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## 4.1 Aesthetics

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This section evaluates the project's potential impacts to aesthetic and visual resources within and adjacent to the project site.

### 4.1.1 Environmental Setting

#### **a. Visual Character and Scenic Resources**

The project site is an 11.77-acre area located in the City of Goleta, Santa Barbara County, California. The project site is bounded by State Route (SR) 217 and San Jose Creek to the southeast. Residential properties are located beyond SR 217 to the east. Industrial uses are located to the north and west. Tidal wetland and stormwater infrastructure are located to the south, undeveloped land with existing trees and shrubs are located approximately 30 feet to the southwest, and undeveloped land with existing trees and shrubs approximately 260 feet away to the northwest.

The project site is primarily flat and contains degraded asphalt, with a row of trees on the southwestern border of the project site. Existing buildings on the project site include a non-operational, drive-in theater including an approximately 3,663-square-foot concessions building, ticket booths, and a vacant, approximately 200-square-foot building. The interior of the project site is enclosed with fencing, with native and ruderal vegetation growing along the fence perimeter. A paved access road connects the project site to South Kellogg Avenue. Vegetation is present on both sides of the access road, with denser and more mature vegetation occurring along the eastern boundary of the project site, adjacent to SR 217.

Figure 4.1-1 presents representative photos of the project site's existing visual character, including primary visual features, when entering the project site (Photograph 1) and exiting the project site (Photograph 2), as well as views of the drive-in theater (Photograph 3) and the existing, vacant building (Photograph 4). The project site does not contain major visual resources, including surface waters, elevation, or other natural or man-made features; however, San Jose Creek is located adjacent to the project site to the southeast.

Figure 4.1-2 presents representative photos of project site views of the surrounding area. Looking south from the project site, views of the Pacific Ocean are obscured by intervening buildings and vegetation (Photographs 1 and 2). Looking north from the project site, views of the Santa Ynez Mountains and foothills are visible from the project site (Photographs 3 and 4).

The project site is mainly unpaved, with vegetation surrounding the perimeter of the project site, and offers views of open space. Specifically, the project site offers largely unobstructed views to the north of the Santa Ynez Mountains and nearby foothills, as shown in Figure 4.1-2 (Photographs 3 and 4). Pursuant to Policy VH 1.1 in the Visual and Historic Resources Element of the Goleta General Plan, the City has designated the Santa Ynez Mountains and foothills as scenic resources. The project site does not offer views to the south of the Goleta coastline and Pacific Ocean, both of which are also designated scenic resources (City of Goleta 2006). The project site itself is not designated as a scenic resource.

**Figure 4.1-1 Project Site Visual Character**



**Photograph 1.** View of the perimeter fencing, vegetation, and the drive-in theater in the background, when entering the project site.



**Photograph 2.** View of the perimeter fencing and vegetation, when exiting the project site.



**Photograph 3.** View of the existing drive-in theater screen, with background vegetation, facing east.



**Photograph 4.** View of the existing building, facing west.

**Figure 4.1-2 Project Site Views**



**Photograph 1.** View looking south. Vegetation obscures views of the Pacific Ocean and SR-217 from the project site.



**Photograph 2.** View looking south-southwest. Vegetation obscures views of the Pacific Ocean from the project site.



**Photograph 3.** View looking northwest. The Santa Ynez Mountains and foothills are clearly visible from the project site.



**Photograph 4.** View looking north. The Santa Ynez Mountains and foothills are clearly visible from the project site.

## **b. 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. 101, approximately 0.9 mile north of the project site, is eligible for state designation as a scenic highway (Caltrans 2018).

The City’s Visual and Historic Resources Element identifies U.S. 101, SR 217, and Hollister Avenue, all of which are in the vicinity of the project site, as local scenic corridors. The City defines local scenic corridors as roadways that pass through, or provide visual access to, areas of high scenic value (City of Goleta 2006).

Although the project site itself does not contain any designated scenic corridors, it is located directly adjacent to the SR 217 scenic corridor and within the vicinity of the U.S. 101 and Hollister Avenue scenic corridors. The centerline of U.S. 101 is approximately 0.9 mile north of the project site, Hollister Avenue is approximately 0.7 mile northwest of the project site, and SR 217 is located directly adjacent to the east/southeast of the project site. These scenic corridors in the vicinity of the project site are designated and protected pursuant to Policies VH 1.1, VH 2.2, and VH 2.3 and Figure 6.1 in the City of Goleta’s General Plan (City of Goleta 2006). Views of the project site, as experienced from designated local scenic corridors, are discussed below.

### **Views from U.S. 101 Mainline**

As a local scenic corridor throughout Goleta, U.S. 101 provides scenic views from the roadway to surrounding areas. U.S. 101 is located 0.9 mile to the north of the project site; intervening buildings and vegetation completely obstruct southward views of the project site.

### **Views from SR 217**

SR 217 is designated as a local scenic corridor and is adjacent to the project site’s eastern/southeastern boundary. While vegetation provides some visual screening along SR 217, existing buildings on the project site are visible to vehicles travelling in either direction along SR 217. Additionally, northbound travelers on SR 217 experience scenic views of the Santa Ynez Mountains, and southbound travelers on SR 217 experience scenic views of the Pacific Ocean and Goleta coastline. Photograph 1 in Figure 4.1-3 and Figure 4.1-4 depict existing views of the project site from the SR 217 local scenic corridor.

### **Views from Hollister Avenue**

Hollister Avenue is designated as a local scenic corridor and is approximately 0.7 mile northwest of the project site’s western boundary. Intervening buildings and vegetation completely obstruct eastward and southward views of the project site.

**Figure 4.1-3 Project Site Existing and Simulated Views from SR 217 Facing West**



**Photograph 1.** Existing westward view of the project site from SR 217. Vegetation obscures most of the project site.



**Photograph 2.** Simulated westward view of the existing project site from SR 217 with visual simulation of the proposed industrial building and landscaping.

**Figure 4.1-4** Project Site Proposed and Simulated Views from Northbound SR 217



**Photograph 1.** Existing northbound view of the project site from SR 217. Existing drive-in theater structures on the project site are visible above the vegetation.



**Photograph 2.** Northbound view of the project site from SR 217 with visual simulation of the proposed industrial building.



### **c. Scenic Views**

In addition to scenic corridors, the Goleta General Plan designates scenic viewpoints, which are designated locations with protected views or vistas. The project site is not designated as or located adjacent to a protected scenic view, as identified by the Goleta General Plan (City of Goleta 2006). However, scenic viewpoints in the vicinity of the project site are discussed below. Views from locally designated scenic corridors, including U.S. 101, SR 217, and Hollister Avenue, are discussed in the above subsection, “Scenic Corridors”.

#### **Hollister Avenue (Between Rutherford Street and South Kellogg Avenue) Scenic Viewpoint**

The Goleta General Plan identifies a north-facing scenic viewpoint on Hollister Road, north of the project site. Considering this viewpoint is directed towards scenic views of the Santa Ynez Mountains and foothills, the project site would not be visible from this viewpoint.

#### **SR 217 and Hollister Avenue Intersection Scenic Viewpoint**

The Goleta General Plan identifies a scenic viewpoint at the intersection of Hollister Avenue and SR 217, northeast of the project site. This viewpoint provides both north-facing scenic views of the Santa Ynez Mountains, and south-facing scenic views of the Pacific Ocean. Intervening buildings and vegetation obstruct the project site from southward-facing views, and the project site would not be visible in northward-facing views, given the orientation of the public viewpoint towards the foothills and mountains.

#### **Other Public Road View Corridors**

The project site is fully visible from several other nearby public roads that are not designated as scenic corridors or do not contain scenic viewpoints, including Kellogg Avenue and South Fairview Avenue. Kellogg Avenue is directly north of the project site, and South Fairview Avenue is located to the west of the project site. Figure 4.1-5 depicts views of the existing project site from Kellogg Avenue (Photograph 1). Figure 4.1-6 depicts views of the existing project site from South Fairview Avenue (Photograph 1).

### **d. Existing Light and Glare Conditions**

The project site is currently primarily undeveloped. On-site sources of illumination come from two sets of pole-mounted halogen lights. One set is located at the northeastern side of the concessions building, and one set is located at the western side of the concessions building; both of these sources illuminate the patio area around the concessions building. Additionally, there are two halogen lights on the northern projection room, facing the movie screen. These lights are operable and were used to light the parking lot after the end of movies; however, the lights are typically not currently in use since the drive-in theater is no longer in operation. The project site does not contain other lighting sources.

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The project site also receives indirect lighting from off-site sources of industrial and residential development that are adjacent to the site, as well as adjacent roadways. Off-site sources include streetlamps, light fixtures along building exteriors, light emanating from windows, and headlights from passing vehicles on SR 217 or from vehicles entering/exiting parking lots of neighboring buildings.

Glare is primarily a daytime occurrence caused by the reflection of sunlight or artificial light from highly polished surfaces, such as window glass or reflective materials, and, to a lesser degree, from broad expanses of light-colored surfaces. Glare can also be produced during evening and nighttime hours by artificial light directed toward a light-sensitive land use. Existing sources of glare on the project site include the inactive drive-in theater screen as well as sunlight reflecting from light-colored building materials and glass within existing structures.

**Figure 4.1-5 Project Site Existing and Simulated Views from Kellogg Avenue**



**Photograph 1.** Existing southward view of existing project site from Kellogg Avenue. The project site is directly visible from this roadway.



**Photograph 2.** Simulated southward view of project site from Kellogg Avenue, including the visual simulation of the proposed building.

**Figure 4.1-6 Project Site Existing and Simulated Views from South Fairview Avenue**



**Photograph 1.** Existing eastward view of existing project site from South Fairview Avenue. Vegetation completely obstructs views of the site.



**Photograph 2.** Simulated eastward view of project site from South Fairview Avenue, including the visual simulation of the proposed building.

## 4.1.2 Regulatory Setting

### a. State Regulations

#### State Scenic Highway Program

Caltrans defines a scenic highway as any freeway, highway, road, or other public right-of-way that traverses an area of exceptional scenic quality. U.S. 101 is eligible for designation throughout Santa Barbara County, but is not designated as a State Scenic Highway in the vicinity of the project site (Caltrans 2018).

#### California Coastal Act

The California Coastal Act, enacted in 1976, establishes procedures for the review of proposed developments in the Coastal Zone and policies for the protection of coastal resources and public access to the coastline. The project site is located in the Coastal Zone, therefore, Section 30251, Scenic and visual qualities, of the California Coastal Act pertains to aesthetics of the project.

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

### b. Local Regulations

#### Goleta General Plan

The City of Goleta's Visual and Historic Resources Element of the General Plan (2006) outlines several goals and policies related to the aesthetics of development and preservation of scenic resources. Policies that are relevant to the project include:

- **Policy VH 1.1: Scenic Resources.** An essential aspect of Goleta's character is derived from the various scenic resources within and around the city. Views of these resources from public and private areas contribute to the overall attractiveness of the city and the quality of life enjoyed by its residents, visitors, and workforce. The City shall support the protection and preservation of the following scenic resources:
  - a. The open waters of the Pacific Ocean/Santa Barbara Channel, with the Channel Islands visible in the distance.
  - b. Goleta's Pacific shoreline, including beaches, dunes, lagoons, coastal bluffs, and open coastal mesas.
  - c. Goleta and Devereux Sloughs.
  - d. Creeks and the vegetation associated with their riparian corridors.
  - e. Agricultural areas, including orchards, lands in vegetable or other crop production, and fallow agricultural lands.

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- f. Lake Los Carneros and the surrounding woodlands.
- g. Prominent natural landforms, such as the foothills and the Santa Ynez Mountains.
- **Policy VH 1.4: Protection of Mountain and Foothill Views.** Views of mountains and foothills from public areas shall be protected. View protection associated with development that may affect views of mountains or foothills should be accomplished first through site selection and then by use of design alternatives that enhance, rather than obstruct or degrade, such views. To minimize structural intrusion into the skyline, the following development practices shall be used where appropriate:
  - a. Limitations on the height and size of structures.
  - b. Limitations on the height of exterior walls (including retaining walls) and fences.
  - c. Stepping of buildings so that the heights of building elements are lower near the street and increase with distance from the public viewing area. Increased setbacks along major roadways to preserve views and create an attractive visual corridor.
  - d. Downcast, fully shielded, full cut off lighting of the minimum intensity needed for the purpose.
  - e. Limitations on removal of native vegetation.
  - f. Use of landscaping for screening purposes and/or minimizing view blockage as applicable.
  - g. Revegetation of disturbed areas.
  - h. Limitations on the use of reflective materials and colors for roofs, walls (including retaining walls), and fences.
  - i. Selection of colors and materials that harmonize with the surrounding landscape.
  - j. Clustering of building sites and structures.
- **Policy 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. If landscaping is used to add visual interest or for screening, care should be taken to prevent a wall-like appearance. Bridges, culverts, drainage ditches and other roadway ancillary elements should be appropriately designed; side slopes and earthen berms adjacent to roadways should be natural in appearance.
- **Policy VH 2.3 Development Projects Along Scenic Corridors.** Development adjacent to scenic corridors should not degrade or obstruct views of scenic areas. To ensure visual compatibility with the scenic qualities, the following practices shall be used, where appropriate:
  - a. Incorporate natural features in design.
  - b. Use landscaping for screening purposes and/or for minimizing view blockage as applicable.
  - c. Minimize vegetation removal.
  - d. Limit the height and size of structures.
  - e. Cluster building sites and structures.
  - f. Limit grading for development including structures, access roads, and driveways. Minimize the length of access roads and driveways and follow the natural contour of the land.
  - g. Preserve historical structures or sites.
  - h. Plant and preserve trees.

- i. Minimize use of signage.
  - j. Provide site-specific visual assessments, including use of story poles.
  - k. Provide a similar level of architectural detail on all elevations visible from scenic corridors.
  - l. Place existing overhead utilities and all new utilities underground.
  - m. Establish setbacks along major roadways to help protect views and create an attractive scenic corridor. On flat sites, step the heights of buildings so that the height of building elements is lower close to the street and increases with distance from the street.
- **Policy 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.
  - **Policy VH 4.1: Lighting.** Outdoor lighting fixtures shall be designed, located, aimed downward or toward structures (if properly shielded), retrofitted if feasible, and maintained in order to prevent over-lighting, energy waste, glare, light trespass, and sky glow. The following standards shall apply:
    - a. Outdoor lighting shall be the minimum number of fixtures and intensity needed for the intended purpose. Fixtures shall be fully shielded and have full cut off lights to minimize visibility from public viewing areas and prevent light pollution into residential areas or other sensitive uses such as wildlife habitats or migration routes.
    - b. Direct upward light emission shall be avoided to protect views of the night sky.
    - c. Light fixtures used in new development shall be appropriate to the architectural style and scale and compatible with the surrounding area.
  - **Policy VH 4.6: Industrial Areas.** The following standards shall be applicable to industrial development (see related LU 4.2):
    - a. All structures shall be designed to be compatible with adjacent development relative to size, bulk, and scale.
    - b. Where residential or commercial uses exist adjacent to industrial properties, such areas shall be buffered from industrial uses by increased setbacks and heavily landscaped screens.
    - c. Transfer of noise off-site shall be minimized by the use of screen walls, acoustical enclosures, or building placement. Noise generating activities shall be located as far as possible from nonindustrial uses.
    - d. All outdoor storage or maintenance areas shall be screened. Landscaping may be used alone or in conjunction with fencing or walls.
    - e. Loading areas and recycling and trash facilities shall be easily accessed and screened from view with landscaping and/or fencing or walls. Adjacent uses shall be considered when siting such areas.
    - f. Roof-mounted equipment shall be screened and considered as part of the structure for height calculations.
    - g. Architectural detailing shall be used to break up the box-like appearance of construction typically used for industrial buildings.
    - h. Adequate lighting shall be provided for security and safety purposes but designed to prevent encroachment onto adjacent uses, wildlife habitats, or the night sky.
    - i. Sufficient, secure, and protected bicycle parking shall be provided.

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- j. Public transit shall be encouraged through effective placement of stops for local and regional transit services. Existing stops shall be upgraded as appropriate.
- **Policy VH 4.9: Landscape Design.** Landscaping shall be considered and designed as an integral part of development, not relegated to remaining portions of a site following placement of buildings, parking, or vehicular access. Landscaping shall conform to the following standards:
  - a. Landscaping that conforms to the natural topography and protects existing specimen trees is encouraged.
  - b. Any specimen trees removed shall be replaced with a similar size tree or with a tree deemed appropriate by the City.
  - c. Landscaping shall emphasize the use of native and drought-tolerant vegetation and should include a range and density of plantings including trees, shrubs, groundcover, and vines of various heights and species.
  - d. The use of invasive plants shall be prohibited.
  - e. Landscaping shall be incorporated into the design to soften building masses, reinforce pedestrian scale, and provide screening along public streets and off street parking areas.

Please see Section 4.10, *Land Use and Planning*, for a comprehensive discussion of applicable goals and policies.

### **Goleta Coastal Zoning Ordinance**

In accordance with Section 17.01.040(E)(4) of the Goleta Municipal Code (GMC), the applicant and the City of Goleta (City) have entered into a Development Agreement (and approved by the Coastal Commission on April 6, 2022). Approval of the Development Agreement was exempt from CEQA based on the statutory common-sense exemption (CEQA Guidelines Section 15061[b][3]) and that there would be no physical change in the environment (CEQA Guidelines Section 15060[c][2]). The Development Agreement permits to continue the use of prior zoning standards until either the date the City obtains a certified Local Coastal Program or December 31, 2023, whichever occurs earlier.

Because of the adopted Development Agreement, the project is subject to the requirements of the previous zoning code (Article II, Coastal Zoning Code) rather than the City's current zoning code and uses all of the previous regulations and procedures in place prior to the adoption of Title 17. Therefore, Sections 35-84A and 35-85 of the City's prior Coastal Zoning Ordinance would apply to the project. The southern two-thirds of the site is zoned Light Industry (M-1) and the northern third of the site is zoned Service Industrial-Goleta (M-S-GOL).

Section 35-84A of the City's previous Coastal Zoning Ordinance provides development standards for M-S-GOL zone, including permitted uses, setback sizes, height limits, performance standards, and parking/landscaping requirements.

Section 35-85 of the City's previous Coastal Zoning Ordinance provides development standards for the M-1 zone, including permitted uses, setback sizes, height limits, building coverage limits, performance standards, and parking/landscaping requirements.



### 4.1.3 Impact Analysis

#### **a. Methodology and Significance Thresholds**

##### **Methodology**

This section evaluates the existing visual resources compared to the proposed development, analyzing the nature of the anticipated change and its compatibility with the visual character of the area. Assessing aesthetic impacts of a project is inherently subject to personal and cultural interpretation; therefore, this analysis uses the County's 2021 *Environmental Thresholds and Guidelines Manual* to direct the assessment of aesthetic impacts.

To assess the aesthetic impacts of a project, visual resources on the project site, visual resources in areas surrounding the project site, and public views that include the project site must be evaluated, including the physical attributes of the project site, its relative visibility, and its relative uniqueness. Regarding visibility, within Goleta, four types of areas are especially important: coastal and mountainous areas, the urban fringe, and travel corridors.

Once visual resources on the project site have been evaluated, the potential impacts of the project on visual resources views in the project vicinity must be determined. Additionally, a determination of compliance with local policies pertaining to visual resources is included in the aesthetics assessment.

Consistent with the requirements for evaluating visual resources described in the State CEQA Guidelines, all views discussed herein refer to public views.

##### **Significance Thresholds**

As described in more detail in Section 4.0, *Environmental Impact Analysis*, the following thresholds are based on the County's 2021 *Environmental Thresholds and Guidelines Manual* and Appendix G of the *State CEQA Guidelines*. Pursuant to Appendix G, potentially significant impacts would occur if development of the project site would:

1. Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista;
2. Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway;
3. In non-urbanized areas, substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings; in an urbanized area, conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality; or
4. Create a new source of substantial light or glare that would adversely affect daytime or nighttime views in the area.

## b. Project Impacts and Mitigation Measures

**Threshold 1:** Would the project have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?

**Impact AES-1** THE PROPOSED INDUSTRIAL BUILDING ON THE PROJECT SITE WOULD HAVE A HEIGHT OF 35 FEET AS MEASURED FROM FINISHED GRADE, WHICH WOULD AFFECT NORTHWARD SCENIC VIEWS OF THE SANTA YNEZ MOUNTAINS AND FOOTHILLS EXPERIENCED BY TRAVELERS ON STATE ROUTE (SR) 217. THIS IMPACT WOULD BE CLASS I, SIGNIFICANT AND UNAVOIDABLE.

The project would construct an approximately 70,594-square-foot “high-cube” industrial building on the northeastern-most portion of the project site. Approximately 4 to 6 feet of fill would be used to elevate the proposed building to meet flood plain elevation requirements, and the building itself would have a height of 35 feet from finished grade. This would result in the total height of the structure of approximately 39 to 41 feet above existing grade, which would be consistent with height limits of the M-S-GOL and M-1 zones, pursuant to the City’s previous Coastal Zoning Ordinance. The proposed industrial building would include aesthetic features such as architectural detailing and landscaping, which would reduce building massing and integrate the proposed building with natural areas of vegetation growing along SR 217. The proposed building would be constructed from concrete of muted, natural colors (e.g., gray and tan), with dark blue accents. The goal of the color palette is to assimilate the proposed building into the scenic landscape.

The project site is in the vicinity of, but not directly in, three locally designated scenic corridors that provide views of scenic vistas: U.S. 101, SR 217, and Hollister Avenue. As discussed under Section 4.1.1, existing views of the project site from U.S. 101 and Hollister Avenue are obscured by intervening buildings (mix of one, two, and three story residential, commercial, office, and industrial uses) and mature vegetation. Further, given the site’s distance (0.9 mile and 0.7 mile respectively) from these roadways the proposed industrial building would not substantially degrade these scenic views.

Construction of the proposed industrial building may affect a locally designated scenic corridor along SR 217. The eastern edge of the site is located approximately 150 feet from the western edge of the 217 roadway and is separated by roadway vegetation and San Jose Creek floodway. The proposed building is to be placed 102 feet away from the eastern property. There would be approximately 250 feet between the building and the western edge of the 217 roadway.

The project site is visible from lanes traveling in both directions, although vegetation currently obscures most of the project site from the roadway. Figure 4.1-3 and Figure 4.1-4 depict existing and simulated views of the project site from the SR 217 local scenic corridor. As shown in Photograph 1 in Figure 4.1-3 and Figure 4.1-4, SR 217 currently offers a northward view of the Santa Ynez Mountains and foothills, which are designated scenic resources. When traveling north on SR 217, the existing movie screen and vegetation are visible and partially obscure views of the Santa Ynez Mountains. When traveling south on SR 217, project site vegetation and the existing movie screen are visible but do not hinder views of the Pacific Ocean. Figure 4.1-3 and Figure 4.1-4 demonstrate, through visual renderings (Photograph 2), that the proposed industrial building would rise above existing and proposed vegetation and the surrounding one- to two-story industrial development and would obstruct northward scenic views of the foothills and mountains. The proposed building would be located in the northeast of the project site and would have substantially more mass than the existing movie screen. The existing movie screen and laurel sumac shrubs behind the movie screen would be removed as part of the project; consequently, the proposed building would be more visible from SR 217 when compared to existing conditions until the proposed vegetation has matured. The project

would include landscaping that would screen the building, as the proposed cypress trees would be anticipated to reach 30 to 50 feet in height. However, the proposed cypress trees would take approximately 10 to 12 years to reach maturity (i.e. a height of 30 feet). While the project would be consistent with the height limitation of 35 feet from finished grade, the proposed industrial building would be constructed on 4 to 6 feet of fill material, giving the proposed building the appearance of being taller than surrounding development and emphasizing the proposed building against the scenic vista. The addition of the proposed industrial building would constitute a potentially significant impact to the northward scenic vista experienced from SR 217.

The project would also alter public views of the project site from Kellogg Avenue and South Fairview Avenue. As shown in Figure 4.1-5, Kellogg Avenue currently provides a direct view of the project site (Photograph 1) that would be largely obstructed by construction of the proposed industrial building (Photograph 2). Also shown in Figure 4.1-6, South Fairview Avenue provides views of project site vegetation (Photograph 1), and construction of the proposed industrial building would elevate the new structure above vegetation levels, so the building would be visible from South Fairview Avenue (Photograph 2). However, the Visual and Historic Resources Element of the Goleta General Plan does not recognize these roadways as scenic view corridors that provide scenic views, given the generic nature of surrounding development and lack of scenic resources on these two roadways. Therefore, changes to views from these local roadways would be a less than significant impact, as the project would add to existing development and there are no scenic views along these roadways of which the project could degrade.

Considering the project would substantially alter scenic views of the Santa Ynez Mountains and foothills from SR 217, a locally designated scenic corridor, the project would overall have a potentially significant impact to scenic vistas.

### **Mitigation Measures**

There is no feasible mitigation that would reduce the impact level to less than significant. Landscaping is proposed to screen the proposed building; however, the proposed building would still obscure views of Santa Ynez Mountains. The proposed building height is the minimum height required to support the high-cube warehouse use. In addition, the proposed 4 to 6 feet of fill is necessary to elevate the proposed building above the 100-year floodplain which gives the proposed building the appearance of being taller than surrounding development. No additional mitigation is available beyond the proposed landscaping screening to reduce this visual impact.

### **Significance After Mitigation**

Impacts would remain significant and unavoidable.

<b>Threshold 2:</b> Would the project substantially damage scenic resources, including but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?
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**Impact AES-2 THE PROJECT SITE IS LOCATED APPROXIMATELY 0.9 MILE FROM UNITED STATES ROUTE 101 (U.S. 101), WHICH IS ELIGIBLE FOR DESIGNATION AS A STATE SCENIC HIGHWAY THROUGHOUT GOLETA. THE PROJECT WOULD NOT IMPACT SCENIC RESOURCES WITHIN A STATE SCENIC HIGHWAY. THERE WOULD BE NO IMPACT.**

U.S. 101 is eligible for designation as a State Scenic Highway throughout Goleta, but is not officially designated as a State Scenic Highway in the vicinity of the project site. The project site is approximately 0.9 mile south of U.S. 101. Buildings and vegetation obscure views of the project site

and existing on-site development from vehicles travelling along U.S. 101. There are no scenic resources adjacent to U.S. 101 that would be affected by views of development on the project site. Given the distance of U.S. 101 from the project site, as well as the presence of intervening vegetation and structures, the addition of the proposed industrial building would not substantially degrade views from U.S. 101. Therefore, there would be no impact to scenic resources within an eligible State Scenic Highway.

### **Mitigation Measures**

No mitigation measures are required.

**Threshold 3:** Would the project, in non-urbanized areas, substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings? (Public views are those that are experienced from a publicly accessible vantage point). If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality?

**Impact AES-3** THE PROJECT WOULD PERMANENTLY ALTER THE PROJECT SITE, REPLACING EXISTING BUILDINGS AND UNPAVED AREAS WITH AN INDUSTRIAL BUILDING AND ASSOCIATED SITE IMPROVEMENTS. THE PROJECT WOULD CONFLICT WITH GOLETA GENERAL PLAN POLICIES PERTAINING TO THE PRESERVATION OF VISUAL RESOURCES ALONG LOCALLY DESIGNATED SCENIC CORRIDORS, BUT WOULD NOT CONFLICT WITH APPLICABLE ZONING REGULATIONS. THIS IMPACT WOULD BE CLASS I, SIGNIFICANT AND UNAVOIDABLE.

The project would involve development of an approximately 70,594-square-foot industrial warehouse building with 60,939 square feet of landscaping, 102 parking spaces, and six loading zones (see Section 2, *Project Description*). The proposed building would be located on the northeastern-most portion of the project site. Approximately 4 to 6 feet of fill would be used to elevate the proposed building, and the building itself would have a height of 35 feet from finished grade, bringing the total height of the structure to approximately 39 to 41 feet from existing grade. Project landscaping would include native and climate-appropriate plantings within the proposed stormwater drainage basin, along the proposed parking lot, along the driveway connecting to South Kellogg Avenue, and along the exterior of the proposed industrial building.

The project site is located in the City's Coastal Zone. Section 30251 of the California Coastal Act requires that development projects in the Coastal Zone protect scenic and visual qualities, including views of the ocean and scenic coastal areas. The project would not obstruct or substantially degrade views of the Pacific Ocean, beach, or other coastal areas, as those scenic resources are currently not visible from the project site and southward views are blocked by intervening buildings, SR 217, and vegetation (Refer to Figure 4.1-2). Thus, the project would adhere to Section 30251 of the California Coastal Act.

The project site is zoned as M-S-GOL and M-1, and would be required to comply with development standards pursuant to Section 35-84A and Section 35-85 of the City's previous Coastal Zoning Ordinance.

Section 35-84A provides permitted uses and development standards for the M-S-GOL zone. The proposed industrial building, which would include operational activities such as warehouse storage, wholesaling, and distribution, is considered a permitted use for the M-S-GOL zone under Section 35-84A. According to Section 35-84A, no building or structure within the M-S-GOL zone may exceed a height of 35 feet from finished grade. The height of proposed industrial building would be approximately 39 to 41 feet when taking into account the amount fill proposed to elevated the

building out of the 100 year flood plain; however, the building would be 35 feet from finished grade. Therefore, the industrial building would not exceed 35 feet from finished grade, and would comply with the maximum height limitation for the M-S-GOL zone. Additionally, project design and operational activities would ensure compliance with the following performance standards from Section 35-84A:

- Open storage of equipment and materials shall be permitted only in areas screened from view of surrounding lots.

Section 35-85 provides permitted uses and development standards for the M-1 zone. Project operational activities are also included as permitted uses for the M-1 zone under Section 35-85, and the maximum height limit for the M-1 zone is 45 feet, which the proposed industrial building would not exceed. Performance standards for the M-1 zone in Section 35-85 are the same as those listed above for the M-S-GOL zone in Section 35-84A. Thus, project design and operational activities would ensure compliance with applicable performance standards.

Although the project would alter the site's existing visual character by introducing a new industrial building with associated site improvements, the proposed intensity and height of development would be generally consistent with the Goleta General Plan. For example, the project would be consistent with Policy VH 4.6, Industrial Areas, which requires industrial development to include architectural detailing to break building massing; adequate lighting; protected bicycle parking; screened outdoor storage, maintenance, or trash areas; and buffers or screens to protect residential development from industrial land uses. The project would comply with Policy VH 4.6 as it would use landscaping to screen the project site from SR 217 and residential development, would provide sufficient parking (including bicycle spaces), would screen outdoor maintenance or trash areas, would provide adequate lighting in accordance with City requirements, and would include architectural detailing to break massing of the proposed industrial building.

However, as discussed under Impact AES-1, the project may obstruct scenic views of the Santa Ynez Mountains and foothills experienced by northward travelers along SR 217. SR 217 is designated as a local scenic corridor; consequently, the project would be inconsistent with Goleta General Plan Policy VH 1.1, Scenic Resources, which identifies scenic resources in the City; Policy VH 2.2, Preservation of Scenic Corridors, which requires preservation of aesthetic qualities of scenic corridors; and Policy VH 2.3, Development Projects Along Scenic Corridors, which requires development adjacent to scenic corridors to not degrade or obstruct views of scenic areas. Please refer to Section 4.10, *Land Use and Planning*, for a detailed analysis of project consistency with Goleta General Plan goals and policies.

The project would introduce a new industrial warehouse building, along with parking and landscaping improvements, on the project site. While the project would be generally consistent with the Goleta General Plan and previous Coastal Zoning Ordinance, the project would directly conflict with General Plan policies VH 1.1, VH 2.2, and VH 2.3, which pertain to the preservation of scenic views along locally designated scenic corridors. Thus, the project would have a potentially significant impact regarding conflict with applicable regulations that govern scenic quality.

## **Mitigation Measures**

There is no feasible mitigation that would reduce the impact level to less than significant.

## Significance After Mitigation

Impacts would remain significant and unavoidable.

**Threshold 4:** Would the project create a new source of substantial light or glare that would adversely affect daytime or nighttime views in the area?

**Impact AES-4** THE PROJECT WOULD INTRODUCE ON-SITE SOURCES OF LIGHT AND GLARE; HOWEVER, SUCH SOURCES WOULD BE CONSISTENT WITH CITY LIGHTING REGULATIONS AND FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION STANDARDS. THEREFORE, IMPACTS INVOLVING LIGHT AND GLARE WOULD BE CLASS III, LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT.

Project construction is not anticipated to occur during evening or nighttime hours and would thus not introduce new light sources to the project site during the construction time period. Consequently, the following discussion focuses on the project's operational impact involving light and glare.

The project would introduce new sources of light from the parking lot and the proposed industrial building exterior once operational. Lighting would consist of a combination of exterior building-mounted wall packs as well as pole-mounted fixtures in the parking lot. All lighting would use light emitting diode (LED) fixtures and would include semi- and fully cut-off light fixtures. Project lighting would be designed in accordance with City standards, including Goleta General Plan Policy 4.12, Lighting, which requires outdoor lighting fixtures to be designed, located, aimed downward or toward structures (if properly shielded), retrofitted if feasible, and maintained in order to prevent over-lighting, energy waste, glare, light trespass, and sky glow (City of Goleta 2006). Additionally, the project applicant has prepared a photometric plan that demonstrates project lighting would be contained on the project site and would not spill onto adjacent properties (Appendix Q).

As discussed further in Impact HAZ-5 in Section 4.8, *Hazards and Hazardous Materials*, project design, including lighting, would be subject to Federal Air Regulations (FAR) Part 77, which requires projects that may affect navigable airspace to submit a Notice of Proposed Construction or Alteration. If a proposed development is identified as a presumed hazard, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) may require further aeronautical study or allow the project to be revised. The project applicant would be required to file a Notice of Proposed Construction or Alteration with the FAA regional office at least 30 days prior to construction. Based on project design, the FAA would then determine whether the project poses a hazard to air navigation and could request changes to project design to minimize those hazards. The FAA would evaluate the project against FAR Part 77 Section 77.17, which provides height standards to ensure the project would not obstruct navigable airspace. Additionally, the FAA would provide lighting recommendations under FAR Part 77 Section 77.21 (d) [4]. Therefore, project lighting would not be substantial to the extent that it would interfere with aviation activity and interfere with views.

Moving sources of light would come from the headlights of vehicles driving on roadways near the project site and entering or exiting the project site early in the morning and evening. While project operation would involve vehicle travel, and thus potential light from vehicles, these lighting sources would be similar to existing conditions surrounding the project site, as commercial and industrial vehicles are frequent in the area.

The project would introduce new sources of glare in the form of focused, intense light from sunlight reflecting on the industrial building, parked car windows, or truck windshields when vehicles are backed up to loading docks. The proposed industrial building would be constructed from muted shades of concrete, including dark gray, light gray, tan, and dark blue, as well as aluminum and glass.

As the proposed industrial building would include light-colored exteriors with elements of metal and glass, the project has the potential to reflect sunlight and produce glare from this building. However, vegetative screening along the perimeter of the project site would reduce off-site impacts of glare from both the proposed building and from vehicles associated with building operation. Considering adjacent land uses include few glare-sensitive receptors, the potential for glare-related impacts would be limited. Overall, potential impacts associated with light and glare would be less than significant.

### **Mitigation Measures**

No mitigation measures are required.

#### **4.1.4 Cumulative Impacts**

Cumulative development includes foreseeable future projects from Table 3-1 in Section 3, *Environmental Setting*, that could have a direct connection to the visual environment of the proposed project. Future projects within one mile of the project site include circulation improvements on Ekwil Street and Fowler Street; replacement of the Hollister Avenue Bridge; San Jose Creek recreational trail improvements; natural gas infrastructure replacement; construction of two office/warehouse buildings; and expansion of the existing Honda and Toyota Dealerships.

Cumulative development on vacant and underutilized land in the Goleta area could obstruct scenic views or vistas experienced from U.S. 101, SR 217, or other public viewing areas. However, implementation of policies to protect scenic vistas from the City's Visual and Historic Resources Element would reduce the magnitude of cumulative impacts to scenic vistas and views. As discussed under Impact AES-1, the project would have a significant and unavoidable impact to scenic vistas given that construction and operation of the proposed industrial building would obstruct views of the Santa Ynez Mountains and foothills experienced by northbound travelers on SR 217. While project design includes muted construction materials and landscaping to integrate the proposed building into the surrounding landscape, this impact cannot be mitigated to a less than significant level. Cumulative projects along the SR 217 corridor include replacement of the San Jose Creek bridge, San Jose Creek recreational trail improvements, the San Jose Creek Fish Passage Project, and expansion of the existing Honda and Toyota Dealerships. Replacement of the San Jose Creek bridge would not involve construction of a new structure that would be visible from SR 217, as the bridge is currently part of the existing visual landscape. The other cumulative projects associated with San Jose Creek within the vicinity of the SR 217 corridor would largely consist of ground-level improvements. The expansion of the existing Honda and Toyota Dealerships would involve new construction of a 27-foot tall structure on the Honda Dealership and an approximately 20-foot tall service bay on the Toyota Dealership. However, both of these additions would be located at the rear of the respective properties, and not visible from SR 217. Therefore, cumulative development would not result in the addition of tall structures that could permanently obstruct scenic views from SR 217. Cumulative impacts to scenic vistas would be less than significant.

There are no officially designated State Scenic Highways in Goleta, thus, there would be no cumulative impacts to visual resources visible from a State Scenic Highway. As discussed under Impact AES-2, the project site is not visible from a designated State Scenic Highway as one does not exist in Goleta. Therefore, the project would not have a cumulatively considerable impact to visual resources near scenic highways.

Cumulative development on vacant and underutilized land in the Goleta area could result in the overall degradation of visual character. Future projects in the Goleta area would adhere to applicable zoning and development regulations, as well as General Plan policies, which would reduce potential

impacts to visual resources and visual character. As discussed under Impact AES-3, the project may conflict with Goleta General Plan policies related to the preservation of views from locally designated scenic corridors, and this impact would be significant and unavoidable. However, cumulative projects would not result in the addition of tall structures that could permanently obstruct scenic views in the area. Therefore, cumulative impacts to visual character would be less than significant.

Cumulative development would contribute to an increase in light and glare throughout Goleta. However, future projects, including the proposed project, would be required to implement City lighting regulations, which would minimize the potential for skyglow or light trespass by requiring lighting fixtures to be designed, located, aimed downward or toward structures (if properly shielded), and retrofitted if feasible. Therefore, although several projects listed in Table 3-1 would occur in the near vicinity of the project site, implementation of City lighting regulations would ensure that substantial cumulative light and glare impacts would not be expected. As discussed under Impact AES-4, the project would have a less than significant impact involving light and glare. The project would add new sources of light and glare from the proposed industrial building and associated vehicles; however, given implementation of City lighting requirements and the existing FAR Part 77 regulatory requirement, this impact would be less than significant. Therefore, the project would not have a cumulatively considerable impact to light and glare, and overall cumulative impacts would be less than significant.