4.1 AESTHETICS AND VISUAL RESOURCES

4.1.1 INTRODUCTION

The Aesthetics and Visual Resources section of the EIR describes existing visual and aesthetic resources for the proposed project area and the region, and evaluates the potential aesthetic impacts of the project. The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) describes the concept of aesthetic resources in terms of scenic vistas, scenic resources (such as trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a State scenic highway), the existing visual character or quality of the project area, and light and glare impacts. The following impact analysis is based on information drawn from the Federal Highway Administration publication entitled Visual Impact Assessment for Highway Projects,[1] as well as the *Davis General Plan*[2] and associated EIR,[3] and visual simulations prepared for the proposed project by Pinto & Partners.[4]

The Aesthetics and Visual Resources section utilizes a methodology based upon the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) publication Visual Impact Assessment for Highway Projects (1988), combined with the State CEQA Guidelines' Appendix G Checklist questions regarding Aesthetics. Together, these provide the key analytical framework and guide the visual impact assessment process for the proposed project. Although the FHWA guidelines were initially created to provide an analytical framework for identifying and assessing qualitative changes to the visual environment that could be introduced as part of a transportation project, this methodology has become an industry standard for evaluating visual impacts associated with local and state non-transportation projects as well.

4.1.2 EXISTING ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

The following setting information provides a summary of the terminology used in this section and an overview of the existing conditions of the project site and surrounding area in relation to visual resources.

Terminology Used in this Visual Analysis

The following terms are used throughout this section and have important bearing upon properly evaluating aesthetics within the context of the CEQA. As a result, this section begins by providing definitions of key terms, as follows:

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1 Federal Highway Administration. *Visual Impact Assessment for Highway Projects* (Publication No. FHWA-HI-88-054). 1988.
2 City of Davis. *Davis General Plan.* Adopted May 2001. Amended through January 2007.
3 City of Davis. *Program EIR for the City of Davis General Plan Update and Project EIR for Establishment of a New Junior High School*. January 2000.
4 Pinto & Partners. *Visual Simulations.* November 2014.

A *viewshed* is all of the surface area visible from a particular location or sequence of locations (e.g., roadway or trail).

Visual character is descriptive and non-evaluative. Landscape visual character (e.g., water, vegetation, and manmade development) is usually described by identifying landscape types that form visual units. These units include pattern elements (form, line, color, texture) and pattern character (dominance, scale, diversity, continuity). Any change to these visual units cannot be described as positive or negative until compared with the viewer response to change. For instance, if there is public preference for the established visual character of an area's landscape, any change that would contrast the character of the landscape can be evaluated.

Views might be discussed in terms of *foreground, middleground,* and *background* views. Foreground views are those immediately presented to the viewer, and include objects at close range that could tend to dominate the view. The foreground is generally thought to include the area extending 0.25 to 0.5 mile from the viewer. Middleground views occupy the center of the viewshed and tend to include objects that are the center of attention if they are sufficiently large or visually different from adjacent visual features. The middleground zone is generally considered to consist of the area that lies 0.5 to 3.0 miles from the viewer. Background views include distant objects and other objects that make up the horizon and that lie 3 miles and farther from the viewer. Objects in the background fade to obscurity with increasing distance. In the context of the background, the skyline can be an important location because objects above this point are highlighted against the background of the sky.

Scenic vista is defined as an area that is designated, signed, and accessible to the public for the express purposes of viewing and sightseeing. This includes any such areas designated by a federal, State, or local agency.

Scenic highway is defined as any stretch of public roadway that is designated as a scenic corridor by a federal, State, or local agency.

Visual Quality, as defined by the FHWA, has to do with the excellence of the visual experience. The evaluative criteria that the FHWA uses to determine the level of visual quality are Vividness, Intactness, and Unity. FHWA defines Vividness as "…the visual power or memorability of landscape components as they combine in striking and distinctive visual patterns." Intactness is defined as "…the visual integrity of the natural and man-built landscape and its freedom from encroaching elements; this factor can be present in well-kept urban and rural landscapes as well as in natural settings." Unity is defined as "…the visual coherence and compositional harmony of the landscape considered as a whole; it frequently attests to the careful design of individual components in the landscape" (USDOT, 1988).

Visual Character of Region

The proposed 229-acre project site is located immediately east of the City of Davis city limits, near the "Mace Curve", in Yolo County, approximately 2.5 miles east of downtown Davis. The City of Davis' General Plan planning area is located 11 miles west of Sacramento and approximately 79 miles northeast of San Francisco. The planning area consists of approximately

160 square miles and is characterized by agricultural/open space landscapes to the north, west, and south; highly developed urban landscapes within the city limits; and open space lands, including the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area, to the east.

Views of agricultural fields are enclosed on the west by the Coast Range hills. Views to other directions are open to the horizon, although the Sierra Nevada Mountains, Sutter Buttes, and Mount Diablo can be seen on clear days. The University of California, Davis (UC Davis) campus is located adjacent to the southwest corner of the City and occupies a total of 2,900 unincorporated acres. Davis is not highly visible from distant views due to an absence of natural or built vertical elements distinguished from the surrounding agricultural lands. The water towers on the campus and the Mondavi Center are the distinguishing features in views north from Interstate 80.

Davis' urban form is generally characterized as that of a small-scale, university city situated within a larger agricultural area. The City is surrounded by agricultural lands, which are traversed by streams, flood control channels, and/or canals. The fields are most often open to expansive views across fields planted with low-growing grain and row crops. Landscapes in and near the City are predominately urban, with the core area of the community having more established neighborhoods and urban landscaping. Newer developed areas on the edges of the community are more noticeable from a distance due to the immaturity of the landscaping. The City's planning area buffers the City on all sides by extending into areas that are dominated by agricultural uses, and views in this area are open and rural in nature. As required by Chapter 40A, Right to Farm and Farmland Preservation, of the Davis Municipal Code, a minimum 150-foot agricultural buffer exists along the boundary of the City. To minimize future potential conflicts between agricultural and non-agricultural land uses and to protect the public health, all new developments adjacent to designated agricultural, agricultural reserve, agricultural open space, greenbelt/agricultural buffer, Davis greenbelt or environmentally sensitive habitat areas according to the land use and open space element maps shall be required to provide an agricultural buffer/agricultural transition area.

Visual Character of Project Site

The 229-acre project site consists of the proposed 212-acre MRIC Site, and the separate 17-acre area known as the Mace Triangle Site, south of County Road (CR) 32A.

<u>MRIC</u>

The 212-acre MRIC site, located north of CR 32A, is primarily used for agricultural purposes and is generally disced and farmed. Tall, dense, and dry weed grasses occur along the perimeter of the site and along a City drainage ditch, known as the Mace Drainage Channel (MDC), which runs west-east through the central portion of the project site. In addition, a detention basin is located south of the MDC, in the east-central portion of the project site. An irrigation well, pad-mounted electrical transformer, and associated pump equipment exists in the southwestern corner of the MRIC site.

The majority of the MDC is dominated by cattail and bulrush grasses.[5] Freshwater wetland plant communities, vernal pools, and seasonal wetlands do not exist on-site. The only on-site aquatic feature is the MDC. Eight trees are located on the MRIC site.[6] The eight trees are all located along the MDC and existing detention basin.

The Alhambra Drive/Mace Boulevard and the 2nd Street/Mace Boulevard signalized intersections are located adjacent to the west of the project site. The nearest exit from Interstate 80 providing access to the project site is Mace Boulevard (Exit 75). The project site is currently accessible from CR 32A.

Immediately west of the project site, on the opposite side of Mace Boulevard, are an Arco gas station and the University Covenant Church. The Mace 391 permanent agricultural easement, totaling 391 acres, is located adjacent to the north, northeast, and east of the site. In addition, existing agricultural operation at the Howat Property, totaling 327 acres, occurs adjacent to the east of the Mace 391 easement. The Union Pacific Railroad and Interstate 80 are located to the south of the site.

Mace Triangle

The 17-acre Mace Triangle site is located south of CR 32A and consists of three parcels. The existing uses on the Mace Triangle site include Ikedas Market and vacant land on 4.62 acres; a City-owned water tank and a Park-and-Ride lot on 3.44 acres; and 8.43 acres of agricultural land. A mural and kinetic element were installed on the water tank and adjacent utility building in 2011. Ikedas Market, the water tank, and the Park-and-Ride lot are located adjacent to Mace Boulevard, while the vacant agricultural parcel is located in the eastern portion of the Mace Triangle site, adjacent to Interstate 80. The Mace Triangle portion of the project site is accessible from CR 32A.

Viewer Types

Viewer types with views of the project site include residents, motorists, bicyclists, and agricultural/other workers.

Residents with views of the project site include the Seville at Mace Ranch residential area and the Alhambra Apartments to the west of the project site, as well as the single-family residences off of Pastal Way and Frontera Drive. Residents would have extended views of the project site due to the long duration of their views of this portion of the project site. As noted above, the nearest residences to the MRIC site would be located at the Seville at Mace Ranch residential area. The Seville at Mace Ranch residential area contains 15 two-story buildings, but only four of the buildings have direct views of the project site. It should be noted that one of the four buildings houses a community room and office and does not contain residences. Once the

[5] Sycamore Environmental Consultants, Inc. *Jurisdictional Delineation Report for the Mace Ranch Innovation Center Project.* February 3, 2015.

[6] Sycamore Environmental Consultants, Inc. *Biological Resources Evaluation for the Mace Ranch Innovation Center Project.* February 3, 2015.

residents reach their residences, the views of the project site would be limited as a vacant parcel and existing vegetation along Mace Boulevard separates the residences from the site. The Alhambra Apartments contain eight two-story buildings, but only four of the buildings have direct views of the project site. Views of the MRIC site from Alhambra Apartments are largely obstructed by the University Covenant Church and landscaping within the church parking lot, and along Mace Boulevard. A few single family residences have second-story views of the northwestern corner of the MRIC site. These residences are located at the end of the Pastal Way cul-de-sac.

Views of the Mace Triangle site are nearly fully obstructed at the nearest residential area (Alhambra Apartments). Obstructions consist of existing development, 2nd Street median landscaping, and landscaping along Mace Boulevard.

Motorists along Mace Boulevard, Interstate 80, and CR 32A have existing views of the project site. Motorists would have limited views of the project due to short (low) duration of their views as motorists drive past the project site. The speed limits on the existing streets within the project vicinity are 40 miles per hour (mph) on Mace Boulevard, 35 mph at the turn south of the site on CR 32A, and 65 mph on Interstate 80. The mural and kinetic element on the East Area Tank of the Mace Triangle Site, as well as agricultural fields are visible landmarks for west-bound motorists. Once the motorists park their vehicles, the motorists exit their vehicle and become pedestrians, visitors, or agricultural workers.

Bicyclists would have moderately extended views of the project as they moved through the vicinity and will be affected because of their duration of views of the project site when traveling along Mace Boulevard.

Pedestrians include school children walking to/from the nearby junior high school, and local residents walking along Mace Boulevard for exercise purposes or traveling to/from the nearby church or businesses along 2nd Street. Pedestrians would also include east Davis residents walking to employment within the project.

Agricultural/Other Workers include the employers and employees of the Arco gas station, the University Covenant Church, Frances Harper Junior High School, agricultural fields adjacent to the site, and the offices within the area. The majority of these users park their cars in the surface parking areas in the vicinity of their place of employment or ride public transportation and walk to their destination. As they walk to their destination, pedestrians have extended views of the project site.

Determination of Key Viewpoints

Because it is not feasible to analyze all the views from which the proposed project can be seen, it is necessary to select a number of key viewpoints that would most clearly display the project's potential visual effects. Selection of key viewpoints was based upon anticipated viewer exposure and response. A review of aerial maps, an inspection of the proposed project site and the potentially affected environs, and review of public scoping meeting comments served to identify those receptors having the greatest exposure to visual changes at the project site. The range of

views was then considered and several representative views in which the proposed project structures would be most noticeable were selected for analysis. This decision was based primarily on proximity and degree of proposed project exposure.

Viewer Exposure and Response

To understand and predict viewer response to the appearance of a project, information must be known about the exposure of viewers, who may see the project. Viewer exposure is determined by assessing the *number* of viewers exposed to the visual change, the physical *location* of the viewer, as well as the *duration* of their view. For example, a driver passing through the project vicinity at 35 mph would not be as sensitive to changes in the visual environment as a bicyclist riding through the area.

The characteristics of each potential viewer group are qualitatively rated in Table 4.1-1, using the following criteria:

Low — Viewers are not as sensitive to change given their distance from the change and/or duration for which they can see the project site. The low category is also applied to those viewer groups for which there is a lower quantity of viewers.

Medium — Compared to the "low" category, viewers in the "medium" category are more sensitive to change given their distance from the change and/or duration for which they can see the project site. The medium category is also applied to those viewer groups for which there is an increased quantity of viewers (i.e., motorists commuting along Interstate 80).

High — The highest level of viewer exposure is applied to those viewer groups, who will have the longest duration of exposure to the visual changes and are located within close proximity to visual changes, such that changes are within the foreground, as defined above.

Table 4.1-1
Viewer Exposure and Response

Viewer Group	Quantity	Location (distance to visual change)	Duration	Viewer Exposure and Response
Residents	Low	Foreground	High	High
Motorists	Medium	Foreground/Middleground/Background	Low	Low
Bicyclists	Medium	Foreground/Middleground/Background	Medium	Medium
Pedestrians	Medium	Foreground/Middleground/Background	Medium	Medium
Agricultural/ Other Workers	Low	Foreground/Middleground	Low	Low

Based upon the viewer groups within the site vicinity, and their viewer exposure ratings, four key viewpoint locations were selected for this analysis. Existing visual character and quality of the viewshed from these viewpoints is discussed in detail below.

Visual Quality

The criteria of vividness, intactness, and unity have equal weight in assessing visual quality of a landscape. The three qualities are defined below, using FHWA descriptions:

1. Vividness: The memorability of the visual impression received from contrasting landscape elements as they combine to form a striking and distinctive visual pattern.
2. Intactness: The integrity of visual order in the natural and man-built landscape, and the extent to which the landscape is free from visual encroachment.
3. Unity: The degree to which the visual resources of the landscape join together to form a coherent, harmonious visual pattern. Unity refers to the compositional harmony or intercompatibility between landscape elements.

Existing Conditions of Key Viewpoints

Figure 4.1-1 provides an overview of the four key viewpoint locations from which the project simulation photographs were taken. Figures 4.1-2 through 4.1-5 show the existing views from the potential receptors. The existing views from key viewpoints #1 through #4 are described in further detail below.

Key Viewpoint #1

West of the project, the site can be seen from travelers along Mace Boulevard. As shown in Figure 4.1-1, the photograph taken at Key Viewpoint #1 presents views looking east at the project site from Mace Boulevard (see Figure 4.1-2). As shown in Figure 4.1-2, existing views from Key Viewpoint #1 consist of Mace Boulevard and associated landscaping, vacant agricultural fields, and trees in the distance. According to Table 4.1-2, the vividness, intactness, and unity from this viewpoint are all rated Medium.

Foreground views are dominated by Mace Boulevard, the associated bike lane, sidewalk, landscaping, and trees along the roadway. Middleground views include a vacant agricultural field opposite the roadway. Background views include trees opposite of the agricultural field.

Table 4.1-2
Existing Visual Quality at Key Viewpoints

Key Viewpoint	Vividness	Intactness	Unity	Viewer Response
1	M	M	M	M
2	M	M	M	H
3	L	L	L	L
4	M	M	M	L/M

Notes: L = Low; M = Medium; H = High

Figure 4.1-1
Photo Locations and View Directions

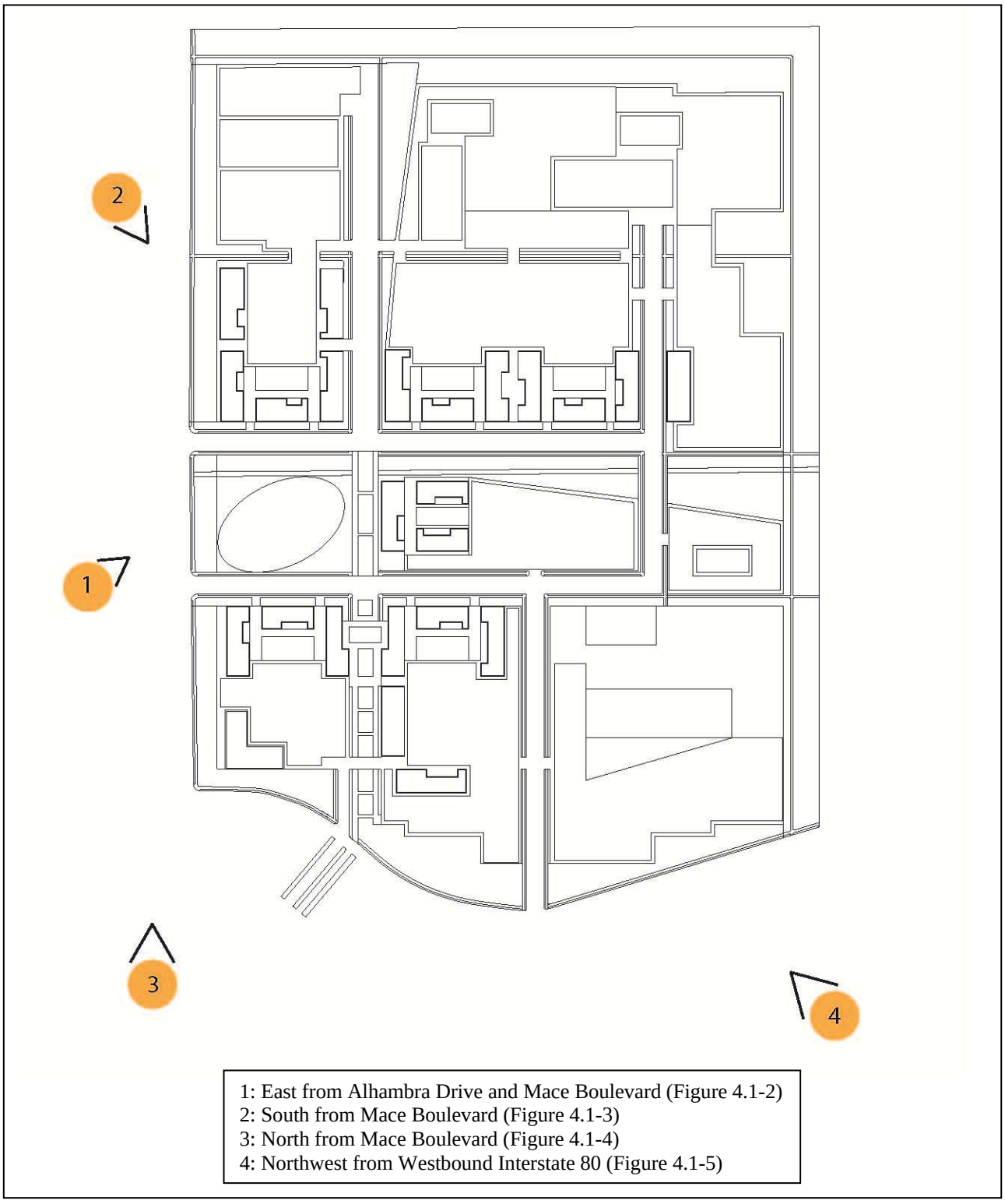


Figure 4.1-2
Existing View from Key Viewpoint #1 – Looking East at the Project Site from Alhambra Drive and Mace Boulevard

Figure 4.1-3
Existing View from Key Viewpoint #2 – Looking South at the Project Site from Mace Boulevard

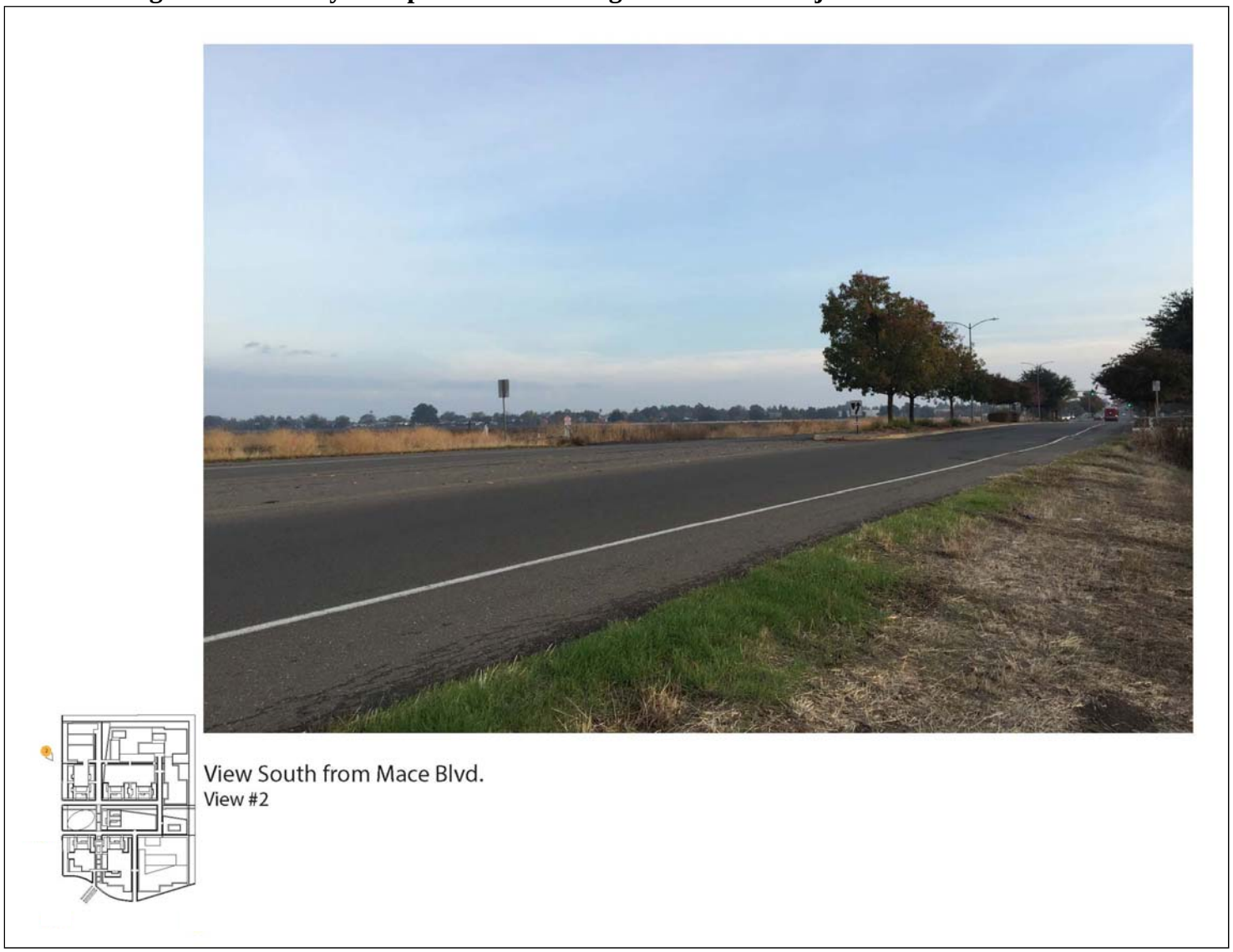
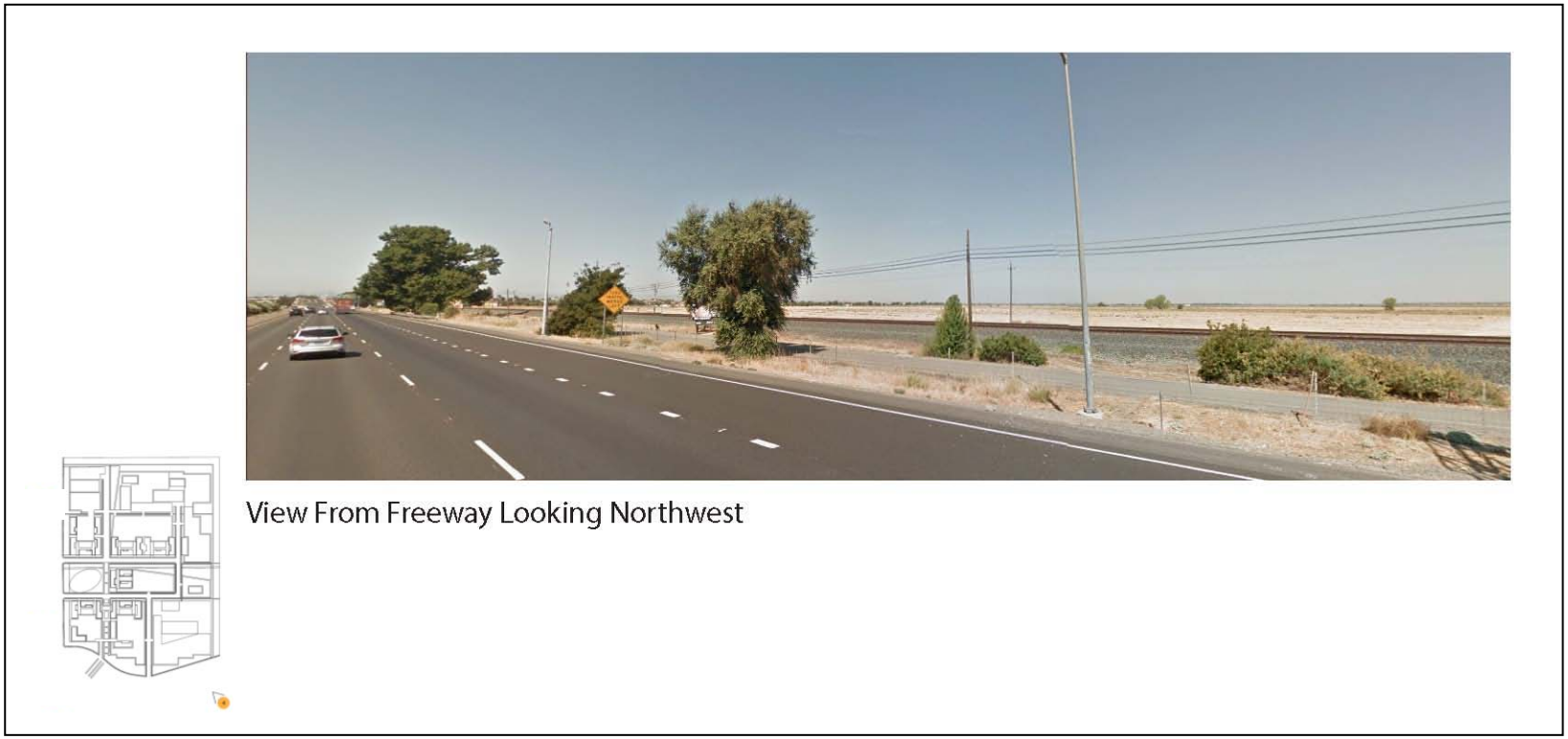


Figure 4.1-4
Existing View from Key Viewpoint #3 – Looking North at the Project Site from Mace Boulevard

Figure 4.1-5
Existing View from Key Viewpoint #4 – Looking Northwest at the Project Site from Westbound Interstate 80



Key Viewpoint #2

West of the project, the site can be seen from travelers along Mace Boulevard. As shown in Figure 4.1-1, the photograph taken at Key Viewpoint #2 presents views looking south at the project site from Mace Boulevard (see Figure 4.1-3). Key Viewpoint #2 can also be considered to represent the magnitude of visual character change at the MRIC site that would be seen by those living at the Seville apartments. As shown in Figure 4.1-3, existing views from Key Viewpoint #2 consist of Mace Boulevard and associated landscaping, vacant agricultural fields, and trees in the distance opposite Interstate 80. According to Table 4.1-2, the vividness, intactness, and unity from this viewpoint are all rated Medium.

Foreground views are dominated by Mace Boulevard, the associated bike lane, and landscaping along the roadway. Middleground views include a vacant agricultural field opposite the roadway. Background views include trees opposite of the agricultural field, with some urban development opposite Interstate 80 in the distance.

Key Viewpoint #3

West of the project, the site can be seen from travelers along Mace Boulevard. As shown in Figure 4.1-1, photographs taken at Key Viewpoint #3 present views looking north at the project site from Mace Boulevard (see Figure 4.1-4). As shown in Figure 4.1-4, existing views from Key Viewpoint #3 consist of Mace Boulevard and the commercial uses to the west, the Park-and-Ride lot to the east, and vacant agricultural lands in the distance to the north and northeast. According to Table 4.1-2, the vividness, intactness, and unity from this viewpoint are all rated Low.

Foreground views are dominated by Mace Boulevard, the associated bike lane, sidewalk, and landscaping, and vegetation surrounding the Park-and-Ride lot. Middleground views include the Park-and-Ride lot, the Mace Boulevard / 2nd Street light, and the Arco gas station. Background views include the agricultural field, and Mace Boulevard with associated landscaping in the distance.

Key Viewpoint #4

As shown in Figure 4.1-1, the photograph taken at Key Viewpoint #4 represents views of motorists looking northwest at the project site from Interstate 80 (see Figure 4.1-5). The area represented by Key Viewpoint #4 functions as an entrance to the Davis community. Key Viewpoint #4 can also be considered to represent the magnitude of visual character change at the project site that would be seen by bicyclists travelling along the Class I bike path, north of Interstate 80, which is visible in the foreground of Figure 4.1-5. As shown in Figure 4.1-5, existing views from Key Viewpoint #4 consist of Interstate 80 and associated landscaping, the Union Pacific Railroad tracks adjacent to the highway, utility poles and lines, and vacant agricultural land adjacent to the railroad. According to Table 4.1-2, the vividness, intactness, and unity from this viewpoint are Low, Medium, Medium, respectively.

Foreground views are dominated by Interstate 80, the associated roadside vegetation, lighting poles, transmission lines, and the UPRR tracks. Middleground and background views include agricultural field and a row of trees in the distance.

The existing visual quality of the site from each key viewpoint is summarized in Table 4.1-2. The table rates the vividness, intactness, and unity of the visual quality of the project site from each key viewpoint.

Existing Night Lighting Conditions

At night, the project site is generally dark. Specifically, the MRIC site is dark due to the lack of on-site lighting. The Mace Triangle site has existing sources of lighting at the Park-and-Ride lot and surrounding the City water tank. Existing off-site sources of light and glare in the area include street lighting on Mace Boulevard and security lighting at the Arco gas station.

Scenic Resource Designations

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) manages the California Scenic Highway Program. The goal of the program is to preserve and protect scenic highway corridors from changes that would affect the aesthetic value of the land adjacent to designated highways. The portion of Interstate 80 in Yolo County is not designated as a scenic highway.[7] In addition, the Davis planning area does not have any officially designated scenic highways, corridors, vistas, or viewing areas.[8]

4.1.3 REGULATORY CONTEXT

The existing federal, State, and local laws and regulations pertaining to the visual quality of the project area are listed below, as applicable.

Federal Regulations

The following Federal Highway Administration visual assessment document is not a binding regulatory document for the project, but this well-utilized document serves as a tool that has proven useful for evaluating potential visual impacts.

Federal Highway Administration

The FHWA published the Visual Impact Assessment for Highway Projects in 1988. The Visual Impact Assessment for Highway Projects document includes a framework for documenting and reviewing visual impacts for highway projects. Although the FHWA visual assessment guidelines were initially created to provide an analytical framework for identifying and assessing qualitative changes to the visual environment that could be introduced as part of a transportation

[7] California Department of Transportation. *California Scenic Highway Mapping System, Yolo County*. Accessed February 20, 2015. Available at: http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/LandArch/scenic_highways/.

[8] City of Davis. *Draft Program EIR*. Page 5A-1. January 2000.

project, this methodology has become an industry standard for evaluating visual impacts associated with local and state non-transportation projects as well.

State Regulations

The following includes an applicable State program related to aesthetic resources.

California Scenic Highway Program

The State Scenic Highway System includes a list of highways that are either eligible for designation as scenic highways or have been so designated. Such highways are identified in Section 263 et seq. of the Streets and Highways Code.

Local Regulations

The following are applicable local goals and policies related to aesthetic resources.

Davis General Plan

The Davis General Plan goals and policies relating to aesthetics and visual resources that are applicable to the proposed project are presented at the end of the section in Table 4.1-5.

City of Davis Municipal Code

The City of Davis regulates outdoor lighting within the community in Chapter 8, Buildings, of the Municipal Code. Article 8.17, Outdoor Lighting Control, is intended to create standards for outdoor lighting to minimize light pollution, glare, and light trespass caused by inappropriate or misaligned light fixtures, while improving nighttime public safety, utility, and security, and preserving the night sky as a natural resource and thus people's enjoyment of looking at the stars. The following definitions are outlined in the ordinance (the following list is not exhaustive, but meant to focus on terms that are particularly important for this CEQA analysis):

8.17.020 Definitions

> Fully shielded
>
> A technique or method of construction and/or manufacture which does not allow any light dispersion to shine above the horizontal plane from the lowest light emitting point of the light fixture. In addition, the light emitting, distributing, reflecting and refracting components of the light fixture, i.e. lamp, lens, reflective surface, etc., shall not extend beyond the shielding of the fixture. Any structural part of the light fixture providing this shielding shall be permanently affixed to the light fixture.

Glare

Artificial light that causes annoyance, discomfort, or loss of visual performance and visibility.

Light pollution

Any artificial light which causes a detrimental effect through uplighting on the environment, astronomical research, and/or enjoyment of the night sky or causes undesirable glare or light trespass.

Light trespass

Artificial light that produces an unnecessary and unwanted illumination of an adjacent property.

Uplighting

Any artificial light source that distributes light above an imaginary horizontal plane passing through the lowest light emitting point of the light fixture. (Ord. 1966 § 1)

In addition, the following requirements are outlined in the ordinance:

8.17.030 General requirements

(a) All outdoor light fixtures installed after the effective date of the ordinance codified in this article and thereafter maintained upon private property used for commercial, industrial or multifamily purposes, as defined in the zoning code of the city, shall be fully shielded. In addition, light trespass and glare shall be limited to a reasonable level through the use of shielding, and directional lighting methods, including, but not limited to, fixture location and height.
(b) All outdoor light fixtures installed after the effective date of the ordinance codified in this article and thereafter maintained upon public property or in the public right-of-way shall be fully shielded. In addition, light trespass and glare shall be limited to a reasonable level through the use of shielding, and directional lighting methods, including, but not limited to, fixture location and height.
(c) Externally illuminated signs, advertising displays, billboards, and building identification shall use top mounted light fixtures which shine light downward and which are fully shielded.
(d) Low-pressure sodium lighting by itself shall not be used in outdoor light fixtures due to poor color rendition and the need by public safety personnel to identify color in the nighttime environment. A combination of low pressure sodium lighting and other type(s) of lighting, such as, fluorescent, may be used if color rendition can be maintained.
(e) Outdoor light fixtures used to illuminate flags, statues, or any other objects mounted on a pole, pedestal, or platform shall use a very narrow cone of light for the purpose of confining the light to the object of interest and minimize spill-light and glare.
(f) Outdoor light fixtures used for outdoor recreational facilities shall be fully shielded except when such shielding would cause an impairment to the visibility required in the intended recreational activity. In such cases, partially shielded fixtures and

directional lighting methods shall be utilized to limit light pollution, glare and light trespass to a reasonable level, as determined by the building official, without diminishing the performance standards of the intended recreational activity. Illumination from recreational facility light fixtures shall be shielded to minimize glare extending toward roadways where impairment of motorist vision might cause a hazard.

(g) In addition to the provisions in this article, all outdoor light fixtures shall be installed in conformity with all other applicable provisions of this municipal code. (Ord. 1966 § 1)

Furthermore, the City of Davis outlines the site plan and architectural approval process for new development within the community in Chapter 40, Zoning, of the Municipal Code. Article 40.31, Site Plan and Architectural Approval, is intended to create a design review process in order to determine compliance with the Municipal Code and to promote orderly and harmonious growth of the City. The following findings for approval are outlined in the ordinance:

40.31.085 Findings for approval

A site plan and architectural (design review) application shall be approved, conditionally approved, or denied by the Community Development and Sustainability Director, Planning Commission, or City Council pursuant to the requirements of Article 40.39 of this chapter. Such application may be approved only if the following findings are made:

(a) The proposed project is consistent with the objectives of the general plan, complies with applicable zoning regulations, and is consistent with any adopted design guidelines for the district within which the project is located;

(b) The proposed architecture, site design, and landscape are suitable for the purposes of the building and the site and will enhance the character of the neighborhood and community;

(c) The architectural design of the proposed project is compatible with the existing properties and anticipated future developments within the neighborhood in terms of such elements as height, mass, scale, and proportion;

(d) The proposed project will not create conflicts with vehicular, bicycle, or pedestrian transportation modes of circulation; and

(e) The location, climate, and environmental conditions of the site are adequately considered in determining the use of appropriate construction materials and methods. Sufficient conditions are included with the approval to ensure the long-term maintenance of the project. (Ord. 2067 § 1, 2001; Ord. 2390 § 2, 2012)

4.1.4 IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

This section describes the standards of significance and methodology utilized to analyze and determine the proposed project's potential impacts related to aesthetics. In addition, a discussion of the project's impacts, as well as mitigation measures where necessary, is also presented.

Standards of Significance

Consistent with Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, the City's General Plan, and professional judgment, a significant impact would occur if the proposed project would result in the following:

- Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista;
- Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a State scenic highway;
- Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings;
- Create a new source of substantial light or glare that would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area; or
- Conflict, or create an inconsistency, with any applicable plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating environmental effects related to aesthetics and visual resources.

Issues Not Discussed Further

As noted previously, Interstate 80, the nearest highway to the project area, is not designated as a scenic highway within the Davis area. In addition, the Davis planning area does not have any officially designated scenic highways, corridors, vistas, or viewing areas.

Rock outcroppings, historic buildings, or other scenic resources do not exist on-site. Thus, such resources would not be adversely affected by the project. It should be noted that a total of eight trees are located on the MRIC site, and several other landscaping trees are located at the Park-and-Ride lot.[9] Because the project site is not visible from a State scenic highway, impacts to the on-site trees would be negligible. Therefore, the project would have no impact related to substantially damaging scenic resources within a State scenic highway. Impacts related to substantially damaging scenic resources within a State scenic highway are not further discussed.

Method of Analysis

The following analysis utilizes a methodology based upon the FHWA publication Visual Impact Assessment for Highway Projects (1988), combined with the State CEQA Guidelines' Appendix G Checklist questions for Aesthetics. Together, these provide the key analytical framework and guide the visual impact assessment process for the proposed project. Although the FHWA guidelines were initially created to provide an analytical framework for identifying and assessing qualitative changes to the visual environment that could be introduced as part of a transportation project, this methodology has become an industry standard for evaluating visual impacts associated for local and state non-transportation projects as well. The process includes the following basic steps:

- Defining the project setting and viewshed.
- Identifying the key views for visual assessment.
- Assessing existing visual resources and viewer exposure and response.
- Describing the visual appearance of the proposed project.

[9] Sycamore Environmental Consultants, Inc. *Biological Resources Evaluation for the Mace Ranch Innovation Center Project.* February 3, 2015.

- Assessing the changes to visual resources while predicting viewer response to those changes.
- Assessing the visual impacts of the proposed project.
- Proposing methods to mitigate adverse visual impacts.

As part of the analysis, an evaluative framework that defines the visual setting in terms of key views is utilized. A key view is a point from which a select view is analyzed from the perspective of potential viewer groups. The key view approach is used in this analysis because of the largely contained character of the overall project.

The following analysis assesses the anticipated changes in visual character (e.g., descriptive, non-evaluative characteristics such as land use, topography, scale, form, and color) and visual quality (e.g., an evaluative assessment of the aesthetics of a view based on the FHWA criteria of the vividness, intactness, and unity of the view), evaluating them with respect to anticipated viewer response.

The visual impacts of the proposed project to area viewers were determined based upon the following criteria:

- The existing visual quality of the key views as evidenced by the degree of vividness, intactness, and unity associated with the existing setting.
- The degree of change to the existing setting based upon the types of structures that would be viewed; the sensitivity of the viewer; the degree to which these features would obstruct, diminish, or dominate existing view qualities; and the potential for landscape treatment or other mitigation to improve visual quality. Computer-generated simulations were used to aid in this evaluation.

It should be noted that visual simulations have not been prepared for Mace Triangle given the speculative nature regarding the extent and type of any future development at this 17-acre site. The City of Davis has included the Mace Triangle within the overall project boundaries to allow the continuation of existing uses, while recognizing, and evaluating in the EIR, the potential for additional urban development on the Ikedas parcel and adjacent agricultural parcel. While this EIR includes an analysis of potential additional growth for the Mace Triangle, preparation of simulations for this potential development would be highly subjective and speculative at this point.

Project-Specific Impacts and Mitigation Measures

The following discussion of aesthetic and visual resource impacts is based on implementation of the proposed project in comparison to existing conditions and the standards of significance presented above.

4.1-1 Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista. Based on the analysis below, the impact is *less than significant.*

A scenic vista, as defined in this EIR, is an area that is designated, signed, and accessible to the public for the express purposes of viewing and sightseeing. This includes any such areas designated by a federal, State, or local agency. Federal and State agencies have not designated any such locations within the City of Davis for viewing and sightseeing. Similarly, the City of Davis, according to the City of Davis General Plan Program EIR, has determined that the Planning Area of the General Plan has no officially designated scenic highways, corridors, vistas, or viewing areas.[10]

Given that established scenic vistas are not located on or adjacent to the proposed project site, the proposed project would have a ***less-than-significant*** impact related to scenic vistas.

Mitigation Measure(s)
None required.

4.1-2 Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the project site and its surroundings. Based on the analysis below and the lack of feasible mitigation, the impact is *significant and unavoidable*.

The proposed project would include up to approximately 2,654,000 square feet of innovation center uses and approximately 64.6 acres of green space on 212 acres. The Mace Triangle parcels have been included as a part of the proposed project at the City's direction primarily for the purposes of annexation. The undeveloped portion of the triangle parcels is proposed for development but not as a part of the MRIC project. As a part of the MRIC application, the City has prepared a proposed Preliminary Planned Development (PPD) Ordinance that would apply only to the three Mace Triangle parcels. The PPD would allow the following:

> The City property would be designated Public-Semi-Public to allow for the continuation of existing uses. New uses are not proposed. The Ikedas parcel and other agricultural parcel would be designated General Commercial to allow for the continuation or expansion of the existing agricultural retail (Ikedas market) and/or for the development of up to 71,056 sf of new commercial uses.

Additional urban development of the Mace Triangle in the future would be subject to further City review in connection with discretionary entitlements, such as final planned development review and approval.

[10] City of Davis. *Draft Program* EIR [pg. 5-2]. January 2000.

MRIC Proposed Phasing

The proposed project would be built-out over the long-term, with four anticipated phases of development (see Figure 4.1-6).

Based upon the market absorption analysis prepared for the innovation center project by BAE Urban Economics (BAE), it is reasonable to assume that full buildout could occur by 2035. As illustrated in Figure 4.1-6, Phase 1 is anticipated to consist of approximately 48 acres in the southern portion of the MRIC site. Phase 1 is estimated to contain approximately 540,000 square feet, which will include 400,000 square feet of Research/Manufacturing space to accommodate the expansion needs of Schilling Robotics, and 140,000 square feet of research/office/research and development (R&D) which may incorporate ground floor ancillary retail of up to 40,000 square feet. Two access points will be provided for Phase 1: 1) a new intersection at Mace Boulevard and Alhambra Boulevard, and 2) a new southern access point, which will connect to County Road 32A, east of the existing Park-and-Ride lot driveway.

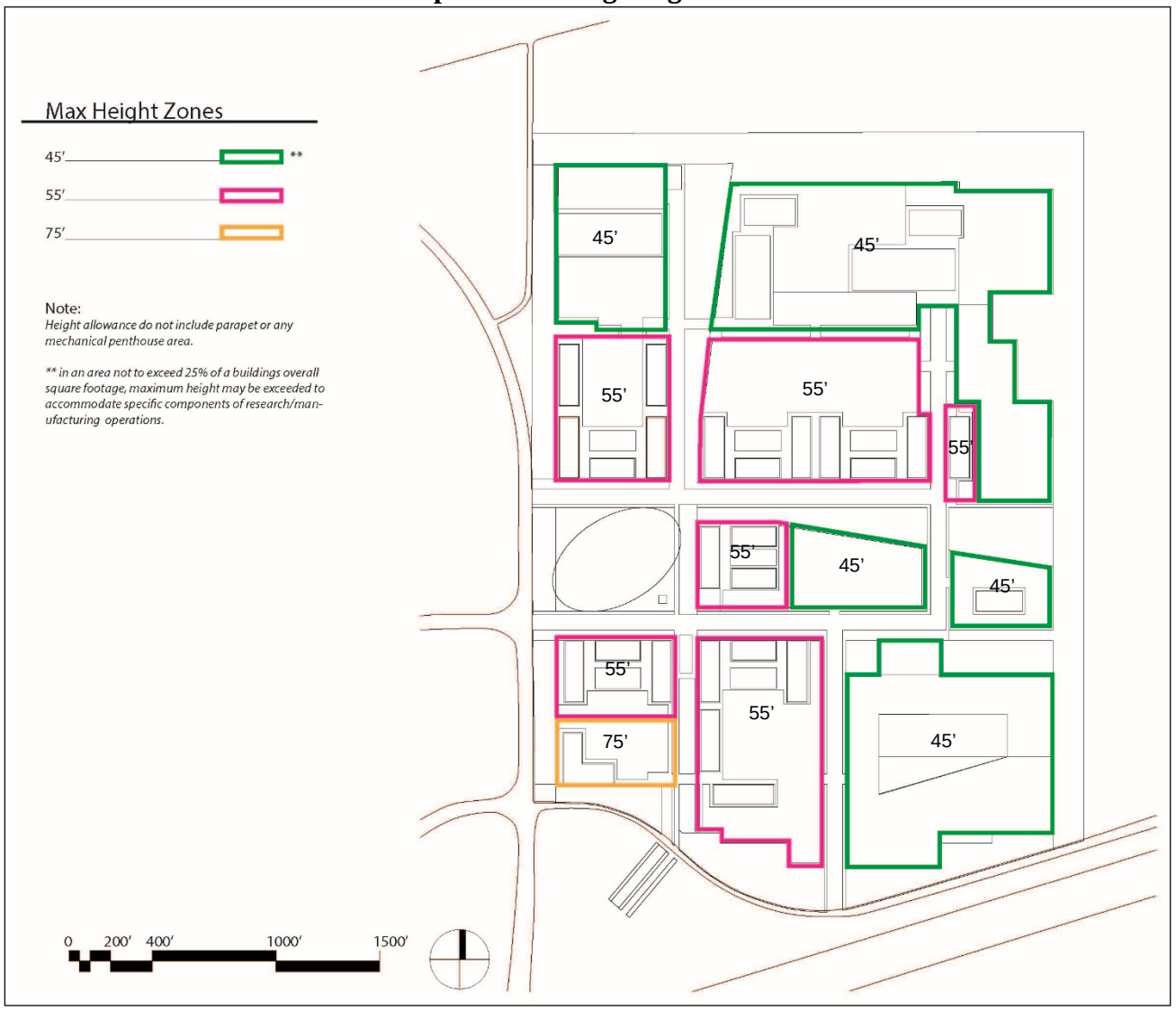
Future phasing is anticipated to move out to the central core and then north and east, although phasing will be driven by user demand. This anticipated development pattern represents a logical pattern of development with structures gradually extending from the current urbanized areas toward the City's new urban boundary. At this time, Phase 2 is anticipated to comprise approximately 29 acres, south of the Mace Drainage Channel. Total building square footage for this phase is projected to be 700,000 square feet, including the proposed hotel/conference center, various research/office/R&D centered around the Oval park, and ancillary retail. An additional 700,000 square feet of building space is projected for Phase 3, including research/office/R&D and manufacturing/research uses. The 49 acres developed in Phase 3 completes development south of the Mace Drainage Channel and along the perimeter of the Oval. Phase 4 consists of the northerly 86 acres of the MRIC site and is projected to include approximately 714,000 square feet of research/manufacturing and research/office/R&D uses.

MRIC Proposed Building Heights

Three building height zones are proposed for the MRIC, as illustrated in Figure 4.1-7. The most restrictive height zone, with a maximum height of 45 feet, generally applies to the proposed manufacturing uses on the outer periphery of the MRIC site. The proposed research/office/research and development uses, located centrally and along Mace Boulevard, are within the 55-foot maximum height zone. The third height zone is reserved for the proposed hotel facility at the southwest corner of the project site, with a proposed maximum height of 75 feet.

Figure 4.1-6
Conceptual Project Phasing

Figure 4.1-7
Proposed Building Height Zones



Key Viewpoints of the MRIC Site

Photosimulations for Key Viewpoints #1 through #4 were prepared to capture representative views from the nearby sensitive visual receptors. Figures 4.1-8 through 4.1-11 illustrate views of the project site and surrounding areas. The existing views are presented as well to provide a direct visual comparison. It should be noted that the visual simulations show general massing and height of the proposed research / office / R&D / manufacturing buildings and do not include exterior details, such as windows and wall treatments, as these design-level details would be determined during final planned development approval (i.e., the next level of discretionary entitlements).

Key Viewpoint #1 (East from Mace Boulevard; see Figure 4.1-8)

A summary of the existing and anticipated changes to the visual quality from Key Viewpoint #1 is discussed in further detail below.

Summary of Existing Visual Quality

Figure 4.1-8 presents the view from Key Viewpoint #1 looking east at the project site from Mace Boulevard. Existing foreground views from Key Viewpoint #1 are dominated by Mace Boulevard, the associated bike lane, sidewalk, landscaping, and trees along the roadway. Middleground views include a vacant agricultural field opposite the roadway. Background views include trees opposite of the agricultural field.

Anticipated Changes to Visual Quality

As shown in the figure, the proposed innovation center buildings would be clearly visible to those motorists travelling along this portion of Mace Boulevard. The proposed minimum 150-foot green space buffer shown in the figure would separate the proposed buildings from Mace Boulevard to help reduce the visual scale of the proposed buildings. In addition, while not shown in the simulation, the project's Planned Development Guidelines identify the general landscaping concepts for the project, which include fast-growing trees with large canopies; native, drought tolerant, pest resistant plant species; and vegetated swales to convey stormwater along the perimeter open space buffer areas.

The aforementioned changes to the visual quality of the project site would be viewed from motorists, bicyclists, and pedestrians looking east at the project site from the Alhambra Drive/Mace Boulevard intersection. The aforementioned viewer groups are subject to views of the project site for a relatively short duration, though by a large number of viewers. Overall, viewer exposure and response from this vantage point is considered medium due to the consideration that project buildings would be located within the viewers' foreground views.

Figure 4.1-8
Proposed View from Key Viewpoint #1 - Looking East at the Project Site from Alhambra Drive and Mace Boulevard

Due to the slower speeds traveled by pedestrians and bicyclists, these viewers would be more sensitive to the changes in the visual environment when compared to motorists. As a result of the above considerations, the visual impact of the project at Key Viewpoint #1 would be significant.

Key Viewpoint #2 (South from Mace Boulevard; see Figure 4.1-9)

A summary of the existing and anticipated changes to the visual quality from Key Viewpoint #2 is discussed in further detail below.

Summary of Existing Visual Quality

Figure 4.1-9 presents the view from Key Viewpoint #2, looking south at the project site from Mace Boulevard. Existing foreground views from Key Viewpoint #2 are dominated by Mace Boulevard, the associated bike lane, and landscaping along the roadway. Middleground views include a vacant agricultural field opposite the roadway. Background views include trees opposite of the agricultural field, with some urban development opposite Interstate 80 in the distance.

Anticipated Changes to Visual Quality

As shown in the figure, the proposed project buildings would be clearly visible to travelers along Mace Boulevard, although existing vegetation along the western project boundary would shield the buildings from travelers along Mace Boulevard.

The aforementioned changes to the visual quality of the project site would be viewed from motorists and bicyclists looking south at the project site from Mace Boulevard. The aforementioned viewer groups are subject to views of the project site for a relatively short duration, though by a large quantity of viewers. Due to the slower speeds traveled by bicyclists and pedestrians, these viewers would be more sensitive to the changes in the visual environment when compared to motorists.

Key Viewpoint #2 can also be considered to represent the magnitude of visual character change at the MRIC site, which would be seen by those living at the Seville apartments. Overall, viewer exposure and response from this key viewpoint is rated as High due to the consideration that project buildings would be located within the foreground views of a select number of residents, who have extended/long duration views of the project site and associated visual changes. Residents within the nearest apartments are subject to extended open views of the project site, though the quantity of viewers having these views is lesser than other viewer groups, such as motorists.

Figure 4.1-9
Proposed View from Key Viewpoint #2 - Looking South at the Project Site from Mace Boulevard

In conclusion, the visual impact of the project at Key Viewpoint #2 would be significant to the nearest residents, and to a lesser extent bicyclists and pedestrians.

Key Viewpoint #3 (North from Mace Boulevard; see Figure 4.1-10)

A summary of the existing and anticipated changes to the visual quality from Key Viewpoint #3 is discussed in further detail below.

Summary of Existing Visual Quality

Figure 4.1-10 presents the view from Key Viewpoint #3 looking north at the project site from Mace Boulevard. Existing foreground views from Key Viewpoint #3 are dominated by Mace Boulevard, the associated bike lane, sidewalk, and landscaping, and vegetation surrounding the Park-and-Ride lot. Middleground views include the Park-and-Ride lot, the Mace Boulevard / 2nd Street light, and the Arco gas station. Background views include the agricultural field and Mace Boulevard with associated landscaping in the distance.

Anticipated Changes to Visual Quality

As shown in the figure, the proposed commercial buildings would be clearly visible to travelers along Mace Boulevard. It should be noted that the building furthest right in the photosimulation represents the tallest building on the project site of 75 feet. The remaining buildings on the site would be 45 to 55 feet in height.

The aforementioned changes to the visual quality of the project site would be viewed from motorists, bicyclists, and pedestrians looking north at the project site from Mace Boulevard. Due to the slower speeds traveled by pedestrians and bicyclists, these viewers would be more sensitive to the changes in the visual environment when compared to motorists. However, as indicated in Table 4.1-2, the vividness, intactness, and unity of the landscape from Viewpoint #3 are all considered "Low". For example, as can be seen from Figure 4.1-10, visual encroachment from human-made structures is prevalent, rendering the intactness Low.

As a result of the above considerations, the visual impact of the project at Key Viewpoint #3 would be less than significant.

Figure 4.1-10
Proposed View from Key Viewpoint #3 - Looking North at the Project Site from Mace Boulevard

Key Viewpoint #4 (Northwest from Interstate 80; see Figure 4.1-11)

A summary of the existing and anticipated changes to the visual quality from Key Viewpoint #4 is discussed in further detail below.

Summary of Existing Visual Quality

Figure 4.1-11 presents the view from Key Viewpoint #4 looking northwest at the project site from Interstate 80. Foreground views are dominated by Interstate 80, the associated roadside vegetation, lighting poles, transmission lines, and the UPRR tracks. Middleground and background views include agricultural field and a row of trees in the distance.

Anticipated Changes to Visual Quality

As shown in the figure, the proposed commercial buildings would be clearly visible to travelers along Interstate 80. Existing and proposed vegetation between Interstate 80 and the southern boundary of the project site would shield views of the project site from motorists traveling west on Interstate 80.

The aforementioned changes to the visual quality of the project site would be viewed from motorists looking northwest at the project site from Interstate 80, as well as bicyclists traveling along CR 32A. The aforementioned viewer groups are subject to views of the project site by a large quantity of viewers. Although motorists along Interstate 80 typically travel at high speeds, these motorists would be considered sensitive to the changes in the visual environment from this viewpoint given that this eastern portion of the Davis Planning Area functions as an entrance to the Davis community, wherein agricultural landscapes currently dominate the viewshed. In addition, due to the regular travel of the Class I bike path, approximately represented by this viewpoint, as well as the relatively long duration during which bicyclists would experience the visual changes resulting from the project, these viewers would also be considered sensitive to the changes in the visual environment.

According to Table 4.1-2, the vividness, intactness, and unity from this viewpoint are considered Medium. While viewer exposure and response is considered Low/Medium given the relative speeds at which motorists, and to a lesser extent, bicyclists will be traveling along the project site, the visual impact of the project at Key Viewpoint #4 would be considered significant for motorists and bicyclists. The eastern portion of the Davis Planning Area, which is the focal point of the viewshed shown in Figure 4.1-10, currently functions as an entrance to the Davis community.

The final determination of significance considered the existing visual quality and the anticipated viewer response. Table 4.1-3 summarizes the assessment rankings for all six key viewpoints.

Figure 4.1-11
Proposed View from Key Viewpoint #4 - Looking Northwest at the Project Site from Westbound Interstate 80

Table 4.1-3
Existing vs. Proposed Visual Quality[1] at Key Viewpoints

Key Viewpoint	Existing			Viewer Response	Proposed			Potential Impact[2]
	V	I	U		V	I	U	
1	M	M	M	M	M	L	L	S
2	M	M	M	H	M	L	L	S
3	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	LS
4	M	M	M	M	L	L	M	S

Notes:
[1] L = Low; M = Medium; H = High
[2] LTS = Less than Significant; S = Significant

As shown in Table 4.1-3, significant impacts were identified for Key Viewpoints #1, #2, and #4. Key Viewpoint #3 would have less-than-significant impact related to the proposed change in visual quality. Although proposed landscaping (not currently shown) would partially shield the buildings from Key Viewpoints #1, #2, and #4, bicyclists along Mace Boulevard and nearby apartment residents, as well as bicyclists and motorists travelling along the Class I bike path north of I-80, would be subject to alteration of the visual quality of the site in their foreground views, with implementation of the proposed project.

MRIC Design Guidelines

To address the aesthetic value of the built environment, the MRIC includes project-specific design guidelines. Each development phase of the MRIC would be required to comply with the Mace Ranch Innovation Center Design Guidelines. The Guidelines address land use, site design, sustainability, architectural character, landscaping, circulation, and parking in order to create an employment center comprised of quality architecture and a diversity of types and scales of open space. The proposed project design would be generally consistent with the relevant Davis General Plan policies and Tier 1 of the current California Green Building Standards Code, while still having a separate identity. The research buildings will be broken up every 100 feet, with major building breaks in the façade, in order to reduce the mass and scale of the buildings. Reflective materials, except for window surfaces, would be avoided.

Article 40.31, Site Plan and Architectural Approval, of the Davis Municipal Code outlines the site plan and architectural approval process for new development within the community. The final site design and architectural application shall be subject to review and approval by the Director of Community Development and Sustainability, Planning Commission, or City Council.

Mace Triangle

The City is proposing an amendment to the General Plan Land Use Map to assign the following General Plan land use designations to the Mace Triangle site (see Figure 3-4 in

the Project Description Chapter): Public and Quasi-Public for the Park-and-Ride lot, and General Commercial for the other two parcels.

As noted above, the City has prepared a proposed Preliminary Planned Development (PPD) Ordinance that would apply only to the three Mace Triangle parcels. The intent of this PPD would be to allow the continuation of existing uses, while recognizing the potential for additional urban development on the Ikedas parcel and adjacent agricultural parcel. Based upon the General Commercial land use designation proposed for the Ikedas parcel and the easternmost agricultural parcel, the City has identified a future development potential for these parcels, the details of which are set forth in Table 4.1-4.

Table 4.1-4
Mace Triangle Site – Summary of Uses by Type

Land Use	Size (square feet)
Total square footage	71,056
Research; Office; R&D	*45,901*
Ancillary Retail	*25,155*

The following analysis regarding the extent and type of any future development at this 17-acre site is speculative in nature as a development plan for the Mace Triangle does not currently exist. Once a site-specific development application comes forward, future development of the Mace Triangle would be reviewed by the City during the entitlement process. Development of the Mace Triangle would be visible from motorists traveling along Interstate 80; however, future development would generally not be visible from residential areas north of Interstate 80. It should be noted that the Mace Triangle site may be visible to residents in the Alhambra Apartments; however, the existing berm associated with the Interstate 80 overpass would generally block views of the Mace Triangle site from the aforementioned residences. Development on the MRIC site or the Mace Triangle site would change the setting for the existing mural and kinetic element on the East Area Tank and utility building, but would not block views of the artwork from Interstate 80 or the US40 bicycle path. As a result, changes in visual character/quality of the Mace Triangle site associated with any future development would not be anticipated to result in significant impacts given the viewer exposure to these changes would be limited (i.e., motorists, bicyclists, workers).

Conclusion

As noted previously, the MRIC Site is not anticipated to be fully developed until 2035. Therefore, open views of portion of the project site would remain until full buildout. The proposed project would comply with the City's General Plan policies, Municipal Code, and the Mace Ranch Innovation Center Design Guidelines. However, due to the substantial change to the existing setting of the site, the MRIC would be considered to degrade the existing visual character or quality of the project site and/or the site's surroundings. Therefore, development of the proposed project would result in a ***significant*** impact.

Mitigation Measure(s)

Buildout of the MRIC would significantly alter the existing visual character of the project site. Although compliance with the City's General Plan policies and the MRIC Design Guidelines would help minimize impacts, feasible mitigation measures are not available to reduce impacts associated with the degradation of the existing visual character or quality of the MRIC site from project development to a less-than-significant level. Therefore, the impact would remain *significant and unavoidable*.

4.1-3 Create a new source of substantial light or glare that would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area. Based on the analysis below and with implementation of mitigation, the impact is *less than significant*.

MRIC

The MRIC site is currently vacant and undeveloped. As such, implementation of the proposed project would introduce new sources of light and glare to the project area.

The proposed project is required to comply with the City's Outdoor Lighting Control policies, the goals and policies of the General Plan, and the Mace Ranch Innovation Center Design Guidelines. Consistency with the City's Municipal Code would be ensured during the site plan and architectural review process. Section 8.17.030 of the City's Municipal Code includes general requirements for outdoor lighting. For example, the Municipal Code requires all outdoor lighting to be fully shielded and all externally illuminated signs to be top mounted in order to direct light downward. In addition, landscaping would be used to reduce long-range visibility of night lighting.

The proposed project's building and street lighting would be designed to minimize potential impacts on surrounding properties in accordance with standards included in the Davis Municipal Code. For example, per the Mace Ranch Innovation Center Design Guidelines, exterior lighting throughout the project site would be the minimum necessary to provide safety for pedestrians and other non-vehicular uses. Lighting would be designed and selected to provide appropriate light levels to reduce long-range visibility of night lighting with full cut off fixture designs. In addition, energy-efficient light-emitting diode (LED) lighting fixtures will be employed throughout the project site. Although complete elimination of project-related glare would be impossible, compliance with the Mace Ranch Innovation Center Design Guidelines, as well as the City's Municipal Code limitations related to glare, would help to reduce the amount of reflective surfaces and materials that could contribute to glare.

Mace Triangle

Glare is typically associated with reflections from windows, building materials, and vehicles. The Mace Triangle site currently contains a City-owned water tank, Ikedas Market, and a Park-and-Ride lot. The City of Davis has included the Mace Triangle within the overall project boundaries to ensure that an agricultural and unincorporated island is not created and to allow the continuation and expansion of existing uses. This

EIR evaluates the potential for expansion of the Ikedas farm stand and additional urban development on the Ikedas parcel and adjacent agricultural parcel. The EIR assumes development of up to 71,056 square feet of general commercial uses, including up to 45,900 of research, office, and R&D, and up to 25,155 square feet of retail. As such, implementation of the proposed project could introduce new sources of light and glare to the project area in the future. However, should an applicant propose development of the Mace Triangle in the future, any lighting would be subject to Article 8.17, Outdoor Lighting Control, of the Davis Municipal Code.

Conclusion

Overall, due to the proposed project's design and required consistency with the City's Municipal Code, the proposed project would not be expected to generate light or glare that would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area. However, without a site lighting plan, the impacts from light and glare are difficult to determine. Therefore, with a lighting plan, the proposed project would have a ***less-than-significant*** impact related to light and glare.

Mitigation Measure(s)

MRIC and Mace Triangle

4.1-3 *In conjunction with submittal of improvement plans for the Mace Triangle and each phase of development for the MRIC, the applicant shall submit a lighting plan to the Community Development and Sustainability Department for review and approval. The lighting plan shall be designed to limit light trespass and glare onto off-site properties to a reasonable level through the use of shielding, and directional lighting methods, including, but not limited to, fixture location and height. The Plan shall comply with Chapter 6 of the Davis Municipal Code - Article 8: Outdoor Lighting Control.*

4.1-4 Conflict, or create inconsistency, with any applicable plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating environmental effects related to aesthetics and visual resources. Based on the analysis below, and with implementation of mitigation, the impact is *less than significant.*

In order to demonstrate the project's consistency with any applicable plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating environmental effects related to aesthetics and visual resources, Table 4.1-5 includes a list of the relevant policies and a corresponding discussion of how the project is consistent with each policy. As demonstrated in the table, the proposed project is generally consistent with the relevant plans, policies, or regulations adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating environmental effects related to aesthetics and visual resources.

However, while the MRIC Design Guidelines encourage incorporation of various design measures, consistent with General Plan policy direction, the Design Guidelines do not require the project to incorporate these features, such as street trees and high-quality design materials (e.g., see Policies UD 2.2 and 2.6). Similar design features will need to be incorporated into Mace Triangle development, for which design guidelines have not been prepared. With implementation of the following mitigation, ensuring project consistency with design-related General Plan policies, the project would have a ***less-than-significant*** impact regarding policy consistency.

Mitigation Measure(s)

MRIC and Mace Triangle

4.1-4 *At or prior to final planned development, or tentative map submittal, whichever occurs first, the applicant shall submit landscape and architectural details to the Department of Community Development and Sustainability showing the following:*

Landscaping

- *Research/office/R&D and manufacturing areas shall have access connections at regular intervals along the perimeter of the project area to adjacent bike and pedestrian pathways and easily-accessible, landscaped pedestrian and bicycle access between various areas.*
- *Arterial and collection streets shall have planted medians, but with widths sized to accommodate tree and shrub plantings. Medians on collector streets shall be limited to locations where the median contributes to a specific purpose or solves a specific problem, such as enhancing an entry, calming traffic, or providing a needed pedestrian refuge at intersections. Removal of street trees to accommodate an increase in vehicular traffic shall occur only as a last resort, after review by appropriate boards and commissions.*
- *Trees that are planted in the future shall have wide canopies, sufficient to eventually provide, at maturity, at least 50 percent shade coverage of the pavement area of local streets and 30 percent shade coverage of the pavement area of collector and arterial streets.*

Architecture

- *A scale transition between intensified land uses and adjoining lower intensity land uses shall be provided, as applicable.*
- *Taller buildings shall be stepped back at upper levels in areas with a relatively smaller-scale character.*

- *Buildings shall be varied in size, density and design.*
- *Stored materials, goods, parts or equipment shall be screened from adjacent public streets or highways.*
- *Loading facilities shall be designed as an integral part of the building(s) which they serve and shall be located in an inconspicuous manner.*
- *Roof mounted equipment shall be screened from view of any ground level area accessible to the general public.*
- *Trash enclosures, noise generating equipment, and other nuisances shall be adequately screened or located away from any adjacent residential use.*

Table 4.1-5
Policy and Regulation Discussion

Policy			Project Consistency
Chapter 3, Urban Design, Neighborhood Preservation and Community Forest Management, of the Davis General Plan			
UD 2.1	Preserve and protect scenic resources and elements in and around Davis, including natural habitat and scenery and resources reflective of place and history.		The site does not contain any natural scenic or historic resources. It is comprised of agricultural land. Loss of agricultural land is addressed in Section 4.2.
UD 2.2	Maintain and increase the amount of greenery, especially street trees, in Davis, both for aesthetic reasons and to provide shade, cooling, habitat, air quality benefits, and visual continuity.		As described in the project description, the applicant proposes a total of 64.6 acres of green space**.** This represents approximately 30 percent of the total project acreage.
	Standard 2.2b	Arterial and collection streets in new developments should have planted medians, but with widths sized to accommodate tree and shrub plantings. Medians on collector streets should be limited to locations where the median contributes to a specific purpose or solves a specific problem, such as enhancing a neighborhood entry, calming traffic, or providing a needed pedestrian refuge at intersections. Removal of street trees to accommodate an increase in vehicular traffic shall occur only as a last resort, after review by appropriate boards and commissions.	Policy UD 2.2 requires that new development maintain and increase the amount of greenery, especially street trees, in Davis, both for aesthetic reasons and to provide shade, cooling, habitat, air quality benefits, and visual continuity. Pursuant to the proposed project Design Guidelines, street trees are advised along all project roadways. However, the language used in the Design Guidelines is not binding. Therefore, in order to be able to make a finding of consistency with Policy UD 2.2, Mitigation Measure 4.1-4 is required to ensure the provision of street trees. As shown in Mitigation Measure 4.1-4, the provision of street trees in accordance with Policy UD 2.2 will be verified during the site plan and architectural review process associated with final planned development review and approval.
	Standard 2.2c	Trees that are planted in the future are expected to have wide canopies, sufficient to eventually provide, at maturity, at least 50 percent shade coverage of the pavement area of local streets and 30 percent shade coverage of the pavement area of collector and arterial streets.	As such, with implementation of Mitigation Measure 4.1-4, a finding of substantial compliance with this policy can be made.
UD 2.3	Require an architectural "fit" with Davis' existing scale for new development projects.		Policy UD 2.3 requires that new development be designed to “fit” with the existing scale and architecture within the City. One way to evaluate this “fit” is to consider the massing of the buildings proposed for the project.

(Continued on next page)

Table 4.1-5
Policy and Regulation Discussion

Policy	Project Consistency
	The project Design Guidelines encourage various architectural treatments to help the project fit within the Davis community, including but not limited to articulation of building breaks and vertical building wall divisions for the R&D buildings, in order for the buildings to relate to the scale and desired character of the various spaces and streets to which a building wall relates. The IC buildings, which would be generally grouped around internal courtyards, are not proposed to be secluded or independent from the rest of the community. However, the language used in the Design Guidelines is not binding. Therefore, in order to be able to make a finding of consistency with Policy UD 2.3, Mitigation Measure 4.1-4 is required to ensure the project fits architecturally with the scale of buildings in East Davis. Compliance with Mitigation Measure 4.1-4 will be verified during the site plan and architectural review process associated with final planned development review and approval. As such, with implementation of Mitigation Measure 4.1-4, a finding of substantial compliance with this policy can be made.
UD 2.6 Require high-quality design standards for manufacturing, assembly, research and development, warehousing, and distribution type land uses. Standard 2.6a Stored materials, goods, parts or equipment should be screened from adjacent public streets or highways. Standard 2.6b Loading facilities should be designed as an integral part of the building(s) which they serve and should be located in an inconspicuous	Policy UD 2.6 requires that new development comply with high-quality design standards for manufacturing, assembly, research and development, warehousing, and distribution type land uses. The MRIC Design Guidelines include recommendations for screening trash/recycling receptacles from public view. The Guidelines also encourage the location of loading facilities away from major pedestrian/bicycling routes. It is intended that service docks be internal to the building envelope. These design features would help to ensure that manufacturing, assembly, research and development, warehousing, and distribution type land uses, would include high-quality design standards.

(Continued on next page)

Table 4.1-5
Policy and Regulation Discussion

Policy			Project Consistency
		manner.	However, the language used in the Design Guidelines is not binding. Therefore, in order to be able to make finding of consistency with Policy UD 2.2, Mitigation Measure 4.1-4 is required to ensure the provision of high-quality building materials. As shown in Mitigation Measure 4.1-4, the provision of high-quality building standards in accordance with Policy UD 2.6 will be verified during the site plan and architectural review process associated with final planned development review and approval. As such, with implementation of Mitigation Measure 4.1-4, a finding of substantial compliance with this policy can be made.
	Standard 2.6c	Extension of loading facilities, including incidental parking and maneuvering areas, into required minimum setback areas is prohibited.	
	Standard 2.6d	Roof mounted equipment should be screened from view of any ground level area accessible to the general public.	
	Standard 2.6e	Trash enclosures, noise generating equipment, and other nuisances shall be adequately screened or located away from any adjacent residential use.	
UD 3.2	Provide exterior lighting that enhances safety and night use in public spaces, but minimizes impacts on surrounding land uses.		All proposed outdoor lighting is proposed to be designed to comply with Section 8.17.030 of the Davis Municipal Code. All outdoor site light fixtures shall be light-emitting diode (LED), to the extent feasible and as required by current City codes, to reduce the demand for electricity. In general, lighting will be designed to minimize light levels for any given application and to direct the lighting onto high use areas. High efficiency fixtures are proposed to direct light where it is needed and to avoid excessive glare and reduce impacts on the night sky and open space. In addition, lighting fixtures are proposed to be equipped with optics and cut off shields that direct the light to the ground in order to avoid spillover of light on adjacent properties or areas. Furthermore, parking lot lights are proposed to be no higher than necessary to provide efficient lighting and would not exceed 30 feet in height, including the base. The objective is to provide lighting for public areas that improve nighttime visibility, avoid glare, and increase the ability to see the night sky. Compliance with the City's Code would be ensured during the design review process and prior to issuance of a building permit, as required by

(Continued on next page)

Table 4.1-5
Policy and Regulation Discussion

Policy	Project Consistency
	Mitigation Measure 4.1-3(a) through 4.1-3(b). As such, the proposed project would provide exterior lighting that enhances safety but minimizes impacts on surrounding land uses.
UD 4.1 Develop an urban design framework plan to consolidate and clarify the relevant design concepts in this chapter and other chapters to promote a positive and memorable image for the city and to reinforce the functional systems of the city such as land use, circulation, and open space.	The Mace Ranch Innovation Center Design Guidelines include a design framework for the project which aims to consolidate the relevant Davis General Plan policies. The Guidelines aim to promote a positive image for the City and to reinforce the functional systems of the City, such as circulation. For example, the proposed project includes a circulation network which provides a hierarchy of streets, bicycle paths, trails, transit, and pedestrian promenades designed to support a wide range of uses and activities. The network fosters connectivity and aims to reduce the needs for automobile travel within project area and in the larger community. In addition, the Yolo Causeway Bike Path connecting Davis to Sacramento abuts the project site and will provide nonautomotive access from the project to surrounding cities as well as downtown Davis and other key places within Davis. In terms of reinforcing the City's functional systems, such as open space, the proposed project includes a 150-foot agricultural buffer in order to allow agricultural operations adjacent to the project site to continue once the project is developed. As such, the proposed project would reinforce the functional systems of the City through proper design.
Chapter 8, Buildings, of the Davis Municipal Code	
8.17.030 General requirements	All proposed outdoor lighting would be designed to comply with Section 8.17.030 of the Davis Municipal Code. All of the outdoor lighting fixtures would be fully shielded and would be designed to limit light trespass and glare through the use of shielding, directional lighting, and fixture location and height. In addition, externally illuminated signs, advertising displays, billboards, or building identification would use top mounted light fixtures which shine light downward and which are fully shielded. Compliance with the City's Code would be ensured during the design

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Table 4.1-5
Policy and Regulation Discussion

Policy	Project Consistency
	review process and prior to issuance of a building permit, as required by Mitigation Measure 4.1-3(a) through 4.1-3(b). As such, the proposed project would comply with the City's Municipal Code.
8.17.050 Approved materials and methods of installation	Any lighting within the roadway right-of-way, proposed bike paths, and public parking lot areas are proposed to be designed to comply with Section 8.17.050 of the Davis Municipal Code. Parking lot lights are proposed to not be higher than necessary to provide efficient lighting and would not exceed 30 feet in height, including the base. In addition, high efficiency fixtures encouraged to direct light where needed would be implemented to avoid excessive glare and reduce impacts on the night sky and open space. Compliance with the City's Code would be ensured during the design review process and prior to issuance of a building permit, as required by Mitigation Measure 4.1-3(a) through 4.1-3(b). As such, the proposed project would comply with the City's Municipal Code.