
Aesthetics, Shadow and Wind

This chapter evaluates the potential aesthetics, shadow and wind impacts of the proposed Specific Plan. It describes existing conditions in and around West Oakland and evaluates the impacts and mitigation needs that development envisioned by the Specific Plan would have with respect to visual character and quality, scenic vistas, scenic highways, light and glare, shadow and wind.

Physical Setting

Visual Character and Quality

Overall Visual Character

West Oakland has a distinct visual character strongly influenced by its historic residential neighborhoods, heavy industrial areas and a mixing of the two. West Oakland is also characterized by a significant amount of vacant and underutilized land distributed throughout the area. The visual character of large parts of West Oakland has been affected by social and economic conditions, including the decline in manufacturing and resulting vacant buildings; the loss of retail trade to the suburbs and resulting empty storefronts and underutilized commercial land; and urban problems such as blight and graffiti. Those areas that have retained high visual quality tend to be those removed from industrial areas with consistent or unique architecture, or proximity to a landmark or focal point.

West Oakland's rich history, culture, and notable architectural resources also strongly influence its visual character, exemplified by the historic beaux-arts style 16th Street Station, built in 1911. Besides landmark buildings, there are extensive residential neighborhoods that retain their historical character. 7th Street was a prosperous commercial district and a destination for Jazz artists, with music and performance venues. The San Pablo Avenue corridor includes notable historic commercial and mixed-use buildings in brick and wood. West Oakland has historically been a regional focal point for the African-American community. From a history of disenfranchisement, a strong sense of neighborhood identity has developed around community activism. A thriving industrial arts sector, a sustainability/food security/urban farming movement, and an "arts-adjacent" alternative lifestyle community are a new and growing influence on the visual character of the formerly industrial parts of West Oakland.

West Grand Avenue, 7th Street, Mandela Parkway, San Pablo Avenue, Peralta Street, Martin Luther King Jr. Way, Market Street and Adeline Street are primary transportation and activity corridors in West Oakland. Segments of these corridors lack streetscape improvements that create a safe and comfortable pedestrian environment, and that safely balance multiple modes of travel, including public transit and bicycles. Sidewalk widths and conditions vary widely, from 15 feet on some blocks to non-existent on others. The shifting street grid pattern has in some areas created a number of small, angular unbuildable parcels, as well as intersections with large "leftover" paved areas. Overhead utilities are typical, with power poles creating obstacles and unsightly conditions. A number of areas lack adequate street

lighting. Street furniture is generally lacking, although in some locations such as in the Prescott Neighborhood, wooden planters, benches and tables have been provided. Bus stops commonly lack shelters, benches and trash receptacles. Many of the streets also experience illegal dumping and graffiti, which detract from visual quality.

The realignment of I-880 following the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake allowed the creation of Mandela Parkway, a landscaped, tree-lined parkway and arboretum that extends 18 blocks, from 8th Street to 32nd Street. The City has also initiated other streetscape improvement projects on 7th Street, Martin Luther King Jr. Way, and Peralta Street. The 7th Street Concept and Urban Design Plan provides widened sidewalks, corner bulb-outs, planted medians, lighting, street furniture, street trees, bicycle lanes, reduced traffic lanes, and a roundabout at the 7th Street/Wood Street intersection. The project also includes art features, a gateway element, “dancing” lights, and sidewalk medallions as part of a Blues Walk of Fame. Phase I of the project has been completed from Peralta Street to Union Street. A Martin Luther King Jr. Way and Peralta Street Streetscape Master Plan are being prepared for those streets.

The City of Oakland General Plan identifies the West Oakland BART Station as a visual landmark. Other readily identifiable structures in West Oakland include the elevated BART tracks, 16th Street Station, the U.S. Postal Service mail distribution center and garage, Jack London Gateway Center, and the California Hotel. The I-580, I-880 and I-980 freeways form strong edges to the community. The City of Oakland General Plan identifies the I-580 and I-880 entrances to the city as major gateways. The West Grand Avenue exit from the I-880 freeway is an important gateway into West Oakland. The I-980 overpass over West Grand Avenue is a gateway to and from West Oakland and the Downtown.

Mandela/ West Grand Opportunity Area

The visual character of Subarea 1A, northeast of the Mandela Parkway and West Grand Avenue intersection, reflects this subarea’s smaller parcels and historic industrial building stock, including a number of cases of adaptive reuse of former industrial buildings, and numerous tin buildings built in the 1940s and 1950s. The large Iron Mountain Storage building at the corner of Mandela/Grand has large blank walls which tend to dominate the views at this prominent corner. The open yard concrete batch plant still in operation on Peralta Street maintains the former heavy industrial character of the neighborhood. There are many vacant lots and open yards, and very few single family homes, most of them concentrated along Adeline Street at the eastern edge of the subarea.

The visual character of Subarea1B, southeast of the Mandela Parkway/West Grand Avenue intersection, is influenced by some of the most architecturally notable industrial buildings in West Oakland, the Nabisco, American Steel, Pacific Pipe Company, Carnation and Mayway buildings. The Nabisco building is particularly architecturally distinct, with an ornate design and a scale that is compatible with adjacent residential uses.

The visual character of Subarea1C, the northwest of the intersection, is characterized by large open yard logistics and trucking businesses. There are many instances of adaptive reuse of older facilities, such as the architecturally significant International Harvester building. There are also many shed-type buildings, such as Pacific Supply. There is a large vacant area at the western border of the subarea next to I-880.

The visual character of Subarea 1D, southwest of the Mandela Parkway/West Grand Avenue intersection, is a mix of newer and older development. Newer development includes initial phases of the large Wood Street Project, a collection of medium-density residential podium buildings, and Raimondi Park with its well-used lighted sports fields. 16th Street Station, a National Historic Landmark, is planned to be rehabilitated as part of future phases of the approved Wood Street Project. Large vacant properties border this Subarea next to I-880.

7th Street Opportunity Area

The visual character of Subarea 2A, immediately surrounding the West Oakland BART Station, is dominated by the BART Station, the elevated BART tracks and several larger vacant parcels on the south side of 7th Street, remaining from the demolition of the former Cypress Freeway. The BART station provides a visual transition between the South Prescott neighborhood and the industrial area east of the station.

The visual character of Subarea 2B is focused on the 7th Street corridor, once a thriving neighborhood commercial district with musical venues served by streetcars, and now dominated by the overhead BART tracks and the large-scale U.S. Post Office facility and garage. On the north side of the street are remaining one- and two-story historical buildings. The BART piers sit in a raised median that divides four lanes of traffic. The Post Office frontage is planted with trees. The 7th Street Concept and Urban Design Plan Streetscape improvements and newer residential developments have begun to transform the area.

The visual character of Subarea 2C reflects the placement of industrial buildings on large parcels and a large vacant lot on Pine Street near historically significant homes. This area feels isolated by the adjacent freeway, 7th Street interchange and sound wall.

3rd Street Opportunity Area

The visual character of the 3rd Street Opportunity Area reflects its original industrial architectural character, with tilt-up concrete warehouses and notable brick buildings, some reused for emerging small businesses, such as the Linden Street Brewery. The character of this Opportunity Area is also strongly influenced by its adjacency to the Port of Oakland and truck routes.

San Pablo Avenue Opportunity Area

The visual character of the San Pablo Avenue Opportunity Area still reflects its historical development as a “main street” with a series of activity nodes linked by streetcar, but much of the area is now auto-oriented, with mostly one and two story buildings interspersed with parking lots, vacant land and storage yards.

Scenic Vistas

A scenic vista is a location that offers a high quality, harmonious, and visually interesting view. There are no officially designated scenic vistas within the Planning Area. The City of Oakland General Plan’s Open Space, Conservation and Recreation (OSCAR) Element calls for protection of views, particularly views of the East Bay hills from the flatlands; views of Downtown and Lake Merritt; views of the shoreline; and panoramic views from Skyline Boulevard/Grizzly Peak Road, and other hillside locations.

Scenic vistas from within the Planning Area are limited by the flat terrain and existing development, but the Oakland hills provide a prominent visual backdrop and orienting feature for West Oakland. Portions of the East Bay hills are visible from various public vantage points within the Planning Area. Some public vantage points have views of taller buildings in Downtown and the cranes at the Port of Oakland. The East Bay hills have views over the Planning Area to San Francisco Bay.

Scenic Highways

According to the City of Oakland General Plan’s Scenic Highways Element, scenic routes are “distinctively attractive roadways that traverse the City and the visual corridors which surround them.”

Current and future scenic routes may include officially designated State scenic highways, municipally designated City roadways or informally recognized local scenic byways.¹

Interstate 580 (the MacArthur Freeway) extends 12.4 miles through Oakland, from the San Leandro city limits to the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge. The entire length of I-580 within Oakland is identified as a designated scenic route in the City of Oakland General Plan Scenic Highways Element. I-980 is identified as a route that could be considered for possible future designation. The segment of I-580 from the San Leandro city limit to State Route 24 (post miles 34.5 to 45.1) is also an officially designated State scenic highway. Scenic Corridor Element policies related to I-580 in the vicinity of the Planning Area address the prohibition of off-premise advertising signs, the undergrounding of overhead utilities, view obstruction, continuing the ban on truck traffic, and the aesthetic quality of new development visible from the freeway.² The segment of I-580 within and adjacent to the Planning Area is elevated, allowing views of the Planning Area and views across the Planning Area to the Downtown and the Port of Oakland. The historic California Hotel with its distinctive steel truss roof sign is visible close to the freeway at San Pablo Avenue.

Light and Glare

Existing sources of nighttime light in and around the Planning Area include those common to urban areas, including street and freeway lights, parking lot lighting, building lighting, illuminated signs, vehicle headlamps and interior lighting visible through windows. Visible light sources and stray lighting from some industrial buildings and yards is incompatible with adjacent residential uses. Inadequate street lighting in some locations makes these areas feel unsafe.

Existing sources of glare include reflection of sunlight and artificial light off of windows, buildings and other surfaces in the day, and glare from inadequately shielded and improperly directed light sources at night.

Shadow

The effects of shading by one structure upon another structure or space can be either positive or negative depending upon site-specific circumstances. Perceived adverse effects of shadow may include loss of natural light, including natural light for passive or active solar energy applications, or loss of desired warming during cool weather. Factors influencing the perceived impact of shadow can include building placement; the height, bulk and setback of structures; the time of year; the duration of shading in a day; weather; landscaping; and the sensitivity of adjacent land uses to loss of sunlight.

Shadows cast by structures vary in length and direction throughout the day and from season to season. The longest shadows are cast during the winter months, when the sun is lowest on the horizon; the shortest shadows are cast during the summer months. Shadows are longer in the early morning and late afternoon. Shadow lengths increase during the low sun or winter season and are longest on December 21-22, the winter solstice. The winter solstice, therefore, represents the "worst-case" shadow condition and the time when the potential for loss of access to sunlight due to an adjacent structure is greatest. Shadow lengths are shortest on June 21-22, the summer solstice. Shadow lengths fall midway between the summer and winter extremes on March 20-21 and September 22-23, the spring and fall equinoxes, respectively.

¹ City of Oakland, City of Oakland General Plan Scenic Highways Element, September 1974, p. 1.

² City of Oakland, City of Oakland General Plan Scenic Highways Element, September 1974, pp. 25 and 26

Shadows are cast to the west by objects during the morning hours when the sun is coming up on the horizon in the east. During late morning and early afternoon, the shadows of objects move northerly and by late afternoon they are cast easterly as the sun moves across the sky from east to west.

Land uses are generally considered shadow-sensitive when sunlight is important to function, physical comfort, or the conduct of commerce. Shadow-sensitive land uses and features of concern as identified by the City's CEQA Thresholds of Significance include any public or quasi-public park, lawn, garden, or open space; shadow-sensitive significant historic resource; and solar collectors or buildings using passive solar heat collection.

Existing shadow conditions within the Planning Area are typical of shadow conditions in developed urban environments.

Wind

West Oakland lies within a climatological sub-region of the San Francisco Bay Area where the marine air that travels through the Golden Gate and across San Francisco Bay is a dominant weather factor. The Oakland-Berkeley Hills cause the westerly flow of marine air to split off to the north and south of Oakland; this phenomenon tends to diminish wind speeds in Oakland. Wind flow is generally from the west, and average wind speeds vary from season to season with the strongest average winds occurring during summer and the lightest average winds during winter. Together, the west, north-northwest and south-southeast winds are the most frequent winds that exceed 25 miles per hour (mph).

Wind conditions within the City result from the interaction of the approaching wind with the physical features of the environment: buildings, topography and landscape. Buildings much taller than surrounding structures intercept winds that might otherwise flow overhead, and bring those winds down the vertical face of the building to ground level, where they create ground-level wind and turbulence. These redirected winds can be incompatible with the intended uses of nearby ground-level spaces.

Ground-level wind acceleration near buildings is controlled by exposure, massing, and orientation. Exposure is a measure of the extent that the building extends above surrounding structures and into the wind stream. A building that is surrounded by taller structures is not likely to cause adverse wind acceleration at ground level, while even a small building can cause wind problems if it is freestanding and exposed. Massing is important in determining wind impact because it controls how much wind is intercepted by the structure and whether building generated wind acceleration occurs above ground or at ground level. Orientation determines how much wind is intercepted by the structure, a factor that directly determines wind acceleration. In general, buildings that are oriented with their long axis across the prevailing wind direction will have a greater impact on ground-level winds than a building oriented with its long axis along the prevailing wind direction.

Regulatory Setting

State of California

California Scenic Highway Program

The California Scenic Highway Program protects scenic highway corridors from changes that would diminish the aesthetic value of lands adjacent to identified scenic highways. "Officially Designated State Scenic Highways" must have a scenic corridor protection program, or its equivalent adopted by the local

jurisdiction, to preserve the scenic quality of the corridor and address land use, development density, earthmoving, landscaping, building design, and outdoor advertising, including billboards, within the corridor. Within Oakland, I-580 from the San Leandro city limit to State Route 24 (post miles 34.5 to 45.1) is an officially designated State scenic highway. There are no officially designated or eligible State scenic highways within or immediately adjacent to the Planning Area.

California Solar Shade Control Act

Under the California Solar Shade Control Act (Public Resource Code Sections 25980-25986), no property owner shall allow a tree or shrub to be placed or to grow so as to cast a shadow greater than 10 percent at any one time between the hours of 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. over an existing solar collector used for water heating, space heating or cooling, or power generation on an adjacent property. These limitations apply to the placement of new trees or shrubs, and do not apply to trees and shrubs that already cast a shadow upon that solar collector. The location of a new solar collector is required to comply with local building and setback regulations, but must be setback not less than five feet from the property line, and must be no less than 10 feet above the ground.³

Title 24 Outdoor Lighting Zones

In 2001, the California Legislature passed a bill requiring the California Energy Commission (CEC) to adopt energy-efficient standards for outdoor lighting for both the public and private sector. In November 2003, the CEC adopted changes to the Building Energy Efficiency Standards within Title 24. The standards specify outdoor lighting requirements for residential and non-residential development. The intent of these standards is to improve the quality of outdoor lighting and reduce the impacts of light pollution, light trespass and glare. The standards regulate lighting characteristics, such as maximum power and brightness, shielding, and use of sensor controls to turn lighting on and off. Different State lighting standards have been established for four lighting zone classifications. Based on population figures in the 2000 Census, areas can be designated by this State specification system as LZ1 (dark), LZ2 (low), LZ3 (medium), or LZ4 (high). Lighting standards for dark and rural areas are stricter for example, to provide appropriate protection from new sources of light pollution and light trespass. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the entire Planning Area is defined as an urban area and is therefore designated as LZ3 per the CEC classification standards.⁴

City of Oakland

General Plan

Land Use and Transportation Element

The following City of Oakland General Plan Land use and Transportation Element policies are relevant to the aesthetics, shadow and wind impacts of the proposed Specific Plan:

Policy W3.4: Preserving Views and Vistas. Buildings and facilities should respect scenic viewsheds and enhance opportunities for visual access of the waterfront and its activities.

³ California Codes, Public Resource Code Sections 25980-25986. The California Public Resources Code can be found at <http://www.leginfo.ca.gov/calaw.html>.

⁴ <http://www.energy.ca.gov/title24/2008standards/outdoorlighting>

Policy T6.2: Improving Streetscapes. The City should make major efforts to improve the visual quality of streetscapes. Design of the streetscape, particularly in neighborhoods and commercial centers, should be pedestrian-oriented and include lighting, directional signs, trees, benches, and other support facilities.

Policy N1.5: Designing Commercial Development. Commercial development should be designed in a manner that is sensitive to surrounding residential uses.

Policy I/C4.3: Reducing Billboards. Billboards should be reduced or eliminated in commercial and residential areas in Oakland neighborhoods through mechanisms that minimize or do not require the expenditure of city funds.

Policy N1.8: Making Compatible Development. The height and bulk of commercial development in “Neighborhood Mixed-Use Center” and “Community Commercial” areas should be compatible with that which is allowed for residential development.

Policy T6.5: Protecting Scenic Routes. The City should protect and encourage enhancement of the distinctive character of scenic routes within the City, through prohibition of billboards, design review, and other means.

Policy N9.5: Marking Significant Sites. Identify locations of interest and historic significance by markers, signs, public art, landscape, installations, or by other means.

Policy N8.2: Making Compatible Interfaces between Densities. The height of development in urban residential and other higher density residential areas should step down as it nears lower density residential areas to minimize conflicts at the interface between the different types of development.

Open Space, Conservation and Recreation Element

The Open Space, Conservation and Recreation Element (OSCAR) promotes the preservation and good design of open space, and the protection of natural resources to improve aesthetic quality in Oakland. The following OSCAR policies are relevant to the aesthetics, shadow and wind impacts of the proposed Specific Plan:

Action OS-3.6.1: Landscape Screening Along Freeways. Require retention of existing landscape screening as a condition of development approval for any property adjacent to Highway 13, Highway 580, or Highway 24.

Policy OS-2.1: Protection of Park Open Space: Manage Oakland’s urban parks to protect and enhance their open space character while accommodating a wide range of outdoor activities.

Policy OS-2.2: Schoolyard Enhancement: Enhance the availability and usefulness of Oakland’s schoolyards and athletic fields as open space resources by (a) working with the Oakland Unified School District to make schoolyards and school athletic fields available to the public during non-school hours; (b) softening the harsh appearance of schoolyards by varying paving materials, landscaping, and restoring elements of the natural landscape, and (c) encouraging private schools, including church schools, to improve the visual appearance of asphalt yard areas.

Policy OS-4.4: Elimination of Blighted Vacant Lots. Discourage property owners from allowing vacant land to become a source of neighborhood blight, particularly in residential areas with large numbers of vacant lots.

Policy OS-9.3: Gateway Improvements. Enhance neighborhood and city identity by maintaining or creating gateways. Maintain view corridors and enhance the sense of arrival at the major

entrances to the city, including freeways, BART lines, and the airport entry. Use public art, landscaping, and signage to create stronger City and neighborhood gateways.

Objective OS-10: Scenic Resources. Protect scenic views and improve visual quality.

Policy OS-10.1: View Protection. Protect the character of existing scenic views in Oakland, paying particular attention to: (a) views of the Oakland Hills from the flatlands; (b) views of downtown and Lake Merritt; (c) views of the shoreline; and (d) panoramic views from Skyline Boulevard, Grizzly Peak Road, and other hillside locations.

Policy OS-10.2: Minimizing Adverse Visual Impacts. Encourage site planning for new development which minimizes adverse visual impacts and takes advantage of opportunities for new vistas and scenic enhancement.

Policy OS-10.3: Underutilized Visual Resources. Enhance Oakland's underutilized visual resources, including the waterfront, creeks, San Leandro Bay, architecturally significant buildings or landmarks, and major thoroughfares.

Objective OS-11: Civic Open Spaces. To maintain and develop plazas, pocket parks, pedestrian walkways, and rooftop gardens in Oakland's major activity centers, and enhance the appearance of these and other public spaces with landscaping and art.

Policy OS-11.2: New Civic Open Space. Create new civic open spaces at BART Stations, in neighborhood commercial areas, on parking garages, and in other areas where high-intensity redevelopment is proposed.

Policy OS-11.3: Public Art Requirements. Continue to require public art as a part of new public buildings or facilities. Consider expanding the requirement or creating voluntary incentives to private buildings with substantial public spaces.

Action OS-11.3.1: Expanded Private Role in Providing Public Art. Study possible approaches to expanding the private sector's role in the city's public art program. Options should include development incentives (density bonuses) and an in-lieu fee based on square footage for major downtown development.

Policy OS-11.4: Siting Public Art. Site public art with sensitivity to its surroundings. Locate public art in a manner which does not reduce useable open space in City parks or impede recreational activities.

Objective OS-12: Street Trees. "Green" Oakland's residential neighborhoods and commercial areas with street trees.

Policy OS-12.1: Street Tree Selection. Incorporate a broad and varied range of tree species which is reflected on a city-maintained list of approved trees. Street tree selection should respond to the general environmental conditions at the planting site, including climate and micro-climate, soil types, topography, existing tree planting, maintenance of adequate distance between street trees and other features, the character of existing development, and the size and context of the tree planting area.

Action OS-12.1.1: Adoption of Street Tree Plan. Formally adopt a City of Oakland Street Tree Plan which addresses species selection for major streets and neighborhoods and contains criteria for tree planting, maintenance, and removal within the Plan, include a new procedure for implementing, amending, and updating the Plan, including changes to tree selection.

Action OS-12.1.2: Priorities for Planting. Identify streets and neighborhoods with the highest priority for street trees and establish a planting program targeting these areas.

Policy CO-7.4: Discourage the removal of large trees on already developed sites unless removal is required for biological, public safety, or public works reasons.

Scenic Highways Element

The Scenic Highways Element seeks to protect and enhance the distinctive character of scenic routes within the City. I-580 is identified as a designated scenic route in the Scenic Highways Element. Interstate 980 is identified as a route that could be considered for possible future designation. The following Scenic Highways Element policies are relevant to the aesthetics impacts of the proposed Specific Plan:

General Policies:

- Overhead utilities should be undergrounded along all freeways, scenic routes, and major streets. Programs should be developed to increase the present rate of undergrounding existing overhead utilities.
- Billboards should be prohibited and other signs should be controlled along freeways and parkways.

Specific Policies Related to MacArthur Freeway:

- The signs within the scenic corridors that are visible from the freeway should be for identification purposes only; no advertising should be permitted.
- Visual intrusions within the scenic corridor should be removed, converted buffered or screened from the motorist's view.
- Panoramic vistas and interesting views now available to the motorist should not be obliterated by new structures.
- New construction within the scenic corridor should demonstrate architectural merit and a harmonious relationship with the surrounding landscape.
- The ban of truck traffic on the MacArthur Freeway should continue indefinitely.

Oakland Municipal Code

The following provisions of the Oakland Municipal Code are relevant to the aesthetics impacts of the proposed Specific Plan:

Title 8: Health and Safety

Chapter 8.10: Graffiti. This chapter is to protect public and private property from acts of defacement by graffiti.

Chapter 8.24: Property Blight. This chapter requires a level of maintenance of residential, commercial, and industrial property that will protect and preserve the livability, appearance, and social and economic stability of the City.

Title 12: Streets, Sidewalks and Public Places

Chapter 12.32: Street Trees. This chapter outlines the provisions for protecting street trees. No new development shall make any tree or shrub improvement, or destroy, deface, or mutilate any tree or

shrub along a public street without having first obtained a written permit from the City of Oakland Director of Parks and Recreation.

Chapter 12.36: Protected Trees. It is the interest of the City of Oakland and the community to protect and preserve trees by regulating their removal; to prevent unnecessary tree loss and minimize environmental damage from improper tree removal; to encourage appropriate tree replacement plantings; to effectively enforce tree preservation regulations; and to promote the appreciation and understanding of trees.

Title 17: Planning

Under the Planning Code, every zone within the City requires that new residential developments are subject to a design review process. No Local Register Property, residential facility, mixed-use development, telecommunications facility, sign, or other associated structure shall be constructed, established, or altered in exterior appearance unless the plans have been approved pursuant to the design review procedure in Chapter 17.136. Title 17 also outlines sign limitations, height restrictions, usable open space requirements, and minimum yards for residential developments located in each zone.

Chapter 17.124: Landscaping and Screening Standards. This chapter prescribes standards for development and maintenance of planting, fences, and walls; for the conservation and protection of property; and through improvements of the appearance of individual properties, neighborhoods, and the City.

Chapter 17.136: Design Review Procedure. In accordance with Chapter 17.136 of the Oakland Planning Code, future individual development projects within the Planning Area would be subject to Design review. Design review considers the visible features of a project and the project's relationship to its physical surroundings. Although independent of CEQA and the EIR process, design review is focused on ensuring quality design, and on avoiding potentially adverse aesthetic effects. Projects are evaluated based on site, landscaping, height, bulk, arrangement, texture, materials, colors, appurtenances, potential shadowing effects on adjacent properties, and other characteristics.

Standard Conditions of Approval

The City's Standard Conditions of Approval relevant to this aesthetics, shadow and wind are listed below. These Standard Conditions of Approval would be adopted as mandatory requirements of each individual future project within the Planning Area when it is approved by the City and would ensure that significant impacts would not occur.

SCA 39: Lighting Plan. *Prior to the issuance of an electrical or building permit.* The proposed lighting fixtures shall be adequately shielded to a point below the light bulb and reflector and that prevent unnecessary glare onto adjacent properties. Plans shall be submitted to the Planning and Zoning Division and the Electrical Services Division of the Public Works Agency for review and approval. All lighting shall be architecturally integrated into the site.

SCA 44: Tree Removal Permit. *Prior to issuance of a demolition, grading, or building permit.* Prior to removal of any protected trees, per the Protected Tree Ordinance, located on the project site or in the public right-of-way adjacent to the project, the project applicant must secure a tree removal permit from the Tree Division of the Public Works Agency, and abide by the conditions of that permit.

SCA 45: Tree Replacement Plantings. *Prior to issuance of a final inspection of the building permit.* Replacement plantings shall be required for erosion control, groundwater replenishment, visual

screening and wildlife habitat, and in order to prevent excessive loss of shade, in accordance with the following criteria:

- a. No tree replacement shall be required for the removal of nonnative species, for the removal of trees which is required for the benefit of remaining trees, or where insufficient planting area exists for a mature tree of the species being considered.
- b. Replacement tree species shall consist of *Sequoia sempervirens* (Coast Redwood), *Quercus agrifolia* (Coast Live Oak), *Arbutus menziesii* (Madrone), *Aesculus californica* (California Buckeye) or *Umbellularia californica* (California Bay Laurel) or other tree species acceptable to the Tree Services Division.
- c. Replacement trees shall be at least of twenty-four (24) inch box size, unless a smaller size is recommended by the arborist, except that three fifteen (15) gallon size trees may be substituted for each twenty-four (24) inch box size tree where appropriate.
- d. Minimum planting areas must be available on site as follows:
 - i. For *Sequoia sempervirens*, three hundred fifteen square feet per tree;
 - ii. For all other species listed in #2 above, seven hundred (700) square feet per tree.
- e. In the event that replacement trees are required but cannot be planted due to site constraints, an in lieu fee as determined by the master fee schedule of the city may be substituted for required replacement plantings, with all such revenues applied toward tree planting in city parks, streets and medians.
- f. Plantings shall be installed prior to the issuance of a final inspection of the building permit, subject to seasonal constraints, and shall be maintained by the project applicant until established. The Tree Reviewer of the Tree Division of the Public Works Agency may require a landscape plan showing the replacement planting and the method of irrigation. Any replacement planting which fails to become established within one year of planting shall be replanted at the project applicant's expense.

SCA 46: Tree Protection During Construction. *Prior to issuance of a demolition, grading, or building permit.* Adequate protection shall be provided during the construction period for any trees which are to remain standing, including the following, plus any recommendations of an arborist:

- a. Before the start of any clearing, excavation, construction or other work on the site, every protected tree deemed to be potentially endangered by said site work shall be securely fenced off at a distance from the base of the tree to be determined by the City Tree Reviewer. Such fences shall remain in place for duration of all such work. All trees to be removed shall be clearly marked. A scheme shall be established for the removal and disposal of logs, brush, earth and other debris which will avoid injury to any protected tree.
- b. Where proposed development or other site work is to encroach upon the protected perimeter of any protected tree, special measures shall be incorporated to allow the roots to breathe and obtain water and nutrients. Any excavation, cutting, filling, or compaction of the existing ground surface within the protected perimeter shall be minimized. No change in existing ground level shall occur within a distance to be determined by the City Tree Reviewer from the base of any protected tree at any time. No burning or use of equipment with an open flame shall occur near or within the protected perimeter of any protected tree.
- c. No storage or dumping of oil, gas, chemicals, or other substances that may be harmful to trees shall occur within the distance to be determined by the Tree Reviewer from the base of any protected trees, or any other location on the site from which such substances might enter the protected perimeter. No heavy construction equipment or construction materials shall be operated or stored within a distance from the base of any protected trees to be determined by the tree reviewer. Wires, ropes, or other devices shall not be attached to any protected tree, except

- as needed for support of the tree. No sign, other than a tag showing the botanical classification, shall be attached to any protected tree.
- d. Periodically during construction, the leaves of protected trees shall be thoroughly sprayed with water to prevent buildup of dust and other pollution that would inhibit leaf transpiration.
 - e. If any damage to a protected tree should occur during or as a result of work on the site, the project applicant shall immediately notify the Public Works Agency of such damage. If, in the professional opinion of the Tree Reviewer, such tree cannot be preserved in a healthy state, the Tree Reviewer shall require replacement of any tree removed with another tree or trees on the same site deemed adequate by the Tree Reviewer to compensate for the loss of the tree that is removed.
 - f. All debris created as a result of any tree removal work shall be removed by the project applicant from the property within two weeks of debris creation, and such debris shall be properly disposed of by the project applicant in accordance with all applicable laws, ordinances, and regulations.

Impacts, Standard Conditions of Approval and Mitigation Measures

Significance Criteria

According to the City's Thresholds of Significance, the Specific Plan would have a significant impact related to aesthetics, shadow and wind if it would:

1. Have a substantial adverse effect on a public scenic vista⁵;
2. Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings, located within a state or locally designated scenic highway;
3. Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings;
4. Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would substantially and adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area;
5. Introduce landscape that would now or in the future cast substantial shadows on existing solar collectors (in conflict with California Public Resource Code sections 25980-25986);
6. Cast shadow that substantially impairs the function of a building using passive solar heat collection, solar collectors for hot water heating, or photovoltaic solar collectors;
7. Cast shadow that substantially impairs the beneficial use of any public or quasi-public park, lawn, garden, or open space;
8. Cast shadow on an historic resource, as defined by CEQA Guidelines section 15064.5(a), such that the shadow would materially impair the resource's historic significance by materially altering those physical characteristics of the resource that convey its historical significance and that justify its inclusion on or eligibility for listing in the National Register of Historic Places, California Register of Historical Resources, Local Register of historical resources, or a historical resource survey form (DPR Form 523) with a rating of 1-5;

⁵ Only impacts to scenic views enjoyed by members of the public generally (but not private views) are potentially significant.

9. Require an exception (variance) to the policies and regulations in the General Plan, Planning Code, or Uniform Building Code, and the exception causes a fundamental conflict with policies and regulations in the General Plan, Planning Code, and Uniform Building Code addressing the provision of adequate light related to appropriate uses; or
10. Create winds that exceed 36 mph for more than one hour during daylight hours during the year.⁶

Scenic Vistas

Impact Aesth-1: There are no officially designated public scenic vistas within or near the Planning Area. No scenic vistas or view corridors would be substantially obstructed, degraded or adversely affected by development in accordance with the Specific Plan. The impacts of the Specific Plan on scenic vistas would therefore be less than significant. **(LTS)**

A project would have an impact on a scenic vista if it would obstruct views or introduce visual elements that would dominate or upset the textures, colors, lines, or overall visual quality of the view. Private scenic vistas as seen from individual private homes are not protected under the City of Oakland General Plan and are not an environmental issue requiring analysis in accordance with CEQA.

There are no officially designated scenic vistas within the Planning Area. The low elevation, flat terrain, and existing development within the Planning Area limit views. Some public vantage points within the Planning Area have limited views of Downtown Oakland, the East Bay hills or cranes at the Port of Oakland. Public views of the Planning Area and public views through the area to Downtown Oakland, the Port of Oakland or the East Bay hills are available primarily from the surrounding elevated freeways and the West Grand Avenue gateway, the elevated BART line, and the East Bay hills and neighborhoods at higher elevations to the west.

Infill development and redevelopment of vacant and blighted properties and facilities, improvements to streetscapes and the public realm, and new landscaping and street trees would improve the quality of views of the Planning Area from public vantage points. Focusing new development within the Opportunity Areas and preserving established neighborhoods would avoid substantial obstruction of limited views of Downtown Oakland and the East Bay hills from public vantage points within the adjacent residential neighborhoods.

Throughout most of West Oakland, no changes in the maximum allowed building heights is proposed as part of the Specific Plan, with the exception of the West Oakland BART Station TOD site. The currently effective building heights proscribed under current zoning that are applicable to the West Oakland BART Station TOD area allow for a maximum building height of 120 feet nearest to I-880, stepping down to 90 feet along 7th Street, and between 60 and 75 feet nearest to the adjacent South Prescott neighborhood. Under these current height limits, new buildings would likely be bulky and block-shaped with 60-foot to

⁶ The wind analysis only needs to be done if the project's height is 100 feet or greater (measured to the roof) and one of the following conditions exist: (a) the project is located adjacent to a substantial water body (i.e., Oakland Estuary, Lake Merritt or San Francisco Bay); or (b) the project is located in Downtown. Downtown is defined in the Land Use and Transportation Element of the General Plan (page 67) as the area generally bounded by West Grand Avenue to the north, Lake Merritt and Channel Park to the east, the Oakland Estuary to the south and I-980/Brush Street to the west. The wind analysis must consider the project's contribution to wind impacts to on- and off-site public and private spaces. Only impacts to public spaces (on- and off-site) and off-site private spaces are considered CEQA impacts. Although impacts to on-site private spaces are considered a planning-related non-CEQA issue, such potential impacts still must be analyzed.

75-foot street walls at the exterior perimeters. The Specific Plan proposes amending the current Zoning Code's height limits to provide for a more precisely defined urban form. At the West Oakland BART Station TOD, the Specific Plan proposes an increase in the maximum allowed building height from the existing height limits of 120 feet (which is currently applicable to parcels adjacent to the I-880 freeway) to allow building heights of up to 160 feet along 7th Street and east of Union Street, 140 feet along 7th Street and east of Union Street, and 140 feet on those parcels adjacent to the I-880 freeway. The Plan would also provide a more effective and substantial transition in building heights nearest to the South Prescott neighborhood, with buildings nearest to this neighborhood as low as 2-stories. These proposed taller building heights would not be expected to block views of Downtown Oakland or the East Bay hills from most public vantage point in and around the Planning Area, or from the I-580 and I-880 gateways to the city identified in the General Plan. The proposed intensity of new development elsewhere throughout West Oakland would generally not exceed a maximum of five stories in height.

The hills to the west have often spectacular views over the Planning Area to San Francisco Bay. Given the elevation of the Planning Area relative to these vantage points, as well as the expansiveness of views from these locations, development under the Specific Plan would not substantially obstruct or degrade these scenic vistas.

No scenic vistas or view corridors would be substantially obstructed or degraded by future development in accordance with the Specific Plan. The impacts of the Specific Plan on scenic vistas would therefore be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

None needed

Scenic Highways

Impact Aesth-2: Development and public realm improvements in accordance with the Specific Plan would not substantially damage scenic resources, including trees or historic buildings, but rather would improve the quality of views of the Planning Area from the I-580 scenic highway. The impacts of the Specific Plan related to scenic highways would be less than significant. **(LTS)**

Interstate 580 is identified as a designated scenic route in the City of Oakland General Plan Scenic Highways Element and I-980 is identified as a route that could be considered for possible future designation. The segment of I-580 within and adjacent to the Planning Area is elevated (as is the northern portion of I-980 and the entire length of I-880). The elevated freeway affords occasional views of the Planning Area and views across the Planning Area to Downtown Oakland, the Port of Oakland or the East Bay hills.

Infill development and redevelopment of vacant and blighted properties and facilities, improvements to streetscapes and the public realm, and new landscaping and street trees would improve the quality of views of the Planning Area from the I-580 scenic route. The City of Oakland Tree Protection Ordinance and SCA 45, *Tree Removal Permit*, SCA 46, *Tree Replacement Plantings* and SCA 47, *Tree Protection During Construction* require any project that involves the removal of any tree protected by the Tree Protection Ordinance to first obtain a permit from the City and comply with any conditions of the permit, including replacement plantings and protection of remaining trees during construction. The Specific Plan would encourage the preservation, rehabilitation, adaptive reuse and showcasing of historic buildings within Planning Area.

No changes in maximum allowed building heights are proposed as part of the Specific Plan. New development would generally not exceed a maximum of five stories in height, except at the 7th Street BART Station TOD, where the Plan proposes buildings up to the maximum height allowed by current zoning (75 feet along the north side of 7th Street and adjacent to the south Prescott neighborhood, stepping up to 90 feet at the BART station and along the south side of 7th Street, and 120 feet near the freeway). These proposed building heights at these locations would not be expected to block views of Downtown Oakland, the Port of Oakland or the East Bay hills from most public vantage point in and around the Planning Area, or from the I-580 and I-880 gateways to the city identified in the General Plan.

Development and public realm improvements in accordance with the Specific Plan would not substantially damage scenic resources, including trees or historic buildings, but rather would improve the quality of views of the Planning Area from the I-580 scenic route. The impacts of the Specific Plan related to scenic highways would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

None needed

Visual Character or Quality

Impact Aesth-3: Development and public realm improvements in accordance with the Specific Plan would not substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of any sites and their surroundings, but would substantially improve the existing visual character and quality of the Planning Area. Infill development and redevelopment would repair the existing inconsistent urban fabric where such inconsistencies exist, and result in a more unified and coherent development character. The proposed land use patterns and development types, and focusing change in the Opportunity Areas while preserving established residential neighborhoods, would provide sensitive transitions to existing development, reinforce the character of residential and non-residential areas, and harmonize existing incompatibilities. Gateway and streetscape improvements, and development of new activity nodes, would improve visual quality and reinforce community identity. The impacts of the Specific Plan on visual character and quality would be less than significant. **(LTS)**

The Project would not degrade, but rather would substantially improve the existing visual character and quality of the Planning Area. Implementation of the proposed Specific Plan would promote a more appealing and coherent visual character in the Planning Area. Community revitalization and development in accordance with the Specific Plan would occur as infill development on vacant land and intensification of underutilized parcels, primarily within industrial areas, along commercial corridors and around the West Oakland BART Station. The Specific Plan would harmonize existing incompatible industrial uses within residential and mixed-use areas. Infill development would result in more compatible land use patterns and a more unified visual character. Artist's renderings illustrating the intended character and quality of planned new development are shown on the following **Figures 4.1-1 through 4.1-6**.



Existing

Proposed



Source: JRDV Urban International

Figure 4.1-1
Atrist's Rendering, Mandela at 26th Street





Existing

Proposed



Source: JRDV Urban International

Figure 4.1-2
Atrist's Rendering, 7th Street Corridor





Existing

Proposed



Source: JRDV Urban International

Figure 4.1-3
Atrist's Rendering, West Oakland BART Station





Existing

Proposed



Source: JRDV Urban International

Figure 4.1-4
Atrist's Rendering, 3rd Street Area





Existing

Proposed



Source: JRDV Urban International

Figure 4.1-5
Atrist's Rendering, San Pablo Avenue



4-6

Gateway and streetscape improvements, and development of new activity nodes, would reinforce West Oakland's unique sense of place. The Specific Plan would encourage the creation of distinct gateways and improve the visual quality beneath freeway overpasses at key entries into the community, which would enhance community character and identity. Streetscape improvements encouraged by the Specific Plan, including lane reductions, repairing sidewalks, improving landscaping, displaying public art, marking local historical and cultural sites, increasing public seating and planting trees, would enhance the appearance of corridors. The Plan proposal for a neighborhood activity node at the West Grand Avenue/Market Street intersection with a new grocery store and neighborhood-serving retail, and at the West Oakland BART Station, would also reinforce community identity. The Specific Plan would facilitate development of taller buildings concentrated at the West Oakland BART Station area, and thus promote a more discernible and distinctive community form and skyline.

Infill development on vacant land, and intensification and redevelopment of underutilized properties would repair the existing inconsistent urban fabric where such inconsistencies exist, and result in a more unified and coherent development character. The proposed development types and streetscape improvements would ultimately improve the visual quality and character of the Planning Area and enhance views from adjacent residential neighborhoods, travel corridors, and other nearby vantage points. By focusing change within the Opportunity Areas while preserving and enhancing existing established residential neighborhoods outside the Opportunity Areas, the character of historic residential neighborhoods would be preserved.

Infill development and redevelopment of vacant and blighted properties and facilities, improvements to streetscapes and the public realm, and new landscaping and street trees would improve the visual quality of Planning Area as seen from the I-580 scenic route and the I-80 and I-880 gateways to Oakland identified in the General Plan.

The Specific Plan would result in an overall more coherent and compatible visual character within and surrounding the Opportunity Areas and improved visual quality throughout the Planning Area. The Specific Plan policies for land use patterns and development types would provide for sensitive transitions to existing development. The impact of the Specific Plan on visual character and quality would therefore be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

None needed

Light and Glare

Impact Aesth-4: Development facilitated by the Specific Plan would create new sources of light and glare, but these new sources would be consistent with typical light and glare conditions. Subsequent individual projects would not substantially and adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area. New light would be required to meet the lighting power allowances for the applicable lighting zone for newly installed outdoor lighting equipment required by Title 24, Parts 1 and 6, Building Energy Efficiency Standards. Subsequent individual projects would also be required to implement SCA 39, *Lighting Plan*. With required adherence to Title 24 lighting power allowances and implementation of SCA 39, light and glare impacts would be less than significant. **(LTS with SCA)**

Development facilitated by the Project would result in additional lighting and increased light emanating from within the Planning Area. New sources of light would be installed as part of new buildings and site

improvements to illuminate entries, parking areas, sidewalks and open spaces, for safety and security, and to highlight architectural features. New lighting would be consistent with typical light and glare conditions for residential and non-residential uses and would not create new sources of substantial light or glare which would substantially and adversely affect nighttime views in the area. There are already numerous sources of light and glare associated with existing development in West Oakland and the surrounding vicinity. The Specific Plan would encourage replacement of existing incompatible heavy industrial and transportation uses and associated lighting with uses more compatible with surrounding residential neighborhoods.

Individual projects would be required to meet the lighting power allowances for the applicable lighting zone for newly installed outdoor lighting equipment, as required by Title 24, Parts 1 and 6, Building Energy Efficiency Standards. Individual projects would also be required to implement SCA 39, *Lighting Plan*. Final lighting design plans must be submitted to the Planning and Zoning Division and the Electrical Services Division of the Public Works Agency for their review and approval.

With required adherence to Title 24 lighting power allowances and implementation of SCA 39, light and glare impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

None needed

Shadow

Impact Aesth-5: The project would not cast shadows that substantially impairs the function of a building using passive solar heat collection, solar collectors for hot water heating, or photovoltaic solar collectors; cast shadow that substantially impairs the beneficial use of any public or quasi-public park, lawn, garden, or open space; or cast shadow on an historic resource such that the shadow would materially impair the resource's historic significance. The shadow impacts of the Specific Plan would be less than significant. **(LTS)**

Computer modeling of shadow impacts conducted for this Specific Plan shows that, on December 21 when shadow lengths are longest, development under the Plan would shadow only a limited portion of five of the West Oakland parks for a limited duration. No shadows would be cast on the 23 other parks, open spaces and school grounds in the Planning Area. With evaluation of shadows as part of the City's standard design review and environmental review of development applications, development allowed by the Specific Plan would not introduce landscaping that would cast substantial shadows on solar collectors or passive solar heating. None of the nine significant historic resources within the Opportunity Areas contains a light-sensitive feature and development under the Specific Plan would not cast substantial shadows on any of these historic resources.

The shadow impacts of development under the Project were analyzed at a project level using computer three-dimensional modeling. The computer modeling was conducted for the city by JRDV Architects using Google SketchUp software. The assumed building placement, height and massing of development for each Opportunity Site is based on the development assumptions identified in Chapter 3, Project Description. Based on the City's shadow impact Thresholds of Significance, shadows were simulated for 9:00 a.m., 12:00 p.m., and 3:00 p.m. for the Spring Equinox, Fall Equinox and Winter Solstice. The modeling results for the overall Planning Area for 9:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. on December 21, the Winter Solstice, are presented in **Appendix 4.1**. These times represent the "worst-case" shadow conditions,

when shadow lengths are longest and the potential for loss of access to sunlight due to an adjacent structure is greatest.

Development under the Specific Plan could potentially cast shadows on shadow-sensitive land uses and features of concern. Shadow-sensitive land uses and features, as identified by the City's CEQA Thresholds of Significance, include any public or quasi-public park, lawn, garden, or open space; shadow-sensitive significant historic resource; and solar collectors or buildings using passive solar heat collection. The shadow impacts on each of these shadow-sensitive land use and features is summarized below.

Public Parks or Open Space

There are 28 public or quasi-public parks, lawns, gardens, open spaces or school grounds within the Planning Area that were considered for potential shadow impacts. About half of the public parks or open spaces within the Planning Area are located within or near an Opportunity Area. Three of these facilities (Cypress Freeway Memorial Park, Raimondi Park, and Wood Street Pocket Park) are located within the Mandela/West Grand Opportunity Area and three (25th Street Park, Brush Street Park, and St. Andrew's Plaza) are located within the San Pablo Avenue area. There are no public parks or open spaces within the 7th Street Opportunity Area or 3rd Street opportunity Area. An additional three parks (Poplar Park, South Prescott Park, and Wade Johnson Park) are located adjacent to an Opportunity Area.

The shadow modeling results for these nine parks for December 21, which represents the "worst case" shadow conditions when shadow lengths are longest, are summarized in **Table 4.1-1** and illustrated in **Figures 4.1-7**. Development under the Specific Plan would cast no shadows on Poplar Park, South Prescott Park, Wade Johnson Park, or Wood Street Pocket Park. Development under the Specific Plan would shadow the eastern edge of 25th Street Park at 9:00 a.m. and the southern edge of Raimondi Park at 3:00 p.m., and the eastern third of Brush Street Park and St. Andrew's Plaza at 3:00 p.m. Shadow impacts would be less at 12:00 p.m. on December 21; at 9:00 a.m., 12:00 p.m., and 3:00 p.m. on the Spring Equinox, Fall Equinox and Summer Solstice; and on all other days of the year. The tallest of the Specific Plan's proposed buildings would occur at the West Oakland ABRT Station TOD development area, where building heights would be a maximum of 160 feet tall. As shown on **Figure 4.1-7**, these tall buildings would not cast shadows that would adversely affect any public parks or open space resources.

Development under the Specific Plan would not cast shadows on any of the other public parks, open spaces or school grounds within the Planning Area. Considering the limited area and duration of shadowing, development under the Specific Plan would not cast shadows that would substantially impair the beneficial use of any public or quasi-public park, lawn, garden, or open space.



December 21, 9:00 AM



December 21, 3:00 PM

Source: JRDV Urban International

Figure 4.1-7
Shadow Impacts, Winter Solstice - at Proposed West
Oakland BART Station TOD



Table 4.1-1: Shadow Impacts on Public Parks and Open Spaces

Public Park or Open Space	December 21, 9:00 a.m.	December 21, 3:00 p.m.
25 th Street Park	Project shadows eastern edge.	No Project shadows.
Brush Street Park	No Project shadows.	Project shadows eastern third.
Cypress Freeway Memorial Park	2 of 18 blocks shadowed by campus development near West Grand Ave.	1 of 18 blocks shadowed by campus development near West Grand Ave.
Poplar Park	No Project shadows.	No Project shadows.
Raimondi Park	No Project shadows.	Project shadows southern edge.
South Prescott Park	No Project shadows.	No Project shadows.
St. Andrew's Plaza	No Project shadows.	Project shadows eastern third.
Wade Johnson Park	No Project shadows.	No Project shadows.
Wood Street Pocket Park	No Project shadows. Half shadowed by Wood Street Project.	No Project shadows. Completely shadowed by Wood Street Project.

Solar Collectors or Passive Solar Heating

Development facilitated by the Specific Plan could potentially cast shadows on solar collectors or the passive solar design of neighboring buildings. The City's Standard Conditions of Approval do not specifically address shadow impacts. However, as part of the standard design review required for each individual development application in the City, potential impacts of proposed new landscaping on shadow-sensitive land uses and features of concern are routinely analyzed by City staff, and design changes are requested of applicants to avoid such impacts, prior to approval of any project. The City tracks the locations of solar collectors through its permit tracking system, which are issued an "SE" permit through the Building Services Division. The regular design review criteria in the Planning Code include a finding "that the proposed design will protect, preserve, or enhance desirable neighborhood characteristics;" this finding is used by Planning staff to evaluate potential shadow impacts, including through shadow studies. With evaluation of shadows as part of the City's standard design review of development applications, development allowed by the Specific Plan would not introduce landscaping that would cast shadows on existing solar collectors or cast shadows that substantially impair the function of a building using passive solar heat collection, solar collectors for hot water heating, or photovoltaic solar collectors. Therefore, the shadow impacts of the Specific Plan on solar collectors or passive solar heating would be less than significant.

Significant Historic Resources

There are nine properties within the Mandela/West Grand, 7th Street and 3rd Street Opportunity Areas that are considered significant historic resources as defined by CEQA Guidelines section 15064.5(a), which are listed below. The San Pablo Avenue Opportunity Area contains no significant historic resources.

- 1600 7th Street, Flynn (Edward) Saloon – McAllister Plumbing
- 1620-24 7th Street, Site of the former Lincoln Theater
- 1632-42 7th Street, Arcadia Hotel – Isaacs & Schwartz block
- 1600-14 Campbell Street, Oakland Warehouse Company – GE Mazda Lamp Works

- 100-50 Linden Street, California Packing Corporation – Del Monte cannery
- 1340 Mandela Parkway, Coca-Cola Company Bottling Plant
- 101 Myrtle Street, California Packing Corporation – Label Plant
- 2401-49 Peralta Street, Merco Nordstrom Valve Company factory
- 1405 Wood Street, Southern Pacific 16th Street Station

None of these resources contains a light-sensitive feature, the shadowing of which would materially impair the resource's historic significance. The shadow modeling results indicate that development of surrounding properties in accordance with the Specific Plan would not cast shadows on these historic resources. Therefore, development allowed by the Specific Plan would not cast shadow on a historic resource such that the shadow would materially impair the resource's historic significance, and the shadow impacts of the Specific Plan on significant historic resources would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

None needed

Adequate Lighting

Impact Aesth-6: The Project does propose changes to any of those existing General Plan policies or zoning or building regulations, and would not cause a fundamental conflict with those policies and regulations in the General Plan, Planning Code and Uniform Building Code, that address the provision of adequate light related to appropriate uses. The impacts of the Specific Plan related to consistency with policies and regulations addressing the provision of adequate light related to appropriate uses would be less than significant. **(LTS)**

Existing policies and regulations addressing the provision of adequate light related to appropriate uses would continue to apply to subsequent development projects within the Planning Area. Future individual development projects within the Planning Area would also be subject to design review in accordance with Chapter 17.136 of the Oakland Planning Code. The Specific Plan would not cause a fundamental conflict with policies and regulations in the General Plan, Planning Code, and Uniform Building Code addressing the provision of adequate light related to appropriate uses. Therefore, the impacts of the Specific Plan related to consistency with policies and regulations addressing the provision of adequate light related to appropriate uses would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

None needed

Wind

Impact Aesth-7: The Planning Area does not lie within the area identified by the City as requiring modeling for evaluation of wind impacts. Therefore, the wind impacts of the Specific Plan would be less than significant. **(LTS)**

The City of Oakland requires wind modeling for proposed structures that are 100 feet or greater (measured to the roof) and one of the following conditions exist: (a) the project is located adjacent to a substantial water body (i.e., Oakland Estuary, Lake Merritt or San Francisco Bay); or (b) the project is

located in Downtown. Downtown is defined in the Land Use and Transportation Element of the General Plan as the area generally bounded by West Grand Avenue to the north, Lake Merritt and Channel Park to the east, the Oakland Estuary to the south and I-980/Brush Street to the west.

The Planning Area does not lie within the area requiring modeling for evaluation of wind impacts. With the exception of the West Oakland BART Station TOD, new development would generally not exceed 100 feet. Although higher density development near the West Oakland BART Station could reach as high as 160 feet in certain locations, the TOD site is not adjacent to the Oakland Estuary, Lake Merritt or San Francisco Bay, nor is it located in Downtown. Therefore, the wind impacts of the Specific Plan would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

None needed

Cumulative Aesthetic, Shadow and Wind Impacts

Cumulative Impact Aesth-8: Cumulative development would change the visual character of developed areas toward a less industrial and more intensive, urban character. The policies of the Specific Plan and other existing plans, regulations and guidelines, including Design Review and the City's Standard Conditions of Approval, would adequately address visual quality. Cumulative development would not substantially obstruct scenic vistas from or degrade the visual character of the I-80 and I-880 gateways or the I-580 scenic route. With required adherence to Title 24 lighting power allowances and implementation of SCA 40, *Lighting Plan*, cumulative light and glare impacts would be less than significant. The Planning Area does not lie within the area requiring modeling for evaluation of wind impacts and thus would not result in a considerable contribution to any significant cumulative impacts related to wind. Cumulative aesthetics, shadow and wind impacts would be less than significant. **(LTS)**

Cumulative development would change the visual character of developed areas toward a less industrial and more intensive, urban character. The policies of the Specific Plan and other existing plans, regulations and guidelines, including Design Review and the City's Standard Conditions of Approval, would adequately address localized visual quality and compatibility. In addition, the Specific Plan would be expected to result in beneficial impacts or less-than-significant impacts with respect to visual character and quality, scenic vistas, scenic highways, light and glare, and shadows.

Development facilitated by the Specific Plan, together with other reasonably foreseeable development, notably the 2012 Oakland Army Base Project⁷, would alter the visual character of the I-80 and I-880 gateways to Oakland, and affect views from the I-580 scenic route and elevated segments of I-880. In the 2012 Oakland Army Base Project Initial Study/Addendum, the City concluded that the project level and cumulative aesthetic impacts of the 2012 Oakland Army Base Project would be less than significant.⁸ With the exception of the West Oakland BART Station transit village, new development would generally not exceed a maximum of five stories in height and thus would not be expected to block views of

⁷ The 2012 Oakland Army Base Project would provide a new state-of-the-art Trade and Logistics Center, with warehouse and distribution facilities to support cargo logistics, and associated roadway, railroad and infrastructure improvements. The 2012 Oakland Army Base Project would also include nine new LED or back lit billboards along I-80 and I-880.

⁸ City of Oakland, 2012 Oakland Army Base Project Initial Study/Addendum, May 2012, pp. 82-118.

Downtown Oakland, the Port of Oakland or the East Bay hills. No scenic vistas or view corridors would be substantially obstructed or degraded by development allowed by the Specific Plan. Therefore, cumulative development would not substantially obstruct scenic vistas from or degrade the visual character of the I-80 and I-880 gateways or the I-580 scenic route.

Development facilitated by the Specific Plan, together with other reasonably foreseeable development, would cause an incremental change in the character of scenic vistas of urban areas and San Francisco Bay from the East Bay hills and neighborhoods at higher elevations to the east toward a more developed character. However, given the expansiveness of these views and the small amount of additional development relative to the existing amount of urban development in these views, this change would not have a substantial effect on scenic vistas.

Cumulative development would generally increase nighttime lighting; however, with required adherence to Title 24 lighting power allowances and implementation of SCA 40, *Lighting Plan*, cumulative light and glare impacts would be less than significant.

The Planning Area does not lie within the area requiring modeling for evaluation of wind impacts and thus would not result in a considerable contribution to any significant cumulative impacts related to wind.

Mitigation Measures

None needed