

4. Aesthetics and Parking Discussion

As discussed in Chapter 1, Introduction, this document has been prepared in accordance with SB 226. SB 743 provides some streamlining options similar as those presented in SB 226. The SB 743 streamlining options were not employed in this document but other provisions of SB 743 were deemed to be applicable. Specifically, SB 743 provides that, “aesthetics and parking impacts of a residential, mixed-use residential, or employment center project on an infill site within a transit priority area shall not be considered significant impacts on the environment.” Aesthetics and parking will no longer be considered in determining if a project has the potential to result in significant environmental effects provided a project meets all of the following three criteria:

1. The project is in a transit priority area;¹ and
2. The project is on an infill site;² and
3. The project is residential, mixed-use residential, or an employment center.³

The Project meets these criteria. Criterion 1 is met due to the Project’s location. As discussed in Chapter 2, Project Description, the Menlo Park Caltrain Station is less than 300 feet south of the Project site, between Alma Street and El Camino Real, providing daily service between San Francisco to Gilroy. Criterion 2 is met due to the adjacent land uses, as discussed in Chapter 2, Project Description and illustrated in Figure 2-1. As discussed therein, there is a former assisted living facility to the north (currently being converted to a hotel); single- and multi-family residential units east of the Caltrain right-of-way; the Menlo Park Caltrain Station and mixed-use development (including residential units) south of Oak Grove Avenue; and the El Camino Real commercial corridor to the west. The northeast corner of El Camino Real/Oak Grove Avenue, immediately adjacent to the Project site, includes a Chevron gas station and a restaurant/café. Downtown Menlo Park is approximately 0.1-mile southwest of the Project site, separated from the site by El Camino Real. Finally, Criterion 3 is met due to the proposed land uses at the Project site, which consist of mixed-use residential, as well as the proposed FAR of 1.5, which is greater than the 0.75 as required by SB 743.

Due to the Project’s consistency with SB 743 criteria, aesthetics and parking issues are not considered to be impacts under CEQA. For informational purposes, the following provides a discussion of the aesthetics and parking impacts with implementation of the Project.

¹ Transit Priority Area is defined as an area that is within 0.5-mile of a major transit stop that is existing or planned, if the project is scheduled to be completed within the planning horizon included in an adopted federal Transportation Improvement Program. PRC § 21099 (a)(7).

² Infill Site is defined as a lot located within an urban area that has been previously developed, or on a vacant site where at least 75 percent of the perimeter of the site adjoins or is separated only by an improved public right-of-way from parcels that are developed with qualified urban uses. PRC § 21099 (a)(4).

³ Employment Center is defined as a project located on property zoned for commercial use with a floor-area ratio no less than 0.75 and that is located within a transit priority area. PRC § 21099 (a)(1).

Aesthetics

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 Jose on the San Francisco Peninsula (Peninsula). Menlo Park is one of over a dozen cities located on the flatter portions of the western and southern margins of the San Francisco Bay (Bay). The municipalities of Atherton and Redwood City border Menlo Park to the north, and Palo Alto and East Palo Alto border Menlo Park to the south.

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, tend 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 mainly concentrated 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 to the north and east of US 101. The portion of the mountain range visible from Menlo Park and the adjacent cities is Skyline Ridge, rising over 2,400 feet in height and located approximately 5 miles southwest of the Project site.

Project Vicinity

The Project site is generally bound by residential and commercial development along Glenwood Avenue to the north, the Caltrain and Garwood Way rights-of-way to the east, Oak Grove Avenue to the south, and El Camino Real to the west.⁴ Regional access includes US 101, approximately 1.6 miles to the east, and State Route (SR) 82 (El Camino Real), which is adjacent to the Project site to the west. In addition, the Menlo Park Caltrain Station is located less than 300 feet to the south of the Project site, between Alma Street and El Camino Real, providing daily service between San Francisco to Gilroy. The mix of developed uses in the immediate Project vicinity, including commercial, retail, and transit-oriented development, influences the visual and urban design character of the Project site. The Project site is part of an urbanized, largely built-out portion of the City adjacent to downtown and the Caltrain corridor. The following is a description of the visual character of the areas surrounding the Project site.

Areas to the north of the Project site are characterized by one- to two-story commercial buildings, a gas station, a vacant multi-story former assisted living facility along Glenwood Avenue (a proposed hotel), and associated surface parking lots. The neighborhood to the north of Glenwood Avenue consists mainly of detached single-family dwellings along tree-lined streets.

Directly to the east of the Project site is the Caltrain corridor, which is separated from the Project site by a chain-link fence and sparse vegetation. Beyond the Caltrain tracks, the neighborhood to the east

⁴ For descriptive purposes, true northwest is Project North with El Camino Real running in a north-south direction and Oak Grove Avenue running in an east-west direction.

consists of detached single-family and multi-family dwellings. Most of these residences are one- to two-stories in height. This area includes buildings with a diversity of architectural styles and ages.

A portion of downtown Menlo Park, including the Menlo Park Caltrain Station, is located immediately south of the Project site, across Oak Grove Avenue. This district is characterized by mixed-use buildings (commercial, retail, and residential) up to three stories in height and public plazas. This area comprises a more urban environment than is found in surrounding neighborhoods. The southern side of Oak Grove Avenue is lined with telephone poles, wires, and street trees, while sidewalks are present on both sides of Oak Grove Avenue.

The commercial district on both sides of El Camino Real to the west of the Project site is dominated by car-oriented businesses with adjacent surface parking, in addition to more traditional one- and two-story street-front retail and mixed-use buildings. Both sides of El Camino Real and the center median are lined with mature street trees and sidewalks are present for pedestrian-oriented activities. The northeast corner of the El Camino Real/Oak Grove Avenue intersection, immediately adjacent to the Project site to the west, includes a Chevron gas station and a restaurant/café.

Project Site

As described in the *Project Description*, the Project site includes 11 parcels of land between El Camino Real and the Caltrain corridor. The Project site includes the former Derry Lane Site (3.5 acres), the former 1300 El Camino Real Site (3.4 acres), and 1258 El Camino Real (0.3 acres). With land dedications for streets, the net Project area would be approximately 6.4 acres. In general, the Project site is flat and almost entirely paved; approximately 76.4 percent of the Project site consists of impervious surfaces. Derry Lane bisects the southern portion of the Project site and features architecturally outdated commercial buildings and associated parking lots on either side. The rest of the Project site is surrounded by chainlink fencing with barbed wire and is inaccessible to the public.

The majority of the Project site either consists of vacant land and unoccupied or under-occupied buildings; out of the seven existing buildings, four are occupied. The largely vacant site represents a visual gap in the streetscape as seen from El Camino Real. The Project site's visual isolation from surrounding land uses is increased by the location of the Caltrain tracks to the east of the site, which separate the site from residential areas further to the east. Landscaping is minimal at the Project site with approximately 37 trees, all of which are considered to be Heritage Trees.

Lighting on the Project site is limited due to the vacant nature of the Project site. Street lighting is present along El Camino Real and Oak Grove Avenue in free-standing light poles or mounted onto telephone poles in consistent intervals. Minimal street lighting is located on Derry Lane; however, some accent light fixtures are mounted on the adjacent buildings.

For discussion purposes, the existing Project site is divided into three areas, which are currently on separate parcels, but owned by the Project Sponsor.

Derry Lane Site. The 3.5-acre Derry Lane Site, as shown in Figure 4-1a, is in the southern portion of the Project site. This area includes eight individual parcels, one public street (Derry Lane), a utility right-of-way, six buildings, and associated parking areas. The six buildings total approximately 22,300 sf and 2 buildings are currently unoccupied. All buildings are 1 to 1.5 stories in height. A former surface parking lot for a car dealership occupied the northeastern portion of the Derry Lane Site; however, this area is now vacant and consists of pervious gravel surfaces and ruderal vegetation, as depicted in Figure 4-1b. A chainlink fence with barb wire surrounds this portion of the site.

The buildings located along Oak Grove Avenue are the most prominent uses on the site, because they are immediately adjacent to the street, are visible from commercial areas to the south, and are in the vicinity of the Caltrain Station. These buildings are closely spaced and have an intimate relationship with the sidewalk and the street, with the possible exception of the car wash building in the southeast portion of the site. The Foster's Freeze has a service window facing Oak Grove Avenue, and generates a substantial amount of pedestrian traffic. The Oak Grove Avenue frontage of the Project site appears as a traditional mid-century, pedestrian-accessible commercial strip, which is visually inconsistent with the newer mixed-use, multi-story buildings and plaza to the south of Oak Grove Avenue.

Derry Lane itself is a quiet, secondary street that provides vehicular access to the rear of the buildings facing Oak Grove Avenue and front access to the buildings fronting Derry Lane. Derry Lane is characterized by on-street parking, trash receptacles, and the fenced backyards of two of the buildings fronting Oak Grove Avenue. A few palm trees are located on the northern side of the street; otherwise, Derry Lane features no street trees. Sidewalks are not continuous and are mainly only featured on the northern side of the street, limiting pedestrian activity.

1300 El Camino Real Site. The 3.4-acre 1300 El Camino Real Site is located in the northern portion of the Project site. This area formerly featured five buildings constructed in 1967 and associated parking areas used for a Cadillac dealership. However, these buildings were demolished in April 2010 in anticipation of the mixed-use 1300 El Camino Real Project. The building foundations and paved surfaces were not demolished or removed and are currently visible from surrounding areas. Therefore, as shown in Figure 4-1c, the existing site is vacant of buildings and consists of impervious surfaces and ruderal vegetation. A large redwood tree is located in the northwestern portion of the Project site.

1258 El Camino Real Site. The 0.3-acre 1258 El Camino Real Site is located toward the center of the Project site, to the north of the Derry Lane Site and to the south of the 1300 El Camino Real Site. This site includes a 3,500-sf, one-story building setback from El Camino Real by a paved driveway, a surface parking lot, and mature trees. Figure 4-1d shows the existing 1258 El Camino Real Site.

Onsite Visibility

Views from the Project site are constrained by surrounding development and trees. Views to the north and south extend to buildings along Glenwood Avenue and Oak Grove Avenue, respectively. However, the southern side of Oak Grove Avenue is lined with telephone poles, wires, and street trees, buffering some views of the surrounding buildings as seen from the Project site. Trees, vegetation, and a privacy wall block some of the views to the east. Because the northern portion of the site does not contain structures, limited views are available of the Santa Cruz Mountains to the west. However, no views within or around the Project site are designated as scenic views by local, state, or federal agencies.

Public View Corridors

Although significant portions of the Project site are visible from public streets, the whole Project site is not visible in its entirety from a single, ground-level vantage point due to its large size, flat topography, and surrounding low-rise buildings. However, views of the Project site are available from the streets that border the Project site: El Camino Real, Oak Grove Avenue, and Garwood Way. In addition, the Project site is visible from the Caltrain corridor. In addition, the Project site is visible from adjacent properties, as shown in Figure 4-2a.

Views from El Camino Real. From El Camino Real, views of the Project site are bounded by commercial buildings to the north and south. However, the largely vacant site represents a visual gap in the



a. Derry Lane Facing East



b. Derry Lane Site Facing Northeast



c. 1300 El Camino Real Facing Northeast



d. 1258 El Camino Real Facing Northeast

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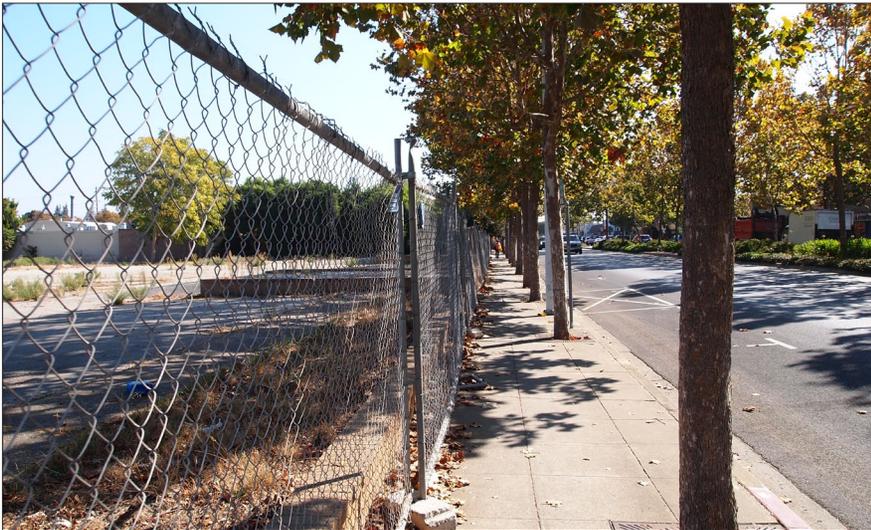
Figure 4-1
Existing Project Site
1300 El Camino Real Greenheart Project



a. Project Site and 1246 El Camino Real Facing North



b. Project Site from El Camino Real Facing North



c. Project Site From El Camino Real Facing South



d. Project Site from Oak Grove Avenue Facing Northeast

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Figure 4-2
Existing Project Site from Surrounding Areas
1300 El Camino Real Greenheart Project

streetscape as seen from El Camino Real. Facing the Project site, no background views are visible from El Camino Real. Foreground views of the Project site heading north and south along El Camino Real are characterized by street trees that line both sides of the street and the center median, as depicted in Figures 4-2b and 4-2c. Some existing trees and vegetation at the Project site are also visible. Therefore, the concentration of vegetation in this part of the Project site and the surrounding vicinity provide a visual barrier. Through the breaks in vegetation, the Project site appears as a large vacant lot with minor activity in the southern portion. The southern portion of the Project site is mostly obstructed by commercial development along the east side of the street. Limited views of the site are available via parking lots and driveways.

Views from Oak Grove Avenue. Views of the Project site from Oak Grove Avenue include buildings adjacent to the north side of the street. Views of the Project site interior are available along Derry Lane and the driveway and parking lot adjacent to Foster's Freeze. Street trees on the southern side of Oak Grove Avenue block some of the views of the Project site from this area facing north. Views from Oak Grove Avenue are shown in Figure 4-2b.

Views from Garwood Way. Views of the Project site from along Garwood Way are partially obstructed by the currently vacant assisted living facility to the north and fencing and vegetation along the south side of the street. From a pedestrian level, buildings within the Project site are barely visible and the site appears to be largely vacant. The rear of commercial buildings that front Derry Lane can be seen from the Garwood Way terminus. Background views from the terminus of Garwood Way include the tops of the Santa Cruz Mountains, beyond the Project site to the west.

Views from the Caltrain Corridor. Passengers sitting on the west side of the northbound trains from Menlo Park have fleeting views of the Project site. The foreground views are characterized by a vacant lot and the commercial buildings along Derry Lane while background views include channelized views of the Santa Cruz Mountains.

Discussion

a. Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?

Effects of the Project

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 of a significant historic or architectural feature (e.g., views of a historic tower). A scenic vista is a location that offers a high quality, harmonious, and visually interesting view. The City does not have any officially designated scenic views or vistas; however, scenic vistas could include views of scenic water areas (such as the Bay and creeks) and open space areas.

The Project site is generally flat and contains limited views of surrounding areas due to topography, existing buildings, and trees. Views of the Santa Cruz Mountain Range are limited and are mainly obstructed by surrounding buildings and mature trees. In addition, these views are not identified as scenic vistas or views in the General Plan, the Menlo Park El Camino Real/Downtown Specific Plan (Specific Plan), or by regulatory agencies with jurisdiction over the Project site.

Analysis in the El Camino Real/Downtown Specific Plan EIR

This checklist item was analyzed in the Specific Plan EIR (pages 4.1-16 to 4.1-17) and no mitigation measures were required. The physical conditions, as they relate to scenic vistas, have not changed in the Specific Plan area since the preparation of the Specific Plan EIR. No substantial new information has since been presented that shows more significant effects than those originally analyzed in the Specific Plan EIR and, therefore, there would be no new specific effects as a result of the Project.

- b. Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings along a scenic highway?***

Effects of the Project

The Project would not substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway. The Project site is visible from SR 82 (El Camino Real); however, this state route is not designated as a state scenic highway by the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans). The closest designated State Scenic Highway is I-280,⁵ which is over 3.2 miles southwest from the Project site. No views of the Project site can be seen from any portion of I-280.

Analysis in the El Camino Real/Downtown Specific Plan EIR

This checklist item was analyzed in the Specific Plan EIR (pages 4.1-17 to 4.1-18) and no mitigation measures were required. The physical conditions, as they relate to scenic resources adjacent to a scenic highway, have not changed in the Specific Plan area since the preparation of the Specific Plan EIR. No substantial new information has since been presented that shows more significant effects than those originally analyzed in the Specific Plan EIR and, therefore, there would be no new specific effects as a result of the Project.

- c. Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings?***

Effects of the Project

As discussed above, the Project site is characterized by mid-century retail buildings along Oak Grove Avenue street frontage, a group of unoccupied or underutilized businesses along the north side of Derry Lane and along El Camino Real, and vast expanses of vacant area, particularly as seen from El Camino Real. The existing buildings that front onto Oak Grove Avenue are outdated and unmaintained and the architectural features are not consistent with the newer buildings to the south of Oak Grove Avenue. In addition, the un-activated and underutilized store frontages and limited street trees do not generally make the area a desired pedestrian destination.

Implementation of the Project would result in the demolition of the seven existing buildings along Oak Grove Avenue, Derry Lane, and El Camino Real and the construction of three new buildings. Retail uses would likely be included along Oak Grove Avenue and El Camino Real frontages, enhancing the street-level pedestrian experience. Plazas would be located between the two office buildings off of El Camino Real and at the corner of Oak Grove Avenue and Garwood Way. First floor retail and plazas with outdoor seating areas would create a more interesting and active pedestrian environment. Office and residential uses on the floors above the ground-floor retail would likely

⁵ California Department of Transportation. 2013. *California Scenic Highway Mapping System, San Mateo County*. Available: <http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/LandArch/scenic_highways/index.htm>. Accessed: January 2, 2014.

enhance the visual diversity of the street scene as a result of varying façade treatments. Garwood Way Public Park would be located in the northeastern portion of the Project site, away from El Camino Real and Oak Grove Avenue. This park would be visible from the newly extended Garwood Way and would be open for use by Menlo Park residents.

The Project would remove all of the 37 existing Heritage Trees at the Project site. However, the conceptual landscape plan shows a minimum replacement of a two-to-one ratio, resulting in at least 74 new trees. These trees would be located throughout the Project site, with a high concentration of trees along the site perimeter and at Garwood Way Public Park. A significant amount of trees would be planted at the northern perimeter, blocking the majority of views of the Project site as seen from the adjacent assisted living facility. There are currently 19 City trees along the El Camino Real and Oak Grove Avenue frontages that would remain with implementation of the Project. These mature trees would help screen the upper levels of the proposed buildings as seen from the street.

The Project would result in the development of a mixed-use development on a site that currently contains a relatively low intensity of uses. The three proposed buildings would be two to three stories taller than the buildings that currently exist within the Project site. In addition, building coverage of the Project site would substantially increase over current conditions, resulting in a more urban appearance.

The Project would result in a substantial change in the visual character of the Project due to the increase in development intensity. These changes would be highly visible from streets surrounding the Project site, including El Camino Real (as shown in Figure 4-3), Oak Grove Avenue, Glenwood Avenue, and Garwood Way. Although the Project would increase the height and building mass at the Project site, this would help fill in the streetscape void left by the vacant parcel previously occupied by the auto dealership and the outdated buildings along Oak Grove Avenue and Derry Lane.

Based on the context of the Project site, the scale of the Project would be appropriately scaled to nearby development. The Project site is visually separated from the single-family residential neighborhoods to the north and east by Glenwood Avenue and the Caltrain right-of-way, respectively. The proposed buildings are a size and scale that are similar to existing buildings in downtown Menlo Park, including the mixed-use buildings on the southern side of Oak Grove Avenue.

Taller buildings would be consistent with the Specific Plan's objectives for increased use of underutilized properties with the intent to locate taller buildings toward the station area to encourage greater activity near the downtown and transit center. The Project would be required to adhere to the standards and guidelines outlined in the Specific Plan regarding development intensity (E.3.1), height (E.3.2), setbacks (E.3.3), massing and modulation (E.3.4), signage (D.5.07 and D.5.08), landscaping (D.5.03 through D.5.06), building ground floor, entry, and retail frontage treatment (E.3.5), open space (E.3.6), and building design (E.3.8.05 through E.3.8.11).

The Project would develop parcels within the Project site that are currently vacant or occupied by underutilized, outdated buildings. The new residential and employee population would increase activity within and around the Project site, increasing the visual appeal of El Camino Real and Oak Grove Avenue. Development of the Project site with commercial, retail, and residential uses would result in the creation of a visual transition between the more intense downtown land uses and the less intense residential uses to the north and east of the Project site. In addition, the Project would create a more consistent development pattern with the commercial uses along El Camino Real and downtown Menlo Park.

Analysis in the El Camino Real/Downtown Specific Plan EIR

This checklist item was analyzed in the Specific Plan EIR (pages 4.1-18 to 4.1-29) and no mitigation measures were required. The physical conditions, as they relate to visual character, have not substantially changed in the Specific Plan area since the preparation of the Specific Plan EIR. No substantial new information has since been presented that shows more significant effects than those originally analyzed in the Specific Plan EIR and, therefore, there would be no new specific effects as a result of the Project.

- d. Create a new source of substantial light or glare that would adversely affect daytime or nighttime views in the area?*

Effects of the Project

Exterior Lighting. Exterior lighting would be added to an area where there currently is little to no illumination. The Project site is visible from El Camino Real and Oak Grove Avenue and could be a nuisance or distraction to the motorists if substantial lighting sources were introduced to the area. Increased lighting at the site could also affect residents to the north and east of the Project site.

Proposed development on the Project site would result in nighttime lighting from vehicle headlights, the surface parking lot, security lighting, pedestrian pathway lighting, and the interior illumination of the office and residential buildings. The increase in building heights would make building lights visible to motorists along the adjacent streets and surrounding neighborhoods, but some of the interior lights on the lower floors would be screened by the perimeter vegetation and potentially by window overhangs and awnings. Parking would be provided in underground garages and in a surface parking lot that would be located away from the surrounding streets and would be screened by the proposed buildings. As such, light impacts from automobiles in the proposed parking areas would be limited.

Due to the urbanized nature of the surrounding area, a significant amount of ambient nighttime lighting currently exists, affecting views of the nighttime sky. The lighting performance standards set by Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) would be followed through lighting specifications, shielding techniques, automatic lighting controls, and light pollution considerations. The proposed lighting is expected to be generally consistent with and similar to existing lighting in downtown Menlo Park.

In addition, the Specific Plan includes several guidelines that promote additional lighting for pedestrian safety, decorative purposes, and integration of nighttime character. These include Guidelines D.2.03, D.2.07, D.2.40, D.2.48, D.2.54, D.3.07, D.3.17, D.3.26, D.4.11, D.5.01, D.5.16, and D.5.19. Although lighting would generally be similar to existing lighting in downtown Menlo Park, this lighting could increase levels of nighttime light and glare that could adversely affect nighttime views of the Project site. The Specific Plan recommends Guidelines E.8.3.19 and E.3.8.21, which would help minimize the potential effects of nighttime light and glare. The Specific Plan includes the regulatory standards E.3.8.18 and E.3.8.17 that new development would be required to adhere to.

Glare from Buildings. Glare is caused by light reflections from pavement, vehicles, and building materials, such as reflective glass and polished surfaces. During the daylight hours, the amount of glare depends on the intensity and direction of sunlight. Glare can create hazards to motorists and be a nuisance for bicyclists and pedestrians and other sensitive viewers.



Source: Bar Architects, 2013.

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Figure 4-3
Proposed Project from El Camino Real Facing East
1300 El Camino Real Greenheart Project

With implementation of the Project, highly reflective surfaces at the Project site could pose the most significant impacts along major road corridors, such as El Camino Real and Oak Grove Avenue. At this time, the specific types of building materials and glass surfaces are unknown. However, the Project would implement the following Specific Plan guidelines (E.3.8.07 and E.3.8.08), which emphasize building features that lessen the use of exterior surfaces that create daytime glare beyond what is present from existing buildings.

The Specific Plan also calls for the shading of sidewalks and other public open spaces through the retention of existing trees, which would also contribute to reducing glare effects (Standard D.2.01 and Guidelines D.2.30, D.2.45, D.3.22, and D.5.17) and use of new tree and landscaping planting (Guidelines D.2.04, D.2.21, D.2.26, D.2.40, D.2.49, D.2.54, D.3.06, D.3.09, D.3.16, D.3.25, D.4.05, D.4.11, D.4.14, D.5.03, D.5.04, D.5.18, and D.6.06). These guidelines not only help protect the interior of buildings from direct sun impacts, but also serve to reduce the potential for daytime glare from buildings. In addition, the Specific Plan includes the regulatory standards E.3.5.02 and E.3.5.16 that new development would be required to adhere to.

Analysis in the El Camino Real/Downtown Specific Plan EIR

This checklist item was analyzed in the Specific Plan EIR (pages 4.1-47 to 4.1-48) and no mitigation measures were required. The physical conditions, as they relate to light and glare, have not changed in the Specific Plan area since the preparation of the Specific Plan EIR. No substantial new information has since been presented that shows more significant effects than those originally analyzed in the Specific Plan EIR and, therefore, there would be no new specific effects as a result of the Project.

Parking

Setting

The majority of the Project site includes vacant, previously developed land that is fenced-off, restricting public access. Therefore, parking is limited at the Project site. However, parallel parking is available along Derry Lane, which is unmetered and restricted to two hours from 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Approximately 25 parking spaces are located in a surface lot between 562/564 Oak Grove Avenue (a dance studio) and 580 Oak Grove Avenue (Foster's Freeze). In addition, approximately 10 marked stalls are located in a surface lot between Derry Lane and the Caltrain right-of-way, to the east of 550 Oak Grove Avenue (car wash).

Discussion

- a. Create a significant parking impact if the project would not provide adequate parking to accommodate anticipated project-generated demand?*

Effects of the Project

Parking would be provided at the Project site in a surface parking lot in the northeast corner of the Project site and within two underground parking garages. The surface parking lot would be accessible via Garwood Way and would serve employees of the proposed office buildings. One parking garage with two levels would be located under the office buildings and would be shared by

office employees, visitors of the retail spaces, and onsite residents. Office and retail uses would be allocated 3.8 parking stalls per 1,000 sf of building space for a total of 798 spaces. This would be consistent with the parking guidelines outlined in the Specific Plan.

Another parking garage would be located under the residential buildings and would provide one level of parking for exclusive use by onsite residents. This parking garage would have 1.3 spaces per unit for a total of 273 spaces. The Project site is located within the Station Area Sphere of Influence in the Specific Plan; therefore, the Specific Plan requires one parking space per unit at the Project site. The Project would exceed the Specific Plan parking standards.

Combined, the Project site would include 1,071 parking spaces for all uses. Although some street parking is currently available on Derry Lane and within two surface lots, the majority of the Project site does not allow for parking. Therefore, the Project would result in a significant increase in parking spaces over existing conditions. In addition, the Project would be consistent with the parking standards outlined in Specific Plan.

Analysis in the El Camino Real/Downtown Specific Plan EIR

This checklist item was analyzed in the Specific Plan EIR (pages 4.13-57 to 4.13-60). Although development under the Plan area would affect parking supply in the downtown, the Specific Plan would not result in inadequate parking capacity. Therefore, the parking impacts were considered less than significant and no mitigation measures were required. The physical conditions, as they relate to parking, have not changed significantly in the Specific Plan area since the preparation of the Specific Plan EIR. No substantial new information has since been presented that shows more significant effects than those originally analyzed in the Specific Plan EIR and there would be no new specific effects as a result of the Project.