflection upon any points along the referenced length of path. Between the riparian area and a point near to the lower PV system, the pedestrian path would be north of the solar cells. The solar panels, being tilted 15 degrees vertically to the south, would reflect sunlight away from pedestrians.
To summarize, the PV canopy systems at the two Athletic Fields parking lots could reflect no sunlight upon ground-based observer positions, and there would be no impact due to daytime light and glare.

**Shadow Effects**

The *City of Los Angeles CEQA Thresholds Guide* issue regarding the potential impact of shading by project-related structures applies to the development of the Athletic Fields Complex because the field lighting would be higher than 60 feet. However, there would be no shadow-sensitive land uses to the north, northwest, or northeast of the playing fields. Moreover, the light standards, while tall, would be slender. Having no appreciable mass, they would have no potential to cast substantial shadows. Therefore, development of the playing fields would have no impact as pertains to undesirable shading of land uses.

**Consistency with Applicable Regulations**

Development of the Athletic Fields Complex would not be consistent with Policy 5-1.1 of the Sylmar Community Plan:

> “Encourage the retention of passive and visual open space, which provides a balance to the urban development of the Community.”

The site for the Athletic Fields is currently natural-appearing open space, which would be lost with their development. The replacement of this open space with the built environment of lighted playing fields would be a substantial inconsistency with this policy when considering the views from VPs 3 and 5, representing the views from the pedestrian path. In these views, the area in which the open space would be lost is within the immediate foreground. As seen from VP 1 however, the lost open space is in the background, west of the Pacoima Wash. The screen plantings along the east side of the fields would eventually buffer the playing fields such that they would be minimally visible. The effect would be similar to that presented by the periphery of trees along the east side of El Cariso Golf Course, and the great majority of the existing open space would appear to be intact. This effect is aided by the foreshortening of the view, the lost open space being in the background. Hence, the inconsistency is considered to be a significant adverse visual impact as pertains to views from the pedestrian path, but less than significant regarding views from the east, such as those along Harding Street and Mountain Glen Terrace (represented by VP 1).

Development of the Athletic Fields Complex would also not be consistent with Policy 6.2.1 of the Sylmar Community Plan:

> “Encourage compatibility in school locations, site layout and architectural design with adjacent land uses and community character and, as appropriate, use schools to create a logical transition and buffer between different uses, e.g., multiple family residential vs. single family residential or commercial vs. residential.”

Institutional scale, NCAA standard-compliant playing fields and their support facilities and amenities would not be completely compatible with natural open space and residential development, which would be a significant impact.
3.0 Setting, Environmental Impact Analysis, Mitigation Measures

3.1 Aesthetics

Figure 3.1-21 Graphic Analyses of Solar Reflectivity Off Solar Panels Relative to VPs 1 and 3
3.0 Setting, Environmental Impact Analysis, Mitigation Measures

3.1 Aesthetics

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Cumulative Impacts

No past, present, and probable future-related projects have been identified that would cause cumulative aesthetic impacts in conjunction with the Athletic Fields Complex. No other projects would be within views, or sequence of related views, that would also include the project site. Accordingly, there is no potential for the project to contribute to the cumulative visual impacts or light or glare impacts associated with the development of the playing fields. Completion of any or all of the projects listed, in addition to the proposed project, would therefore not result in a cumulative aesthetic impact.

3.1.4 Mitigation Measures for Significant Impacts

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<th>Mitigation Measure (MM) Number</th>
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<th>Post Mitigation Level of Impact</th>
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<td>Impact AES-1</td>
<td>Athletic Fields buildings, playing fields and landscape screenings would obstruct views of open space and hillsides and would reduce visual quality from public views in being incongruous with the partially natural appearing existing character of the site and would dominate attention. Until the proposed screen plantings mature at the Athletic Fields, the buildings and playing fields there would remain dominant; thereafter, the impacts would be adverse but less than significant. These interim significant impacts cannot be mitigated to be less than significant. The obstruction of views of open space as seen from the pedestrian path (VP 3) would increase as screen plantings mature, eventually becoming significant. This impact cannot be mitigated to a level less than significant.</td>
<td>None feasible.</td>
<td>Significant.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Impact AES-2</td>
<td>Lighting of the Athletic Fields would introduce ambient lighting that, in the absolute darkness of the existing site, would appear noticeable. Until the proposed screen plantings mature, the lighting at the Athletic Fields buildings and playing fields would be co-dominant with the existing sources of lighting; thereafter, the impacts would be lessened and be subordinate to those sources. Though reduced by the plantings, the effect of night lighting would remain significant. The impact of night lighting cannot be mitigated beyond the beneficial effect of the proposed screen plantings.</td>
<td>None feasible.</td>
<td>Significant</td>
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### 3.1 Aesthetics

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<tr>
<td>Impact AES-3</td>
<td>Development of the Athletic Fields Complex would not be consistent with Policy 5-1.1 of the Sylmar Community Plan that encourage the retention of passive and visual open space and creation of buffers between different land uses. The loss of open space in views from points along the pedestrian path cannot be mitigated.</td>
<td>None feasible.</td>
<td>Significant</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impact AES-4</td>
<td>Development of the Athletic Fields Complex would not be consistent Policy 6.2.1 of the Sylmar Community Plan that encourages compatibility of school locations, site layout, and architectural design with adjacent land uses and community character. The Nursery Property development and development of the Athletic Fields would introduce land uses that would be incongruous with adjacent land uses and community character. The impact cannot be mitigated.</td>
<td>None feasible.</td>
<td>Significant</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### 3.1.5 Level of Significance after Mitigation

No feasible mitigation measures have been identified. Significant impacts AES-1-AES-4 would remain significant.