

CHAPTER 8.0

VISUAL RESOURCES

This section addresses visual issues related to the proposed project. The existing visual characteristics of the project site and offsite improvement area are described, along with the sensitive visual receptors and aesthetic resources of the local viewshed. County policies related to the preservation and maintenance of visual resources are discussed. The impact analysis presents the standards used to evaluate the significance of impacts to visual resources, and addresses potential effects of the proposed project on the aesthetic quality of the area.

8.1 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

8.1.1 REGIONAL LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

The rolling terrain of the Sierra Foothills and the backdrop of the Sierra Nevada Mountains generally characterize the visual resources of western Placer County, including the project site and offsite improvement area. Active streams to the north (Orchard Creek, Ingram Slough, and Auburn Ravine) flow to the west and have narrow active floodplains. Elevations in the area range from approximately 120 to 140 feet above mean sea level (msl). The main ridges and knolls in the vicinity of the proposed project are up to 20 feet higher than the stream channels in some locations. The land surface generally slopes west towards the middle of the Sacramento Valley and the Sacramento River.

The project site and offsite improvement area are located within the northeast portion of the Sunset Industrial Area (SIA) (**Figure 4-1**). Approximately two-thirds of the SIA is currently undeveloped and/or used for agricultural activities. Developed uses within the SIA generally consist of light and heavy industrial, private and public utilities and services, and recreation. A majority of the industrial uses are located in the southeastern portion of the SIA in the general vicinity of Sunset Boulevard, Industrial Boulevard, and Cincinnati Avenue.

8.1.2 LOCAL STUDY AREA LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

The project site currently contains Thunder Valley Casino, which is an approximately 237,000-square-foot structure that is approximately 50 feet tall at its highest point. Associated facilities include a fire station, paved parking, stormwater detention basin, potable water infrastructure, central utility plant, and a wastewater treatment plant (**Figure 4-2**). The entire casino parcel has been graded and developed, and landscaped areas are located along the north side of Athens Avenue and within planting beds throughout

the parking lots and adjacent to the buildings. The stormwater detention basin located on the west side of the parcel is bordered with grasses, reeds, and native wetland forbs. Pine and Deodar cedar trees have been planted along the north and east sides of the project site to enhance the buffer between the casino and adjacent open space. Native and non-invasive ornamental species of trees, shrubs, grasses and flowering annuals are maintained within the planting beds and along the parcel frontage.

The offsite improvement area consists of an overflow parking lot south of the project site as well as unpaved areas adjacent to Athens Avenue and Thunder Valley Court. The overflow parking lot is currently paved and lighted and contains a stormwater detention basin located in the northeast corner. Landscaped areas are located along the west edge of the parking lot adjacent to Thunder Valley Court, along the east edge adjacent to the stormwater detention basin, and along the north edge adjacent to Athens Avenue. A view of the overflow parking lot is included in **Figure 4-3**.

As shown in **Figure 4-4**, open space, industrial and commercial facilities, Industrial Avenue, and the Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) surround the project site and offsite improvement area. There are no residences on or immediately adjacent to the project site or offsite improvement area. The Orchard Creek Conservation Bank, located immediately to the north, east and west of the casino parcel, contains Orchard Creek, seasonal wetlands and vernal pools, and a freshwater marsh. A few trees are located along the eastern side of Industrial Avenue, and utility lines and the UPRR tracks are visible parallel to this roadway. Surrounding industrial and commercial establishments are utilitarian in nature and do not contain notable architectural features or extensive landscaping. No areas of uncommon scenic quality have been identified within the project vicinity, although both State Route (SR) 65 and Industrial Avenue have been designated as scenic corridors in the Placer County General Plan.

The MOU between the Tribe and Placer County (**Appendix A**) specifies that the project site will be used and developed in a manner consistent with and in compliance with all applicable Placer County general and community plans, zoning ordinances, and design guidelines, as well as the Uniform Building Codes, as adopted or supplemented by the County. To this end, the existing Thunder Valley Casino, fire station, wastewater treatment plant, and central utility plant were all designed to be consistent with the goals and objectives of the Placer County Design Guidelines, in terms of scale, color palette, building materials, and articulation of vertical and horizontal surfaces, as well as consistency within the project site as a whole.

A muted exterior color palette of warm earth tones and natural building materials (primarily stone, stucco, terra cotta, and burnished metal) is used throughout the casino complex. The color scheme and traditional California/Mediterranean architectural features are consistent with Placer County Design Guidelines and nearby existing developments, while exterior details echo the natural landscape with motifs recalling local plants, wildlife, and Native American cultural elements. The MOU further states that the Tribe and Placer County have a mutual interest in protecting open space, and in preservation of the natural and scenic qualities of Placer County.

8.1.3 SUMMARY OF VIEWING CONDITIONS

Because of the gently rolling topography and large open space areas without dense concentrations of tall trees, views to and from the project site are generally unimpeded. With clear weather conditions, it is anticipated that the proposed project could be seen from a distance of four miles or more; however, the common occurrences of haze, smog, or low cloud cover would reduce both the viewing distance and the visual prominence of the proposed project.

The view of the project site also includes other visible facilities located on the west and east sides of SR 65 as shown in **Figures 8-1** and **8-2**. Zoning along both sides of SR 65 in the project vicinity is primarily for industrial or business park uses. **Figure 8-1** shows land uses and facilities on the west side of SR 65. Six 300-foot-tall radio transmission towers with blinking red lights are located approximately 0.35 miles south of the project site (**photo 1**). These towers are affiliated with KFIA, which is operated by Salem Communications and broadcasts on 710 AM. The Rio Bravo Rocklin Biomass Power Plant, which is located approximately 0.35 miles south of the project site and adjacent to the overflow parking lot, has two associated structures that are approximately 65 to 75 feet high as well as a landscaped area with eucalyptus trees (**photo 2**). The Western Regional Sanitary Landfill, located approximately one mile west of the project site, includes covered areas rising approximately 50 feet above the natural grade (**photo 3**). A large ACE Hardware warehouse that is approximately 25 feet high is located approximately 0.65 miles south-southeast of the project site (**photo 4**).

Figure 8-2 shows land uses and visible structures near the proposed project on the east side of SR 65. These include the recently opened Kaiser Permanente facility, located approximately 1.3 miles northeast of the casino (**photo 1**). Whitney High School, also recently completed, is approximately one mile east of the project site (**photo 2**). Multi-story apartments and townhomes, including Montessa/Vicara at Whitney Ranch, are also under construction in this area (**photo 3**). A three-story building approximately 50 feet high within the Orchard Creek Business Park is currently under construction adjacent to SR 65 between the casino and the high school (**photo 4**).

Potential future land uses along the SR 65 corridor may include office buildings, hotels/motels, manufacturing and trade, retail centers, educational or medical facilities, recreational or public assembly uses, and transportation and communications facilities. The proposed Lincoln 270 project and the southern expansion of the Placer Corporate Center include some of these uses directly adjacent to the SR 65 corridor. The proposed plans for the Empire West/Athens Park development include two- and three-story office buildings between Industrial Avenue and SR 65. Construction on the northwest corner of the Sunset Boulevard/SR 65 intersection (south of Placer Corporate Center) is currently at an early stage; however, freestanding walls approximately 30 feet in height have been completed. Planned and/or approved uses are discussed in further detail in **Chapter 16.5**. The locations of existing and planned developments in the vicinity of the proposed project are shown on **Figure 4-4**.

Figure 8-1: Photographs of Nearby Land Uses West of SR 65

Figure 8-2: Photographs of Nearby Land Uses East of SR 65

8.1.4 VIEWER SENSITIVITY AND VIEWSHED ZONES

Viewer sensitivity to the proposed project is dependent on several factors, including proximity to the proposed project, permanence or frequency of views, and context or viewing conditions. For example, commercial and tourist traffic along SR 65 or Industrial Avenue would not be considered especially sensitive to visual impacts from the proposed project, since these individuals would pass quickly through the viewshed of the project, and because other developed areas are readily visible from these roadways. Local commuter traffic on these through roads would be considered somewhat more sensitive, since these individuals would presumably pass by the project site twice a day, five days a week. Nearby residences, schools, and other institutional or public facilities (e.g., houses of worship, parks, hospitals) are considered the most sensitive visual receptors, if the views from these facilities and neighborhoods would include the proposed project. Industrial and commercial developments within the viewshed would not be considered particularly sensitive visual receptors, as activities related to such enterprises are generally oriented to the interiors of their host buildings.

Residential developments associated with the Lincoln Crossing (0.85± miles), Sun City at Lincoln Hills (1.3± miles), Twelve Bridges (1.0± miles), and Whitney Ranch (1.0± miles) projects are considered the closest sensitive visual receptors for the proposed project. Twelve Bridges Middle School (1.0± miles), Whitney High School (1.0± miles), Kaiser Permanente's Lincoln Medical Center (1.3± miles), Sutter Medical Plaza Lincoln (1.25± miles), and the newly constructed Lincoln Public Library-Twelve Bridges (1.25± miles) are also within the viewing area for the proposed project. Based on the locations of these sensitive visual receptors, two primary viewshed zones have been identified that would be subject to visual impacts from the proposed project:

VIEWSHED A

Viewshed A is both a residential and commuter viewshed, experienced by southbound travelers along SR 65 and residents of the newly constructed houses within the neighborhoods of the Lincoln Crossing development located north of the project site. Southbound travelers on SR 65 and Industrial Avenue experience views of the north side of the existing casino until they are almost directly perpendicular to it. Casino views are not directly within the forward line of sight for drivers. As shown in **Figure 8-3 (photo 1)**, the viewshed along southbound SR 65 also includes numerous signs, lights, and overpasses, while the viewshed along southbound Industrial Avenue (**Figure 8-3, photo 2**) includes power poles and transmission lines to the east and the UPRR tracks to the west. Other facilities within the SIA, such as the Rio Bravo Rocklin Biomass Power Plant and the Western Regional Sanitary Landfill, are also visible from this viewshed, as is development to the east. Residents of the Lincoln Crossing development, especially those along the southernmost edge of the nearest neighborhoods, may experience unimpeded views of the casino at a distance of 0.85 miles or more. The Orchard Creek Conservation Bank is located between these residences and the casino, providing an intermediary vista of protected open space.

Figure 8-3: Existing Viewsheds for Commuters along SR 65 and Industrial Avenue

VIEWSHED B

Viewshed B is primarily a residential viewshed, experienced by residents of new developments to the east of the project site. The Sun City at Lincoln Hills, Twelve Bridges, and Whitney Ranch developments have all introduced housing to the east of SR 65. Views from some of the neighborhoods include the existing casino, as well as the Rio Bravo Rocklin Biomass Power Plant, KFIA radio antennae, the ACE Hardware warehouse, and other industrial uses within the SIA. Surrounding parcels are zoned for commercial or business park uses, with construction currently underway at the Orchard Creek Business Park. In addition to residences, sensitive visual receptors to the east of the project site include Kaiser Permanente's Lincoln Medical Center, Sutter Medical Plaza Lincoln, Twelve Bridges Middle School, Whitney High School, and the Lincoln Public Library-Twelve Bridges. Commuters along northbound SR 65 and Industrial Avenue do not have clear or uninterrupted views of the existing casino. As shown in **Figure 8-3 (photo 3)**, the viewshed along northbound SR 65 includes signage, fencing, and construction projects. The viewshed along northbound Industrial Avenue includes numerous utility lines, lights, industrial facilities, and the UPRR tracks (**Figure 8-3, photo 4**).

8.2 REGULATORY SETTING

The following section summarizes the relevant Placer County regulations and guidelines regarding visual resources, as applicable to the proposed project. There are no applicable federal or state regulations for this issue.

8.2.1 PLACER COUNTY GENERAL PLAN

The Placer County General Plan designates the 49-acre project site as Industrial, and the zoning for the site is Industrial Park – Combining Design Scenic Corridor. The Industrial Park zoning indicates that the project site may be used for industrial purposes such as manufacturing, as well as (but not limited to) recreation and retail trade. The Combining Design Scenic Corridor designation provides special regulations to protect and enhance the aesthetic character of lands and buildings within public view, encourage tourism, minimize adverse effects of conflicting land uses, encourage preservation of historic buildings, and provide project review procedures which require special attention to landscaping, circulation, and energy conservation (Placer County, 2007c).

The Placer County General Plan contains several goals and policies regarding visual resources and aesthetics. Goals include the protection of visual and scenic resources as important quality-of-life amenities for residents and principal assets in the promotion of recreation and tourism, and the promotion of high-quality design for new development in Placer County. Several policies have been developed to promote these goals, such as requirements for transitional landscaping, limits on grading and land alteration for all development (including parking areas and roadways), and regulations promoting development of appropriate scale, character, and quality to be compatible with its respective settings.

Outdoor lighting that illuminates the night sky or intrudes onto adjacent properties is discouraged, and compliance with the Placer County Design Guidelines Manual is required. Goals and policies from the Placer County General Plan are detailed in **Table 4-2**.

Subsection (D) of Section 17.54.020 of the Placer County Code states that, “In a zone district with a height limit of up to fifty (50) feet, hotels, public and quasi-public buildings, communications equipment buildings, schools, houses of worship, hospitals, and other institutions permitted in the zone, may exceed the prescribed height limit if the additional height is authorized through a conditional use permit process that includes an analysis of visual impacts including photo simulations” (Placer County 2007c).

8.2.2 SUNSET INDUSTRIAL AREA PLAN

As shown on **Figure 4-6**, the project site is located within the Orchard Creek Planning Area of the SIA. The SIA Plan contains goals and policies to minimize adverse effects on the natural resources of the SIA, especially during new development. These goals include preservation of open space, preservation of wildlife habitats, and supporting diversity of plants and native trees and vegetation. The SIA Plan indicates that Placer County will enforce guidelines to ensure that new development landscaping is designed to integrate existing vegetative conditions into site design. The relevant goals and policies of the SIA Plan are included in **Table 4-3**. Specific guidelines for the Orchard Creek Planning Area encourage attractive and appropriate architecture, landscaping, streetscaping, and signage for developments in this area, as summarized in **Table 4-4**.

8.3 IMPACTS

SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA

The evaluation of potential impacts is based on the project’s ability to change the visual character of the site as determined by the following criteria:

- obstruction of a scenic view from public viewing areas;
- introduction of physical features that are substantially out of character with adjacent areas;
- alteration of the natural landscape characteristics of the site of which the scale or degree of change appears as a substantial, obvious, and disharmonious modification of the overall scene, to the extent that it clearly dominates the view;
- disruption of adjacent residential areas from new nighttime lighting; or
- inconsistency with the goals and policies of the Placer County General Plan or SIA Plan.

CONSTRUCTION AND OPERATIONAL IMPACTS

IMPACT 8.1:	The proposed project would result in changed views from local roads, residential areas, and public buildings, and contribute to the urbanization of the area.
SIGNIFICANCE:	Less than Significant
MITIGATION:	None Warranted

The expanded gaming facility, hotel, parking garage, and performing arts center have been designed to be consistent with the existing facilities on the project site and with the design standards set forth in Placer County's Zoning Ordinance, SIA Plan and other County documents. Offsite improvements would also conform to all applicable design regulations and guidelines, and would be subject to County approval. The architectural features, building materials, color palette, and landscaping plans for the expansion have all been developed to complement and enhance the existing casino building and related structures. Because the existing facilities have been approved, the intent of the expansion would be to present a cohesive and consistent aesthetic effect within the casino parcel and offsite improvement areas. No primary or intense colors, bright or flashing lights, or vast expanses of reflective glass are proposed, as per the Placer County Design Guidelines (2003b).

Residential zoned areas are not located adjacent to the project site. As described in **Chapter 16.0**, a variety of developments, including a motocross park and recreation area, hotels, retail space, and business parks, have been proposed in the vicinity of the proposed project. Guided urbanization of this area, including changed views from local roadways and neighborhoods, is consistent with the long-term plans for western Placer County outlined in the General Plan and the SIA Plan.

Chapter 17 of the Placer County Code specifies that in the Industrial and Industrial Park Districts, building heights are generally limited to 50 feet and that an analysis of visual impacts, including simulated photographs of the proposed project, shall be used to assess the potential for visual impacts resulting from any proposed structure more than 50 feet high. A series of photo simulations has been prepared to provide views of the proposed project from the locations of sensitive visual receptors, as seen on a clear day. These photo simulations show the visual scale and appearance of the proposed project in relation to surrounding land uses. The approximate locations of these visual simulations are shown in **Figure 8-4**. **Figure 8-5** shows views from the north (Viewshed A) along SR 65, Industrial Avenue, and from two locations within the Lincoln Crossing residential development. **Figure 8-6** shows views from the east (Viewshed B) including locations near Twelve Bridges Middle School, Catta Verdera Country Club at Twelve Bridges, Sun City at Lincoln Hills, and along SR 65.

A visual impact analysis was completed for sensitive viewers located within Viewsheds A and B based on the photo simulations and the criteria listed below. While the viewing experience is personal and

Figure 8-4: Locations for Distance View Photo Simulations

Figure 8-5: Photo Simulations A-D –Visual Analysis of Viewshed A

Figure 8-6: Photo Simulations E-H –Visual Analysis of Viewshed B

subjective in nature, the application of these criteria allows for an objective, baseline assessment of the visual environment and subsequent visual impacts:

- Clarity in Line of Sight - the overall visibility of the project within the viewshed, influenced by such factors as trees, buildings, topography or any other potential visual obstruction within the viewshed.
- Duration of Visibility - the amount of time the project is exposed to viewers within the viewshed. For example, a passing commuter will experience a shorter period of viewing time than a resident within the viewshed.
- Proximity of the Viewer - the effects of foreshortening due to the distance of the viewer from the project will influence the dominance of the development in the perspective of the viewer within the viewshed.
- Number of Viewers - the number of viewers anticipated to experience the visual character of the project in forward-oriented view (i.e., not through a rear-view mirror). A densely populated residential district, or a busy highway within the viewshed of the project would present more viewers than unpopulated areas.

A summary of the visual impact analysis is presented in **Table 8-1**. Sensitive viewers in Viewshed A include residents of the Lincoln Crossing development as well as southbound commuter traffic on SR 65 and Industrial Avenue. As shown in **Figure 8-5 (photo simulations B and D)**, viewers within the Lincoln Crossing development would have a low to moderate potential for visual impacts, depending on distance and the presence of vegetation as well as utility poles and overhead lines near the observation point.

In addition, as shown in **photo simulation D**, the Rio Bravo Rocklin Biomass Power Plant is currently visible from the Lincoln Crossing development and would continue to be visible after development of the proposed project. As shown in **Figure 8-5 (photo simulations A and C)**, commuters along the SR 65 corridor south of the City of Lincoln and north of the project site would have a fairly unimpeded view of the proposed project; however trees, fencing, utility poles, and overhead lines are present and slightly obstruct views. These viewers would experience a low to moderate potential for visual impacts. Several new developments are planned along this corridor, which would further obstruct views in the future. The proposed Lincoln 270 project, located between SR 65 and Industrial Avenue on the north side of Athens Avenue, would include a variety of commercial and industrial uses.

Commuters along Industrial Avenue would be closer to the proposed project than those commuters on SR 65 and would experience a moderate potential for visual impacts. However, utility poles, overhead transmission lines, the UPRR tracks, Rio Bravo Rocklin Biomass Power Plant, KFIA radio antennae,

**TABLE 8-1
SENSITIVE VISUAL RECEPTORS WITHIN VIEWSHEDS A AND B AND POTENTIAL FOR VISUAL IMPACTS**

Sensitive Visual Receptor	Viewshed	Approximate Distance from Casino (direction)	Potential for Visual Impacts
Lincoln Crossing (residences)	A	0.85-2.7 miles (north)	Low to Moderate- residences at south end of development have unobstructed view of casino nearly one mile to south; those further north have limited or partially obstructed views.
SR 65 (commuter traffic)	A	0.4 miles (east)	Low to Moderate- trees, fencing, signage, lights, overpasses, utility poles, and overhead lines are present and slightly obstruct views; expanded casino complex would be one of several new developments visible along this corridor.
Industrial Avenue (commuter traffic)	A	0.05 miles (east)	Moderate- Commuters along Industrial Avenue would be closer to the proposed project than those commuters on SR 65; however, views would include utility poles, overhead lines, UPRR tracks, Rio Bravo Rocklin Biomass Power Plant, KFIA radio antennae, Western Regional Sanitary Landfill, ACE Hardware warehouse, and other industrial uses within the SIA.
Sun City at Lincoln Hills (residences)	B	1.3-4.0 miles (northeast)	Low to Moderate- all residences are on the east side of SR 65. Views would be dominated by SR 65 corridor and other nearby developments.
Twelve Bridges (residences)	B	1.0-4.0 miles (northeast, east)	Low to Moderate- all residences are located on east side of SR 65. Some views would be dominated by SR 65 corridor and other nearby developments. Views at southwest end of development would have relatively unobstructed view of expanded casino complex.
Twelve Bridges Middle School	B	1.0 mile (east-northeast)	Low to Moderate- views from school would be dominated by SR 65 corridor and other nearby developments.
Whitney Ranch (residences)	B	1.0-3.0 miles (southeast, east)	Low to Moderate- all residences are on east side of SR 65, but those at northwest end of development have relatively unobstructed view of casino.
Whitney High School	B	1.0 mile (east-southeast)	Low to Moderate- views from school would be dominated by construction of Orchard Creek Business Park, SR 65 corridor, and other nearby developments.
Kaiser Permanente's Lincoln Medical Center	B	1.3 miles (northeast)	Low- views would be dominated by SR 65 corridor, Twelve Bridges Drive, and other nearby developments.
Sutter Medical Plaza Lincoln	B	1.25 miles (northeast)	Low-views would be dominated by SR 65 corridor and other nearby developments.
Lincoln Public Library-Twelve Bridges	B	1.25 miles (northeast)	Low-views would be dominated by SR 65 corridor and other nearby developments.

Source: City of Lincoln Community Development Department, 2007; Western Placer Unified School District, 2007; AES, 2007.

Western Regional Sanitary Landfill, Ace Hardware warehouse, and other industrial uses within the SIA are clearly visible from Industrial Avenue and would continue to be visible after development of the proposed project. Construction of a three- to four-story building is currently underway at the Orchard Creek Business Park, and is clearly visible from both SR 65 and Industrial Avenue.

Sensitive viewers in Viewshed B include residents of the Sun City at Lincoln Hills, Twelve Bridges, and Whitney Ranch developments, as well as viewers at Kaiser Permanente's Lincoln Medical Center, Sutter Medical Plaza Lincoln, Twelve Bridges Middle School, Whitney High School, and the Lincoln Public Library-Twelve Bridges. As shown in **Figure 8-6 (photo simulations F and H)**, viewers within nearby residential developments would have a low to moderate potential for visual impacts, depending on the distance from the casino and the presence of vegetation, other buildings, and topography relative to the observation point. As shown in **photo simulation E**, the Rio Bravo Rocklin Biomass Power Plant is currently visible from East Lincoln Parkway near Twelve Bridges Middle School, although construction of the Orchard Creek Business Park may obscure or dominate future views to the south of the casino from this point. Viewers at this school and at Whitney High School would experience a low to moderate potential for visual impacts. **Photo simulation G** shows a southeastern view from within the right of way of SR 65. Drivers on SR 65 near this point would likely see only the top of the proposed hotel tower, because of the topography of the roadway. Views from the Kaiser Permanente and Sutter Health medical facilities and the Lincoln Public Library-Twelve Bridges would have a low potential to experience visual impacts because of the visual prominence of SR 65 in the foreground of views from these points, and because landscaping associated with these facilities has been designed to provide screening of views from the most commonly used areas. The Rio Bravo Rocklin Biomass Power Plant, KFIA radio antennae, and other industrial facilities within the SIA are also visible from these observation points.

Although the proposed project would be visible from a variety of locations, it is not anticipated to be an intrusive or aesthetically disruptive feature on the landscape. The proposed project would constitute only a small portion of the viewshed from each direction that includes sensitive viewers. As more of the planned and approved projects in the SIA and surrounding jurisdictions approach buildout, the prominence of the proposed project on the landscape would be diminished. Maturation of trees and other landscaping within the recently completed residential developments would also provide screening for viewers in these areas. Through conformance with applicable land use regulations and design guidelines, development of the proposed project would result in a less than significant impact.

IMPACT 8.2:	Construction of the hotel, parking garage, and performing arts center would add buildings to the landscape that would exceed 50 feet in height.
SIGNIFICANCE:	Less than Significant
MITIGATION:	None Warranted

The plans for the expanded casino and other proposed structures incorporate architectural features and design motifs similar to the existing casino building, which harmonize with the surrounding background and other local developments. The tallest proposed building (hotel tower) would be set back approximately 390 feet from the front property line to provide a more gradual transition from open space areas to taller building elements. The terrain upon which the development is located is mostly flat, therefore, views of the proposed casino/hotel complex will not silhouette above any ridges or hilltops.

As mentioned previously, Chapter 17 of the Placer County Code specifies that in the Industrial and Industrial Park Districts, an analysis of visual impacts, including simulated photographs of the proposed project, shall be used to assess the potential for visual impacts resulting from any proposed structure more than 50 feet high. The proposed hotel (approximately 300 feet high, with communications antennae adding 18 feet of height), parking garage (103 feet, nine inches high), and performing arts center (93 feet, four inches high) would exceed 50 feet. Visual impacts related to the height of the hotel, performing arts center, casino, and parking garage have been assessed via the preceding analysis of visual impacts using photo simulations. The photo simulations demonstrate the visual impact is less than significant.

IMPACT 8.3:	Outdoor lighting associated with the proposed project would generate nighttime illumination.
SIGNIFICANCE:	Less than Significant
MITIGATION:	None Warranted

Nighttime lighting would continue the design elements of the existing casino complex and would be designed to minimize scenic and aesthetic impacts and unnecessary nighttime offsite light scatter. A nighttime photo simulation of the proposed project is included as **Figure 8-7**. The majority of the exterior lighting consists of burial uplights, recessed downlights, decorative wall sconces, and chandeliers that are the same or a slight variation of those used on the existing structures. The lighting is designed to have minimal impact to the surrounding natural habitat and residences while providing security for patrons and employees.

Security lighting is included in the project design, and would consist of low-intensity downcast overhead lamps and walkway lighting. Freestanding lighting in all surface parking lots, including the temporary overflow parking lot, would not exceed 20 feet in height and would be down-lighted at 90 degrees from vertical. All surface parking lighting would be full cut-off shielded with a flat lens. The parking garage façade is up-lit with floodlights grazing the stone pilasters. The garage entry is flanked by decorative sconces similar to those found on the existing casino.

The hotel tower exterior would be illuminated at the crown and roof. Low-powered, energy-efficient, color-changing light emitting diode (LED) accent lights would be used to highlight the vertical columns while LED floodlights would wash the horizontal louvers of the roof. The lighting effect would be programmable for a range of effects from a static, warm, white light to changing colors. The lighting

Figure 8-7: Nighttime Photo Simulations

fixtures would be 50 watts each, which is a fraction of the wattage of typical building floodlights that can be as much as 1,000 watts each. The hotel and performing arts center would feature tinted glass set in stucco and stone-trimmed framework, so as to reduce reflections from sunlight during the day and minimize and diffuse nighttime illumination from within the buildings.

The proposed project would be developed consistent with and in compliance with all applicable Placer County General Plan and community plan policies, zoning ordinances, and design guidelines as per Section 2 of UAIC-Placer County MOU (**Appendix A**). The design of the proposed project would not include intrusive or disruptive lighting on any of the proposed buildings or on any signs.

Because the recently completed and approved residential housing developments in the vicinity are located more than one-half mile from the proposed project, and because the building and landscaping design will conform to the County regulations and standards mentioned above, nighttime lighting of the casino and related facilities would not significantly disrupt the nighttime viewshed of any residential areas. The Tribe will continue to comply with the building standards set out in all Uniform Building Codes, as adopted or supplemented by the County. Therefore, additional nighttime illumination will represent a less than significant impact.

8.4 MITIGATION MEASURES

No mitigation measures are warranted.