

## 4.1 AESTHETICS

This section of the EIR describes existing aesthetic and visual resources in the San Pedro Community Plan Area (CPA) and the surrounding area and analyzes the potential for aesthetic and visual impacts associated with implementation of the proposed San Pedro Community Plan. In particular, descriptions of existing visual characteristics, both within and in the vicinity of the CPA, are presented and potential San Pedro plan-related impacts to aesthetic and visual resources, such as increased light and glare or impacts to scenic views, are evaluated based on analysis of aerial photographs, site reconnaissance, and policies contained in the proposed San Pedro Community Plan and implementing ordinances. Two comment letters addressing aesthetics were received in response to the notice of preparation (NOP) circulated for the proposed plan. The comments expressed concern over preservation of scenic views and the need for additional street trees for beautification.

Full reference-list entries for all cited materials are provided in Section 4.1.5 (References).

### 4.1.1 Environmental Setting

As set forth in CEQA Guidelines Section 15125(a) this section describes the physical environmental conditions in the CPA at the time the environmental analysis commenced. It constitutes the baseline physical conditions by which the City of Los Angeles will determine whether an Aesthetic impact is significant. Special emphasis is placed on environmental resources that are rare or unique to the CPA and that may be affected by the adoption and implementation of the proposed San Pedro Community Plan and implementing ordinances.

#### ■ Topographic Features

San Pedro is a coastal community located in the southern portion of Los Angeles. Major geographic features that shape the CPA's topography include the coastal plain and the foothills of the Palos Verdes Peninsula. The topography of the CPA is varied, with level areas to the east adjacent to the Port of Los Angeles (the coastal plain), rising to the rolling hillsides of the Palos Verdes Peninsula to the west, with dramatic sea cliffs and shorelines at the Pacific Ocean.

The main commercial shopping district of the CPA, including the San Pedro downtown area, is located on the relatively flat lands to the west of the harbor. Here Pacific Avenue and Gaffey Street, two north-south major commercial shopping streets, provide a transition between the harbor to the east and the residential areas to the west. West of Gaffey Street the terrain begins to rise and takes on a more undulating form. With its gently rolling topography, the lower elevations to the west of Gaffey Street support a mix of residential, commercial, and institutional land uses. Still farther to the west the land becomes steeper and residential uses predominate. The hilly southwestern portion of the CPA faces south toward the Pacific Ocean, the coastline, and Catalina Island. This area contains the majority of the single-family residential areas, as well as most of the natural open space, parkland, and seascape views in the CPA.

## ■ Aesthetics/Visual Character

### *Urban Visual Character*

The visual character of the CPA is dominated by views of areas predominantly outside of the CPA, including the Port of Los Angeles, the hillsides of the Palos Verdes Peninsula, the Pacific Ocean, and the Vincent Thomas Bridge. Large portions of San Pedro have views of the harbor and the myriad activities of cruise and cargo ship traffic. Views of the Port of Los Angeles dominate the south central and southeastern portion of the CPA. The Port is the busiest container port in the United States and fifth busiest container complex in the world (when combined with the neighboring Port of Long Beach). The Port encompasses an area of 7,500 acres (including 4,300 acres of land and 3,200 acres of sea), with 43 miles of waterfront and features 27 cargo terminals, including dry and liquid bulk, container, breakbulk,<sup>1</sup> and automobile facilities.<sup>2</sup> As of 2007, approximately 2,730 vessels call at the Port annually, including ships from 80 shipping lines and more than 15 cruise lines.

Views of the areas surrounding the Port from the CPA are of land intensely developed with warehouse industrial facilities for the loading and unloading of various types of cargo, large-scale commercial operations, and a complex transportation network of truck and railroad corridors. Spreading out to the north and northwest beyond the immediate vicinity of the Port are smaller and older industrial and commercial businesses. Also visible are cranes, cargo containers, and ships.

Older residential areas, comprised largely of small single-family homes on small lots, are located in the northeast portion of the CPA. San Pedro's downtown and commercial shopping area is located to the west of the Port. Downtown San Pedro is the historic heart of San Pedro. Bordered by 5<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> Streets between Pacific Avenue and Harbor Boulevard, downtown San Pedro is located just west of the Harbor's Los Angeles Main Channel and provides views out toward Terminal Island. Downtown San Pedro is a cultural focal point of the community, consisting of shops, restaurants featuring international cuisines, coffee houses, pubs, art galleries and studios, and bookstores housed in a variety of architectural styles. Nightlife is enlivened in downtown San Pedro by restaurants, pubs, and coffee houses that offer outdoor dining and nightly entertainment. Residential areas surrounding downtown are predominantly medium-density residential, with single-family homes in the southern and western areas of the CPA.

The southern portion of the harbor is dedicated to recreation and tourist-serving facilities. This area, although not located in but directly adjacent to the CPA, includes the Cabrillo Marina, a complex of private marinas and yacht clubs, hotels, restaurants, shops, and tourist facilities. The Cabrillo Marine Aquarium, designed by the world-famous architect Frank Gehry, is located in the Cabrillo Marina area. Also located in this area is the Cabrillo Beach Recreational Complex, which includes Cabrillo Beach, a popular swimming, fishing and boating area.

---

<sup>1</sup> Breakbulk is packaged cargo, usually manufactured goods, that is marked for individual consignees and has to be loaded and unloaded piece by piece at each point of transfer.

<sup>2</sup> The Port of Los Angeles, About the Port, [http://www.portoflosangeles.org/idx\\_about.asp](http://www.portoflosangeles.org/idx_about.asp).

## Open Space Areas

Open space areas and parks are located throughout the CPA, but particularly along the southern edge. Open space areas in the southern portion of the CPA include shoreline cliffs, parks, and beach areas. A series of coastal parklands extend west from Cabrillo Beach inside the breakwater (not within the CPA), around Point Fermin, to the Los Angeles City line and beyond. In addition to their open space and recreational opportunities, these parklands provide panoramic views of the Pacific Ocean, the coastline, and the southern end of the Palos Verdes Peninsula. The foothills to the north of the coastline and Paseo del Mar are developed with single-family housing. Many of these homes have southerly views of the Pacific Ocean, Catalina Island, and the cargo and cruise ships traveling to and from the Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach. Views to the west from these areas include open space areas between the CPA and the City of Rancho Palos Verdes.

Parks and open spaces in San Pedro include White Point Park, Joan Milke Flores Park, Point Fermin Park, Angels Gate Park, Cabrillo Beach Park (located in the Port of Los Angeles CPA), Deane Dana Friendship Community Regional Park,<sup>3</sup> Averill Park, Peck Park, Rena Park, Leland Park, Harbor Highlands Park, and Field of Dreams (refer to Figure 4.12-4 [Park and Recreation Center Facilities] for the specific locations of these parks). The parks located on the coastline (White Point Park, Angels Gate Park, Joan Milke Flores Park, Point Fermin Park, Lookout Point Park, and Cabrillo Beach Park) have unobstructed views of the Pacific Ocean. Views from parks further inland vary depending on the topography, elevation, and location. Visitors to Deane Dana Friendship Community Regional Park, Peck Park, Harbor Highlands Park, and Field of Dreams have relatively unobstructed views of the harbor and Pacific Ocean, although existing urban development is highly visible in the foreground.

## Scenic Vistas

Scenic views or vistas are defined in the City's General Plan Conservation Element as the panoramic public view access to natural features, including views of the ocean, striking or unusual natural terrain, or unique urban or historic features, also referred to as scenic resources. Public access to views of scenic resources is from parklands, privately and publicly owned sites, and public rights-of-way.

The 1999 San Pedro Community Plan includes objectives and policies intended to protect and preserve existing scenic vistas of the ocean and harbor from designated scenic highways, scenic view sites, and existing residential structures. These policies would continue under the proposed Community Plan. Views of scenic resources (ocean and harbor) are provided from view site areas including, but not limited to, roadways that parallel the coast, specifically Paseo del Mar. There are five Scenic View Sites and seven coastal trails with substantial views identified in the San Pedro Specific Plan. The five Scenic View Sites are:

- Lookout Point (Angels Gate Park)
- Korean Bell (Angels Gate Park)
- Osgood Farley Battery Site (Angels Gate Park)
- Upper Roxbury Street Trail Site
- White's Point East Trail Site

---

<sup>3</sup> The majority of this park is outside the CPA boundary; however, a small portion is within the CPA.

As presented in Appendix C of the San Pedro Specific Plan, the seven trails are:

- Barbara Street
- Meyler/Roxbury Streets
- Sunken City—Point Fermin
- Lighthouse—Point Fermin
- White's Point East
- Upper Roxbury Street
- Weymouth Avenue

### **Scenic Roadways**

There are no state-designated scenic highways within or adjacent to the CPA. The existing General Plan Land Use Map (as of October 6, 2010) for the San Pedro Community Plan identifies the following roadways within and adjacent to the CPA as scenic roadways:

- **John S. Gibson Boulevard/Front Street/Harbor Boulevard** is designated as a Major Scenic Highway II. Stretching between the Wilmington CPA in the north and Crescent Avenue in the south, this continuous roadway provides public views of the Los Angeles Harbor and its operations.
- **25<sup>th</sup> Street**, between Western Avenue on the east and the City of Rancho Palos Verdes on the west, is designated as a Major Scenic Highway II. It provides intermittent public views of the Pacific Ocean and the eastern side of the Palos Verdes Peninsula.
- **Western Avenue**, between 25<sup>th</sup> Street and Paseo del Mar, is designated as a Major Scenic Highway II. It provides public views of the Pacific Ocean and the White Point Reservation/Fort MacArthur open space.
- **Paseo del Mar/Shepard Street**, between Western Avenue on the west and Pacific Avenue on the east is designated as a Secondary Scenic Highway. It provides public views of the Pacific Ocean, Catalina Island, and coastal parklands.

### **Scenic Resources**

The San Pedro area is rich in scenic resources, ranging from the Palos Verdes Peninsula to the Port of Los Angeles. In addition, San Pedro also boasts a number of man-made structures and other features that contribute to its rich aesthetic character. While not all of them are located within the San Pedro CPA, a few of these features are identified below:

- **Cabrillo Marine Aquarium**, designed by Frank Gehry, is located in the Cabrillo Marina area.
- **Church of Mary Star of the Sea** is a prominent landmark with a steeple-top statue overlooking the harbor.
- **Fisherman's Wharf**. Much of San Pedro's tradition and heritage stems from the fishing families who came from the Mediterranean and Adriatic. Today, these commercial fishing docks are still an important activity center.
- **John S. Gibson Junior Park** is a landscaped, pocket park that offers views of the harbor and the Port of Los Angeles. Fisherman Memorial located in the park includes a full-scale bronze statue of a fisherman and his catch and a memorial wall commemorating the important role fishermen and the fish industry played in the area.

- **Korean Bell of Friendship**, the massive bronze memorial bell donated by South Korea in 1976 to the people of Los Angeles.
- **Point Fermin Lighthouse**, a Victorian-era structure built in the late nineteenth century. The lighthouse is now part of a museum and park on a bluff overlooking the ocean.
- **Ports O' Call**, a New England-style seaside village, encompassing 15 acres of shops, restaurants and attractions, overlooks the Port of Los Angeles. A meandering promenade of cobblestone streets connects the specialty shops. Ports O' Call is also the departure point for narrated Harbor Cruises, whale watching and helicopter tours, and Catalina sailing cruises.
- **Fisherman Industry Memorial, John S. Gibson Park**, Created by Henry Alvarez and Clete Shields as a tribute to the San Pedro fishing industry, the bronze sculpture is located on South Harbor Boulevard south of East 5<sup>th</sup> Street.
- **San Pedro Plaza Park**, a landscaped, linear park that extends along Beacon Street between 7<sup>th</sup> Street and 13<sup>th</sup> Street that offers views of the harbor, the Port of Los Angeles, and the Vincent Thomas Bridge.
- **San Pedro Waterfront Red Car Line** runs parallel to the waterfront from 22<sup>nd</sup> Street along downtown San Pedro to the Cruise Ship Terminal. This line includes two newly constructed trolleys built to resemble the wood-bodied 500 class cars introduced in 1905 for the Pacific Electric Railway, which once operated more than 1,000 miles of track running streetcars and interurbans in Southern California. The 1.5-mile line operates along former Pacific Electric right-of-way and provides access to such waterfront attractions as the 6<sup>th</sup> Street and the LA Maritime Museum, Ports O' Call, Fisherman's Wharf and 22<sup>nd</sup> Street.
- **Vincent Thomas Bridge** is a San Pedro landmark. Completed in 1963, this suspension bridge links San Pedro with Terminal Island. The overall length of the bridge is 6,050 feet, with a main suspension span of 1,500 feet and 500-foot spans on either side. The towers are 365 feet high. It is the third longest suspension bridge in California. Since 2005, the bridge has been illuminated with 160 blue LED lights powered by solar panels. It is the first combined use of solar power and LEDs in a bridge lighting installation. The lights operate from dusk to midnight in order to minimize impact on wildlife. The dramatic green bridge is designated as the official landmark and gateway welcoming visitors to Los Angeles.
- **22<sup>nd</sup> Street Landing** is the home to the largest privately owned diving and fishing fleets on the West Coast. From the Landing, visitors can go sportfishing, scuba diving/snorkeling, or they can charter a boat for sightseeing. Whale-watching boats make regular tours during whale-watching season.
- **Palos Verdes/Rolling Hills** are immediately to the north of the San Pedro boundary and offer a scenic natural landscape of soft, rolling hills.

### *Light and Glare*

The CPA is a highly urbanized community and, as such, has a relatively high level of nighttime illumination. In particular, as a 24-hour-per-day operation, portions of the Port of Los Angeles and its associated facilities are brightly illuminated. Street lighting is omnipresent and, particularly along major thoroughfares, there are many additional sources of lighting, including window illumination, exterior security lighting, illuminated signage and advertising, and vehicle headlights. Residential streets tend to have lower levels of night lighting, but still maintain higher levels of lighting than do newer suburban communities. There is substantial "night glow" or "light pollution" above San Pedro due to the intensity

of unshielded night lighting and the frequency of overcast nights, where cloud cover or fog reflect light to a greater extent than if the sky were clear.

Light that falls beyond the intended area is referred to as light trespass. Types of light trespass include spill light and glare. Nighttime lighting is necessary to provide and maintain safe, secure, and attractive environments; however, these lights have the potential to produce spill light and glare, and if designed incorrectly, could be considered unattractive. Spill light can adversely affect light sensitive uses at nighttime, especially residences. Light dissipates with increased distance from the source. Ambient light levels or illumination is measured in foot-candles. Table 4.1-1 (Typical Illumination Levels in Foot-Candles) lists typical ambient illumination levels in foot-candles for exterior and interior lighting. “Horizontal” foot-candles measure light illumination on a horizontal surface, such as a sidewalk or parking lot; “vertical” foot-candles measure light illumination on a vertical surface.

| <b>Table 4.1-1 Typical Illumination Levels in Foot-Candles</b> |                     |
|--|---------------------|
| <i>Light Source</i>  | <i>Foot-Candles</i> |
| Sunlight   | 10,000              |
| Full Daylight  | 1,000               |
| Overcast Day   | 100                 |
| Very Dark Day  | 10                  |
| Twilight   | 1                   |
| Deep Twilight  | .1                  |
| Full Moon  | .01                 |
| Quarter Moon   | .001                |
| Starlight  | .0001               |
| Overcast Night   | .00001              |
| Office Lighting  | 70-150              |
| Street Lighting  | 0.6-1.6             |

SOURCE: The Engineering ToolBox, Illuminance - Recommended Light Levels  
[http://www.engineeringtoolbox.com/light-level-rooms-d\\_708.html](http://www.engineeringtoolbox.com/light-level-rooms-d_708.html) (accessed September 29, 2011).

Glare results when a light source directly in the field of vision is brighter than the eye can comfortably accept. Squinting or turning away from a light source is an indication of glare. The presence of a bright light in an otherwise dark setting may be distracting or annoying, referred to as discomfort glare, or it may diminish the ability to see other objects in the darkened environment, referred to as disability glare.

## 4.1.2 Regulatory Framework

### ■ Federal

There are no federal policies related to aesthetics.

## ■ State

### *Caltrans Scenic Highways*

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) defines a scenic highway as any freeway, highway, road, or other public right-of-way that traverses an area of exceptional scenic quality. Suitability for designation as a State Scenic Highway is based on vividness, intactness, and unity, as defined by Federal Highway Administration guidelines.

California's Scenic Highway Program was created by the Legislature in 1963. Its purpose is to protect and enhance the natural scenic beauty of California highways and adjacent corridors, through special conservation treatment. The state laws governing the Scenic Highway Program are found in the Streets and Highways Code, Sections 260 through 263. A highway may be designated scenic depending upon how much of the natural landscape can be seen by travelers, the scenic quality of the landscape, and the extent to which development intrudes upon the traveler's enjoyment of the view.

The status of a proposed State Scenic Highway changes from "eligible" to "officially designated" when the local governing body applies to Caltrans for Scenic Highway approval, adopts a Corridor Protection Program, and receives notification that the highway has been officially designated a State Scenic Highway.<sup>4</sup>

There are no officially designated State scenic highways within the CPA.

## ■ Regional

There are no regional policies related to aesthetics.

## ■ Local

### *City of Los Angeles General Plan Elements*

The City of Los Angeles Citywide General Plan Framework (GPF) is a long range, citywide, comprehensive growth strategy and a special element of the General Plan that plans for the future. Therefore, the GPF looks at the City as a whole and provides a citywide context within which community planning takes place. The GPF element neither overrides nor supersedes the Community Plans; rather, it guides the City's long-range growth and development policy, establishing citywide standards, goals, policies, and objectives for citywide elements and community plans.

The State also requires that a Conservation Element be included in the City and County General Plans to address natural and other open space resources.

---

<sup>4</sup> California Department of Transportation, Frequently Asked Questions, Caltrans Landscape Architecture Program, <http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/LandArch/scenic/faq.htm>.

**Table 4.1-2 General Plan Policies Relevant to Aesthetics**

| No.                                       | Policy  |
|---|---|
| <b>GENERAL PLAN FRAMEWORK</b>             |   |
| <b>Urban Form and Neighborhood Design</b> |   |
| Goal 5A                                   | A livable City for existing and future residents and one that is attractive to future investment. A City of interconnected, diverse neighborhoods that builds on the strengths of those neighborhoods and functions at both the neighborhood and citywide scales.   |
| Policy 5.2.2                              | <p>Encourage the development of centers, districts, and selected corridor/boulevard nodes such that the land uses, scale, and built form allowed and/or encouraged within these areas allow them to function as centers and support transit use, both in daytime and nighttime (see Chapter 3: Land Use). Additionally, develop these areas so that they are compatible with surrounding neighborhoods, as defined generally by the following building characteristics.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Buildings in neighborhood districts generally should be low rise (one- to two-stories), compatible with adjacent housing, and incorporate the pedestrian-oriented design elements defined in Policy 5.8.1 and Policies 3.16.1–3.16.3. They should also be located along sidewalks with appropriate continuous storefronts.</li> <li>b. Buildings in community centers generally should be two to six stories in height, with the first several stories located along the sidewalk. They should also incorporate the pedestrian-oriented elements defined in policy 5.8.1. Either housing or office space may be located above the ground floor storefronts.</li> <li>c. The built form of regional centers will vary by location. In areas such as Wilshire and Hollywood Boulevards, buildings will range from low- to mid-rise buildings, with storefronts situated along pedestrian-oriented streets. In areas such as Century City and Warner Center, freestanding high rises that are not pedestrian-oriented characterize portions of these centers. Nevertheless, regional centers should contain pedestrian-oriented areas, and incorporate the pedestrian-oriented design elements defined in policy 5.8.1 and policies 3.16.1–3.16.3.</li> <li>d. Buildings located at activity nodes along mixed-use boulevards generally shall have the same characteristics as either neighborhood districts or community centers, depending on permitted land use intensities. Housing over ground floor storefronts or in place of commercial development shall be encouraged along mixed-use boulevards. (P1, P18, P24, P25)</li> </ul> |
| Objective 5.5                             | Enhance the livability of all neighborhoods by upgrading the quality of development and improving the quality of the public realm.  |
| Policy 5.5.7                              | Promote the undergrounding of utilities throughout the City's neighborhoods, districts, and centers.  |
| Objective 5.6                             | Conserve and reinforce the community character of neighborhoods and commercial districts not designated as growth areas.  |
| Objective 5.7                             | Provide a transition between conservation neighborhoods and their centers.  |
| Objective 5.8                             | Reinforce or encourage the establishment of a strong pedestrian orientation in designated neighborhood districts, community centers, and pedestrian-oriented subareas within regional centers, so that these districts and centers can serve as a focus of activity for the surrounding community and a focus for investment in the community.  |

| <b>Table 4.1-2 General Plan Policies Relevant to Aesthetics</b>   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>No.</b>  | <b>Policy</b>   |
| Policy 5.8.1  | Buildings in pedestrian-oriented districts and centers should have the following general characteristics: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. An exterior building wall high enough to define the street, create a sense of enclosure, and typically located along the sidewalk;</li> <li>b. A building wall more-or-less continuous along the street frontage;</li> <li>c. Ground floor building frontage designed to accommodate commercial uses, community facilities, or display cases;</li> <li>d. Shops with entrances directly accessible from the sidewalk and located at frequent intervals;</li> <li>e. Well lit exteriors fronting on the sidewalk that provide safety and comfort commensurate with the intended nighttime use, when appropriate;</li> <li>f. Ground floor building walls devoted to display windows or display cases;</li> <li>g. Parking located behind the commercial frontage and screened from view and driveways located on side streets where feasible;</li> <li>h. Inclusion of bicycle parking areas and facilities on public right of ways and public parking areas to reduce the need for vehicular use; and</li> <li>i. The area within 15 feet may be an arcade connected to a building that is substantially open to the sidewalk to accommodate outdoor dining or other activities.</li> </ol> |
| Policy 5.8.2  | The primary commercial streets within pedestrian-oriented districts and centers should have the following characteristics: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Sidewalks: 15-17 feet wide (see illustrative street cross-sections).</li> <li>b. Mid-block medians (between intersections): landscaped where feasible.</li> <li>c. Shade trees, pruned above business signs, to provide a continuous canopy along the sidewalk and/or palm trees to provide visibility from a distance.</li> <li>d. Pedestrian amenities (e.g., benches, pedestrian-scale lighting, special paving, window boxes, and planters).</li> </ol>  |
| Policy 5.8.4  | Encourage that signage be designed to be integrated with the architectural character of the buildings and convey a visually attractive character.   |
| <b>CONSERVATION ELEMENT</b>   |   |
| <b>Land Form and Scenic Vistas</b>  |   |
| Objective   | 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 will, to the greatest extent practical, retain significant existing land forms (e.g., ridge lines, bluffs, unique geologic features) and unique scenic features (historic, ocean, mountains, unique natural features) and/or make possible public view or other access to unique features or scenic views.  |
| SOURCE: Los Angeles Department of City Planning, <i>The Citywide General Plan Framework: An Element of the City of Los Angeles General Plan</i> (adopted August 8, 2001), CPC 94-0354 GPF CF 95-2259 CF 01-1162, <a href="http://cityplanning.lacity.org">http://cityplanning.lacity.org</a> ; Los Angeles Department of City Planning, <i>General Plan of the City of Los Angeles</i> , Conservation Element (adopted September 26, 2001). |   |

### **City of Los Angeles Municipal Code**

The primary purpose of zoning is to segregate uses that are thought to be incompatible; in practice, zoning is used as a permitting system to prevent new development from harming existing residents or businesses and to preserve the “character” of a community.

With respect to aesthetics, the City of Los Angeles uses zoning for a variety of purposes including, but not limited to, regulating: (1) building heights, to protect views and minimize adverse shadow; (2) setbacks, to prevent overcrowding and property line encroachments; (3) protected tree species, to

preserve scenic resources; and (4) retaining walls, to prevent overbuilding of hillsides. The City of Los Angeles also regulates the placement, construction, and modification of all exterior signs and sign support structures through Section 14.4.1 of the Los Angeles Municipal Code (LAMC).

Additionally, the LAMC contains specific regulations with respect to light and glare. LAMC Section 12.21 A.5(k) (Amended by Ordinance No. 171,858) states that all lights used to illuminate a parking area shall be designed, located, and arranged so as to reflect the light away from any street and adjacent premises with the following exceptions:

1. Lights in compliance with Sections 91.6305 of the LAMC.
  - a. **91.6305.1 Light.** All parking garages serving dwelling units or guest rooms shall be provided with an incandescent light bulb (minimum of 60 watts) or other artificial light at a maximum height of 8 feet (2,438 mm) and shall provide a minimum average surface illumination of 0.2 foot-candle at floor level. Where, in any specific case, different sections of the LAMC specify different requirements, the most restrictive shall govern.
  - b. **91.6305.2 Exterior Illumination.** All parking garages serving dwelling units or guest rooms shall be provided with an incandescent light bulb (minimum of 60 watts) or other artificial light at a maximum height of 8 feet (2,438 mm) and shall provide have a minimum average surface illumination of 0.2 foot-candle; however, exterior lighting that is brighter than 2 foot-candles and affecting adjacent residential properties shall be activated by motion sensors for a period of not to exceed twenty minutes.
2. All parking areas and garages provided for three or more dwelling units or guest rooms shall have an average surface illumination of not less than 0.2 foot-candle.

LAMC Section 93.0117 pertains to outdoor lighting affecting residential property and provides that no person shall construct, establish, create, or maintain any stationary exterior light source that may cause the following locations to either be illuminated by more than 2 foot-candles of lighting intensity or receive direct glare from the light source:

1. Any exterior glazed window or sliding glass door on any other property containing a residential unit or units.
2. Any elevated habitable porch, deck, or balcony on any other property containing a residential unit or units.
3. Any ground surface intended for uses such as recreation, barbecue, or lawn areas on any other property containing a residential unit or units.

### ***Downtown San Pedro Community Design Overlay***

The Downtown San Pedro Community Design Overlay (CDO) District provides guidelines and standards for development projects, including new development and improvements to existing properties, within Downtown San Pedro. Specifically, the guidelines pertain to site planning, architectural details, signage, appurtenances, landscaping, and resource protection. The CDO boundary corresponds to parcels identified in the San Pedro Community Plan as Regional and Community Commercial Designations. The CDO covers both sides of Pacific Avenue between 4<sup>th</sup> Street and 9<sup>th</sup> Street and extends east to Harbor Boulevard. Along Harbor Boulevard, the boundary extends north to Swinford Street between Beacon Street and Harbor Boulevard. The CDO encompasses almost 100 acres, or about 0.16 square miles. The intent of the Downtown San Pedro CDO is to provide design guidance and

direction to create a recognizable, vibrant, and attractive Downtown district; contribute to Downtown’s unique sense of place and function as a community center; create an environment that encourages the continued development of arts and cultural activities; establish 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> Streets as the primary pedestrian zones, linking the historic waterfront and Pacific Avenue commercial area; improve the aesthetic appeal and commercial function of Pacific Avenue; and enhance design along Harbor Boulevard to provide a seamless connection between Downtown and the Port of Los Angeles. The overarching goal of the Downtown CDO is to ensure that development reflects the overall vision of a cohesive, pedestrian-friendly and vibrant commercial and mixed-use district. Its design guidelines and standards are flexible, providing direction for design articulation without mandating one particular architectural style or form.

The CDO encompasses three distinct commercial land use categories. The portion of the district between Harbor Boulevard and Centre Street is a Regional Center, with floor area ratios from 1.5:1 to 6:1 (building heights of generally 6 to 20 stories; the portion from Centre Street to Pacific Avenue is classified as a Community Center, containing retail, office, entertainment, public facilities and neighborhood-oriented uses, with floor area ratios from 1.5:1 to 3:1 and heights of generally 2 to 6 stories; and Pacific Avenue is identified as a Mixed Use Boulevard, encouraging housing above first-floor storefronts or in place of commercial development.

Table 4.1-3 (Relevant Downtown San Pedro CDO Guidelines) summarizes (in some cases with abbreviated text) the CDO guidelines that would be relevant to development under the proposed plan.

| <b>Table 4.1-3 Relevant Downtown San Pedro CDO Guidelines</b> |          |  |
|---|----------|--|
| <i>Category</i>   | <i>#</i> | <i>Guideline</i>   |
| Site Planning   | 1        | Position buildings to promote pedestrian activity along the public right-of-way  |
|   | 2        | Encourage an inviting pedestrian environment and provide for streetwall continuity by locating new buildings at the front property lot line or close to it                                   |
|   | 3        | View corridors to the waterfront and Port of Los Angeles, Vincent Thomas Bridge, cruise ships, the Palos Verdes hills, and the Downtown skyline should be preserved and enhanced             |
|   | 4        | Encourage open space as part of project site design to invite and encourage pedestrian activity  |
|   | 5        | Parking lots and structures should fit within the urban fabric; massing, scale and façade articulation should respond to the surroundings and provide a degree of three-dimensional interest |
| Architectural Details   | 6        | Building massing should be modulated and articulated to temper the scale of development, create a pedestrian-friendly environment, and stimulate and enhance visual interest                 |
|   | 7        | Building height must consider light, shadows, views, and massing in relationship to surrounding properties and residential neighborhoods   |
|   | 8        | Heighten visual interest and enhance pedestrian orientation by incorporating three-dimensional elements and material variation into the façade of buildings                                  |
|   | 9        | The texture of building façades should be complementary to other buildings in the surrounding area   |
|   | 10       | Emphasize pedestrian orientation and accessibility (of building entrances) by creating well-articulated and inviting building entrances, and by orienting these entrances towards the street |
|   | 11       | All projects should have as many windows as possible on the ground floor when facing a street or pedestrian walkway  |

| <b>Table 4.1-3 Relevant Downtown San Pedro CDO Guidelines</b> |          |  |
|---|----------|--|
| <i>Category</i>   | <i>#</i> | <i>Guideline</i>   |
|   | 12       | When appropriate, using awnings or canopies to define the public realm of the sidewalk, provide shelter and shade, and enhance the building façade by adding variation, color, and horizontal rhythm.  |
|   | 13       | Architecturally integrate parking structures into the design of the projects they serve, and activate the street by including commercial uses on the ground level of structures  |
| Signage   | 14       | Promote the identity and success of individual businesses while enhancing the visual quality of the Downtown through context-sensitive signage design  |
|   | 15       | Promote the identify and success of individual businesses through the appropriate placement of wall signs and locate signs in a manner so as to not detract from building architecture   |
|   | 16       | Promote the identity and success of individual businesses while enhancing the visual quality of the Downtown through the appropriate placement of projecting signs, minimize sign clutter, and ensure that signage design is suitable and well-proportioned to the structure and building façade |
|   | 17       | Where appropriate, use awnings or canopies to define the public realm of the sidewalk, provide shelter and shade, and enhance the building façade through the addition of three-dimensional variation, color, and horizontal rhythm  |
|   | 18       | Promote the identify and success of individual businesses while enhancing the visual quality of the Downtown, through the appropriate placement, size, and quantity of additional signage  |
| Appurtenances   | 19       | Provide storefront security as needed without obscuring storefront windows and creating blank walls along the sidewalk   |
|   | 20       | Improve the pedestrian environment along the sidewalk and minimize visual blight by obscuring unsightly equipment adjacent to streets and other public rights-of-way   |
|   | 21       | Support and open and safe physical environment by designing enclosures for outdoor eating areas that do not detract from the quality of the pedestrian experience along the sidewalk   |
|   | 22       | Lighting should be incorporated into the design not only to accentuate architectural features, but also to provide a safe environment for pedestrian activity  |
| Landscaping   | 23       | Create inviting spaces, provide shade within the public realm, screen unattractive areas, and enhance architectural detail through the thoughtful and careful placement of landscaping   |
|   | 24       | Enhance parking areas by providing landscaping that shades, buffers, and screens unattractive views of parking   |

SOURCE: Los Angeles Department of City Planning, *Downtown San Pedro Community Design Overlay District* (July 21, 2008), Ordinance No. 179,935.

### **San Pedro Specific Plan**

The San Pedro Specific Plan and the San Pedro Coastal Land Use Plan (LUP) are components of the Local Coastal Program. Development in the coastal zone is subject to provisions of the 1976 California Coastal Act. The Specific Plan and the LUP protect, maintain, enhance, and restore the overall quality of the Coastal Zone environment while meeting a portion of the California Coastal Act. Public access, recreational opportunities, and visual qualities are to be maximized. The Specific Plan includes goals, objectives, and policies applicable to aesthetics and visual quality.

**Table 4.1-4 Relevant San Pedro Specific Plan Policies**

*Policy*

**Section 10 Visual Resource Regulations**

1. Lookout Point and its immediately surrounding (Appendix C) view area, as shown on the Special Features map, is designated a public viewsite. The visual corridor extending from this viewsite shown on said map shall be protected. New construction or remodeling within the immediate vicinity of the viewsite on the easterly side of Gaffey Street, as shown on said map, shall be limited to an absolute height of 24 feet, measured as set forth in Section 5 B 1(a). However, the Director of Planning may permit additional height to the maximum otherwise allowed in this ordinance if he finds that such height will not obstruct the view from the viewsite. Evidence may include, but is not limited to photographs taken from the viewsite with the proposed project superimposed upon it or a topographic map showing proposed elevations of the project.

2. The Korean Bell monument and the surrounding structure, and the Osgood-Farley Battery site, as shown on the Special Features map (Appendix C), are designated public viewsites. The visual corridors extending from these viewsites shall be protected. New construction or remodeling within the immediate vicinity of the viewsites, as shown on the Special Features map, shall be limited to a total height of 24 feet, measured as set forth in Sections 5B and 5C. However, the Director of Planning may permit additional height to the maximum otherwise allowed in this ordinance if he finds that such height will not obstruct the view from the viewsite. Evidence may include, but is not limited to photographs taken from the viewsite with the proposed project superimposed upon it or a topographic map showing proposed elevations of the project.

3. White Point Reservation is designated a public viewsite and all development therein shall provide for public viewing to and along the coast.

4. Turn-out and viewsite areas from Paseo del Mar, as shown on the Special Features map (Appendix C), shall provide unobstructed views of the ocean.

5. Utilities serving new structures shall be placed underground. Utilities for existing buildings converted to condominiums or stock cooperatives shall be placed underground. The Advisory Agency may as a condition of map approval waive any requirement for underground utilities if the Advisory Agency finds that such would result in an unnecessary hardship inconsistent with the purposes of the Specific Plan or that there are special circumstances applicable to the subject property such as soil, shape, topography or other conditions that would make underground installations unreasonable or impractical.

SOURCE: Los Angeles Department of City Planning, *San Pedro Specific Plan* (November 1990).

***San Pedro Local Coastal Program***

Portions of San Pedro are located within the state of California Coastal Zone. The Coastal Commission, in partnership with coastal cities and counties, plans and regulates the use of land and water in the Coastal Zone. The Coastal Act of 1976 declared that the California Coastal Zone is a distinct and valuable resource of vital and enduring interest to all the people and exists as a delicately balanced ecosystem. In order to protect, maintain, and, where feasible, enhance and restore the overall quality of this ecosystem, the Coastal Act requires that local government prepare a Local Coastal Program for those parts of the Coastal Zone within its jurisdiction. The San Pedro Local Coastal Program (LCP) includes goals, objectives, and policies applicable to aesthetics and visual quality.

**Table 4.1-5 Relevant San Pedro Coastal Land Use Plan Policies**

| No.  | Policy   |
|--|--|
| <b>I. LAND USE</b>   |  |
| <b>Housing</b>   |  |
| Policy 10  | The preservation of existing public scenic views from scenic highways or designated scenic view sites shall be required for the approval of all coastal development permits, zone changes, conditional use permits, variances, divisions of land and other discretionary permits.  |
| <b>Commerce</b>  |  |
| Policy 4   | Commercial facilities be made compatible with adjacent residential areas through urban design techniques such as landscaping, buffering, and orientation.  |
| <b>Industry</b>  |  |
| Policy 2   | Industrial facilities be made compatible with adjacent residential areas by urban design such as landscaping, buffering, orientation, and increased setbacks.  |
| Policy 4   | Areas used for open storage be screened from public view.  |
| <b>II. NEW DEVELOPMENT</b>   |  |
| <b>Open Space and Resource Conservation</b>  |  |
| Policy 1   | Designated open space areas be developed and maintained in accordance with the recreation and visual impact policies of this Plan.   |
| <b>Coastal Zone</b>  |  |
| Policy 2   | The scenic and visual qualities of San Pedro be protected as a resource of Community as well as regional importance, with permitted development sited and designed to: protect views to and along the ocean, harbor, and scenic coastal areas; minimize the alteration of natural landforms; be visually compatible with the character of the surrounding area; and prevent the blockage of existing views from designated public scenic view areas and Scenic Highways.   |
| Policy 4   | Visual access to coastal views be provided by means of appropriately located scenic overlooks, turnouts, view spots, and other areas for limited vehicular parking, especially along designated Scenic Highways and Bikeways.  |
| Policy 5   | Turn-out and viewsite areas from Paseo del Mar shall provide unobstructed views of the ocean. All development seaward of the turn-out and viewsite areas of Paseo del Mar and Sheppard Street shall be sited, designed, and constructed so that public views to and along the ocean are protected to the maximum extent feasible. All development in this area, including public recreation and public works, shall be subordinate to their setting and minimized in height and bulk to the maximum extent feasible to accomplish view protection.   |
| Policy 6   | Until a "Corridor Plan" is prepared for a Scenic Highway, any development adjacent to a Scenic Highway shall protect public views to the ocean to the maximum extent feasible, be adequately landscaped to soften the visual impact of the development, and, where appropriate, provide hiking or biking trails, a turnout, vista points, and other complementary facilities.  |
| Policy 9   | The Osgood/Farley Battery site shall be designated as a public view site and any development which obstructs coastal views from this site or the Lookout Point and Korean Bell viewsites shall be prohibited.  |
| Policy 10  | Lookout Point and its immediate surrounding view area, the Korean Bell monument and the surrounding structure, and the Osgood-Farley Battery Site as shown on the Special Features map are designated public viewsites. The visual corridors extending from these viewsites as shown on the said map shall be protected. New construction or remodeling within the visual corridors shall be limited to an absolute height of 24 feet, measures as set forth in the Land Use Section of this Plan. However, the Director of Planning may permit additional height to a maximum of 26 feet, measured as set forth in the Land Use Section of the Plan, if he finds that such height will not obstruct the view from the viewsite. |
| SOURCE: Los Angeles Department of City Planning, <i>San Pedro Coastal Land Use Plan</i> (June 1991). |  |

## ■ Proposed Plan Policies

Table 4.1-6 (Proposed San Pedro Community Plan Policies) lists the proposed policies applicable to Aesthetics.

| <b>Table 4.1-6 Proposed San Pedro Community Plan Policies</b> |  |
|---|--|
| <i>Policy No.</i>   | <i>Policy</i>  |
| Residential Areas   |  |
| Policy LU1.1  | Neighborhood character. Maintain the distinguishing characteristics of San Pedro's residential neighborhoods with respect to lot size, topography, housing scale and landscaping, to protect the character of existing stable neighborhoods from new, out-of-scale development.  |
| Policy LU1.3  | Neighborhood transitions. Assure smooth transitions in scale, form, and character, by regulating the setback, stepbacks, design of the rear elevation of buildings, and landscaping of backyards where neighborhoods of differing housing product and density abut one another.  |
| Policy LU1.4  | Hillside development. Limit the intensity and density in hillside areas to that which can be reasonably accommodated by infrastructure and natural topography. Development should be integrated with and be visually subordinate to natural features and terrain.  |
| Policy LU1.8  | Front yard character. Discourage parking between the street and the front of the structure on surfaces that are not part of required driveways.  |
| Policy LU2.2 (Single-Family Residential)                      | Height transitions. Provide height transitions between established single-family neighborhoods and adjacent multi-family, commercial, and industrial areas.  |
| Policy LU3.5  | Compatibility. Ensure that the new development of multi-family, duplex, small lot subdivisions or lower-density units located in or adjacent to single-family neighborhoods maintains the visual and physical character of single-family housing and be designed to respect and complement the architectural and building patterns of surrounding existing residential development.  |
| Policy LU5.4  | Appropriate Transitions. New development should respect and respond positively to the architectural and building patterns of surrounding existing residential areas. New commercial buildings that face residential uses or are adjacent to residential neighborhoods that have lower development intensities and building heights should ease the scale of transition through use of downsizing scale, massing, heights, or setbacks. |
| Policy LU5.5  | Complimentary residential Uses. Residential uses in commercial areas should complement and enhance commercial districts with compatible design, entrances, scale, massing and continuation of the streetwall.  |
| Policy LU5.6  | High quality development. Design new commercial development, including infill projects, to produce a high-quality built environment, with distinctive character, and compatibility with existing and adjacent development, that reflect San Pedro's unique historic, environmental, and architectural context, and create memorable places that enrich community life.   |
| Policy LU5.7  | Strategically locate new large projects. Allow large projects only in appropriate locations, and provided that projects do not interrupt community fabric, street grid, designated public views, or the viability of Neighborhood Centers, and that those facilities are designed to be compatible in scale and character with surrounding uses.   |
| Policy LU5.12   | Retail streetscapes. Maintain and, where deficient, improve street trees, plantings, furniture (such as benches, trash receptacles, news racks, and drinking fountains), signage, public art, and other amenities that promote pedestrian activity in retail commercial districts.   |
| Policy LU5.13   | Improve design. Promote quality site, architectural and landscape design that incorporates walkable blocks, distinctive parks and open spaces, tree-lined streets, and varied architectural styles.  |
| Policy LU7.4  | View preservation. Plan new development to avoid creating a "wall of development" along Harbor Boulevard by requiring stepbacks, variation in massing and heights, and preservation of view corridors.   |

**Table 4.1-6 Proposed San Pedro Community Plan Policies**

| <i>Policy No.</i> | <i>Policy</i>  |
|-------------------|--|
| Policy LU7.5      | Discourage AGFs. Above ground facilities (AGF) should not be located in the Specific Plan area or on scenic highways. If necessary, AGFs should be located below grade or out of public view when sited along scenic highways or in proximity to view corridors, vista points, community design overlays or other public scenic access points.   |
| Policy LU8.1      | Vibrant Community Center. The Community Commercial center at Western Avenue and 25th when redeveloped, should be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ designed to include a mixed use center to serve the surrounding community with services and retail opportunities</li> <li>■ developed with a mix of housing types for a range of incomes</li> <li>■ designed with buildings of varied heights to maximize existing and new public views to the ocean</li> <li>■ developed with parking below ground level if feasible; and</li> <li>■ integrated with public plazas and other public gathering spaces.</li> </ul> |
| Policy LU9.1      | Active Downtown. Develop 6 <sup>th</sup> Street between Harbor Boulevard and Pacific Avenue into a pedestrian-only street, with sidewalk dining, pedestrian oriented commercial uses, improved streetscape and landscape amenities, public art spaces and water features.  |
| Policy LU9.2      | Downtown and Waterfront connection. Continue to coordinate with the Port of Los Angeles, CRA/LA and Public Works to implement design improvements that provide physical design connections between the Waterfront and downtown San Pedro. These should include but not be limited to street trees, landscaping, lighting, paving, wayfinding signage and gateway signage.  |
| Policy LU10.4     | Attractive design. New development along Harbor Boulevard should be high quality, with well designed signature architecture that invites and welcomes people to San Pedro. This development should complement and benefit from the POLA promenade improvements such as the Welcome Water Fountain. Developments should have: prominent pedestrian oriented design at the ground floor with a mix of uses; individual entrances for limited ground floor residential; abundant landscaping; and structures that are designed to retain public views to the waterfront per CDO guidelines.                                     |
| Policy LU12.3     | Art display. Develop accessible locations and public spaces for display of public art, featuring both permanent and temporary installations.   |
| Policy LU15.1     | Transitions. Require a transition of industrial uses, from intensive uses to less intensive uses, in those areas in close proximity to residential neighborhoods.  |
| Policy LU15.2     | Enhanced design. Require design techniques, such as appropriate building orientation and scale, landscaping, buffering, noise insulation and increased setbacks, in the development of new industrial properties to improve land use compatibility with adjacent uses and to enhance the physical environment.   |
| Policy LU15.3     | Street beautification. Require streetscape improvements such as street trees, sidewalks, landscaping, lighting, and undergrounding of utilities.   |
| Policy LU16.7     | Enhance design. Improve the aesthetic quality of North Gaffey Street, including sidewalks, trees, lighting, and signage; eliminate blight and detrimental visual impacts on residential areas, and establish a stable environment for quality industrial development.  |
| Policy LU17.5     | Maintain character. Support the study of Residential Floor Area (RFA) Special Districts or Community Design Overlays (CDOs) for neighborhoods that retain a cohesive character but are not eligible to become Historic Preservation Overlay Zones.   |
| Policy LU17.6     | Retain neighborhood scale. Retain existing neighborhood scale and characteristics in the area bounded by O'Farrell Street, Hanford Avenue, Third Street, Walker Avenue, the westerly extension of Fourth Street, and Harbor View Avenue, by retaining substandard lots as developed at the time of original Plan adoption.   |
| Policy LU18.1     | Maintain visual resources. Protect the scenic and visual qualities of San Pedro as a local as well as regional resource, with permitted development sited and designed to: protect views to and along the ocean, harbor, and scenic coastal areas; minimize the alteration of natural landform; be visually compatible with the character of the surrounding area; and prevent the blockage of existing views for designated public scenic view areas and Scenic Highways.   |

| <b>Table 4.1-6 Proposed San Pedro Community Plan Policies</b> |  |
|---|--|
| <i>Policy No.</i>   | <i>Policy</i>  |
| Policy LU18.2   | Preserve access to coastal views. Ensure public visual access to coastal views by means of appropriately located scenic overlooks, turnouts, view spots and other areas for limited vehicular parking, especially along designated Scenic Highways and Bikeways.   |
| Policy LU18.3   | Protect public views from Scenic Highways. Preserve existing public scenic views of the ocean and harbor from designated Scenic Highways, and designated scenic view sites. Until a "Corridor Plan" is prepared for Scenic Highways, any development adjacent to a Scenic Highway shall protect public views to the ocean to the maximum extent feasible, be adequately landscaped to soften the visual impact of the development, and, where appropriate, provide hiking or biking trails, a turnout, vista points and other complementary public facilities.   |
| Policy LU18.4   | Paseo del Mar. Turn-out and view site areas from Paseo del Mar shall provide unobstructed views of the ocean. All development seaward of the turn-out and viewsite areas of Paseo del Mar and Shepard Street should be sited, designed and constructed so that public views to and along the ocean are protected to the maximum extent feasible. All development in this area, including public recreation and public works, shall be subordinate to their setting and minimize in height and bulk to the maximum extent feasible to accomplish view protection. |
| Policy LU18.5   | Preserve Public View Sites. The Osgood/Farley Battery site, Lookout Point site, and the Korean Bell site shall be designated as public view sites and no development which obstructs views from these sites shall be allowed or approved.  |
| Policy M13.1  | Scenic Highways. Support programs to encourage the identification and preservation of scenic highways.   |

SOURCE: Los Angeles Department of City Planning (2011).

### **Consistency Analysis**

The proposed San Pedro Community Plan and implementing ordinances would allocate land for the range of uses that the CPA will need through 2030, including land for housing, jobs, and recreation, as well as improve the link between land use and transportation in a manner that is consistent with the City of Los Angeles Citywide General Plan Framework (GPF) citywide growth strategy.

The proposed San Pedro Community Plan contains goals, objectives, policies, and programs that would promote and enhance the livability of all neighborhoods by: upgrading the quality of development and improving neighborhood transitions and streetscapes; improving overall aesthetics; providing employment opportunities; restricting incompatible uses; increasing housing opportunities; and encouraging a pedestrian environment, in addition to achieving zone consistency. The proposed Community Plan and implementing ordinances would be consistent with the policies set forth in the Urban Form and Neighborhood Design section of the City’s GPF document and the City’s General Plan Conservation Element, as well as the Downtown CDO guidelines and the citywide Design Guidelines. Similarly, the policies in the proposed San Pedro Community Plan and implementing ordinances would be consistent with the policies in the San Pedro Specific Plan and Local Coastal Program pertaining to preservation of views and visual quality. Therefore, the proposed San Pedro Community Plan would be consistent with applicable guidelines and regulations.

### 4.1.3 Project Impacts and Mitigation

#### ■ Analytic Method

The following analysis takes into account two attributes of aesthetic values with respect to environmental impacts: (1) viewshed and (2) aesthetics or visual character. The former refers primarily to views of the CPA from varying vantage points, as well as views from or adjacent to the CPA of such visual features as open spaces, coastline, harbor, mountain ranges, etc. The latter pertains to aspects of the visual character of existing development and of the CPA, such as architecture, color, design, décor, mass, and height.

Regarding viewshed, “significant impacts” for the purposes of the CEQA analysis typically consist of loss or obstruction of a valued public view (e.g., scenic vista or views of the horizon or iconic structure). These impacts also include changes in the character of the viewshed that detract from a valued public view, such as the elimination or obstruction of natural and/or manmade features that were formerly part of a valued public viewshed.

The inherent subjectivity of issues and values of visual character creates a challenge in arriving at a conclusive determination of what constitutes a “significant impact” for the purposes of CEQA. Impacts regarding visual character typically include changes to the style or ambiance of a community, the insertion of a prominent feature that changes the original visual character of an area, or the elimination of a significant natural feature (or open space).

The Los Angeles CEQA Thresholds Guide (2006) sets forth guidance for the determination of significance of aesthetic impacts. This guidance is based on CEQA Guidelines Appendix G and provides specific criteria to be considered when making a significance determination. In some cases, the Thresholds Guide includes quantitative thresholds. For purposes of this analysis, Thresholds Guide criteria are used, supplemented by the thresholds identified in Appendix G, where appropriate. The City’s Thresholds Guide includes significance thresholds that are appropriate for analyzing impacts at a project level, where more detail is available than would otherwise be for a Community Plan. The Appendix G criteria are more appropriate for a plan level evaluation. Therefore, the analysis incorporated the appropriate City Thresholds, including an evaluation of view obstruction and the importance of natural view forms within the CPA.

The City’s CEQA Thresholds Guide includes several significance thresholds related to aesthetics that would be primarily relevant at the discretionary project level, and applied on a case-by-case basis. These include:

- The amount or relative proportion of existing features or elements that substantially contribute to the valued visual character or image of a neighborhood, community, or localized area, which would be removed, altered, or demolished
- The amount of natural open space to be graded or developed
- The degree to which proposed structures in natural open space areas would be effectively integrated into the aesthetics of the site, through appropriate design, etc.
- The degree to which the project would contribute to the area’s aesthetic value

## ■ Thresholds of Significance

Implementation of the proposed plan may have a significant adverse impact on aesthetics if it would:

- Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista
- Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway
- Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings
- Create a new source of substantial light or glare that would adversely affect day- or nighttime views in the area
- Shade shadow-sensitive uses for more than three hours between the hours of 9:00 am and 3:00 pm Pacific Standard Time (between late October and early April), or for more than four hours between the hours of 9:00 am and 5:00 pm Pacific Daylight Time (between early April and late October)

## ■ Effects Not Found to Be Significant

There were no effects identified that would not have any impact with respect to aesthetics.

## ■ Less-than-Significant Impacts

There are no less-than-significant impacts of implementing the proposed plan with respect to aesthetic resources.

## ■ Significant and Unavoidable Impacts

**Impact 4.1-1**      **Implementation of the proposed plan could have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista. Implementation of feasible mitigation measures would reduce this impact, but not to less than significant. Therefore, this impact is *significant and unavoidable*.**

As discussed under Section 4.1.1 above, the major scenic features in the vicinity of the CPA are the Pacific Ocean, the hillsides of the Palos Verdes Peninsula and the Port of Los Angeles. In addition, there are numerous parks, monuments and other cultural features that have recognized scenic value. Whereas the Pacific Ocean is best viewed from the southern portion of the CPA, the Palos Verdes Peninsula is best viewed from the southern and western portions and the Port of Los Angeles is best viewed from the eastern portion of the CPA. The numerous other scenic elements are scattered across the CPA and there is no one best area to view these features.

The GPF and Conservation Element do not identify any scenic vistas or recognized views in the CPA. However, the San Pedro Specific Plan identifies five scenic viewpoints distributed throughout the area where views of scenic resources are available. Hillside areas in the southern and western portions of the CPA that are more prominently visible from the southern portion of the CPA are located in areas designated as Low Density Residential, Open Space, and Public Facilities. The proposed San Pedro Community Plan and implementing ordinances do not propose substantial changes in those areas. However, some changes are proposed in areas that, although developed with existing structures, could be developed with new structures under the proposed Community Plan and implementing ordinances.

The majority of land use changes proposed by the San Pedro Community Plan and implementing ordinances consist of General Plan Amendments to create consistency with GPF Land Use designations, create consistency between existing land uses on parcels or with existing surrounding uses, restrict incompatible uses, and correct minor errors. The proposed changes would not change overall land use patterns within the CPA as identified in the 1999 San Pedro Community Plan, but do propose some land use changes as described in Chapter 3 (Project Description). The proposed plan could allow total development of 2,320.8 acres of residential uses, 230 acres of commercial uses, 242.7 acres of industrial uses, 880.9 acres of semi-public/public (including open space). Compared to existing conditions, implementation of the proposed plan could result in an increase of 4,820 dwelling units, 3.4 million additional square feet of commercial and industrial space, and 41.6 acres of open space/public uses. The proposed San Pedro Community Plan would create new housing options, mostly downtown and in areas identified for mixed use, in accordance with GPF guiding policy to focus growth in higher-intensity commercial centers close to transportation and services. The proposed San Pedro Community Plan would preserve the character of existing single-family and lower-density neighborhoods by maintaining lower-density land use designations and limiting the allowed residential density of some neighborhood commercial areas. The proposed plan seeks to direct growth away from these existing residential neighborhoods towards transit-oriented districts and corridors in commercial centers. Other areas—particularly in the downtown—would undergo comparative transformation, with increasing residential and commercial activity. These changes are proposed predominantly in the North Gaffey area and in the Downtown. (See Figure 3-4 [San Pedro Community Plan Recommendations by Sub-Area] for an illustration of the proposed changes.)

Because proposed policies focus on directing growth away from existing residential neighborhoods toward areas with transit and services and commercial corridors, potential adverse impacts on scenic vistas and views from build-out of the proposed plan would be limited to those targeted change areas as well as publicly accessible open spaces where views across these change areas could be affected. Therefore, this analysis focuses on changes to vistas that could result from development in the North Gaffey area and the downtown. New land uses within the CPA could obstruct currently unobstructed scenic vistas. For example, on certain project sites, future new land uses may result in taller structures than currently exist. However, the overall scale of future structures within the CPA would be limited by zoning regulations. Furthermore, existing LAMC requirements and development standards, together with applicable goals and policies of the Conservation Element and Local Coastal Program Land Use Plan, help to protect scenic vistas throughout the CPA. Compliance with these requirements, development standards, goals, and policies would reduce potential impacts to scenic vistas.

The following are proposed height and/or FAR changes (for subarea map, please see Figure 3-5 [San Pedro Community Plan Proposed Change Areas]):

- Development regulations in the North Gaffey area (subareas 10, 20, 30, and 40) would allow, light and limited industrial uses. Floor Area Ratio<sup>5</sup> (FAR) would be increased for the east side of the North Gaffey Industrial area from 1.5 to 3.0 and a 55 foot height maximum would be established for the industrial and business park uses on both sides of North Gaffey as an incentive for green technology uses.

---

<sup>5</sup> Floor Area Ratio, or FAR, is the ratio of the total floor area of buildings on a certain location to the size of the land of that location.

- Housing opportunities would be increased in the Gaffey Commercial Corridor (subareas 70, 80, and 90); from Oliver to 19<sup>th</sup> Street, but stand-alone residential would be prohibited, and design guidelines would improve aesthetics and address transitions between commercial and residential zones.
- FAR would be reduced from 3.0 to 1.5 at Western and First (subarea 75) and a zone change would be implemented to correct zone inconsistency for existing medical office use.
- On Pacific Avenue, between 3<sup>rd</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> Streets (subarea 130), the allowable height would be set at 75 feet. In subarea 130, allowable FAR would increase from 1.5 to 4.0, and transferable FAR would be considered. South of 10<sup>th</sup> to Hamilton along Pacific Avenue (subarea 150), building heights would be limited to 30 feet. Auto-related uses would be restricted. From Oliver to 3<sup>rd</sup> (subarea 120), stand-alone residential would be prohibited and a 45 foot height limit would be implemented. Automobile related uses would also be restricted.
- On Grand from 5<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> (subarea 100), the currently unlimited height limit would be restricted to 75 feet maximum. The Downtown CDO would be extended to include this area.
- In other areas, such as 7<sup>th</sup> Street (subarea 140), the existing FAR would be decreased from 6.0 to 4.0 to retain existing uses and maintain character, and building heights would be restricted to 75 feet.
- In the Harbor Boulevard “Gateway” area (subareas 170 and 175), FAR would be increased to 4.0, building heights would be restricted to 75 feet, stand-alone residential would be prohibited, and policies would be added for streetscape and gateway improvements. Developments within a Community Design Overlay (CDO) or requesting an increase in height would require transition buffers to step-down building height adjacent to residential uses.

Height district changes proposed in the southern portion of the CPA are limited to the commercial area at Western Avenue at 25<sup>th</sup> Street (subarea 260), north of White Point Reservation in an area currently developed with commercial properties. This area is proposed for a land use classification change from Neighborhood Office Commercial to Community Commercial. Building heights would be restricted to 75 feet, transitions would be required for development adjacent to residential, and stand-alone residential would be prohibited. The changes in this area are intended to improve aesthetics, provide employment opportunities, restrict incompatible uses, address transitions, increase housing opportunities, and encourage a pedestrian environment, in addition to achieving zone consistency. Other changes are summarized in detail in Table 3-2 (Summary of Proposed Changes by Subarea) in Chapter 3 (Project Description), and consist of nomenclature changes, implementation of design guidelines, or changes to correct inconsistencies in land use designation or zoning.

As described in the Environmental Setting, scenic vistas of the Pacific Ocean and the Port of Los Angeles are obtained from roadways that parallel the coast, specifically Paseo del Mar. Additionally, there are five Scenic View Sites and seven coastal trails with substantial views identified in the San Pedro Specific Plan. Additional parks and open spaces in the CPA and San Pedro area include White Point Park, Joan Milke Flores Park, Point Fermin Park, Angels Gate Park, Cabrillo Beach Park (located within the Port of Los Angeles CPA), Deane Dana Friendship Community Regional Park<sup>6</sup>, Averill Park, Peck Park, Rena Park, Leland Park, Harbor Highlands Park, and Field of Dreams. Visitors to Deane Dana Friendship Community Regional Park, Peck Park, Harbor Highlands Park, and Field of Dreams have

---

<sup>6</sup> The majority of this park is outside the CPA boundary; however, a small portion is within the CPA.

relatively unobstructed views of the harbor and Pacific Ocean, although existing urban development is highly visible in the foreground. The parks located on the coastline (White Point Park, Angels Gate Park, Joan Milke Flores Park, Point Fermin Park, Lookout Point Park, and Cabrillo Beach Park) have unobstructed views of the Pacific Ocean. Views from parks further inland vary depending on the topography, elevation, and location. Also as noted in the Environmental Setting, there are locally designated scenic roadways adjacent to and through the CPA that provide views of the harbor and Pacific Ocean. These include Western Avenue, 25<sup>th</sup> Street, Paseo del Mar, and Harbor Boulevard.

As noted, above, the proposed San Pedro Community Plan could result in infill development of residential, commercial, industrial, and open space uses and would create new housing options, mostly downtown and in areas identified for mixed use to focus growth in higher-intensity commercial centers close to transportation and services. Growth would be directed towards transit-oriented districts and corridors in commercial centers, focused on the North Gaffey area and Downtown/Pacific Corridor Redevelopment Area. The intensification of development in these areas could affect views toward the harbor and Pacific Ocean from those parks and open spaces located in the northern portion of the CPA; i.e., Peck Park, Rena Park, Leland Park, Harbor Highlands Park, and Field of Dreams. However, these open spaces are, to varying degrees, somewhat elevated above the coastal plain on which intensification of development would occur, and the changes in allowable building heights that could result from implementation of the proposed San Pedro Community Plan are not substantial enough to significantly obstruct views from these locations. The changes proposed in the southern portion of the CPA near Western Avenue and 25<sup>th</sup> Street would occur in an area currently developed with commercial uses north of White Point Reservation and would not affect views from this area. Deane Dana Friendship Community Regional Park is in the foothills of Rancho Palos Verdes, and intensification of development near Western and 25<sup>th</sup> would not obstruct views from this location. There are no views from Averill Park that would be further obstructed, as this park is surrounded by existing development that currently obstructs views from this location. Views from Western Avenue south of 25<sup>th</sup> Street would not be affected. Similarly, as no intensification of uses is proposed in the southern portion of the CPA, other than as identified at Western and 25<sup>th</sup> Street, views from the coastal open spaces and scenic roadways would not be affected by implementation of the proposed Community Plan.

Existing Downtown San Pedro Community Design Overlay guidelines, and GPF and Conservation Element policies would also help reduce potential impacts to scenic vistas. The Conservation Element includes an objective, policy, and program related to Land Form and Scenic Vistas to protect and reinforce natural and scenic vistas through permit processing, enforcement, and environmental review of project designs to ensure that natural features and views are retained. GPF Policies 5.2.2, 5.5.6, 5.5.7, and 5.7.1, would protect scenic vistas by encouraging the development of low-rise buildings, encouraging the use of step backs in heights for higher floors of buildings, promoting the undergrounding of utilities, and establishing standards for transitions in heights of buildings. Proposed Policy LU7.4 specifically provides for view preservation, providing that new development should be planned to avoid a wall of development along Harbor Boulevard through setbacks, variation in massing and height, and preservation of view corridors. Proposed Policy LU7.5 discourages placement of aboveground facilities in scenic highways and in proximity to view corridors, vista points, community design overlays, or other public scenic access points. Proposed Policies LU18.2, LU18.3, LU18.4, and LU18.5 are designed to

preserve public view sites, as is proposed Policy M14.1. Mitigation measure MM4.1-1 would be implemented to further protect public views.

While citywide design guidelines, element policies and city regulations would help reduce potential impacts to scenic vistas, adoption and implementation of the proposed San Pedro Community Plan and implementing ordinances could still have a substantial adverse effect on scenic vistas, recognized/valued views and/or result in view obstruction available from a length of a public roadway, bike path, or trail. Mitigation measure MM4.1-1 would further help to reduce this impact, as would regulations in the City's Building and Zoning Code that govern setbacks, height, density, massing, and other development characteristics. However, while plan policies and guidelines, existing rules and regulations, and the implementation of feasible mitigation measures would reduce this impact, in many cases to less than significant, a level of uncertainty remains with the introduction of additional urban development and, therefore, this impact would be considered *significant and unavoidable*.

**Impact 4.1-2      Implementation of the proposed plan could substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway. Implementation of feasible mitigation measures would reduce this impact, but not to less than significant. Therefore, this impact is *significant and unavoidable*.**

There are no California (Caltrans)-designated scenic highways within or adjacent to the CPA. However, the existing General Plan Land Use Map (as of October 6, 2010) for the San Pedro Community Plan identifies the following scenic roadways within the CPA: John S. Gibson Boulevard/Front Street/Harbor Boulevard, 25<sup>th</sup> Street, Western Avenue, and Paseo del Mar. Together, these roads provide an overview of the CPA's major scenic features: the Pacific Ocean, the Palos Verdes Peninsula, and the Port of Los Angeles.

The majority of land use changes proposed consist of General Plan Amendments to create consistency with GPF Land Use designations, create consistency between existing land uses on parcels or with existing surrounding uses, restrict incompatible uses, and correct minor errors. The proposed San Pedro Community Plan and implementing ordinances would not structurally change land use patterns within the CPA. There are no changes proposed along Paseo del Mar. However, changes are proposed along Western Avenue for a small area at the intersection of 25<sup>th</sup> Street, currently developed with commercial properties, where existing building height limits would be increased from 30 feet to between 45 feet to 75 feet with the additional requirement of a transitional height buffer adjacent to residential uses. Although transitional height buffers would reduce the impacts of increased height in these areas, because specific development projects are not known, a project's architectural style, building materials, massing, or size could contrast with adjacent development, such that the aesthetic value of the area is diminished. Therefore, the proposed plan and implementing ordinances could impact scenic resources within locally recognized scenic roadways.

No intensification of uses or development is proposed under the proposed plan and implementing ordinances that would affect the scenic resources identified in the San Pedro Specific Plan or the Local Coastal Program. No open spaces are proposed to be removed or graded. Design guidelines and implementing ordinances would protect unique visual features or elements that substantially contribute to the valued visual character or image of a neighborhood or community, in concert with existing GPF

and Conservation Element policies. The Conservation Element includes an objective, policy, and program related to Land Form and Scenic Vistas to encourage development that would retain significant existing landforms or unique scenic features through permit processing, enforcement, and environmental review of project designs to ensure that natural features and views are retained. The proposed San Pedro Community Plan coordinates development of the San Pedro community with development at the Port to create a seamless interface, and provides for more public access and view corridors to the harbor. It creates potential opportunities for additional open space with views of the harbor, new public spaces along the waterfront, and includes policies to promote future public recreational use of sections of the former Fort MacArthur property near the harbor and ocean.

GPF Policies 5.1.1, 5.2.2, 5.5.3, 5.5.6, 5.5.7, 5.7.1, and 5.8.4 would protect scenic resources and vistas by encouraging development that defines the character of the CPA, promoting the development of low-rise buildings and the use of step backs in heights for higher floors of buildings, encouraging the formulation and adoption of building design and site design standards, promoting the undergrounding of utilities, establishing standards for transitions in heights of buildings, and encouraging visually attractive signage. Proposed Community Plan Policy LU18.1 specifically addresses scenic resources, providing that permitted development sited and designed to protect views to and along the ocean, harbor, and scenic coastal areas; minimize the alteration of natural landform; be visually compatible with the character of the surrounding area; and prevent the blockage of existing views for designated public scenic view areas and scenic highways. Additional Community Plan policies promote appropriate compatibility, transitions, and design to enhance visual quality, which can also protect scenic resources. Although mitigation measure MM4.1-1 would be implemented to further protect scenic resources, because specific development projects are not known, the adoption and implementation of the proposed plan and implementing ordinances could affect scenic resources, including locally recognized desirable aesthetic features. Therefore, this would be a *significant and unavoidable* impact.

**Impact 4.1-3      Implementation of the proposed plan could substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings. Implementation of feasible mitigation measures would reduce this impact but not to less than significant. Therefore, this impact is *significant and unavoidable*.**

As previously discussed, the visual character of the CPA is dominated by three elements: the Port of Los Angeles; the Pacific Ocean coastline, and the Palos Verdes Peninsula. Within this setting, the CPA is visually defined by the intense commercial activity generated by the Port, its traditional downtown area, its surrounding residential areas, and its abundant recreational facilities, including beaches, parks, museums, and a wide variety of cultural monuments. The CPA is an intensely developed, mature urban community.

The majority of land use changes proposed by the proposed San Pedro Community Plan and implementing ordinances consist of General Plan Amendments to create consistency with GPF Land Use designations, create consistency between existing land uses on parcels or with existing surrounding uses, restrict incompatible uses, and correct minor errors. The proposed plan and implementing ordinances would not structurally change land use patterns within the CPA. The proposed plan and implementing ordinances propose some changes in height districts and Floor Area Ratio (FAR) in several

areas of the CPA. Increases in maximum height allowances would be primarily in the Harbor Boulevard Gateway, Western and 25<sup>th</sup> commercial area, and North Gaffey industrial corridor, to reflect the intensification of uses in those areas. Changes in allowable FAR are limited to the downtown and industrial areas along North Gaffey Street. Height district changes proposed in the southern portion of the CPA are limited to changes to a small group of commercial properties at Western Avenue and 25<sup>th</sup> Street in an area already developed with commercial properties and a transitional height buffer for uses adjacent to residential would be required. The existing 30-foot to unlimited height permitted along portions of Pacific Avenue and Grand would be restricted.

The areas most likely affected by the proposed plan and implementing ordinances include structures that are in poor condition, dated, vacant and/or obsolete; have blank façades against the street that do not enhance the streetscape or provide a pedestrian-friendly environment; have sparse or under-maintained landscaping; and have incongruent architecture. Further, land use changes would likely focus on vacant sites and those occupied by parking lots and/or low-rise structures that do not maximize the economic potential of the site. While new development in these areas might change the visual quality, these changes are more likely to be perceived as an improvement rather than an adverse impact. In addition, any potential adverse effects would be avoided by subjecting proposed new development to a thorough design review process prior to permitting, ensuring that visual character and quality are maintained, and compatible with the existing visual setting.

The proposed plan and implementing ordinances include design standards and guidelines for new industrial, commercial and multiple family residential uses, and small lot subdivisions. The proposed plan aims to support the creation and maintenance of distinctive neighborhoods, districts, and centers that provide visual diversity, varying intensities of residential and commercial activity that are appropriate to their location, and plentiful opportunities for social interaction. The plan identifies districts and centers that reflect a defined local character, scale, and relationship to adjacent neighborhoods and provide a full complement of uses with easy access to parks, stores, and other amenities of everyday living. Development intensities are designed to retain low-scale residential neighborhoods, concentrate more intense development in specific locations, and maximize accessibility to amenities, while providing transition in scale and height to lower-density neighborhoods. The design standards in the proposed plan and implementing ordinances would ensure that new development complements the existing character and scale of neighborhoods in the CPA.

The proposed plan and implementing ordinances contain policies that would protect the visual character of the CPA by preserving existing residential neighborhoods; limiting the intensity and density in single-family neighborhoods (in particular, Hillside Areas or the Coastal Zone); expanding the existing Downtown San Pedro CDO; and establishing other design standards and guidelines. These types of changes would strengthen the existing visual character of the CPA and enhance the visual quality. Consequently, the proposed plan and implementing ordinances would not structurally change the existing visual character, value, and quality of the community.

GPF Policies 5.1.1, 5.2.2, 5.5.3, 5.5.6, 5.5.7, 5.7.1, and 5.8.4 would protect visual character by encouraging development that defines the character of the CPA, promoting the development of low-rise buildings and the use of step backs in heights for higher floors of buildings, encouraging the formulation and adoption of building design and site design standards, promoting the undergrounding of utilities,

establishing standards for transitions in heights of buildings, and encouraging visually attractive signage. Specific Community Plan Policies LU1.1, LU1.3, LU1.4, LU1.8, LU2.2, LU3.5, LU5.4, LU5.5, LU5.6, LU5.7, LU5.12, LU5.13, LU7.5, LU8.1, LU9.1, LU9.2, LU10.4, LU12.3, LU15.1, LU15.2, LU15.3, LU16.7, LU17.5, LU17.6, and LU18.1 are specifically included to maintain visual character and quality through appropriate transitions between uses, compatibility of uses, and design guidelines.

In addition, existing CDO guidelines and GPF and Conservation Element policies would help reduce potential impacts from landform alteration. The Conservation Element includes an objective, policy, and program related to Land Form and Scenic Vistas to encourage development that would retain significant existing landforms or unique scenic features or vistas through permit processing, enforcement, and environmental review of project designs to ensure that natural features and views are retained.

In addition, the City's existing policies and regulations would continue to protect the existing visual character. Existing policies described above and mitigation measure MM4.1-1 would be implemented to further protect the existing visual character. However, the adoption and implementation of the proposed plan and implementing ordinances could still affect existing visual character, aesthetic value, and quality of the community, since specific details of development projects are not known. Therefore, this would be a *significant and unavoidable* impact.

**Impact 4.1-4      Implementation of the proposed plan could create a new source of substantial light or glare that could adversely affect day- or nighttime views in the area. Compliance with existing codes and regulations and implementation of feasible mitigation measures would reduce this impact but not to less than significant. Therefore, this impact is *significant and unavoidable*.**

The CPA is an area predominantly developed with residential uses, low- and medium-rise commercial areas and industrial uses, as well as the Port of Los Angeles immediately adjacent. The CPA is a highly urbanized community and, as such, maintains a relatively high level of nighttime illumination. In particular, as a 24-hour per day operation, portions of the Port of Los Angeles and its associated facilities are brightly illuminated. Street lighting is omnipresent and, particularly along major thoroughfares, there are many additional sources of lighting, including window illumination, exterior security lighting, illuminated signage and advertising, and vehicle headlights. Residential streets tend to have lower levels of night lighting than the downtown and commercial centers. The southern portion of the CPA contains substantial open space, and the ambient lighting there is relatively low compared to other areas of the CPA, although it is still subject to the substantial night lighting from Port activities. There is substantial "night glow" or "light pollution" above the CPA due to the intensity of existing night lighting and the frequency of overcast nights, where fog and low clouds reflect light downward and increase the perceived level of light.

Implementation of the proposed plan and implementing ordinances would result in an intensification of population and buildings in the downtown area and along North Gaffey Street and Pacific Avenue. As a result, the creation of new lighting sources associated with a greater number of dwelling units, businesses, street lighting, and vehicle headlights would be anticipated in these areas. Some intensification of use would also occur just north of Western Avenue and 25<sup>th</sup> Street, which would increase ambient night lighting in an area just north of White Point Park, a large open space area. The proposed plan and

implementing ordinances do not propose any large-scale land use changes or development that would increase lighting substantially in any part of the CPA over existing conditions, as future development under the proposed plan would be infill development, including the replacement of existing structures.

The proposed plan and implementing ordinances include new policies geared toward streetscape improvements, urban design standards and guidelines, and expansion of the Downtown CDO. In addition, GPF Policies 5.5.3, 5.5.4, and 5.8.1 call for lighting commensurate with intended nighttime use. Although intensification of uses would likely occur in the areas identified, an increase in nighttime lighting in the downtown area would not be significant for existing sensitive receptors considering the existing high levels of ambient light and glare in this highly developed urban core. Similarly, the proposed changes along North Gaffey Street would occur in existing industrial and commercial areas, and would not be anticipated to adversely affect any sensitive receptors. The proposed changes under the proposed Plan and implementing ordinances that would occur north of White Point Park have the greatest potential for adverse lighting effects on the sensitive uses directly to the south, since this is a nature preserve. Lighting effects on biological resources are addressed in Section 4.3 (Biological Resources) of this EIR. Visitors to the nature preserve would not be affected by any increase in ambient lighting in this area, as the preserve is closed between dusk and dawn.

The Los Angeles Municipal Code (LAMC) contains specific regulations with respect to light and glare. LAMC Section 12.21 A.5(k) (Amended by Ordinance No. 171,858) states that all lights used to illuminate a parking area shall be designed, located and arranged so as to reflect the light away from any street and any adjacent premises. Additionally, any new lighting would be designed to conform to applicable standards in LAMC Sections 93.0117 and 12.21 A.5(k), which pertain to outdoor lighting affecting residential property. All new development would be required to be consistent with the LAMC, which would ensure that light-sensitive areas adjacent to or within new development would be protected from spillover or excessive lighting. Conformance to LAMC regulations and implementation of mitigation measure MM4.1-1 would help reduce this impact. However, the introduction of new development as part of the proposed plan and implementing ordinances could result in changes in ambient illumination, light, glare, or spillover lighting. Therefore, this would be a *significant and unavoidable* impact.

**Impact 4.1-5      Implementation of the proposed plan could result in development of structures that would shade shadow-sensitive uses for more than three hours between the hours of 9:00 AM and 3:00 PM Pacific Standard Time (between late October and early April), or for more than four hours between the hours of 9:00 AM and 5:00 PM Pacific Daylight Time (between early April and late October). Compliance with design guidelines and policies and implementation of feasible mitigation measures would reduce this impact, but not to less than significant. Therefore, this impact is *significant and unavoidable*.**

For purposes of this analysis, shading refers to placing existing land uses in shade, preventing direct access to sunlight by off-site shadows cast by project-related buildings or structures (in this case, projects implemented under the proposed plan). The consequences of shadows on land uses may be positive, including cooling effects during warm weather, or negative, such as the loss of natural light necessary for solar energy purposes or the loss of warming influences during cool weather. Shadow effects are dependent upon several factors, including the local topography, the height and bulk of a project's

structural elements, the shade sensitivity of adjacent land uses, the season and consequent length of shadows, and the duration of shadow projection. Facilities and operations sensitive to the effects of shading include, but are not necessarily limited to, residential, recreational, institutional (e.g., schools, nursing homes), some public outdoor spaces or restaurants with outdoor eating areas, plant nurseries, and existing solar collectors. These uses are considered sensitive because sunlight is important to function, physical comfort, or commerce. A project's potential for shading adjacent land uses is determined by identifying the height and bulk of proposed plan components; mapping the "footprint" (location, shape, and size) of the project site; and calculating and diagramming the shadows that would be cast by those components during the most extreme, or conservative, conditions: Winter Solstice (December 21), when the sun is at its lowest point in the sky and shadows are the longest, and Summer Solstice (June 21), when the sun is at its highest point and shadows are the shortest.

Shadow length and bearing (the direction in which they are cast) is dependent on the location (latitude and longitude) of the project site, which dictates the angle of the sun relative to the project site; in the Los Angeles area, the maximum shadow a building can cast is usually equivalent to three times its height during the Winter Solstice. The potential for off-site effects is dependent on the distance between the project site and the nearest shade sensitive land uses. Shade/shadow analyses are generally undertaken when there is potential for shade sensitive uses to be placed in shadow by a proposed plan for three or more hours, at which point shading may be considered to interfere with the activities on that off-site property. For purposes of this analysis, land uses in proximity to a proposed development for which sunlight is important to function, physical comfort, or commerce are considered shade-sensitive.

The CPA is an area predominantly developed with residential uses, low- and medium-rise commercial areas and industrial uses, as well as the adjacent Port of Los Angeles. The proposed plan and implementing ordinances would not substantially alter land use patterns and would, instead, focus growth on transit-oriented corridors and the downtown core. Most of the existing open space areas are located away from the targeted change areas, particularly the changes to height districts, and existing and proposed design guidelines and height restrictions adjacent to these open spaces would preclude development that would cast substantial shadow on these sensitive uses. Existing single-family neighborhoods would be protected, and new residential development in the downtown core would be high-density development in mixed uses, such as above ground-floor retail. The Downtown CDO design guidelines would limit impacts from shade and shadow for new construction or redevelopment.

It is possible, although unlikely, that existing and potential public open spaces in the downtown could be affected by shadow from future structures. Current requirements and development standards provided in the LAMC, City design guidelines, as well as goals and policies of the Conservation Element, San Pedro Specific Plan, Downtown CDO, and Local Coastal Program, help ensure that new development is of a height that is similar to surrounding structures. Similarly, the goals and policies provided in the proposed plan provide for transition buffers and encourage and require the preservation and enhancement of the distinct visual character present in the CPA's individual neighborhoods and districts. Specifically, Policies LU1.1, LU1.3, LU1.8, LU2.2, LU3.5, LU5.4, and LU5.5 provide for protection of neighborhood character and appropriate height and neighborhood transitions. Policies LU5.7 and LU5.17 provide for strategic location of new large projects in appropriate locations that do not interrupt community fabric and require the scale and massing of new development to provide appropriate transitions in building

height and bulk. Discretionary approvals consider height transitions and visual impacts. Additionally, future major projects would be reviewed by the City's Planning Commission, which provides a method by which the City ensures that new buildings are compatible with their surroundings, and therefore, result in new buildings that are similar in height, scale, and massing to surrounding development. Proposed land use changes for the San Pedro Community plan and implementing ordinances would enhance and protect the existing character of the City overall, but it is still possible that surrounding uses could be impacted with regard to shade and shadow from future development. Therefore, impacts associated with the casting of shade/shadows on adjacent sensitive land uses (for projects implemented under the proposed plan and implementing ordinances) would be considered ***significant and unavoidable***.

## ■ Mitigation Measures

The proposed plan incorporates programs and policies that are intended to minimize, to the extent practicable, adverse impacts to aesthetics. All projects will be subject to specific regulations of the zoning and building code addressing construction type, setbacks, height, parking, open space, density, intensity, etc. Individual discretionary projects will be required to complete project-specific environmental review. In addition, the following mitigation measure, consistent with the objectives of the San Pedro Community Plan, shall also be implemented:

*MM4.1-1            The City shall ensure that review of individual discretionary projects addresses aesthetic concerns as appropriate to minimize site-specific aesthetic impacts, including impacts to public views, scenic resources, lighting, and shading.*

## ■ Level of Significance After Mitigation

The mitigation measure for discretionary projects outlined above and conformance to LAMC regulations would reduce impacts relative to aesthetics as a result of implementation of the proposed plan and implementing ordinances. However, specific development projects are not known, and while future development projects are considered on a case-by-case basis, impacts would remain ***significant and unavoidable***.

### 4.1.4 Cumulative Impacts

The geographic context for the analysis of cumulative aesthetic impacts is generally localized. For purposes of this analysis, the context for views includes the geographic area within and outside the CPA that would have views of and across the CPA to the Pacific Ocean and the Harbor. Cumulative impacts with regard to lighting, shadow, and visual quality and character would be within the geographic context of the CPA and the development immediately adjacent in Rancho Palos Verdes, Rolling Hills, and Wilmington, as well as the community of La Rambla in the County of Los Angeles. The analysis accounts for all anticipated cumulative growth within this geographic area. Cumulative impacts are only addressed for those thresholds that have a project-related impact, whether it is less than significant, significant, or significant and unavoidable. If “no impact” occurs, no cumulative analysis is provided for that threshold.

Views of the Pacific Ocean and the Port of Los Angeles/San Pedro Harbor are obtained from many vantage points along the coast and from higher elevations inland. Visitors to and residents of Palos Verdes and Rolling Hills experience sweeping views of these features, depending on the specific location. Visitors to Wilmington or communities north of San Pedro do not generally have views of the Pacific Ocean or the Port except from immediately adjacent due to intervening development, vegetation, and topography. The land use or general plans for Palos Verdes, Rolling Hills, and Wilmington include numerous policies intended to protect views, and development in these areas is subject to stringent design guidelines, height restrictions, and other regulations that avoid impacts on views. In fact, most development in the City of Los Angeles is subject to design guidelines and development restrictions aimed at preserving views. The proposed plan includes its own community-specific design guidelines, policies, and implementing ordinances to protect views and the proposed land use changes would enhance and protect the existing character of the City overall. However, as set forth above, it is still possible that surrounding uses could be impacted with regard to scenic vistas. Therefore, the proposed plan's cumulative impact on scenic vistas would be *significant and unavoidable*.

Scenic resources are numerous in the defined geographic area, including the rolling hillsides and panoramas of Rolling Hills and Palos Verdes, the expanse of the Pacific Ocean, the identified scenic resources identified in San Pedro, and the coastline and beaches. There are large areas of open space in the western portion of this geographic area, extending northward to Santa Monica Bay, that substantially contribute to the visual character of the area. The communities north of San Pedro, including Palos Verdes and Rolling Hills, have in place a number of policies to protect scenic resources and contributing visual features. Development in the City of Los Angeles is subject to design guidelines and development restrictions that protect scenic resources in the Coastal Zone. The proposed plan includes community-specific design guidelines, policies, and implementing ordinances to protect scenic resources. No natural open space would be developed or graded as a result of implementation of the proposed plan and implementing ordinances. However, since the details of future development projects are not known, it is still possible that surrounding uses could be impacted with regard to scenic vistas. Therefore, the proposed plan's cumulative impact on scenic resources would be *significant and unavoidable*.

The existing visual character of the geographic area includes rolling hills and large expanses of open space north of the CPA in the communities of Rolling Hills and Palos Verdes. East of the CPA is the intensely developed urban area, and south of the CPA lies the Port of Los Angeles with its substantial industrial activity. There are large areas of open space in the western portion of this geographic area, extending northward to Santa Monica Bay, that substantially contribute to the visual character of the area. The communities adjacent to San Pedro, including Palos Verdes and Rolling Hills, have implemented a number of community-specific policies to protect scenic resources and contributing visual features. Coastal development in the City of Los Angeles is subject to design guidelines and development restrictions that protect visual quality and character. As such, there would be no significant cumulative impact as a result of cumulative development. The proposed plan includes community-specific design guidelines, policies, and implementing ordinances to protect visual quality and, as a result, would not degrade the visual quality and character of the community. Instead, the proposed plan and implementing ordinances would protect the visual character of the CPA by preserving existing residential neighborhoods; limiting the intensity and density in single-family neighborhoods (in particular, Hillside Areas or the Coastal Zone); extending the Downtown CDO and establishing other design standards and

guidelines. These types of changes would strengthen the existing visual character of the CPA and enhance its visual quality. Consequently, the proposed plan and implementing ordinances would not structurally change the existing visual character, value, and quality of the community. However, since specific development projects are not known, it is still possible that surrounding uses could be impacted. Therefore, the proposed plan's potential cumulative impact on visual character would be ***significant and unavoidable***.

Development of cumulative projects in the CPA and adjacent communities, including the Port of Los Angeles, could incrementally increase ambient nighttime lighting. However, a high level of ambient lighting currently exists, which is expected in an intensely developed urban area, and the Port of Los Angeles has operated 24 hours a day, 7 days a week for decades. Large areas of open space that exist north of the CPA are protected by existing design guidelines and development restrictions that protect the visual character of these areas. Therefore, it is not anticipated that development north of the CPA would be intensified and result in a substantial increase in ambient light. Similarly, as the areas east and south of the CPA are intensely developed with urban uses, it is not anticipated that development of cumulative projects or build-out of the General Plan for the City and County of Los Angeles would substantially increase nighttime lighting. The Los Angeles Municipal Code (LAMC) contains specific regulations with respect to light and glare. LAMC Section 12.21 A.5 (k) (Amended by Ordinance No. 171,858) states that all lights used to illuminate a parking area shall be designed, located and arranged so as to reflect the light away from any street and any adjacent premises. Additionally, any new lighting would be designed to conform to applicable standards in LAMC Sections 93.0117 and 12.21 A.5 (k), which pertain to outdoor lighting affecting residential property. Discretionary projects would be required to be consistent with the LAMC and would implement mitigation measure MM4.1-1, which would ensure that light-sensitive areas adjacent to or within new development would be protected from spillover or excessive lighting. While the adoption and implementation of the proposed plan and implementing ordinances would not significantly change ambient illumination levels, the details of individual future development projects are not known. Therefore, the plan's cumulative impact on illumination levels is ***significant and unavoidable***.

As noted above, shadow length and bearing (the direction in which they are cast) is dependent on the location (latitude and longitude) of the project site, which dictates the angle of the sun relative to the project site; in the Los Angeles area, the maximum shadow a building can cast is usually equivalent to three times its height during the Winter Solstice. It should also be noted that shadows in the San Pedro area are generally cast in a northwesterly to northeasterly direction over the course of a given day. Cumulative development in the communities adjacent to the CPA could result in shadow impacts, but these would be localized and not additive. The City of Los Angeles requires an evaluation of potential shade/shadow impacts as part of discretionary development review and mitigation to reduce any significant impacts. Further, the design review process for applicable development projects and GPF and localized policies help ensure that sensitive uses are not adversely affected by new development with regard to visual character, quality, views, etc. However, the proposed plan could intensify development in existing industrial and commercial corridors and could result in some significant shadow impacts, as noted above. Therefore, the proposed plan's cumulative impact on shade/shadow would be ***significant and unavoidable***.

## 4.1.5 References

- California Department of Transportation. Frequently Asked Questions. Caltrans Landscape Architecture Program. <http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/LandArch/scenic/faq.htm>.
- Engineering ToolBox, The. Illuminance - Recommended Light Levels [http://www.engineeringtoolbox.com/light-level-rooms-d\\_708.html](http://www.engineeringtoolbox.com/light-level-rooms-d_708.html) (accessed September 29, 2011).
- Los Angeles Department of City Planning. *Downtown San Pedro Community Design Overlay District*. Ordinance No. 179,935, July 21, 2008.
- . *General Plan of the City of Los Angeles*. Conservation Element, adopted September 26, 2001.
- . *San Pedro Coastal Land Use Plan (LUP)*, June 1991.
- . *San Pedro Community Plan*, May 1999 (Revised).
- . *San Pedro Specific Plan*, November 1990.
- . *The Citywide General Plan Framework: An Element of the City of Los Angeles General Plan*. CPC 94-0354 GPF CF 95-2259 CF 01-1162, adopted August 8, 2001. <http://cityplanning.lacity.org>. Port of Los Angeles, The. About the Port. [http://www.portoflosangeles.org/idx\\_about.asp](http://www.portoflosangeles.org/idx_about.asp).