

## 5. Environmental Analysis

### 5.1 AESTHETICS

This section of the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) evaluates the potential impacts to the visual character of the Project area and its surroundings associated with implementation of the proposed Project. This section includes a discussion of the qualitative aesthetic characteristics of the environment that potentially could be altered by the Project's implementation and of the Project's consistency with established relevant visual resource policies.

#### 5.1.1 Environmental Setting

##### 5.1.1.1 REGULATORY BACKGROUND

###### State

###### *State Scenic Highways*

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 284 (Caltrans 2011). 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 State Scenic Highway System includes a list of highways that are either eligible for designation as scenic highways or have been officially designated (Caltrans 2011 and 2015). 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 Scenic Highway.

When a city or county nominates an eligible scenic highway for official designation, it must identify and define the scenic corridor. Scenic corridors consist of land that is visible from the highway right of way, and is comprised primarily of scenic and natural features. Topography, vegetation, viewing distance, and/or jurisdictional lines determine the corridor boundaries. The city or county must also adopt ordinances, zoning and/or planning policies to preserve the scenic quality of the corridor or document such regulations that already exist in various portions of local codes. These ordinances and/or policies make up the Corridor Protection Program.

State Route (SR) 1, commonly known as Pacific Coast Highway (PCH), is an "Eligible State Scenic Highway" but has not been designated as an Official State or County Scenic Highway (Caltrans 2011).

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### Local

#### *City of Long Beach Municipal Code*

The City of Long Beach Municipal Code identifies land use categories, development standards, and other general provisions that ensure consistency between the General Plan and proposed development projects. The following provisions from the Municipal Code help minimize visual and light and glare impacts associated with new development projects, including the proposed Project:

- **Section 21.41.259 Parking Areas – Lighting.** All parking lots and garages are required to be illuminated with lights directed and shielded to prevent light and glare from intruding onto adjacent sites. The light standards shall not exceed the height of the principal use structure or one foot for each two feet of distance between the light standard and the nearest property line, whichever is greater.
- **Section 21.44.855 Light and Glare Intrusion Prevention.** All electronic message center signs shall be adequately shielded and properly oriented and aimed so as to prevent the intrusion of light and glare upon residential land uses, including those in mixed-use districts.
- **Section 21.44.600 (E) (3) Prohibited Signs, Unlawful Illumination.** Floodlights that are not hooded or shielded so that the light source is not visible from public right-of-way, adjacent property, or residential dwelling unit are prohibited.

#### *City of Long Beach Local Coastal Program*

The City of Long Beach Local Coastal Program (LCP) was adopted by the Long Beach City Council and certified by the California Coastal Commission in 1980. The LCP identifies the SEADIP area as the entire southeast corner of Long Beach. Approximately 70 percent of the Project area is located within the LCP's coastal zone boundary. The LCP regulates development in the coastal zone area and specifies appropriate location, type, and scale of new or changed uses of land and water. The LCP also includes a land use plan (LUP) and measures to implement the plan (e.g., zoning ordinances).

### 5.1.1.2 EXISTING CONDITIONS

#### Visual Character and Land uses

As shown in Table 4-1, *Existing Land Use Summary*, in Chapter 4 of this DEIR, the Project area encompasses approximately 1,481 acres of land in the southeast corner of the City of Long Beach. Existing land use is composed primarily of residential use (21 percent), industrial use (20 percent), and coastal habitat/wetlands/recreation (19 percent). Other uses include channel/marina/waterway (11 percent), mixed use (6 percent), open space/recreation (5 percent), and commercial (1 percent).

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A large portion of undeveloped land in the Project area is the Los Cerritos Wetlands, which is approximately 300. The predominant industrial uses include the Southern California Edison, AES Alamos, and Los Angeles District Water & Power, which are in the eastern portion of the Project area.

### *Residential Neighborhoods*

The visual character of the Project area can be defined, in part, by its residential neighborhoods. The neighborhoods are mostly residential developments, each distinctly unique based on housing type, site layout, relationship to the water, level of public access or permeability, and age. Most are located north of the Los Cerritos Channel and, as shown in Figure 4-1, *Neighborhoods*, of this DEIR, include the following (see Chapter 2 of the Specific Plan for a comprehensive list):

- Bay Harbor
- Belmont Shores Mobile Estates
- Bixby Village
- Channel Point
- Del Lago
- Pathways
- Spinnaker Bay
- University Park Estates

Most of the residential neighborhoods are gated and built out. Architectural styles vary widely among the neighborhoods mainly due when they were built or remodeled. Most neighborhoods have a unique visual style through their branding and architecture. The range of styles includes Cape Cod waterfront (horizontal clapboard), California Coastal (wood shingles and sloped roofs), Normandy or Traditional European, Spanish or Mediterranean (stucco and tile roofs), and Midcentury Modern (wood, stucco, and glass). Building heights vary widely—from single-story, single-family homes (e.g., most homes in University Park Estates) to four-story condominium buildings (e.g. Marina Pacifica).

### *Pacific Coast Highway Corridor*

The segment of PCH that traverses the Project area from the northwest to the southeast features most of the area's nonresidential land uses, including Bixby Plaza, Marina Pacifica Mall, Marketplace, and Marina Shores. In general, these shopping centers were developed in the late 1970s and designed on a suburban scale; they are generally separated from the street and sidewalk by large parking lots. Most of them include shops, restaurants, and offices. Styles range from coastal shed roofs with

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wood siding to large stucco big box retail stores. Existing buildings along PCH range from one to four stories; although, the residential properties are mostly one or two stories.

### *Los Cerritos Wetlands*

The central and eastern portions of the Project area are dominated by the Los Cerritos Wetlands, which span eastward from the Los Cerritos Channel to beyond the San Gabriel River. Much this area contains undeveloped open space and waterways, including approximately 175 acres of wetlands in varying degrees of degradation. However, it also includes the Los Alamitos Retaining Basin, one residential neighborhood (Island Village), and two large power generation plants. The AES Alamitos power plant and the Haynes Generating Station are visually prominent industrial uses whose turbine structures and stacks can be seen throughout the Project area and the surrounding vicinity. Existing views of the wetlands are also affected by the presence of power lines and oil extraction facilities (including oil well pumps, storage tanks, and small buildings). In general, the substantial undeveloped lands of the Los Cerritos Wetlands offer an expansive and natural visual character. However, the area's appearance is marked by the presence of past and present industrial land uses.

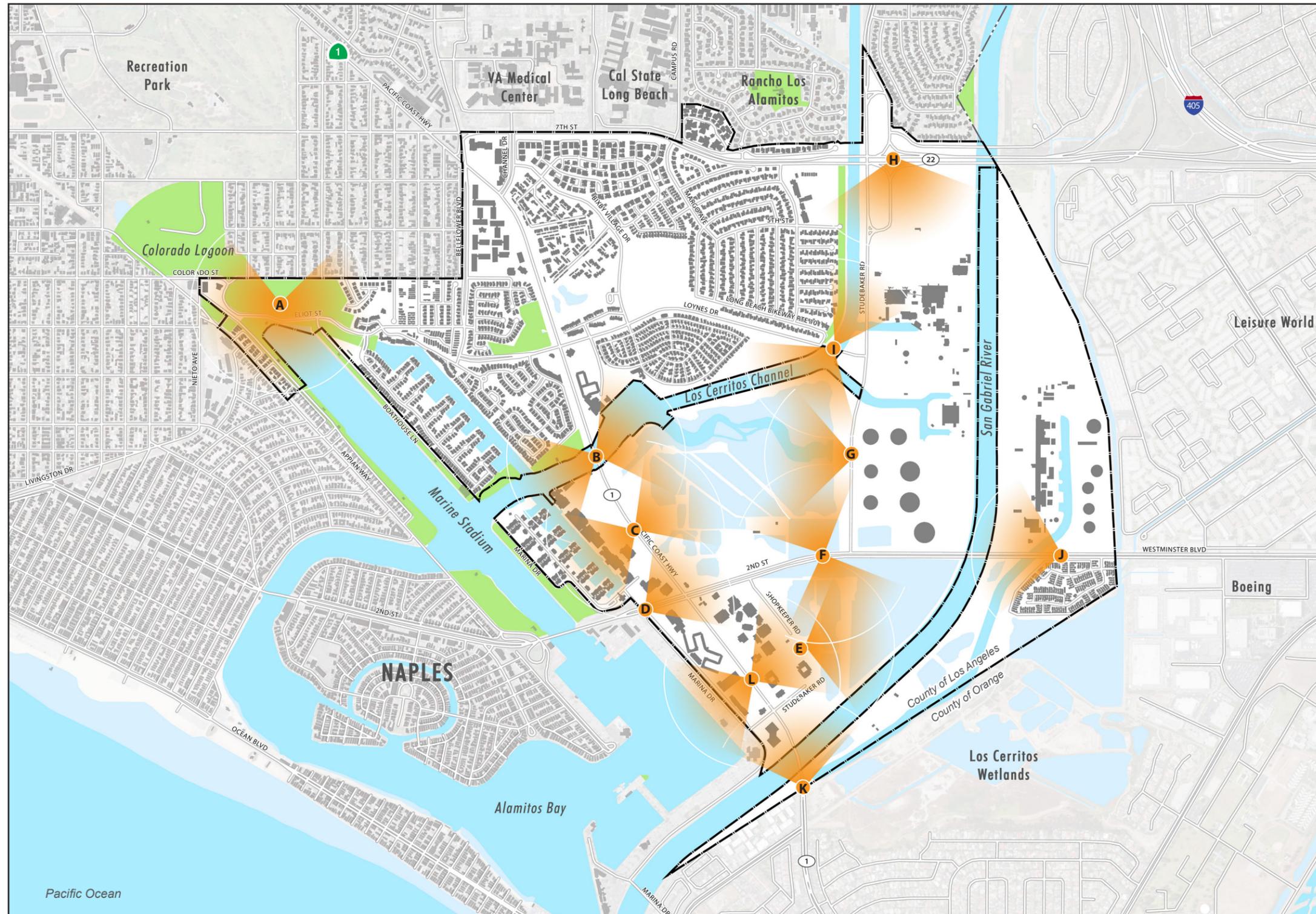
### Visual Resources

A number of viewsheds shown in Figures 5.1-1a and 5.1-1b, *Project Area Viewsheds*, add to the overall character and sense of place in the Specific Plan area. In particular, the proximate location of the Project area to the Los Cerritos Channel, Marine Stadium, and San Gabriel River, provide scenic viewsheds of the wetlands, waterways, and the marina. In such an urban setting, viewsheds also include gateways, visual features, and destinations that reinforce the character of the Project area (see Figure 5.1-2, *Gateways, Visual Features, and Destinations*). The five major vehicular gateways into the Project area include:

- **Northwest Gateway** – from Greater Long Beach at the 7th Street/Channel Drive/PCH/Bellflower Boulevard intersection
- **North Gateway** – from the north and east cities at the SR-22/Studebaker Road intersection
- **East Gateway** – from Seal Beach and Leisure World at the 2nd Street/Studebaker Road intersection
- **Southwest Gateway** – from Naples and Belmont Shores at the PCH/2nd Street intersection
- **South Gateway** – from Seal Beach and Orange County cities at PCH near the San Gabriel River

Watercraft access includes the Alamitos Bay into the Marine Stadium, the Los Cerritos Channel, and marinas. The San Gabriel River and Long Beach Bikeways are also gateways for bicyclists.

Figure 5.1-1a - Project Area Viewsheds  
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LEGEND

 SEASP Study Area

 Viewsheds



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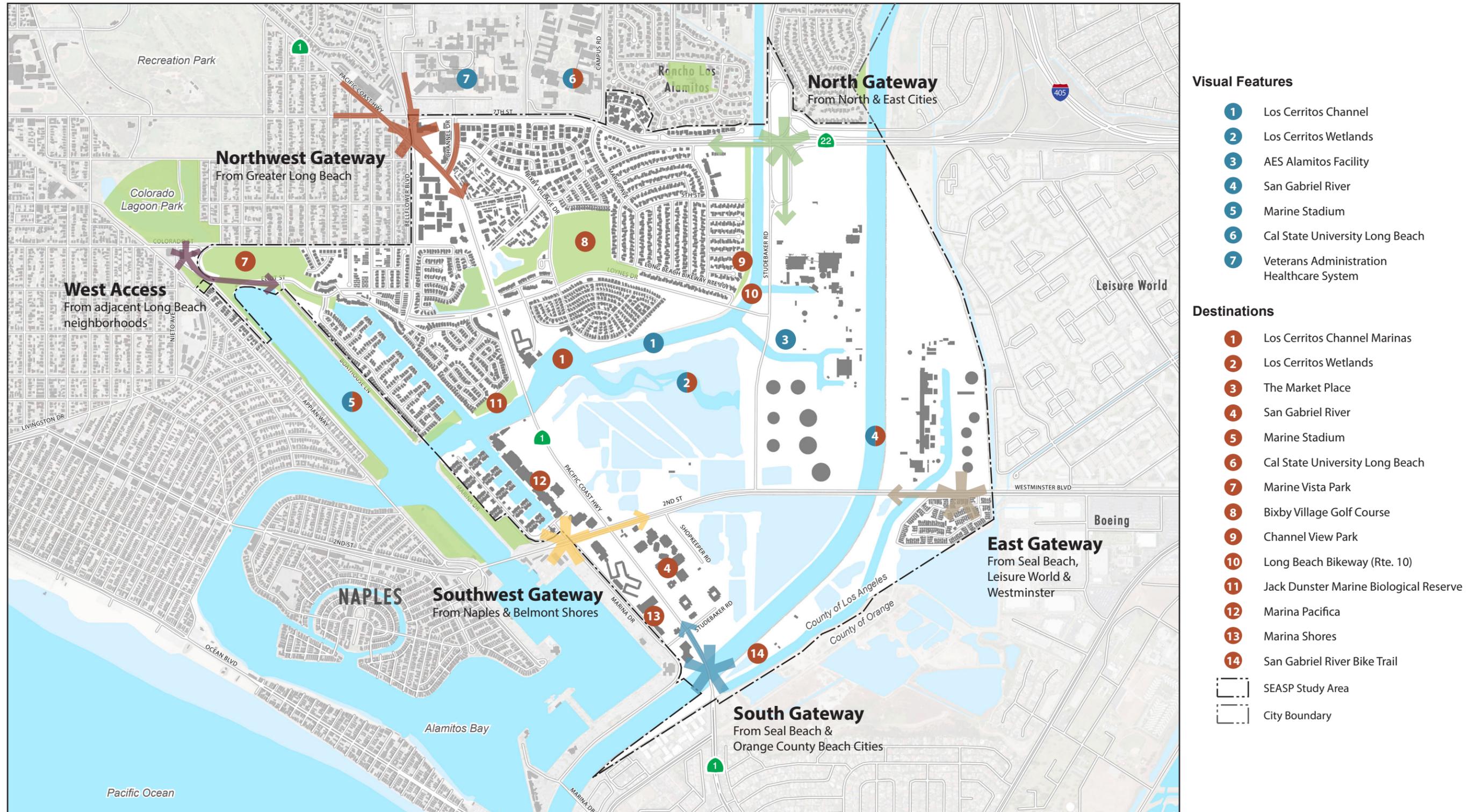
Figure 5.1-1b - Project Area Viewsheds  
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Figure 5.1-2 - Gateways, Visual Features, and Destinations  
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Distinctive visual features in the Specific Plan area include the Los Cerritos Channel, Los Cerritos Wetlands, AES Alamitos Facility, San Gabriel River, and Marine Stadium. Near the Project area, California State University Long Beach and Veterans Administration Medical Center are also prominent visual. There are also a number of visitor destinations in the Project area, including the Los Cerritos Channel marinas and wetlands, The Marketplace, San Gabriel River, Marine Stadium, Bixby Village Golf Course, Jack Dunster Marine Biological Reserve, Marina Pacifica Mall, and a number of parks and bikeways.

### Landform

The terrain within the Specific Plan area and its surrounds is predominantly flat. Overall, there is little change in elevation throughout the City (100 feet at most) and Project area. The Santa Ana Mountains are approximately 25 miles to the east, and the San Gabriel Mountains are about 30 miles to the north.

### Scenic Highways

As stated above, Caltrans' California Scenic Highway Mapping System designates PCH an eligible state scenic highway (Caltrans 2011). PCH traverses the Project area in a northwest-southeast direction. The eligible portion is from its intersection with Lakewood Boulevard in the northwest of the Project area to south Orange County in the city of Dana Point.

### Light and Glare

Excessive light and glare can negatively affect sensitive land uses when placed near other uses that have outdoor lighting or are made from materials that reflect light and glare. The Project area is already developed with urban land uses, including residential and commercial uses. Therefore, light and glare are present in the Project area. During the day, glare may reflect off glass or metal surfaces; at night, light is generated by street lights, parking lot lights, security lighting, signage and building lighting, and vehicular traffic. In particular, substantial traffic along PCH and SR-22/7th Street contributes vehicular light and glare on the roads. Ambient lighting from surrounding uses, including residential uses, California State University Long Beach and Veterans Administration Medical Center, also exists. Industrial land uses in the eastern portion of the Project area, the Colorado Lagoon Park, Bixby Village Golf Course, Marina Vista Park, and Los Cerritos Wetlands have less light and glare.

### 5.1.2 Thresholds of Significance

According to Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, a project would normally have a significant effect on the environment if the project would:

AE-1 Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista.

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- AE-2 Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway.
- AE-3 Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings.
- AE-4 Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area.

### 5.1.3 Environmental Impacts

#### Methodology

Aesthetic impacts can be assessed by considering proposed grade separations, landform alteration, building setbacks, scale, massing, and landscaping features associated with project design. The information presented in this section is based on field reconnaissance, review of the proposed land use plan, aerial photographs, and other graphic representations as presented in the proposed Specific Plan. This analysis identifies and objectively examines factors that contribute to the perception of aesthetic quality and potential impacts. It should be noted, however, that there are no locally defined standards or methodologies for the assessment of aesthetic impacts for residential projects.

The following impact analysis addresses thresholds of significance for which the Initial Study disclosed potentially significant impacts. The applicable thresholds are identified in brackets after the impact statement.

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**Impact 5.1-1: Buildout of the proposed Project would not substantially obstruct a scenic vista. [Threshold AE-1]**

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**Impact Analysis:** As shown in Figures 5.1-1a and 5.1.1b, most of the Project area's notable viewsheds are those visible from major arterial highways, including 2nd Street, Studebaker Road, and PCH. These are discussed below in detail.

Other existing scenic vistas include views southward from Marina Vista Park toward the Marine Stadium and views from elevated portions of SR-22/7th Street southward toward the Los Cerritos Wetlands. These viewsheds would not be expected to change dramatically since no land use changes or changes in development capacity are planned for the northern half of the Project area under the proposed Specific Plan. Although new industrial uses could be constructed in the northeast quadrant of the Project area and could be visible from Viewshed H (see Figure 5.1.1a), industrial uses are already present in that location and views of the wetlands beyond are already obstructed under existing conditions.

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### Views from 2nd Street

Second Street traverses the Project area in an east-west direction and offer existing close-range views of the Los Cerritos Wetlands (to the north and south) and distant views of the San Gabriel Mountains (to the north and east). Distant views of the San Gabriel Mountains are already limited and would not be further obstructed since the alignment of the roadway (and related eastward sightline) would be maintained. Viewshed D, which is visible while crossing over Alamitos Bay from the Naples neighborhood, is already obstructed by commercial buildings, ornamental trees, and signage in the foreground and the Haynes Generating Station in the middle distance. Despite its proximity to the Los Cerritos Wetlands, Viewshed D offers no existing scenic views of the wetlands. Therefore, new development along the PCH corridor, allowed under the proposed Specific Plan, would not obstruct an existing scenic vista in that location. Upon buildout of the Specific Plan, Viewsheds F and J would experience beneficial impacts to scenic vistas since the plan encourages restoration of the Los Cerritos Wetlands. The proposed Specific Plan also encourages the consolidation of oil well pumps and other facilities that currently block views of the wetlands.

### Views from Studebaker Road

Like 2nd Street, Studebaker Road offers distant views of the San Gabriel Mountains and closer views of the Los Cerritos Wetlands. Wetland restoration activities promoted by the proposed Specific Plan would reduce visual obstructions of the Los Cerritos Wetlands (as seen from Viewsheds G and I). Landscaping buffers required along Studebaker as part of any new industrial development to the east (see Chapter 5, *Development Standards*, of the Specific Plan) would aid in preserving existing distant views looking north and east.

### Views from PCH

Scenic views visible from the PCH corridor (as seen in Viewsheds B, C, L, and K) are generally obstructed under existing conditions by commercial buildings, ornamental trees, signage, and other elements of the urban environment. Views of Alamitos Bay are visible from Marina Drive south of PCH, but these views are substantially obstructed by boats in the marina. The most generous views of the Los Cerritos Wetlands visible from the PCH corridor are found at Viewshed B where PCH crosses the Los Cerritos Channel. Elsewhere, views of the wetlands are generally blocked by retail and office buildings in the Marketplace shopping center.

Upon buildout of the proposed Specific Plan, the PCH corridor would experience the most change in land uses and building intensity, including the introduction of pedestrian-oriented mixed uses, a modified street scene along PCH, and buildings up to seven stories tall. However, the Specific Plan includes extensive development standards and design guidelines aimed at providing new “water and wetlands” view corridors along PCH (see Section 5.2 (e) of Chapter 5 and Section 7.1.2 of Chapter 7). A conceptual diagram of this concept is shown in Figure 5.1-2. The block structure and street

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network required by the Specific Plan would introduce new sightlines that would extend between PCH and the scenic vistas beyond, including views of Alamitos Bay to the west and the Los Cerritos Wetlands to the east. Because no view corridors currently exist along this segment of PCH (between 2nd Street and the San Gabriel River), impacts of the proposed Project's implementation would be beneficial. For additional analysis related to scenic resources visible from PCH, see Impact 5.1-2, below.

### Conclusion

In summary, the majority of the Project area would experience little to no change in visible appearance upon buildout of the Specific Plan. Therefore, scenic views from these locations would be minimal. Scenic views from major roadways traversing the Project area would either be unchanged or improved due to 1) future restoration activities and consolidation of oil extraction infrastructure as encouraged by the Specific Plan, 2) preservation of roadway alignments that offer distant views of the San Gabriel Mountains, and 3) the required introduction of new view corridors in the portion of the Project area that would experience the most new urban development. Upon implementation of the proposed Project, adverse impacts to existing scenic views would be less than significant.

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### Impact 5.1-2: The proposed Project would not adversely impact scenic resources along Pacific Coast Highway. [Threshold AE-2]

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**Impact Analysis:** Caltrans' California Scenic Highway Mapping System designates PCH an eligible state scenic highway (Caltrans 2011). PCH traverses the Project area in a northwest-southeast direction through existing residential and commercial neighborhoods, including the Colorado Street neighborhood, Spinnaker/Bay Harbor neighborhood, Loynes neighborhood, and Marina Pacifica and Marketplace Districts (see Figure 3-3, *Aerial Photograph*). The eligible segment of the highway spans from the intersection of PCH and Lakewood Boulevard in the northwest portion of the Project area to south Orange County in the city of Dana Point. In order for the highway to become officially designated as a scenic highway, the local governing body would need to apply to Caltrans for scenic highway approval and adopt a Corridor Protection Program. 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 (Caltrans 2015).

Although the relevant segment of PCH is not officially designated as a scenic highway, there are scenic views visible from PCH (see viewsheds B, C, L and K in Figures 5.1-1a and 5.1-1b, *Project Area Viewsheds*). Viewshed B is along the bridge over the Los Cerritos Channel and provides views towards Jack Nichol Park, the Los Cerritos Wetlands, several hotels and restaurants with parking areas (e.g., Best Western and Acapulco), and the marina. Viewshed C includes views of the Los

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Cerritos Wetlands to the east and commercial uses and parking areas to the west. Viewshed L provides views of the Marina Shores and Marketplace District commercial uses and parking areas. Viewshed K provides views of the bridge over the San Gabriel River.

As shown on Figure 3-4, *Proposed Land Use Plan*, the land on either side of the eligible segment of PCH would be designated primarily as Mixed Use Community Core (i.e., Marina Pacific Mall, Seaport Marina Hotel, Marina Shore and Marketplace) and Coastal Habitat, Wetlands, & Recreation (i.e., Los Cerritos Wetlands). The proposed Mixed Use Community Core land use designation provides residential, regional retail, hotel, and office uses. The focus of this designation is on creating a pedestrian scale environment, including increased connectivity, gathering spaces, and linkages to the marina and wetlands. The Coastal Habitat, Wetlands, & Recreation designation provides for coastal restoration, access, visitor-serving recreational activities, biological reserves, and continued oil extraction operations.

As discussed under Impact 5.1-2, these land use designations would allow intensified development in specific locations. However, buildout of the Specific Plan would generally result in new or intensified urban uses in areas that already feature urban uses that obstruct—or partially obstruct—scenic views from PCH (e.g., Viewshed C facing west and Viewshed L facing east and west). Urban uses would not be allowed in areas that currently feature expansive horizontal planes of vision offering views of scenic resources from PCH (e.g., Viewsheds B and C looking east across the Los Cerritos Wetlands to the distant San Gabriel Mountains).

One notable exception is the “Pumpkin Patch” site at PCH and Studebaker Road (Viewshed K), where new industrial uses (likely an oil extraction facility; see Section 5.11, *Mineral Resources*, of this DEIR) would be allowed on an existing vacant lot. However, eastward views of the Los Cerritos Wetlands and San Gabriel Mountains from this location are already obstructed by commercial buildings and trees in the foreground and the Haynes Generating Station in the middle distance. Therefore, permitted land uses at this location would not be expected to dramatically diminish any existing scenic views.

Because PCH is not an officially designed scenic highway in the Project area, and because buildout of the proposed Project would concentrate new development and redevelopment in areas that already feature urban uses, adverse impacts to scenic views visible from a state scenic highway would be minimal. Furthermore, development standards and design guidelines in the Specific Plan include provisions aimed at protecting existing viewsheds and promoting the creation of new “water and wetlands” view corridors along PCH (see Section 5.2(e) of Chapter 5 and Section 7.1.2 of Chapter 7 of the Specific Plan). Therefore, impacts related to state scenic highways would be less than significant.

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**Impact 5.1-3: Buildout of the proposed Project would alter and intensify development in the Specific Plan area, but would not adversely impact the existing visual appearance of the Project area. [Threshold AE-3]**

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***Impact Analysis:*** Buildout of the proposed Specific Plan would allow for the development of an additional 5,439 dwelling units and 573,576 square feet of nonresidential building space in the Project area compared to existing conditions. The Specific Plan would establish the necessary plans, development standards, regulations, infrastructure requirements, design guidelines, and implementation programs on which subsequent project-related development activities would be founded.

### **Changes in Visual Appearance and Character**

Because most of the land use changes and additional development capacity proposed by the Specific Plan are concentrated in a few areas of the Project area (see Figure 4-1, *Areas of Change*, in Chapter 4 of the Specific Plan), anticipated changes to visual appearance and character are best described by breaking the area into three subareas: the area's existing residential neighborhoods, the commercial corridor spanning the segment of PCH that traverses the Project area, and the Los Cerritos Wetlands. While aggregate aesthetic impacts in the Project area would be dependent on the design of individual development and infrastructure projects, anticipated impacts can be generalized based on the type, scale, amount, and location of new development allowed by the Specific Plan.

#### *Residential Neighborhoods*

As indicated in Chapter 4, *Community Structure and Land Use Plan*, of the Specific Plan, no land use changes or additional development capacity are planned for a majority of the Project area, including the residential neighborhoods located north of the Los Cerritos Channel. These neighborhoods are built out with established single-family and multifamily residential uses. During public workshops held related to the proposed Project, residents and other members of the community made it clear that the community wanted to retain the design, scale and visual character of these neighborhoods under the proposed Specific Plan. Therefore, no land use changes are planned for the Project area's residential neighborhoods. At buildout of the Specific Plan, these areas would be expected to experience only very minor changes in visual appearance and character. Therefore, aesthetic impacts in residential neighborhoods would be less than significant.

#### *PCH Corridor*

Most land use changes, changes in development capacity, and public improvements proposed under the Specific Plan are planned for the corridor along PCH. During community meetings and Community Advisory Committee workshops held for the proposed Project, it was evident that if any change were to occur in the Project area, properties south of the Los Cerritos Channel—namely

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the commercial uses along PCH—would be the most suitable areas to accommodate a transition of uses over time. These properties have the greatest potential to integrate a mix of uses in a condensed area to minimize impacts on wetlands resources and also to create the pedestrian-friendly activity center called for in the Southeast Area Specific Plan Vision (see Chapter 3, *Vision, Priorities, and Guiding Principles*, of the Specific Plan).

The proposed Mixed Use Community Core designation would affect the existing commercial corridor that includes the Marina Pacific Mall, Marketplace, Seaport Marina Hotel, and Marina Shores shopping center. This area is envisioned as the primary activity center in the Project area and provides for a mix of uses including residential, regional retail, hotel, and office uses. The focus of this designation is on creating a pedestrian scale environment, including increased connectivity, gathering spaces, and linkages to the marina and wetlands. Permitted, conditionally permitted and prohibited uses for this designation are identified in Table 4-4, *Permitted Uses*, of the Specific Plan.

The Mixed Use Marina designation provides for residential, neighborhood retail, hotel, visitor serving recreation, and marina uses on the Golden Sails property. The focus of this designation is on creating a strong interface and connections with Los Cerritos Channel and Bahia Cerritos Marina. This area is also a transition from the Mixed Use Community Core areas to lower density residential uses north of the Los Cerritos Channel. Coastal recreation uses (boating, kayaking, etc.) and public access to coastal waters is encouraged in this area.

Because these two designations would allow the greatest intensification of land uses—including buildings up to seven stories in some locations—and the greatest flexibility for future development, the affected parcels along PCH would be expected to see the greatest change in physical appearance and community character over time as parcels are redeveloped. However, the proposed Specific Plan contains numerous development standards (see Chapter 5 of the Specific Plan) and design guidelines (see Chapter 7 of the Specific Plan) designed to maintain a consistent and aesthetically-pleasing community character along the PCH corridor. These include provisions related to:

- Building intensity and massing
- Building placement, setbacks and height
- Parking design
- Block structure, site access, and walkability
- Gateways and views
- Streetscape amenities and landscaping
- Architectural character
- Materials and color

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As shown in Figure 5.1-3, *Conceptual Renderings*, the guidelines have been designed to preserve the Project area's unique identity. In particular, the Specific Plan's design standards and guidelines focus on creating view corridors from PCH to the area's waterways, creating streetscapes that offer visual interest, and ensuring that buildings "step back" from scenic amenities and community edges. Compliance with these standards and guidelines would ensure that any change in visual appearance along the PCH corridor would reflect the existing community character and maritime atmosphere of the Project area. Therefore, adverse aesthetic impacts along the PCH corridor would be less than significant.

### *Los Cerritos Wetlands and Northeast Project Area*

The proposed Specific Plan contains numerous provisions that encourage restoration of the Los Cerritos Wetlands: it establishes a Wetland Monitoring Fund (Section 5.9 of the Specific Plan) to preserve and restore wetlands, and it requires wetland buffers for development adjacent to wetlands (Section 5.10 of the Specific Plan). The proposed Specific Plan also encourages the consolidation of existing oil extraction facilities, which would create greater expanses of land available for wetland restoration. Furthermore, the proposed Coastal Habitat, Wetlands, & Recreation designation allows for limited new development, such as trails, visitor-serving recreation to the extent that it integrates with the natural landscape (Section 7.2.12 Boat Storage Facilities), and an interpretive center ancillary to the wetlands. Urbanized land uses are not allowed in the wetlands. Therefore, implementation of the Specific Plan would result in beneficial impacts in this portion of the Project area.

Although new industrial uses would be allowed in the northeast corner of the Project area, these would occur only on sites already containing heavy industrial uses. Furthermore, it is expected that proposed plans for this area would include shorter and lower-profile energy facilities that would be less visible from the Project area, reducing impacts on community character in the Los Cerritos Wetlands area. For the above reasons, impacts related to implementation of the proposed Specific Plan would result in less than significant impacts in the Los Cerritos Wetlands.

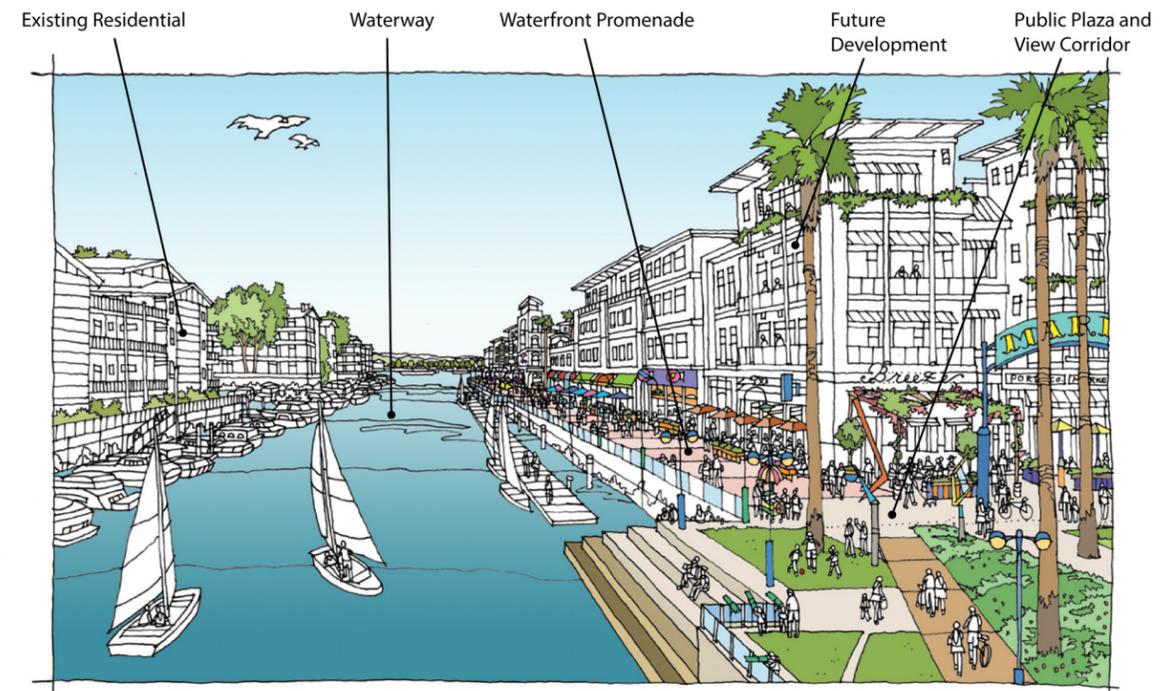
Figure 5.1-3 - Conceptual Renderings  
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New development would be encouraged to create a visually dynamic and friendly interface with the street.



Pedestrian paseos would extend view corridors to the marina and wetlands.



Building placement in the Mixed Use Community Core would create midblock pathways and view corridors connecting the neighborhood with the adjacent waterway. The scale and massing of new buildings would complement existing residential uses across the water.



Improvements to the PCH street section would emphasize a multi-modal approach to transportation while preserving long-range views along the corridor.



This conceptual diagram shows how future redevelopment in the Mixed Use Community Core would provide physical and visual connections between PCH and the waterfront. These connections would enhance existing scenic views.

0 1,500  
Scale (Feet)



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**Conclusion**

As discussed above, implementation of the proposed Project would generally result in beneficial impacts related to visual appearance and character. Land use changes and additional development capacity are planned for areas already dominated by urban, nonresidential land uses and away from established residential neighborhoods. Compliance with development standards and design guidelines identified in the Specific Plan would ensure that new development would be visually compatible with adjacent development and the Project area's overall community character. Lastly, the Specific Plan encourages consolidation of oil extraction facilities in the Los Cerritos Wetlands, allowing for these areas to be restored as viable habitat and recreational open space. Upon compliance with provisions of the proposed Specific Plan, adverse impacts related to visual appearance and character would be less than significant, and no mitigation is necessary.

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**Impact 5.1-4: Implementation of the proposed Project would generate additional light and glare into the Project area. [Threshold AE-4]**

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***Impact Analysis:*** Nighttime light and glare impacts are the effects of a project's exterior lighting upon adjacent uses and areas. Glare can also be generated by light reflecting off passing cars and large expanses of glass windows or other reflective surfaces. Excessive light and/or glare can impair vision, cause annoyance, affect sleep patterns, and generate safety hazards when experienced by drivers. Light and glare impacts are determined through a comparison of the existing light and glare sources with the proposed lighting plan or policies and the type of development proposed.

The Project area is highly urbanized and built out, and there are many existing sources of nighttime illumination. These include street and parking area lights, security lighting, and interior/exterior lighting on existing buildings. The Project area is also highly traveled by people driving in and out of the Long Beach area, which causes additional day and nighttime light and glare. Existing commercial, office, and industrial land uses throughout the Project area are not considered sensitive land uses with regard to nighttime lighting and glare. However, there are a few sensitive land uses within the area, which include single-family residences, multifamily residences, mobile homes, and one school. Additionally, many of the areas surrounding the Project area include single- and multifamily residences.

The proposed Project would alter and intensify land uses and their related lighting sources in the Specific Plan area by introducing new buildings (with both interior and exterior lighting), security, sign, and parking lights. In addition to necessary lighting for safety and security, the proposed Project would also introduce aesthetic lighting, such as illumination of areas within the neighborhood commercial areas (e.g., Bixby Plaza and Marina Plaza) and the mixed use core area (e.g., Marina Pacific Mall, Seaport Marina Hotel, Marketplace, and Marina Shores) for architectural and façade detailing. Additional sources of glare could also be introduced through the Project area in

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the form of large expanses of glazing (i.e., glass windows) and building materials (e.g., reflective metal treatments).

### Design Guidelines

Future development projects accommodated under the proposed Specific Plan would likely include a wide variety of building materials and architectural treatments. However, these materials and treatments would likely be similar those existing throughout the Specific Plan area. Accordingly, they would not be expected to create substantial day or nighttime glare. Windows that would be installed in residential and nonresidential development projects could potentially increase sources of glare, because they would reflect sunlight during certain times of the day. In addition, vehicles driving through the Project area or parked on future development sites in the Project area would increase the potential for reflected sunlight during certain times of the day. However, glare from these sources would be temporary and typical of the surrounding area, and would not be expected to increase beyond what is typical for an existing urbanized area.

In order to ensure that new development in the Project area does not generate excessive light and glare, the proposed Specific Plan includes numerous design guidelines aimed at reducing the impacts of light and glare on adjacent land uses. The list of sections from the Specific Plan below includes standards and guidelines related to aesthetics, energy efficiency, safety, and protection of biological resources (see “bird-safe treatments”).

#### *Section 7.1.8, Public and Private Open Space*

- Landscaping shall be planted in raised pots and beds. Private open spaces should incorporate trees and other plantings in permanent and temporary planters that will shade, reduce reflective glare, and add interest to the space.

#### *Section 7.1.9, Parking and Loading*

- Parking structure decks should screen night lighting to avoid uplighting, spillover and glare on nearby properties.

#### *Section 7.2.2, Materials and Color*

- Buildings shall use durable, high quality materials to develop long-lasting buildings that can be adaptively reused over time. Natural stone, precast concrete, and factory-finished metal panels (heavy gauge only, in corrugated or flat sections, low reflectivity) are preferred.

#### *Section 7.2.3, Facades and Ground Floor*

- Buildings should have a variety of solid and nontransparent or treated transparent glass surfaces.

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*Section 7.2.10, Architectural Lighting*

- Direct lamp glare from unshielded floodlights is not permitted.
- Lighting that aims light directly into the night sky is prohibited.
- Internal and external storefront lighting should be designed for ground floor retail and restaurant spaces to augment the pedestrian space and encourage window-shopping even when stores are closed.
- Special illumination should be used to highlight main building entrances and add interest to the building facade. Subtle lighting to accent the architecture and special architectural elements (such as distinctive building rooftops) is encouraged.
- Secondary building entrances and parking/ loading/service access points should have lighting compatible with the project's lighting to maintain a safe environment around the entire project, especially where pedestrians and other building tenants circulate.
- Automatic timers should be programmed to maximize personal safety at night while conserving energy. They should be reset seasonally to match the flux of dusk/dawn.
- Exterior lighting should be designed and located in such a way that it does not project off-site or onto adjacent uses. This is especially critical with neighboring residential uses.

*Section 7.2.14, Bird-Safe Treatments*

- Nighttime lighting shall be minimized to levels necessary to provide pedestrian security.
- Buildings shall be designed to minimize light spillage and maximize light shielding to the maximum feasible extent.
- Building lighting shall be shielded and directed downward, up-lighting is prohibited. Use of “event” searchlights or spotlights shall be prohibited.
- Landscape lighting shall be limited to low-intensity and low-wattage lights.
- Red lights shall be limited to only that necessary for security and safety warning purposes, blue or green lights are a better option if the use of colored lights is desired.
- For exterior courtyard and recessed areas, building edges shall be clearly defined by using opaque materials or non-reflective glass.

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- Compliance with the above design guidelines would ensure that new buildings and other urban infrastructure would be designed to reduce excessive light and glare.

#### Municipal Code

Additionally, future development projects would be required to adhere to the lighting standards outlined in the City's Municipal Code, thereby ensuring that existing and future project residents throughout the Project area and its surroundings are protected from existing and project-related lighting sources. Specifically, Sections 21.41.259 (Parking Areas, Lighting), 21.44.855 (Light and Glare Intrusion Prevention), and 21.44.600 (Prohibited Signs) of the City's Municipal Code require that all parking area lighting be illuminated with lights directed and shielded to prevent light spillover to adjacent properties, that any electronic signs be adequately shielded and properly oriented and aimed, and all floodlights be hooded or shielded to minimize light and glare on public right-of-way, adjacent property, or other sensitive land uses (e.g., homes, schools, churches, etc.), respectively. Compliance with these provisions would be ensured through the City's development review and building plan check process.

#### Conclusion

Overall, lighting and glare impacts associated with buildout of the proposed Specific Plan would not substantially increase nighttime light and glare in the Specific Plan area or its surroundings. Compliance with components of the Specific Plan and the City's Municipal Code would ensure that development in the Project area would not produce a substantial increase in light or glare. Project-related light and glare impacts would not be significant, and no mitigation is necessary.

### 5.1.4 Cumulative Impacts

#### Visual Character and Quality

Aesthetic impacts are localized to the Project area and its immediate surroundings. No major projects are approved, planned, or anticipated for the general vicinity of the Project area in the near future. Furthermore, surrounding neighborhoods, including Belmont Shore, central Seal Beach, Leisure World in Seal Beach, and areas around California State University, Long Beach are largely built out; none of these areas are anticipated to experience substantial growth in the near future due to land constraints. Accordingly, their visual character and appearance are not anticipated to dramatically change or otherwise adversely affect the community when combined with aesthetic changes in the Project area. In consideration of these factors, the Project's contribution to cumulative aesthetic impacts would be less than considerable and, therefore, less than cumulatively significant.

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### Scenic Views and Resources

Scenic resources visible from PCH, including views of the San Gabriel Mountains, are already obscured or partially obscured by buildings, ornamental trees, electrical lines, and other visual obstructions in the vicinity surrounding the Project area. Furthermore, the surrounding vicinity is largely built out and not zoned for land uses that would substantially obscure scenic resources when combined with possible redevelopment in the Project area. Therefore, the Project's contribution to cumulative impacts to scenic resources visible from PCH or elsewhere in the Project area would be less than significant.

### Light and Glare

Due to the highly developed nature of the Project area and the existence of light and glare from existing commercial and residential uses and surrounding properties, implementation of the Specific Plan would not add significantly to the generation of nighttime light and glare in the vicinity of the Project area. Infill projects in surrounding neighborhoods (Belmont Shore, Seal Beach, etc.) would be surrounded by other light and glare-producing land uses. Their impacts would therefore not combine with those of the Project to adversely impact existing or planned sensitive receptors such as single-family homes. Therefore, the Project's contribution to cumulative light and glare impacts would be less than considerable, and therefore less than cumulatively significant.

### 5.1.5 Existing Regulations

#### State Regulations

- California's Building Energy Efficiency Standards for Residential and Nonresidential Buildings, Title 24, Part 6, of the California Code of Regulations

#### City of Long Beach Municipal Code

- Section 21.41.259 Parking Areas, Lighting
- Section 21.44.855 Light and Glare Intrusion Prevention
- Section 21.44.600 Prohibited Signs

### 5.1.6 Level of Significance Before Mitigation

Upon implementation of regulatory requirements and standard conditions of approval, Impacts 5.1-1 through 5.1-4 would be less than significant.

### 5.1.7 Mitigation Measures

No significant adverse impacts related to aesthetics were identified and no mitigation is necessary.

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### 5.1.8 Level of Significance After Mitigation

No significant adverse impacts related to aesthetics were identified.

### 5.1.9 References

California Department of Transportation (Caltrans). 2011, September 7. California Scenic Highway Mapping System – Riverside County.

[http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/LandArch/16\\_livability/scenic\\_highways/index.htm](http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/LandArch/16_livability/scenic_highways/index.htm).

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Long Beach, City of. 2014, August 28. Southeast Area Development Improvement Plan Opportunities & Constraints Workbook.

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