

3.1 - Aesthetics

3.1.1 - Introduction

This section describes the existing aesthetics, light, and glare conditions in the project area as well as the relevant regulatory framework. This section also evaluates the possible impacts related to aesthetics that could result from implementation of the proposed project. Information included in this section is based, in part, on-site reconnaissance and photo inventory, visual simulations prepared specifically for the project and included in this section, as well as the City of Antioch General Plan and City of Antioch General Plan Environmental Impact Report (EIR). No public comments were received during the EIR scoping period related to aesthetics.

3.1.2 - Environmental Setting

Visual Character

Visual character in the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) context is an impartial description of the defining physical features, landscape patterns, and distinctive physical qualities within a landscape. Visual character is informed by the composition of land, vegetation, water, and structure and their relationship (or dominance) to one another, and by prominent elements of form, line, color, and texture that combine to define the composition of views. Visual character-defining resources and features within a landscape may derive from notable landforms, vegetation, land uses, building design and façade treatments, transportation facilities, overhead utility structures and lighting, historic structures or districts, or panoramic open space.

Contra Costa County

Contra Costa County includes a variety of topographical features such as the San Francisco Bay Delta Estuary, and is within the Central Coast Range Geomorphic Province of California. The County covers a total of 805 square miles of land and water. The elevation of Contra Costa County ranges from 98 feet below sea level to 3,849 above sea level. The topography includes low lying and relatively flat coastal terrain from the San Francisco Bay Delta Estuary to major ridgelines along the Diablo Range, a subdivision of the Pacific Coast Ranges. Mount Diablo rises to an elevation of 3,849 feet above mean sea level making it the most prominent topographical feature in the County.

The physical environment of the County ranges from urban to rural with the western and central county areas characterized by urban and suburban city development, and the eastern County area characterized primarily by agricultural and open space areas.

City of Antioch

The City of Antioch is located in eastern Contra Costa County and is bordered to the north by the San Joaquin River Delta; to the east by the City of Brentwood and the City of Oakley; to the west by the City of Pittsburg and unincorporated portions of the County; and to the south by unincorporated portions of the County. The topography includes low lying and relatively flat coastal terrain from the San Joaquin River to hills and ridgelines in the southern portion of the City. The summit of Mount Diablo is visible to the southwest of the City. The northern and central portion of the City is

characterized by urban and suburban development, and the southern portion of the City is characterized primarily by undeveloped areas.

Project Site

The project site is primarily undeveloped and located in a developing area of the City of Antioch within the Sand Creek Focus Area. The visual character of the project site is characterized by seasonal and non-native grasses, Sand Creek, and relatively flat elevation, with steeper slopes adjacent to the creek banks and in the hills in the southwestern portion of the site. Mount Diablo is located approximately 6.50 miles to the southwest of the project site. The visual character directly adjacent to the project site is composed of single-family homes and fencing to the north, the approximately 6.80 acre Kaiser Permanente Antioch Medical Center to the east, and undeveloped open space to the south and west. In addition, the project site is located adjacent to Deer Valley Road and Empire Mine Road.

Scenic Resources

Scenic resources typically involve prominent, unique, and identifiable natural features in the environment (e.g., trees, rock outcroppings, islands, ridgelines, channels of water, and aesthetically appealing open space) and cultural features or resources (e.g., regional or architecturally distinctive buildings, or structures that serve as a focal point of interest).

Contra Costa County

The Open Space Element of the Contra Costa County General Plan 2025 identifies the main scenic resources within the County as the scenic ridges, hillsides, and rock outcroppings, such as Shell Ridge and Lime Ridge, as well as the San Francisco Bay Delta Estuary system.¹

City of Antioch

Views of Mount Diablo, ridgelines, and the San Joaquin River from locations that are accessible to the public are important resources for the City.² The City of Antioch General Plan designates landmarks within the City because they provide prominent visual features and focal points within the City. Designated landmarks within the City include the San Joaquin River, Mount Diablo, Antioch Bridge, and other historical buildings described in the General Plan.³

Project Site

The project site does not contain any General Plan designated scenic resources. However, the project site is bound by Deer Valley Road on the east, a designated important view corridor by the Antioch General Plan, providing views of Mount Diablo.

Views

Views may be generally described as panoramic views of a large geographic area for which the field of view can be wide and extend into the distance. Associated vantage points provide an orientation

¹ Contra Costa County. 2005. Contra Costa County General Plan 2005–2020.

² LSA Associates. 2003. City of Antioch General Plan Update, page 5-5.

³ Ibid.

from publicly accessible locations. Examples of distinctive views include urban skylines, valleys, mountain ranges, or large bodies of water.

Contra Costa County

Mount Diablo is the most prominent topographical feature in the area. Shell Ridge and Lime Ridge, located in the western portion of the County, are both designated as scenic ridgeways by the Contra Costa County General Plan 2025. Intervening development, vegetation, and the flat topography of the project site obscure views of Shell Ridge, and Lime Ridge from the project site.

City of Antioch

The City of Antioch General Plan designates important view corridors as public spaces and natural ridgelines and landmarks, such as Mount Diablo and distant hills, local ridgelines, the San Joaquin River, and other water bodies, as view corridors. Important view corridors to be protected include Somersville Road, Lone Tree Way, Hillcrest Avenue, State Route 4 (SR-4), SR-160, James Donlon Boulevard, Deer Valley Road, and Empire Mine Road.⁴

Project Site

Exhibit 3.1-1 identifies and describes specific viewpoint locations near the project site that provide a representative cross-section of visual images and information about the existing aesthetic conditions of the immediate surrounding area. These locations represent publicly accessible views that may be seen by a variety of observers in the area, ranging from motorists and pedestrians traveling along local streets or Deer Valley Road, located east of the project site, to pedestrians walking along the trails in the Black Diamond Mines Regional Preserve. As summarized in Table 3.1-1, there are various publicly accessible locations in the City of Antioch and Contra Costa County area with views toward and/or through the project site.

Table 3.1-1: Summary of Viewpoint Locations for Existing Views

Viewpoint Location	View Description
1	Looking south from Empire Mine Road.
2	Looking west at a section of Sand Creek.
3	Looking east at an existing windmill near the former Judsonville site.
4	Looking southwest at the project site from Deer Valley Road.
5	Looking southwest at the existing on-site barn structure.
6	Looking northwest at the residential development along the northern border of the project site.
7	Looking south at the three-way intersection on Deer Valley Road.
8	Looking east at Kaiser Permanente Antioch Medical Center from the project site.
Source: FCS 2019	

⁴ LSA Associates. 2003. City of Antioch General Plan Update, page 5-5.

Viewpoint Location 1—Existing view from Location 1 looking south from Empire Mine Road

This viewpoint is located on Empire Mine Road at the western boundary of the project site looking south as shown in Exhibit 3.1-2. Views from this viewpoint are of the western boundary of the project site composed of a hillside with grasses, several trees, and fencing along Empire Mine Road.

Viewpoint Location 2—Existing view from Location 2 looking west at a section of Sand Creek

This viewpoint is located in the northwestern portion of the project site on the bank of Sand Creek looking west across the project site as shown in Exhibit 3.1-3. Views from this viewpoint are of the western portion of the project site composed of Sand Creek, grasses, a large hill, and multiple large trees along either side of Sand Creek.

Viewpoint Location 3—Existing view from Location 3 looking east at an existing windmill near the former Judsonville site

This viewpoint is located in the western portion of the project site near the former Judsonville site as shown in Exhibit 3.1-4. Views from this viewpoint are of the western and central portion of the project composed of a windmill, grasses, a hill, and trees.

Viewpoint Location 4—Existing view from Location 4 looking southwest at the project site from Deer Valley Road

This viewpoint is located on the western side of Deer Valley Road looking west across the project site toward Mount Diablo as shown in Exhibit 3.1-5. Views from this viewpoint show rolling hills on the project site, trees, and Mount Diablo in the background.

Viewpoint Location 5—Existing view from Location 5 looking southwest at the existing on-site barn structure

This viewpoint is located within the eastern portion of the project site at the existing barn structure as shown in Exhibit 3.1-6. Views from this viewpoint are of the barn structure and surrounding hillsides.

Viewpoint Location 6—Existing view from Location 6 looking northwest at the residential development along the northern border of the project site

This viewpoint is located at the northeastern boundary of the project site looking northwest as shown in Exhibit 3.1-7. Views from this viewpoint are of grasses and vegetation on the project site and single-family homes adjacent to the north of the project site boundary.

Viewpoint Location 7—Existing view from Location 7 looking south at the three-way intersection on Deer Valley Road

This viewpoint is located at the intersection of Deer Valley Road and Wellness Way looking south as shown in Exhibit 3.1-8. Views from this viewpoint are of Deer Valley Road, vehicles, a portion of the Kaiser Permanente Antioch Medical Center, grasses and vegetation on the project site, and hills and ridgelines in the background.



Source: Raney Planning & Management, Inc., March 2018.



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Source: Raney Planning & Management, Inc., March 2018.

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Exhibit 3.1-2
Existing View from Location 1
Looking South from Empire Mine Road

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Source:

Exhibit 3.1-3

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Existing View from Location 2
Looking West at a section of Sand Creek

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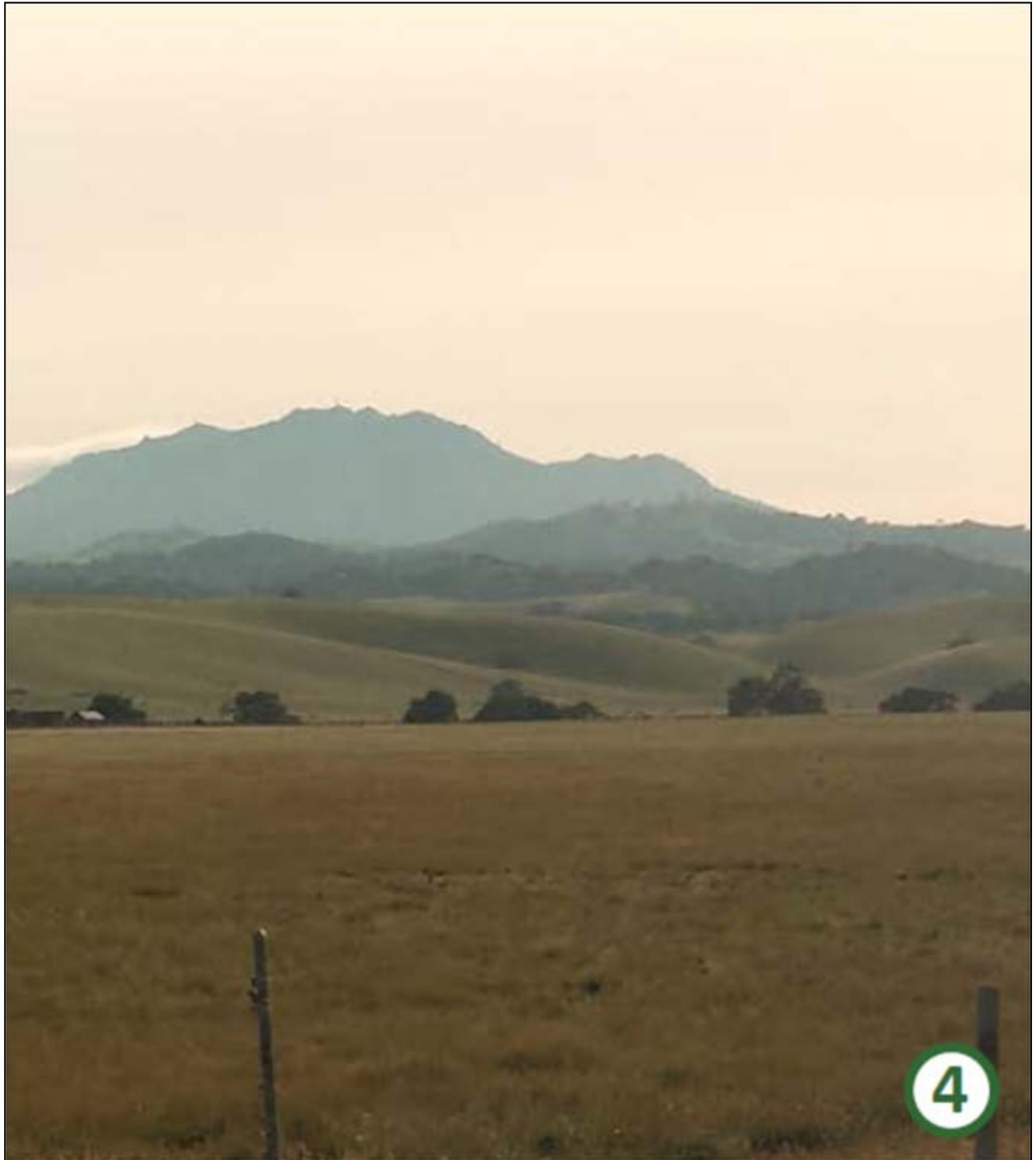
Source: Raney Planning & Management, Inc., March 2018.

Exhibit 3.1-4

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Existing View from Location 3 - Looking East at an
Existing Windmill near the Former Judsonville site

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Source: Raney Planning & Management, Inc., March 2018.

Exhibit 3.1-5

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Existing View from Location 4 - Looking Southwest
at the Project Site from Deer Valley Road

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Source: Raney Planning & Management, Inc., March 2018.



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Source: Raney Planning & Management, Inc., March 2018.

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Exhibit 3.1-7
Existing View from Location 6 - Looking Northwest
at the Residential Development Along the Northern Border

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Source: Raney Planning & Management, Inc., March 2018.

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Exhibit 3.1-8
Existing View from Location 7 - Looking South
at the Three-Way Intersection on Deer Valley Road

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Viewpoint Location 8—Existing view from Location 8 looking east at Kaiser Permanente Antioch Medical Center from the project site

This viewpoint is located on the project site's eastern boundary just south of Sand Creek Road looking east as shown in Exhibit 3.1-9. Views from this viewpoint are of the Kaiser Permanente Antioch Medical Center, Deer Valley Road, and landscaping.

Light and Glare

In the context of CEQA Guidelines, light is nighttime illumination that stimulates sight and makes things visible, and glare is difficulty seeing in the presence of bright light such as direct or reflected sunlight.

Project Site Vicinity

The primary sources of nighttime light in the surrounding area are from vehicle headlights traveling along Deer Valley Road as well as exterior lighting associated with the residences to the north and the Kaiser Permanente Antioch Medical Center to the east.

Project Site

The project site is primarily undeveloped with the exception of existing structures, including a single-family residence and various barns and outbuildings located on the eastern portion of the site. Existing lighting on the project site is from the exterior lighting associated with the on-site structures.

3.1.3 - Regulatory Framework

Federal

No federal plans, policies, regulations, or laws related to aesthetics are applicable to the project.

State

California Scenic Highway Program

The State Legislature created the California Scenic Highway Program, maintained by the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), in 1963. The purpose of the State Scenic Highway Program is to protect and enhance the natural scenic beauty of California highways and adjacent corridors, through special conservation treatment. The State laws governing the Scenic Highway Program are found in the Streets and Highways Code, Sections 260 through 263. A highway may be designated scenic depending upon how much of the natural landscape can be seen by travelers, the scenic quality of the landscape, and the extent to which development intrudes upon the traveler's enjoyment of the view. The State Scenic Highway System includes a list of highways that are either eligible for designation as scenic highways or have been officially designated. The status of a proposed State Scenic Highway changes from eligible to officially designated when the local governing body applies to Caltrans for scenic highway approval, adopts a Corridor Protection Program, and receives notification that the highway has been officially designated a Scenic Highway.

Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations Building Energy Efficiency Standards

California Building Code (California Code of Regulations [CCR], Title 24)—including Title 24, Part 6—includes Section 132 of the Building Energy Efficiency Standards, which regulates lighting

characteristics, such as maximum power and brightness, shielding, and sensor controls to turn lighting on and off. Different lighting standards are set by classifying areas by lighting zone. The classification is based on population figures of the 2000 Census. Areas can be designated as LZ1 (dark), LZ2 (rural), or LZ3 (urban). Lighting requirements for dark and rural areas are stricter in order to protect the areas from new sources of light pollution and light trespass.

Local

City of Antioch General Plan

Land Use Element

The City of Antioch General Plan Land Use Element establishes the following goals and policies related to aesthetics:

General Plan Land Use Element

- **Policy 4.4.6.7b.k:** A maximum of 4,000 dwelling units may be constructed within the Sand Creek Focus Area. Appropriate density bonuses may be granted for development of age-restricted housing for seniors; however, such density bonuses may not exceed the total maximum of 4,000 dwelling units for the Sand Creek Focus Area.
- **Policy 4.4.6.7b.l:** It is recognized that although the ultimate development yield for the Focus Area may be no higher than the 4,000 dwelling unit maximum, the actual development yield of the Sand Creek Focus Area will depend on the nature and severity of biological, geologic, and other environmental constraints present within the Focus Area, including, but not limited to constraints posed by slopes and abandoned mines present within portions of the Focus Area; on appropriate design responses to such constraints, and on General Plan policies. Such policies include, but are not limited to, identification of appropriate residential development types, public services and facilities performance standards, environmental policies aimed at protection of natural topography, substantial open space and environmental resources, policies intended to protect public health and safety, and implementation of the Resource Management Plan called for in Policy “u” below.
- **Policy 4.4.6.7b.s:** Sand Creek, ridgelines, hilltops, stands of oak trees, and significant landforms shall be preserved in their natural condition. Overall, a minimum of 25 percent of the Sand Creek Focus Area east of Deer Valley Road shall be preserved in open space, exclusive of lands developed for golf course use.
- **Policy 4.4.6.7b.t:** Adequate buffer areas adjacent to the top of banks along Sand Creek to protect sensitive plant and amphibian habitats and water quality shall be provided. Adequate buffer areas shall also be provided along the edge of existing areas of permanently preserved open space adjacent to the Sand Creek Focus Area, including but not limited to the Black Diamond Mines Regional Park. Buffers established adjacent to existing open space areas shall be of an adequate width to minimize light/glare, noise, fire safety, and public safety, habitat, and public access impacts within the existing open space areas, consistent with the provisions of Section 10.5, Open Space Transitions and Buffers Policies of the General Plan.



Source: Raney Planning & Management, Inc., March 2018.

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Exhibit 3.1-9
Existing View from Location 8 - Looking East
at Kaiser Permanente Antioch Medical Center from the Project Site

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- **Policy 5.4.2a:** Base the City’s review of public and private projects on the following general design principles:
 - Innovative design, regardless of its style, is more important to the achievement of “quality” than the use of predetermined themes.
 - “High quality” comes from the explicit consideration of all aspects of development design. It is in the design details that “quality” is ultimately manifested.
 - Designers need to respect community goals and needs, as well as address their client’s economic objectives.
 - Individual buildings and developments are not isolated entities, but are a part of a larger district and community into which they must fit. While innovation and individual expression are sought, compatibility of design elements is also important.
 - Standardized design solutions, “corporate architecture” and “off the shelf models” cannot always be depended upon. What worked before or was accepted elsewhere may not work or be acceptable in the proposed application in Antioch.
 - Architectural styles, landscaping, and project amenities should complement surrounding development, and convey a sense of purpose, not expediency.
 - All building elevations visible to the public should be given equal attention and detail.
 - The same design solution, no matter how well done, when repeated too often or over too large an area, can become boring, lose its effectiveness, and no longer communicate “quality.”
- **Policy 5.4.2b:** Incorporate Antioch’s “Gateway to the Delta” theme and reminders of its community heritage into the design of new residential, commercial, employment-generating, and recreational development, as well as into public facilities.
 - Incorporate nautical/waterway, gateway/entry, industrial or ranching themes into the design details of new developments and community facilities, such as building architecture, signage, lighting standards, site paving and landscaping, street furniture (e.g., benches, trash enclosures, and receptacles), fencing, and placement of murals and sculpture in public locations.
 - Maintain a consistent design theme throughout each development project. Each individual development project and area within the project should portray an identifiable design theme.
 - Select tree species that are appropriate to their specific applications (e.g., providing shade, framing long-distance views of the San Joaquin River or Mount Diablo, or framing short-distance views of new development).
- **Policy 5.4.2c:** Maintain view corridors from public spaces to natural ridgelines and landmarks, such as Mount Diablo and distant hills, local ridgelines, the San Joaquin River, and other water bodies.
 - Recognizing that new development will inevitably result in some loss of existing views, as part of the City’s review of development and commercial and industrial landscape plans, minimize the loss of views from public spaces.
 - Important view corridors to be protected include Somersville Road, Lone Tree Way, Hillcrest Avenue, SR-4, SR-160, James Donlon Boulevard, Deer Valley Road, and Empire Mine Road.
- **Policy 5.4.2d:** Strengthen and emphasize community focal points, visual landmarks, and features contributing to Antioch’s identity using design concepts and standards implemented through the zoning ordinance, design guidelines and design review process, and specific plan and planned community documents.

- **Policy 5.4.2e:** Create a framework of public spaces at the neighborhood, community, and regional scale.
 - Provide for new open space opportunities throughout the City, especially in neighborhoods having minimal access to open space. This includes exploring the potential for creek corridors, bicycle and pedestrian paths, and new small open space and conservation areas.
 - Provide an open space network linked by pedestrian and bicycle paths, which preserves and enhances Antioch's significant visual and natural resources.
 - Provide sitting areas within parks and along pedestrian and bicycle paths.
 - Utilize existing creeks, such as Sand Creek, as linear parks, providing pedestrian and bicycle paths.
 - Views along utility corridors should be retained and enhanced through the use of planting materials to frame and focus views and to provide a sense of orientation.
- **Policy 5.4.2f:** Provide for consistent use of street trees to identify City streets, residential neighborhoods, commercial and employment districts, and entry points to the City.
 - Select species to enhance the pedestrian character of, and convey a distinctive and high quality visual image for the City's streets; are drought-tolerant, fire- and pest-resistant; and complement existing street trees.
 - Use changes in tree species, scale, color and spacing to differentiate the roadway types identified in the Circulation Element.
 - Use a consistent palette of street trees to distinguish Antioch from other communities, and to distinguish individual areas within the community (e.g., Rivertown, East Lone Tree, "A" Street Corridor) from each other.
 - Street trees should relate to the scale, function, and visual importance of the area in which they are located, establishing a hierarchy of street trees for entry locations, intersections, and activity centers.
 - *Major accent trees* are to be located at City and community entry locations, key intersections, and major activity centers (e.g., County East Mall, Prewett Family Park).
 - *Street trees* should be selected as a common tree for street frontages. A single species may be selected for all residential neighborhoods or different species to distinguish different neighborhoods from each other. Within residential neighborhoods, street trees should be full, providing shade and color. In commercial districts, the trees should provide shade but be more transparent at the motorist and pedestrian levels to promote views of storefronts and visual interaction of pedestrians. Within employment districts, street trees should provide shade and screening, and be used to frame views of buildings and building entries.
- **Policy 5.4.2g:** Maintain common community design elements throughout the City.
 - Provide a system of well-designed directional signage, facilitating way-finding to community features such as shopping areas, marinas, parks, and civic buildings.
 - Incorporate common design elements in community features such as roadway landscaping, streetlights, street signs, traffic lights, and community directional signage.
 - Use design variations in landscaping, street light standards, and street signs as a means of defining special design districts (e.g., Rivertown, Somersville Road, and "A" Street Corridors)
- **Policy 5.4.2o:** Design onsite lighting to improve the visual identification of adjacent structures.
 - In all projects, lighting fixtures should be attractively designed and of a low profile to complement the overall design theme of the project within which they are located.

- On-site lighting shall create a safe environment, adhering to established crime prevention standards, but shall not result in nuisance levels of light or glare on adjacent properties. Limit sources of lighting to the minimum required to ensure safe circulation and visibility.
- **Policy 5.4.2p:** Lighting should accommodate night use of streets and promote security while complying with the provision of a dark night sky. Streetscape areas that are used by pedestrians at night should be well lit. Within rural and open space areas, limit street lighting to intersections and other locations that are needed to maintain safe access (e.g., sharp curves).
- **Policy 5.4.12b:** Ensure that the design of new development proposed along a boundary between residential and non-residential uses provides sufficient protection and buffering for the residential use, while maintaining the development feasibility of the nonresidential use. The burden to provide buffers and transitions to achieve compatibility should generally be on the second use to be developed. Where there is bare ground to start from, both uses should participate in providing buffers along the boundary between them.
- **Policy 5.4.14a:** Design hillside development to be sensitive to existing terrain, views, and significant natural landforms and features.
- **Policy 5.4.14b:** Projects within hillside areas shall be designed to protect important natural features and to minimize the amount of grading. To this end, grading plans shall conform to the following guidelines.
 - *Slopes less than 25%:* Redistribution of earth over large areas may be permitted.
 - *Slopes between 25% and 35%:* Some grading may occur, but landforms need to retain their natural character. Split-level designs and clustering are encouraged as a means of avoiding the need for large padded building areas.
 - *Slopes between 35% and 50%:* Development and limited grading can occur only if it can be clearly demonstrated that safety hazards, environmental degradation, and aesthetic impacts will be avoided. Structures shall blend with the natural environment through their shape, materials and colors. Impact of traffic and roadways is to be minimized by following natural contours or using grade separations. Encouraged is the use of larger lots, variable setbacks and variable building structural techniques such as stepped or post and beam foundations are required.
- **Policy 5.4.14c:** Manufactured slopes in excess of five vertical feet (5') shall be landform graded. "Landform grading" is a contour grading method which creates artificial slopes with curves and varying slope ratios in the horizontal and vertical planes designed to simulate the appearance of surrounding natural terrain. Grading plans shall identify which slopes are to be landform graded and which are to be conventionally graded.
- **Policy 5.4.14d:** The overall project design/layout of hillside development shall adapt to the natural hillside topography and maximize view opportunities *to*, as well as *from* the development
- **Policy 5.4.14e:** Grading of ridgelines is to be avoided wherever feasible, siting structures sufficiently below ridgelines so as to preserve unobstructed views of a natural skyline. In cases where application of this performance standard would prevent construction of any structures on a lot of record, obstruction of views of a natural skyline shall be minimized through construction techniques and design, and landscaping shall be provided to soften the impact of the new structure.

- **Policy 5.4.14f:** Hillside site design should maintain an informal character with the prime determinant being the natural terrain. This can be accomplished by:
 - Utilizing variable setbacks and structure heights, innovative building techniques, and retaining walls to blend structures into the terrain, and
 - Allowing for different lot shapes and sizes.
- **Policy 5.4.14g:** Buildings should be located to preserve existing views and to allow new dwellings access to views similar to those enjoyed from existing dwellings.
- **Policy 5.4.14h:** Streets should follow the natural contours of the hillside to minimize cut and fill, permitting streets to be split into two one-way streets in steeper areas to minimize grading and blend with the terrain. Cul-de-sacs or loop roads are encouraged where necessary to fit the terrain. On street parking and sidewalks may be eliminated, subject to City approval, to reduce required grading.
- **Policy 5.4.14i:** Clustered development is encouraged as a means of preserving the natural appearance of the hillside and maximizing the amount of open space. Under this concept, dwelling units are grouped in the more level portions of the site, while steeper areas are preserved in a natural state.
- **Policy 5.4.14j:** Project design should maximize public access to canyons, overlooks, and open space areas by:
 - Providing open space easements between lots or near the end of streets or cul-de-sacs; and
 - Designating public pathways to scenic vistas.
- **Policy 5.4.14k:** Permit the use of small retaining structures when such structures can reduce grading, provided that these structures are located and limited in height so as not to be a dominant visual feature of the parcel.
 - Where retaining walls face public streets, they should be faced with materials that help blend the wall into the natural character of the terrain.
 - Large retaining walls in a uniform plane should be avoided. Break retaining walls into elements and terraces, and use landscaping to screen them from view.
- **Policy 5.4.14l:** Lot lines shall be placed at the top of slopes to facilitate maintenance by the down slope owner, who has the greater “stake” in ensuring the continued integrity of the slope.
- **Policy 5.4.14m:** The overall scale and massing of structures shall respect the natural surroundings and unique visual resources of the area by incorporating designs, which minimize bulk and mass, follow natural topography, and minimize visual intrusion on the natural landscape.
 - The overall height of a building is an important aspect of how well it fits into the existing character of the neighborhood and its hillside environment. Houses should not be excessively tall so as to dominate their surroundings or create a crowded appearance in areas of small lots. Structures should generally be stepped down hillsides and contained within a limited envelope parallel to the natural grade, rather than “jutting out” over natural slopes.
 - Building forms should be scaled to the particular environmental setting so as to complement the hillside character and avoid excessively massive forms that fail to enhance the hillside character.
 - Building facades should change plane or use overhangs as a means to create changing shadow lines to further break up massive forms.

- Wall surfaces facing towards viewshed areas should be minimized through the use of single story elements, setbacks, roof pitches, and landscaping.
- **Policy 5.4.14n:** Collective mass rooflines and elements should reflect the naturally occurring ridgeline silhouettes and topographical variation, or create an overall variety, that blends with the hillside.
- **Policy 5.4.14o:** Based upon the graphic principle that dark colors recede and light colors project, medium to dark colors which blend with the surrounding development should be used for building elevations and roof materials in view-sensitive areas.
- **Policy 10.5.1c:** In designing buffer areas, the following criteria shall be considered and provided for (when applicable) within the buffer areas to avoid or mitigate significant impacts.
 - Aesthetics: How will development affect views from adjacent open space areas? What are the sensitive land uses and resources within open space areas and how might they be affected by changes in the visual environment?
 - Light and Glare: Will a proposed development result in increased light or glare in open space areas that would impact open space uses or wildlife habitats within that open space?

City of Antioch Code of Ordinances

The Antioch Municipal Code contains lighting standards for outdoor parking areas in order to ensure new lighting does not negatively impact surrounding uses.

Title 9, Chapter 5, Article 17, Section 15: Lighting

Outdoor parking area lighting fixture heights are evaluated to determine the relationship to surrounding land uses and prevent light from shining directly onto adjacent properties.

Citywide Design Guidelines

The City of Antioch Citywide Design Guidelines contains standards for mixed, residential, commercial, and business uses as well as sign design and streetscape standards.

Chapter 3 Commercial

The goals and objectives of this chapter seek to provide commercial development that is compatible with the area in size, design, and access. The chapter contains the following objectives:

- Consider the area's size and scale;
- Articulate building forms and elevations to create varied rooflines, building shapes, and patterns of shade and shadow;
- Utilize landscaping to provide project amenities and screen parking and equipment areas;
- Provide site access, parking, and circulation that is arranged in a logical and safe manner for pedestrians and vehicles; and
- Design spaces for outside equipment, trash receptacles, storage, and loading areas in the least conspicuous part of the site.

Chapter 6 Residential

The goals and objectives of this chapter aim to promote single-family development that is architecturally diverse while also providing a higher level of design standards than the zoning code minimum requirements. This chapter contains the following goals:

- Recognize and fulfill the different economic, social, and physical needs of residents;
- Create a human-scaled, bicycle and pedestrian-friendly environment;
- Create visual diversity and create neighborhoods with a unique sense of place; and
- Incorporate physical and pedestrian connections between neighborhoods to help create a unified community.

Chapter 7 Sign Design Guidelines

This chapter contains guidelines that encourage businesses to provide quality signage that adds and supports the character of the City of Antioch as well as complying with regulations contained in the Antioch Zoning Code. This chapter contains the following objectives:

- Encourage creative and well-designed signs that contribute positively to Antioch’s visual environment, expression of local character, and development of a distinctive image.
- Signs shall be compatible and integrated with the building’s architectural design and with other signs on the property.
- Recognize that businesses often depend on signs to attract customers.

Chapter 8 Streetscape

The goals and objectives of this chapter aim to create a unified and visually attractive environment that encourages private property upgrades and new development.⁵ This chapter contains the following objectives:

- Establish a clear sense of arrival, through a distinct change in landscape, built areas, or special entrance features;
- Organize signage, lighting, and street furniture to give people a sense of direction and orientation;
- Create a public realm that is safe, secure, and enjoyable; Establish a high quality street furniture palette that creates interest and comfort for the public realm;
- Establish a landscape palette that sets the proper tone, is easy to maintain, and is appropriate to the locale; and
- Balance the needs of the pedestrian with vehicular and bicycle traffic.

⁵ City of Antioch. Citywide Design Guidelines, Chapter 8.

3.1.4 - Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Significance Criteria

According to CEQA Guidelines, Appendix G, Environmental Checklist, to determine whether impacts to aesthetics are significant environmental effects, the following questions are analyzed and evaluated.

Except as provided in Public Resources Code Section 21099, would the project:

- 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 building within a State Scenic Highway?
- c) In non-urbanized areas, substantially degrade 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 point). If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality?
- d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?

Approach to Analysis

This analysis provides a discussion of the visual impacts associated with the proposed project and the area surrounding the project site. Several variables affect the degree of visibility, visual contrast, and ultimately project impacts: (1) scale and size of facilities, (2) viewer types and activities, (3) distance and viewing angle, and (4) influences of adjacent scenery or land uses. Viewer response and sensitivity vary depending on viewer attitudes and expectations. Viewer sensitivity is distinguished among project viewers in identified scenic corridors and from publicly accessible recreational and plaza areas. Recreational areas and scenic corridors are considered to have relatively high sensitivity.

As part of this analysis, various areas in the project site vicinity and eastern Contra Costa County area were screened as potential viewpoint locations, based on whether the existing project site is visible from these locations and the degree to which viewers at those locations would be sensitive to proposed physical changes at the project site during the proposed construction and operational periods. A set of locations that constitute a representative cross-section of views experienced by a representative cross section of observers was chosen for the analysis. Views from these locations were photographed and are included in this Draft EIR to illustrate existing conditions. Consequently, visual change discussions were provided for these same views to facilitate project impact determinations. Project design drawings and information about height and massing were also relied upon to identify whether or when the proposed structures would result in visual impacts. The City of Antioch General Plan and Ordinance Code were also evaluated to determine applicable policies and design requirements for the project.

Light and Glare

The analysis of light and glare impacts in this section focuses on the nature and magnitude of changes in light and glare conditions of the project site and surrounding area. If the light and glare conditions of the project and the existing environment are similar, then the visual compatibility would be high. If the light and glare conditions of the project strongly contrast with the existing light and glare or applicable policies and guidelines, then light and glare compatibility would be low and significant impacts may result. Relevant urban design policies and guidelines are used to provide conclusions with regard to the significance of project- and cumulative-level light and glare impacts.

Impact Evaluation

Scenic Vistas

Impact AES-1:	The project would not have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista.
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Construction

A significant impact would occur if the project construction would have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista as identified in the City Antioch General Plan. As discussed previously, the project site does not contain designated scenic resources such as Mount Diablo, the San Joaquin River, or historical buildings described in the General Plan, although the site and local roadways such as Deer Valley Road provide views towards Mount Diablo.

Construction activity would involve cranes, trucks, and other equipment that would temporarily occupy the site, but would not pose a significant obstacle for viewing scenic resources. Thus, construction activity would not adversely affect existing views of scenic vistas within the project vicinity. Therefore, temporary construction impacts related to scenic vistas would be less than significant.

Operation

Examples of typical scenic vistas include mountain ranges, ridgelines, or bodies of water as viewed from a highway, public space, or other areas designated for the express purpose of viewing and sightseeing. In general, a project's impact to a scenic vista would occur if development of the project would substantially change or remove a scenic vista. The City of Antioch General Plan does not specifically identify any scenic vistas within the project site, although views of Mount Diablo and its prominent ridgelines are considered scenic and are available from local roadways such as Deer Valley Road. Discussion of General Plan view corridors is discussed further under Impact AES-3.

In addition, Policy 5.4.14j in the City's Hillside Design Policies specifies that projects should provide public pathways to scenic vistas in order to maximize public access to canyons, overlooks, and open space areas. The total open space and trail areas would comprise approximately 40 percent of the total project site. An approximately 6-mile publicly accessible trail system would be provided along Sand Creek and throughout the project site. The trail system would connect the proposed neighborhood areas to each other and to nearby parks, ridgeline areas, trailhead staging areas, and the proposed mixed-use Village Center area. An approximately 1-acre trail staging area is proposed to be located in the southwestern portion of the project site, near Empire Mine Road, to provide easy access to the existing East Bay Regional Park trail system, as well as the project site's proposed

trail system. As such, the proposed project would provide public pathways to scenic vistas, such as Mount Diablo and its prominent ridgelines to the west and south of the site, consistent with Policy 5.4.14j. Therefore, the proposed project would not have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista. Therefore, impacts would be less-than-significant.

Level of Significance

Less Than Significant

Scenic Highways

Impact AES-2:	The project would not substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic building within a State Scenic Highway.
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Construction

There are no scenic resources designated by the City of Antioch General Plan on the project site. SR-4, located 1.8 miles to the east of the project site, is listed as an Eligible State Scenic Highway, but is not visible from the project site. Thus, demolition and grading during construction could not result in adverse impacts to scenic resources within a State Scenic Highway. Therefore, no temporary construction impact related to scenic resources within a State Scenic Highway would occur.

Operation

The proposed project is not located within or near a designated or Eligible State Scenic Highway; thus, there are no scenic resources, trees, rock outcroppings, or historic buildings within a State Scenic Highway located on the project site. SR-4, located 1.8 miles to the east, is listed as an Eligible State Scenic Highway; however, the segment has not been officially designated. Furthermore, due to distance and intervening trees, development of the project site would not be visible from SR-4. Therefore, the proposed project would not damage scenic resources within a State Scenic Highway and no impact would occur.

Level of Significance

No Impact

Visual Character

Impact AES-3:	With respect to the non-urban character of the existing project site, the project would substantially degrade 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).
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Construction

Construction of the project would temporarily affect the visual character and quality of the project site. However, the project site is located adjacent to urban development such as the Kaiser Permanente Antioch Medical Center to the east and single-family homes to the north. In addition, construction activity would be temporary in nature and would not permanently degrade the existing visual character of the project site. Therefore, impacts related to construction would be less than significant.

Operation

The project site is characterized by grassland with an existing single-family residence and various barns and outbuildings. The surrounding area has a suburban residential character. The area to the north is developed as single-family homes as is the area to the east with the Kaiser Permanente Antioch Medical Center. However, rural and undeveloped City of Antioch and Contra Costa County land is located to the south and west of the project site.

According to the Public Resources Code Section 21071,⁶ an incorporated city is an “Urbanized Area” if it meets either of the following criteria: (1) has a population of at least 100,000 persons, and (2) has a population of less than 100,000 persons if the population of that city and not more than two contiguous incorporated cities combined equals at least 100,000 persons. According to the last census population estimate on July 1, 2018, Antioch had a population of 111,535. Out of an abundance of caution, even though the project is in an urban area as defined by CEQA, because of the rural character of the immediate site, the more stringent threshold of a non-urban area is being applied.

The City of Antioch General Plan identifies view corridors and views from these view corridors as scenic resources because they also afford publicly available views of visual landmarks, such as Mount Diablo and ridgelines. As described in 3.1.2, Environmental Setting, Deer Valley Road and Empire Mine Road are designated view corridors because they have publicly-accessible views of Mount Diablo.

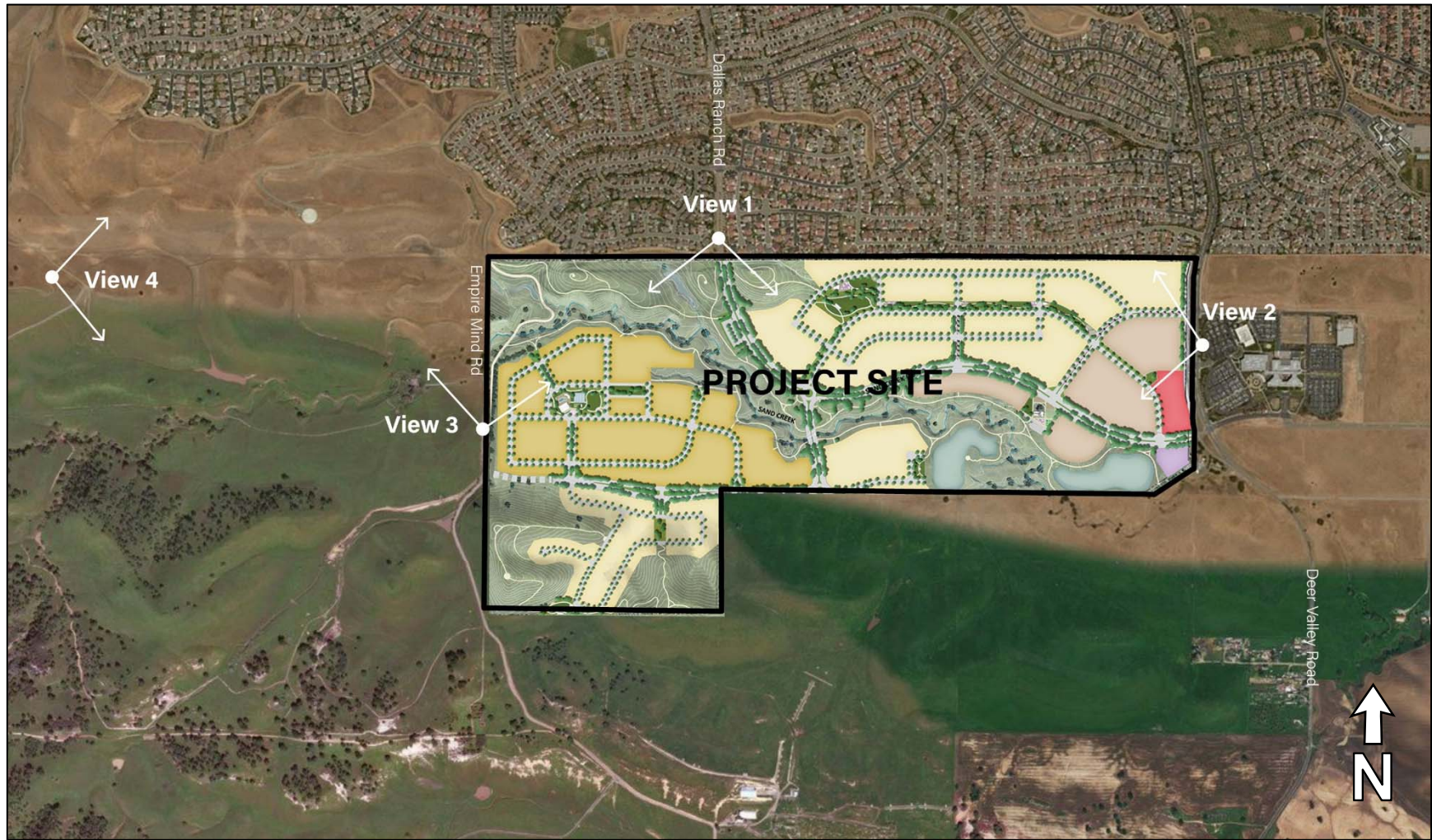
As shown in Exhibit 3.1-10, visual simulations show the project’s changes to existing visual character from Dallas Ranch Road, Deer Valley Road, Empire Mine Road, and an unpaved trail at the Black Diamond Mines Regional Preserve.

View of Project Site from Dallas Ranch Road (View 1)

Exhibit 3.1-11 provides a view of the project site looking south from the existing terminus of Dallas Ranch Road, which is representative of similar public viewpoints at other neighborhood roadways to the north of the project site and existing residences to the north.

As shown in Exhibit 3.1-11, views of the proposed project would consist primarily of landscaping along the project entry. While portions of the hillsides to the south would be partially obscured by vegetation, views of the ridgeline would not be substantially affected. Views of the proposed residential buildings from this vantage point would be screened by landscaping elements and project site topography. Such landscaping elements would blend with existing vegetation in the area consistent with City of Antioch General Plan Design Policy 5.4.2a and Policy 5.4.2g in order to provide common design elements and ensure the project complements surrounding development. Notwithstanding, neighboring homeowners, hikers, and the like will experience a completely modified view of the site—it will no longer be rolling grasslands, but homes, infrastructure, etc. Even though homeowners living along the edge of the project site do not necessarily represent a large portion of the public, the City wishes to acknowledge the loss of an open space viewshed. As such, the proposed project could substantially degrade the visual character or quality of the site for hikers, travelers along Deer Valley Road, as well as abutting residents to north and south.

⁶ JUSTIA US Law. Public Resources Code, Division 13, Environmental Quality Chapter 2.5, Definitions, Section 21071 (2014). Website: <https://law.justia.com/codes/california/2014/code-prc/division-13/chapter-2.5/section-21071/>. Accessed December 18, 2019.



Source: Raney Planning & Management, Inc., March 2018.

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Exhibit 3.1-10 Location and Orientation of Views 1, 2, 3, and 4

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Existing



Proposed

Source: Raney Planning & Management, Inc., March 2018.

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Exhibit 3.1-11
View 1: Existing and Proposed
View from Dallas Ranch Road

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ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

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View of Project Site from Deer Valley Road (View 2)

Exhibit 3.1-12 provides a view of the project site looking west from Deer Valley Road, near the Kaiser Permanente Antioch Medical Center. As described previously, City of Antioch General Plan Policy 5.4.2c identifies Deer Valley Road as a designated view corridor because it provides views of Mount Diablo.

Existing views include the undeveloped grasslands of the project site, as well as hillsides and ridgelines located in the background, including Mount Diablo. Upon development of the proposed project, views of the site from the east would change from a rural, undeveloped landscape to a developed, residential and commercial environment. Views of the distant topographical features would be obscured by the proposed buildings and landscaping features of the project.

The project includes medium density housing, trees and other landscaping along the eastern project site boundary. The project would also include construction of a sidewalk, landscaping, curbs and gutters, a bicycle lane, and a new 12-foot wide southbound traffic lane. At the Village Center frontage on Deer Valley Road, the proposed buildings would include a 10-foot setback from the Deer Valley Road right-of-way. The landscaping elements along the site boundary would partially screen views of the on-site buildings and would enhance the aesthetic quality of the pedestrian sidewalk along the site boundary. Nonetheless, based on implementation of the above-described buildings and landscaping, the project would obscure views of distant topographical features, including Mount Diablo and the surrounding ridgelines. Thus, the proposed project could substantially degrade the visual character or quality of the site for viewers to the east of the site, which is considered a potentially significant impact.

View Looking North Along Empire Mine Road (View 3)

Exhibit 3.1-13 provides a view looking north along Empire Mine Road, with the project site to the east. Empire Mine Road has been closed to through traffic since 2005; however, many individuals hike along it on their way to Black Diamond Mines Regional Preserve. The rural, two-lane road along the site's western boundary is designated as a view corridor in the City of Antioch General Plan because it offers views of Mount Diablo and associated ridgelines to the west. Currently, views at this viewpoint consist of foothills to the north of the project site and a row of non-native eucalyptus trees along the eastern shoulder of the roadway. No views of Mount Diablo are visible from this north-facing viewpoint. Upon development of the proposed project, the existing trees would be retained and would help to screen the proposed single-family residences from view. As shown in the exhibit, the proposed residences would be set back a considerable distance from the roadway and would not dominate the viewshed. In addition, the project would not obstruct views of Mount Diablo and associated ridgelines to the west. The project would change a portion of the viewshed from an undeveloped rural landscape to a residential development. Although the proposed project would not substantially degrade the views of Mount Diablo, it could substantially degrade the visual character of the site for viewers travelling and/or hiking on Empire Mine Road. This would be a potentially significant impact.

View Looking East Toward Project Site from Black Diamond Mines Regional Preserve (View 4)

Exhibit 3.1-14 provides a view looking east toward the project site from a trail in Black Diamond Mines Regional Preserve, which is located approximately 0.9-mile west of the site. Views currently

consist of undeveloped grassland and rolling hills, as well as scattered trees. The project site, as well as the City of Antioch, are visible in the distant background. Development of the proposed project would convert portions of the project site from a rural, undeveloped environment to a residential community (with limited commercial development). As shown in the exhibit, the proposed development would not block views of a designated scenic resource.

The steep hillsides within the northwest and southwest portions of the project site are protected from development, with the exception of unpaved pedestrian and bicycle paths. The limited residential development within the southwest portion of the site would use landform grading methodology, avoiding the top 25 percent of the hilltops and matching the existing contouring of the hillsides to the maximum extent feasible. Existing trees on the hillsides in the project area would partially screen the proposed development areas.

While the proposed project would preserve scenic resources protected by City of Antioch General Plan Policy 5.4.2c. Overall, development of the proposed project would represent a significant change in the overall viewshed from the Black Diamond Mines Regional Preserve. As a result, the project could substantially degrade the visual character or quality of the site for visitors at the Black Diamond Mines Regional Preserve or other nearby public spaces. This would be considered a potentially significant impact.

Conclusion

As discussed previously, although the project is located within the City of Antioch which is an urban area as defined by CEQA, the immediate area adjacent and surrounding the project site is non-urban in nature. Development of the proposed project would represent a change in the visual character of the project site as viewed from surrounding non-urban areas. Within the portions of the site to be developed, the project would change the landscape from rural, grazing land, to a built suburban landscape with residential and commercial development that would be similar to the surrounding development to the north and east. The proposed project would substantially degrade visual resources in the area and would partially obscure views of distant topographical features, including Mount Diablo and the surrounding ridgelines, for viewers along the designated view corridor on Deer Valley Road to the east of the site, which is considered a potentially significant impact.

The proposed project would include development standards for each of the proposed land use designations within the project site. The development standards are consistent with the Design Guidelines adopted by the Initiative and establish minimum design parameters for residential development, including standards related to parking, recreational vehicle storage, driveway slopes, grading, minimum lot dimensions, setbacks, and maximum building heights.

In addition to the development standards, the project would include design guidelines that would provide guidance for neighborhood and landscape design associated with implementation of project development. The proposed design guidelines would include guiding principles to address neighborhood identity, consistency with future surrounding development, and architectural design.



Existing



Proposed

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Existing



Proposed

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Existing



Proposed

Exhibit 3.1-14

View 4: Existing and Proposed

View from Black Diamond Mines Regional Preserve

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Neighborhood-specific guidelines would be provided for each of the proposed residential neighborhoods, as well as the proposed Village Center area and fire station site. Specific landscape guidelines (included in the proposed design guidelines) would address the design of open space, parks, trail staging areas, and streetscapes within the proposed project site. As discussed in Section 3.10, Land Use and Planning, the proposed project would be generally consistent with the City's Hillside Design Guidelines and other applicable provisions of the General Plan related to the preservation of aesthetic resources. In order to ensure that future development within the project site is consistent with the proposed development standards and design guidelines, as well as existing applicable City standards, the project would be subject to the City's Design Review process established by Chapter 5, Article 26 of the Antioch Municipal Code.

Based on the above, even with implementation of the development standards and design guidelines, the project would substantially obstruct views of a protected scenic resource in a non-urbanized area, Mount Diablo, from a General Plan designated view corridor, Deer Valley Road, which would substantially degrade the existing visual character and quality of the site and the site's surroundings. Therefore, a significant impact would occur.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation

Potentially Significant

Mitigation Measures

No Feasible Mitigation is Available

Level of Significance After Mitigation

Significant and Unavoidable

Light and Glare

Impact AES-4:	The project would create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area.
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Construction/Operation

As discussed previously, the proposed project site is primarily undeveloped. The proposed project would have a significant impact if substantial light or glare would adversely affect nighttime or daytime views, respectively, in the area. Project sources of lighting would include, but would not be limited to, headlights from cars travelling on internal roadways, streetlights, light associated with the proposed Village Center area, exterior lighting on the proposed residential buildings, and interior light spilling through windows. The most prominent sources of light would be from the stationary sources adjacent to proposed buildings and parking areas and elevated lighting sources such as street lights. The most prominent sources of light would be visible from project roadways. As such, the proposed project would create an increase of nighttime light and daytime glare, due to the increase of lighting and reflective surfaces and vehicle headlights in the area.

However, the Antioch Municipal Code has requirements for lighting and glare to reduce the impacts of glare and light trespass. Specifically, Section 9-5.1715 of the Municipal Code states that outdoor

parking area lighting fixture heights must be determined based on the relationship of the fixtures to surrounding uses, and lighting must not shine directly onto an adjacent street or property. In addition, City of Antioch General Plan Policy 5.4.2o states that lighting must not result in nuisance levels of light or glare on adjacent properties. Compliance with these provisions is reviewed prior to certificate of occupancy by City building officials.

The project's proposed design guidelines include specific standards related to lighting. For example, light fixtures must be appropriately placed and scaled to avoid light spillover or glare into surrounding areas. The City of Antioch General Plan EIR determined that the impact of new sources of light and glare could be minimized by incorporating design features and operating requirements into new developments that limit light and glare. Further, the proposed project has been designed to include significant setbacks from its western boundary, as well as from the Sand Creek corridor to minimize impacts, including light and glare, on the natural environment. Although project lighting could potentially affect migratory species, the setbacks from the undeveloped lands to the west, and from Sand Creek would maintain the function of these areas for species migration. Additionally, Mitigation Measure (MM) BIO-1a to MM BIO-1p would reduce impacts to special-status species to a less than significant level. As a result, compliance with the City of Antioch lighting specifications and Zoning Code requirements would ensure the project does not result in significant light spillage or nighttime sky impacts. Therefore, lighting and glare impacts would be less than significant.

Level of Significance

Less Than Significant

3.1.5 - Cumulative Impacts

Impacts to aesthetic resources are localized and not cumulative in nature. For example, the creation of glare at one location is not worsened by glare created at another location. Rather, such effects are independent, and the determination as to whether they are adverse is specific to the project and location where they are created. Projects that block a view or affect the visual quality of a site also have localized aesthetic impacts. The impact occurs specific to a site or area and remains independent from another project elsewhere that may block a view or degrade the visual environment of a specific site.

The following discussion of cumulative impacts is based on the implementation of the proposed project in combination with other proposed and pending projects in the region. Other proposed and pending projects in the region under the cumulative context would include buildout of the City of Antioch General Plan, including the Sand Creek Focus Area, as well as development of the most recently approved land uses within the vicinity of the project area.

Visual Character and Views

The development projects listed in Section 3, Environmental Impact Analysis, Table 3-1, Cumulative Projects, are mostly residential and commercial in nature. The proposed project and the projects listed in Table 3-1 propose urban development, but only Cumulative Project 3 (Aviano Adult Community Project) would be located within the same visible area, as it would be located across Deer Valley Road beyond the Kaiser Permanente Antioch Medical Center. The Aviano Adult Community Project would

develop approximately 533 residential units and would be consistent with the vision for the Sand Creek Focus Area. The City of Antioch General Plan EIR determined that as the City of Antioch continues to expand, future development could alter landforms, scenic vantage points, and the overall character of the City. The project would contribute to the cumulative change in visual character within the City of Antioch. Residential subdivisions are located to the north of the project site, and new residential subdivisions are approved to the east of the project site. In addition, agricultural land designated for development is located to the west. The City of Antioch General Plan has designated the areas south, west, and east of the project site for open space and urban development. Therefore, in terms of the change to the visual character of the project area, development on the project site is what is anticipated to occur in the project area under the General Plan. Development in the City, in addition to development on the project site, would contribute to a change in the visual character of the region.

As discussed previously, City of Antioch General Plan Policy 5.4.2c states that view corridors from public spaces to natural ridgelines and landmarks, such as Mount Diablo and distant hills, local ridgelines, and the San Joaquin River and other water bodies (such as Sand Creek), should be preserved. Specific view corridors identified in Policy 5.4.2c include Somersville Road, Lone Tree Way, Hillcrest Avenue, SR-4, SR-160, James Donlon Boulevard, Deer Valley Road, and Empire Mine Road. However, Policy 5.4.2c also recognizes that new development will inevitably result in some loss of existing views.

The project would include development standards and design guidelines that would guide future development within the project site. Per a conceptual grading plan included in the proposed design guidelines, the southwestern portion of the project site (within the proposed LD-1 neighborhood area) would be graded with a landform grading methodology, avoiding the top 25 percent of the hilltops and matching the existing contouring of the hillsides to the maximum extent feasible. The steepest slopes to the east and west of the proposed LD-1 neighborhood would be retained as open space and left in a primarily undeveloped state. Thus, the proposed project would be consistent with Policy 5.4.14a through 5.4.14f in the City's Hillside Design policies. Additional discussion of the project's consistency with the City's Hillside Design policies, as well as other applicable General Plan policies, is provided in Section 3.9, Land Use and Planning.

Given that the project site is located at a slightly lower elevation than the developed areas to the north of the site, the proposed development would not obscure views of Mount Diablo or local ridgelines from Dallas Ranch Road and residences to the north. In addition, given that Empire Mine Road is located along the site's western boundary and Mount Diablo is located to the southwest of the site, views of Mount Diablo from the roadway would not be substantially affected. However, views of Mount Diablo and other natural features from Deer Valley Road, which is designated as a scenic corridor by the City of Antioch General Plan, would be partially blocked by the proposed project (Exhibit 3.1-12).

The City of Antioch General Plan EIR addressed planned buildout of the planned Sand Creek Focus Area, which included the project site, and concluded that with implementation of policies included in the General Plan, converting vacant land to urban use would result in a less-than-significant impact with regard to scenic vistas and scenic resources. Although development on the project site would be typical of urban development anticipated to occur in the project area, the project would

involve a change to the visual character and quality of the site and surroundings from what has been anticipated specifically for the site by the City. In addition, while implementation of the proposed development standards and design guidelines would help maximize the aesthetic quality of future development within the project site, the project would still create a partial obstruction to scenic views offered from Deer Valley Road in a non-urban area, which would substantially degrade the existing visual character and quality of the site and surrounding area. Therefore, implementation of the proposed project, in addition to cumulative development in the area, would be considered cumulatively significant.

Light and Glare

The proposed project would be required to comply with the City of Antioch lighting specifications to ensure the project would not result in significant light spillage or nighttime sky impacts. As a result, the proposed project would not have a significant impact on light or glare on the surrounding area. The development projects listed in Table 3-1 are mostly residential and commercial in nature. The proposed project and the projects listed in Table 3-1 propose urban development. Project 3 (Aviano Adult Community Project) would be located across Deer Valley Road and 0.5-mile to the east of the project site. The Aviano Adult Community Project would develop approximately 533 residential units and would be consistent with the vision for the Sand Creek Focus Area.

The project site and area directly surrounding the site is mostly non-urban in nature with undeveloped land and Black Diamond Mines Regional Park to the west and south. There is developed land including single-family homes to the north and the Kaiser Permanente Antioch Medical Center to the east. The project and other cumulative projects would include exterior and interior lighting. All lighting associated with the project and cumulative projects would be subject to Antioch Municipal Code Section 9-5.1715 regarding parking lot area lighting standards. In addition, all cumulative projects located in the City of Brentwood would be subject to the City of Brentwood's lighting standards contained in the Municipal Code. As such, the cumulative impact related to light and glare would be less than significant.

Level of Cumulative Significance

Cumulatively Significant (Visual Character and Views)

Less than Cumulatively Significant (Light and Glare)

Mitigation Measures

No Feasible Mitigation is Possible (Visual Character and Views)

No Mitigation is Required (Light and Glare)

Level of Significance After Mitigation

Cumulatively Significant and Unavoidable (Visual Character and Views)

Less than Cumulatively Significant (Light and Glare)