4.1 AESTHETICS/VISUAL RESOURCES

This section describes the potential aesthetics and visual resources impacts that could result from construction and operation of the City Fire Station 10.

4.1.1 Existing Setting

The Goleta Valley is well known for the scenic beauty of its open spaces, foothills, and ocean and mountain views. Goleta lies between the Santa Ynez Mountains and the Pacific Ocean. Prominent features of the foothills and mountains are seen throughout the City and include expanses of orchards, chaparral, and rock outcroppings. The City also encompasses highly scenic coastal open space areas and the Pacific Ocean (City of Goleta 2006).

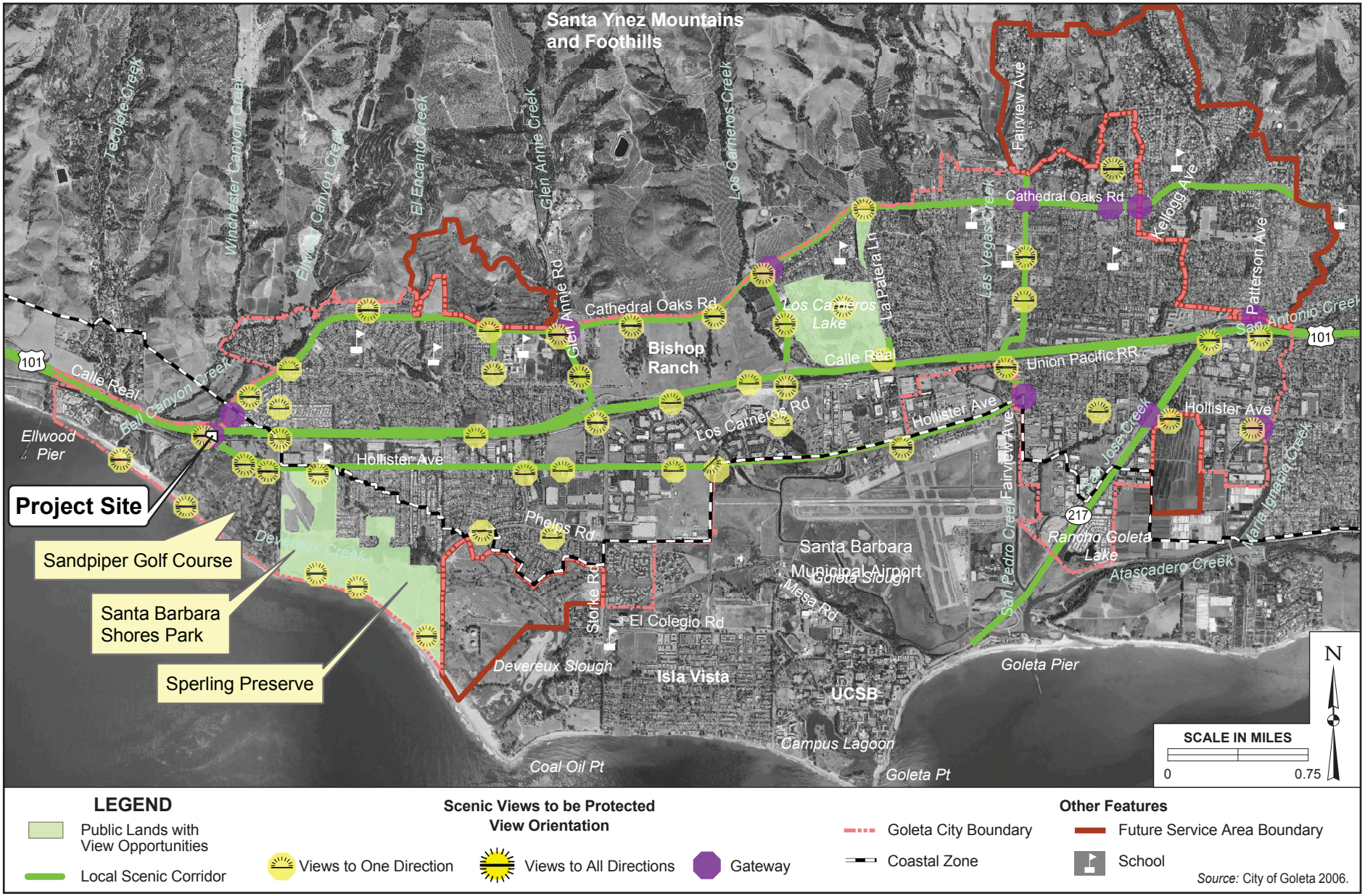
Visual Character and Scenic Resources

The Project site consists of an approximately 1.21-acre irregularly shaped undeveloped parcel of land in western Goleta (see Figure 4.1-1). The site has a gentle-sloping topography (1.4 percent average), and drains in a predominantly southeasterly direction (Flowers & Associates, Inc. 2017). The site was formerly developed as a service station (1968-1993) and is designated in the City's Zoning Ordinance for visitor-serving uses. The site is located adjacent to U.S. Highway 101 (US 101) and Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) transportation corridors (to the north), Cathedral Oaks Road (to the west), Sandpiper Golf Course (to the south), and The Hideaway residential development (to the east). Other development in the project vicinity consists of agricultural lands, as well as residential neighborhoods and small business parks which are typified by flat-roofed, one- and two-story buildings with surface parking.

The primary visual features of the Project site consist of a mix of eucalyptus and acacia trees and low-lying vegetation, including weeds, shrubs, and grasses, which are densely clustered along the northern and eastern portions of the site, as well as spread throughout the site.

Scenic Corridors

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) designates highways throughout California as "scenic highways." For a highway to be declared as scenic, the government with jurisdiction over the abutting land must adopt a "scenic corridor protection program" that limits development, outdoor advertising, and earthmoving around the highway. U.S. Highway 101 (US 101) is eligible for state designation as a scenic highway in the vicinity of the Project site and throughout Santa Barbara County. Additionally, the City's Visual and Historic Resources Element lists the following roadways near the Project site as designated "local scenic corridors", which pass through, or provide visual access to, areas of high scenic value (see Figure 4.1-1):



amec foster wheeler

Public View Corridors
City of Goleta Fire Station 10

FIGURE 4.1-1

- Hollister Avenue;
- Cathedral Oaks Road;
- US 101; and
- Calle Real.

These designated scenic corridors are subject to Goleta GP/CLUP Policy VH 1.2, discussed in Section 4.1.2, below.

Hollister Avenue is directly adjacent to the south boundary of the Project site. Cathedral Oaks Road at the US 101 overpass (Cathedral Oaks Overpass) is directly adjacent to the west boundary of the Project site. The centerline of US 101 is approximately 300 feet north of the Project site, while Calle Real is approximately 450 feet to the north of the Project site beyond US 101. Discussion of views related to each scenic corridor are ordered in terms of importance and proximity to the Project site. Public views from the Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) right-of way (adjacent to northern site boundary), as well as private views from The Hideaway residential development (adjacent to eastern site boundary) are also discussed because of their proximity to the Project site.

Hollister Avenue is directly adjacent to the Project site southern boundary. The Cathedral Oaks Road - US 101 overpass is directly adjacent to the west boundary of the Project site. The Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) right-of way is adjacent to the northern Project site boundary, at an elevation of 86 feet above sea level (ASL), and 35 feet below Project site existing grade. The US 101 centerline is approximately 300 feet north of the Project site, while Calle Real is approximately 450 feet to the north of the Project site beyond US 101.

Discussion of views related to each scenic corridor are ordered in terms of importance and proximity to the Project site. Public views and private views from The Hideaway residential development (adjacent to eastern site boundary) are discussed because of their proximity to the Project site. (Private views are addressed in City GP Policy VH 1.8 Private Views).

Computer simulations of the proposed Project were prepared by Ken Doud, *Videoscapes*, a specialist with over 20 years' experience preparing these documents. The accuracy of the simulation is ensured by geo-referencing the location and angle of the existing setting photograph, and then systematically incorporating the geo-referenced grading plans, architectural elevations, and landscaping plans. The resulting simulations present precise images of the Project without landscaping, and with established landscaping using median expected heights as defined in the *Sunset Western Garden Book* (Sunset 2012).

Views from Hollister Avenue. The full length of Hollister Avenue is designated as scenic in the City's GP/CLUP EIR (City of Goleta 2006) because of the views it offers of the Santa Ynez Mountains and agricultural foothills to the north, as well as the Pacific Ocean and Channel Islands to the south. The eucalyptus woodland within the Project site is not identified as a contributing element to this scenic character.

City of Goleta Visual Aesthetic Impact Guidelines state (page 182): "Assessing the visual impacts of a project involves two major steps. First, the visual resources of the project site must be evaluated. Important factors in this evaluation include the physical attributes of the site, its relative visibility, and its relative uniqueness. In terms of visibility, four types of areas are especially important: coastal and mountainous areas, the urban fringe, and travel corridors." The existing eucalyptus trees on site are located within the urban fringe and along a travel corridor. However, their integrity and condition are compromised due to their declining health. They are also not unique, given the much more substantial concentration of woodland farther to the west, north of Haskells Beach and the Bacara Resort and Spa, the Ellwood Mesa Preserve to the southeast, and between the Union Pacific Railroad tracks and US 101 extending to Ellwood School east of the Project site. Therefore, the limited stand of eucalyptus woodland onsite is not considered a scenic visual resource.

Hollister Avenue is identified by Policy VH 2.6 of the Goleta General Plan as an important "gateway" at the western boundaries of the City in the vicinity of the Project site. Additionally, this segment of Hollister Avenue is indicated in the immediate vicinity of an area (to the northwest of the site) with scenic views in all directions (see Figure 4.1-1).

Scenic views of the Pacific Ocean and Channel Islands to the south of the Hollister Avenue scenic corridor would not be affected by the proposed Project. The primary visual features of the Project site as experienced from Hollister Avenue are mature eucalyptus trees and low-lying vegetation on-site in the foreground, along with partial views of agricultural foothills and the Santa Ynez Mountains to the northwest in the background. Existing views of scenic resources across the Project site looking north to northeast to the foothills and Santa Ynez Mountains experienced by motorists, bicyclists, and pedestrians on Hollister Avenue are entirely blocked by existing vegetation on-site, as well as by eucalyptus trees along the neighboring UPRR right-of-way embankment north of the Project site (see Figure 4.1-2). Existing northwest views of scenic resources across the Project site to the foothills and Santa Ynez Mountains experienced by motorists, bicyclists, and pedestrians on Hollister Avenue are intermittent and generally blocked by existing vegetation on-site, as well as by existing vegetation offsite along westbound Calle Real west of the Project site (see Figure 4.1-3).

Views from Cathedral Oaks Overpass. In the vicinity of the Project site, Cathedral Oaks Road is identified by Policy VH 2.6 of the Goleta General Plan as a "gateway" to the western boundaries of the City. As an overpass of the US 101 and UPRR transportation corridors, it is the highest-elevated public street location in the vicinity of the Project site. The existing guard-rail, as well as existing eucalyptus trees on-site and within the UPRR right-of-way, block southeast views of the Project site to motorists, bicyclists, and pedestrians traveling southward along Cathedral Oaks Overpass and turning onto the southbound US 101 ramp (see Figure 4.1-4). Intermittent views of the Project site are available to motorists and pedestrians traveling southward on Cathedral Oaks Overpass as they turn onto

Existing

Proposed – no Landscaping

Proposed – with Mature Landscaping

Source: Videoscapes 2018.

amec foster wheeler

Existing and Proposed Views from Hollister Avenue Looking Northeast City of Goleta Fire Station 10

FIGURE 4.1-2

Existing

Proposed – no Landscaping

Proposed – with Mature Landscaping

Source: Videoscapes 2018.

amec foster wheeler

Existing and Proposed Views from Hollister Avenue Looking Northwest City of Goleta Fire Station 10

FIGURE 4.1-3

Figure 4.1-4. View of the Project Site from Cathedral Oaks Overpass

eastbound Hollister Avenue. However, these views are generally screened by eucalyptus trees and other vegetation along the site boundary and within the project site boundaries.

Views from the US 101. The southbound US 101 on-ramp from the Cathedral Oaks Overpass generally blocks southward views of the Project site, as the on-ramp is elevated above the existing grade of the highway mainline and is heavily vegetated along that public right-of-way. However, northbound motorists on US 101 and southbound vehicles using the on- and off-ramps for US 101 at Cathedral Oaks Overpass experience ephemeral views of the Project site and the existing eucalyptus trees near the northern site boundary.

Views from Calle Real. Calle Real, parallel and north of US 101, is a major arterial road that is separated from the Project site by approximately 450 feet by US 101 and the UPRR (see Figure 4.1-5). These transportation corridors are situated below Calle Real and so are generally not visible from Calle Real. From the perspective of motorists, bicyclists, and pedestrians on Calle Real, views of the Project site are blocked due to the existing eucalyptus tree windrow. The primary visual features of the Project site as experienced from Calle Real are several mature eucalyptus trees along the northern site boundary growing from adjacent

to the UPRR corridor below the Project site. Views from Calle Real across the Project site to the south are blocked by intervening trees and vegetation along the UPRR right-of-way and within the site boundaries.

Views from UPRR Right-of-Way (ROW). Although not a designated scenic corridor, the UPRR ROW corridor abuts the Project site at the base of an approximately 35-foot high cut slope along the northern site boundary. Because of this elevation differential, the Project site is generally not visible to train passengers traveling through Goleta. Views of the Project site from the perspective along the UPRR tracks are obstructed by an earthen cut slope. The upper tier of passenger train car windows is approximately 10 to 11 feet above the adjacent ground surface elevation of the ROW. These rail passengers have brief, partially obstructed views of the Project site; however, the duration of such views is very brief.

Figure 4.1-5. View of the Project Site from Calle Real, Looking Southwest
(tree canopies that are located north of the Project site (UPRR and US 101 ROW) are identified by the red line)

Private Views. The Project site is visible to varying degrees from The Hideaway residential development to the east of the Project site. The residential units on the far western side of the development do not have substantial views of the Santa Ynez Mountains and foothills across the Project site. The majority of views across

the Project site to the west and toward the mountains are obstructed by intervening vegetation within the UPRR right-of-way and within the Project site.

Existing Light and Glare Conditions

Although the Project site is undeveloped and lacks on-site sources of illumination, it receives indirect lighting from off-site neighboring residential units and roadways. Sources of illumination at The Hideaway residential units include light fixtures on the exterior of buildings and lighting emanating from windows. Additionally, the southern portion of the Project site receive indirect light from street lamps lining Hollister Avenue. Other sources of light and glare include headlights from passing vehicles on Hollister Avenue, Cathedral Oaks Overpass, and the US 101 southbound on-ramp, as well as from cars entering and exiting parking lots at the neighboring residential area (The Hideaway residential development). Light sensitive receptors in the project vicinity include users of Sandpiper Golf Course, residents of The Hideaway residential development, and motorists, bicyclists, and pedestrians on roadways adjacent to the Project site.

4.1.2 Regulatory Setting

The City of Goleta has adopted numerous policies pertaining to the aesthetics of development and the preservation of scenic resources in the Visual and Historic Resources Element of the Goleta General Plan. Policies that are relevant to the proposed Project are summarized below.

VH 1.1 Scenic Resources. *The City shall support the protection and preservation of scenic resources including the open waters of the Pacific Ocean/Santa Barbara Channel, Goleta's Pacific shoreline, sloughs, riparian corridors, agricultural areas, Lake Los Carneros, and prominent natural landforms such as the foothills and the Santa Ynez Mountains.*

VH 1.2 Scenic Resources Map. *Views from public vantage points for viewing scenic resources identified in Figure 6-1 of the Visual and Historic Resources Element, shall be protected by minimizing an impairment that could result from new development.*

VH 1.4 Protection of Mountain and Foothill Views. *Views of mountains and foothills from public areas shall be protected through development practices such as limitations on the height and size of structures; downcast, fully shielded lighting; and selection of colors that harmonize with the surrounding landscape*.

VH 1.5 Protection of Open Space Views. *Views of open space, including agricultural lands, from public areas shall be protected during the development process first through site selection and then by use of design alternatives that enhance rather than obstruct or degrade such views.*

VH 1.6 Preservation of Natural Landforms. *Natural landforms such as mature trees, native vegetation, drainage courses, prominent slopes, and bluffs shall be protected. Protection associated with development should be accomplished first through site selection to protect natural landforms then by use of alternatives that enhance and incorporate natural landforms in the design.*

VH 1.8 Private Views. *Project development and architecture shall be considerate of private views.*

VH 2.1 Designated Scenic Corridors. *The Scenic Resources Map (see Figure 4.1-1) 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:*

a. *US 101*
b. *Cathedral Oaks Road*
c. *Hollister Avenue*
d. *Los Carneros Road*
e. *Fairview Avenue*
f. *Calle Real*

VH 2.2 Preservation of Scenic Corridors. *The aesthetic qualities of scenic corridors shall be preserved through retention of the general character of significant natural features; views of the ocean, foothills, and mountainous areas; and open space associated with recreational and agricultural areas including orchards, prominent vegetation, and historic structures.*

VH 2.3 Development Projects Along Scenic Corridors. *Development adjacent to scenic corridors should not degrade or obstruct views of scenic areas.*

VH 2.4 Public Improvements. *Public improvements visible from scenic corridors including landscaping, street lighting, signage, medians, noise attenuation walls, and other hardscape elements shall include a high level of design through appropriate detailing and use of high quality, durable materials.*

VH 2.6 Gateways to the City. *The City should create prominent gateways at key entrances to Goleta. 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 including but not limited to:*

a. *Hollister Avenue at the eastern and western City boundaries.*
b. *Cathedral Oaks at the eastern and western City boundaries.*
c. *Old Town – Hollister Avenue at Fairview Avenue and SR-217.*
d. *Glen Annie Road, Los Carneros Road, Fairview Avenue, and Cambridge Drive at Cathedral Oaks Road.*
e. *Calle Real and Patterson Avenue.*

VH 3.1 Community Design Character. *The City's agricultural heritage, open spaces, views of natural features, established low-density residential neighborhoods, and small-scale development with few visually prominent buildings contribute to the visual character of Goleta. Residential, commercial, and industrial development should acknowledge and respect the desired aspects of Goleta's visual character and make a positive contribution to the City through exemplary design.*

VH 3.2 Neighborhood Identity. *New development shall preserve the unique qualities and character of each neighborhood through compatibility with existing architectural styles of adjacent development, except where poor quality design exists.*

VH 3.4 Building Design. *The City's visual character shall be enhanced through development of structures that are appropriate in scale and orientation and that use high quality, durable materials. Structures shall incorporate architectural styles, landscaping, and amenities that are compatible with and complement surrounding development.*

VH 4.9 Landscape Design. *Landscaping shall confirm to the natural topography, protect or replace existing specimen trees, emphasize the use of native and drought-tolerant vegetation, avoid the use of invasive plants, and be incorporated into the whole site design.*

VH 4.10 Streetscape and Frontage Design. *A unified streetscape shall be created to improve the interface between pedestrians and vehicles*.

VH 4.12 Lighting. *Outdoor lighting fixtures shall be designed, located, aimed downward or towards structures (if properly shielded), retrofitted if feasible, and maintained in order to prevent over-lighting, energy waste, glare, light trespass, and sky glow.*

4.1.3 Impact Analysis

Methodology and Significance Thresholds

The assessment of aesthetic impacts involves qualitative analysis that is subjective in nature. Viewers react to viewsheds and aesthetic conditions differently based on personal and cultural perspectives. This evaluation measures the existing visual resources against the proposed development, analyzing the nature of the anticipated change and compatibility with the visual character of the area.

The City's *Environmental Thresholds Guidelines Manual* refers to CEQA Guidelines Appendix G. Pursuant to the Appendix G, potentially significant impacts would occur if development of the Project site would:

AES-1: Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista;

AES-2: Substantially damages scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway;

AES-3: Substantially degrades the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings; and/or

AES-4: Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area.

Project Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Potential impacts on visual resources and associated mitigation measures are discussed below.

Impact AES-1: ***Removal of mature eucalyptus trees would temporarily degrade scenic views along designated scenic corridors until establishment of replacement screening landscaping. Short-term project impacts to scenic view corridors would be significant and unavoidable (Class I).***

Under the proposed Project, a majority (a total of 56) of the existing eucalyptus trees would be removed as part of the proposed landscape design and replaced with screening vegetation including trees and shrubs. Six (6) of these trees were identified as dead as of February 2017 when Watershed Environmental, Inc. (WEI) completed the tree survey for Evaluation of Dead and Structurally Compromised Tree Removal (Watershed Environmental, Inc. 2017; see Appendix C-1). Additionally, several eucalyptus trees were identified as severely leaning and structurally compromised, which pose a threat to public safety because of ladder fuel fire hazard or potential to fall on passing vehicles. After removal of mature eucalyptus trees, heavy equipment and grading activities would be temporarily visible from Sandpiper Golf Course, The Hideaway residential development, and local scenic corridors including Hollister Avenue, Cathedral Oaks Overpass, US 101, and Calle Real. Short-term construction activities of up to 16 months would entail heavy equipment operating on the site, which would negatively affect scenic views from local scenic corridors.

The proposed Project would have a minimal effect on scenic views from US 101 during project construction due to the dense screening of eucalyptus trees along the UPRR right-of-way and the existing topography of the area that places vehicles on the highway at a substantially lower elevation that the Project site. Existing views looking south towards the Project site from US 101 and Calle Real, as well as looking southeast towards the site from Cathedral Oaks Overpass, consist of the cluster of UPRR ROW and on-site mature eucalyptus trees which are considered scenic resources. The view experienced by moving vehicles looking south on southbound US 101 and vehicles using the southbound US 101 onramp from Cathedral Oaks Overpass would be brief. Similarly, the view experienced by pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorists on Calle Real looking south would be brief and temporary until Project construction would be completed.

Hollister Avenue is considered a local scenic corridor with scenic views to both the north and south in the vicinity of the Project site (see Figure 4.1-1). However, along the section of Hollister Avenue abutting the Project site, scenic views across the site that may be affected by construction of the proposed Project include westward views of the agricultural foothills and Santa Ynez Mountains. As noted above, the dense eucalyptus windrow along the railroad embankment on its northern side precludes any views of the mountains or foothills to the north and to the east. Few trees exist to the west of the Project site, which also generally block scenic views of mountainous scenic resources. Compared to current conditions along the boundaries of the Project site, proposed removal of eucalyptus trees for construction of the fire station would incrementally open up views from westbound Hollister Avenue to the northwest and beyond that do not currently exist. The views during short-term construction would degrade the scenic value of the Hollister Avenue scenic corridor.

Eucalyptus trees north of the Project site growing at the base of the slope adjacent to the UPRR ROW, would not be removed because they are outside the Project site boundary (see the red line identifying their canopy in Figure 4.1-5). Therefore, views of the Project site from Calle Real including this scenic vegetation would not be significantly modified. Impacts on visual resources would be *adverse, but less significant* (Class III).

To minimize construction impacts on the Hollister Avenue scenic corridor associated with removal of mature eucalyptus trees, the proposed landscape plan includes planting of specimen trees to avoid long-term negative impacts. However, because scenic views would be temporarily altered during project construction, short-term impacts to scenic view corridors would be substantial until the landscaping would be established, considered to be approximately 10 years in time. This would result in a *significant and unavoidable* (Class I) short-term impact on scenic view corridors.

Mitigation Measures and Residual Impacts

No feasible measures are available to address this short-term impact.

The proposed landscape plan would provide for screening including trees achieving heights of up to 80 feet and shrubs of 20 feet height that would completely screen fire station massing from view corridors to the east (The Hideaways) and north (US 101 and Calle Real) upon establishment in approximately 10 years (see Figure 4.1-2 and 4.1-3, Proposed – with Mature Landscaping). However, the residual project impact until the landscaping would be established on obstruction of scenic views during the short-term construction phase would be *significant and unavoidable* (Class I).

Impact AES-2: ***Removal of the established eucalyptus trees as experienced from designated scenic corridors would be replaced by establishment of mature vegetation over the long-term, contributing to views along designated scenic corridors such that scenic resources would be maintained. Long-term project impacts to scenic view corridors would be adverse, but less than significant (Class III).***

As described in the discussion for Impact AES-1, views of the Project site are experienced from designated scenic corridors including Hollister Avenue, Calle Real, US 101, and Cathedral Oaks Overpass. Existing views looking south towards the Project site from US 101 and Calle Real, as well as looking southeast towards the site from Cathedral Oaks Overpass and looking north towards the Project site from Hollister Avenue, consist of the mature eucalyptus trees on-site and on the south side of the UPRR ROW and that are considered scenic resources.

The proposed fire station with associated structures, parking spaces, and landscaping would alter the existing visual setting. The 32-foot high, one-story building would be located in the center of the site, with the site entrance facing southward (see Figures 2-7 and 2-11, and 4.1-2 Proposed). After project completion, views of the Project site from a majority of the scenic corridors in the project vicinity (i.e., Calle Real, US 101, Cathedral Oaks Overpass) would be

similar to existing conditions; established vegetation and mature trees along the site boundaries would provide similar scenic views as the existing mature eucalyptus trees on-site. For example, eucalyptus windrows east of the Project site would be preserved as experienced from Calle Real (see Figure 4.1-5).

Mature landscaping would include screening vegetation along the northern and eastern property boundary, including large 24- to 36-inch box specimen Monterey cypress, Coast live oak, and *Arbutus marina* (Marina strawberry) ~~New Zealand Christmas~~ trees, which would achieve a height of between 25 ~~30~~ to 60 ~~80~~ feet (Sam Maphis, ASLA, personal communication 2018). The linear arrangement of large screen trees would be complimented by native and drought-tolerant shrubs reaching 10- ~~12 to 20~~ feet high (see Figures 4.1-2 and 4.1-3, Proposed-with Mature Landscaping).

New permanent development on the Project site has the potential to affect views from the Hollister Avenue scenic corridor (refer to Figure 4.1-1). The proposed Project would not affect scenic coastal views to the south of Hollister Avenue of the Pacific Ocean and Channel Islands beyond Sandpiper Golf Course. However, from the perspective of Hollister Avenue, views across the site to the north of the agricultural foothills and Santa Ynez Mountains have the potential to be affected by the proposed Project. Development of the project would result in obstructed views of mountainous scenic resources to the northwest similar to existing conditions that provide for background views of the Santa Ynez Mountains, although partially blocked by trees within the UPRR and U.S. 101 ROW that would remain. However, implementation of the proposed Project's preliminary landscape plan would slightly open up scenic views to the northwest. The proposed Project would remove existing trees and vegetation on-site that currently block northwest views of the Santa Ynez Mountains and fronting foothills from the perspective traveling westbound on Hollister Avenue; obstruction of these views after implementation of the proposed Project would be to a lesser degree. Based on the simulated view from Hollister Avenue looking northwest) after establishment of mature landscaping, mountainous views would be ephemeral similar to existing conditions (see Figure 4.1-3 Proposed with Mature Landscaping. Scenic views of the open sky would improve and overall impacts to scenic views along Hollister Avenue would be *adverse, but less than significant* (Class III).

Similar to existing conditions, the proposed Project would generally obstruct northeast views of mountainous scenic resources. The existing on-site eucalyptus trees and vegetation would be replaced with the proposed building and landscaping. Based on the simulated view from Hollister Avenue looking northeast (see Figure 4.1-2 Proposed with Mature Landscaping), with establishment of proposed landscaping, the building would be partially screened from view by mature landscaping that would reduce the impact on scenic views from the perspective traveling eastbound on Hollister Avenue. Views across the Project site to the northeast would be blocked by the proposed building and mature vegetation, similar to existing conditions. Impacts on aesthetics/visual resources would be *adverse, but less than impact* (Class III).

After development of the proposed fire station and establishment of mature vegetation, the proposed Project would not generate long-term effects on aesthetics/visual resources as experienced from Calle Real, US 101, or Cathedral Oaks scenic corridors. The project would result in a change to scenic views as experienced from the Hollister Avenue scenic corridor; such impacts, however, would not substantially affect scenic views over the long-term. This would result in a long-term *adverse, but less than significant* (Class III) impact on scenic view corridors.

Mitigation Measures and Residual Impacts

As long-term impacts on aesthetics/visual resources would be less than significant, no mitigation is required. The residual long-term impact on aesthetics/visual resources would be *adverse, but less than significant* (Class III).

Impact AES-3.1: ***Mature eucalyptus trees would be removed, but their scenic value is low and there are no other scenic resources on the Project site. Impacts to scenic resources would be adverse, but less than significant (Class III).***

As stated in the *Environmental Setting*, US 101 is an eligible state scenic highway. However, it is not officially designated and no other designated state scenic highways exist in Santa Barbara County. Therefore, no significant scenic resources within a state scenic highway would be affected by the proposed Project. Views of the Project site do not include scenic resources identified in Policy VH 1.1 of the Goleta General Plan including the open waters of the Pacific Ocean, the shoreline, Goleta and Devereux Sloughs, creeks and riparian vegetation, agricultural areas, Lake Los Carneros and surrounding woodlands, and prominent landforms.

The Project site is undeveloped and generally flat with gentle average slope of 1.4 percent; there are no significant rock outcroppings or historic buildings on-site. The majority of the Project site is comprised of low-lying vegetation, including coastal sage scrub and non-native grassland plants (e.g., weeds, shrubs, and grasses) with little scenic value. The existing eucalyptus woodland trees are generally clustered towards the northern and eastern portions of the Project site, contributing to scenic views in the project vicinity. These trees are largely visible from the perspective of Hollister Avenue; the trees are also briefly visible from the perspectives of Cathedral Oaks Overpass, the southbound US 101 on-ramp, and briefly along northbound US 101. However, they are not considered scenic resources, as their integrity and condition are compromised due to their declining health. They are also not unique, given the much more substantial concentration of woodland farther to the west, north of Haskells Beach and the Bacara Resort and Spa, the Ellwood Mesa Preserve to the southeast, and between the Union Pacific Railroad tracks and US 101 extending to Ellwood School east of the Project site. There are no other scenic resources on the Project site.

The proposed Project would involve removal of 56 of the existing trees on-site with the exception of four eucalyptus trees (up to 18 inches in diameter at breast height) and three Monterey cypress trees (up to 5 inches in diameter at breast height)

within the southwest corner of the Project site that would be preserved (see Figure 2-7). As stated in Section 2.0, *Project Description*, the County of Santa Barbara Fire Marshal has determined that existing eucalyptus trees on the Project site are a fire hazard given their potential flammability (Steve Oaks, personal communication 2017). A previous tree survey identified numerous dead eucalyptus trees, and others where several large branches may pose potential hazards; these trees do not qualify as scenic resources. Therefore, a majority of the existing eucalyptus trees on-site, as well as other potentially flammable vegetation including coastal sage scrub and non-native grassland, would be removed from the Project site to ensure fire hazards are minimized (see Figure 2-7).

The proposed Project would also add a number of specimen trees to the site, including a prominent coast live oak at the site entrance to the south. According to the ~~preliminary~~ revised landscape plan (see Figure 2-11) a variety of vegetation would be provided along the northern and eastern property boundary including: three (3) ~~24- to~~ 36- to 48-inch box specimen native Monterey cypress; three (3) 48-inch box native coast live oak; nine (9) 36-inch box native coast live oak (six of which would be multi-trunk); and fourteen (14) 24-inch box *Arbutus marina* (Marina strawberry) trees. The plantings would achieve heights of between 25 feet (*Arbutus marina*), 30 to 50 feet (coast live oak) and 40 to 60 feet (Sam Maphis, ASLA, personal communication 2018). Thirty-three (33) native lemonade berry bushes would be planted between the specimen trees and achieve a height of 10 feet. One Monterey cypress (in the northeastern Project site corner), one (1) 36-inch box coast live oak, four (4) *Arbutus marina* trees, and sixteen (16) lemonade berry bushes would be planted along the eastern project boundary. Five (5) 36-inch box coast live oak, one (1) multi-trunk 36- or 48-inch box coast live oak, and nineteen (19) lemonade berry bushes would be planted along the northern project boundary. ~~along the northern and eastern property boundary would include large 24- to 36-inch box specimen Monterey cypress, Coast live oak, and New Zealand Christmas trees, which would achieve a height of between 30 to 80 feet. The linear arrangement of large screen trees would be complimented by native and drought-tolerant shrubs reaching 12 to 20 feet high.~~ The landscaping rising above the 6-foot high concrete block wall would provide a visual separation between the fire station institutional uses and The Hideaway residential development to the east, and southerly views from US 101 and residential neighborhoods to the north. As a result of this landscaping, ~~the proposed Project seven prominent trees would be preserved on-site and~~ the loss of scenic trees would be offset by the planting of dozens of trees of different variety throughout the site.

In summary, the proposed Project would not affect scenic resources within a state scenic highway. Although 56 eucalyptus trees would be removed from the site, such trees do not contribute significantly to scenic views in the project vicinity, and would be replaced by a variety of specimen trees and landscaping that would more than make up for the loss of existing trees on the Project site. The long-term replacement screening vegetation would result in an *adverse, but less than* s*ignificant* (Class III) impact on scenic resources.

Mitigation Measures and Residual Impacts

As long-term impacts on aesthetics/visual resources would be less than significant, no mitigation is required. The residual long-term impact on aesthetics/visual resources would be *adverse, but less than significant* (Class III).

Impact AES-3.2: ***Fire Station 10 development would replace presently undeveloped land urban infrastructure, but proposed structures and landscaping would be compatible with that of surrounding development. Impacts to visual character and quality of the site and its surroundings would be adverse, but less than significant (Class III).***

The Project site currently consists of an undeveloped parcel with existing trees and other vegetation. After completion of the proposed Project, visual character and quality of the Project site would be altered by the approximately 11,600 square foot fire station. Development would be consistent with the architectural styles and landscaping of other development in the surrounding Goleta Valley. As discussed in Section 2.0, *Project Description*, the architectural features of the proposed Fire Station 10 development would reflect some of the early vernacular forms of the Goleta Valley, including barn-like mass and volumes, and low-profile ranch houses. The proposed structure would have a maximum roof height of 32 feet, where roof forms are broken-up into staggered gables (see Figure 2-10). The architectural style would be a Modern Western architectural style that would utilize the materials and forms of California Ranch traditions, including short towers and cupulas. The overall massing on the Project site would be comparable and compatible to that of surrounding The Hideaway residential development to the east and the low-profile Sandpiper Golf Course to the south.

Overall, the proposed Project would have a mass and scale comparable to that of nearby residential areas and small business parks along the western Hollister Avenue corridor. Small business parks developments, such as those along Hollister Avenue, are composed of buildings that are large, singular, and rectangular configurations that provide the appearance of substantial size, scale, and bulk. The Fire Station 10 development would be composed of one smaller roughly rectangular building with similar height to neighborhood developments. While the one proposed building and its site plan would provide some variation from neighborhood buildings in the Project vicinity, such as those at The Hideaway residential development, the resulting appearance would not be out of scale or detract from the character of the nearby neighborhoods or small business parks. The overall size, bulk, and scale of the project would be harmonious within the Goleta Valley development context due to the appearance of clustered development on the Project site. The design of a one-story building at street-level would therefore reduce the visual effect of the proposed Fire Station 10 development.

The Project would involve addition of paved, impervious surfaces to the site, including surface parking and construction of a site wall around the north, east, and west perimeters of the site, which would change the quality of the site. Total impervious surface coverage of the site would be approximately 84 percent after

project completion (Flowers & Associates, Inc. 2017). However, all proposed impervious surfaces on-site would drain to a bioretention basin or permeable paver parking lot, which would retain some of the site's drainage quality.

Landscaped areas and surface parking also would contribute to changes in visual character. As shown in Figure 2-11, trees planted in the vicinity of the proposed fire station structure would reduce the openness of the site and the depth of views from the perspective of Hollister Avenue. The visual character and quality of the site, however, would not be adversely affected. Proposed plans for landscaping around the site perimeter including removal of flammable vegetation, as well as streetscape improvements along the southern boundary of the site and construction of a sidewalk to improve pedestrian circulation would improve the visual quality of the site.

Although 56 eucalyptus trees would be removed from the site, screening vegetation and landscaping including the linear arrangement of large 30- to 80-feet high screen trees would be complimented by native and drought-tolerant shrubs reaching 12 to 20 feet high would provide a visual separation between the proposed Fire Station 10 development and The Hideaway residential development to the east, and southward views from US 101 and residential neighborhoods to the north.

In addition to the visual quality and character of the area, the Hollister/Cathedral Oaks intersection adjacent to the northwest portion of the site is considered to be the western "gateway" to the City. Therefore, not only is site location and compliance with development standards such as building height, landscaping, and site coverage important to preserve and enhance the visual quality of the area, the actual design of the Fire Station 10 development would also have an important and beneficial contribution to establishing the character of this "gateway" given its compatibility with surrounding uses.

As described in the *Existing Setting*, the Project site has a gentle slope (1.4 percent average) draining in a predominantly southeasterly direction (Flowers & Associates, Inc. 2017). Project-associated grading activities would be relatively minor, including cut and fill of between 5 and 7 feet to obtain the finished floor elevation. Across the majority of the site, grading activities would not substantially change the existing topography.

In summary, construction of the proposed Fire Station 10 development would not substantially alter the site's existing topography. Although the proposed Project would alter the existing visual character of the site, the proposed development would be compatible with surrounding uses and would be similar in bulk, scale, and mass as other developments in the project vicinity. This would result in an *adverse, but less than significant* (Class III) impact to the visual character and quality of the site.

Mitigation Measures and Residual Impacts

As long-term impacts on aesthetics/visual resources would be less than significant, no mitigation is required. The following standard permitting requirements would be applied:

AES-3.2.1: Height Limitations. The height of structural development shown on the Design Review Board ("DRB") approved plans considered through Advisory Review shall not exceed the mean height and peak height shown on approved project exhibit maps.

Plan Requirements and Timing: Finished grade shall be consistent with the approved final grading plan. Height limitations shown on DRB approved f plan sets considered through Advisory Reviews hall be adhered to during any future construction.

Monitoring: City staff shall verify compliance prior to issuance of a Coastal Development Permit/Land Use Permit or building/grading permit(s).

AES-3.2.2: Composite Utility Plans. The applicant shall submit a composite utility plan for City staff review. All external / roof mounted mechanical equipment (including HVAC condensers, switch boxes, etc.) shall be included on all building plans and shall be designed to be integrated into the structure and/or screened in their entirety from public view.

Plan Requirements and Timing: Detailed plans showing all external / roof mounted mechanical equipment shall be submitted for review and approval by the Planning and Environmental Review Director, or designee, prior to Coastal Development Permit/Land Use Permit issuance.

Monitoring: City staff shall verify installation of all external / roof mounted mechanical equipment per the approved plans prior to Fire Station 10 occupancy.

AES-3.2.3: Screening of Utility Connections. All new utility service connections and above-ground mounted equipment such as backflow devices, etc. shall be screened from public view and/or painted in a soft earth-tone color(s) (red is prohibited) so as to blend in with any future structures. Screening may include a combination of landscaping and/or fencing/walls. Whenever possible, utility transformers shall be placed in underground vaults. All gas and electrical meters shall be concealed and/or painted to match the building. All gas, electrical, backflow prevention devices, and communications equipment shall be completely concealed in an enclosed portion of the building, on top of the building, or within a screened utility area. All transformers and vaults that must be located within the right-of-way shall be installed below grade unless

otherwise approved by the City, and then completely screened from view.

Plan Requirements and Timing: The plans submitted for City staff and advisory DRB design review approval shall identify the type, location, size, and number of utility connections and above-ground mounted equipment as well as how such equipment would be screened from public view and the color(s) that it would be painted so as to blend in with the project design and surrounding area.

Monitoring: Prior to final inspection of any future construction and Fire Station 10 occupancy, City staff shall verify that all above-ground utility connections and equipment is installed, screened, and painted per the DRB approved plans.

AES-3.2.4: Landscaping. Approximately 75 percent of landscaping on the Project site shall consist of drought-tolerant native and/or Mediterranean type species that adequately complement the project design and integrate the site with surrounding land uses.

Plan Requirements and Timing: The final landscape plan shall identify the following:

a. Type of irrigation proposed;

b. All existing and proposed trees, shrubs, and groundcovers by species;

c. Size of all plantings; and

d. Location of all plantings.

The final landscape plan shall be reviewed and approved on an advisory basis by the DRB and Planning and Environmental Review Director, or designee, prior to Land Use Permit/Coastal Development Permit issuance.

Monitoring: City staff shall inspect the site to ensure that landscaping has been installed consistent with the DRB approved final landscape plan.

AES-3.2.5: Landscape Installation and Maintenance Agreement. The applicant shall install required landscaping and water-conserving irrigation systems per the final landscape plan as well as permanently maintain required landscaping.

Plan Requirements and Timing: The applicant shall install approved landscaping and water conserving irrigation systems per the approved Memorandum of Understanding and Maintenance and Responsibility Agreement between the City of Goleta and Santa Barbara County Fire District (March 2016). .

Monitoring: City staff shall inspect the site to ensure that landscaping has been installed consistent with the DRB approved landscape plan.

AES-3.2.6: Design of Trash / Recycling Enclosure(s). The applicant shall provide a trash/recycling enclosure(s) that is compatible with the architectural design of the project, shall be of adequate size for trash and recycling containers (at least 50 square feet), and shall be accessible by users and for removal by the solid waste collector. The trash/recycling area shall be enclosed with a solid wall of sufficient height to screen the area, shall include a solid gate and a roof, and shall be maintained in good repair in perpetuity.

Plan Requirements and Timing: The enclosure(s) shall be shown on final project plans and shall be reviewed and approved on an advisory basis by the Planning and Environmental Review Director, or designee, and the DRB prior to Land Use Permit/Coastal Development Permit issuance.

Monitoring: City staff shall inspect the site to ensure that the required trash/recycling enclosure(s) has been installed consistent with the DRB approved final project plans.

AES-3.2.7: Trash Control. The applicant shall prevent construction and/or employee trash from blowing offsite by providing covered receptacles on-site before commencement of any grading or construction activities. Waste shall be picked up weekly or more frequently as directed by City staff. The applicant shall designate and provide to City staff the name and phone number of a contact person(s) to monitor construction trash/waste and organize a clean-up crew. Additional covered receptacles shall be provided as determined necessary by City staff.

Plan Requirements and Timing: This requirement shall be noted on all plans prior to Land Use Permit/Coastal Development Permit issuance. Trash control shall occur throughout all grading and construction activities.

Monitoring: City staff shall periodically inspect throughout grading and construction activities to verify compliance with this requirement.

The above standard permitting requirements would ensure consistency with City standards. The residual impact on visual character and quality of the site would be *adverse, but less than significant* (Class III).

Impact AES-4*: The proposed Project would introduce new sources of lighting and glare to an undeveloped parcel that currently has none. Impacts would be potentially significant (Class II).*

The Project site consists of an undeveloped open space area without any on-site sources of lighting or glare. As discussed in Section 4.1.1, *Existing Setting*, the site

receives indirect lighting from off-site sources at The Hideaway residential development and along adjacent roadways, particularly Hollister Avenue. The proposed Fire Station 10 development would introduce sources of light and glare to the site for operations and safety purposes. Exterior lighting would include overhead lighting, down-lighting, and low-level path lighting (see Section 2.5.7, *Lighting*). Additionally, the proposed flag pole would constantly be illuminated with upward directed lighting. Headlights on cars entering and exiting the parking areas on-site also would produce new sources of light and glare. Light sensitive receptors in the project vicinity include users of Sandpiper Golf Course, residents of The Hideaway residential development, and motorists, bicyclists, and pedestrians on adjacent roadways. The introduction of exterior lighting for both the structure and outdoor work areas would potentially expose sensitive receptors, as well as sensitive biological resources to excessive light and glare if not properly designed and shielded. A majority of exterior lighting fixtures would be shielded to avoid glare extending offsite; however, the new sources of illumination and glare would potentially have adverse effects on surrounding properties or roadways at night and on the City's night sky unless properly shielded. Additionally, lighting emanating from the southward-facing building entrance, windows, and fire truck bay doors of the proposed Fire Station 10 development would produce light and glare that would have a potentially adverse effect on users of Sandpiper Golf Course, as well as motorists, bicyclists, and pedestrians along Hollister Avenue. This would particularly be an issue during afternoon times when the sunlight reflects off of the building windows and large apparatus bay doors, potentially creating a substantial amount of glare. However, as described in Section 2.6.3, *Architecture*, the apparatus bay doors would be glazed with an anti-reflective, non-glare treatment to address concerns over reflected sunlight. Project features related to creation of new sources of light and glare would result in a *potentially significant* (Class II) impact on visual resources.

Mitigation Measures and Residual Impacts

The following mitigation measure would be required to reduce the impact of introduction of new sources of light and glare:

AES-4.1: **Lighting Specifications.** Any exterior lighting installed on the Project site shall be of low intensity, low glare design, and shall be hooded to direct light downward onto the subject parcel and prevent spill-over onto adjacent parcels. Exterior lighting fixtures shall be kept to the minimum number and intensity needed to ensure public safety. These lights shall be dimmed after 11 p.m. to the maximum extent practical without compromising public safety. Upward directed exterior lighting is prohibited except to light the flag pole. Lighting fixtures shall be appropriate for the architectural style of the structure and surrounding area.

Plan Requirements and Timing: The locations of all exterior lighting fixtures, complete cut-sheets of all exterior lighting fixtures, and a photometric plan prepared by a registered professional engineer showing the extent of all light and glare emitted by all

exterior lighting fixtures shall be reviewed and approved by the DRB, and the Planning and Environmental Review Director, or designee, before the City issues a building permit for construction.

Monitoring: Before the City issues a certificate of occupancy, City staff, shall inspect exterior lighting features to ensure that they have been installed consistent with approved plans.

The above measure would substantially minimize the visual impacts associated with introduction of new sources of light and glare for construction of the Fire Station 10. The residual impact of creation of new sources of light and glare would be *adverse, but feasibly mitigated to less than significant* (Class II).

4.1.4 Cumulative Impacts

Region of Influence

The Region of Influence for evaluating cumulative impacts on visual resources includes those areas in which related past, present, and reasonably probable projects would have the potential to contribute to obstruction of important public scenic views, damage scenic resources, degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings, and/or create new light or glare sources that would potentially adversely affect day or nighttime views. Therefore, all related projects that could be visible from important public scenic views of visual resources such as open space, the Pacific Ocean, Goleta Slough, and Santa Ynez Mountains from parks and roadways would be within the Region of Influence.

Impact Assessment

Within the region of influence, development of the proposed Project combined with other projects for residential, office, commercial/retail, and industrial buildings would potentially cause a significant cumulative impact on scenic views where construction of multiple projects would occur along scenic corridors in the City. Several approved and pending projects are sited along designated scenic corridors (see Table 3-1), where construction phases of this proposed Project may overlap with other projects planned in the City. Construction activities would create short-term temporary impacts on scenic views experienced from view corridors; however, there are no other pending or approved projects that are proposed along scenic corridors in the Project vicinity. The Project's short-term contribution to cumulative impacts on scenic view corridors until proposed landscaping would be established (approximately 10 years) would be *potentially significant*.

Each related project's potential contribution to cumulative impacts on visual resources within the region of influence would be evaluated on a case-by-case basis and would go through development review to verify consistency with General Plan policies and development standards identified in the City's Coastal Zoning Ordinance. These measures would help to ensure that cumulative development, including the project's cumulative contribution, does not cause significant impacts related to obstruction of important scenic views, damage to scenic resources, degradation of visual character, and/or creation of new light or glare sources.

The Project's contributions to cumulative changes in the visual character of the area at the western entrance to the City, as well as to night lighting, would be considered *potentially significant*. Standard permitting requirements AES-3.2.1 through AES-3.2.7 and proposed mitigation AES-4.1 would reduce the Project's long-term contribution to cumulative impacts on aesthetics/visual resources to *adverse, but feasibly mitigated to less than significant* (Class II).