

3.2 Aesthetics

This section describes the existing aesthetic resources and visual characteristics of the Project site and its immediate vicinity, along with existing plans and policies that are relevant to visual resource issues within the City of Menlo Park. This section also evaluates the effect on existing visual resources associated with implementation of the Project. The evaluation of potential impacts on aesthetic and visual resources due to implementation of the Project is based on a review of photographs, visual simulations, site reconnaissance, and Project data. The specific impacts examined in this section pertain to the Project's potential to change the visual quality and character of the Project area and create new sources of light and glare.

No comments pertaining to aesthetics were received in response to the Notice of Preparation (NOP) (Appendix 1).

Existing Conditions

Regulatory Setting

City of Menlo Park General Plan. The City of Menlo Park General Plan guides development and use of land within the City. Several goals and policies of the general plan apply broadly to aesthetics across the City. The following policies from the Land Use Element of the general plan pertain to the Project.

Policy I-G-2: The community should contain an ample supply of specialized open space in the form of squares, greens, and parks whose frequent use is encouraged through placement and design.

Policy I-G-7: Public access to the Bay for the scenic enjoyment of the open water, sloughs, and marshes shall be protected.

The following policies from the Open Space and Conservation Element of the City General Plan pertain to the Project.

Policy OSC1.12: Landscaping and Plazas. Include landscaping and plazas on public and private lands, and well-designed pedestrian and bicycle facilities in areas of intensive non-vehicular activity. Require landscaping for shade, surface runoff, or to obscure parked cars in extensive parking areas.

Policy OCS1.13: Yard and Open Space Requirements in New Development. Ensure that required yard and open spaces are provided for as part of new multi-family residential, mixed-use, commercial, and industrial development.

Policy OCS1.15: Heritage Trees. Protect Heritage Trees, including during construction activities, through enforcement of the Heritage Tree Ordinance (Chapter 13.24 of the Municipal Code).

ConnectMenlo General Plan Update. The City General Plan (Land Use and Circulation Elements) and M-2 Area Zoning Update, also known as ConnectMenlo, is under way. Although not yet adopted, the following draft goal and policies in ConnectMenlo pertain to the Project and are identified for informational purposes.

Goal LU-1: Promote the orderly development of Menlo Park and its surrounding area.

Policy LU-6.2: Open Space in New Development. Require new nonresidential, mixed-use, and multiple-dwelling development of a certain minimum scale to provide ample open space in the form of plazas, greens, community gardens, and parks whose frequent use is encouraged through thoughtful placement and design.

Policy LU-6.6: Public Bay Access. Protect and support public access to the Bay for the scenic enjoyment of open water, sloughs, and marshes, including restoration efforts, and completion of the Bay Trail.

Policy LU-6.8: Landscaping in Development. Encourage extensive and appropriate landscaping in public and private development to maintain the City's tree canopy and to promote sustainability and healthy living, particularly through increased trees and water-efficient landscaping in large parking areas and in the public right-of-way.

Menlo Park Municipal Code, Chapter 13.24, Heritage Trees. Chapter 13.24 protects the health and maintenance of heritage trees, which are trees or groups of trees of historical significance, special character, or community benefit. Heritage trees include oak trees that are native to California (Genus *Quercus*) and have a trunk with a circumference of 31.4 inches or more (10 inches in diameter) and all trees other than native oaks that have a trunk with a circumference of 47.1 inches (15 inches in diameter) or more, measured 54 inches above natural grade.

Conditional Development Permit. A Conditional Development Permit (CDP) would be required for the Project. The CDP would be incorporated as part of the Project to define the development standards and create mechanisms for the City of Menlo Park to process any revisions to the Project that might arise over the buildout period. According to Chapter 16.82.060 of the City's Municipal Code, every application for a CDP shall be accompanied by architectural drawings and plot plans showing elevations and locations of proposed buildings, proposed landscaping, parking, and other physical features. The Planning Commission will review these drawings and plans when considering recommending approval of the CDP to the City Council.

Design Guidelines for Signs. The Design Guidelines for Signs¹ provides regulations for the design of signs in residential and nonresidential areas. The stated intent of the guidelines is to

... encourage signage that helps maintain the positive image of the area enjoyed by the residents and businesses of the City. Every Menlo Park business is encouraged to post an attractive sign stating the name of the business. The sign should be at a scale appropriate to the pedestrian and vehicular streetscape and the nature of the business.

All new and modified signs require approval by the Director of Community Development or his/her designee. At this time, no plans for signage have been submitted to the City of Menlo Park (City).

Menlo Park Municipal Code, Chapter 16.64, Fences, Walls, Trees, and Hedges. The Zoning Ordinance, Chapter 16.64, includes standards for fences in nonresidential and residential areas. In nonresidential areas, fences, walls, hedges, and similar structures located between the building and front lot line are required to obtain approval from the Community Development Director. The following features must be considered when obtaining approval: structural stability; aesthetics; general health, safety, and welfare of the community; clear lines of sight for vehicular and pedestrian traffic; or other safety factors.

Environmental Setting

Regional Context

The City of Menlo Park is a 19-square-mile municipality situated approximately 30 miles south of San Francisco and about 20 miles north of San José on the San Francisco Peninsula (Peninsula). Menlo Park is one of more than a dozen cities located on the flatter portions of the western margin of San Francisco

¹ City of Menlo Park Community Development Department, Planning Division. 2008. *Design Guidelines for Signs*. August. Available: <<http://www.menlopark.org/documentcenter/view/254>> Accessed: September 14, 2015.

Bay (Bay), east of the San Andreas Fault Zone. The municipalities of Redwood City generally border Menlo Park to the northwest, Atherton to the west, Palo Alto and Stanford University to the southeast, and East Palo Alto to the east. The Bay is located north of the City.

Urban development within the region is largely concentrated between the Bay and the Interstate 280 (I-280) corridor. In general, the Peninsula is developed with low-density uses within distinct neighborhoods that include commercial, retail, and residential buildings. Larger-scale development, such as office parks and industrial buildings, tends to be located between the Bay and US 101. Some high-rise office, apartment, and hospital buildings are located between US 101 and I-280; however, these buildings are concentrated mainly along the US 101 and El Camino Real corridors.

The Bay and its natural features are key visual components in the eastern and northern portions of the City. The principal topographic feature visible from the City is the Santa Cruz Mountain Range, which runs the length of the Peninsula and forms a barrier between the Pacific Ocean and the Bay. The mountain range is visible from adjacent cities and the majority of Menlo Park, especially north and east of US 101. The portion of the mountain range visible from Menlo Park and the adjacent cities is Skyline Ridge, rising more than 2,400 feet in height and located approximately 15 miles south of the Project site.

Project Vicinity

The visual and urban design character in the vicinity of the Project site is influenced by both the undeveloped areas along the Bay and the mix of developed uses in the area, which include industrial, office, residential, and commercial uses. Tidal mudflats and marshes in the Bay, the Don Edwards San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge (Refuge), and the former salt ponds are located across Bayfront Expressway/SR 84 (Bayfront Expressway), to the north. The existing Facebook Building 20 is adjacent to the Project site to the east. Across Chilco Street and the Dumbarton Rail Corridor, to the south, is a mix of land uses in the Belle Haven neighborhood, such as churches, single-family residences, multi-family residential units, and institutional buildings. Industrial and office uses are also located across Chilco Street, to the west. The Project vicinity is relatively flat, with limited long-range views, due, in part, to the prevalence of buildings that block views of the surroundings. In addition, mature trees and vegetation provide visual separation and screening between existing buildings and along streets. Visual resources to the north, such as the Bay, the hilly open space of Bedwell Bayfront Park (Bayfront Park), salt marshes, the Refuge, and the Dumbarton Bridge, are generally not visible from the majority of vantage points in the vicinity of the Project; these resources are visible only from areas immediately adjacent to Bayfront Expressway. No scenic resources, such as rock outcroppings, cliffs, or knolls, are present in the Project vicinity, although mature trees are present throughout the area.

The contrast between the differing land uses and the natural setting of the Bay to the north provides limited unity and inconsistent visual patterns. Development in the Project area ranges from large office and industrial buildings and warehouses to low-density single-family residential units. Office and industrial buildings are located to the east and west. As mentioned above, to the east is Facebook Building 20, which is approximately 433,555 gross square feet (gsf), with parking located at grade beneath the podium of the office building. Inclusive of all rooftop mechanical screening, Building 20 is approximately 73 feet in height. This building, which opened in 2015, is a visually distinctive feature in the area because of its mass, scale, architectural style, and useable green roof, which contains mature trees and landscaping. The building is highly visible from Bayfront Expressway and the Belle Haven neighborhood. Farther to the northeast, across Bayfront Expressway, are Facebook Buildings

10–19, totaling more than 1 million gsf, with heights ranging from 31.5 feet to 47 feet to the top of the parapet. Buildings 10–19 are significantly set back from Bayfront Expressway by expansive surface parking lots and blocked from view by dense, mature landscaping along the perimeter of the property.

The area to the west, across Chilco Street, is characterized by one- to two-story, mostly tilt-up construction and newer two- to three-story office buildings. The newer buildings are surrounded by manicured landscaped setbacks, tree-lined streets, and surface parking lots. The older industrial uses are often located on large parcels of land with low-rise, boxy buildings that have limited windows and no decorative façades. The buildings are surrounded by paved parking lots and sparse landscaping. Overhead utility lines are visible in most areas, and sidewalks are typical; however, there are no designated bicycle lanes or pedestrian trails in this office/industrial park.

The Belle Haven neighborhood, south of the Project site, generally consists of one- to two-story houses on medium-sized lots, with ample street setbacks, landscaped front yards, mature street trees, and well-maintained sidewalks. The neighborhood also features open space areas, parks, a small commercial retail area adjacent to Willow Road/SR 114, Fire Station 77, and Belle Haven Elementary School. The abandoned Dumbarton Rail Corridor separates the Belle Haven neighborhood from the existing office and industrial uses on the Project site.

Bicycle and pedestrian trails are located in the vicinity of the Project site. The San Francisco Bay Trail (Bay Trail), which travels along Bayfront Expressway, north of the Project site, is a series of existing and planned regional bicycle and hiking trails that are administered by the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG). The trails will eventually connect and provide a continuous trail system around the perimeter of the San Francisco and San Pablo Bays, linking 47 cities with 500 miles of trails.² This portion of the Bay Trail runs to the north of Bayfront Expressway, west of Buildings 10–19; travels across the Bayfront Expressway/Willow Road intersection; and continues along the southern portion Bayfront Expressway, to the east. This trail is evenly paved but does not include features such as benches or landscaping. In addition, the Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC) Public Shoreline Trail runs perpendicular to Bayfront Expressway (adjacent to Buildings 10–19), providing its users with views of the salt ponds, the marshes, the Refuge, the Bay, and the Santa Cruz Mountain Range as well as the East Bay Hills on clear days. This trail is evenly paved and includes maintained vegetation, benches, and trash receptacles.

Project Site

As described in Chapter 2, *Project Description*, the Project site comprises approximately 58 acres. The Project site is bounded by the six-lane Bayfront Expressway to the north, Building 20 to the east, the Dumbarton Rail Corridor and Belle Haven Neighborhood to the south, and industrial and office uses along Chilco Street to the west. The Project site is currently accessible from one stop sign-controlled driveway on Chilco Street. The Project site is enclosed by a chain link fence and landscaping along the majority of the perimeter.

Visual Character. The Project site consists of 10 buildings, totaling 1.02 million gsf; a surface parking lot for approximately 1,690 vehicles; and landscaped islands with mature trees (Figure 3.2-1). The buildings include industrial, warehouse, office, and research and development (R&D) uses. The existing buildings, which cover approximately 46 percent of the Project site, range from one to three stories in

² Association of Bay Area Governments. *Overview*. Available: <<http://www.baytrail.org/overview.html>>. Accessed: September 14, 2015.



a. Northern portion of Project Site facing southwest.



b. View of Bayfront Expressway from Project Site facing north.



c. View of Building 20 from Project Site facing northeast.



d. View of Belle Haven Neighborhood facing south.

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Figure 3.2-1
Existing Conditions at the Project Site
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height. The buildings are generally constructed with steel and concrete frames, with glass curtain walls that are separated horizontally by blue spandrel glass. As depicted in Figure 3.2-1a, the buildings are capped by hipped roofs with red asphalt shingles and wide, thick concrete eaves, which are supported by full-height concrete columns. Building 308–309, which were located on the Project site at the time of the NOP,³ feature typical roofs; however, the façades do not feature full-height concrete columns, and the walls are sheathed in stucco, with two rows of aluminum-frame windows. Buildings 301–304, 306, and 307 have similar architectural features and design as Buildings 308–309. However, Building 307 also includes a tall manufacturing tower, which is visible throughout the Project site and from offsite locations. The manufacturing building (Building 305) was constructed in a Corporate Modern style, featuring concrete construction with concrete blocks that have been sheathed in cement plaster. Interior courtyards are located between and adjacent to Buildings 301–306 and Buildings 307–309.

The buildings are set back from Bayfront Expressway but are located relatively close to the property line to the south. The perimeter of the Project site is surrounded by a chain link fence with barbed wire and moderate landscape buffers. Wooden poles with utility wires run along the northern and southern perimeters of the Project site, and four lattice-type electrical transmission towers with 60-kilovolt (kV) lines bisect the northern portion of the site.

Onsite Topography. The Project site was previously undeveloped marshland, which was filled prior to development of the Raychem facilities (now TE Connectivity).⁴ As such, the Project site is relatively flat, with elevations ranging from 7 to 10.5 feet NAVD.⁵

Vegetation. Vegetation on the Project site includes dense trees and shrubs along the perimeter and entrance roadways, on parking islands, and around and between the buildings. The trees and shrubs along the perimeter of the Project site provide a visual barrier between the site and the exterior land uses, emphasizing the separation between adjacent streets and onsite buildings. However, there are breaks in the landscape buffers along Bayfront Expressway and along certain portions of the southern perimeter, allowing for views to and from the adjacent streets and the Belle Haven neighborhood. The arborist report prepared for the Project site identified 770 trees, consisting of 35 species. Of these, 274 trees qualify as heritage trees under the City's Tree Ordinance.⁶ These trees consist almost entirely of nonnative ornamental species, such as blackwood acacia (*Acacia melanoxylon*), Japanese maple (*Acer palmatum*), deodar cedar (*Cedrus deodara*), silver dollar gum (*Eucalyptus polyanthemos*), honey locust (*Gleditsia triacanthos inermis*), Lombardy poplar (*Populus nigra "Italica"*), plum (*Prunus cerasifera*), and holly oak (*Quercus ilex*). Two native (but planted and thus also ornamental) trees on the Project site include coast live oak (*Quercus agrifolia*) and eight white alder (*Alnus rhombifolia*).

Lighting and Shadows. Light sources at the Project site include fixtures on existing buildings and around the paved parking areas. However, because the buildings at the Project site are currently underutilized, the Project site is not brightly illuminated at night. Although the existing buildings include some glass doors and windows, reflective surfaces are minimal due to architectural style and mostly blocked from exterior areas by vegetation. There is no lighting along the adjacent segment of Bayfront Expressway; however, cobra-style street lighting is provided farther to the east, adjacent to Facebook Building 20.

³ Prior to the City's consideration of the Project, two buildings (307–309) were slated to be demolished. This will occur as a separate project; therefore, for purposes of this analysis, it is assumed that Buildings 307–309 are existing at the Project site and that they are currently visible from the Project site and surrounding areas.

⁴ Cornerstone Earth Group. 2015. *Phase I Environmental Site Assessment, 300 Constitution Drive, Menlo Park, California*. July 28, 2015.

⁵ North American Vertical Datum of 1988.

⁶ SCBA Tree Consulting. 2015. *Tree Survey at 301–309 Constitution Drive*. December 21, 2015.

As stated above, the existing buildings at the Project site are one to three stories in height. These buildings do not cast shadows onto adjacent properties, roadways, or open spaces, including the Belle Haven neighborhood to the south. However, the lattice utility towers and power lines, as well as some of the taller vegetation on the Project site, cast shadows on Bayfront Expressway to the north. The shadows are most extreme during the winter solstice when they can reach past Bayfront Expressway to the Bay Trail, the salt ponds/marsh, and Chilco Street.

Views from the Project Site

Because of the relatively flat topography of the Project site and vicinity, as well as the prevalence of existing buildings and vegetation, views from locations at grade are largely restricted. Views at the Project site consist mainly of the existing onsite surface parking lots, vegetated islands, perimeter landscaping, buildings, and power lines. Views of the salt ponds, marshes, the Refuge, and the Bay are largely obstructed from pedestrian-level viewpoints but are available from the northernmost boundary of the Project site. As shown in Figure 3.2-1b, mid-ground views from the Project site consist of Bayfront Expressway, with channelized background views of Bayfront Park and the East Bay Hills.

To the east of the Project site, as depicted in Figure 3.2-1c, exterior views are limited to Building 20. To the south, the offsite views consist of Chilco Street, the inactive Dumbarton Rail Corridor, temporary construction staging areas, and single-family residential units in the Belle Haven neighborhood (Figure 3.2-1d). Therefore, although the existing buildings on the Project site may not be visible from streets in the Belle Haven neighborhood (as discussed in more detail below), the buildings are visible from two-story residences (facing north, toward the Project site). Offsite views to the west are limited to Chilco Street, the mature street trees along Chilco Street, and the industrial and office buildings farther to the west. Background views to the south and west (Figure 3.2-1a) include partially obstructed views of the Santa Cruz Mountain Range.

Public View Corridors

Although portions of the Project site are visible from nearby public vantage points, the Project site is not visible in its entirety from a single ground-level vantage point because of its large size, flat topography, and the surrounding low-rise buildings. However, there are prominent public vantage points with views of the Project site, as discussed below.

BCDC Public Shoreline Trail. The BCDC Public Shoreline Trail, located approximately 0.4 mile northeast of the Project site, runs along the perimeter of Buildings 10–19. Because of the natural Bay features to the north and west and the views of the Santa Cruz Mountain Range to the south, this viewpoint is considered scenic. As depicted in Figure 3.2-2a, the Project site is visible when looking southwest from the BCDC Public Shoreline Trail. From this vantage point, the foreground views feature the trail, the marsh, the Refuge, and the salt ponds. Middleground views include Bayfront Expressway, Building 20, vegetation on the Project site, the rooftops of the existing buildings on the Project site, and the electrical transmission towers and power lines. Farther south and southwest are primarily unobstructed, panoramic background views of the Santa Cruz Mountain Range.

Bay Trail. The Bay Trail runs north of Bayfront Expressway, across from the Project site. As depicted in Figure 3.2-2b, the Bay Trail runs between the salt ponds and marsh to the north and Bayfront Expressway to the south. Because of the natural Bay setting to the north and west and the Santa Cruz Mountain Range to the south, this viewpoint is considered scenic. Depending on the location of the bicyclist/pedestrian on the Bay Trail, existing buildings on the Project site are visible through the



a. BCDC Public Shore Trail facing southwest.



b. Bay Trail facing west.



c. Higher elevation of Bayfront Park facing southeast.



d. Intersection of Chilco Street and Constitution Street facing east.

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Figure 3.2-2
Views from Adjacent Areas
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perimeter vegetation to the south. Looking west and east, prominent middleground features within the viewshed include Bayfront Expressway, traffic signal poles, electrical transmission towers, utility poles and wires, and Building 20, with views of the Santa Cruz Mountain Range in the background.

Bayfront Park. Bayfront Park, located approximately 0.5 mile northwest of the Project site, was built on the site of a former landfill, which has been redeveloped into a park. The 160-acre park includes benches, an open playfield, natural wooded areas, and an extensive trail system, most of which is unpaved. Some of the interior trails are steep where they cross the hills in the park. These trails lead to several viewpoints.⁷ Therefore, the Project site is visible from Bayfront Park, looking southeast. Because of the expansive views of the Bay setting to the north, east, and west (from higher elevations of Bayfront Park), as well as views of the Santa Cruz Mountain Range and the East Bay Hills, views from Bayfront Park are considered to be scenic.

Foreground views from within the park (looking southeast, toward the Project site) are of grassy vegetation, the marsh and salt ponds, and Bayfront Expressway. Because of the flat topography, background views from lower elevations of the park are limited. However, as depicted in Figure 3.2-2c, middleground and background views are more expansive from the tops of the rolling hills in Bayfront Park. Long-range views from this vantage point include low-rise structures of varying height, electrical transmission towers, mature trees, and vegetation. In the background, the Santa Cruz Mountain Range is visible to the south, and the East Bay Hills are visible to the northeast on clear days. Despite the distance and intervening vegetation, the existing buildings at the Project site are visible from Bayfront Park.

Bayfront Expressway. Bayfront Expressway is a major roadway that links the Dumbarton Bridge to US 101. This six-lane roadway runs in an east–west direction parallel to the northern boundary of the Project site. A concrete median, approximately 3 feet in height, separates the eastbound and westbound lanes. Views of the Project site from passing automobiles traveling in the eastbound or westbound direction are partially blocked by the perimeter vegetation and the center median. However, large breaks in the perimeter vegetation allow for unobstructed views of the onsite surface parking lot and Buildings 301, 303, 304, and 306. In addition, the regional lattice electrical transmission towers and electrical transmission lines along the northern portion of the site are highly visible from Bayfront Expressway. Facing the Project site, the ridges of the Santa Cruz Mountain Range are partially visible between the onsite rooftops and mature trees.

Chilco Street. Chilco Street extends south from Bayfront Expressway through the Belle Haven neighborhood. A portion of Chilco Street wraps around the western and southern edges of the Project site. This segment of the street provides one vehicular lane and one bicycle lane in each direction; however, there are no sidewalks from Constitution Drive southward. Views of the Project site from Chilco Street vary, depending on viewer position. Looking north from the intersection of Chilco Street and the Dumbarton Rail Corridor, the existing low-laying perimeter vegetation blocks views of the lower portions of the buildings, docking stations, and vehicular circulation areas. However, the rooftops and towers of Buildings 305 and 307 are prominent features in the area, while the rooftop of Building 306 is partially visible farther to the north.

As the motorist continues along the east–west segment of Chilco Street, adjacent to the southern perimeter of the Project site, the perimeter vegetation becomes denser, effectively screening the majority of the Project site. Only the towers of the onsite buildings and the utility poles and wires are

⁷ Menlo Park Community Services Department. n.d. Bedwell Bayfront Park. Available: <www.menlopark.org/Facilities/Facility/Details/Bedwell-Bayfront-Park-6>. Accessed: November 5, 2015.

visible from street level. As shown in Figure 3.2-2d, the north–west segment of Chilco Street, west of the Project site, includes a center median with mature street trees. The Project site is currently accessible only from this portion of Chilco Street, at the stop sign–controlled intersection at Constitution Drive. Dense trees, manicured landscaping, and the flat topography block the majority of views of the Project site, although channelized views of Building 23 are provided from this intersection.

Belle Haven Neighborhood and Hamilton Park. As discussed above, the Belle Haven neighborhood contains mainly single-family residential units with mature and well-maintained landscaping. The residential features of the neighborhood are set back from the streets. The neighborhood includes some industrial buildings and open parcels along the Dumbarton Rail Corridor, parks, small commercial retail areas, and institutional buildings, such as Belle Haven Elementary School and Fire Station 77. Because of the flat topography, existing structures, and dense vegetation, there are no pedestrian-level background views of the areas surrounding the Belle Haven neighborhood, such as the Bay and the Santa Cruz Mountain Range.

Because of limited development directly abutting the Dumbarton Rail Corridor and the height of the existing onsite towers, there are channelized views of the Project site from select streets in the Belle Haven neighborhood. The streets that run in a north–south direction in the neighborhood, such as Chilco Street, Modoc Avenue, and Hill Avenue, have channelized view corridors of the perimeter vegetation and buildings on the Project site.

The Project site is also visible from Hamilton Park, which was developed as part of the Hamilton Avenue Housing and Park Project. The 1-acre park is located south of the Project site, along Hamilton Avenue, and includes a playground and grass area.⁸ Looking north, the existing tower of Building 307 is visible in the middleground. Two-story single-family residences along Sandlewood Street block the rest of the Project site when viewed from Hamilton Park. There are no background views from this location and views from this location are not considered scenic.

Environmental Impacts

This section describes the impact analysis for the Project related to aesthetics. It discusses the methods that were used to determine the impacts of the Project and lists the thresholds that were used to conclude whether an impact would be significant. Impacts are determined to be no impact (NI), less than significant (LTS), less than significant with mitigation (LTS/M), or significant and unavoidable (SU). Measures to mitigate (i.e., avoid, minimize, rectify, reduce, eliminate, or compensate for) significant impacts accompany each impact discussion, as needed.

Thresholds of Significance

In accordance with Appendix G of the State CEQA Guidelines, the Project would be considered to have a significant effect if it would result in any of the conditions listed below.

- Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista.
- Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings along a scenic highway.

⁸ City of Menlo Park. 2005. *Hamilton Avenue Housing and Park Project*. Available: <<http://www.menlopark.org/642/Hamilton-Avenue-Housing-Park-Project>>. Accessed: September 16, 2015.

- Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings.
- Create a new source of substantial light or glare that would adversely affect daytime or nighttime views in the area.

Methods for Analysis

Visual conditions within the Project area are defined by a mix of regional roadways and industrial, office, recreational, residential, and commercial development. The interplay of these elements of the visual setting varies from point to point, depending on viewer location. The appearance of the Project site and the surrounding community would change with implementation of the Project, which would result in the construction of new and taller buildings at the Project site.

To illustrate the general appearance of the development proposed at the Project site, photomontages (massing studies) from seven vantage points were prepared, as shown in Figure 3.2-3. A photomontage is a photograph of existing conditions, with an image a proposed development superimposed over the photograph through the use of computer imaging techniques. The photomontages prepared for the Project have been constructed in a photo-realistic fashion to show how the proposed development would look, inclusive of buildings, parking structures, and landscaping. The photomontages are used to illustrate the development that is proposed at the Project site and provide a reasonable representation of the buildings' general massing, scale, and height upon Project completion. Because façade articulations and architectural designs have not yet been developed, these features are not included in the photomontages.

The photomontages, as included in Figures 3.2-4 through 3.2-10, depict views of the Project from the following locations:

- Viewpoint 1: BCDC Public Shoreline Trail facing, southwest
- Viewpoint 2: Bay Trail, facing southeast
- Viewpoint 3: Bayfront Park, facing southeast
- Viewpoint 4: Hill Avenue, facing north
- Viewpoint 5: Modoc Avenue, facing north
- Viewpoint 6: Chilco Street, facing north
- Viewpoint 7: Hamilton Park, facing northwest

Prior to preparing the photomontages, field investigations were conducted to determine those locations that would offer maximum visual exposure of the Project from public vantage points (see Figure 3.2-3). The photomontage locations selected include both "existing" (without Project development) and "proposed" (with Project development) views.

Impacts Not Evaluated in Detail

Impacts on Scenic Resources along a State Scenic Highway. The Project would not damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a State Scenic Highway. Bayfront Expressway is not designated as a State Scenic Highway by the California Department of Transportation. The closest designated scenic highway is I-280, which is more

than 5.5 miles southwest of the Project site.⁹ There are no views of the Project site from any portion of I-280. Therefore, although the Project would remove trees, **no impacts** related to scenic resources within a State Scenic Highway corridor would occur. Thus, this issue is not discussed any further.

Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Impact AES-1: Impacts on Scenic Vistas. The Project would not substantially affect scenic vistas. (LTS)

Impacts on Scenic Vistas. For the purposes of this analysis, a *scenic vista* is defined as a vantage point with a broad and expansive view of a significant landscape feature (e.g., a mountain range, lake, or coastline) or a significant historic or architectural feature (e.g., a historic tower). A scenic vista is a location with high visual quality, including harmonious and visually interesting views. The City does not have any officially designated scenic views or vistas. However, in the areas surrounding the Project site, the locations that could be considered scenic vistas are the BCDC Public Shoreline Trail, the Bay Trail, and Bayfront Park. These areas offer expansive views of the natural setting of the marsh, Refuge, and salt ponds, with the Bay farther to the north. In addition, viewers who use these facilities can be considered sensitive viewers because they are aware of their surroundings during their recreational activities.

BCDC Public Shoreline Trail (Viewpoint 1). The proposed development at the Project site would increase the total building area by more than 300,000 gsf compared with existing conditions. Therefore, building massing and height would be increased, resulting in greater visibility of the onsite buildings compared with existing conditions. As shown in Viewpoint 1, Figure 3.2-4a, existing views from the BCDC Public Shoreline Trail, facing south, include the marsh, the Refuge, and salt ponds in the foreground; Bayfront Expressway, the utility towers, and the perimeter vegetation of the Project site in the middleground; and the Santa Cruz Mountain Range in the background. The rooftops of the existing onsite buildings are visible between the perimeter vegetation and trees within the parking lots.

As depicted in Figure 3.2-4b, the foreground views would remain the same with implementation of the Project, but the middleground and background views would be altered. The proposed buildings, which would be approximately 75 feet in height, would be visible from the BCDC Public Shoreline Trail due to the increased massing and height. However, because of distance, the buildings would not constitute a significant feature in the area. In addition, the proposed buildings would be similar in height and scale to Building 20, to the east, which would integrate the Project site with the surrounding built environment. Because the proposed development at the Project site would be taller than existing conditions, it would interrupt a portion of the panoramic and mostly unobstructed views of the Santa Cruz Mountain Range, as seen from this trail. Nonetheless, the continuous ridgeline would still be visible over the roofs. Because the ridgeline would still be visible from this viewpoint, this impact would not be significant.

Bay Trail (Viewpoint 2). Figure 3.2-5a shows existing and proposed conditions, as seen from the Bay Trail, looking southwest and toward the Project site. Currently, views from this direction, facing the Project site, encompass Bayfront Expressway, the utility towers and power lines, and perimeter vegetation at the Project site. The salt ponds, Refuge, and Buildings 10–19 are visible in the middleground, facing northeast, with background views of the East Bay Hills. With Project development, as shown in Figure 3.2-5b, the two office buildings and hotel would be visible from the Bay Trail.

⁹ California Department of Transportation. 2011. California Scenic Highway Mapping System, San Mateo County. Available: <http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/LandArch/16_livability/scenic_highways/index.htm>. Accessed: September 9, 2015.



Figure 3.2-3
Map of Viewpoints
 Facebook Campus Expansion Project Draft EIR



Graphics ... 00296.15 (8-22-2016)

Source: Gehry Partners, LLP, 2016.



Figure 3.2-4
BCDC Public Shoreline Trail facing Southwest (Viewpoint 1)
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Graphics ... 00296.15 (8-22-2016)

Source: Gehry Partners, LLP, 2016.



Figure 3.2-5
Bay Trail facing Southeast (Viewpoint 2)
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Existing



Proposed



Graphics ... 00296.15 (8-22-2016)

Source: Gehry Partners, LLP, 2016.



Figure 3.2-6
Bayfront Park facing Southeast (Viewpoint 3)
Facebook Campus Expansion Project Draft EIR

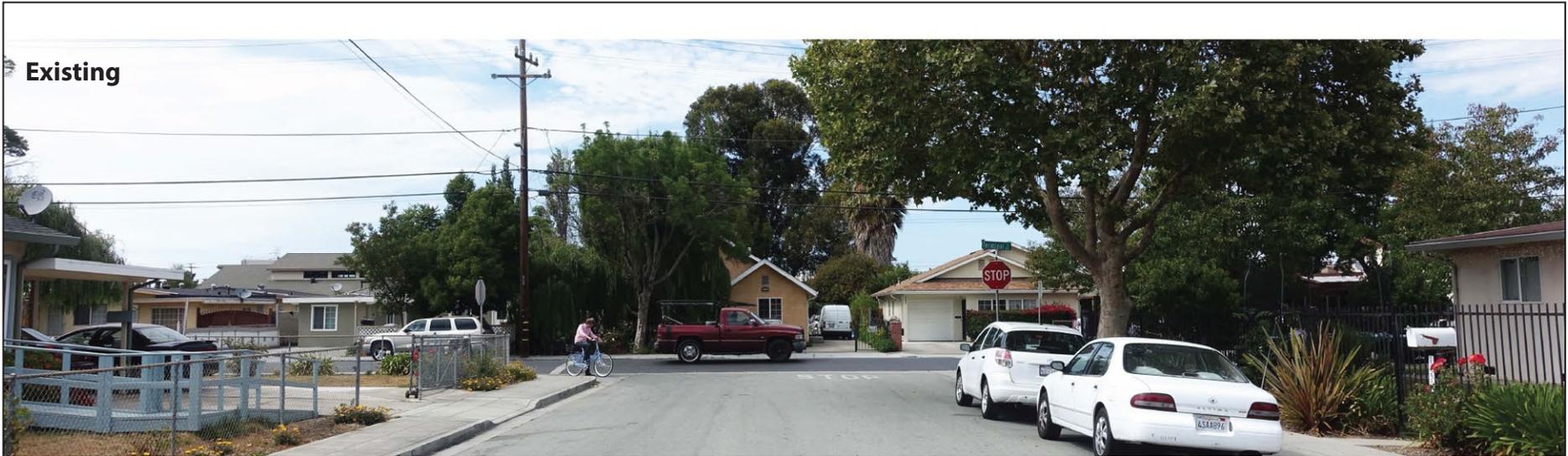


Graphics ... 00296.15 (8-22-2016)

Source: Gehry Partners, LLP, 2016.



Figure 3.2-7
Hill Avenue facing North (Viewpoint 4)
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Graphics ... 00296.15 (8-22-2016)

Source: Gehry Partners, LLP, 2016.



Figure 3.2-8
Modoc Avenue facing North (Viewpoint 5)
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Graphics ... 00296.15 (8-22-2016)

Source: Gehry Partners, LLP, 2016.



Figure 3.2-9
Chilco Street facing North (Viewpoint 6)
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Although this would represent a significant increase in building mass compared with existing conditions, the buildings would not significantly block views of scenic features, such as the East Bay Hills to the east and the salt ponds to the north. In addition, the proposed multi-use bicycle/pedestrian bridge would span Bayfront Expressway, connecting the Project site with the Bay Trail. The foundation and vertical supports of the bridge would touch down north of the Bay Trail, within the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) right-of-way. A portion of the aerial walkway could cantilever beyond the Caltrans right-of-way. At a height of about 35 feet, the bridge would represent a new visual feature in the area. However, as depicted in Figure 3.2-5b, the bridge would not block significant views of the Bay or the East Bay Hills from this viewpoint. As the viewer moves along the Bay Trail and toward the bridge, the bridge would appear larger, blocking additional views of the Santa Cruz Mountain Range to the southwest and the East Bay Hills to the east. Regardless, this view would be fleeting as the viewer changes location on the Bay Trail. The bridge would represent a small portion of the overall vista, as viewed from the Bay Trail. In addition, the primary view from this area is away from the Project site and more toward areas to the north where views encompass the panoramic and expansive scenery of the marsh, Refuge, Bay, and East Bay Hills. Therefore, this impact would not be significant.

Bayfront Park (Viewpoint 3). Viewpoint 3 depicts a higher-elevation view from Bayfront Park under existing and proposed conditions. As depicted in Figure 3.2-6a, the Project site is visible from Bayfront Park, but because of distance and intervening vegetation, views of the existing buildings are mainly blocked. The proposed development (Figure 3.2-6b) would appear larger than the existing buildings, as viewed from the higher elevations of Bayfront Park. However, the proposed buildings would be a small element in the overall panoramic view from Bayfront Park. In addition, the ridgeline of the Santa Cruz Mountain Range would remain visible, and views of the East Bay Hills would not be blocked. The proposed buildings at the Project site would be visible from the lower elevations of Bayfront Park; however, the existing and proposed vegetation in the middleground would block portions of the proposed buildings, allowing them to blend with their surroundings. Therefore, the visual impact on Bayfront Park would not be significant.

Overall Impacts on Scenic Vistas. As explained above, the Project would result in additional height, bulk, and massing from the proposed buildings and the multi-use bicycle/pedestrian bridge, which would add a new visual element to the setting. However, the increased development would represent a small portion of the overall vista, as viewed from the BCDC Public Shoreline Trail, Bay Trail, and Bayfront Park. Furthermore, the increased development would not substantially obstruct views of the Santa Cruz Mountain Range. Views from all of the scenic viewpoints generally tend to focus on areas away from the Project site and more toward the north where views encompass the panoramic and expansive scenery of the marsh, Refuge, salt ponds, Bay, and the East Bay Hills. Because Bayfront Expressway and other manmade features, such as large electrical transmission towers and power lines, are located between the salt ponds and the Project site, the views facing south, toward the Project site, are not as significant as those facing north.

It is important to note that the views of the Project site change as the viewer adjusts position. For example, as the viewer approaches the site along the BCDC Public Shoreline Trail or Bay Trail, the proposed development would appear larger and would block a greater amount of the background views. However, the development at the Project site would appear smaller against the backdrop of the mountains as the viewer retreats away from the site. From Viewpoint 1, the ridgeline of the Santa Cruz Mountain Range would be unobstructed, even with the development of the proposed buildings. However, as the viewer travels south along the BCDC Public Shoreline Trail, the buildings would appear larger and could block the ridgeline. Therefore, because the viewer would be in motion along these trails, background views would be different from any given location.

Although the Project would add height, bulk, and massing at the Project site, this change would not result in a significant impact on a scenic vista. As stated above, the scenic vistas from these sensitive viewer locations are mainly facing north, away from the Project site; therefore, the proposed buildings would not significantly alter the scenic vistas. The proposed development at the Project site would have a ***less-than-significant*** impact on scenic vistas from the BCDC Public Shoreline Trail, the Bay Trail, and Bayfront Park.

Impact AES-2: Degradation of Visual Character or Quality. The Project would not substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings. (LTS)

For the purposes of this analysis, a substantial degradation of existing visual character or quality would occur if the Project were to introduce a new visible element that would be inconsistent with the overall quality, scale, and character of surrounding development. The analysis considers the degree of contrast between proposed features and existing features that represent the area's valued aesthetic image, in addition to the degree to which the Project would contribute to the area's aesthetic value. This analysis examines changes in visual character and quality at the site itself as well as how the Project would change the existing visual character and quality, as seen from sensitive areas surrounding the Project site. However, it is important to note that potential impacts resulting from a change in visual character are partially subjective. To some, any development and change in the existing setting, regardless of design, is considered significantly adverse, while others may consider any change in development to be beneficial.

Impacts on Project Site and Surrounding Area. As described above, the Project site is not considered visually significant because it consists of an urbanized and industrial area with several manufacturing and warehousing buildings as well as expansive impervious surfaces. The mix of uses in this area, including Bayfront Expressway to the north, Building 20 to the east, residential uses to the south, and industrial and office complexes to the west, generally results in an inconsistent development pattern.

Project construction would include demolition, excavation, and construction activities on the Project site. These activities would be separated into two phases. Phase 1 would occur over approximately 18 months, while Phase 2 would occur over 23 months. These construction activities would temporarily degrade the existing visual character of the Project site and the surrounding area. Construction materials and equipment would be staged entirely onsite, in areas that would not be under construction. Construction fencing and existing and proposed landscaping would provide visual screening. Construction activities would be visible to motorists along Bayfront Expressway and Chilco Street as well as residents in the Belle Haven neighborhood but would be screened, as feasible. In addition, construction and associated visual degradation would be short term and temporary. Accordingly, this temporary construction-related impact would be ***less than significant***, and no mitigation would be required.

The two proposed office buildings, Buildings 21 and 22, would be oriented in an east-west direction and connected through an open-air bridge. Buildings 21 and 22 would comprise approximately 512,900 gsf and 449,500 gsf, respectively, of office, event, and amenity spaces. In addition, the hotel building would include approximately 174,800 gsf of hotel and amenity spaces. Each proposed building would offer a variety of design styles and building articulations. The Project would result in an increased floor area compared with existing conditions at the Project site and increase overall building heights. The new multi-use bicycle/pedestrian bridge would allow for public access to the Bay Trail and Bayfront Park from the Project site. It would span Bayfront Expressway at a height of approximately 35 feet. The ramp would touch down north of the Bay Trail, within the Caltrans right-of-way adjacent to the marsh/salt

ponds. A portion of the aerial walkway could cantilever beyond the Caltrans right-of-way. The proposed multi-use bicycle/pedestrian bridge would be a new source of height, mass, and bulk. However, the multi-use bicycle/pedestrian bridge would be consistent with the surrounding recreational trails, including the Bay Trail and the BCDC Public Shoreline Trail.

Landscaping would be provided throughout the Project site in a manner that would provide new green spaces, including drought-tolerant landscaping, and encourage active use of the outdoors. The new landscaping would be composed predominately of native plant communities that would be well adapted to the Project site and sensitive to adjacent bayland habitats. The Project would include a multi-level landscape, with spaces at the ground, office, and roof levels. The proposed perimeter landscape areas on the northern and southern boundaries of the Project site, along Bayfront Expressway and the Dumbarton Rail Corridor, would continue the landscape established as part of Building 20. Low landforms, up to 4 feet above existing grades, would be planted with native and adapted understory plants. The landforms and groupings of trees would provide a buffer along the northern and southern boundaries of the Project site. The proposed landscape would also include natural areas at the eastern and western ends of the Project site. These areas would be planted with a wide variety of native species, with a focus on habitat and stormwater treatment functions. In addition, a series of bioretention areas would be integrated into the landscaped areas within the parking areas to provide stormwater treatment for impervious surfaces outside of the building footprints. The parking areas that would extend beyond the building footprints would be shaded by trees that would be interspersed with landscaped areas, and the building roofs would include a combination of paths, gathering areas, and larger planning areas that would include native and climate-adapted understory and tree plantings. The parking lots could also include canopies with solar photovoltaic roofs.

An approximately 2-acre publicly accessible open space, which would be owned and managed by Facebook, is proposed in a portion of the area between Buildings 21 and 22. The park would include a mix of uses and provide a safe pedestrian route between the Belle Haven neighborhood, Bayfront Expressway, and the Bay Trail. The park would be compatible with both the office environment and public access. The final design of the open space would be subject to review and approval by the City. Monument and wayfinding signage would be provided at each of the vehicular entry points, consistent with the City of Menlo Park Signage Ordinance. Additional pedestrian wayfinding and rules signage would be located throughout the Project site, including in the publicly accessible open space.

There are 770 trees on the Project site. Of these, 274 are considered heritage trees, per Section 13.24 of the City's Municipal Code.¹⁰ Under the existing site plans, all trees would be removed, and no heritage trees would remain. However, the applicant is proposing that heritage trees that are in good health (as determined by a certified arborist) would be replaced at a ratio of 2:1, and heritage trees with fair or poor health, or dead heritage trees, would be replaced at a ratio of 1:1. The Project Sponsor is proposing to plant a minimum of 423 trees to replace the 274 heritage trees that would be removed following Project implementation, which meets the proposed heritage tree replacement ratio. These trees would be located throughout the Project site, including the site perimeter, the surface parking lot, and areas surrounding the proposed buildings, as explained above. When first planted, the proposed trees would not adequately screen views of the buildings from surrounding areas. However, at full maturity, it is expected that the proposed trees could screen a substantial portion of the buildings. In addition, some of the existing perimeter trees that are not located on the Project site and not along Chilco Street would remain with implementation of the Project and continue to limit views to and from the site.

¹⁰ SCBA Tree Consulting. 2015. *Tree Survey at 301-309 Constitution Drive*. December 21, 2015.

Building 20, east of the Project site, is an approximately 433,555 gsf office building with at-grade parking beneath the building podium. It is approximately 73 feet in height, inclusive of all rooftop mechanical screening and the East Lobby roof. As the dominant development feature in the area, Building 20 partially obscures the Santa Cruz Mountain Range, as seen from areas north of the Project site. Compared with Building 20, Buildings 21 and 22 would be generally similar in height and massing. Each proposed building would offer a variety of design styles and building articulations that would complement each other as well as Building 20. Therefore, the site plan for the Project would increase unity with the surroundings by creating a contiguous building mass and landscaped areas that would reflect an architectural design compatible with (although not exactly the same as) that of the existing built environment of the area east and west of the Project site. Although it is unknown at this time what types of façade articulation and architectural design would be used for the buildings, it is expected that they would be harmonious with each other and their surroundings and that the design would be informed by an architectural language of massing, materiality, and interconnectivity that would link the buildings at the Project site to the broader context. In addition, the proposed landscaping would serve to screen the lower portions of the proposed structures.

Although development at the Project site would increase onsite building height, mass, and bulk, the Project would have a less-than-significant impact on onsite visual character and the quality of the immediate surrounding areas. Currently, the site consists of outdated buildings and surface parking lots that do not complement the natural quality of the salt ponds and marshes to the north, Building 20 to the east, the Belle Haven neighborhood to the south, and the office parks to the west. The proposed development would increase unity with its surroundings by constructing buildings that would reflect a similar architectural design. Therefore, the impact on visual character and quality is considered to be *less than significant*.

Impacts on Public View Corridors. The public view corridors identified above include the residential areas of Belle Haven, Chilco Street, and Hamilton Park. In addition, the BCDC Public Shoreline Trail, the Bay Trail, and Bayfront Park also have public view corridors; however, these are considered scenic vistas and are discussed in more detail under Impact AES-1, above.

Belle Haven Neighborhood (Viewpoints 4 and 5). As discussed above, the Belle Haven neighborhood features mainly single-family residential units with mature and well-maintained landscaping. Because of the flat topography, existing structures, and dense vegetation, background views of the areas surrounding the neighborhood are not available. However, as shown in Figures 3.2-7 and 3.2-8, streets that run perpendicular to Terminal Avenue, such as Hill Avenue and Modoc Avenue, have channelized view corridors of the Project site.

As shown in Figure 3.2-7a, Building 305 at the Project site is screened from Hill Avenue predominantly by single-family units along Terminal Avenue and dense clusters of vegetation. There are no background views. With the proposed development (Figure 3.2-7b), only one building (Building 21) would be visible from this viewpoint. This proposed building would be taller than the existing building; however, the building would remain screened predominantly by the single-family units. Additionally, the existing dense trees and shrubs along Terminal Avenue would continue to partially block the view of the Project site. Therefore, views of proposed Building 21 would be available only through intermittent breaks in the vegetation. The building would not significantly alter the view from Hill Avenue.

Viewpoint 5 (Figure 3.2-8a) depicts views from Modoc Avenue, facing north. As shown, the views consist of single-family units in the Belle Haven neighborhood, which are set back from the street, and dense vegetation. Portions of Building 305 on the Project site are visible from this viewpoint; however, this

building is blocked mainly by the residential buildings and landscaping. As depicted in Figure 3.2-8b, Building 22 would be visible from Modoc Avenue. As with existing conditions, the view of this proposed building from Modoc Avenue would be channelized and visible only behind existing structures. The proposed building would not add significant building height, mass, or bulk to the Project site, as seen from Modoc Avenue. Therefore, views of the Project site from Modoc Avenue would not significantly alter the visual character of the area.

Chilco Street (Viewpoint 6). As depicted in Figure 3.2-9a, existing views of the Project site from Chilco Street, facing north, consist of single-family residential units in the Belle Haven neighborhood, Fire Station 77, dense trees and vegetation, the Dumbarton Rail Corridor, and utility and power lines. A portion of Building 307 at the Project site is visible from this viewpoint. No background views are available. As depicted in Figure 3.2-9b, the western portion of Building 21 and the publicly accessible open space would be visible from this viewpoint. Development of the Project would increase building height, bulk, and mass, as seen from this segment of Chilco Street. However, landscaping at the publicly accessible open space and vegetation on the building's rooftop deck would partially screen the building from view and help to blend it with its surroundings. Therefore, views of the Project site from Chilco Street would not significantly alter the visual character of the area.

Hamilton Park (Viewpoint 7). As depicted in Figure 3.2-10a, views from Hamilton Park, facing north, consist of the park's open space, vegetation, playground, and signage in the foreground and the surrounding single-family units in the Belle Haven neighborhood in the middleground. Farther to the north, the tower of Building 307 is highly visible. The existing tower would be demolished under a separate project (as discussed under *Cumulative Impacts*, below). Under the Project, Building 21 would be constructed and would be visible from Hamilton Park (Figure 3.2-10b). A more expansive view of the onsite building would be provided compared with existing conditions; however, the new building would be shorter than the existing tower. Additionally, the building would blend in with its surroundings because of the vegetation on its rooftop deck.

Overall Degradation of Existing Visual Character or Quality. The proposed development at the Project site would increase compatibility with the surroundings by creating contiguous landscaped areas and office buildings that would reflect a similar architectural design. The existing site consists of outdated industrial and office buildings. The Project would construct new buildings that would be a continuation of the existing pattern of office buildings east and west of the Project site. Implementation of the Project would change the visual character of the Project site but would not significantly alter the quality of the surrounding areas because of the dense perimeter vegetation, trees, flat topography, and modern architectural detailing on the exterior of the buildings. Similar to the existing buildings, the roofs of the proposed buildings would be visible from surrounding areas. However, the proposed buildings would include rooftop decks with landscaping. This would not change overall views to the extent that the visual quality of the area and public view corridors would be substantially degraded.

The proposed development would support the area's transition to office campuses and increase consistency and accessibility with its surroundings by creating contiguous landscaped areas and providing bicycle and pedestrian connections. In addition, as discussed above, CDP approval for the Project would include review of the architectural plans by the Planning Commission. However, because Building 22 and the hotel currently include only massing studies, those buildings would need additional review in the future by the Planning Commission. The CDP for the Project would enable the Planning Commission to approve the architectural plans for the other buildings. The proposed buildings would alter the visual character of the Project site but would not significantly change the

character of the surrounding areas because of perimeter landscaping and flat topography. Although the upper levels of the proposed buildings would be visible from surrounding areas, this would not change overall views to the extent that the visual character of the area would be substantially different. Therefore, the Project would have a ***less-than-significant*** impact with respect to overall degradation of existing visual character and quality—and may be considered an improvement compared with existing conditions.

Impact AES-3: New Sources of Light and Glare. The Project could create a new source of substantial light or glare that could adversely affect daytime or nighttime views in the area. (LTS/M)

Exterior Lighting. Exterior lighting at the Project site is limited because the buildings are currently only partially occupied. Street lighting is not provided along Bayfront Expressway or Chilco Street. However, some security lighting is currently present at the Project site, adjacent to building entrances and within the parking lots. Overall, the Project would add lighting to an area that is not currently a significant source of nighttime lighting.

Because of the size of the Project, construction would result in extended work hours. The additional work hours would require, in some cases, construction site lighting for safety reasons. Lighting used during construction would include generator light towers with up to four metal halide lamps. These light towers would not extend higher than 32 feet. Per requirements outlined by the Project contractor,¹¹ the light towers would be located within 600 feet of the property line and oriented toward the Project site to reduce light spillage onto adjacent properties. Any lighting units located on the floor level or roof of the building would have their luminaries focused downward to avoid offsite illumination and be oriented away from nearby residential units. Lighting would be turned off at the end of each workday, no later than 15 minutes after the conclusion of any exterior work, or 10:00 p.m. By adhering to these construction techniques, which would be identified as conditions of approval within the CDP, lighting impacts during construction would be ***less than significant***.

Proposed development at the Project site would result in nighttime light from vehicles, interior circulation areas, parking lots, buildings, rooftop decks, and security features. The Project site would be more visible from Bayfront Expressway and Chilco Street, and lighting could be a nuisance or distraction for motorists. Increased lighting at the Project site could also affect residents in the Belle Haven neighborhood. The increase in building heights would make the lights more visible to motorists and residents; however, some of the building lights would be screened by the perimeter vegetation and potentially by window overhangs or awnings.

Because of the urbanized nature of surrounding areas to the east, south, and west, a significant amount of ambient nighttime lighting currently exists, thereby affecting views of the nighttime sky. Building 20 in particular, to the east, contributes to nighttime lighting in the immediate vicinity. However, areas to the north, which include the salt ponds, marshes, Refuge, and Bay, contain no nighttime lighting. The lighting performance standards set by the U.S. Green Building Council under the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) program would be followed (e.g., standards regarding lighting specifications, shielding techniques, automatic lighting controls, light pollution). Nonetheless, the increase in building heights and onsite activity would result in a ***potentially significant*** increase in lighting in the area.

¹¹ Level 10 Construction. Memo to Jeremy Oliver, project manager. Subject: Work Hours. October 26, 2015.



Graphics ... 00296.15 (8-22-2016)

Source: Gehry Partners, LLP, 2016.



Figure 3.2-10
Hamilton Park facing Northwest (Viewpoint 7)
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Glare from Buildings. Glare is caused by light reflections from pavement, vehicles, and building materials, such as reflective glass and polished surfaces. During daylight hours, the amount of glare depends on the intensity and direction of sunlight. Glare can create hazards for motorists and be a nuisance for bicyclists and pedestrians as well as other sensitive viewers. With implementation of the Project, highly reflective surfaces at the Project site could pose the most significant impacts along major road corridors, such as Bayfront Expressway and Chilco Street. At this time, the specific types of architectural materials and glass surfaces are unknown. Because building material specifics are currently unknown, it is conservatively assumed that the Project would result in **potentially significant** glare impacts.

Vehicle Headlights. The Project site would include surface parking lots as well as parking areas under building podiums. Light and glare from vehicle headlights and windshields at these locations could be a nuisance to motorists and adjacent uses. In particular, the proposed surface parking lot south of Building 22 could result in light spillage onto the Belle Haven neighborhood. However, dense perimeter landscaping is proposed along the perimeter of the Project site that would effectively block light from vehicle headlights that might spill onto adjacent areas. Therefore, the Project would result in **less-than-significant** impacts from vehicle headlight spillage.

MITIGATION MEASURES. Implementation of Mitigation Measures AES-3.1 and AES-3.2 would reduce potential light and glare impacts of the Project to a **less-than-significant** level.

AES-3.1: Design Lighting to Meet Minimum Safety and Security Standards. Concurrent with the building permit submittal, the Project Sponsor shall incorporate lighting design specifications to meet minimum safety and security standards. The comprehensive site lighting plans shall be subject to review and approval by the City's Community Development Department, Planning Division, prior to building permit issuance for the first building on the site.

The following measures shall be included in all lighting plans.

- Luminaries shall be designed with cutoff-type fixtures or features that cast low-angle illumination to minimize incidental spillover of light onto adjacent private properties. Fixtures that shine light upward or horizontally shall not spill any light onto adjacent private properties.
- Luminaries shall provide accurate color rendering and natural light qualities. Low-pressure sodium and high-pressure sodium fixtures that are not color-corrected shall not be used, except as part of an approved sign or landscape plan.
- Luminary mountings shall be downcast and pole heights minimized to reduce the potential for backscatter into the nighttime sky and incidental spillover onto adjacent properties and undeveloped open space. Light poles shall be no higher than 20 feet. Luminary mountings shall be treated with non-glare finishes.

AES-3.2: Treat Reflective Surfaces. The Project Sponsor shall ensure the application of a low-emissivity coating on exterior glass surfaces of proposed structures. The low-emissivity coating shall reduce the reflection of visible light that strikes the exterior glass and prevent interior light from being emitted brightly through the glass.

Impact AES-4: New Sources of Shadow. Shadows cast by the proposed structures would not shade open spaces or public areas for an extended period. (LTS)

Significant shading of public open spaces could be considered an adverse impact if new shadows were to change the usability or comfort of a space. Open spaces, pathways, plazas, and courtyards within the Project site are considered to be private open spaces. Although the publicly accessible open space south of Buildings 21 and 22 would be open to the public, it would still be owned by the Project Sponsor. Therefore, this area is not considered in the analysis. The Bay Trail, which is located north of Bayfront Expressway, is the closest public area to the Project site that could be affected.

Shadow simulations have been created for critical periods of the day on March 20 (spring equinox), June 21 (summer solstice), September 23 (fall equinox), and December 22 (winter solstice) to depict the maximum and minimum amount of shadow that would be cast by the Project at the site. Shadow impacts are most noticeable during the day between 9:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. To estimate shade effects throughout the year, shadow simulations include 9:00 a.m., 12:00 p.m., and 3:00 p.m. The shadow simulations are presented in Figures 3.2-11 through 3.2-14.

As shown in the figures, no offsite public parks, open space areas, or private residences would be affected by shadows that would be cast by the proposed office buildings. The only shadows that would be cast offsite by the Project would be toward Bayfront Expressway. At 3:00 p.m. on the winter solstice (Figure 3.2-14), the Project would cast minor shadows onto some eastbound lanes of Bayfront Expressway. However, impacts on Bayfront Expressway would be less than significant because the shadows would be noticeable by motorists for only a few seconds. As shown in Figure 3.2-14, shadows from the existing electrical transmission towers at the Project site would reach the Bay Trail. However, these shadows are an existing condition and not a result of the Project. The proposed multi-use bicycle/pedestrian bridge that would connect the Project site to the Bay Trail would cast shadows on the trail during all seasons. However, the bridge would not shade a significant area, and users of the Bay Trail would be exposed to these shadows only momentarily as they bike or walk past the area.

As depicted in Figures 3.2-11 through 3.2-14, shadows from the proposed buildings would be restricted to the Project site during the summer solstice as well as the spring and fall equinoxes, resulting in no shadow spillage onto adjacent properties or public spaces. The shadows from the buildings during the winter solstice would extend to just north of Bayfront Expressway, but as explained above, this would not be considered significant because it would not affect public open space. Although the proposed multi-use bicycle/pedestrian bridge would shade Bayfront Expressway and the Bay Trail, the structure would not shade a significant area, and shadows would be experienced by motorists and Bay Trail users only briefly. As such, the Project would result in *less-than-significant* shadow impacts.

Cumulative Impacts

The geographic context for cumulative aesthetics impacts is generally confined to areas that are visible from the Project site or have views of the Project site. Therefore, the cumulative context includes the Project site plus adjacent areas along Bayfront Expressway and in the Belle Haven neighborhood. Proposed projects in the City on the other side of US 101 are not included because distance, flat topography, and intervening development serve as visual barriers between the two areas. Therefore, this cumulative analysis includes development north and east of US 101.

Cumulative impacts are addressed only for those thresholds that would result in a Project-related impact, whether it be less than significant, significant, or significant and unavoidable. If the Project would result in no impact with respect to a particular threshold, it would not contribute to a cumulative impact. Therefore, no analysis would be required. The Project would have no impact related to scenic



March 20, 9 am



March 20, 12 pm



March 20, 3 pm



Graphics... 00296.15 (3-22-2016)

Source: Gehry Partners, LLP, 2016.



Figure 3.2-11
Spring Equinox (March 20) Shadows
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June 21, 9 am



June 21, 12 pm



June 21, 3 pm



Graphics ... 00296.15 (3-22-2016)

Source: Gehry Partners, LLP, 2016.



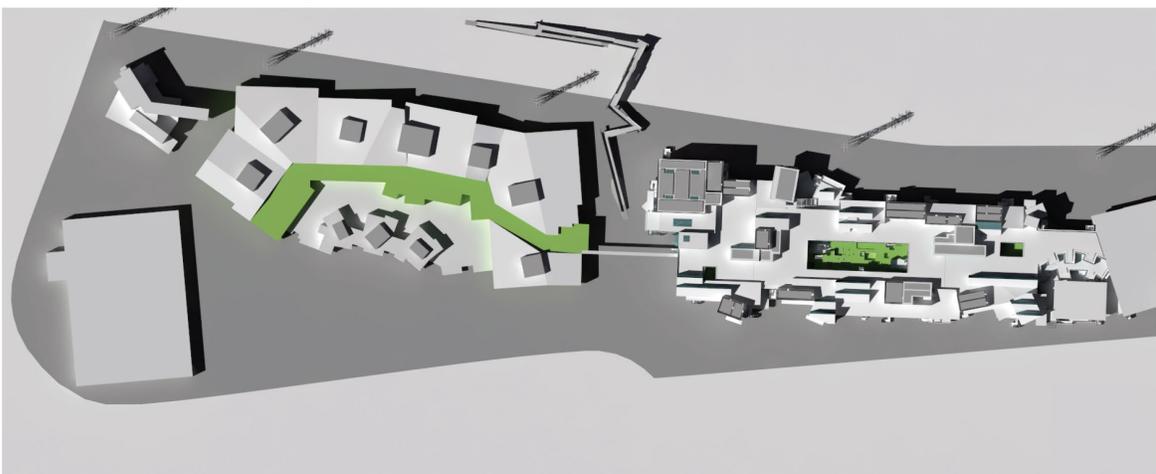
Figure 3.2-12
Summer Solstice (June 21) Shadows
Facebook Campus Expansion Project Draft EIR



September 23, 9 am



September 23, 12 pm



September 23, 3 pm



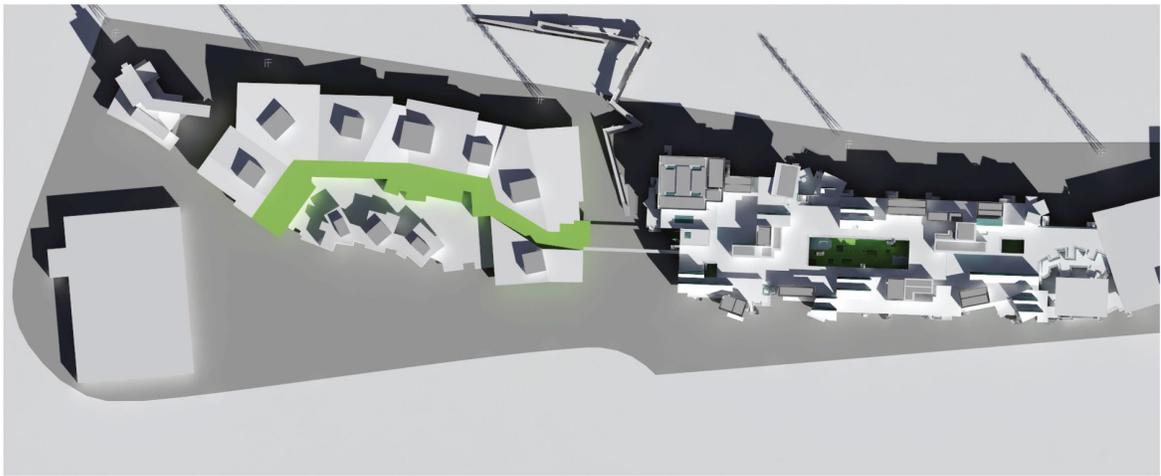
No Scale

Graphics... 00296.15 (3-22-2016)

Source: Gehry Partners, LLP, 2016.



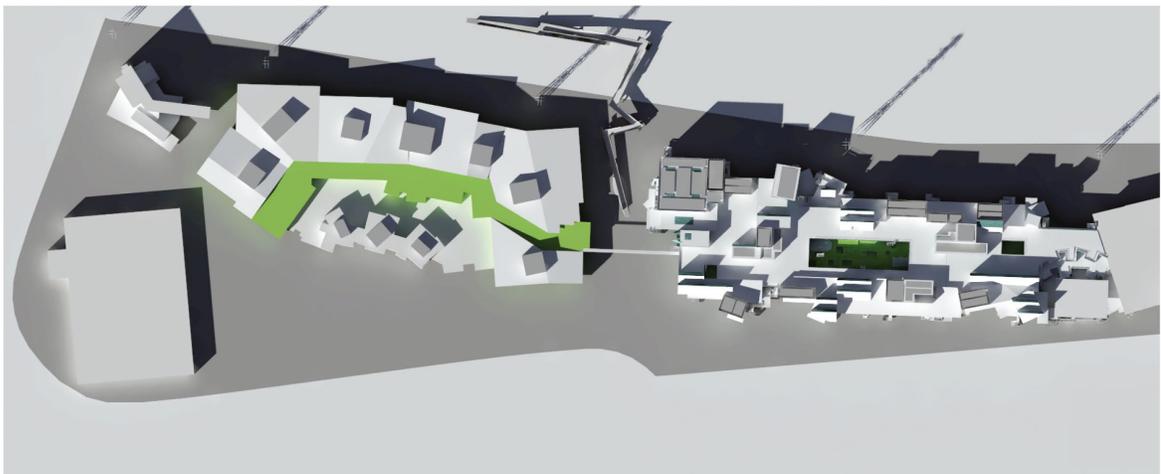
Figure 3.2-13
Fall Equinox (September 23) Shadows
Facebook Campus Expansion Project Draft EIR



December 22, 9 am



December 22, 12 pm



December 22, 3 pm



Graphics ... 00296.15 (3-22-2016)

Source: Gehry Partners, LLP, 2016.



Figure 3.2-14
Winter Solstice (December 22) Shadows
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resources along a State Scenic Highway because these areas would not be affected by the Project, as discussed above in *Impacts Not Evaluated in Detail*. Therefore, these topics are not considered for cumulative impacts. This cumulative analysis examines the effects of the Project in the relevant geographic area in combination with other current projects, probable future projects, and projected future growth.

Impact C-AES-1: Cumulative Degradation of Aesthetics. The Project, in combination with other foreseeable development in the surrounding area, would not have a significant cumulative impact on visual character or the quality of scenic vistas or public view corridors and would not cumulatively contribute to new sources of light, glare, or shadows. This cumulative impact is less than significant. (LTS)

Scenic Vistas

The Project site is visible from the BCDC Public Shoreline Trail, the Bay Trail, and Bayfront Park. Because of flat topography, distance, intervening vegetation and development, and the relatively low-scale characteristics of the other proposed projects in the area, it is unlikely that the other projects would be visible from scenic vistas. These projects include demolition of Buildings 307–309 (6), Building 23 (5), Chilco Street Improvements (14), the proposed Dumbarton Trail (15), Commonwealth Corporate Campus (7), New Magnet High School (11), 777 Hamilton Avenue (29), 1283 Willow Road (3), 1221 Willow Road (30), and 1315 O'Brien Drive (12). Therefore, the Project, in combination with these projects, would not result in a cumulative impact on scenic views and vistas. However, the large-scale development of Menlo Gateway (4) along Bayfront Expressway could be visible from all three scenic areas. The existing Project site and the Menlo Gateway site include prior manufacturing buildings, warehouses, and unkempt land adjacent to newer office developments. Both projects would enhance the project sites with modern buildings and increased landscaping. From the BCDC Public Shoreline Trail and the Bay Trail segment adjacent to the Project site, the buildings at the Project site would be in the middleground, while the buildings at the Menlo Gateway site would appear in the background. From Bayfront Park and the Bay Trail segment across Bayfront Expressway, buildings at the Menlo Gateway site would appear in the middleground, while the Project buildings would appear in the background. The Project site and the Menlo Gateway site are separated by approximately 0.5 mile. As such, depending on the viewpoint, closer development would appear as a dominant feature, while other development would appear to blend with surrounding vegetation, Bayfront Expressway, intervening structures, and the general surroundings. Although the Project and Menlo Gateway would add height, bulk, and massing in the Project vicinity, this change would not result in a significant impact on a scenic vista. The scenic vistas from identified sensitive viewer locations are mainly facing north, away from the Project site and the Menlo Gateway development; therefore, the proposed buildings would not significantly alter the scenic vistas. Cumulative impacts are considered *less than significant*.

Visual Character or Quality from Public View Corridors

As discussed above, only projects that are in the immediate vicinity of the Project site could contribute to degradation of the visual character or quality of the existing setting. The majority of the projects listed in Table 3.0-3 in Section 3.0, *Environmental Impact Analysis*, are too far away to combine with the Project and degrade visual character or quality. The existing public view corridors include Bayfront Expressway, Chilco Street, the Belle Haven neighborhood, and Hamilton Park; views from the BCDC Public Shoreline Trail, the Bay Trail, and Bayfront Park are analyzed above.

As shown in Figure 3.0-1, projects within the vicinity of these public view corridors include Buildings 307-309 (6), Building 23 (5), Chilco Street Improvements (14), the Dumbarton Trail (15), Commonwealth Corporate Campus (7), Menlo Gateway (4), New Magnet High School (11), 777 Hamilton Avenue (29), 1283 Willow Road (3), 1221 Willow Road (30), and 1315 O'Brien Drive (12). However, several of these projects would not be visible, together with the Project site, from a single view corridor because of the distance between the Project site and these other projects, intervening development, flat topography, and the low-scale characteristics of the other projects. Thus, for purposes of this analysis, the only projects that could be visible, together with the Project site, from the Belle Haven neighborhood and Chilco Street are Building 23 (5), Buildings 307-309 (6), Chilco Street Improvements (14), and the proposed Dumbarton Trail (15), which are considered together in this cumulative analysis. As summarized below, all three projects would be located in proximity to or on the Project site and result in redevelopment of an urban area. However, none of these projects would result in the construction of new structures.

Although Building 23 (5) is located on the southwestern portion of Project site, it is considered a separate development project. In December 2014, the Planning Commission approved a use permit to convert Building 23 to office uses without adding any net new square footage. In addition to interior modifications, Building 23 would include exterior renovation with updated colors, materials, and window glazing. The area around the building would be enhanced to include new landscaping, an outdoor deck with trellis, a covered shuttle stop, and an entry feature near the main entrance. Building 23 and the Project buildings would both be visible from Chilco Street to the south and west and private residences in the Belle Haven neighborhood to the south. This project would renovate an outdated warehouse building, turning it into a modern office building. Similar to the Project, Building 23 would be renovated by the Project Sponsor; therefore, the Project and Building 23 would be expected to complement each other upon completion. The site plan for the Project and Building 23 would increase unity with each other and the surroundings by creating a contiguous building mass and landscaped areas that would reflect an architectural design that would be similar to (although not exactly the same as) that of the existing built environment. Thus, Building 23 would not be expected to substantially degrade the visual character or quality of its surroundings. Therefore, Building 23 and the Project would not result in cumulative impacts.

Demolition of Buildings 307-309 (6), which were located on the Project site at the time of the NOP, is also considered a separate project. As discussed above, Building 307 includes a tall manufacturing tower, which is visible throughout the Project site and from offsite locations. Demolition of this building would change the visual appearance of the Project site and this feature would no longer be visible. With construction of the Project, Building 21 would be constructed in its place. However, the project that would just demolish these buildings would not combine with other projects to result in a cumulative impact.

The Chilco Street Improvements (14) would redesign the Chilco Street frontage adjacent to the Project site. This project would construct a new two-way, 12-foot-wide separated Class 1 bike route; a Class 2 bike path; a 5- to 6-foot-wide pedestrian path; new fencing; and a public access easement. In addition, the project would include the removal of existing trees that are in poor condition and those where required for bicycle and pedestrian improvements. It is currently anticipated that 84 trees would be removed, 42 of which are heritage trees. Trees would be replaced consistent with the City's Heritage Tree Ordinance, and new groundcover plantings would be included along the entire frontage. The project would revitalize a portion of Chilco Street and integrate it with the surrounding area. The proposed fencing and vegetation along Chilco Street would help to screen the site and the proposed buildings, as seen from the south. Therefore, the improvements would lessen the visual impacts and would not create a new significant impact.

The proposed Dumbarton Trail (15) would provide a 4.5-mile-long bicycling and walking path adjacent to the current Dumbarton Rail Corridor. The concept for this potential trail project, which was developed by the Project Sponsor, is being proposed as a discrete project. This project could require the removal of some existing vegetation that currently provides a visual buffer between the Belle Haven neighborhood and areas north of the Dumbarton Rail Corridor. However, the visual character as seen from Belle Haven streets is not expected to be affected by the trail project because of intervening structures and vegetation. Therefore, the proposed Dumbarton Trail and the Project would not be visible from public view corridors in the Belle Haven neighborhood, resulting in less-than-significant cumulative impacts.

As described above, there has been a trend in the Project area toward redeveloping some existing industrial and warehousing uses to create corporate office campuses. The Project would provide increased unity with its existing and planned surroundings by creating contiguous landscape areas and buildings that would reflect a similar architectural design. Other development that could be seen from the same public view corridors would complement the Project and help integrate it with the surrounding office/industrial park and the Belle Haven neighborhood. Therefore, the Project, together with Building 23, the Chilco Street Improvements, and the Dumbarton Trail, would not result in substantial degradation of visual character or quality in the surrounding areas, and the cumulative impact would be *less than significant*.

Light and Glare

Other development in the area could include direct illumination of project structures, features, streets, and/or walkways and increase ambient nighttime lighting levels in the area. The projects could also result in increased light and glare from vehicle headlights and be large enough to contribute to a cumulative lighting impact. Building surfaces can also increase glare if they are reflective or if they include large expanses of windows. However, because the other projects would all involve redevelopment of urban sites that already generate light and glare and the land uses proposed are not anticipated to be particularly light intensive, development of the other projects is not anticipated to significantly increase nighttime lighting and glare conditions in the area. The proposed Dumbarton Trail would not introduce substantial new permanent sources of light or glare because it is anticipated that only minor lighting associated with nighttime illumination would be added to the trail. The Chilco Street Improvements would most likely add lighting to a street where no lighting currently exists. However, surrounding developments and nearby streets include street and vehicle lights; a significant change with respect to light and glare is not expected. The Project would implement Mitigation Measures AES-3.1 and AES-3.2, which would reduce the Project's contribution to less than significant. Thus, cumulative impacts from nighttime lighting and glare would be *less than significant*.

Shadows

Shadows from proposed development at the Project site would extend over a small geographic area, and no foreseeable projects, in combination with the Project, would result in shadow impacts. Although shadows from identified projects would not overlap with shadows from the Project, there could be an overall increase in shadows in the area. The majority of the mixed-use, office, and residential projects are not expected to increase shadows in the area substantially because of limited mass and height. Shadow impacts on the Project site would be restricted to the interior of the site and a small portion of Bayfront Expressway and the Bay Trail because of the multi-use bicycle/pedestrian bridge. As shown in Figures 3.2-11 through 3.2-14, shadows from Building 23, which is located on the Project site, would not combine with shadows from buildings proposed by the Project. Shadows from the Project on the Bay Trail would be limited and would not adversely affect recreationists while using the trail. Therefore, the Project's contribution to this cumulative impact is considered *less than cumulatively considerable*.

