

This section discusses the proposed project relative to potential effects on designated scenic resources or vistas, conflicts with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality, and adverse lighting and glare effects. The analysis in this section is largely based on viewshed characteristics, site topography, available public views in the project vicinity, and photo simulations prepared for the project based on building plans. Guidelines and policies that pertain to aesthetic resources are identified in the *City of Encinitas General Plan* (1991) and the *City of Encinitas 2013-2023 Housing Element Update Environmental Assessment* (2018).

## ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

### ***Project Setting***

The project site is located at the northeast corner of Piraeus Street and Plato Place in the Leucadia community of Encinitas, in central coastal San Diego County. Undeveloped land borders the site to the north (proposed off-site preserve area). Existing single-family residential development lies immediately to the east of the project site and at a distance to the south and southeast across Plato Place. Piraeus Street parallels the western property boundary, with Interstate 5 (I-5) running north-south further to the west.

The project site is currently undeveloped, vacant land. On-site vegetation communities generally consist of deerweed scrub, disturbed land cover, coastal sage scrub community (California sagebrush-California buckwheat scrub), and chamise chaparral. No large trees are present within the project site. Chamise chaparral is present in the northern portion of the project site. The northern off-site preserve area is generally occupied by chamise chaparral, coastal sage scrub community, California brittle bush scrub, annual brome grassland, Lemonade berry scrub, and giant reed break. One walnut tree and several Mexican fan palms are also located within the northern off-site preserve area.

Site topography is relatively flat with slopes along the western and northern edges. Between the project site and the off-site preserve area exists a steep slope.

### **Project Viewshed**

The viewshed is generally the area that is visible from an observer's viewpoint and includes the screening effects of intervening vegetation, topography, and/or physical structures. Viewsheds may occur from designated scenic viewpoints or from singular vantage points where an unobstructed view of visual components within the landscape exists. A viewshed is composed of such elements as topography and natural land features (e.g., hillsides, mountains) which may

**3.1 Aesthetics**

limit or restrict potential views, as well as other physical features within the landscape, such as buildings, vegetation, and water features. Potential visual impacts within a viewshed may be affected by the distance of the viewer from a site, the frequency and length of views, the personal perception of the viewer, and physical and/or atmospheric conditions at the time viewing occurs.

Within the surrounding viewshed, varied views of the site from vehicles (or other modes of transit, such as bicycles) are afforded as passengers travel along I-5, La Costa Avenue, Sky Loft Road, Piraeus Street, and/or Plato Place, as well as other roadways proximate to the site. Intermittent views may also occur from area roads at a distance to the north of the site (e.g., from across Batiquitos Lagoon) and/or at higher elevations. However, the viewshed is somewhat limited to those properties in proximity to the project site, as views from surrounding public vantage points (in particular to the west and south, as well as further to the east of the site beyond the adjacent existing residential uses) are restricted due to intervening vegetation and existing development.

Additionally, critical viewsheds are defined in the City's General Plan Resource Management Element as those areas that extend radially for approximately 2,000 feet from designated vista points and cover areas upon which development could potentially obstruct, limit, or degrade the view. The project site lies within an identified critical viewshed area (City of Encinitas 1991); refer to Figure 3.1-1A, Scenic Resources.

**Viewer Response**

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

**Viewer Sensitivity**

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

### **Viewer Groups**

Viewer groups would mainly consist of individuals traveling in proximity to the project site, generally along Piraeus Street, Plato Place, Sky Loft Road, I-5, La Costa Avenue, and Gabbiano Lane. Viewer groups are anticipated to consist of local residents and/or visitors traveling through the area viewing the subject site from surrounding public roads, as well as area sidewalks or trails. Roadway users would primarily be drivers and passengers in cars, trucks, and on motorcycles, as well as bicyclists.

### **Viewer Exposure**

Views of the site from vehicles (or other modes of transportation) traveling along area roadways would vary due to distance. Views would generally be restricted by existing development, intervening vegetation, area topography, and the length of time the site is actually visible from a particular location along an area roadway. In determining the exposure of each viewer group, several factors are considered, including the number of viewers experiencing visual changes, duration of views, anticipated speed at which viewers would be traveling, and the relation of the viewer to the project site. Table 3.1-1 below summarizes the anticipated viewer groups and the potential viewing experience of each.

**Table 3.1-1: Viewer Groups and Anticipated Exposure**

<b>Anticipated Viewer Group</b>	<b>Number of Viewers</b>	<b>Distance to the Project</b>	<b>Anticipated Views</b>	<b>Quality of Existing View</b>	<b>Viewer Sensitivity</b>	<b>Duration of Viewer Exposure</b>
Piraeus Street (vehicles, bicyclists, pedestrians)	Varies	Adjacent to project site	Project site is visible; Views vary based upon viewing location	Low -Moderate	Moderate	Varies; estimated 45-60 seconds depending on travel speed (posted speed limit is 45 mph)
Plato Place (vehicles, pedestrians)	Varies	Adjacent to project site	Project site is visible; Northern off-site preserve area is obscured from view	Low -Moderate	Moderate	Varies; estimated 10-15 seconds depending on travel speed (no posted speed limit)
Sky Loft Road (vehicles)	Varies	0.13 miles (north or project site)	Portions of the project site are visible; Northern off-site preserve area is visible	Low - Moderate	Moderate	Varies; estimated 15-20 seconds depending on travel speed (posted speed limit is 25 mph)

Table 3.1-1, continued

Anticipated Viewer Group	Number of Viewers	Distance to the Project	Anticipated Views	Quality of Existing View	Viewer Sensitivity	Duration of Viewer Exposure
Interstate 5 (vehicles)	Varies	0.02 miles (west of project site)	Entire project site is visible	Low -Moderate	Low - Moderate	Varies; estimated 10-20 seconds depending on travel speed (posted speed limit is 65 mph)
La Costa Avenue (vehicles, bicyclists, pedestrians)	Varies	0.3 miles (north of project site)	Entire project site and northern off-site preserve area are visible	Moderate	Low - Moderate	Varies; estimated 10-15 seconds depending on travel speed (posted speed limit is 55 mph)
Gabbiano Lane/Public Trails Across Batiquitos Lagoon (vehicles, bicyclists, pedestrians)	Varies	0.7 miles (northwest of project site)	Views of project site are intermittent/obscured; portions of northern off-site preserve area may be visible	Moderate	Low	Varies; estimated 5-30 seconds depending on travel speed
Residences in Surrounding Area (Private Views)	Varies; not public views	Varies	Portions of project site and off-site preserve area may be visible or visible to a degree from certain vantage points	Moderate	Moderate	Varies; average of 10 to 12 hours per day

Notes: mph = miles per hour

**Principal Viewpoints Considered (Key Views)**

Intermittent views of the site are experienced by viewers from varying public vantage points within the surrounding viewshed (e.g., residential properties to the east and southeast; Batiquitos Lagoon). The following are key public views from which it is anticipated that the proposed improvements would have the highest degree of visibility; refer also to Figure 3.1-1B, Key View Map:

- **Key View 1:** View from the southwest corner of Piraeus Street and Plato Place looking north/northeast.

- **Key View 2:** View from Plato Place near the southeastern portion of the site looking west/northwest.
- **Key View 3:** View from 1690 Gascony Road (Station White) looking west.
- **Key View 4:** View from southbound Interstate 5 looking east.

#### *Station White*

Station White is a historic overlook located directly east of Gascony Road in Encinitas. The observation post was constructed in 1942 and designated as a World War II outlook due to the clear views of the Pacific Ocean it provided. After chief spotter Richard Scott contracted polio and was no longer able to manage Station White operations, many local volunteers, primarily women, acquired spotting duties at the observation post. In June 2006, Station White was dedicated as a historic viewshed within the City of Encinitas.

In March 2011, Encinitas City Council passed Resolution 2011-04, consistent with the Local Coastal Program, to add a new Policy 4.9 to the Resource Management Element of the City's General Plan, as described below. In recognition of Station White's historic views as culturally and historically significant to the local community, the new policy designated Station White as the first historical viewshed within the City, and the Visual Resource Sensitivity Map of the General Plan was revised to include Station White as a historic viewshed.

In addition, Policy 4.10 (previously Policy 4.9) was revised to include proposed development adjacent to historic viewsheds as an additional location subject to road and development design criteria outlined in the Resource Management Element, and to the provisions outlined in the Scenic/Visual Corridor Overlay Zone. Additionally in 2011, the City Council amended Chapter 30.34, Section 80 of the City's Municipal Code to add subsection C "Historic Viewsheds," thereby including such viewsheds within the City's Scenic/Visual Corridor Overlay Zone. This addition granted the City's Planning Commission the authority to establish historic viewsheds based on variety of resources, such as written descriptions or photos.

## **REGULATORY FRAMEWORK**

### ***Federal***

There are no federal regulations pertaining to aesthetics or visual resources that are applicable to the proposed project.

---

**3.1 Aesthetics*****State*****Caltrans Scenic Highway Program**

The State of California adopted a Scenic Highway Program (Streets and Highways Code Section 260 et seq.) to preserve and protect scenic highway corridors from change that would diminish the visual quality of areas adjacent to highways. The scenic designation is based on the amount of natural landscape visible by motorists, the scenic quality of the landscape, and the extent to which development intrudes upon the motorist's enjoyment of the view.

Interstate 5 in the vicinity of the project site is designated as an eligible state scenic highway under Caltrans' Scenic Highway Program. The segment identified as eligible for consideration as a state scenic highway extends from State Route 74 near the City of San Juan Capistrano to the north to its intersection with State Route 75, across the San Diego Bay from the City of Coronado to the south.

**California Coastal Act**

The California Coastal Act protects coastal resources, assists local governments in implementing coastal planning and regulatory powers, and controls construction along the state's 1,100 miles of shoreline through the issuance of Coastal Development Permits (CDPs). Under the act, local governments are encouraged to adopt Local Coastal Programs (LCP) within their jurisdictions. The LCP consists of a Land Use Plan (LUP) with goals and regulatory policies as well as a set of implementing ordinances. Even if a local government has an approved LCP, the California Coastal Commission (CCC) occasionally retains jurisdiction over some lands and continues to issue permits in those "retained jurisdictional" areas.

***Local*****City of Encinitas General Plan**

The City's General Plan includes background information, goals, and policies aimed at the protection and maintenance of community character and aesthetic resources (which incorporate goals and policies of the City's LCP). Relevant goals and policies are listed below.

*Circulation Element*

**GOAL 4:**                    **The City should make every effort to develop a circulation system that highlights the environmental and scenic amenities of the area. (Coastal Act/30251)**

**Policy 4.1:**                    **Design roads to enhance scenic areas. (Coastal Act/30251)**

- Policy 4.2: Promote and encourage roadside and median landscaping.
- Policy 4.10: Develop street lighting standards, where appropriate, consistent with neighborhood/community character and night sky viewing.
- Policy 4.11: Keep street lighting, curbs, and gutter requirements consistent with individual neighborhood character.
- Policy 4.12: Encourage undergrounding of utilities within street rights-of-way and transportation corridors. (Coastal Act/30251)

*Land Use Element*

**GOAL 1:** Encinitas will strive to be a unique seaside community providing a balance of housing, commercial light industrial/office development, recreation, agriculture and open space compatible with the predominant residential character of the community.

Policy 1.12: The residential character of the City shall be substantially single-family detached housing.

**GOAL 3:** To assure successful planning for future facilities and services, and a proper balance of uses within the city, the City of Encinitas will establish and maintain a maximum density and intensity of residential and commercial uses of land within the City which will:

- a) provide a balance of commercial and residential uses which creates and maintains the quality of life and small-town character of the individual communities; and
- b) protect and enhance the City's natural resources and indigenous wildlife.

**GOAL 6:** Every effort shall be made to ensure that the existing desirable character of the communities is maintained.

**GOAL 7:** Development in the community should provide an identity for the City while maintaining the unique identity of the individual communities. (Coastal Act/30253)

**GOAL 9:** Preserve the existence of present natural open spaces, slopes, bluffs, lagoon areas, and maintain the sense of spaciousness and semirural living within the I-5 View Corridor and within other view corridors, scenic

**highways and vista/view sheds as identified in the Resource Management Element. (Coastal Act/30240/30251)**

Policy 9.2: Encourage retention of buffer zones such as natural vegetation or earth barriers, bluffs, and canyons to protect adjacent areas of freeway corridor from pollutants of noise, exhaust, and light. (Coastal Act/30240/30251)

*Resource Management Element*

**GOAL 3: The City will make every effort possible to preserve significant mature trees, vegetation and wildlife habitat within the Planning Area.**

Policy 3.6: Future development shall maintain significant mature trees to the extent possible and incorporate them into the design of development projects.

**GOAL 4: The City, with the assistance of the State, federal, and regional agencies, shall provide the maximum visual access to coastal and inland views through the acquisition and development of a system of coastal and inland vista points. (Coastal Act/30251)**

Policy 4.5: The City will designate “Scenic/Visual Corridor Overlay” areas within which the character of development would be regulated to protect the integrity of the Vista Points according to the following criteria (Coastal Act/30251/30253):

- Critical viewshed areas should meet the following requirements:
  - Extend radically for 2,000 feet from the Vista Point
  - Cover areas upon which development could potentially obstruct, limit, or degrade the view
- Development within the critical viewshed area should be subject to design review based on the following:
  - Building height, bulk, roof line, and color and scale should not obstruct, limit, or degrade the existing views;
  - Landscaping should be located to screen adjacent undesirable views (parking lot areas, mechanical equipment, etc.).

Policy 4.6: The City will maintain and enhance the scenic highway/visual corridor viewsheds. (Coastal Act/30251)



- Policy 4.7: The City will designate the following view corridors as scenic highway/visual corridor viewsheds (Coastal Act/3025130253):
- La Costa Avenue from just west of I-5 to El Camino Real
- Policy 4.8: The City will designate Scenic/Visual Corridor Overlay and scenic highway viewshed areas as illustrated on the Visual Resource Sensitivity Map (Figure 3) (Coastal Act/30251)
- Policy 4.9: The City will designate historic viewsheds in order to preserve historical views which represent a significant cultural or historic resource to the community. The following historic viewsheds will be developed and maintained as feasible:
- Station White
- Policy 4.10: It is intended that development would be subject to the design review provisions of the Scenic/Visual Corridor Overlay Zone for those locations within scenic view corridors, along scenic highways, and adjacent to significant viewsheds, historic viewsheds, and vista points with the addition of the following design criteria:
- Road Design
    - Type and physical characteristics of roadway should be compatible with natural character of corridor, and with the scenic highway function.
  - Development Design
    - Building and vegetation setbacks, scenic easements, and height and bulk restrictions should be used to maintain existing views and vistas from the roadway.
    - Development that is allowed within a viewshed area must respond in scale, roof line, materials, color, massing, and location on site to the topography, existing vegetation, and colors of the native environment.

### **2013-2021 City of Encinitas General Plan Housing Element Update**

In March 2019, the City Council adopted the Housing Element Update (HEU) which provides the City with a coordinated and comprehensive strategy for promoting the production of safe,

---

**3.1 Aesthetics**

decent, and affordable housing for all within the City. The purpose of the HEU is to ensure that the City establishes policies, procedures, and incentives to increase the quality and quantity of the housing supply in the City. The HEU includes a series of discretionary actions to update and implement the City's Housing Element. Relevant policies and goals related to aesthetics are provided below:

**GOAL 2:                      Sound housing will be provided in the City of Encinitas for all persons.**

Policy 2.4:                      Coordinate the provision of open areas in adjoining residential developments to maximize the benefit of the open space.

Policy 2.5:                      Encourage street planting, landscaping, and undergrounding of utilities.

Policy 2.6:                      Encourage high standards of design, materials, and workmanship in all construction and developments.

Policy 2.7:                      Discourage residential development of steep slopes, canyons, and floodplains.

**Local Coastal Program (LCP)**

The Coastal Act calls for the identification and preservation of significant viewsheds in the Coastal Zone. Section 30251 of the Coastal Act states that "the scenic and visual qualities of the coastal areas shall be considered and protected as a resource of public importance. Permitted development shall be sited and designed to protect views to and along the ocean and scenic coastal areas..." According to the past actions and precedents set by the CCC, the primary concern of this section of the Coastal Act is the protection of ocean and coastal views from public areas (highways, parks, beach access ways, viewpoints, etc.).

Approximately two-thirds of Encinitas is located in the Coastal Zone and falls under CCC jurisdiction. As stated above, in accordance with the Coastal Act, the City has adopted and implements an LCP, which is incorporated into its General Plan as well as into provisions of the Municipal Code and various specific plans. Those policies of the General Plan relevant to the LCP are identified with shaded text throughout the document.

The goals and policies of the LCP are intended to protect, maintain, and enhance the Coastal Zone environment; ensure balanced utilization and conservation; maximize public access to and along the coast; prioritize coastal-dependent and related development; and encourage coordinated state and local initiatives to implement beneficial programs and other educational uses. Any project in the Coastal Zone is subject to review by the City and/or the CCC.

The project site lies within the Coastal Overlay Zone and, as a result, requires a Coastal Development Permit (non-appealable) to ensure conformance with the California Coastal Act. The City is responsible for issuance of a Coastal Development Permit for the project site. Projects within the Coastal Zone Overlay are subject to certain design restrictions for developing in the Coastal Zone (i.e., building height limits, retaining view corridors, maintaining coastal access, and protection of coastal resources).

### **City of Encinitas Municipal Code**

As part of the City's Municipal Code, the Zoning Regulations (Title 30) are used as an implementation mechanism for achieving the goals, objectives, and policies identified in the General Plan. While the General Plan land use designations provide basic criteria and guidelines for future development in the City, specific objective development standards are included in the Zoning Regulations to better define such guidelines. The land use designations identified in the General Plan Land Use Element correspond to the boundaries of one or more zoning districts identified on the City's Zoning Map (i.e., specific plan areas).

### ***Scenic/Visual Corridor Overlay Zone***

The Resource Management Element of the City's General Plan identifies visual resources within the City's boundaries that are considered to contribute to the scenic quality of the local Encinitas community, as well as the larger region. Such visual resources include a variety of scenic vista points, critical viewsheds, scenic roadways, and scenic view corridors (City of Encinitas 1991).

The project site is located adjacent to the I-5 corridor which, from certain vantage points, offers views to the north along the coastline and west to the Pacific Ocean. Additionally, views to the Batiquitos Lagoon may also occur from various vantage points within the City limits in the vicinity of the project site.

Interstate 5 in the vicinity of the project site is identified as a Scenic View Corridor. Additionally, La Costa Avenue between Highway 101 and El Camino Real is designated as a scenic road (City of Encinitas 1991). Two proposed vista points are located to the north of the site: one at the northwest corner of La Costa Avenue and the southbound off-ramp, and one at the northeast corner of La Costa Avenue and the I-5 northbound on-ramp; refer to Figure 3.1-1A, Scenic Resources. The City's Resource Management Element requires the City to designate Scenic/Visual Corridor Overlay Zones within which the character of proposed development is regulated to protect the integrity of the City's designated vista points. Critical viewsheds are defined in the Resource Management Element as those areas that extend radially for approximately 2,000 feet from the vista point and cover areas upon which development could potentially obstruct, limit, or degrade the view. Development within these critical viewshed areas

is subject to design review to ensure building height, bulk, roofline, color, and scale do not limit or degrade existing views and that landscaping is used to screen undesirable views.

### ***City of Encinitas Design Guidelines***

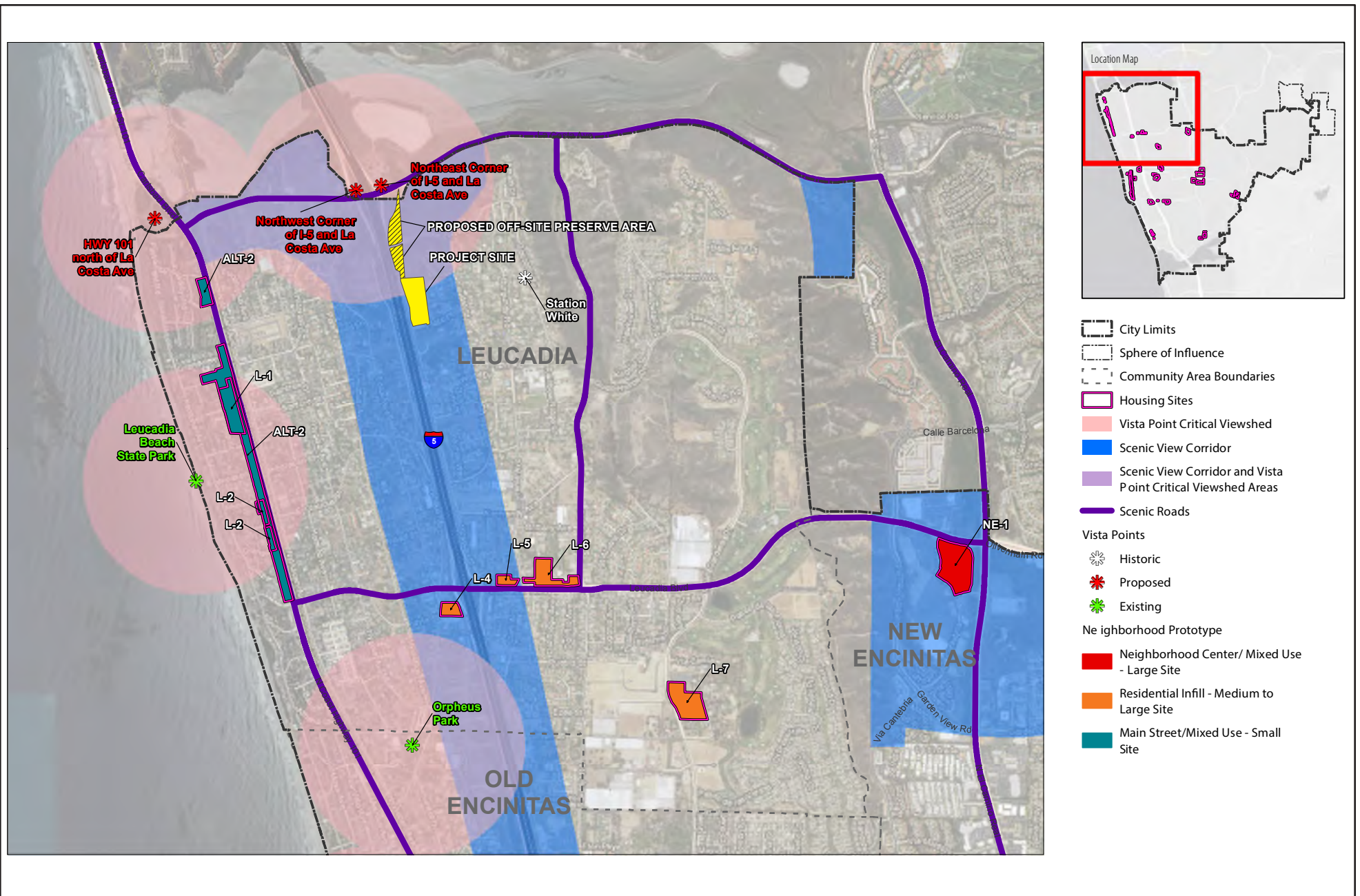
Where a project is subject to design review pursuant to Sections 23.08.030 and 23.08.040 of the Encinitas Municipal Code, it is recommended that applicants review the City of Encinitas' Design Guidelines for applicability to the development being proposed. The design guidelines are intended to guide future development in the City while maintaining the character and architectural design exhibited by the City's varied communities, contributing to a positive physical image and identity, and allowing for creativity and innovation in design.

The following provides a brief list of objective design measures from the City's Design Guidelines that specifically pertain to maintaining existing views:

- 2.5.1 Generally, ground level view corridors should be provided from public streets. This requires space between buildings and/or development of landscaped areas that connect to open space.
- 2.5.2 Landscaped areas should be developed and plant materials selected so as to create and/or preserve view corridors.
- 2.5.3 Site planning for individual parcels shall consider internal view (for example, courtyards) as well as views looking outward.
  - A. Outward views should be framed with tree and shrub massing. Plantings should also soften views of the buildings from surrounding areas.
  - B. Where public streets are located at or below grade of development, the adjacent parkways and slopes should be landscaped with diverse plant materials to enhance motorists' views.
  - C. Parking areas adjacent to view corridors or streets shall be screened.
- 2.5.4 Projects should be designed to preserve some of the significant views through the site. Projects should be designed to preserve significant public views. A significant public view is a view of a significant feature (ocean, lagoon or backcountry) as viewed from public parks and General Plan designated vista points and scenic view corridors. Trees and vegetation that are themselves part of the view quality should be retained.
- 2.5.5 Projects should be designed to preserve some of the significant views through the site enjoyed by residents of nearby properties.

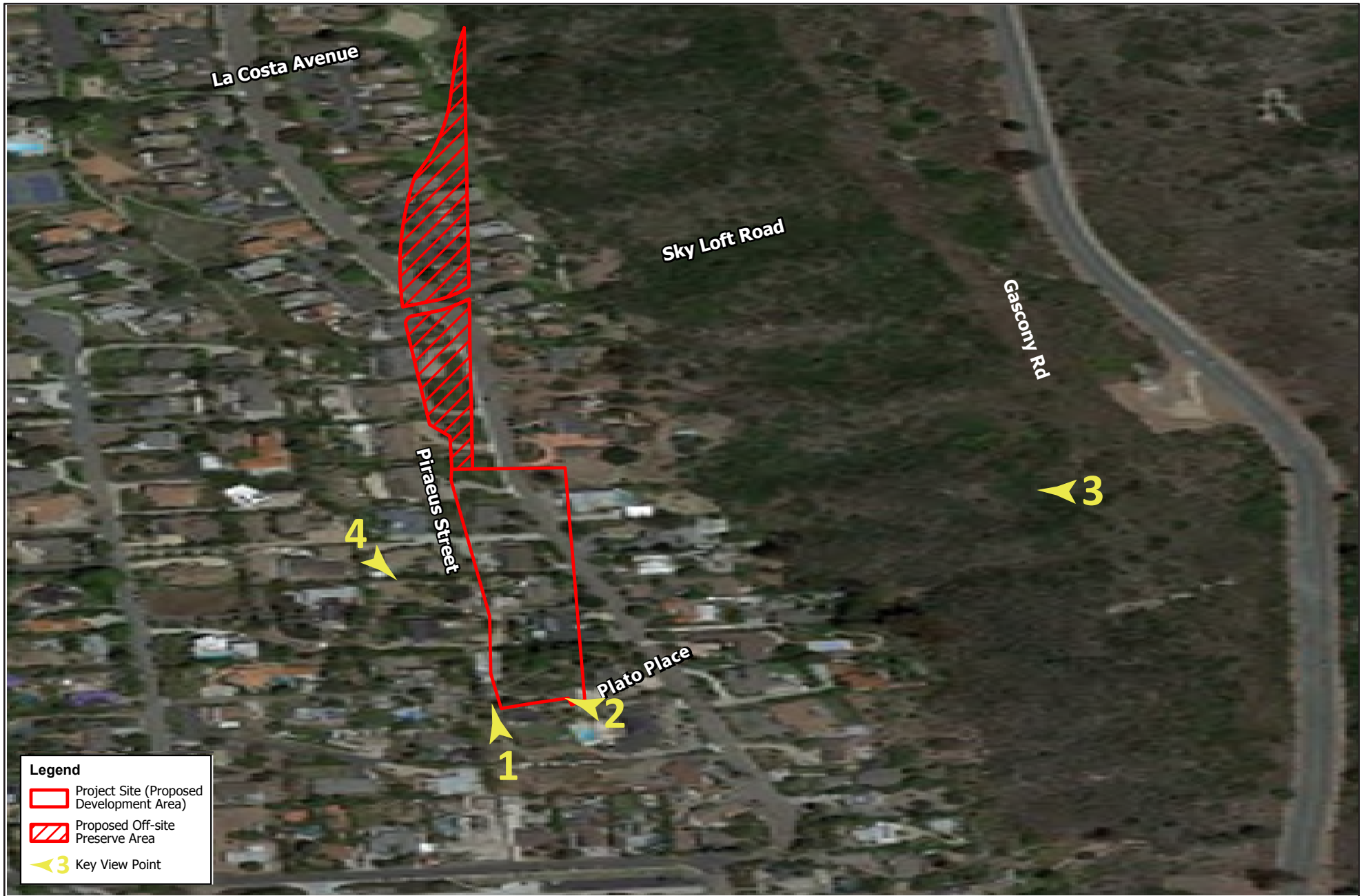
- A. Complete preservation of these views is difficult, if not impossible. Project viability can be severely reduced or destroyed in an attempt to preserve views for adjacent properties. The smaller the site, the more difficult the solution. On larger sites, however, clustering the buildings can preserve portions of these views or creating view opportunities. The reckless and unnecessary blockage of views should be avoided to provide for some view preservation. View preservation through the site shall be considered when trees are selected for landscaping the project.
- B. A significant view refers to a medium- to long range view from the primary living area of significant features including the coast, ocean, lagoons, backcountry canyons, valleys, ridges and other distinctive geographic features. The primary living area is the area most often occupied by the occupants of the residence relative to other portions of the residence and is where the view is observed. The determination of the primary living area is to be made on a case-by-case basis, but typically would be a living room, family room, kitchen, or dining area, or outdoor patio or deck immediately next to the primary living area.

*This page left blank intentionally.*



*This page intentionally left blank.*





*This page intentionally left blank.*



*This page intentionally left blank.*





*This page intentionally left blank.*





*This page intentionally left blank.*





*This page intentionally left blank.*





*This page intentionally left blank.*





*This page intentionally left blank.*



*This page intentionally left blank.*





*This page intentionally left blank.*





*This page intentionally left blank.*





*This page intentionally left blank.*





*This page intentionally left blank.*



## STANDARDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

### *Thresholds of Significance*

According to Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, the project would have a significant impact related to aesthetics if, except as provided in Public Resources Code Section 21099, it would:

1. Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista.
2. Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway.
3. In non-urbanized areas, substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings. If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality.
4. Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area.

## PROJECT IMPACTS AND MITIGATION

### **SCENIC VISTA**

<b>Impact 3.1-1</b>	<b>The project would not have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista. Impacts would be less than significant.</b>
---------------------	---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

As stated, the City's General Plan Resource Management Element identifies a number of scenic resources within the City's boundaries that are considered to contribute to the scenic quality of the local Encinitas community, as well as the larger region. Various resources identified include scenic vista points, critical viewsheds, scenic roadways, and scenic view corridors; refer to Figure 3.1-1A, Scenic Resources.

Interstate 5 in the vicinity of the project site is identified as a Scenic View Corridor. Additionally, La Costa Avenue between Highway 101 and El Camino Real is designated as a scenic road (City of Encinitas 1991). The project site lies within the Scenic View Corridor for I-5. Development within these critical viewshed areas is subject to the overlay restrictions and to the City's design review process to ensure that the architectural style and character of proposed structures and other improvements do not conflict with the surrounding character, obstruct scenic views, or reduce the value of any scenic resource.

Additionally, two proposed vista points are located to the north of the site: one at the northwest corner of La Costa Avenue and the southbound off-ramp, and one at the northeast corner of La

---

### 3.1 Aesthetics

Costa Avenue and the I-5 northbound on-ramp. The City's Resource Management Element requires the City to designate Scenic/Visual Corridor Overlay Zones within which the character of proposed development is regulated to protect the integrity of the City's designated vista points. Critical viewsheds are defined in the Resource Management Element as those areas that extend radially for approximately 2,000 feet from the vista point and cover areas upon which development could potentially obstruct, limit, or degrade the view. The project site lies within the critical viewshed area for each of the two vistas points to the north along La Costa Avenue. Refer to Figure 3.1-1A, Scenic Resources.

As part of the City's design review process, project design characteristics such as building height, scale, building coverage, roofline, materials, color, and/or bulk would be evaluated as appropriate to ensure that the proposed development does not limit or degrade existing views and that landscaping is used to screen undesirable views. The project has been designed in conformance with applicable Scenic/Visual Corridor Overlay restrictions and would not have a substantial adverse effect on a designated scenic vista. Potential project effects on key public viewpoints within the surrounding viewshed are evaluated below; refer to Figure 3.1-1A, Scenic Resources.

Visual simulations from four key public vantage points within the project vicinity were rendered to provide a comparison of "before" and "after" conditions on the project site. The visual simulations for the viewpoints are provided in Figures 3.1-2A to 3.1-5B. Additionally, refer to Figure 2.0-3, Conceptual Site Plan, and Figures 2.0-4A through 2.0-4E which illustrate the intended architectural design for the project. The resulting "before" and "after" images aid in illustrating that the proposed project would meet applicable design regulations (i.e., height, scale, lot size, etc.) and would have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista or existing visual quality of such resources within the surrounding community. However, overall viewer response to the visual changes on the site would depend on the vantage location, distance to the site, and the degree to which the development is visible. Additional views of the proposed development are shown in Figures 3.1-6 and 3.1-8.

*Key View 1: View from the Southwest Corner of Piraeus Street and Plato Place Looking North/Northeast.*

Key View 1 is from the corner of Piraeus Street and Plato Place, looking north/northeast to the project site; refer to Figures 3.1-2A and 3.1-2B. Views from this location would mainly be experienced by passengers in vehicles, bicyclists, and pedestrians traveling north on Piraeus Street and by passengers in vehicles traveling west on Plato Place.

Currently from this view, as seen in Figure 3.1-2A, the vegetation communities of the project site comprise the focal points and background. The view experienced would be influenced by travel

speed and would largely consist of the existing roadway conditions and development along both roadways. Although some viewers may appreciate the current undeveloped state of the site, the existing visual quality and character of the project site experienced from this viewpoint is considered low-moderate due to the lack of scenic resources, such as rock outcroppings, historic buildings, and mature trees; refer also to Impact 3.1-2 below.

As seen in Figure 3.1-2B, views of the proposed development from Key View 1 would generally consist of multi-family residential units in the background and landscaping/streetscaping in the foreground, including the proposed sidewalks along Plato Place and Piraeus Street. Traveling further north along Piraeus Street, the main view would be the northern off-site preserve area, which would remain in its current undeveloped state.

While the scale, density, and height of the proposed project would alter the existing view, the change in the view does not rise to a level of significance because the project would be similar to existing uses in the surrounding viewshed. Furthermore, the scale, density, and height of the project is consistent with the City's General Plan and HEU, as well as applicable zoning regulations, as applicable. As shown, landscaping planted with the project would continue to mature over time, thus further screening the development from public view and limiting views into the site. Although such landscaping would reduce the visibility of the project within the visual setting, such enhancements would continue to further improve the aesthetics of the site over time while reinforcing the overall community character.

Therefore, the project would not have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista or other scenic resource from this vantage point. Impacts would be less than significant.

*Key View 2: View from Plato Place Near the Southeastern Portion of the Site Looking West/Northwest*

Key View 2 is the view from Plato Place near the southeastern portion of the project site, looking west/northwest; refer to Figures 3.1-3A and 3.1-3B. Views from this location would primarily be experienced by passengers in vehicles traveling along Plato Place. An existing off-site residential driveway and existing off-site ornamental landscaping are the focal points, and the vegetation communities of the project site comprise the background; refer to Figure 3.1-3A. The view experienced would be influenced by travel speed on Plato Place and intermediate landscaping. Although some viewers may appreciate the undeveloped state of the site from this vantage point, the existing visual quality and character of the subject property is considered low to moderate due to the lack of scenic resources or other on-site elements having scenic value.

As seen in Figure 3.1-3B, public views of the proposed development to the west/northwest from Key View 2 would generally consist of residential units in the background and landscaping/streetscaping in the foreground. This view would also include the proposed entry

---

**3.1 Aesthetics**

drive along Plato Place. Traveling west along Plato Place, the foreground would include enhanced views of the proposed sidewalk and ornamental landscaping along the roadway. While the scale, density, and height of the project would alter the existing view from this vantage point, the change in the view does not reach a level of significance as the project would be visually similar to existing uses in the surrounding viewshed.

Furthermore, the scale, density, and height of the project is consistent with that intended by the City's General Plan and HEU, as well as with zoning regulations pertaining to scale, height, lot coverage, etc. Therefore, the project would not have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista or other scenic resource from this vantage point. Impacts would be less than significant.

*Key View 3: View from 1690 Gascony Road (Station White) Looking West*

Key View 3 is from the corner of 1690 Gascony Road (Station White) looking west to the project site; refer to Figures 3.1-4A and 3.1-4B. Views from this location would mainly be experienced by passengers in vehicles and pedestrians traveling east and west on Gascony Road and by nearby residences.

Under existing conditions, as shown in Figure 3.1-4A, a single-family residence and ornamental landscaping comprise the foreground, with the middleground and background generally consisting of existing residential uses, established landscaping, and, ultimately, the Pacific Ocean. The project site is not readily visible within the existing visual setting from this vantage point.

As seen in Figure 3.1-4B, views of the proposed development from this vantage point would consist of the very upper portions of several proposed multi-family residential units. Changes to existing public views experienced from Key View 3 would therefore be minimal in nature and are not anticipated to be noticeable by passengers in vehicles traveling along Gascony Road or occupying the public seating area provided at this location. Furthermore, the scale, density, and height of the project is consistent with the City's General Plan and HEU. Therefore, the project would not have a substantial adverse effect on the designated historic viewshed from this vantage point; no discernable change in public views experienced is anticipated. Impacts would be less than significant.

*Key View 4: View from Southbound Interstate 5 Looking East*

Key View 4 is the view looking east to the site from southbound I-5; refer to Figures 3.1-5A and 3.1-5B. Views from this location would be experienced by passengers in vehicles traveling along the freeway.

As seen in Figure 3.1-5A, the existing view is dominated by the lanes of southbound and northbound I-5 in the foreground and middleground, and a series of manufactured slopes

adjacent to Piraeus Street spanning the length of the site in the background. Mature vegetation is present along the existing slopes. Views of the site from this vantage point occur across the multiple lanes of I-5, which typically supports high volumes of traffic during daytime hours, thus degrading the overall quality of the view. Views experienced would be further influenced by travel speed. Although some viewers may appreciate the current undeveloped state of the site, the existing visual quality and character experienced from this vantage point is considered to be low-moderate due to the absence of scenic resources.

As seen in Figure 3.1-5B, similar to that under existing conditions, views of the proposed development from Key View 4 would remain dominated by traffic along I-5 and by the slopes extending along Piraeus Street. The proposed multi-family residential units, manufactured slopes, retaining walls, and existing and proposed landscaping would be visible in the background.

While the scale, density, and height of the proposed structures, combined with the proposed manufactured slopes and retaining walls, would alter the existing view from this vantage point, the change experienced does not rise to a level of significance because views would not substantially differ from views of other existing land uses in the surrounding viewshed as one travels along I-5. Furthermore, the project has been designed consistent with the scale, density, and height of future development as identified in the City's General Plan and HEU, as well as applicable zoning regulations that are intended to maintain community character and protect designated scenic views. Proposed landscaping would continue to mature over time, thus further screening the development from public view and visually blending the structures, slopes, and retaining walls into the surrounding setting. Further, the site lacks any scenic resources (e.g., rock outcroppings, ridgelines, etc.), and therefore, existing views would not be altered in this regard due to project disturbance or removal.

For the reasons stated above, the project is not anticipated to result in a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista or other scenic resource from this vantage point. Impacts would be less than significant.

#### Summary

Based on the above discussions, adverse effects on existing public views from designated scenic vista points or scenic viewsheds would not occur as the result of project implementation. Impacts in this regard would be **less than significant**.

**Mitigation Measures:** None required.

**Level of Significance:** Less than significant.

**SCENIC RESOURCES**

---

<b>Impact 3.1-2</b>	<b>The project would not substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway. Impacts would be less than significant.</b>
---------------------	----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

---

Interstate 5 runs north-south approximately 150 feet west of the project site. Within San Diego County, I-5 is not a listed state scenic highway under Caltrans' Scenic Highway Program. Therefore, the project site is not located within a state scenic highway (Caltrans n.d.). However, I-5 in the vicinity of the project site is designated as an eligible state scenic highway. The segment identified as eligible for consideration as a state scenic highway extends from State Route 74 near the City of San Juan Capistrano to the north to its intersection with State Route 75, across the San Diego Bay from the City of Coronado to the south (Caltrans n.d.).

As stated previously, the General Plan Resources Management Element identifies I-5 as a scenic view corridor. La Costa Avenue from just west of Highway 101 east to El Camino Real is identified as a scenic roadway. The project site also lies within the designated Station White historic viewshed. Potential project effects on these designated scenic resources are evaluated under Impact 3.2-1, above.

No rock outcroppings are present on the project site. As the property is vacant and undeveloped, no historic structures are located on-site. Additionally, no large trees are present within the boundaries of the project site (ECORP 2022). No public or mature trees would therefore be removed as part of the project.

Therefore, the project would not substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway. Impacts would be **less than significant**.

**Mitigation Measures:** None required.

**Level of Significance:** Less than significant.

**CONFLICT WITH ZONING OR OTHER REGULATIONS**

---

<b>Impact 3.1-3</b>	<b>The project would not conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality. Impacts would be less than significant.</b>
---------------------	------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

---

According to Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, potential aesthetic impacts are evaluated differently based on whether the project is located in a non-urbanized or urban area. Per this threshold, projects located in non-urbanized areas would result in a significant aesthetic impact

if the project substantially degraded the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings (public views are those that are experienced from publicly accessible vantage points). Projects located in urbanized areas would result in a significant aesthetic impact if the project would conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality. Because the project site is located within an urbanized area of the City, the latter criteria is applied for analyzing potential effects of the proposed project on aesthetic resources. Below is a discussion of the project's consistency with key zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality of the project site.

Although the project would alter existing views of the subject site, such development would be consistent with the goals and policies defined in the General Plan and HEU. The project site is included in the City of Encinitas 2013-2021 Housing Element Update which was adopted by the City of Encinitas on March 13, 2019 (City of Encinitas 2018). Potential aesthetic impacts related to future development of the project were considered in the environmental analysis for the HEU. As determined in the HEU Environmental Assessment, aesthetic impacts from implementation of the HEU would be less than significant as long as each project complies with the City's Municipal Code and other City regulations related to visual resources (City of Encinitas 2018).

The City of Encinitas General Plan includes issues and policies related to California Coastal Act requirements; therefore, the City of Encinitas General Plan also serves as a Local Coastal Plan (LCP) guiding development within the City. The project site lies within the Coastal Overlay Zone and requires a Coastal Development Permit (non-appealable) to ensure conformance the California Coastal Act. Projects within the Coastal Zone Overlay are subject certain design restrictions for developing in the Coastal Zone (i.e., building height limits, retaining view corridors, maintaining coastal access, protection of coastal resources, etc.).

The project has been designed in conformance with the requirements of the Coastal Overlay Zone to ensure the protection of coastal and scenic resources within the community. As described herein, the project is not anticipated to restrict or affect any designated vista points within the City.

Maximum building height proposed is 35 feet, consistent with requirements of the R-30 overlay zone. Per Municipal Code Section 30.16.101B.a.iii, a maximum of 5 feet is allowed beyond the 35-foot height limit for "allowed projections" such as mechanical equipment and other screening. As such, the proposed on-site structures (including projections) would not exceed 40 feet in height.

As shown in the visual simulations prepared and discussed further above under Threshold 3.1-1, the project would not adversely affect scenic views along the La Costa Avenue or I-5 scenic corridors. Additionally, the project would not interfere with existing facilities along La Costa

Avenue (sidewalk and bike lane) that would provide continued coastal access (Pacific Ocean) to the west of the subject site.

The *City of Encinitas General Plan* includes issues and policies related to California Coastal Act requirements; therefore, the *City of Encinitas General Plan* serves as an LCP Land Use Plan for the City. The LCP incorporates land use plans for future development in the Coastal Zone, provisions of the City's Zoning Regulations, zone overlays for sensitive resources, and other implementing measures to ensure the protection of coastal resources. For those lands located within the Coastal Zone, any conflicts that occur between the Land Use Plan and any policy or provision of the General Plan that is not a part of the LCP, the Land Use Plan takes precedence. Any such conflicts shall result in identifying a resolution that achieves the highest degree of protection for resources in the Coastal Zone.

The City is responsible for the issuance of Coastal Development Permits within the Coastal Zone, excluding submerged lands, tidelands, or public trust lands. Relative to the City's LCP, subsequent to the City's approval of the HEU, the City processed an amendment to update the City's LCP to include the HEU sites. On September 11, 2019, the HEU was approved by the California Coastal Commission. The following excerpts are specific to the project site, where the Coastal Commission found that (CCC 2019):

*Cannon Property (Piraeus) (Site 2) - This site is a vacant property located at the corner of Piraeus Street and Plato Place, both of which are two-lane local streets. The southern portion of the site is flat due to previous grading, with the majority of the rest of the site sloping up towards a flat pad on the northeast corner. Some mature trees and vegetation are on the northern portion of the site. The land use classification of the site is Rural Residential 2 (RR2)...*

*...Three of the sites were identified as having sensitive vegetative communities, including the Cannon property (Site 2), the Encinitas Blvd and Quail Gardens Sites (Site 5), and Sage Canyon (Site AD1). Additionally, Sage Canyon was identified as having wetlands on-site. All future development on sites with coastal sage scrub or wetlands will be subject to the certified LCP policies as well as mitigation measures within the EA, which includes avoidance and minimization measures for impacts to vegetation communities from grading and development, as well as suitable mitigation in accordance with the North County Multiple Habitat Conservation Program...*

*...While a number of the inventoried sites to be re-designated have lower density land use designations (in some cases, significantly lower, as is the case with the Cannon Property, Echter Property, and Greek Church Parcel), the R-30 Overlay is intended to respect neighborhood character, be compatible with community specific settings and provide*



*reasonable transitions between existing residences and potential development sites. All of the sites are located within, contiguous with, or in close proximity to, existing developed areas...*

*...Ten of the thirteen sites within the Coastal Zone overlap with scenic resources, whether it is a view corridor, critical viewshed, or is located along a scenic road. Review of site locations reveal that development will occur in areas that will not impede coastal views. The Cannon property (Site 2), for example, is located within the I-5 Scenic Corridor and Critical Viewshed for two viewpoints along I-5 and La Costa Avenue. However, the development is proposed to occur on the inland side of the vista points, and the site itself is upslope of the I-5 Corridor and will therefore not impact scenic views.*

The project would be subject to the certified LCP policies as well as mitigation measures for sensitive vegetation communities, which include avoidance and minimization measures for impacts to vegetation communities from grading and development, as well as suitable mitigation in accordance with the North County Multiple Habitat Conservation Program; refer Section 3.3, Biological Resources. The development would also be consistent with the existing character of the area and community, and would not impede coastal views as it would be located on the inland side of identified viewpoints within the vicinity; refer to Section 3.1, Aesthetics.

For these reasons, land use conflicts within the R-30 Overlay zone, in which the project site is located, would be minimized in accordance with Section 30242 of the Coastal Act, and as such, the CCC found the City's HEU to be consistent with the relevant policies of the CCC. Because the project is consistent with the 2019 HEU, the project would not conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted by the CCC.

Additionally, the northern off-site preserve area (APN 216-110-35) of the project site is not identified in the HEU and was therefore not included in the evaluation herein of HEU consistency with the Coastal Act. However, proposed off-site preserve area is similarly subject to the Coastal Overlay Zone. As the off-site preserve area would remain in its natural state, no development would occur that would substantially degrade the scenic quality of any coastal resources or the character of designated scenic views in the area. No conflict with the Coastal Act would result in this regard.

The project would adhere to State Density Bonus Law by providing 15 "very low income" affordable residential units (affordable to households earning no more than 50 percent of the area median income). Density Bonus Law allows projects to utilize up to three concessions and unlimited waivers. Depending on the request, such allowances may increase allowed maximum building heights or residential density, or other such design aspects, thereby causing a project to have a more substantial effect on the visual setting and/or designated scenic views in the vicinity.

One incentive is proposed. The incentive requested is for exception to the City's undergrounding utilities requirement for existing overhead utilities, pursuant to Encinitas Municipal Code Section 23.36.120. All existing San Diego Gas & Electric utility poles that surround the project site are 12 kilovolt and would typically be required to be undergrounded (refer to Section 2.0, Project Description, for additional discussion). However, given that the overhead utility poles are present in the visual landscape under existing conditions, the project would not result in development that would adversely affect scenic views along the I-5 corridor, La Costa Avenue, or otherwise adversely affect existing scenic views or resources within the surrounding area in this regard. Additionally, one waiver is requested as the project exceeds the allowable encroachment into steep slopes pursuant to Encinitas Municipal Code Section 30.34.030 (Hillside/Inland Bluff Overlay Zone). The project requires an approximately 40% encroachment into steep slope areas, and without this waiver, the project footprint would be substantially reduced, impacting the project's ability to provide for deed-restricted affordable housing on-site. However, no conflict with State Density Bonus Law allowances would occur as a result of City approval of the incentive or waiver requested by the applicant.

### ***Summary***

As described above, and as illustrated in the figures provided, development of the project site as proposed would not adversely alter existing views to the site from off-site public vantage points. Although the project would result in a visual change in existing public views of the project site, such development is consistent with the underlying zoning and applicable design guidelines.

Furthermore, the approximately 4.95-acre parcel immediately north of the project site (off-site preserve area) would be preserved in its current undeveloped state. No change to existing views due to development of the proposed off-site preserve area would occur, and no conflict with applicable zoning or other regulations pertaining to scenic quality would result.

Therefore, the project would not conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality. Impacts would be **less than significant**.

**Mitigation Measures:** None required.

**Level of Significance:** Less than significant.

---

**CREATE NEW SOURCE OF SUBSTANTIAL LIGHT OR GLARE**

---

<b>Impact 3.1-4</b>	<b>The project would not create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area. Impacts would be less than significant.</b>
---------------------	-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

---

Artificial light during evening and nighttime hours emanates from building interiors and passes through windows, from street lighting for purposes of vehicular circulation and bike and pedestrian safety, and from other exterior sources (e.g., building illumination, security lighting, parking lot lighting, landscape lighting, and signage). The degree of illumination may vary widely depending on the amount of light generated, height of the light source, shielding by barriers or obstructions, type of light source, and weather conditions. Light spill is typically defined as the presence of unwanted light on properties adjacent to the property being illuminated. Artificial light can be a nuisance to adjacent residential areas and diminish the view of the clear night sky. Residences and hotels are considered light sensitive, since occupants have expectations of privacy during evening hours and may be subject to disturbance by bright light sources.

Glare is caused by the reflection of sunlight or artificial light on highly polished surfaces such as window glass or reflective materials and, to a lesser degree, from broad expanses of light-colored surfaces. Daytime glare is common in urban areas and is typically associated with exterior facades largely or entirely comprising highly reflective glass. Glare can also occur during evening and nighttime hours with the reflection of artificial light sources such as automobile headlights. Glare-sensitive uses include residences, hotels, transportation corridors, and aircraft landing corridors.

The project would install on-site lighting to provide an adequate level of nighttime lighting for safe motorized and non-motorized circulation and to increase public safety for nighttime pedestrian and bicyclist use. Lighting would also be installed at the access driveways off of Plato Place and Piraeus Street to identify the project entrance and to provide safe ingress and egress. In addition to safety lighting for on-site drives and parking areas, exterior building lights are proposed, both as architectural details on the residential units and at the pool and spa deck area in the southwestern portion of the site.

As demonstrated by the Lighting Plan prepared for the project (Visual Concepts Lighting, Inc. 2022; see Appendix B), all proposed lighting would conform with City design standards which require low-level lighting that would not exceed 0.5 foot-candle levels at the property line; light poles at a maximum height of 18 feet in height; and low-level lighting directed downward via 90-degree cutoffs to reduce light overspill onto adjacent properties (including the proposed off-site preserve area adjacent to the north and existing residential uses to the east). The Conceptual Lighting Plan was prepared as part of the project improvement plans to demonstrate that on-site lighting levels with project implementation would meet City requirements for nighttime lighting

levels at the property line. Consistency with City requirements would ensure the minimization of potential impacts associated with the provision of night-lighting that might otherwise adversely affect nighttime views in the area. Refer also to Section 3.3, Biological Resources, which addresses potential indirect effects on adjacent habitats from project lighting.

Additionally, the project does not include construction or installation of structures using highly reflective materials or surfaces that could otherwise create a new source of substantial glare adversely affecting daytime views in the area. Refer to Figures 2.0-4A to 2.0-4E which illustrate the proposed building elevations, including the type of construction materials and colors anticipated. The project also does not include large expanses of glass or high gloss surface colors that would have the potential to cause substantial reflection and/or glare effects. Any metal surfaces integrated into the proposed building facades would be surfaced with non-reflective paint or otherwise treated (i.e., galvanized) to minimize or reduce the potential for glare to occur. Additionally, the project would be subject to the City's design review process to ensure consistency with applicable objective design guidelines.

In accordance with Title 24 of the California Building Code, solar photovoltaic (PV) panels would be installed on the roofs of the residential townhomes. Rooftop PV panels would generally be visible in views looking toward to the project site. The solar panels would be capable of providing approximately 149 kilowatts of solar power for the on-site uses. Due to the nature of their intended function, PV solar PV panels are designed to be highly absorptive of incoming sunlight and are not anticipated to create substantial glare that would affect motorists or on- and off-site receptors. The installation of PV panels is required to achieve building code standards and to generate adequate energy for continued operational needs, while the duration of any received glare and exposure of receptors at specific on- or off-site locations to any glare generated by the project would be temporary. Therefore, the installation of solar panels would not contribute to a substantial glare effect.

Based on the discussion above, the project as proposed would not create a new source of substantial light or glare that would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area. Impacts would be **less than significant**.

**Mitigation Measures:** None required.

**Level of Significance:** Less than significant.

---

**CUMULATIVE IMPACTS**

---

<b>Impact 3.1-5</b>	<b>The project would not result in a significant cumulative aesthetic impact. Impacts would be less than cumulatively considerable.</b>
---------------------	-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

---

***Geographic Scope***

The cumulative setting for aesthetics consists of existing and future uses within the proposed project's viewshed. The community of Leucadia generally offers an urbanized visual setting. The City's General Plan and Municipal Code, in combination with other regulatory planning documents and ordinances, provide guidance for the types of allowable development in Encinitas, thereby influencing future land uses and the overall character at buildout.

The geographic scope for cumulative impacts related to aesthetic resources includes existing development and reasonably foreseeable future development projects. Such projects may be viewed in conjunction with the proposed project from public roadways or public lands in the surrounding viewshed and may therefore have the potential to contribute to an overall change in the existing visual setting. Cumulative projects considered are identified in Table 3.0-1 and shown in Figure 3.0-1 in Section 3.0 of this EIR. Additionally, to be conservative, the cumulative analysis is based on the "worst-case" assumption that all 2019 HEU sites develop under maximum density bonus unit allowances. The cumulative impact analysis includes all 2019 HEU sites to the extent they may contribute to certain issue-specific cumulative effects; refer to Table 3.0-2.

***Potential Cumulative Impacts***

The cumulative impact analysis focuses on whether the combination of the proposed project with other cumulative projects would have a cumulative aesthetic impact on the local viewshed. The proposed project's impact would be cumulatively considerable if, when considered with other existing, approved, proposed, and reasonably foreseeable development in the region, it would result in substantial alteration of the visual character of the region, significant impacts to scenic vistas, or substantial increases in daytime glare and nighttime lighting.

As mentioned under Impact 3.1-3, the Resources Management Element of the City's General Plan identifies two scenic vista points to the northwest of the project site (northeast and northwest corners of I-5 and La Costa Avenue). The project site is visible from both of these designated vista points. Additionally, according to the Visual Resource Sensitivity Map included in the Resource Management Element, the project site is located entirely within two scenic view corridors (La Costa Avenue from just west of I-5 to El Camino Real and I-5 from La Costa Avenue south within the City). As designed, the project was determined to have a less than significant impact on such resources, due to project design, setting, and public views experienced relative to such scenic resources as such views would not be substantially changed or adversely degraded. Future



---

**3.1 Aesthetics**

development projects within the study area would similarly be required to consider and evaluate proximity to and potential effects on such resources on a site-specific basis, and to identify proper mitigation measures to reduce any such significant effects.

No scenic resources, such as mature trees, rock outcroppings, or historic buildings, would be affected by the proposed development, as such resources are not located on the project site; refer to Impact 3.1-2 above. Cumulative projects within the study area would similarly be required to evaluate potential effects on such resources on a site-specific basis, and with consideration for the intended improvement characteristics, to identify whether a cumulative impact would occur.

The visual setting in the project vicinity is generally characterized by residential development, undeveloped land, and open space/recreational uses (such as Batiquitos Lagoon). As the project proposes a similar use to that existing in surrounding residential developments within the surrounding area, the project would not result in a substantial change to the affected viewshed. Rather, it is anticipated that the development as proposed would visually blend in with the surrounding residential neighborhoods when viewed in conjunction with existing development. The degree to which the proposed building elements would be visible within the viewshed would further be reduced by proposed ornamental landscaping on-site, as well as site design wherein views to some on-site buildings would be blocked by others due to line of sight. Furthermore, the northern off-site preserve area would remain in perpetuity and left in its current state; thus, no development would occur that would contribute to a substantial cumulative visual change to existing views in this regard.

Other existing, approved, proposed, or reasonably foreseeable projects that could combine with the proposed project to contribute to an increase in daytime glare or nighttime lighting would include residences and commercial uses in proximity to the project site and in the surrounding area. Further, similar to the proposed project, other cumulative projects considered would be subject to applicable City lighting and glare requirements, including design measures identified in the Encinitas Municipal Code, to ensure that such development does not adversely affect daytime or nighttime views in the area.

All cumulative projects in the vicinity of the project site, and development of other future land uses in the surrounding viewshed, would be conditioned via the City's discretionary review process on a site-specific basis to avoid, reduce, and mitigate significant visual impacts relative to the proposed improvements. All future development would be evaluated on a project-specific basis to ensure that no conflict with applicable regulations pertaining to scenic resources would occur, or that any such effects are reduced to the extent feasible as appropriate.

In combination with other cumulative projects and with development of other future land uses in the surrounding area, the proposed project would not result in a significant impact to scenic vistas, damage to scenic resources on the project site, conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality, or creation of a new source of substantial light or glare that would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area. Therefore, the project would not contribute to a significant cumulative impact related to aesthetics or glare. Impacts would be **less than cumulatively considerable**.

**Mitigation Measures:** None required.

**Level of Significance:** Less than cumulatively considerable.

*This page left blank intentionally.*