3.1 AESTHETICS AND VISUAL RESOURCES

This section describes the following within the City and its immediate environs:

- environmental setting (existing conditions and regulatory setting) for aesthetics and visual resources relating to the proposed project;
- the impacts associated with aesthetics and visual resources that would result from the proposed project; and
- mitigation measures that would reduce these impacts.

The setting, impacts, and mitigation measures for the City’s future service areas are described in Chapter 4.0, “Future Service Areas.” Chapter 5.0, “Alternatives to the Proposed Project,” discusses the impacts of the alternatives to the proposed project.

3.1.1 Existing Conditions

3.1.1.1 Visual Character

The City of Goleta lies between the Santa Ynez Mountains and the Pacific Ocean. Although the foothills and mountains are outside City boundaries, these landforms will remain largely undeveloped and provide a scenic backdrop to Goleta’s urbanized area. Prominent features of the foothills and mountains are seen throughout the City and include expanses of orchards, chaparral, and rock outcroppings.

Visually attractive open spaces within Goleta include public recreation areas, such as the Lake Los Carneros Natural and Historical Preserve, and agricultural lands, such as Fairview Gardens and the Bishop Ranch, all readily visible from public streets (see Figure 3.1-1, Public Viewpoints). A large lemon orchard and other agricultural areas located adjacent to the City boundary can be seen south of Hollister Avenue between Patterson Avenue and State Route 217 (SR-217). Goleta also encompasses highly scenic coastal open space areas. Santa Barbara Shores Park and the Sperling Preserve are important upland drainage areas associated with the Devereux Slough ecosystem. Home to significant natural features and one of the largest monarch butterfly overwintering sites in the United States, this open space is bordered on the west by the Sandpiper Golf Course and the east by UCSB-owned open space and the Coal Oil Point Reserve (COPR). An extensive trail system provides access to these scenic areas, which, due to the predominantly flat terrain, provide sweeping views of onsite eucalyptus trees, the Santa Ynez Mountains and foothills, the Pacific Ocean, coastal bluffs, and Devereux Slough.

Goleta’s urban design reflects its transition from a farming region to a post-World War II suburban residential community. Once inhabited by the indigenous Chumash, the Goleta Valley changed during the Mission Period of the late 1700s when dense oak forests were cut down for cattle grazing and farming to support the Santa Barbara Mission and Presidio. In the early to mid-1800s, the missions were secularized and the lands granted by the Mexican government to former Presidio soldiers. Cattle grazing and agriculture continued until a severe drought in the 1860s forced large land holdings to be split into smaller parcels. As houses and barns were built on these smaller plots, the economic base moved from cattle to mixed-crop farming such as walnuts, lima beans and lemons. Goleta remained a small community, and fertile flatlands supported the main industry of agriculture into the late 1940s and early 1950s. Although several housing tracts had been constructed in the 1920s, it was not until the construction of US-101 in
1947 and the Cachuma Dam in 1950 that large residential subdivisions of predominantly single story ranch-style tract homes became interspersed among the lemon orchards. Relocation of the University of California from Santa Barbara's Riviera neighborhood to Goleta Point in 1950 and construction of light industrial parks for the defense industry in the 1960s fostered additional growth in the Goleta Valley. New strip retail commercial areas along Calle Real and Fairview Avenue were built to meet the demands of the growing residential population.

Today, Goleta retains its small-scale suburban character, with relatively low residential densities and few visually prominent buildings (none greater than three stories). Open spaces and broad vistas continue to provide a connection to the natural environment. Although growth was so rapid during the 1960s that only a few pre-World War II buildings exist, the Old Town area is the historic center of Goleta and the place where an array of architectural styles are still represented.

As shown in Figure 3.1-2 (City Subareas), the City can be divided into subareas that have common distinguishing characteristics and functions. These subareas are defined and briefly described in Section 3.10, Land Use and Recreation.

3.1.1.2 Visual Resources

Scenic Resources
An essential aspect of Goleta's character is derived from the various scenic resources within and around the City. Views of these resources from public and private areas contribute to the overall attractiveness of the City and the quality of life enjoyed by its residents, visitors, and workforce. Natural features and resources within and around the City include:

- the open waters of the Pacific Ocean/Santa Barbara Channel, with the Channel Islands visible in the distance;
- Goleta's Pacific shoreline, including beaches, dunes, lagoons, coastal bluffs, and open coastal mesas;
- Goleta and Devereux Sloughs;
- creeks and the vegetation associated with their riparian corridors;
- agricultural areas, including orchards, lands in vegetable or other crop production, and fallow agricultural lands;
- Lake Los Carneros and the surrounding woodlands; and
- prominent natural landforms, such as the foothills and the Santa Ynez Mountains.

Scenic Corridors
GP/CLUP Figure 6-1 identifies corridors that pass through, or provide visual access to, areas of high scenic value. These corridors, or segments of corridors, include but are not limited to the following:

- US-101;
- Cathedral Oaks Road;
- Hollister Avenue;
• Los Carneros Road;
• Fairview Avenue; and
• Calle Real.

3.1.1.3 Key Public Viewpoints

Public vantage points within the City include public streets and US-101, as well as public open spaces located throughout the City. Figure 3.1-1 shows the public vantage points where expansive views of the City and its visual resources are readily available to viewers on roadways and in City public open spaces. Although views of the City’s visual resources are also available from residential areas and other private lands within the City, local regulations and guidelines generally focus on maintaining views from public vantage points.

Views from US-101
Motorists on US-101 currently have both northerly and southerly views from the highway as it extends through the City. At the eastern entrance to the City, motorists have northern views of the Santa Ynez Mountains and foothills and southern views of the coastal areas and agricultural uses between Patterson Avenue and SR-217. Between Los Carneros and Glen Annie Roads, motorists have northern views of the Santa Ynez Mountains, the foothills, Bishop Ranch, Lake Los Carneros Natural and Historic Preserve, and southern views of Goleta Slough and coastal areas. Where US-101 extends through the western portion the City, motorists have northern views of the mountains and foothills and southern views of the coastal areas, including Santa Barbara Shores Park and Sandpiper Golf Course.

Views from other Major Public Roadways within the City
Motorists on Hollister Avenue also currently have views of important visual resources. Between La Patera Lane and Santa Felicia Drive, motorists on Hollister Avenue have northern views of the Santa Ynez Mountains, foothills, Bishop Ranch, and Lake Los Carneros Natural and Historic Preserve. Where Hollister Avenue extends through the western portion of the City, motorists have expansive views of the coastal areas, including Santa Barbara Shores Park. Views of coastal areas are also available from Hollister Avenue near Los Carneros Road and La Patera Lane. Hollister Avenue extends through the Old Town area, offering views of this landmark area as well.

Other major roadways with expansive views of important visual resources include Los Carneros Road, Glen Annie Road, and Fairview Avenue. Views of coastal areas, mountains, foothills, Bishop Ranch, and Lake Los Carneros Natural and Historic Preserve are available to motorists on Los Carneros Road and Glen Annie Road. Motorists on Fairview Avenue have expansive views of the mountains, foothills, the ocean, and Fairview Gardens.

Gateways to the City
Gateways are significant points of entry into a city or community. From these gateways, motorists are presented with the visual character of the city. Figure 3.1-1 depicts the following gateways to Goleta:

• roadways that extend through Hollister Avenue at the eastern and western City boundaries that provide expansive views of the City, coastal areas, the mountains and foothills;
• views of the City, mountains, and foothills from Cathedral Oaks Road at the eastern and western City boundaries;
• views of Old Town from Hollister Avenue at Fairview Avenue and SR-217;
• views of the City on Glen Annie Road, Los Cameros Road, and Fairview Avenue at the northern City boundaries; and
• views of the City from Calle Real and Patterson Avenue.

**Views from Public Open Space Areas within the City**
Expansive views of important visual resources are also available from public open spaces within the City. Northern and southern views of the mountains, foothills, and coastal areas are available from Santa Barbara Shores Park, Sperling Preserve, and Lake Los Carneros Natural and Historic Preserve.

An extensive trail system extends throughout both the Sperling Preserve and the Santa Barbara Shores Park, which because of their predominantly flat character provide sweeping views of onsite eucalyptus trees, the Santa Ynez Mountains and foothills, the Pacific Ocean, the coastal bluffs, and Devereux Slough.

### 3.1.2 Regulatory Framework

#### 3.1.2.1 Federal and State

**Federal Authorities and Administering Agencies**
The Federal Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972 applies to this project as administered by the State of California.

**State Coastal Act**
As shown in Figure 3.1-1, the southern portion of the City is within the state Coastal Zone. All uses within the Coastal Zone are regulated under the Coastal Act. A primary objective of the Coastal Act is the protection of scenic and visual resources, particularly as viewed from public places such as road rights-of-way and park and open space areas. New development is required to be sited and designed to protect views of the ocean along the shoreline and other scenic views in coastal areas. Additionally, new development is required to minimize alteration of natural landforms and must be sited and designed to be visually compatible with the character of the surrounding areas. The Coastal Act further encourages measures to restore and enhance visual quality in areas where scenic and visual resources have been degraded.

The Coastal Act policy related to visual resources within the California Coastal Zone is presented below. The numbers refer to the section of the California Public Resources Code:

**Section 30251** The scenic and visual qualities of coastal areas shall be considered and protected as a resource of public importance. Permitted development shall be sited and designed to protect views to and along the ocean and scenic coastal areas, to minimize the alteration of natural land forms, to be visually compatible with the character of surrounding areas, and, where feasible, to restore and enhance visual quality in visually degraded areas. New development in highly scenic areas, such as those designated in the California Coastline Preservation and Recreation Plan prepared by the Department of Parks and Recreation and by local government, shall be subordinate to the character of its setting.

**Subsection 5 of Section 30253** States that new development shall: "Where appropriate, protect special communities and neighborhoods which, because of their unique
characteristics, are popular visitor destination points for recreational uses.” Special communities are defined as “areas that add to the visual attractiveness of the coast.”

**State Law Regarding the Formation of General Plan Elements**

Development of a Visual and Historic Resources Element for a general plan is optional under state law. However, the formation of specific goals, policies, and objectives related to visual resources addresses several mandatory subjects as set forth in the general plan law. In particular, Government Code Section 65560 requires an open space plan to include areas of outstanding scenic, historic, and cultural value, as well as scenic highway corridors. Further, general plan law (Government Code Section 65302.4) authorizes the general plan to express community intentions regarding urban form and design. These expressions may provide for specific measures to regulate relationships between buildings and between buildings and outdoor public areas, including streets.

**State Scenic Highway Designations**

The portion of US-101 that extends through the City is identified as an "Eligible Scenic Highway—Not Officially Designated" by the State Scenic Highway System. Although US-101 is not officially designated as a scenic highway, for purposes of this analysis it is considered a scenic corridor.

### 3.1.2.2 Local

**City of Goleta Ordinances**

Development in the City is subject to the City's Inland Zoning Ordinance for those portions of the City outside of the Coastal Zone and the Coastal Zoning Ordinance for those portions of the City within the Coastal Zone. Following the adoption of the GP/CLUP, the existing Inland and Coastal Zoning Ordinances will be replaced by a single, unified zoning code that includes zoning regulations applicable to inland areas and the coastal zone. Existing City zoning ordinances are not applicable in the context of this EIR because they will be replaced when the GP/CLUP is adopted.

**City of Goleta Old Town Revitalization Plan**

The purpose of the Goleta Old Town Revitalization Plan (GOTRP) is to: 1) identify and construct a range of public infrastructure improvements to correct such problems as flooding and circulation deficiencies and attract private investment to the area; 2) identify a range of private developments for identified parcels which strengthen and diversify Old Town's economic base and provide needed services for the area; and 3) create a comprehensive financing package which provides a reliable source of long-term capital to implement revitalization projects.

The Revitalization Plan comprises a mix of residential, commercial, and industrial development that would provide a balance of employment, shopping, housing, and recreational opportunities. The project includes private development, public infrastructure improvements, land use/zone changes, ordinance amendments, and a Heritage District Overlay, as well as development incentives such as permit streamlining, financial assistance, and relocation support.

**City of Goleta Old Town Heritage District Architecture and Design Guidelines**

The Goleta Old Town Heritage District Architecture and Design Guidelines (Guidelines) are intended to enhance the image of Old Town, ensure the development of a distinctive and unified streetscape, and promote a more pedestrian oriented downtown. The Guidelines implement the design goals and policies established by the GOTRP and address both public and private
improvements including architectural design, neighborhood compatibility, streetscape, and other design elements.

The Heritage District Guidelines provide very specific design direction for potential developers in Old Town. Used in concert with the Revitalization Plan policies and development standards, these documents are intended to assist staff, applicants, and decision makers in understanding community preferences and a project's consistency with revitalization goals thereby leading to a more efficient review process.

3.1.3 Project Impacts and Mitigation

3.1.3.1 Thresholds of Significance

City of Goleta Environmental Thresholds and Guidelines Manual


Based on the guidelines in the Thresholds Manual, a proposed project would result in a potentially significant visual impact if it would result in one or more of the following conditions:

1a. The project site has significant visual resources by virtue of surface waters, vegetation, elevation, slope, or other natural or man-made features which are publicly visible.

1b. The proposed project has the potential to degrade or significantly interfere with the public’s enjoyment of the site’s existing visual resources.

2a. The project has the potential to impact visual resources of the Coastal Zone or other visually important area (i.e. mountainous area, public park, urban fringe, or scenic travel corridor).

2b. The project has the potential to conflict with the policies set forth in the Local Coastal Plan, the General Plan or any applicable community plan to protect the identified views.

3. The project has the potential to create a significantly adverse aesthetic impact though obstruction of public views, incompatibility with surrounding uses, structures, or intensity of development, removal of significant amounts of vegetation, loss of important open space, substantial alteration of natural character, lack of adequate landscaping, or extensive grading visible from public areas.

CEQA Thresholds

Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines identifies the following four circumstances that can lead to a determination of significant visual impact:

1. The project has a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista.

2. The project substantially damages scenic resources, including but not limited to trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within view of a state scenic highway.

3. The project substantially degrades the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings.
4. The project creates a new source of substantial light or glare, which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area.

3.1.3.2 Discussion of Relevant GP/CLUP Policies

Visual and Historic Resources Element
The policies of the Visual and Historic Resources Element are intended to preserve and protect Goleta’s scenic and historic resources to the maximum extent feasible while allowing quality development in conformance with the provisions of the GP/CLUP. The following principles and goals, which are not in order of priority, provide the foundation for the detailed policies in Sections C and D of the Visual and Historic Resources Element. All policies have been written to be in conformity with the guiding principles and goals. Future actions of the City following adoption of the GP/CLUP are required to be consistent with these principles and goals:

1. Recognize and preserve the unique and valuable scenic and historic resources that reflect the cultural and historical heritage of Goleta.
2. Ensure that new development is designed to preserve and protect important natural features and scenic resources.
3. Acknowledge that all development alters the existing environment and recognize the importance of quality design.
4. Preserve links to Goleta’s architectural past whenever possible to avoid the loss of community character.
5. Preserve the City’s historic structures and sites as irreplaceable resources and protect these resources from deterioration, inappropriate alterations, and demolition.
6. Encourage owners of local historic resources to invest in maintenance and restoration efforts, and if eligible, seek historic landmark status.
7. Strengthen the character of Goleta Old Town (Old Town) to reflect its position as the historic hub of the community.
8. Ensure that new construction and additions to existing buildings maintain the character and livability of existing neighborhoods and are designed to fit appropriately within the context of the surrounding area.
9. Protect natural landforms by preventing excessive and unsightly grading associated with development.
10. Encourage “green” building principles, concepts, and features into new and renovated structures.
11. Lessen the visual impact of development through the use of appropriate landscaping.

Policies from the Visual and Historic Resources Element intended to help ensure that future development is consistent with these principles and goals are listed below:

- Policy VH 1: Scenic Views
- Policy VH 2: Local Scenic Corridors
- Policy VH 3: Community Character
- Policy VH 4: Design Review
- Policy VH 5: Historic Resources
• Policy VH 6: Historical and Cultural Landscapes

**Land Use Element**

The Land Use Element provides a discussion of allowable uses within GP/CLUP land use designations. The description of the land use designations includes information on uses, density, building heights and architecture that affect visual character.

The Land Use Element also contains policies and objectives related to the preservation of community character and scenic resources that complement the more specific policies in the Visual and Historic Resources Element. These policies are listed below:

• Policy LU 1: Land Use Plan Map and General Policies
• Policy LU 2: Residential Land Uses
• Policy LU 3: Commercial Land Uses
• Policy LU 4: Office and Industrial Uses
• Policy LU 5: Public and Quasi-Public Land Uses
• Policy LU 6: Park and Open Space Uses
• Policy LU 7: Agriculture
• Policy LU 8: Central Hollister Residential Development Area
• Policy LU 9: Coastal-Dependent and -Related Uses (Key Pacific Shoreline Sites)
• Policy LU 10: Energy-Related On- and Off-Shore Uses
• Policy LU 11: Nonresidential Growth Management
• Policy LU 12: Land Use In Goleta’s Environs

3.1.3.3 Project Impacts

**Class I Impacts**

**Short-Term Impacts**

Buildout of the GP/CLUP would not result in any short-term significant and unavoidable (Class I) impacts to aesthetic and visual resources.

**Long-Term Impacts**

*Impact 3.1-1. Impacts of GP/CLUP on Visual Resources within the City Including Views from Hollister Avenue and City Gateways*

As shown in Figure 3.1-1, the scenic corridors within the City include Hollister Avenue. As discussed below, proposed development of vacant or underutilized land in accordance with the GP/CLUP (See Figures 3.1-1 and 3.10-2) in the vicinity of certain scenic corridors along Hollister Avenue could result in significant impacts to views. Another key public viewpoint that could be impacted in association with development of vacant land includes the gateways to the City located on US-101 at the western and eastern entrances of the City. Specific impacts associated with these areas, as well as a discussion of the policies from the GP/CLUP that would reduce potential impacts to views from these areas, but not to a level of insignificance, are discussed below.

**Impact 3.1-1a: Impacts to Views from Hollister Avenue.** Northerly views available from Hollister Avenue could be impacted by development of vacant and underutilized land adjacent
to the roadway in accordance with the GP/CLUP. As shown in Figure 3.10-2, vacant land near intersections with Los Carneros Road and Storke Road is designated to be developed as medium-density residential and for office/institutional uses by the GP/CLUP (See Figure 3.10-4). Sites 77 and 84 are designated for medium-density residential. Sites 85, 86, and 87 are designated for both medium density residential and general commercial uses. Site 88 is designated for business park use. As shown in Figure 3.1-1, motorists along Hollister currently have northerly views of the Santa Ynez Mountains and foothills. Development of these vacant parcels in the vicinity of Storke Road and Los Carneros Road in accordance with the designations of the GP/CLUP could result in potentially significant impacts to mountain views from Hollister Avenue.

**Impact 3.1-1b: Impacts to Views from Gateways.** Development in accordance with the GP/CLUP could affect the major gateways to Goleta along Hollister Avenue at the western and eastern boundaries of the City. As shown in Figure 3.10-2, vacant and underutilized areas at the eastern and western portions of the City would be designated for planned residential and community commercial uses. Sites 118 and 119, as shown in Figure 3.10-2 in the vicinity of the gateway at the western border of the City, are designated as planned residential and visitor-serving commercial respectively. Sites 30, 35, and 36 in the vicinity of the gateway at the eastern border of the City near Patterson Avenue are designated for medium-density residential uses, and sites 32 and 34 are designated for office/institutional and general commercial uses, respectively. Development of these types of uses in accordance with the designations of the GP/CLUP could result in potentially significant impacts to views from the gateways at the western and eastern boundaries of the City.

The existing land uses within the vicinity of the northern and southern City gateways, including Old Town, Cathedral Oaks Road, Glen Annie Road, Los Carneros Road, Fairview Avenue, and Calle Real would not change with implementation of the GP/CLUP. Therefore, implementation of the GP/CLUP would not impact the visual character of these gateways.

**Policies That Would Reduce Impact 3.1-1, but Not to a Level of Insignificance.** The Visual and Historic Resources Element proposes the following policies intended to preserve and enhance visual resources and scenic views within the City, including views from Hollister Avenue and City Gateways. These policies would reduce impacts to scenic views and City Gateways associated with the GP/CLUP, but not to a less-than-significant level.

- Policy VH 1: Scenic Views
- Policy VH 2: Local Scenic Corridors
- Policy VH 4: Design Review

A discussion of how the policies reduce impacts to views from scenic corridors and key viewpoints is provided below.

**GP/CLUP Policies that Apply to Impact 3.1-1a.** Views from Hollister Avenue that may be adversely impacted by future development of vacant land north of Hollister Avenue would be reduced by implementation of GP/CLUP Policies VH 2 and VH 4, but not to a less-than-significant level. As described above, the GP/CLUP policies require that development not degrade or obstruct views of scenic areas. By promoting development that minimizes the scale and height of structures located adjacent to scenic corridors, and considering the existing developed character of the area north of Hollister Avenue, implementation of GP/CLUP policies
would reduce the potential impacts of future development to views from Hollister Avenue, but not to a level of insignificance.

**GP/CLUP Policies that Apply to Impact 3.1-1b.** Potential adverse impacts to the visual character of City gateways would be reduced but not to a less-than-significant level by implementation of GP/CLUP Policies VH 2 and VH 4. These policies call for enhancement of prominent gateways through landscaping and pedestrian amenities. Policies related to preservation of the visual character of scenic corridors and to views of visual resources within the City would reduce potential impacts of future development along the scenic corridors, but not to a less-than-significant level.

**Impact 3.1-2. Impacts of GP/CLUP on Citywide Visual Character**

Implementation of the GP/CLUP could result in a significant change to the visual character of the City because design standards and policies are subjective. As shown in Figure 3.10-2, the City consists of approximately 307 acres, or 6 percent, of vacant land that has not already been approved for development. With the buildout proposed in the GP/CLUP, this vacant land could be developed with predominantly single- and multiple-family residential uses with the exception of the open-space and agriculturally designated parcels. Commercial and industrial uses proposed on vacant land would be developed adjacent to existing commercial areas. Because development of the vacant land would be an extension of the existing residential neighborhoods and commercial areas, impacts from GP/CLUP implementation would be reduced. However, because of the subjective nature of design standards and policies, there is potential for significant impacts to the City's visual character to occur as a result of Plan implementation.

An exception to this is the visual character of Coastal Open Space Areas. As shown in Figure 3.10-2, the GP/CLUP land use designations reflect existing land uses in the coastal areas. Coastal resources, including Santa Barbara Shores Park and the Sperling Preserve, would be designated as open space/passive recreation by the GP/CLUP. The Sandpiper Golf Course would be designated open space/active recreation. Therefore, coastal open space areas would not be impacted by implementation of the GP/CLUP. In addition, Policy VH 1, “Scenic Views,” supports the protection and preservation of scenic resources including the open waters of the Pacific Ocean/Santa Barbara Channel (with the Channel Islands visible in the distance), and the City’s Pacific shoreline, including beaches, dunes, lagoons, coastal bluffs, and open coastal mesas. Implementation of the GP/CLUP therefore would not result in significant impacts to the visual character of existing Coastal Open Space Areas.

Potential impacts of the GP/CLUP on the visual character of the City are described below.

**Impact 3.1-2a: Impacts to the Visual Character of City Subareas.** The City has designated subareas as shown in Figure 3.1-2. Potential impacts of the GP/CLUP on the visual character within the subareas are as follows.

**Central Subarea**

A majority of the vacant land to be developed in accordance with the GP/CLUP is located within the Central Subarea. As shown in Figure 3.10-2 (Sites 49 through 69), vacant land within the Central Subarea is located primarily north of Hollister Avenue and south of US-101. These vacant parcels would be developed with medium-density multiple-family residential uses (see Figure 3.10-4). A vacant site (Site 83) south of Hollister Avenue and north of Phelps Road would be developed with community commercial uses. The character of the area along Hollister Avenue within the Central Subarea currently consists of a mix of residential and commercial uses. The location of the proposed commercial uses would
represent a visual extension of these existing uses; however, the potential for a significant adverse impact to visual character still remains.

**Old Town and Residential Subareas**

The GP/CLUP Community Commercial land use designation would allow additional residential uses among existing commercial development in the Old Town and Northeast Community Center Subareas. The existing commercial uses are located at the southern border of an existing residential community and would be separated from Old Town by US-101. Nevertheless, the development of these subareas with additional residential uses could result in a visual incompatibility with surrounding land uses.

Development of underutilized land within the Old Town Subarea would be limited to development of commercial uses under the Old Town land use designation. Future development within this designation is subject to design restrictions within the GP/CLUP that require any buildings and other development to conform with the aesthetic and historic character of Old Town.

As shown in Figure 3.10-2, an Old Town commercial land use designation would be applied to the existing Old Town areas adjacent to Hollister Avenue. This designation is intended to permit a wide range of local- and community-serving retail and office uses. A major purpose of this designation is to enhance the physical and economic environment for existing businesses and uses of the Old Town commercial district. Although new development of two and three story buildings along Hollister Avenue in Old Town (such as on Vacant Sites 37, 38, 39) may block views of the Santa Ynez Mountains, this is not a scenic corridor and any impacts from new development in the Old Town category would be reduced by measures ensuring that buildings, pedestrian plazas, design amenities, and facilities are consistent with the *Goleta Old Town Heritage District Architecture and Design Guidelines*. In addition, Policy VH 4, “Design Review,” states that Old Town should retain its unique character through building individuality, avoiding the “false historic look.” Pedestrian walkways should be enhanced with trees, landscaping, and benches. Visual resources in the Old Town area would be protected to some degree with implementation of the GP/CLUP, but there is still potential for significant impacts to occur.

Figure 3.10-2 also shows that the residential subareas are predominantly built out with residential uses and possess limited amounts of vacant land. In addition, the GP/CLUP would not promote conversion of existing uses to other land use types. As a result, implementation of the GP/CLUP would not result in impacts to the visual character of the residential subareas.

**Coastal Resource and Central Resource Subareas**

Implementation of the GP/CLUP would not result in significant impacts to the visual character of the Coastal or Central Resource Subareas. As shown in Figure 3.10-4, no changes to the underlying land uses are proposed in these areas. Bishop Ranch would remain as an agricultural use area. The Pacific shoreline sites within the coastal resource areas would remain either coastal visitor-serving commercial, coastal recreation, or coastal open space/passive recreation uses.

The GP/CLUP land use map incorporates the approved Ellwood-Devereux Open Space. The Ellwood-Devereux Open Space area within Goleta is a part of a planned contiguous open space area of over 650 acres along or near the Pacific shoreline. This larger multi-jurisdictional open space area includes UCSB and County lands. The
Ellwood-Devereux project has already been approved by the City, and therefore is not considered to be an impact associated with implementation of the GP/CLUP.

**Impact 3.1-2b: Impacts to the Visual Character of Natural Open Space and Agricultural Areas.** As shown in Figure 3.10-2, natural open space and agricultural areas that represent scenic resources within the City could be adversely impacted with implementation of the GP/CLUP. The open space/passive recreation land-use designation would cover the entire Lake Los Carneros Natural and Historic Preserve. Bishop Ranch would be designated for Agriculture under the proposed GP/CLUP land use plan. Other agricultural parcels throughout the City would also remain in agricultural use, except for 55.7 acres of existing agriculture that would be designated for urban-type uses. These sites include: a 6.6-acre parcel and a 9.4-acre parcel in the northeast part of the City that are surrounded by residential development and are planned for single-family residential; a 21.2-acre parcel in the southeastern portion of the City north of Hollister Avenue that is planned for medium-density residential (10.26 acres of which is part of an approved but unbuilt project called Sumida Gardens); a 9.4-acre parcel in the western portion of the City of which 3.7 acres are planned for single-family residential; 2.4 acres in the southwestern portion of the City that is planned for business park uses; and 12.2 acres in the southwestern portion of the designated for development of visitor serving commercial uses. These agricultural parcels are surrounded by existing development and the visual character of the area would be altered with the conversion of these parcels to other, more urbanized, uses. Although Policy VH 1, “Scenic Views,” supports the protection and preservation of scenic resources including agricultural areas, designation of 55.7 acres of agricultural lands to urban uses still has the potential to result in a significant visual/aesthetic impact because of the subjective nature of design policies.

**Impact 3.1-2c: Impacts to the Visual Character of Views of the Santa Ynez Mountains and Foothills.** The majority of the land use designations under the GP/CLUP would not result in long-term significant adverse impacts to the visual character of views of the Santa Ynez Mountains and foothills as seen from the City. As shown in Figure 3.10-4, no features of the GP/CLUP would extend or modify the physical character of the mountains or foothills to the north of the City boundary or the Bishop Ranch Area. In addition, as shown in Figure 3.10-2, there are very few vacant lands in the northern half of the City that, if developed, would impact views of the mountains. Vacant Site 2 is a parcel of vacant land in the northwestern part of the City; however, it is only 0.2 acres designated as planned development. Because if its small size, visual impacts resulting from future development are expected to be minimal. Sites 12 through 29 are very small parcels of vacant lands planned as single-family residential in the middle of existing single-family residential developments. However, the potential for development of those sites to adversely impact the visual character of views of the mountains and foothills in a significant manner remains.

**Impact 3.1-2d: Impacts to Views from Cathedral Oaks Road, Glen Annie Road, Los Carneros Road North of US-101, and Fairview Avenue.** Scenic corridors and views from Cathedral Oaks Road, Glen Annie Road, Los Carneros Road north of US-101, and Fairview Avenue are either built out with residential uses or is agricultural or open space associated with Bishop Ranch, and Los Carneros Preserve. Although new office and institutional uses proposed by the GP/CLUP in the vicinity of the scenic corridor along Los Carneros Road north of US-101 would be a visual extension of existing development in this area, this future development still has potential to result in significant impacts on such view corridors because design policies are subjective.
As shown in Figure 3.10-4, land use designations in areas characterized by existing commercial uses immediately north of US-101 in the vicinity of Fairview Avenue would be modified to allow for additional residential development. The addition of residential development in this location is not expected to substantially change the character of the area or adversely impact northerly or southerly views from Fairview Avenue. In addition, Policy VH 2, “Local Scenic Corridors,” includes measures to protect views along scenic corridors. However, due to the subjective nature of design policies, the potential for significant adverse impacts to occur as a result of such development cannot be dismissed.

Policies That Would Reduce Impact 3.1-2, but Not to a Level of Insignificance. The Visual and Historic Resources Element proposes the following policies intended to preserve the overall community character of the City.

- Policy VH 1: Scenic Views
- Policy VH 3: Community Character
- Policy VH 4: Design Review

These policies would promote the preservation of community character by requiring that new development be compatible with existing architectural styles of adjacent development, except where poor quality design already exists. Site plans shall provide for buildings, structures, and uses that are subordinate to the natural topography, existing vegetation, and drainage courses; adequate landscaping; adequate vehicular circulation and parking; adequate pedestrian circulation; and provision and/or maintenance of solar access. The character of public open spaces would be enhanced by creating well-defined community outdoor gathering places that incorporate focal points such as parks, fountains, public art, and/or landscape features. Overall, these policies would reduce impacts to visual character resulting from buildout of the GP/CLUP, but not to a less-than-significant level.

Class II Impacts

Short-Term Impacts

Short-term impacts from construction of proposed development associated with buildout of the GP/CLUP could impact aesthetic resources. Impacts may include but are not limited to the visibility of construction equipment from roadways and land uses adjacent to new development, grading and site clearing activities, and soil stockpiling. Future development projects would be required to undergo separate environmental review during which short-term impacts would be addressed and further mitigation identified.

Long-Term Impacts

Impact 3.1-3. Impacts of GP/CLUP on Visual Resources within the City Including Scenic Corridors and Key Public Viewpoints

As shown in Figure 3.1-1, the scenic corridors within the City include US-101, Hollister Avenue, SR-217, Cathedral Oaks Road, Glen Annie Road, Los Carneros Road north of US-101, and Fairview Avenue. As discussed below, proposed development of vacant or underutilized land in accordance with the GP/CLUP (See Figures 3.1-1 and 3.10-2) in the vicinity of certain scenic corridors would potentially create significant impacts to views including US-101 and SR-217 in the southeastern part of the City. Specific impacts associated with the scenic corridors and key public viewpoints as well as a discussion of the policies from the GP/CLUP that would ensure that potential impacts to views from these areas are reduced to a level of insignificance are discussed below.
Impact 3.1-3a: Impacts to Views from US-101. As shown in Figure 3.1-1, southerly and northerly views of visual resources are available from US-101 throughout the City. Vacant land along US-101 is designated for development with medium-density residential and office/institutional uses by the GP/CLUP in the area south of US-101 primarily near Los Carneros Road and Storke Road. Sites 49 through 69, 77, 80, and 84 on Figure 3.1-2 would be designated medium density residential and site 118 would be designated for planned residential under the GP/CLUP (See Figure 3.10-4). The medium-density residential designation allows for development of multi-family residential development including uses such as apartment buildings. Site 81 on Figure 3.1-2 is designated for office/institutional use. Sites 85, 86, and 87 are designated for both medium density residential and general commercial uses. Site 88 is designated for business park use. Site 119 is designated for visitor commercial uses. Development of these types of uses in accordance with the designations of the GP/CLUP could result in potentially significant impacts to views from US-101.

Impact 3.1-3b: Impacts to Views from SR-217. Views from SR-217 may be impacted with implementation of the GP/CLUP. As shown when comparing Figures 3.10-2 with 3.1-1, the area surrounding SR-217 includes the riparian corridor of the San Jose Creek. There are currently five vacant lots along the creek, which are Sites 37, 38, 41, 47, and 48, as shown on Figure 3.1-2. These parcels are designated as planned residential, Old Town, visitor serving, and services, respectively. As shown in Figure 3.1-2, parcels located along Hollister to the west and east of SR-217 characterized by existing Office and Industrial and Community Commercial Uses are proposed to be modified to allow some residential development. The Page Hotel site adjacent to SR-217 on South Kellogg (Vacant Site 41) has a land use designation of Visitor-serving Commercial, although it is currently being used for agriculture. Development consistent with the land use designation would result in a potential loss of land currently used for agriculture. In addition, the GOTRP EIR identifies lands along the SR-217 Scenic Corridor including Vacant Sites 36 through 39 and 45 through 48 where visual resources would be converted from vacant land to commercial, mixed use and light industrial uses through implementation of the GOTRP. Development of these uses on sites 45 through 48 would be visible from SR-217. The addition of residential and commercial development within these areas could result in potentially significant impacts to coastal, ocean, and riparian corridor views and potentially change in an adverse manner the character of the scenic areas in the vicinity of SR-217.

The GOTRP EIR identified potential impacts to views of the Santa Ynez Mountains with the development of the hotel on Vacant Site 41 and two to three story buildings along Hollister Avenue. Therefore development of Vacant Sites 38 through 41 could result in potentially significant impacts to views of the mountains and foothills from SR-217.

Impact 3.1-3c: Impacts from Public Viewing Areas within the City. Views from public viewing areas within the City, including Lake Los Carneros Natural and Historic Preserve, Santa Barbara Shores Park, and the Sperling Preserve, could be affected by construction of future development in accordance with the GP/CLUP. Such future development could occur in vacant or underutilized areas that could impact views from these public viewing areas. As shown in Figure 3.1-1, northerly and southerly views are currently available from a series of pedestrian trails within the Ellwood-Devereux Open Space. Northerly and southerly views are also available from Lake Los Carneros Natural and Historic Preserve. Vacant land designated for development along Hollister and US-101 could be visible from these public viewing areas. Sites 49 through 69, 77, 80, 84, and 118 on Figure 3.10-2 would be designated medium density residential on the GP/CLUP (see Figure 3.10-4). Sites 79, 81, 87, and 88 on Figure 3.10-2 are designated for business park, office/institutional, medium density residential/general
commercial, and business park uses, respectively. Site 78 as shown in Figure 3.10-2 is designated for service industrial use. Future development anticipated along Hollister and US-101 could result in potentially significant impacts on these public views within the City.

**Impact 3.1-3d: Impacts to Views from Areas within the Coastal Zone.** As shown in Figure 3.10-4, Pacific Shoreline Sites, including Santa Barbara Shores Park and Sperling Preserve, would be designated as Open Space/Passive Recreation by the GP/CLUP. As shown in Figure 3.10-2, vacant Sites 89 and 118 within the Coastal Zone near the western boundary of the City are to be designated for planned residential uses by the GP/CLUP. Site 119, also located in the Coastal Zone, is designated for visitor serving commercial uses. Such future development would be in close proximity to important coastal resources, including the Sperling Preserve/Ellwood Devereux open space area and Sandpiper Golf course. As shown in Figure 3.10-2, vacant sites 45, 46, 47, and 48 located in the southeastern portion of the City near San Jose Creek are designated for development of service industrial uses and would be visible from the San Jose Creek riparian area. Development in these vacant sites could result in potentially significant impacts to views from these coastal areas.

**Impact 3.1-3e: Light and Glare.** Future development of vacant and underutilized land within the City could increase light and glare visible from public viewing areas or from scenic corridors. A substantial increase in light and glare primarily in association with development of vacant land along Hollister and US-101 (See Figure 3.10-2) could result in potentially significant impacts to views from scenic corridors and public viewing areas within the City.

**Policies that Reduce Impact 3.1-3.** The Visual and Historic Resources Element proposes the following policies intended to ensure the preservation and enhancement of the visual character and public views within and from Goleta’s scenic corridors. These policies would reduce impacts to scenic corridors and key viewpoints associated with the GP/CLUP to a less-than-significant level.

- Policy VH 1: Scenic Views
- Policy VH 2: Local Scenic Corridors
- Policy VH 4: Design Review

A discussion of how the policies reduce impacts to views from scenic corridors and key viewpoints is provided below.

**GP/CLUP Policies that Apply to Impact 3.1-3a.** Views from US-101 that may be adversely impacted by future development of vacant land south of US-101 in the vicinity of Los Carneros Road and Storke Road would be reduced by implementation of GP/CLUP Policies VH 2 and VH 4. Through these policies, the Visual and Historic Resources Element would promote development that does not degrade or obstruct views of scenic areas. In accordance with these policies all future development would be subject to height restrictions, must incorporate existing sensitive landforms into the design, incorporate natural features in the design, minimize grading, and minimize signage. Landscaping must also provide screening. Large building masses in multiple-family residential developments are to be avoided. Use of several small structures rather than one large structure is encouraged. Height restrictions for multiple family residential uses are 35 feet outside the Coastal Zone and 25 feet within the Coastal Zone (Table 2-1 of the Land Use Element). Office and Commercial developments must be compatible with the scale of surrounding development, and roof mounted equipment shall be screened and part of the height restrictions. In addition, applicants for all proposed developments along scenic corridors must
prepare a site-specific visual assessment to ensure that development complies with the requirements of the GP/CLUP.

The existing character of views from US-101 would also be considered in assessing impacts of future development. Southerly views from US-101 in the vicinity of vacant land near Storke Road and Los Carneros Road currently include urban uses in the foreground with coastal and ocean views in the distance. Vacant sites in the vicinity of Los Carneros Road are currently bordered by predominantly office, industrial warehousing, and institutional uses. The railroad also borders vacant sites to the north. Considering the type of the existing warehousing and office structures, development of multiple family uses on vacant land in this location would not represent a substantial deviation from the scale of structures in the area. In addition, as shown in Figure 3.1-1, the views of motorists on US-101 in the vicinity of Los Carneros Road are primarily northerly views of the foothills and Bishop Ranch. The locations of these vacant sites are also not foreground views from motorists and therefore would not be visible for extended periods of time considering vehicle speeds in the area. Future development, designed in accordance with GP/CLUP policies, would not substantially degrade the existing visual character of the area.

By promoting development that minimizes the scale and height of structures located adjacent to scenic corridors, and considering the existing developed character of the area south of US-101, implementation of GP/CLUP policies would reduce the potential impacts of future development to views from US-101 to a less-than-significant level.

**GP/CLUP Policies that Apply to Impact 3.1-3b.** The policies listed above would ensure that future development is subject to height restrictions, landscaping requirements, and architectural treatments that reduce potential impacts to views of visual resources including ocean, island, and mountain views from public viewing areas to a less-than-significant level. In addition, the GOTRP EIR identifies lands along the SR-217 Scenic Corridor, including Vacant Sites 36 through 39, 41, and 45 through 48, where visual resources would be impacted through buildout under the GOTRP. The GOTRP provides development standards that require design to be compatible with surrounding land uses and for use of landscaping that provides screening (DevStds VIS-OT-1.2, VIS-OT-1.4, and VIS-OT-3.3, KS6-6, KS7B-7). It is assumed for purposes of this analysis that the requirements of the GOTRP regarding the visual character of future development in this area would be incorporated into the design of future projects. As such, the development standards in the GOTRP and the policies of the GP/CLUP would reduce the potential impacts of future development to views from SR-217 to a less-than-significant level.

Implementation of Policy VH 1, “Scenic Views,” supports preservation of prominent landforms within the City. This policy protects views of the mountains and foothills. Implementation of the GP/CLUP policies would reduce the potential impacts of future development to views of the foothills from SR-217 to a less than significant level.

**GP/CLUP Policies that Apply to Impact 3.1-3c.** Adverse impacts to views from public viewing areas resulting from future development of vacant land located between US-101 and Hollister Avenue with a mix of multiple family, office/institutional, and commercial development would be reduced by implementation of GP/CLUP Policies VH 2 and VH 4. As described above, the GP/CLUP policies require that development not degrade or obstruct views of scenic areas. The policies listed above ensure that future development is subject to height restrictions, landscaping requirements, and architectural treatments that reduce potential impacts to views of visual resources including ocean, island, and mountain views from public viewing areas to a
less-than-significant level. By promoting development that minimizes the scale and height of structures located adjacent to scenic corridors, and considering the existing developed character of the area north of Hollister Avenue and south of US-101, implementation of GP/CLUP policies would reduce the potential impacts of future development to views from public viewing areas to a less-than-significant level.

**GP/CLUP Policies that Apply to Impact 3.1-3d.** The GP/CLUP includes Policies VH 1 and VH 2 to ensure that the coastal open space areas are not altered from existing conditions. These policies would reduce potential impacts of development proposed in proximity to coastal resources and coastal scenic corridors to a less-than-significant level. These policies would need to be incorporated into the design of sites 45 through 48, 89, 118, and 119 on Figure 3.10-2 prior to approval of such development by the City. Development planned for sites 89 and 118 would also be located in proximity to existing residential neighborhoods, and would be an extension of those portions of the City within the Coastal Zone that are currently developed with predominantly single-family residential uses. Therefore, buildout under the GP/CLUP would not result in significant adverse impacts to the visual resources of the Coastal Zone through implementation of these policies.

**GP/CLUP Policies that Apply to Impact 3.1-3e.** Implementation Policy VH 4, “Design Review,” would reduce potential impacts from light and glare associated with future development to a less-than-significant level by ensuring that lighting is designed, located, aimed downward or toward structures (if properly shielded), retrofitted if feasible, and maintained in order to prevent overlighting, energy waste, glare, light trespass, and sky glow.

**Class III Impacts**

**Short-Term Impacts**

Policies of the GP/CLUP Visual and Historic Resources Element and Land Use Element related to aesthetics address impacts of future development on scenic resources, views from scenic corridors, and preservation of community character. Future development in accordance with the GP/CLUP could result in short-term adverse visual and aesthetic impacts related to construction activities. Future development projects would be required to undergo separate environmental review, during which short-term impacts would be further addressed and mitigation identified.

**Long-Term Impacts**

**Impact 3.1-4. Impacts from Light and Glare**

Aesthetics and visual resources impacts to public viewing locations outside the City’s boundaries would not be significant, as the type and location of development contemplated in the City’s proposed land use plan would generally be consistent with surrounding land uses. Land designated for the most intense development would be located along the Hollister Corridor, adjacent to other urbanized uses. No new sources of significant light or glare are proposed. Guidance regarding outdoor lighting fixtures is provided in GP/CLUP policy VH 4 and subpolicy VH 4.12. Impacts would be considered less than significant.

**Class IV Impacts**

**Short-Term Impacts**

There are no short-term beneficial (Class IV) impacts to visual resources resulting from GP/CLUP implementation.
Long-Term Impacts

**Impact 3.1-5. Improvements to Visual Quality of City Gateways**

Policy VH 2 of the GP/CLUP addresses improvements to the visual quality of City gateways. Features such as specimen trees, accent plantings, signage, public art, monuments, decorative pavement, and pedestrian amenities may be used to emphasize and enhance entries to the City. Implementation of this policy and improvements to City gateways is a beneficial impact of the GP/CLUP on the visual character of the City. Gateways subject to the policy will include but not be limited to:

- roadways that extend through Hollister Avenue at the eastern and western City boundaries that provide expansive views of the City, coastal areas, as well as the mountains and foothills;
- views of the City, mountains, and foothills from Cathedral Oaks Road at the eastern and western City boundaries;
- views of Old Town from Hollister Avenue at Fairview Avenue and SR-217;
- views of the City to motorists on Glen Annie Road, Los Carneros Road, and Fairview Avenue at the northern City boundaries; and
- views of the City from Calle Real and Patterson Avenue.

**Impact 3.1-6. Creating Well Defined Public Spaces**

Policy VH 3 of the GP/CLUP addresses the need for creation of well-defined public spaces in the City. Enhancements may include community outdoor gathering places that incorporate focal points such as parks, fountains, public art, and/or landscape features. Small public open spaces may be provided in each neighborhood either through acquisition in existing neighborhoods or by design in new neighborhood developments in order to establish community focal points. Implementation of this policy and creation of public spaces is a beneficial impact of the GP/CLUP on the visual character of the area.

3.1.3.4  Cumulative Impacts

Implementation of the GP/CLUP would not contribute to the cumulative loss of coastal open space areas and the associated visual resources. As shown in Figure 3.10-2, coastal resources, including Santa Barbara Shores Park and the Sperling Preserve/Ellwood Devereux open space area, would be designated as open space/passive recreation by the GP/CLUP. The Sandpiper Golf Course would be designated for coastal recreation. Apart from the proposed project, there are several other development projects within coastal area that have recently been completed and/or proposed including the Ocean Meadows Residences project (County); UCSB North and West Campus project (UCSB), University San Clemente Graduate Student Housing (UCSB), and the Devereux School Master Plan (County). Coastal open space areas would be lost with implementation of these projects; however, the GP/CLUP itself would not contribute to the cumulative loss of unspoiled coastal visual resources, as most of the development proposed under it would be located in vacant lands or underutilized lands located within the central area of the City. Therefore, the project’s contribution to this loss of regionally unique coastal open space would be considered less than significant.

With respect to a substantial degradation of the visual character or quality of the area, future development would continue to be guided by local General Plans and local design review procedures, which would continue to protect the visual character of the area represented by architectural features and elements, visual compatibility, view corridors, and scenic resources.
and vistas. Therefore, the cumulative impact to the visual character or quality of the area would be less than significant. Moreover, the contribution of the proposed project to cumulative impacts would not be cumulatively considerable because most of the development would occur on vacant or underutilized lands in a manner that would be considered an extension of existing residential neighborhoods and commercial areas. Implementation of the GP/CLUP would not result in a significant change to the visual character of the City. As shown in Figure 2-3, only a small portion (307 acres of 5,075 acres, or 6 percent, within City boundaries) currently consists of vacant land that has not already been approved for development by the County. With the implementation of the GP/CLUP (see Figure 3.10-4, Proposed Land Use Map), this vacant land would be developed with predominantly single- and multiple-family residential uses. Commercial and industrial uses proposed on vacant land would be developed adjacent to existing commercial areas. Because implementation of the GP/CLUP would result in development of a minimal amount of vacant land, such development would result in a visual extension of existing residential neighborhoods and commercial areas, and the land use plan would not pose a significant change to the overall visual character of the City.

Growth representing full implementation of local General Plans, the proposed project, and other related projects could result in the creation of new sources of light or glare that could affect day or nighttime views. Future development of vacant and underutilized land within the City could increase light and glare visible from public viewing areas or from scenic corridors. With regard to nighttime views, most development under the GP/CLUP would likely be concentrated in areas that are already developed with residential, commercial, and industrial uses. These areas are exposed to considerable amounts of nighttime light already and added light would not substantially change the existing nighttime visual character of the City. Further, as required by each of the jurisdictions design review processes, lighting would also be placed to ensure it illuminates only the intended areas and does not penetrate into residential communities. The City’s GP/CLUP includes policies that would reduce potential impacts from light and glare associated with future developments to a less than significant level. Therefore, cumulative impacts associated with the substantial creation of light or glare, such that it adversely affects daytime or nighttime views in the area, would be less than significant.

3.1.3.5 Mitigation

Modifications to GP/CLUP Policies
No modifications are required.

Other Mitigation
No additional mitigation is identified.

3.1.3.6 Residual Impacts

Implementation of the GP/CLUP would result in significant residual impacts to scenic corridors and key viewpoints, and to the City’s visual character. These impacts are significant and cannot be mitigated to a less-than-significant level.
3.1.4 References


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