

CHAPTER 3

Environmental Setting, Impacts, and Mitigation Measures

3.1 Land Use and Planning

Introduction

This section identifies and evaluates the Project's consistency with land use plans and policies adopted for the purpose of avoiding and mitigating adverse environmental effects of development. Discussed below are the environmental and regulatory setting; the criteria used for determining the significance of environmental impacts related to land use and planning; potential land use and planning impacts associated with the Project; and mitigation measures to reduce or avoid environmental impacts determined to be potentially significant.

Environmental Setting

Existing Land Uses

The Project site includes nine developed parcels, each containing a one-story industrial building. The nine buildings have 258,279 square feet of building floor area and are located on parcels which total 777,170 square feet, for a collective floor area ratio of 34%. The Project site is characterized as an industrial business park, providing office and research and development space for various industries. Santa Ana Court is located within the Project site, providing access from East Arques Avenue and ends in a cul-de-sac on site.

Surrounding Area

Land uses surrounding the Project site are described in Chapter 2 and shown on Figure 2-2. Surrounding land uses include industrial, commercial, public facilities, and high-density residential development.

To the north of East Arques Avenue are mixed uses including a home improvement store, self-storage, bank, and gentlemen's club. To the east of the Project site are mixed uses including automotive services (collision repair, tire shop, towing), a guitar school, restaurant, and the City corporation yard. To the south of the Central Expressway are mixed uses including an animal clinic, dog boarding facility, manufacturing sales services, and automotive repair services. To the west of North Wolfe Road are mixed uses including office/research and development buildings

and churches/spiritual centers. To the northwest, across North Wolfe Road and East Arques Avenue, are City Fire Station #2 and an apartment complex.

Moffett Federal Airfield is located about 2.1 miles northwest of the Project site and Mineta San Jose International Airport is located approximately 3.5 miles southeast of the Project site. Moffett Federal Airfield is a joint civil-military airport owned and operated by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) Ames Research Center while San Jose International Airport is a public use airport.

Regulatory Framework

City of Sunnyvale General Plan

The Sunnyvale General Plan is the primary tool for guiding land use development decisions in the City. The Project site and all adjacent properties are designated Industry on the General Plan Land Use Map as shown on **Figure 3.1-1** (City of Sunnyvale, 2011). The relevant goals and policies associated with the Project (and not included within other technical sections of the EIR) are included in Table 3.1-2, at the end of this Section.

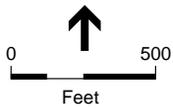
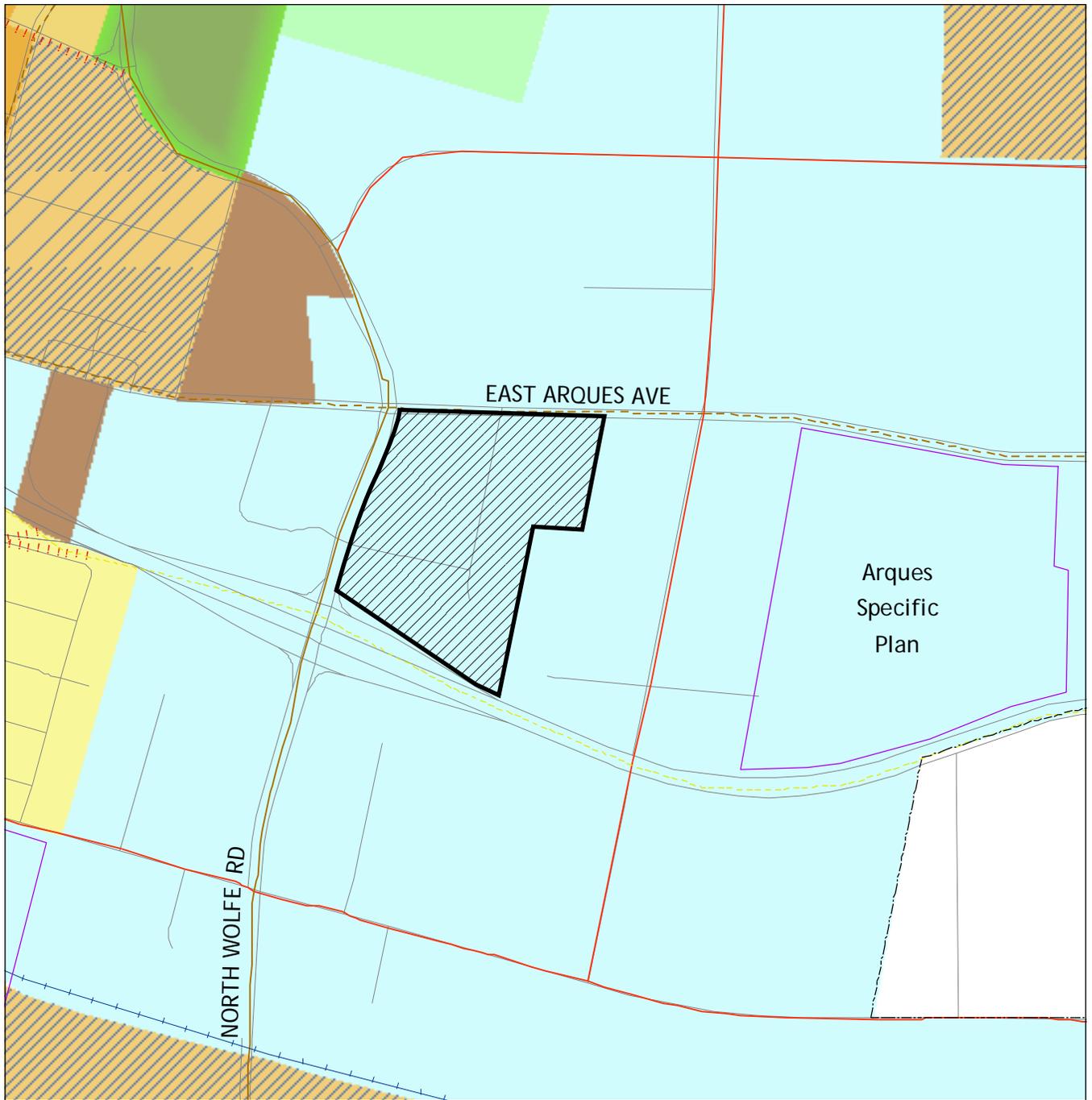
City of Sunnyvale Municipal Code

Zoning regulations are contained in Title 19 of the Sunnyvale Municipal Code (City of Sunnyvale, 2013). The zoning for the Project site and immediate vicinity are shown in **Figure 3.1-2**. The Project site and adjacent properties are zoned M-S Industrial and Service, with a maximum building height of 8 stories and 75 feet, maximum lot coverage of 45%, and a floor-to-area ratio (FAR) of 35%. Land directly to the west also has a combining district zoning of Places of Assembly. To the northwest across North Wolfe Road and East Arques Avenue the land is zoned Public Facilities (where Fire Station #2 is located) and High-Density Residential with a combining district zoning of Planned Development (where the Parkside Apartment Homes complex is located).

The M-S Industrial and Service zoning district is defined as follows at Section 19.22.020 of the Municipal Code:

The M-S industrial and service zoning district is reserved for the construction, use and occupancy of buildings and facilities for offices, research, limited manufacturing, hotels and motels, restaurants, financial uses, retail sales and services, professional services and other uses compatible with the zoning district.

Due to the wide range of uses allowed within the M-S one, many uses require a Conditional Use Permit and/or a Miscellaneous Plan Permit to ensure compatibility with surrounding uses. Within the M-S zone there are three subcategories, primarily defined by the allowable FAR, and thus allowing various intensities of development. The Project site is within the least intensive subcategory. The allowed building height, lot coverage, and FAR for each of the M-S zone subcategories are contained in Table 19.32.020 of the Municipal Code and shown in **Table 3.1-1**.



 Project Site

 Low Density Residential (0-7 du/ac)

 High Density Residential (27-45 du/ac)

 Industry

 Industrial to Residential (Low Med Density)

 Industrial to Residential (Med Density)

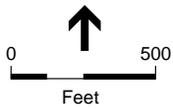
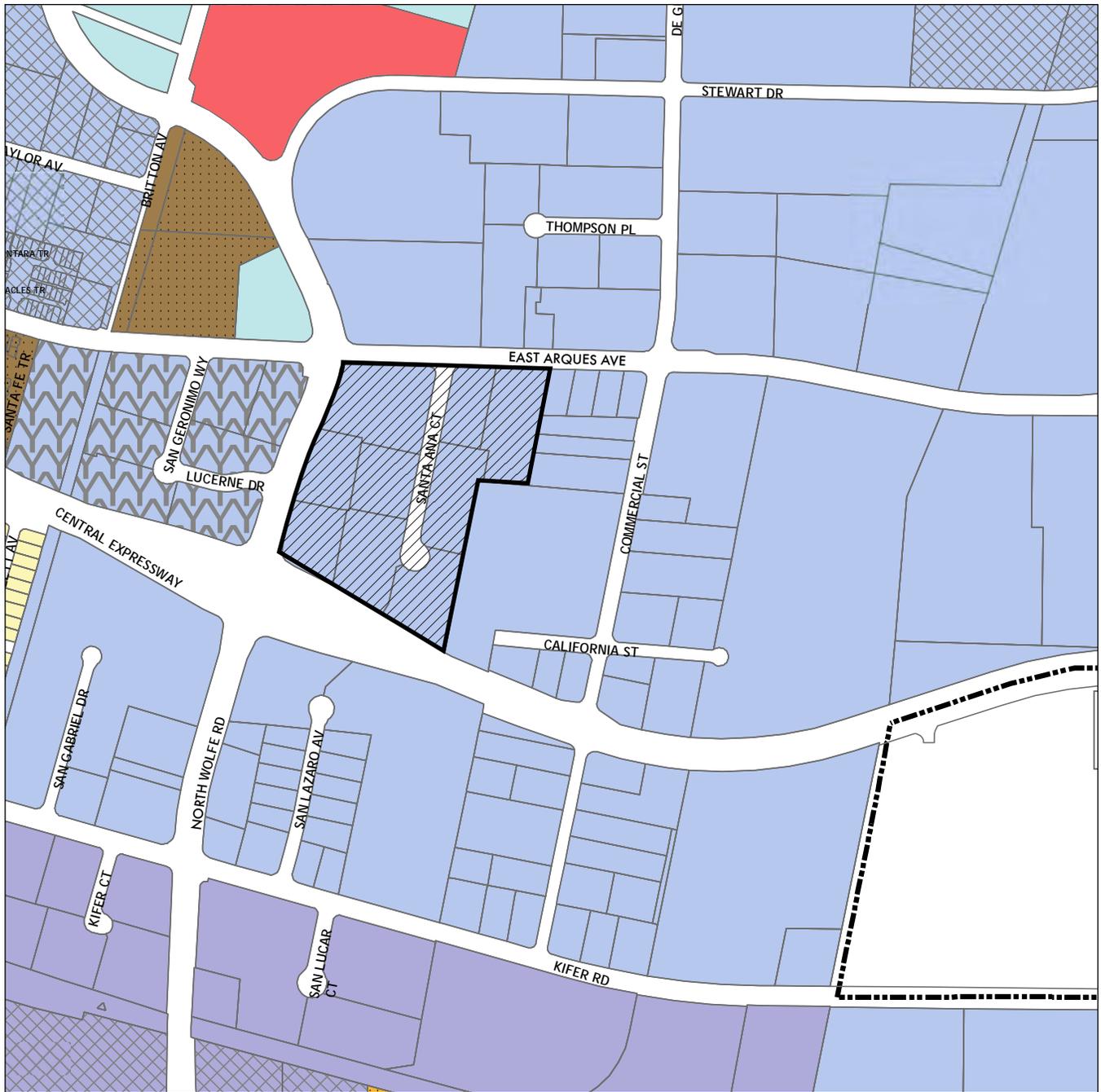
 Parks

 School

SOURCE: City of Sunnyvale, 2011

Landbank Central & Wolfe Campus . 120442.01

Figure 3.1-1
Project Site and Vicinity Land Use Designations



 Project Site

-  PD - Planned Development
-  POA - Places of Assembly
-  ITRR3 - Industrial to Residential (Medium)
-  R4 - High Density Residential
-  MS - Industrial and Service
-  M3 - General Industrial
-  PF - Public Facilities
-  C2 - Highway Business

SOURCE: City of Sunnyvale, 2013

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Figure 3.1-2
Project Site and Vicinity Zoning

**TABLE 3.1-1
 BUILDING HEIGHT, LOT COVERAGE AND FLOOR AREA RATIO FOR M-S ZONING DISTRICTS**

Zoning District	Building Stories	Building Height (ft.)	Lot Coverage	Floor-to-Area Ratio
M-S	8	75	45%	35%
M-S (70% FAR)	8	75	45%	70%
M-S (100% FAR)	8	100	45%	100%

SOURCE: City of Sunnyvale, 2013.

Moffett Federal Airfield Comprehensive Land Use Plan and Federal Aviation Regulation Part 77

The County of Santa Clara Airport Land Use Commission creates Comprehensive Land Use Plans to establish airport land use planning areas, referred to as Airport Influence Areas. These Areas set the boundaries for application of Airport Land Use Commission policy, including height restrictions, noise exposure, and safety. The Project site is not located within the Airport Influence Area of Moffett Federal Airfield or any other airport (Santa Clara County Airport Land Use Commission, 2012).

The Comprehensive Land Use Plan for Moffett Federal Airfield also shows the Federal Aviation Regulation Part 77 approach “surfaces,” which establish maximum building height to avoid interference with aircraft approaching airport runways. In the vicinity of the Project site, the Federal Aviation Regulation Part 77 surface is approximately 307 feet in height, which is well above the maximum height of the Project’s proposed buildings; the Project would therefore be consistent with Federal Aviation Regulation Part 77 height restrictions (Santa Clara County Airport Land Use Commission, 2012).

Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Significance Criteria

Consistent with Appendix G of the CEQA *Guidelines*, the Project would have significant land use and planning impacts if it would:

- Physically divide an established community;
- Conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect; or
- Conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan.

Approach to Analysis

The Project would not result in impacts related to the following criteria. No impact discussion is provided for these topics for the following reasons:

Physically Divide an Established Community. The Project would replace existing industrial uses on a developed site with industrial uses, albeit at a larger scale and higher intensity. The Project does not propose to reduce or change the existing connectivity in the surrounding area. While the right of way for Santa Ana Court would be abandoned, the Project site would provide new internal circulation and it would not affect the off-site circulation network for pedestrians, cyclists or vehicles. Thus, this issue will not be discussed further in this section.

Conservation Plans. The Project site is not located within an area covered by a habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan and thus this issue will not be discussed further in this section.

The impact analysis considers the effects of the proposed Project related to land use compatibility and considers potential inconsistencies of the proposed development with relevant planning documents implemented by the City to the extent such policies are adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect. The impact discussion contemplates whether any Project inconsistencies with public land use plans, goals, policies, and documents would result in a significant physical environmental impact. The discussion of plan and policy consistency provided here reflects the best estimation of the EIR preparers. The final determination of plan and policy consistency is the responsibility of the City of Sunnyvale Planning Commission and City Council.

Impact Analysis

Impact LU-1: The Project could conflict with an applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of the City of Sunnyvale adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect. (Less than Significant)

The Project site is currently zoned M-S 35% FAR. The Project includes as a required approval an amendment to the City's Precise Zoning Plan (Map) to rezone the site to the M-S 100% FAR (Industrial and Service zone, allowable FAR of 100%). This zoning allows for buildings of up to eight stories, up to 100 feet in height, up to 45% lot coverage and up to 100% FAR. The Project proposes four occupied stories, above two stories used for parking, with a building height of 75 feet above average grade (89 feet above average grade including roof mounted equipment and screening), 42% lot coverage, and 100% FAR. Following rezoning of the Project site, the Project would be consistent with City zoning, and thus would have a less-than-significant impact with respect to zoning.

The City's General Plan contains numerous policies that are applicable to the Project. **Table 3.1-2** summarizes the Project's consistency with several of the land use policies that are intended to avoid or mitigate environmental effects related to land use and land use compatibility (General Plan policies related to particular environmental effects, such as noise, are considered in the appropriate section of this chapter). Based on the analysis in the table, the Project appears to be consistent with the land use policies of the General Plan and thus would have a less-than-significant impact with respect to the General Plan. The final determination of policy consistency is the responsibility of the City of Sunnyvale Planning Commission and City Council.

Mitigation: None required.

**TABLE 3.1-2
PROJECT CONSISTENCY WITH GENERAL PLAN RELEVANT LAND USE POLICIES**

General Plan Policy	Consistency Analysis
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy LT -2.2 Encourage nodes of interest and activity, such as parks, public open spaces, well planned development, mixed-use projects and other desirable uses, locations and physical attractions. • Policy LT-2.2b Encourage development of diversified building for M-S and intensities. • Policy LT-4.2b Utilize adopted City design guidelines to achieve compatible architecture and scale for renovation and new development in Sunnyvale’s neighborhoods. • Policy LT-4.8a Require high quality site, landscaping and building design for higher intensity industrial development. • Policy CC -3.1 Place a priority on quality architecture and site design which will enhance the image of Sunnyvale and create a vital and attractive environment for businesses, residents and visitors, and be reasonably balanced with the need for economic development to assure Sunnyvale’s economic prosperity. 	<p>The Project appears to be consistent with these policies in that it will be subject to design review and initially places a priority on modern, state-of-the-art architecture balanced with landscaping and open space. The Project will be comprised of three interconnected six-story buildings with a cohesive building skin surrounding each building so that they appear as a single structure. The buildings will be set in the middle of the Project site with grass fields, athletic courts and roadways separating the buildings from the Project site perimeter as illustrated in the Illustrative Plan (Figure 2-4). The building will have architecturally interesting embellishments, where now the existing aesthetic character of the site has no remarkable architectural resources. The buildings will be set back, with extensive landscaping, including trees all along perimeter, which, when mature, will soften views of the Project from the surrounding area.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy LT -2.1 Recognize that the City is composed of residential, industrial and commercial neighborhoods, each with its own individual character; and allow change consistent with reinforcing positive neighborhood values. • Policy LT-2.1c Require appropriate buffers, edges and transition areas between dissimilar neighborhoods and land uses. • Policy LT -4.1 Protect the integrity of the City’s neighborhoods; whether residential, industrial or commercial. • Policy LT-4.1a Limit the intrusion of incompatible uses and inappropriate development into city neighborhoods. • Policy LT-4.1c Use density to transition between land use and to buffer between sensitive uses and less compatible uses. • Policy LT-4.1d Anticipate and avoid whenever practical the incompatibility that can arise between dissimilar uses. • Policy LT-4.2 Require new development to be compatible with the neighborhood, adjacent land uses and the transportation system. • Policy LT-4.2a Integrate new development and redevelopment into existing neighborhoods. • Policy LT -4.6 Safeguard industry’s ability to operate effectively, by limiting the establishment of incompatible uses in industrial areas. 	<p>The Project appears to be consistent with these policies in that it maintains the industrial use of the site. It is not adjacent to dissimilar or sensitive uses which would pose potential compatibility issues.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy LT-6.3a Support land use policies to achieve a healthy relationship between the creation of new jobs and housing. • Policy LT -7.2 Encourage land uses that generate revenue, while preserving a balance with other City needs, such as housing. • Policy HE-1.4 Continue to require office and industrial development to mitigate the demand for affordable housing. 	<p>The Project is consistent in that it would provide for revenue generation and would pay a housing mitigation fee to reduce impacts to housing should the development increase local housing demands by creating new job growth.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy LT-6.4 Encourage sustainable industries that emphasize resource efficiency, environmental responsibility, and the prevention of pollution and waste. 	<p>The Project incorporates a range of sustainable elements within the design. Sustainability features of the proposed Project include LEED Platinum CS certification; “Net-Zero ready” amenities building (i.e., designed to be ready for additions to achieve a net-zero energy system), solar photovoltaic array on the parking garage roof, solar photovoltaic-ready roofs, and use of reclaimed water.</p>

SOURCE: City of Sunnyvale, 2011.

References

City of Sunnyvale, 2011. Sunnyvale General Plan. Chapter 2, Community Vision; Chapter 3, Land Use and Transportation. Available at: <http://sunnyvale.ca.gov/CodesandPolicies/GeneralPlan.aspx>.

City of Sunnyvale, 2013. Sunnyvale Municipal Code. Current through Ordinance 3000-13 and August 2013 code supplement. Available at: <http://qcode.us/codes/sunnyvale>.

Santa Clara County Airport Land Use Commission, 2012. Comprehensive Land Use Plan, Moffett Federal Airfield. Available at: http://www.sccgov.org/sites/planning/PlansPrograM-S/ALUC/Documents/ALUC_20121128_NUQ_CLUP_adopted.pdf.

3.2 Population and Housing

This section includes a description of population and housing trends in the City of Sunnyvale and Santa Clara County. This description is followed by an evaluation of whether the Project would cause significant impacts with respect to population and housing, such as displacement of substantial numbers of people or housing or causing unanticipated growth.

Setting

Population

The City of Sunnyvale (City) is the second largest city in Santa Clara County (County) with approximately 145,973 people or 7.9% of the County population in 2013 (California Department of Finance, 2013). **Table 3.2-1** summarizes population growth since 2000 and projections for the City of Sunnyvale and Santa Clara County utilizing the 2013 regional growth projections prepared by the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG, 2013a). The City is anticipated to grow approximately 19.7% from 2013 levels by the year 2030.

**TABLE 3.2-1
 POPULATION TRENDS: CITY AND COUNTY**

	2000 ^a	2010 ^a	Existing 2013 ^b	Projected 2030 ^c
City of Sunnyvale	131,844	140,081	145,973	174,700
Santa Clara County	1,682,585	1,781,642	1,842,254	2,188,500

SOURCES:

- ^a California Department of Finance, 2012.
- ^b California Department of Finance, 2013.
- ^c ABAG, 2013a.

Housing

Table 3.2-2 provides the number of households in Sunnyvale and Santa Clara County in the years 2000 and 2010, as well as projections for the 2030 planning horizon. The number of households in the City is anticipated to increase by 22.3% from 2010 to 2030. In 2013, the City had an average of 2.67 persons per household, which was lower than the County average of 2.96 persons per household (California Department of Finance, 2013).

**TABLE 3.2-2
 HOUSEHOLD TRENDS: CITY AND COUNTY**

	2000	2010	Projected 2030
City of Sunnyvale	52,539	54,170	66,290
Santa Clara County	565,863	614,000	747,070

SOURCE: ABAG, 2013a.

In 2013, the City had approximately 56,898 housing units or 8.9% of the County housing stock; the County had approximately 639,446 housing units (California Department of Finance, 2013). The City vacancy rate in 2013 of 4.3% was similar but slightly less than the County vacancy rate of 4.4% (California Department of Finance, 2013).

Employment

The rapid increase in jobs in Silicon Valley came to an abrupt halt in late 2000 with the economic downturn associated with the “dot.com bust.” Severe job losses were suffered throughout Silicon Valley. ABAG estimates that by 2005, the number of jobs in Sunnyvale had dropped approximately 25% from peak levels in 2000 to 73,630. In 2006, ABAG projected that by 2025 there would be 104,190 jobs and the City projected that by 2025 there would be 109,600 jobs (the City’s projection was based on a 2005 estimate of nearly 85,000 jobs). These projections were formed prior to the more recent economic downturn, which has drastically reduced the projected number of jobs. By 2013, ABAG had reduced its projections for most jurisdictions and estimated approximately 90,160 jobs within the City by 2030 (**Table 3.2-3**); this represents an anticipated job growth of 15.8% from 2010 to 2030.

**TABLE 3.2-3
 JOB TRENDS: CITY AND COUNTY**

	2000	2010	Projected 2030
City of Sunnyvale	99,290	77,890	90,160
Santa Clara County	1,044,130	906,270	1,147,020

NOTE: The 2010 job estimate is consistent with the City of Sunnyvale, Draft Land Use and Transportation Element.

SOURCE: ABAG, 2013a.

Based on March, 2014 data from the California Employment Development Department, the County has a labor force of approximately 933,400 persons with an unemployment rate of 6.1%. The City’s labor force is approximately 80,200 persons or 8.6% of the County labor force, and the City’s unemployment rate is 5.2% (California Employment Development Department, 2014a). Both the City and County unemployment rates are lower than the California unemployment rate of 8.5% (California Employment Development Department, 2014b). According to U.S. Census data, the mean travel to work time for City residents is 22 minutes, compared to 24.3 minutes for the County as a whole (U.S. Census, 2011).

Table 3.2-4 shows the labor distribution for employed Sunnyvale residents. The industries that employ the most residents (26.4%) are within the Professional, Scientific, Management, and Waste Management Services sector, followed by Manufacturing (21.3%), and then Educational Services, Health Care, and Social Assistance (15%). Together, these three sectors account for over 60% of employment in the City.

**TABLE 3.2-4
 LABOR FORCE DISTRIBUTION**

Major Industry	2011	
	Jobs	Percent
Professional, Scientific, Management, Administrative, and Waste Management Services	19,024	26.4
Manufacturing	15,370	21.3
Educational Services, Health Care, and Social Assistance	10,788	15
Retail Trade	6,089	8.5
Arts, Entertainment, Recreation, Accommodation, and Food Services	4,328	6
Information	3,437	4.8
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate, and Rental and Leasing Services	3,100	4.3
Construction	2,493	3.5
Other Services, except Public Administration	2,374	3.3
Transportation, Warehousing, and Utilities	1,625	2.3
Public Administration	1,578	2.2
Wholesale Trade	1,572	2.2
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, Hunting, and Mining	226	0.3
Civilian Employed Population	72,004	100%

SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau, 2011.

Regulatory Setting

Local

City of Sunnyvale General Plan

The following are the goals and policies from the City’s *General Plan* (2011) which are relevant to the Project and its potential impact on population and housing.

Land Use and Transportation

- **Goal LT-6: Supportive Economic Development Environment.** Sustain a strong local economy that contributes fiscal support for desired City Services and provides a mix of jobs and commercial opportunities.
 - **Policy LT-6.1:** Maintain a diversity of commercial enterprises and industrial uses to sustain and bolster the local economy.
 - **Policy LT-6.4:** Encourage sustainable industries that emphasize resource efficiency, environmental responsibility, and the prevention of pollution and waste.
- **Goal LT-7: Balanced Economic Base.** Endeavor to maintain a balanced economic base that can resist downturns of any one economic sector.
 - **Policy LT-7.1:** Support efforts to establish Sunnyvale’s downtown area as a strong commercial center for the City.

- **Policy LT-7.3:** Maintain an attractive business community.
- **Policy LT-7.4:** Support land use policies that provide a diversified mix of commercial/ industrial development.

Housing Element

- **Goal HE-1: Adequate Housing.** Assist in the provision of adequate housing to meet the diverse needs of Sunnyvale’s households of all income levels.
 - **Policy HE-1.4:** Continue to require office and industrial development to mitigate the demand for affordable housing.
 - **Policy HE-1.5:** Work with Sunnyvale’s major employers, educational and health care institutions to facilitate and encourage the development of workforce housing. Promote the City’s affordable housing programs with local employers.

Housing Mitigation Fund

Since 1983, the City has collected a Housing Mitigation fee from specified industrial and commercial developments that exceed a floor area ratio of 35% as a means of mitigating the impact of job-producing development on the demand for affordable housing. The anticipated floor area ratio of the Project is 100% and consequently the Project will be subject to this fee.

Regional Housing Need Allocation Plan

ABAG has adopted a Regional Housing Need Allocation (RHNA) Plan covering the period from 2014 to 2022. Overall, ABAG and the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) determined that the Bay Area must plan for 187,990 new housing units. This estimate is based on population projections and is adjusted for high vacancy rates, high unemployment and unprecedented foreclosures in recent years (ABAG, 2013b). **Table 3.2-5** provides a summary of the allocations for the City and for the County as a whole.

**TABLE 3.2-5
 REGIONAL HOUSING NEED ALLOCATIONS**

	Very Low (0-50%)^a	Low (51-80%)^a	Moderate (81-120%)^a	Above Moderate (120%+)^a	Total
City of Sunnyvale	1,640	906	932	1,974	5,452
Santa Clara County	16,158	9,542	10,636	22,500	58,836

^a Percentages represent percent of area median income.

SOURCE: ABAG, 2013b.

Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Significance Thresholds

Based on Appendix G of the CEQA *Guidelines*, the Project would have a significant impact if it would:

- Induce substantial population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure);
- Displace substantial numbers of people or existing housing units, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere.

The Project would not displace existing housing or otherwise displace people in such a manner that would require the construction of replacement housing elsewhere, and thus there would be no impact of this kind. As such, this issue will not be discussed further.

Impact Analysis

Impact PH-1: The Project could induce substantial population growth, either directly or indirectly. (Less than Significant)

For the purposes of this assessment the Project is assumed to result in 2,500 jobs, as estimated by the applicant. The existing one-story industrial buildings at the Project site currently provide several hundred jobs, though some are now partially vacant. These existing buildings would be demolished as part of the Project. The potential exists for these businesses to relocate within existing vacant space, either in Sunnyvale or in the surrounding area. Therefore, it is assumed that existing jobs on the Project site would continue to exist in the City or nearby, and the demolition of the existing buildings on the Project site would have no effect on local employment or, by extension, housing demand or population.

Population growth is considered substantial if it is unplanned or unanticipated by the City General Plan. ABAG projects that there will be 90,160 jobs in the City by 2030, or 12,270 additional jobs in comparison to 2010 (ABAG, 2013a). The Sunnyvale General Plan anticipates and plans for somewhat higher increases in the number of jobs (City of Sunnyvale, 2011). The Project would provide a portion (2,500 jobs, with a net increase of about 2,100 jobs) of this planned job growth, and is thus consistent with the City's General Plan.

Furthermore, housing needs are generally regional in nature. With average worker commute times for the County of over 20 minutes, it is anticipated that some portion of the employees of the proposed development would commute from outside of the City. There are approximately 2,455 vacant units within the City (California Department of Finance, 2013), which could reduce demands on housing if some workers decided to locate within the City limits. In addition, to the extent that some unemployed workers in the City labor force might be employed by the proposed development, these employees would not need to relocate.

The City General Plan aims to balance job and housing growth, and since 2000 the City has approved on average about 300 new housing units per year. More residential development is proposed but not yet approved. In accordance with the RHNA Plan, to meet the City's share of the regional demand for housing, the City is required to provide zoning and other programs for at least 5,452 additional units by 2022 to accommodate planned growth (ABAG, 2013b).

As the anticipated number of jobs is within planning projections, the Project would not result in the direct inducement of substantial population growth, but rather would respond to local and regional demand; thus the impact of the Project on population and housing would be less than significant.

Mitigation: None required.

References

- Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG), 2013a. Bay Area Plan Projections 2013.
- ABAG, 2013b. Final Regional Housing Need Allocation (2014 to 2022). Adopted July 18, 2013. Available online at: http://www.abag.ca.gov/planning/housingneeds/pdfs/2014-22_RHNA_Plan.pdf.
- California Employment Development Department, 2014a, Monthly Labor Force Data for Cities and Census Designated Places (CDP), February, 2014. March 21, 2014.
- California Employment Development Department, 2014b, Report 400 C: Monthly Labor Force Data for Counties, January 2014. March 7, 2014. California Department of Finance, 2012. E-4 Population Estimates for Cities, Counties, and the State, 2001-2010, with 2000 & 2010 Census Counts. Sacramento, California, November 2012.
- California Department of Finance, 2013. E-5 Population and Housing Estimates for Cities, Counties and the State — January 1, 2011- 2013. Sacramento, California, May 2013.
- California Department of Finance, 2012. Table 2: E-4 Population Estimates for Cities, Counties and State, 2001-2010 with 2000 & 2010 Census Counts. Sacramento, California, November 2012.
- City of Sunnyvale, 2011. General Plan. Chapter 3, Land Use and Transportation; Chapter 5, Housing. Consolidated in 2011. Available at: <http://sunnyvale.ca.gov/CodesandPolicies/GeneralPlan.aspx>.
- U.S. Census, 2011. 2007-2011 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates: Selected Economic Characteristics. Available at: http://factfinder2.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS_11_5YR_DP03, accessed September 24, 2013.

3.3 Aesthetics

Introduction

This section evaluates the potential for the Project to degrade the visual character of the Project site and its surroundings, to block scenic vistas, or to produce a new source of unwanted light or glare. Photographs from representative viewpoints are used to illustrate the Project site's current visual qualities, and to characterize vistas in the area of the Project site. Visual Simulations are provided to illustrate the visual qualities and aesthetic character of the proposed Project.

Environmental Setting

Visual Character

Regional Setting

The Project site is located in the central portion of the City of Sunnyvale. Sunnyvale is bordered by portions of San Jose to the north, Moffett Airfield to the northwest, Mountain View to the west, Los Altos to the southwest, Cupertino to the south, and Santa Clara to the east. Sunnyvale is located in the northwest portion of Santa Clara County. Sunnyvale, like its neighbors, is built-out, and with its neighbors forms a continuous urban landscape.

Project Setting

The area immediately surrounding the Project site is built-out, with no vacant land in the vicinity of the site. The area has broad, tree-lined, multi-lane thoroughfares and mostly single-story research and development, commercial, and public service buildings. The area in and around the Project site is relatively flat, at an elevation of about 50 feet above sea level. From raised overcrossings such as the Central Expressway, which runs just to the south of the Project site, there are fleeting glimpses of the East Foothills (the hills to the east of the Santa Clara Valley), but with no remarkable landmarks in the immediate vicinity.

The Project site blends into the surrounding area with few distinguishing characteristics around the site borders, other than the adjoining roadways. The Project site consists of nine separate parcels; each contains a one-story industrial building. There are trees, grass, parking lots, and interior roadways between the buildings, which are currently occupied. The visual quality of the Project site is influenced by mature landscaping, including trees, tended flower beds, and shrubs. The existing buildings feature architecture that is characteristic of suburban office parks of the 1970s and 1980s: low buildings that are set back from the street, constructed with tilt-up concrete, large windows and angled roofs with terra cotta roof tiles or flat roofs. Many buildings feature a concrete mosaic on the front or side of the building that provides an interesting design element or focal point (**Figure 3.3-1** and **Figure 3.3-2**).



SOURCE: ESA

Landbank Central & Wolfe Campus . 120442.01

Figure 3.3-1
Photos of Existing Site



SOURCE: ESA

Landbank Central & Wolfe Campus . 120442.01

Figure 3.3-2
Photos of Existing Site

Existing Views from the Project Site

Views from the Project site to adjacent neighborhoods are generally limited due to the nearly flat topography, existing development, and mature landscaping, including tall trees both on and off the site. A radio tower, located within the adjacent City corporation yard, is visible in the near distance to the east of the site. In general, the Project site contains limited long-range views because of the site location and adjacent vegetation.

Existing Views of the Project Site

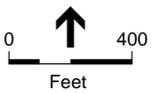
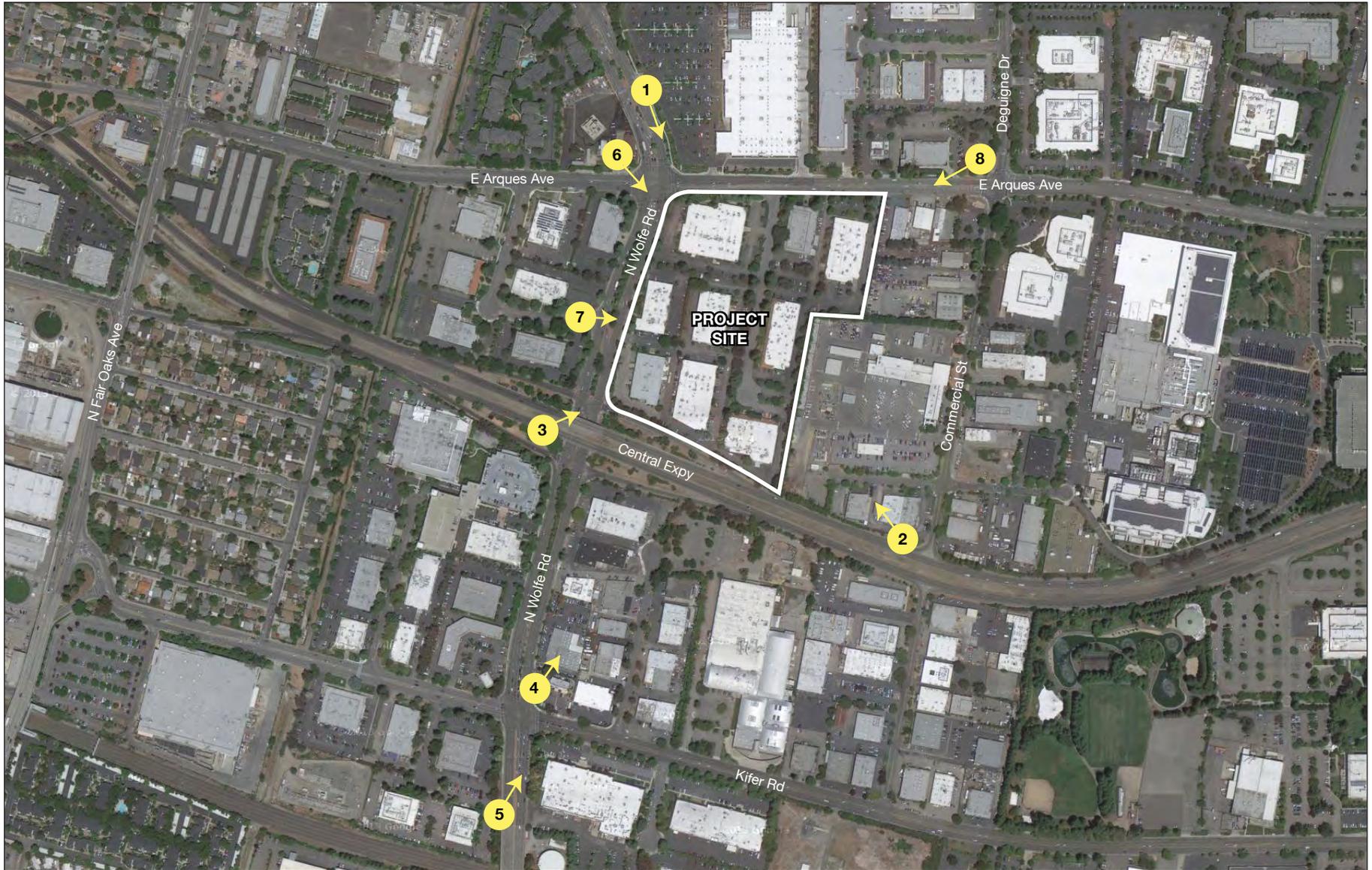
The Project site is surrounded by similar commercial and light industrial developments, with a lack of natural or built landmarks. Following is a description of views of the Project site from eight representative public viewpoints in the vicinity of the site. **Figure 3.3-3** shows the location of viewpoints. **Figures 3.3-4** through **3.3-11** illustrate these views.

Viewpoint 1: View from North Wolfe Road looking south. This viewpoint is located between the fire station and the Lowe's store, at the median in the middle of the road north of East Arques Avenue. In the foreground of the view are North Wolfe Road traffic lanes and the median. The Project site is visible in the background, beyond the intersection. The view is characterized by glimpses of low buildings, vehicles, and landscaping, with medium sized trees that are slightly taller than the buildings. A number of mature trees are visible that reduce views into the interior of the Project site. Above the Project site, sky is visible, but nothing else is visible beyond the Project site.

Viewpoint 2: View from the Central Expressway, at the intersection with Commercial Street, looking northwest. The photo is taken from the south side of Central Expressway, at the on/off ramp for eastbound Central Expressway. In the foreground of this view are the Expressway lanes, median, and shrubbery. In the midground, beyond the Expressway fence, there are trees and one story buildings, which are not on the Project site. The radio tower, located within the City Corporation Yard, is to the right in this view. Mature trees on the Project site are seen in the background of the view, beyond the buildings. Nothing is visible beyond the Project site, other than the sky.

Viewpoint 3: View from eastbound Central Expressway, looking north. This photograph is taken from the south side of Central Expressway, looking northeast toward the Project site. The viewpoint is just to the west of the North Wolfe Road overpass. The view includes the Expressway, both lanes of traffic, the median, and the sky above. Beyond the expressway, mature trees extend above the median, limiting views into the Project site. Views into the site are limited to a few hundred feet and consist mostly of trees. The background is composed of sky.

Viewpoint 4: View to the northeast from the median of North Wolfe Road, just north of Kifer Road. From this viewpoint, the northbound lane of North Wolfe Road is in the foreground, with commercial buildings, driveways, and landscaping on the east side of the road in the midground. In the background, the Central Expressway overpass is visible in the extreme left of the view. The tops of a few trees on the Project site are visible in the middle background; otherwise, the Project site cannot be seen from this viewpoint. Beyond the Project site, only the sky is visible, except for a glimpse of the East Foothills above the Expressway overpass.



SOURCE: HOK

Landbank Central & Wolfe Campus . 120442.01

Figure 3.3-3
Viewpoint Map





SOURCE: ESA

Landbank Central & Wolfe Campus . 120442.01

Figure 3.3-5
Viewpoint 2



SOURCE: HOK

Landbank Central & Wolfe Campus . 120442.01

Figure 3.3-6
Viewpoint 3



SOURCE: ESA

Landbank Central & Wolfe Campus . 120442.01

Figure 3.3-7
Viewpoint 4





SOURCE: ESA

Landbank Central & Wolfe Campus . 120442.01

Figure 3.3-9
Viewpoint 6



SOURCE: ESA

Landbank Central & Wolfe Campus . 120442.01

Figure 3.3-10
Viewpoint 7



SOURCE: ESA

Landbank Central & Wolfe Campus . 120442.01

Figure 3.3-11
Viewpoint 8

Viewpoint 5: View looking northeast from the western sidewalk of North Wolfe Road, on the overpass above the Caltrain track, south of Kifer Road. Two-way traffic, the traffic median, and the intersection of North Wolfe Road and Kifer Road are in the foreground of the view from this elevated viewpoint. The midground of the view consists of trees and North Wolfe Road, north of the intersection. In the background, on the left of the image, the East Foothills can be seen above the treetops. From this viewpoint, trees completely block views of the Project site, which would be in the middle background of the photo. Other than a glimpse of the East Foothills, nothing is visible beyond the Project site.

Viewpoint 6: View from the north side of East Arques Avenue, just west of North Wolfe Road, looking southeast. This viewpoint is at the bus stop on East Arques Avenue, adjacent to the fire station. In the foreground of the view are the traffic lanes of East Arques Avenue and the intersection with North Wolfe Road. In the midground is a portion of the Project site, at the southeast corner of East Arques Avenue and North Wolfe Road. One of the existing buildings on the Project site is visible, with landscaping in front. Beyond, in the background of the view, tall trees on the Project site can be seen. Nothing is visible beyond the Project site, other than the sky.

Viewpoint 7: View from the corner of North Wolfe Road and Lucerne Drive facing east into the Project site. The North Wolfe Road median can be seen in the foreground ground of this Viewpoint. Most of the view, however, is into the Project site, and is composed of mature trees within the Project site and along North Wolfe Road, a driveway and parking lot, and one-story buildings. Nothing is visible beyond the Project site, other than the sky.

Viewpoint 8: View from East Arques Avenue near Commercial Street, looking southwest toward the Project site. This view, from the north side of East Arques Avenue just west of Commercial Street, shows East Arques Avenue stretching off to the west, with the intersection with North Wolfe Road in the distance, in the bottom right of the photo. A glimpse of the Santa Cruz Mountains, to the west of the Santa Clara Valley, can be seen above the intersection. Across East Arques Avenue in the left of the frame there are commercial buildings and associated parking lots, which are not on the Project site. The Project site is in the middle of the view. Tall trees, ground-level landscaping, and glimpses of the site buildings are visible. Nothing is visible beyond the Project site, other than the sky.

Existing Light and Glare

The Project site is within a developed and urbanized area where nighttime lighting is part of the built environment. Vehicle headlights, street lighting at intersections and along the streets, parking lot lighting, and building lighting, as well as various other sources of light from surrounding industrial, commercial, and residential uses are part of the existing setting. Mature trees mute the light and limit views of the sky. Sources of glare in the Project area are largely attributable to reflections from vehicles and building windows, but the abundance of mature trees in the area, combined with the low, one and two story buildings in the area, limits glare. Overall, lighting levels are typical for urban areas and the type of development in the vicinity of the Project site.

Regulatory Framework

This section identifies State and local policies that pertain to the Project's potential effects on scenic vistas and resources.

State Regulations

California Scenic Highways Program and Scenic Corridor Protection Program

In 1963, the California Legislature established the State's Scenic Highway Program, intended to preserve and protect scenic highway corridors from changes that would diminish the aesthetic value of lands adjacent to highways. The State laws governing the Scenic Highway Program are found in the Streets and Highways Code, Section 260 et seq. The California Department of Transportation administers California's Scenic Highways Program, intended to preserve and protect scenic highway corridors from change that would diminish the aesthetic value of lands adjacent to highways. Within the City of Sunnyvale, there are no officially designated California Scenic Highway segments (Caltrans, 2013).

Local Plans and Policies

City of Sunnyvale General Plan

The consolidated City of Sunnyvale General Plan Chapters 3, Land Use and Transportation and Chapter 4, Community Character, address visual resource issues. The goals and policies that are relevant to the Project are listed below.

Goal II. Attractive Community

To maintain and enhance the appearance of Sunnyvale, and to distinguish it from surrounding communities, through the promotion of high quality architecture, the preservation of historic districts and structures, the maintenance of a healthy urban forest, and the provision of abundant and attractive open space.

Goal XIII. Community Identity

To foster a strong sense of community which promotes participation in civic affairs, community pride and a sense of place.

- **Goal CC-2: Attractive Street Environment.** Create an attractive street environment which will compliment private and public properties and be comfortable for residents and visitors
- **Goal CC-3: Well Designed Sites and Buildings.** Ensure that buildings and related site improvements for private development are well designed and compatible with surrounding properties and districts.
 - ***Policy LT-2.2b:*** Encourage development of diversified building forms and intensities.
 - ***Policy LT-4.8a:*** Require high quality site, landscaping and building design for higher intensity industrial development.

- **Policy LT -4.13:** Promote an attractive and functional commercial street environment.
- **Policy LT-4.13a:** Discourage commercial street uses and designs that result in a boxy appearance.
- **Policy CC-1.8:** Provide and encourage the incorporation of art — both functional and decorative - in public and private development.
- **Policy CC-3.1:** Place a priority on quality architecture and site design which will enhance the image of Sunnyvale and create a vital and attractive environment for businesses, residents and visitors, and be reasonably balanced with the need for economic development to assure Sunnyvale’s economic prosperity.
- **Policy CC-3.2:** Ensure site design is compatible with the natural and surrounding built environment.
- **Policy CC-5.2:** Enhance the visual character of the City by preserving diverse as well as harmonious architectural styles, reflecting various phases of the City’s historical development and the cultural traditions of past and present residents.

Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Significance Criteria

Consistent with Appendix G of the CEQA *Guidelines*, the Project would have a significant impact on visual resources if it would:

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

Approach to Analysis

Views are considered to be sensitive when they have high scenic quality and are accessible from public locations. Scenic quality is a measure of the overall impression or appeal of an area created by the physical features of the landscape, such as natural features (landforms, vegetation, water, color, adjacent scenery, and scarcity), and human-made features (bridges, roads, buildings, railroads, agricultural patterns).

Impacts related to aesthetics and views are determined by comparing existing visual conditions within and adjacent to the Project site with conditions expected after implementation of the Project. Impacts could be considered significant if scenic views would be blocked, or where scenic resources would be damaged or degraded.

Three simulated views of the Project are provided, based on Viewpoints 3, 6, and 8, and as shown in **Figures 3.3-12, 3.3-13 and 3.3-14**. Portions of the following impact analysis are based on the simulations. The simulations illustrate the Project site five years following completion of construction and installation of new landscaping.

The Project would not result in impacts related to the following criterion:

Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a State scenic highway.

No impact discussion is provided for this topic because the Project site is not visible from a State scenic highway and thus impacts related to scenic resources within a State scenic highway would not occur with implementation of the Project.

Impact Analysis

Impact AES-1: The Project could have an adverse effect on a scenic vista. (Less than Significant)

Construction of the Project would bring about a substantial change in views of the Project site and vicinity. Where once there were numerous single story buildings separated by landscaping, interior streets and parking, there would be three six story office structures with a cohesive building skin surrounding each building so that they appear as a single large structure, and a multi-story parking structure.

The office buildings would be set back from the Project site perimeter with landscaped areas, including trees, athletic courts and roadways (see Figure 2-4, Illustrative Plan, in Chapter 2, Project Description). Because of their height, the buildings would be much more visible than the existing site buildings, and would be distinct and unusual architecturally. Some of the existing mature trees on the Project site, particularly around the perimeter of the site and around the central quad, would be retained (see Figure 2-15, Proposed Tree Planting, in Chapter 2, Project Description). Street level views would therefore be little changed from the present, with the exception of prominent views of the upper stories of the new buildings above the level of the perimeter trees (Figure 3.3-14).

The new buildings would be visible from farther away and from more locations than the existing site buildings. Vehicles approaching the Project site on the Central Expressway (Figure 3.3-12) and vehicles and pedestrians on East Arques Avenue, North Wolfe Road, and other roadways in the vicinity of the Project site, would have a clear view of the new buildings rising above the treetops, where currently the sky fills the view (Figures 3.3-13 and 3.3-14).

As described in the Setting section, because of the flat topography of the area, the abundance of mature street and landscaping trees, and the lack of distinguishing natural or built features, there are few scenic views in the vicinity of the Project site. While the Project would alter views of the Project site and the immediate surrounding area, it would not block or adversely affect an existing scenic vista. Therefore, impacts of the Project on scenic vistas and scenic views would be less than significant.



Existing



Simulation

SOURCE: HOK

Landbank Central & Wolfe Campus . 120442.01

Figure 3.3-12
Existing and Simulated Views, Viewpoint 3



Existing



Simulation

SOURCE: HOK

Landbank Central & Wolfe Campus . 120442.01

Figure 3.3-13
Existing and Simulated Views, Viewpoint 6



Existing



Simulation

SOURCE: HOK

Landbank Central & Wolfe Campus . 120442.01

Figure 3.3-14
Existing and Simulated Views, Viewpoint 8

Mitigation: None required.

Impact AES-2: The Project could degrade the existing visual character or quality of the Project site and its surroundings. (Less than Significant)

The proposed Project includes a landscaped perimeter with replanted and retained trees, a central quad with landscaping, athletic courts and open space between the building areas, and new, contemporary buildings with a distinctive and unusual design. The visual character of the area, as experienced by pedestrians, bicyclists and motorists, would be shaped by the proposed large scale of the Project, the architectural design of the buildings, and site landscaping. The proposed new development would give the Project site a distinctive appearance, with unusual, tall, curved structures as the prominent feature. The Project buildings would be closer to the perimeter of the Project site and would be much larger than the existing buildings, which together would increase their visual presence on the adjacent streets (Figures 3.3-13 and 3.3-14). Visual quality is subjective. Although the visual character of the Project area would be substantially altered by the Project, it would not necessarily be degraded, given that the proposed Project would be designed as a unified, landscaped campus, and given that the Project would be subject to the City's formal Design Review process. Thus, impacts related to the degradation of visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings would be less than significant.

Mitigation: None required.

Impact AES-3: The Project would create a new source of light which could adversely affect nighttime views in the Project area. (Less than Significant)

The Project site is within a developed and urbanized area where nighttime lighting is part of the environment. Vehicle headlights, street lighting at intersections and along streets, parking lot lighting, security lighting, and building lighting as well as various other sources of light from surrounding urban uses characterize current nighttime conditions. Once constructed, the proposed new buildings would be prominent new features. Given the height of the buildings, nighttime lighting of the buildings could become a relatively more prominent visual presence than is currently the case and could affect nighttime views in the vicinity of the Project site. The proposed parking garage would be partially enclosed, and so garage lighting and headlights from vehicles moving within the structure at night would not create a new source of light. As stated in the Project Description, the Project applicant has committed to meeting the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) standard for night lighting. The standard is intended to minimize "light trespass" from a building and site, reduce sky-glow to increase night sky access, improve nighttime visibility through glare reduction, and reduce development impact from lighting on nocturnal environments (U.S. Green Building Council, 2009). Achievement of the LEED standard for night lighting would avoid creating a new substantial source of light. Given the applicant's

commitment to meeting this standard and the fact that the Project would be subject to Design Review, this impact would be less than significant.

Mitigation: None required.

Impact AES-4: The Project could create a new source of glare. (Significant)

Reflective light, or glare, is caused by sunlight or artificial light reflecting from finished surfaces such as window glass or other reflective materials. The reflectivity of surface materials, including glass, can vary widely. Buildings constructed of highly reflective materials from which the sun reflects at a low angle commonly cause adverse glare. Existing sources of reflective light at and in the vicinity of the Project site are largely attributable to reflections from vehicles and windows of commercial and industrial buildings. Because of the many street trees in the area, and the typical low building height, currently overall glare levels are low.

The Project proposes to use glass and aluminum for the exterior of the proposed buildings. These materials could be highly reflective. Furthermore, the proposed curved façade of the office buildings, particularly the concave surfaces facing west and north, could potentially concentrate reflected sunlight, and project it onto nearby surfaces. This could occur, for example, in the late afternoon along North Wolfe Road. Effects of this kind have been experienced with buildings recently constructed in Las Vegas and London, where the combination of building height, concave shape, and exterior building materials have essentially created a parabolic mirror that has reportedly damaged property and caused sunburns (BBC News Magazine, 2013; ABC News, 2010). Because of the potential for the proposed buildings to result in a new, substantial source of glare, including the potential for the concentration and projection of sunlight, this impact is considered significant.

Mitigation Measure

Mitigation Measure AES-4: Prior to issuance of Project building permits, the applicant shall complete and submit to the City of Sunnyvale Community Development Department documents showing that the potential for the proposed new buildings to cause a new source of reflected light and glare has been examined, and that any necessary design alterations have been made to avoid an impact of this kind. Design alterations may include, but are not limited to, selection of exterior building materials that are less reflective; use of exterior building elements that break up reflective surfaces; and re-design of the shape or orientation of the buildings. These documents and any necessary design alterations shall be to the satisfaction of the Community Development Director.

Significance after Mitigation: *Less than Significant.* Mitigation Measure AES-4 would ensure that impacts related to reflected light and glare are adequately examined, addressed, and reviewed as part of the Project Design Review consideration and approval, and that any measures necessary to avoid creating a substantial new source of reflected light or glare are incorporated into the Project design. Therefore, this mitigation measure would reduce this impact to a less-than-significant level.

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