

IV. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

A. AESTHETICS

1. INTRODUCTION

Aesthetics, views, nighttime illumination, and daytime glare are related elements in the visual environment. *Aesthetics* generally refers to the identification of visual resources, the quality and character of what can be seen, and the overall visual perception of the environment. *View* refers to the visual access to important focal points or panoramic views from an area. *Nighttime illumination* addresses the extent to which a use's nighttime lighting (either interior or exterior) is visible from the surrounding area. *Glare* refers to the effect from reflective surfaces or lighting that may result in a safety or nuisance concern to drivers or surrounding uses.¹

2. ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS

a. Physical Setting

(1) *Existing Visual Character*

The Project Site is located within the Studio City/North Hollywood neighborhood of the San Fernando Valley. The visual character of the Project Site is that of a recreational center with ample greenery, trees, and landscaping. The visual character of the surrounding area is that of a fully developed multi-family and single-family residential neighborhood, also developed with a mix of local and chain commercial stores, restaurants, and services along major thoroughfares such as Ventura Boulevard, Laurel Canyon Boulevard, and Coldwater Canyon Avenue. The Los Angeles River also bisects the community and runs approximately parallel to Ventura Boulevard.

The existing Project Site is currently developed with a 9-hole pitch-and-putt golf course, a 24-tee driving range enclosed by a varying approximately 40- to 70-foot mesh fence, a surface parking lot containing a row of eight approximately 20-foot-high light standards in the shape of a golf ball resting on a tee, tennis courts enclosed by approximately 12-foot-high fences as well as a small tennis house, a one-story golf course clubhouse, and a maintenance yard. *Figure IV.A-1: Photo Key for Views of Project Site* shows the general direction and location in which the following photographs were taken, thus providing an idea of the visual character of the Project Site. *Figure IV.A-2: Views of Project Site - South Whitsett Avenue Location*, *Figure IV.A-3: Views of Project Site -North Whitsett Avenue Location*, *Figure IV.A-4: Views of Project Site - Corner of Whitsett Avenue and Valley Spring Lane*, *Figure IV.A-5: Views of Project Site - Surface Parking Lot*, *Figure IV.A-6: Views of Project Site -Corner of Valley Spring Lane and Babcock Avenue*, *Figure IV.A-7: Views of Project Site -Corner of Valley Spring Lane and Beeman Avenue*, *Figure IV.A-8: Views of Project Site -Corner of Valley Spring Lane and Teesdale Avenue*, *Figure IV.A-9: Views of Project Site -Corner of Valley Spring Lane and Bellaire Avenue*, *Figure IV.A-10: Views of Project Site -Northwesterly Valleyheart Drive Across Los Angeles River*, *Figure IV.A-11: Views of Project Site -Southeasterly Valleyheart Drive Across Los Angeles River*, *Figure IV.A-12: Views of Project Site - Southeasterly Valleyheart*

¹ City of Los Angeles, *L.A. CEQA Thresholds Guide* (Los Angeles: City of Los Angeles, 2006).

Drive Across Los Angeles River -Through Foliage demonstrate views which typify the Project Site as viewed from surrounding streets.

The major streets in the Project vicinity include Whitsett Avenue, Ventura Boulevard, Moorpark Street, Coldwater Canyon Avenue, and Laurel Canyon Avenue. Development along Whitsett Avenue, Moorpark Street, Coldwater Canyon Avenue, and Laurel Canyon Avenue consists of low- to mid-rise (one to four stories) multi-family residential buildings, interspersed with one- and two-story single family dwellings, as well as local-serving corner commercial uses at most of the major street intersections, and larger, more intense commercial uses near intersections with Ventura Boulevard. The smaller neighborhood streets that lie between these major streets, such as Valley Spring Lane, Valleyheart Drive, Woodbridge Street, and Bellaire Avenue, as well as the foothills of the Hollywood Hills to the south of Ventura Boulevard are characterized primarily by one- and two-story single family dwellings. Ventura Boulevard is the primary commercial destination in the community, consisting of local and regional serving commercial uses, including big-box retail and national chain restaurants and services. Most of the commercial development along Ventura Boulevard is made up of low-rise buildings (one- to two-stories) with associated parking lots and garages. Most of the major commercial uses in the neighborhood lie south of the Los Angeles River.

Notable structures and developments in the area include the Sportsmen's Lodge Event Center (one story) and Hotel (five stories) along Ventura Boulevard, south of the Los Angeles River and to the west of the Project Site; the approximately 8.5-acre Studio City Recreation Center (a.k.a. Beeman Park) to the north of the Project Site approximately 1/3 of a mile, consisting of a one-story auditorium, baseball diamonds, basketball and tennis courts, picnic tables, and a children's play area; the four-story Hallmark Channel building, situated on an inclined foothill to the south of the Project Site at the southeast corner of the intersection of Ventura Boulevard and Fairway Avenue; a four-story office building complex directly across the Los Angeles River to the southwest of the Project Site, on the north side of Ventura Boulevard; the one-story City of Los Angeles Fire Station No. 78, adjacent to the Project Site on the northwest corner of Whitsett Avenue and Valleyheart Drive; and the one-story Thirty-Sixth Church of Christ, Scientist on the northeast corner of Whitsett Avenue and Valleyheart Drive.

Figure IV.A-13: Photo Key for Views of Neighborhood Character shows the general direction and location in which the following photographs were taken, thus providing an idea of the visual character of the immediately surrounding neighborhood. *Figure IV.A-14: Views of Neighborhood Character -South Whitsett Avenue Location*, *Figure IV.A-15: Views of Neighborhood Character -North Whitsett Avenue Location*, *Figure IV.A-16: Views of Neighborhood Character -Corner of Whitsett Avenue and Valley Spring Lane*, *Figure IV.A-17: Views of Neighborhood Character -Corner of Valley Spring Lane and Babcock Avenue*, *Figure IV.A-18: Views of Neighborhood Character -Corner of Valley Spring Lane and Beeman Avenue*, *Figure IV.A-19: Views of Neighborhood Character -Corner of Valley Spring Lane and Teesdale Avenue*, *Figure IV.A-20: Views of Neighborhood Character -Corner of Valley Spring Lane and Bellaire Avenue*, *Figure IV.A-21: Views of Neighborhood Character -Adjacent Fire Station*, and *Figure IV.A-22: Views of Neighborhood Character -Corner of Whitsett Avenue and Valleyheart Drive - Los Angeles River* demonstrate views which typify the immediately surrounding neighborhood character.



FIGURE IV.A-1
PHOTO KEY FOR VIEWS OF PROJECT SITE





PHOTO #1

FIGURE IV.A-2
VIEWS OF PROJECT SITE -SOUTH WHITSETT AVENUE LOCATION



PHOTO #2

FIGURE IV.A-3
VIEWS OF PROJECT SITE -NORTH WHITSETT AVENUE LOCATION



PHOTO #3

FIGURE IV.A-4
VIEWS OF PROJECT SITE -CORNER OF WHITSETT AVENUE AND VALLEY SPRING LANE



PHOTO #4

FIGURE IV.A-5
VIEWS OF PROJECT SITE -SURFACE PARKING LOT



PHOTO #5

FIGURE IV.A-6
VIEWS OF PROJECT SITE -CORNER OF VALLEY SPRING LANE AND BABCOCK AVENUE

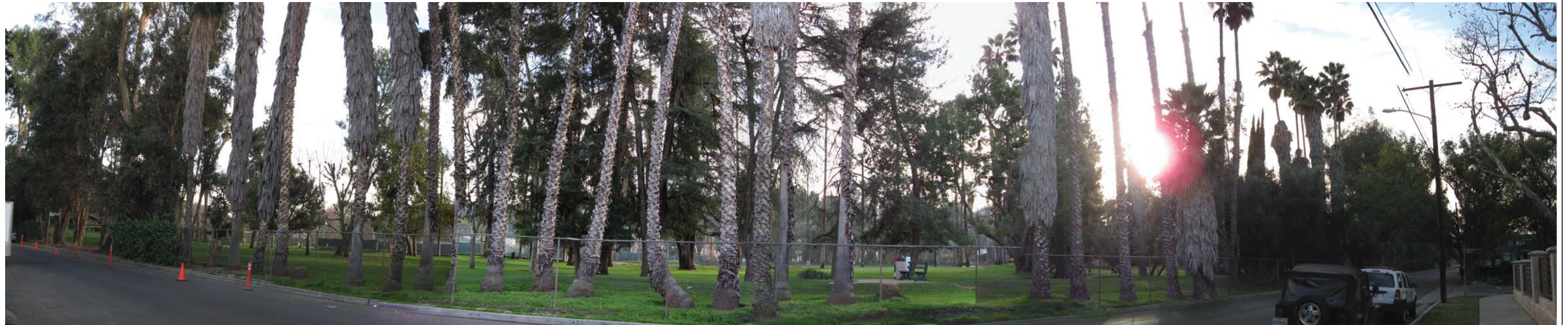


PHOTO #6

FIGURE IV.A-7
VIEWS OF PROJECT SITE -CORNER OF VALLEY SPRING LANE AND BEEMAN AVENUE



PHOTO #7

FIGURE IV.A-8
VIEWS OF PROJECT SITE -CORNER OF VALLEY SPRING LANE AND TEESDALE AVENUE



PHOTO #8

FIGURE IV.A-9
VIEWS OF PROJECT SITE -CORNER OF VALLEY SPRING LANE AND BELLAIRE AVENUE



PHOTO #9

FIGURE IV.A-10
VIEWS OF PROJECT SITE -NORTHWEST VALLEYHEART DRIVE LOCATION ACROSS LOS ANGELES RIVER

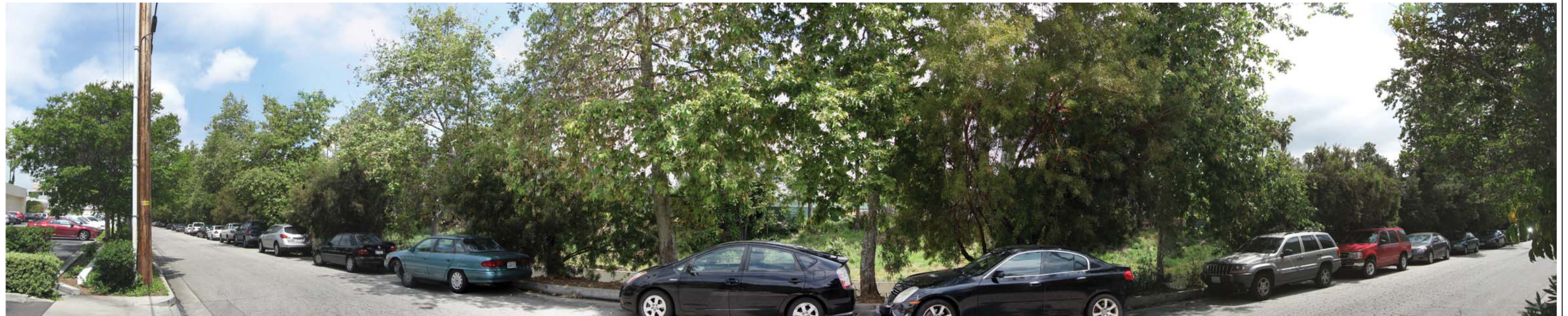


PHOTO #10

FIGURE IV.A-11
VIEWS OF PROJECT SITE -SOUTHEAST VALLEYHEART DRIVE LOCATION ACROSS LOS ANGELES RIVER



PHOTO #11

FIGURE IV.A-12
VIEWS OF PROJECT SITE -SOUTHEAST VALLEYHEART DRIVE LOCATION ACROSS LOS ANGELES RIVER - THROUGH FOLIAGE



FIGURE IV.A-13
PHOTO KEY FOR VIEWS OF NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER





PHOTO #12

FIGURE IV.A-14
VIEWS OF NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER -SOUTH WHITSETT AVENUE LOCATION



PHOTO #13

FIGURE IV.A-15
VIEWS OF NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER -NORTH WHITSETT AVENUE LOCATION



PHOTO #14

FIGURE IV.A-16
VIEWS OF NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER -CORNER OF WHITSETT AVENUE AND VALLEY SPRING LANE



PHOTO #15

FIGURE IV.A-17
VIEWS OF NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER -CORNER OF VALLEY SPRING LANE AND BABCOCK AVENUE



PHOTO #16

FIGURE IV.A-18
VIEWS OF NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER -CORNER OF VALLEY SPRING LANE AND BEEMAN AVENUE



PHOTO #17

FIGURE IV.A-19
VIEWS OF NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER -CORNER OF VALLEY SPRING LANE AND TEESDALE AVENUE



PHOTO #18

FIGURE IV.A-20
VIEWS OF NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER -CORNER OF VALLEY SPRING LANE AND BELLAIRE AVENUE



PHOTO #19

FIGURE IV.A-21
VIEWS OF NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER -ADJACENT FIRE STATION



PHOTO #20

FIGURE IV.A-22
VIEWS OF NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER -CORNER OF WHITSETT AVENUE AND VALLEYHEART DRIVE - LOS ANGELES RIVER

(2) *Existing Viewsheds*

According to the Sherman Oaks-Studio City-Toluca Lake-Cahuenga Pass Community Plan, the Project Site is not located within an important scenic viewshed, such as the Mulholland Scenic Parkway Specific Plan. Due to the flat local topography, portions of the Santa Monica Mountain Range, known as the Hollywood Hills, are visible from the Project Site and surrounding uses. In all directions, except to the south, the long-range visual horizon is primarily obstructed (and dominated) by existing man-made low- and mid-rise buildings and features, including the driving range fence and golf ball light standards on the Project Site, as well as various tall trees in the foreground. Views to the south include limited intermittent long-range views of portions of the Hollywood Hills, with foreground views dominated by existing urban development and tall foliage. Portions of the Los Angeles River are also visible to the south, although heavily obstructed by foliage and greenery.

The primary public views of the Project Site are generally from Whitsett Avenue or Valleyheart Drive. Several of the existing tennis courts (enclosed by fences) on the Project Site are visible from Whitsett Avenue, but are partially obstructed by tall trees. The remaining tennis courts, the greens and fairways of the golf course, and the driving range are not visible from Whitsett Avenue due to fencing and foliage or shrubbery. The taller elements on the Project Site, including the driving range fence, the golf ball light standards in the surface parking lot, several tall trees, as well as the clubhouse structure and putting green along Whitsett Avenue, are clearly visible in the foreground and background from Whitsett Avenue. Some of the tennis court fences are also visible from Valleyheart Drive, but the majority of the Project Site is blocked from view by the existing City of Los Angeles fire station at the corner of Whitsett Avenue and Valleyheart Drive. From Valley Spring Lane and Bellaire Avenue, portions of the golf course greens and fairways are visible through fencing and trees; however, these northern and western portions of the Project Site are not part of the Development Site that will be modified or physically disturbed for the Project. The Project Site may also be visible from vantage points from the Hollywood Hills and taller structures along Ventura Boulevard, although, if so, the views would be partially obstructed by tall trees and foliage on the Project Site and along the Los Angeles River.

(3) *Night Lighting*

The Weddington Golf and Tennis Project Site is bordered by residential uses to the east, north, and west, with the Los Angeles River and commercial uses along Ventura Boulevard to the south. Commercial development and traffic along Ventura Boulevard provide the greatest sources of local illumination. The major sources of nighttime illumination in the immediate Project vicinity are the big-box retail stores (e.g., Bed Bath and Beyond, Staples, Aaron Brothers, etc.) immediately south of the Project Site and Los Angeles River, which generate lighting from surface parking lots, exterior building lighting, and vehicle headlights. Other, smaller commercial uses along Ventura Boulevard, as well as Los Angeles Fire Station No. 78 at the corner of Whitsett Avenue and Valleyheart Drive, are also sources of nighttime illumination and vehicle headlights. The nearest multi-family residences to the Project Site are located across the street on Whitsett Avenue. The nearest single-family residences to the Project Site are located across the street on Valley Spring Lane and Bellaire Avenue.

The Project Site itself also generates nighttime illumination. Current sources of illumination on the Weddington Golf and Tennis Project Site include lighting for the driving range, surface parking lot, and tennis courts, as well as exterior lighting for the clubhouse structure. The sources of illumination from the Project Site are directed on-site, but are visible to surrounding uses—specifically the taller lighting elements such as the 1000-watt stadium style golf ball light standards, which provide light for the driving range, as well as tennis court lighting. Nighttime traffic entering and exiting the Weddington Golf and Tennis Project Site does not significantly contribute to the existing illumination of the area due to the reduced usage of the facilities at night and the existence of a block wall/shrub wall around the perimeter of the parking lot along Whitsett Avenue.

(4) Daytime Glare

Glare may be caused directly by intense illumination or indirectly from the reflection of light off building surfaces. The presence of glare is frequently a subjective issue; however, when glare is excessive, it can cause discomfort, reduction of visibility, and even momentary loss of vision. A common source of adverse glare includes buildings with exterior facades that incorporate highly reflective glass or mirror-like surface materials, which can reflect light when the sun is at a low angle. To a minor extent, evening glare can also be a factor due to vehicle headlights reflecting off reflective surfaces at street level.

The existing structures (i.e., golf clubhouse and small tennis house) on the Project Site have brick and painted wood facades with batten siding, wood shingle roofs, and aluminum-framed glass windows and doors. The driving range contains a wood shelter and high fencing consisting of mesh netting and wooden posts. The tennis courts are enclosed by chain link fencing with non-reflective wind screens. The golf ball light standards are comprised of white and green painted metal. Due to the composition of building materials throughout the Project Site and the low height of the building structures that contain reflective surfaces (i.e., glass windows), the Project is not currently a source of significant glare.

b. Regulatory and Policy Setting

(1) Sherman Oaks-Studio City-Toluca Lake-Cahuenga Pass

Often spoken of as the South Valley area of the San Fernando Valley, the majority of the Sherman Oaks-Studio City-Toluca Lake-Cahuenga Pass Community Plan (the “Community Plan”) Area consists of gently sloping plains abutting the northern portions of the Hollywood Hills and located about 11 miles northwesterly of downtown Los Angeles. The Community Plan Area has a pattern of low- to medium-density residential uses, including within portions of the Hollywood Hills, interspersed with a mix of low- and high-intensity commercial uses, especially along Ventura Boulevard, as well as production and post-production uses on industrially zoned properties, such as the CBS Studio Center.

The Community Plan does not identify any significant visual and/or scenic resources within or immediately adjacent to the Project Site. Most significant visual and/or scenic resources in the Community Plan Area are considered in the Mulholland Scenic Parkway Specific Plan Area.

However, the Community Plan does provide generalized urban design policies and standards to ensure that projects, public spaces, and rights-of-way incorporate specific elements of good design. The Community Plan acknowledges that a community's environment can be enhanced by individual projects through promotion of architectural design that enhances quality of life, living conditions, and neighborhood pride of the residents, as well as improvements to the streetscape in commercial corridors, public spaces, and rights-of-way to create continuity and encourage pedestrian and economic activity.

Generally, the Community Plan sets forth planning goals and objectives to maintain the community's visual character by:²

- Preserving and enhancing the positive characteristics of existing residential neighborhoods while providing a variety of compatible new housing opportunities.
- Improving the function, design, and economic vitality of the commercial corridors.
- Preserving and enhancing the positive characteristics of existing uses, which provide the foundation for community identity, such as scale, height, bulk, setback, and appearance.
- Planning the remaining commercial and industrial development opportunity sites for needed job producing uses that improve the economic and physical condition of the Community Plan Area.

More specifically, the Community Plan includes the following objectives and policies addressing visual character in residential areas:³

Objective 1-3: To preserve and enhance the varied and distinct residential character and integrity of existing single and multi-family neighborhoods.

Policy 1-3.1: Seek a high degree of compatibility and landscaping for new infill development to protect the character and scale of existing residential neighborhoods.

Policy 1-3.2: Consider factors such as neighborhood character and identity, compatibility of land uses, impact on livability, impacts on services and public facilities, and impacts on traffic levels when changes in residential densities are proposed.

Policy 1-3.3: Preserve existing views in hillside areas.

The Community Plan also includes Urban Design guidelines that address individual land uses as well as the overall community design. The design policies establish a minimum level of design

² City of Los Angeles, *Sherman Oaks-Studio City-Toluca Lake-Cahuenga Pass Community Plan* (Los Angeles: City of Los Angeles, 1998), Chapter II, p. II-2 and II-3.

³ City of Los Angeles, *Sherman Oaks-Studio City-Toluca Lake-Cahuenga Pass Community Plan* (Los Angeles: City of Los Angeles, 1998), Chapter III, p. III-4.

required in private projects and recommendations for public space improvements. Urban design policies applicable to the Project Site include:⁴

Site Planning. Projects shall be designed around a landscaped focal point or courtyard to serve as an amenity for residents by:

- Providing a pedestrian entrance at the front of each project.
- Requiring useable open space for outdoor activities, especially for children.

Building Design. The design of all buildings shall be of a quality and character that improves community appearance by avoiding excessive variety and monotonous repetition. The following policies are suggested to address building design:⁵

- Require the use of articulations, recesses, surface perforations, and porticoes to break up long, flat building facades.
- Utilize complementary building facades.
- Incorporate varying designs to provide definitions of each floor.
- Integrate building fixtures, awnings, security gates, etc. into the design of the building.
- Screen all rooftop equipment and building appurtenances from adjacent properties.
- Require decorative, masonry walls to enclose trash.

Parking Structures. Parking structures should be integrated with the design of buildings they serve through the following:⁶

- Design parking structure exteriors to match the style, materials, texture, and color of the main building(s).
- Utilize decorative walls and landscaping to buffer adjacent residential uses from parking structures.

Community Design and Landscaping. In addition to the establishment of Design Standards for individual projects, improvements to the streetscape and landscaping of public spaces, roadway medians, and other rights-of-way create an attractive and orderly public realm and contribute to the overall urban aesthetic of a community. It is the intent of these guidelines to improve the environment, both aesthetically and physically, as opportunities in the Sherman Oaks-Studio

⁴ City of Los Angeles, *Sherman Oaks-Studio City-Toluca Lake-Cahuenga Pass Community Plan* (Los Angeles: City of Los Angeles, 1998), Chapter V, p. V-3 and V-4.

⁵ City of Los Angeles, *Sherman Oaks-Studio City-Toluca Lake-Cahuenga Pass Community Plan* (Los Angeles: City of Los Angeles, 2001), Chapter V, p. V-4.

⁶ *Ibid.*

City-Toluca Lake-Cahuenga Pass Community Plan Area occur which involve public improvements or other public and/or private projects that affect public spaces and right-of-ways. The design guidelines in the Community Plan seek to establish standards for a comprehensive streetscape and landscape improvement program for street trees, street lighting, sidewalk/crosswalk paving, street furniture, public signage, and public plazas. The area of the Project Site is not included in the design guidelines as one of the four corridors and/or districts of specific interest for establishment of streetscape and landscape standards.

(2) Los Angeles Municipal Code (“LAMC”)

According to LAMC Section 12.21.1, the Project Site is within Extra Limited Height District 1-XL, which permits structures up to two stories and 30 feet in height (to the highest point of the roof). The residential properties surrounding the Project Site, north of the Los Angeles River, are zoned Height District No. 1 with building height limits ranging between 28 and 45 feet. The commercial properties along Ventura Boulevard, south of the Project Site and the Los Angeles River, are zoned Very Limited Height District 1-VL with a building height limit of three stories and 45 feet.

As it pertains to this analysis, additional LAMC requirements regulate such aspects of development as the design of parking facilities and site plan design. Requirements regulating land use controls (that may, in turn, influence the visual character at the Project Site) will be considered as part of the entitlement approval process for the Project.

LAMC Section 91.6306 addresses graffiti removal and deterrence. Specifically, in all buildings, the first nine feet, measured from grade, of exterior walls and doors must be built and maintained with a graffiti-resistant finish consisting of either hard, smooth, impermeable surfaces such as ceramic tile, baked enamel or a renewable coating of an approved, anti-graffiti material or a combination of both. The only exception to this requirement is if a building owner files a “Covenant and Agreement Regarding Maintenance of Building (Graffiti Removal)” with the Los Angeles Department of Building and Safety, agreeing to remove the graffiti within seven days of the graffiti being applied or within 72 hours of being notified by the Department of Building and Safety to remove the graffiti. If the building owner fails to abide by the Covenant and Agreement, the Covenant and Agreement may be terminated by the Department of Building and Safety and the above requirements would apply to the building owner.

The Project is also subject to LAMC Section 93.0117, which limits the effect on neighboring residential properties of the light intensity and direct glare from the materials and exterior light sources used in the design. Lighting systems for parking areas for the Project would be subject to LAMC Section 12.21 A.5(k).

(3) Los Angeles River Improvement Overlay District (“RIO”)

The City of Los Angeles is currently undergoing an approval process to codify and establish a Supplemental Use District known as the Los Angeles River Improvement Overlay (RIO) District for properties located within a specific boundary area of the city—generally those within approximately 2,500 feet of the Los Angeles River, which includes the Project Site. The purpose

of the RIO District is to assure that development within river-adjacent areas is in accordance with design policies adopted in the City's General Plan Framework while also contributing to the overall environmental and ecological health of the City's watersheds and the L.A. River. If approved by the City, the RIO District would implement development regulations and design guidelines that may affect the design and aesthetics of the Project. If approved, the RIO District requirements on landscaping, screening, exterior lighting, river access and views, and building orientation would be implemented and enforced in the Project design as part of the entitlement approval process.

3. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

a. Methodology

This analysis considers the overall visual effect anticipated at the Project Site with the development of the SCSLC on the Development Site, including 200 senior living dwelling units within six, four-story buildings, minor reconfiguration of the existing driving range and golf course uses, and demolition of 16 existing tennis courts.

b. Thresholds of Significance

In accordance with Appendix G to the State CEQA Guidelines, the Project would have a significant impact on aesthetics if it would cause any of the following conditions to occur:⁷

- a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista;
- b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a State scenic highway;
- c) Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings; or
- d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area.

Furthermore, as set forth in the City of Los Angeles L.A. CEQA Thresholds Guide,² the determination of significance shall be made on a case-by-case basis, considering the following:

- a) The amount or relative proportion of existing features or elements that substantially contribute to the valued visual character or image of a neighborhood, community, or localized area, which would be removed, altered, or demolished;
- b) The amount of natural open space to be graded or developed;

⁷ California Resources Agency, reproduced by AEP, *2011 California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Statute and Guidelines*, http://www.califaep.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=111&Itemid=198 (Jan 2012).

- c) The degree to which proposed structures in natural open space areas would be effectively integrated into the aesthetics of the site, through appropriate design, etc.;
- d) The degree of contrast between proposed features and existing features that represent the area's valued aesthetic image;
- e) The degree to which a proposed zone change would result in buildings that would detract from the existing style or image of the area due to density, height, bulk, setbacks, signage, or other physical elements;
- f) The degree to which the project would contribute to the area's aesthetic value;
- g) Applicable guidelines and regulations;
- h) The nature and quality of recognized or valued views (such as natural topography, settings, man-made or natural features of visual interest, and resources such as mountains or the ocean);
- i) Whether the project affects views from a designated scenic highway, corridor, or parkway;
- j) The extent of obstruction (e.g., total blockage, partial interruption, or minor diminishment); and
- k) The extent to which the project affects recognized views available from a length of a public roadway, bike path, or trail, as opposed to a single, fixed vantage point.
- l) The change in ambient illumination levels as a result of project sources; and
- m) The extent to which project lighting would spill off the project site and effect adjacent light-sensitive areas.

c. Project Impacts

(1) Visual Character/Aesthetics

The proposed Project includes the construction of the 200-unit Studio City Senior Living Center consisting of six four-story buildings on proposed Lot 2 of the Project Site, with associated landscaping, hardscaping, common areas, and amenities. Construction of the senior residential complex and any physical disturbance of the Project Site will be contained within the Development Site on the southeast corner of the Project Site, which is comprised of proposed Lot 2 and small portions of Lot 1 that are adjacent to Lot 2. The physical alterations on Lot 1, which are required to accommodate the Project, will include movement of the existing southern driving range fence approximately 21 feet to the north of its current location, thus eliminating three of the 24 existing tee stands, as well as movement of the existing green/hole for golf hole number five approximately 25 feet to the northwest and the tee for golf hole number six

approximately 90 feet to the west, thus shortening the fairways for the two holes by the respective distances.

Implementation of the Project would result in the replacement of 16 existing tennis courts and associated fencing, nighttime lighting, and a small tennis house on the Project Site. As detailed in *Section IV.D: Environmental Impact Analysis – Cultural Resources* of this Draft EIR, although the golf course, driving range, golf clubhouse, and golf ball light standards on the Project Site are considered eligible as historic resources on the California Register, the tennis courts and appurtenances to be removed for the Project are not considered historical resources. The tennis courts, which are all enclosed by approximately 12-foot-high windscreen fencing, as well as the lighting and tennis house, are not noted or valued for their visual character or aesthetic contribution to the Project Site. As such, demolition of the tennis courts, including the fencing, nighttime lighting, and small tennis house would not substantially alter the valued visual character or image of the immediate area.

The golf course and the driving range, which are the existing elements to be slightly modified (in specific locations) as part of the Project, are considered eligible for listing as historic resources in the California Register, and thus, may be considered a valuable visual element to maintain the visual character of the Project Site. As such, extensive modification or complete removal of these uses may constitute a significant change and impact to the visual character of the Project Site and immediate area. However, as proposed, the minor modifications to the southeastern portion of the golf course turf and the southern portion of the driving range fence will not substantially alter the visual character of the Project Site nor the general image of the immediate area. The areas to be modified will continue to be used as turf for golf course purposes and fencing for the driving range. The fairways for golf hole numbers five and six will be shortened; however, the fairways, greens, and tees will be recreated to appear similar to those that currently exist. No stands of trees are anticipated to be affected by the reconfiguration of the two golf hole fairways. The overall visual character and aesthetic of the golf course as a green open space with an abundance of aged trees, used for a nine-hole pitch-and-putt golf course, will remain intact.

The movement of the southern fence of the existing driving range is not anticipated to alter the appearance, alignment, or direction of the fence—only the location. Although the driving range modification will eliminate three existing southern tee stands, these changes are not anticipated to alter the overall visual character of the driving range or the Project Site, due to the retention of all existing visual elements on the driving range, including the 230-yard fairway, the varying approximately 40- to 70-foot screen fence, 21 tee stands, and the wooden shed-style canopy that shelters the northern half of the tee stands. As a result, the impact on visual character of eliminating and/or modifying existing structures and elements on the Project Site would be less-than-significant.

The six four-story buildings proposed for the Project would be similar in size and mass to several existing multi-family residential buildings across the street from the Project Site along Whitsett Avenue. The design of the new buildings would incorporate many of the architectural elements that are present in the surrounding multi-family residential buildings, as well as in the community in general, such as the use of cultured stone, clay tile roofing, pitched roofs, earth tone colors, and wrought iron. *Figure II-8: Elevations and Sections, Figure II-9: Buildings 1*

Through 5 Typical Floor Plan, and Figure II-10: Building 6 Typical Floor Plan (in Section II: Project Description) show the proposed general configuration and appearance of the SCSLC buildings. Each building will be a maximum of four stories tall and up to (and not exceeding) 45 feet in height. The entrances into all the buildings will face the interior courtyard of the development, which will be fenced and gated. The proposed subterranean parking structure for the complex will not be visible at or above grade.

The architectural style and treatment will be consistent throughout all the buildings in the complex. Primarily, the building façades will be treated with a combination of cultured stone, cement plaster, and glass as shown in *Figure II-8: Elevations and Sections*. Also, the Project will be designed in accordance with LAMC Section 91.6306, addressing graffiti removal and deterrence. Specifically, in all buildings, the first nine feet, measured from grade, of exterior walls and doors must be built and maintained with a graffiti-resistant finish consisting of either hard, smooth, impermeable surfaces such as ceramic tile, baked enamel, or a renewable coating of an approved, anti-graffiti material or a combination of both. The only exception to this requirement is if a building owner files a “Covenant and Agreement Regarding Maintenance of Building (Graffiti Removal)” with the Los Angeles Department of Building and Safety, agreeing to remove the graffiti within seven days of the graffiti being applied or within 72 hours of being notified by the Department of Building and Safety to remove the graffiti. If the building owner fails to abide by the Covenant and Agreement, the Covenant and Agreement may be terminated by the Department of Building and Safety and the above requirements would apply to the building owner.

The new SCSLC buildings will be buffered from the existing golf course and driving range uses by greenery, hedging, fencing, and existing stands of tall trees on the Project Site. Access will be provided to the 22-space golf course and driving range parking lot from the senior housing complex to provide visual and physical connectivity, and to unify the golf course uses on Lot 1 with the residential uses on Lot 2. Landscaping will be provided and trees will be planted throughout the senior residential complex that is consistent with landscaping and trees on the golf course and throughout the adjacent neighborhood. As a result, with the appropriate Project Design Features and Mitigation Measures to ensure visual consistency of landscaping, trees, and building materials with the existing golf course on the Project Site and the surrounding residential community, the impact on visual character of constructing new uses and structures on the Project Site would be less-than-significant.

During construction activities for the Project, the visual character of the Project Site will reflect short-term changes, as some of the construction activities will be visible from adjacent land uses. As all of the demolition and construction will be located within the Development Site on the southeastern portion of the Project Site, all of the noticeable construction activity will be along Whitsett Avenue. As such, construction security fencing, noise barriers, and staging areas may be visible from Whitsett Avenue during the short-term construction phase. These construction elements will not be visible or will be highly obstructed in view from Valley Spring Lane and Bellaire Avenue, due to the buffer from the Development Site provided by the golf course and the tall trees lining the northern and western perimeter of the Project Site.

During construction, equipment and materials would be stored on the Project Site, and temporary facilities (such as construction trailers, staging sites, and portable toilets) would be stored onsite and could potentially cause aesthetic blight to those in direct view of the materials, equipment, and facilities. However, this potential aesthetic blight would be screened by temporary construction fencing. As required by Mitigation Measure MM AES-2, because of the potentially ongoing golf course and driving range operations, efforts will be made by the developers to continue to present an attractive community presence throughout the duration of the construction activities. Further, as required by Mitigation Measure MM AES-3, to enhance safety concerns, construction areas will be clearly partitioned and visually segregated from public areas.

Although construction-related structures and activities would create a notable change to the visual character of the Project Site along part of Whitsett Avenue, these changes would extend only for the duration of the construction activities (approximately 24 months). Following the completion of construction, Lot 1 of the Project Site, containing the golf course, driving range, and golf clubhouse, would resume the visual character that currently exists, while Lot 2 will maintain a visual character, aesthetics, and architecture that are consistent with the surrounding multi-family residential uses.

Finally, as part of the Project, it will be necessary to remove a number of existing trees for grading, construction, and development of the senior living center. Removal of large stands of trees or trees with unique appearances may affect the overall visual character of the Project Site. As detailed in *Section IV.C: Environmental Impact Analysis – Biological Resources* of this Draft EIR, approximately nine trees are anticipated for removal on the Development Site. The trees are all non-protected species, and include “of-size⁸” Aleppo pines, Montebello ash, Mexican fan palms, Queensland umbrella tree, Benjamin fig, and an orange tree.

Two of the trees, a Mexican fan palm and an orange tree, to be removed within the interior portion of the Development Site, adjacent to the tennis courts, are singular ornamental trees that are isolated from the heavier stands of trees throughout the golf course and along the Los Angeles River right-of-way. These two trees are not unique in appearance, and are not visible from any surrounding street. Removal of these trees would not affect the tree canopy or visual character of the Project Site with regards to foliage cover.

The seven remaining trees anticipated for removal consist of singular ornamental trees and one small grouping, situated closer to Whitsett Avenue, within the existing surface parking lot and adjacent to the existing tennis courts. These seven trees are more visible from Whitsett Avenue, but they do not contribute significantly to the visual character or foliage canopy of the Project Site. The trees are generally isolated from the larger stands of trees throughout the golf course, along the Los Angeles River, and along Valley Spring Lane. The trees to be removed also do not appear especially unique in appearance. No trees in the public right-of-way are planned for removal, and as such, the appearance of the tree line along the Project Site frontage will not be significantly altered. All trees to be removed near Whitsett Avenue are set back from the Project Site frontage and removals will not impact the visual continuity of the tree line, hedging, or golf

⁸ “Of-size” trees refer to ornamental trees that measure at least 8 inches or more in cumulative trunk diameter(s) at 4.5 feet above existing grade. (Source: Horticultural Tree Report, *Appendix J* of this Draft EIR)

ball light standards along the frontage. As a result, the impacts on visual character of removing existing trees on the Project Site would be less-than-significant. Further details about tree removal impacts and mitigations are discussed in *Section IV.C: Environmental Impact Analysis – Biological Resources* of this EIR.

(2) *Viewsheds*

Implementation of the Project would increase visibility of development at the Project Site. The majority of the 16 existing tennis courts to be removed for the Project are interior and not visible from surrounding streets; however, the 12-foot-high screening fences for certain tennis courts with frontage on Whitsett Avenue and adjacent to the Los Angeles fire station, are visible along Whitsett Avenue and at the terminus of Valleyheart Drive. The nighttime lampposts for the tennis courts are also visible, as they extend above the 12-foot windscreen fencing. Much of the fencing for the tennis courts along Whitsett Avenue is set back from the street due to an existing surface parking lot fronting on Whitsett Avenue, while other parts of the fencing are relatively obscured from view by foliage and trees. There are very limited views of the tennis courts and the 12-foot-high fencing from Valleyheart Drive due to view obstruction by the Los Angeles fire station, the maintenance facilities for the golf course, and heavy tree cover. A small, one-story tennis house is also visible from Whitsett Avenue. The tennis courts, including fencing and tennis house, would be replaced with six four-story buildings with associated landscaping and hardscaping as part of the SCSLC development. The buildings would be taller than all existing development on the Project Site, with the exception of the driving range fence and many tall trees within the golf course, but of similar height and massing to the surrounding residential buildings along Whitsett Avenue.

The footprint of the senior housing complex would be similar to the existing footprint of the 16 tennis courts with the intention to preserve the location and configuration of the golf course and driving range to the extent possible. The Project will increase the general height and massing of the Project Site by converting part of the existing footprint from 16 tennis courts with approximately 12-foot-high fencing into six residential condominium buildings that extend 45 feet high.

With respect to views of the existing golf course, driving range, and golf clubhouse from surrounding streets, even with an increase in building height and massing on the southeast portion of the Project Site, views would not be affected by Project development. Currently, the greens and tees for the golf course and driving range are not visible from Whitsett Avenue due to fencing and hedging obstructions. As such, the Project development would not create any additional view obstructions of those uses. However, the taller elements, such as the driving range fence and the golf ball light standards are visible from Whitsett Avenue. Views of these elements would be largely unaffected by the Project buildings. It is possible, however, from certain viewpoints along Whitsett Avenue, that views of the approximately 40- to 70-foot driving range fence in the background may be partially obscured by the 45-foot-high senior housing buildings in the foreground. Additionally, although five of the eight existing golf ball light standards may be removed from their current locations to accommodate the Project and relocated to undetermined locations on the Project Site, in accordance with required Mitigation Measure MM AES-4, these light standards will be situated so that they remain on the Project Site and are

visible to the public, whether they continue to light the adjacent driving range or not. It is likely that the removed golf ball light standards will be relocated to the portion of the surface parking lot that will remain on the project site after project development; however, the relocations have yet to be finally determined.

Currently obstructed views of the golf course, driving range, and golf clubhouse from Valley Spring Lane would be unaffected by development of the Project. Limited views of the golf course from Bellaire Avenue would also be unaffected by the Project. No public views are currently available from the south of the Project Site within the Los Angeles River right-of-way, as public access to this area is currently restricted.

Further south, only views of the golf course greens and driving range fence are available from Valleyheart Drive (the segment south of the Los Angeles River), and are highly obstructed by trees and foliage. The Project would not affect current visibility of the golf course greens from Valleyheart Drive, but may further obstruct visibility of the driving range fence. However, due to the approximately 40- to 70-foot height of the fencing, it may still be visible above the 45-foot height of the Project buildings. Further to the south, views of only the golf course and driving range fence are available from Ventura Boulevard, and these views are largely obstructed by existing commercial development, the Los Angeles fire station, and tall trees that line the Los Angeles River. As such, the Project height and massing will have a negligible impact on views from Ventura Boulevard.

Views of the golf course, driving range, and golf clubhouse, may be available from higher viewpoints in the Hollywood Hills. An increase in height and massing on the existing tennis court footprint may obstruct additional minor portions of the driving range or golf course greens adjacent to proposed Lot 2, but the effects would be negligible. As a result, the impact on views of the existing golf course, driving range, and golf clubhouse caused by increasing height and massing on the Project Site would be less-than-significant.

With respect to overall viewsheds in the immediate area, according to the Sherman Oaks-Studio City-Toluca Lake-Cahuenga Pass Community Plan, the Project Site is not located within any important scenic viewshed, including the Mulholland Scenic Parkway Specific Plan. From Whitsett Avenue, short- and mid-range viewsheds toward the Project Site would be dominated by the Project buildings on the southern half of the street frontage, some of which will be obscured by existing trees along Whitsett Avenue. Long-range views of tall trees on the golf course and of the Hollywood Hills from Whitsett Avenue may be obscured by the new Project buildings. The long-range viewsheds from Whitsett Avenue are already obscured by tall trees and the Los Angeles fire station in the foreground, but the Project may further obscure views of the Hollywood Hills and the taller trees visible on the golf course in the distance. However, these features are not considered scenic resources, do not constitute scenic vistas, and are already obstructed by features in the foreground along Whitsett Avenue.

From Valley Spring Lane, short-range viewsheds consist primarily of golf course greens, fencing, and heavy foliage along the northern perimeter of the golf course. Mid-range viewsheds are heavily obscured by foreground foliage and fencing, and include golf course greens, portions of the driving range, and limited views of the tennis court fencing in the distance. Long-range

views included very limited viewsheds of the Hollywood Hills in the background from specific viewpoints along Valley Spring Lane. Due to the highly obstructed short-, mid-, and long-range views, the proposed Project buildings will have a negligible impact on viewsheds from Valley Spring Lane. Similarly, the Project will not be visible from Bellaire Avenue, which currently has short-, mid-, and long-range views of only the golf course greens, heavily obstructed by foreground foliage and fencing. Additionally, no public viewsheds are currently available from the south of the Project Site within the Los Angeles River right-of-way, as public access to this area is currently restricted.

Further south, along Valleyheart Drive (the segment south of the Los Angeles River), short-range viewsheds towards the Project Site include a heavy cover of street trees and the Los Angeles River. Mid- and long-range viewsheds include limited views of the golf course greens and driving range fence, as well as tall trees and foliage throughout the Project Site. The Project buildings would not affect the short-range viewsheds of the Los Angeles River and may obscure mid- and long-range viewsheds of the driving range fence and tall trees on the Project Site. However, these features are not scenic resources, do not constitute scenic vistas, and are already obstructed by street trees in the foreground along Valleyheart Drive.

Further to the south, along Ventura Boulevard, short- and mid-range viewsheds towards the Project Site include big-box commercial development, surface parking lots, and street trees along Ventura Boulevard and Valleyheart Drive (segment south of the Los Angeles River). Long-range viewsheds include the tall trees on the Project Site and very limited views of the existing tennis court screening and the driving range fence. These visible features are not scenic resources and do not constitute a scenic vista. Further, as views of the Project Site are already heavily obscured by foreground commercial development, trees, and foliage, the development of the Project would have a negligible impact on viewsheds towards the Property along Ventura Boulevard.

Figure IV.A-23: Conceptual View of Project – Whitsett Avenue, Figure IV.A-24: Conceptual View of Project – Whitsett Avenue Near Valleyheart Drive South Roadway, Figure IV.A-25: Conceptual View of Project – Valleyheart Drive South Roadway Near Whitsett Avenue, Figure IV.A-26: Conceptual View of Project – Valleyheart Drive South of Los Angeles River – Through Foliage, Figure IV.A-27: Conceptual View of Project – Valley Spring Lane, and Figure IV.A-28: Conceptual View of Project – Elevated View From Hollywood Hills South of Ventura Boulevard, show viewsheds toward the Project Site and demonstrate the context of the urban development in the Project area. The Project would be most visible and prominent in the foreground along Whitsett Avenue as shown in *Figure IV.A-23*. With the exception of the driving range fencing/netting, the golf course and driving range are currently obstructed from view along Whitsett Avenue by existing tennis court fencing and parking lot hedging. The Project structures would continue to obstruct views of the golf course and driving range along Whitsett Avenue. The driving range fence would likely also continue to be visible above the height of the Project structures. The Project is also anticipated to be visible in the background from elevated viewpoints in the Hollywood Hills as shown in *Figure IV.A-28*, with possible foreground obstructions from foliage and structures not accounted for in the rendering. The large, big-box commercial uses and surface parking lots along Ventura Boulevard would continue to be a prominent mid-ground sight from the Hollywood Hills.

The Project may be partially visible in the distance from Valleyheart Drive south of the Los Angeles River as depicted in *Figure IV.A-26*. However, as shown earlier in *Figure IV.A-10: Views of Project Site -Northwest Valleyheart Drive Location Across Los Angeles River* and *Figure IV.A-11: Views of Project Site -Southeast Valleyheart Drive Location Across Los Angeles River*, there is a heavy stand of trees and foliage along Valleyheart Drive south of the Los Angeles River, which will obstruct many views of the Project. The Project may also be partially visible in the distance from certain residences along Valley Spring Lane that are nearer to the intersections with Babcock Avenue and Beeman Avenue, as depicted in *Figure IV.A-27*. However, as shown earlier in *Figure IV.A-6: Views of Project Site – Corner of Valley Spring Lane and Babcock Avenue*, *Figure IV.A-7: Views of Project Site – Corner of Valley Spring Lane and Beeman Avenue*, *Figure IV.A-8: Views of Project Site – Corner of Valley Spring Lane and Teesdale Avenue*, there are stands of trees, heavy foliage, hedging, fencing, the driving range, and the golf course clubhouse, which would largely obstruct views of the Project structures from these residences. The senior housing complex would not be visible from residences or viewpoints along the western Project Site boundaries including Bellaire Avenue and parts of Valley Spring Lane.

From viewpoints to the south of the Project Site (i.e. along Valleyheart Drive and Ventura Boulevard), as depicted in *Figure IV.A-24* and *Figure IV.A-25*, foreground and background views are dominated by existing development. With development of the Project, either the upper stories of the new Project buildings would be visible behind the existing, adjacent fire station or the Project would be completely obstructed by the existing development.

The height and massing of the Project would be consistent with the surrounding multi-family residential buildings, specifically along Whitsett Avenue. As the Project would incorporate many of the architectural elements that are present in surrounding multi-family residential buildings, the Project would appear as a continuation of existing background features. Overall views from surrounding areas would not be significantly impacted due to the existing development and landscaping surrounding the Project Site, which already obscure and limit views to and from the Project Site. Furthermore, the Project Site and surrounding area are not considered scenic resources and do not constitute scenic vistas according to the Community Plan. Although the immediate views of the Project Site would be of the intensified development, the senior housing complex would be visually consistent with the surrounding residential structures. Therefore, less-than-significant impacts to existing viewsheds are expected.

(3) *Nighttime Illumination*

The Project would provide additional sources of nighttime illumination with security lighting, landscape lighting, exterior building and courtyard lighting, and interior building lighting. The Project would eliminate existing lighting used for the 16 tennis courts that will be removed, and would retain existing driving range and parking lot lighting, including the eight golf ball light standards along Whitsett Avenue.



FIGURE IV.A-23
CONCEPTUAL VIEW OF PROJECT -WHITSETT AVENUE



FIGURE IV.A-24
CONCEPTUAL VIEW OF PROJECT - WHITSETT AVENUE NEAR VALLEYHEART DRIVE SOUTH ROADWAY



FIGURE IV.A-25
CONCEPTUAL VIEW OF PROJECT -VALLEYHEART DRIVE SOUTH ROADWAY NEAR WHITSETT AVENUE



FIGURE IV.A-26
CONCEPTUAL VIEW OF PROJECT -VALLEYHEART DRIVE SOUTH OF LOS ANGELES RIVER -THROUGH FOLIAGE



FIGURE IV.A-27
CONCEPTUAL VIEW OF PROJECT - VALLEY SPRING LANE



FIGURE IV.A-28
CONCEPTUAL VIEW OF PROJECT -ELEVATED VIEW FROM HOLLYWOOD HILLS SOUTH OF VENTURA BOULEVARD

Project lighting for the senior residential buildings would be similar to that of the existing multi-family residential buildings along Whitsett Avenue and would be designed to minimize any adverse impacts. The SCSLC will incorporate interior lighting systems that utilize occupancy sensors that will shut off unnecessary/unused lights, which would reduce the amount of lighting visible to the surrounding area. All new exterior lighting would be directed downward for illumination onsite, would be “dark-sky compliant”, and/or would be shielded with visors/louvers to minimize light spillover for areas offsite.

Night lighting from the SCSLC may be visible from multi-family residential developments along Whitsett Avenue across from the development, the Christian Science Church on the northeast corner of Whitsett Avenue and Valleyheart Drive, and from the Los Angeles fire station adjacent to the Project Site. Lighting from the Project would not significantly impact the surrounding uses and would not significantly increase the intensity of existing nighttime illumination on the Project Site. Currently, each of the 16 tennis courts at the Project Site contains eight lamps for nighttime play that extend above the screen fencing for the courts. As such, lights from a total of 128 lamps, directed onsite, are currently visible from the surrounding uses. Additionally, the Project Site is brightly lit by eight approximately 20-foot golf ball light standards, directed onsite toward the driving range, and retrofitted with 1000-watt stadium style lights, which are currently visible from the surrounding uses. The tennis courts and associated nighttime lighting will be replaced by the Project, which will contain lighting directed onsite or shielded, which is typical of multi-family residential dwellings. The intensity of the Project lighting will not be greater than the intensity of the tennis court lighting that currently exists (and to be removed). Much of the Project’s exterior lighting will be used for the interior courtyard of the complex, which will largely be shielded from view on surrounding properties by the Project buildings and stands of landscape trees. The lighting for the Project will not appear more intense than the similarly lighted multi-family residential buildings, the Los Angeles fire station, nor the Christian Science Church on Whitsett Avenue. As such, the Project would not significantly impact the nighttime illumination levels for the immediately adjacent or surrounding properties.

At 45 feet in height, the senior housing buildings will not be significantly taller than the surrounding buildings along Whitsett Avenue, and thus the nighttime lighting will not be visible to properties outside of the immediate surrounding area. Views of the Project’s nighttime lighting from the single- and multi-family residential dwellings on both Valley Spring Lane and Bellaire Avenue would largely be unnoticeable or unseen due to the distance of these properties from the senior housing complex, as well as the intervening tree foliage and stadium-style lighting that currently emanates from the approximately 20-foot-high golf ball light standards for the existing driving range. Similarly, the Project would not have significant impacts on the already brightly lit Ventura Boulevard due to the intervening effects of tree foliage along the Los Angeles River, as well as nighttime lighting from existing commercial development, big-box retail, and associated parking lots along the corridor. Finally, the Project would not significantly impact residences in the Hollywood Hills and other outlying areas due to the distance of these areas from the SCSLC and the cumulative illumination effect from the intervening commercial development on Ventura Boulevard (i.e., the incremental effect of additional lighting due to the Project would be negligible at these distances). Therefore, no significant adverse illumination impacts are expected to occur.

(4) *Daytime Glare*

The SCSLC building façades will be treated with a combination of stone, cement plaster, and glass for windows and doors. The glass surfaces are not continuous along the façades of the buildings and would be broken up by the cement plaster walls, cultured stone base, balusters, balconies, landscaping, and other architectural detailing, thereby minimizing the potential for glare at ground-level and from early morning or late afternoon sun on the upper levels. Compliance with LAMC Section 93.0117 (reflective materials design standards), which limit reflective surface areas and the reflectivity of architectural materials used, would reduce any adverse impact for building material glare. Implementation of the Project would not produce glare that would create a visual nuisance and, therefore, would not result in a significant impact.

(5) *Consistency with Adopted Plans and Policies*

The Community Plan identifies the Project Site as an Open Space land use with a private golf course designation. The Project is consistent with the Community Plan, in part due to the fact that the Project preserves the pitch-and-putt golf course, driving range, and golf clubhouse, which have long been recognized by the community as an established use in this area. Further, the Project is consistent because it furthers the Urban Design policies and guidelines identified above (i.e., as through physical site improvements) and indirectly supports those policies by not creating obstacles for their realization. The Project implements many of the site planning, building height, pedestrian-orientation, lighting and landscaping guidelines identified in the Urban Design section of the Community Plan for multi-family residential uses. Pedestrian-orientation is also addressed in detail in *Section IV.M: Environmental Impact Analysis – Transportation and Circulation* of this Draft EIR. The Project would result in a less-than-significant impact to aesthetic-related and urban design consistency and compatibility issues in the project area as demonstrated by the Project's consistency with applicable policies and programs of the Community Plan. A more detailed and complete analysis of the Project's consistency with the Community Plan can be found in *Section IV.H: Environmental Impact Analysis – Land Use and Planning* of this Draft EIR.

It should be noted that the City of Los Angeles is currently undergoing an approval process to codify and establish a Supplemental Use District known as the Los Angeles River Improvement Overlay District (RIO) for properties located approximately 2,500 feet from the Los Angeles River, which includes the Project Site. The RIO District has not been adopted as a plan or policy. In initial examination of the draft proposed ordinance for the RIO District, it appears that the Project design would be compliant with the development regulations and design guidelines of the plan. Full adoption of the RIO District would require the Project to be evaluated for compliance in design and relation to the Los Angeles River, as enforced by the City.

d. Cumulative Impacts

Development of the Related Projects would incrementally increase the intensity and urbanization of the Project area. As required by the City of Los Angeles, the Project design must be reviewed by the Los Angeles City Department of Planning for consistency with applicable Los Angeles codes and regulations prior to final plan approval.

(1) *Visual Character*

Impacts to aesthetics are generally site specific and localized. As discussed above, the Project is anticipated to result in a less-than-significant aesthetic impact to the visual character along all Project Site frontages. The Project is located within a neighborhood dominated by single- and multi-family residential dwellings and with commercial development primarily along Ventura Boulevard, all consisting of low- and mid-rise structures. None of the Related Projects are located within the immediate Project area or immediately surrounding streets. The nearest Related Project includes a proposal for a mixed-use residential/retail project (Related Project LA1 at 12548 Ventura Boulevard) directly to the south of the Project Site, on the south side of Ventura and buffered from the Project Site by the big-box retail along the Los Angeles River. In examination of the proposal, the Related Project would be constructed consistent with the Community Plan standards and the proposed use would be consistent with the surrounding area and character of Ventura Boulevard. Development of the proposed Project in conjunction with the Related Projects would result in redevelopment or infilling of residential and commercial land uses throughout the community. As a result, the Project would not contribute to a potential cumulative impact to visual character in the Project vicinity. Furthermore, a separate, site-specific environmental analysis will be prepared for Related Projects to determine and, if necessary, mitigate Related Project-specific potential impacts to visual character. Therefore, cumulative visual character impacts of Related Projects are considered to be less-than-significant.

(2) *Alteration of Views*

Although aesthetic impacts are generally site specific to the local setting, impacts that may affect panoramic viewsheds or recognized visual resources can have an effect on a broader area. As discussed above, the Project is anticipated to result in a less-than-significant impact to views from surrounding development. All the Related Projects would not be at a scale or height to impact views. The inactive status 391-unit apartment and coffee house development at 11617 Ventura Boulevard (Related Project LA5) and the approved status 270-unit condominium Sherman Village project at 12629 Riverside Drive (Related Project LA4) appear to be the largest in scale of the Related Projects. However, these Related Projects are not of such great height and mass that would affect or significantly alter views in their immediately surrounding areas. Further, as depicted in *Figure III-1: Location of Related Projects* in *Section III: General Overview and Environmental Setting*, most of the Related Projects are spaced a sizeable distance from each other and are not closely concentrated in a single area. Therefore, these projects are not anticipated to have a significant cumulative impact to views within the Project area. The Project would not contribute to a potential cumulative impact to views or viewsheds in the Project vicinity. Furthermore, a separate, site-specific environmental analysis will be prepared for Related Projects to determine and, if necessary, mitigate Related Project-specific potential impacts to aesthetics. Therefore, cumulative impacts related to viewsheds affected by Related Projects are considered to be less-than-significant.

(3) *Lighting and Glare*

Build-out of Related Projects in the Project area will contribute to the overall levels of nighttime illumination and glare in the Sherman Oaks-Studio City-Toluca Lake-Cahuenga Pass Community Plan Area. Nighttime illumination would cumulatively increase with these developments; however, the Related Projects are located along and spread throughout Ventura Boulevard, a highly commercialized corridor with a high degree of existing nighttime illumination. The additional glow from these projects is considered negligible and not cumulatively considerable, based on comparison to the existing conditions for the densely commercial corridor. Glare and direct lighting are site-specific concerns that would be addressed through the separate, site-specific environmental analysis prepared for each Related Project and, if necessary, mitigated appropriately. Further, the Project and the Related Projects are subject to the LAMC Section 93.0117 reflective materials design standards, which limit reflective surface areas and materials that could contribute to glare. Thus, potential glare created from these Related Projects is not cumulatively considerable. Such mitigation would contribute to the reduction of nighttime illumination as well. Because the Project would not contribute significantly toward increased nighttime lighting levels in the immediate area, its cumulative contribution to lighting is considered to be less-than-significant.

4. COMPLIANCE MEASURES, PDFS, AND MITIGATION PROGRAM

a. Compliance Measures

The following Compliance Measures are reasonably anticipated standard conditions that are based on local, State, and federal regulations or laws that serve to offset or prevent specific aesthetic impacts. These Compliance Measures are applicable to the proposed Project and shall be incorporated to ensure that the Project has minimal impacts to surrounding uses:

- As required by LAMC Section 12.40, the site shall be required to prepare a Landscape Plan, which shall address replacement of removed trees.
- The owners shall maintain the subject property clean and free of debris and rubbish and to promptly remove any graffiti from the walls, pursuant to LAMC Section 91.6306.
- The residential component of the Project shall be subject to the City of Los Angeles Zoning Code, Lighting Regulations, Chapter 9, Article 3, Section 93.0117, which limits light source intensity and reflective glare.
- Exterior lighting shall be directed onsite to minimize nighttime lighting illumination and light spillover onto neighboring properties.

b. Project Design Features (PDFs)

The following PDFs are specific design and/or operational characteristics included to avoid or reduce potential aesthetic impacts.

PDF AES-1: The Project shall include an exterior lighting design that will minimize nighttime illumination.

c. Mitigation Measures

The Project will result in less-than-significant operational aesthetic impacts. To ensure that the aesthetic impacts are less-than-significant during the construction phase of the Project, the following Mitigation Measures shall be implemented:

MM AES-1: During the construction/demolition phase of the Project, equipment, materials, and temporary facilities (such as construction trailers, staging sites, and portable toilets) shall be stored on the Project Site and screened by temporary construction fencing.

MM AES-2: Due to potentially ongoing golf course and driving range operations during the construction/demolition phase of the Project, efforts shall be made by the developer to continue to present an attractive community presence through construction screening (i.e., fencing) that is sufficient enough to screen the construction site from view along Whitsett Avenue and from the golf course/driving range, and through responsible cleanup of dirt, debris, and materials around and outside the construction site screening.

MM AES-3: To enhance safety, construction areas shall be clearly partitioned and visually segregated from public areas.

MM AES-4: Any existing golf ball light standards removed from their current locations shall be retained and relocated so that they remain on the property and continue to be visible to the public, whether they are utilized for lighting purposes or not.

5. LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE AFTER MITIGATION

Project impacts during operations, with regard to visual character, views, illumination, and glare, are less-than-significant. During the construction and demolition phase of the Project, aesthetic impacts would be temporary and applicable only to uses immediately surrounding the Project Site and with direct view to the Development Site; however, with implementation of the above Mitigation Measures, any potential, short-term aesthetic impacts related to construction and demolition would be reduced to a less-than-significant level.