

4. AESTHETICS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The Aesthetics chapter of the EIR describes existing aesthetic resources in the area of the proposed project and the broader region, and evaluates the potential aesthetic impacts of the project. CEQA describes the concept of aesthetic resources in terms of scenic vistas, scenic resources (such as trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a State scenic highway), and the existing visual quality of the project area. In addition, pursuant to CEQA Guidelines, this chapter describes potential impacts related to light and glare. The following analysis is based on information drawn from the Placer County General Plan,¹ the Placer County General Plan EIR,² the Dry Creek-West Placer Community Plan (DCWPCP),³ the Placer County Design Guidelines,⁴ and the Placer County Landscape Design Guidelines.⁵

It should be noted that per the court ruling in *Preserve Poway v. City of Poway* (2016) 245 Cal. App.4th 560 [199 Cal.Rptr. 3d 600], community character is separate and apart from aesthetic impacts and, thus, is not a CEQA issue. Rather, the analysis of aesthetics should be limited to tangible, physical evidence that a project is visually inconsistent with the surrounding community (rather than a psychological “feel”). Therefore, where applicable, the analysis presented within this chapter focuses on potential physical changes to visual composition of the project site and surrounding area, rather than overall community character.

4.2 EXISTING ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

The following setting information provides an overview of the existing conditions of visual resources in the vicinity of the project site, which is located within the eastern portion of the DCWPCP, west of the City of Roseville city limits.

Visual Character of the Region

The area covered by the DCWPCP encompasses approximately 9,200 acres in the southwest portion of Placer County, California. Currently, the project region is developed with a variety of scattered rural single-family homes, as well as a small number of residential subdivisions. The most dominant natural feature in the DCWPCP area is Dry Creek and associated woodlands and riparian habitats. Dry Creek and the associated tributaries generally trend east to west through the central portion of the region, punctuating the open grassland areas present in the eastern portion of the DCWPCP area and the residential subdivisions to the west. The topography is generally flat.

¹ Placer County. *Countywide General Plan Policy Document*. August 1994 (updated May 2013).

² Placer County. *Countywide General Plan EIR*. July 1994.

³ Placer County. *Dry Creek-West Placer Community Plan*. Amended May 12, 2009.

⁴ Placer County. *Design Guidelines Manual*. Revised September 24, 2003.

⁵ Placer County. *Placer County Landscape Design Guidelines*. Adopted May 7, 2013.



State Scenic Highways

According to the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) map of designated and eligible scenic routes under the California Scenic Highway Program, officially-designated State scenic highways do not exist within the vicinity of the project site or in Placer County.⁶

Visual Character of the Project Site and Surrounding Area

The following information provides an overview of the existing conditions of the project site and surrounding area in relation to visual character.

Project Site

Currently, the project site consists primarily of ruderal grasses and is absent of structures or other indications of prior development. The western portion of the site contains an unnamed tributary that flows southward to Dry Creek. One seasonal swale and one drainage ditch within the site drain to the tributary. Existing riparian woodland lines both sides of the tributary, and scattered almond trees are located along the drainage ditch. The topography of the site is gently undulating, and a small knoll is located near the northwest portion of the site. Figure 4-1 through Figure 4-4 below provide representative views of the project site from the adjacent roadways. The photos include views from vantage points from roadways along the project site in which the site is visible. This grouping of photos does not comprise an exhaustive collection of every view that includes the project site from all vantage points, but is meant to show representative views toward the site from the two contiguous roads.

Surrounding Areas

The areas to the north and west of the site are primarily vacant and undeveloped, with the exception of the Father's House church located north of the site along the Brady Lane frontage. The nearest home to the west of the site is approximately 1,000 feet from the site boundary, and the nearest home to the north is located approximately 360 feet from the site boundary. To the south of the site, neighboring uses include four rural single-family homes across Vineyard Road. Generally, the areas to the north, west, and south of the site are representative of the rural character that largely defines the eastern portion of the DCWPCP. Neighboring uses to the east of the site include a single-family residential subdivision located across Brady Lane, within the City of Roseville limits. The subdivision includes lots from 5,000-square foot (sf) minimum lots with single-family homes that are typically located approximately 20 feet from the eastern edge of pavement along Brady Lane and are screened from the road with mature landscaping and masonry walls.

A two-acre rectangular-shaped parcel, located at 1940 Vineyard Road, extends approximately 700 feet north (roughly halfway) into the project site. The parcel is developed with a house and associated outbuildings, located approximately 25 feet from the parcel's northern property line and 15 feet from its eastern property line. The existing on-site tributary flows through a culvert crossing under Vineyard Road near the south/center of the two-acre parcel.

⁶ Department of Transportation. *California Scenic Highway Mapping System, Placer County*. Available at: http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/LandArch/16_livability/scenic_highways/. Accessed February 2019.



Figure 4-1
Existing View of Project Site from Brady Lane Looking West



Figure 4-2
Existing View of Project Site from Brady Lane/The Father's House Church Looking Southwest



Figure 4-3
Existing View of Project Site from Vineyard Road Looking Northeast



Figure 4-4
Existing View of Project Site from Vineyard Road Looking Northwest



Off-Site Improvement Areas

Off-site improvement areas associated with the proposed project would include widening improvements to Brady Lane and Vineyard Road along the project frontages, as well as extension of a new sewer line within Vineyard Road east to Foothills Boulevard. All improvements would occur within the paved right-of-way. Generally, the off-site improvement areas do not possess any unique visual characteristics.

Viewer Types

Viewer types in the vicinity that have views of the project site include the following:

- Motorists along Vineyard Road and Brady Lane have existing views of the project site while driving past the site.
- Pedestrians and bicyclists along Brady Lane have existing views of the site. Vineyard Road does not include paved shoulders or sidewalks on either side of the roadway adjacent to the project site; thus, bicycle and pedestrian traffic along Vineyard Road in the project vicinity is limited.
- Church members at The Father's House church located northeast of the site have unimpeded views of the project site from the church parking lot.
- Residents of the existing single-family residential subdivisions to the east of the site within the City of Roseville have limited views of the project site from upper-story windows. Ground-level views for such residents are blocked by intervening hardscape and landscape features. To the south of the site, the existing single-family rural residences have views of the project site from across Vineyard Road. Views of the site from the residences to the northeast are blocked by landscaping elements along the northern boundary of the existing church. Views of the site from the existing residences to the west and northwest, including the single-family home located at 1940 Vineyard Road, are partially obscured by the riparian vegetation associated with the on-site tributary along the site's western boundary.

Public Versus Private Views

Travelers along nearby roadways, as well as the nearby residences east and south of the project site, would be considered sensitive visual receptors. However, it is important to distinguish between public and private views. Private views are views seen from privately-owned land and are typically viewed by individual viewers, including views from private residences. Public views are views that are experienced by the collective public. In the case of the proposed project, public views would consist primarily of views from Vineyard Road and Brady Lane in the project vicinity.

CEQA (Pub. Resources Code, § 21000 et seq.) case law has established that only public views, not private views, are protected under CEQA. For example, in *Association for Protection etc. Values v. City of Ukiah* (1991) 2 Cal.App.4th 720 [3 Cal. Rptr.2d 488] the court determined that “we must differentiate between adverse impacts upon particular persons and adverse impacts upon the environment of persons in general. As recognized by the court in *Topanga Beach Renters Assn. v. Department of General Services* (1976) 58 Cal.App.3d 188 [129 Cal.Rptr. 739]: “[A]ll government activity has some direct or indirect adverse effect on some persons. The issue is not whether [the project] will adversely affect particular persons but whether [the project] will adversely affect the environment of persons in general.” Such a conclusion is consistent with the thresholds of significance established in Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines. Therefore, it is appropriate to focus the aesthetic impact analysis on potential impacts to public views, rather than private views.



Existing Conditions of Key Viewpoints

A number of key viewpoints that would most clearly display the proposed project's potential visual effects have been selected for in-depth analysis. For the purpose of this analysis, the segments of Vineyard Road and Brady Lane within the project vicinity are characterized as key viewpoints.

Existing Views from Vineyard Road

Existing views of the project site from Vineyard Road consist of rural grassland with scattered trees in the foreground. From the southwest of the site, the foreground consists predominantly of riparian vegetation associated with the existing on-site tributary, which partially obscures views of the on-site grassland areas. The Father's House church and the two-story single-family homes within the subdivision to the east of the site are visible beyond the site in the background. The visual character of the viewshed reflects a transition between the rural residential landscape to the west of the site and the more densely developed urban landscape to the east of the site that is located within the City of Roseville.

Existing Views from Brady Lane

Views of the project site from Brady Lane consist of rural grassland with scattered trees. Dense vegetation associated with the existing on-site tributary, as well as vegetation along Vineyard Road to the south of the site, is visible in the distance. The rural visual character of the viewshed is consistent with grassland located beyond the site to the west and north.

Light Pollution and Glare

Light pollution refers to all forms of unwanted light in the night sky, including glare, light trespass, sky glow, and over-lighting. Views of the night sky can be an important part of the natural environment, particularly in communities surrounded by extensive open space. Excessive light and glare can also be visually disruptive to humans and nocturnal animal species.

The project site is primarily characterized by an undeveloped, unlit landscape. As such, sources of light and glare do not currently occur on the project site. However, the project site is located within the vicinity of existing residential development to the south and east. Lighting associated with such development, as well as street lighting along Brady Lane and headlights from vehicles traveling on Brady Lane and Vineyard Road, contributes to the overall nighttime lighting environment of the project area.

4.3 REGULATORY CONTEXT

Applicable federal laws or regulations pertaining to the aesthetic quality of the project area do not exist. However, the existing State and local laws and regulations applicable to the proposed project are listed below.

State Regulations

The following is an applicable State regulation related to aesthetic resources.

California Scenic Highway Program

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



Local Regulations

The following local regulations are applicable to the proposed project.

Placer County General Plan

The following design goals and policies of the Placer County General Plan are applicable to the proposed project.

- Goal 1.K To protect the visual and scenic resources of Placer County as important quality-of-life amenities for County residents and a principal asset in the promotion of recreation and tourism.
- Policy 1.K.3 The County shall require that new development in rural areas incorporates landscaping that provides a transition between the vegetation in developed areas and adjacent open space or undeveloped areas.
- Policy 1.K.4 The County shall require that new development incorporates sound soil conservation practices and minimizes land alterations. Land alterations should comply with the following guidelines:
- a. Limit cuts and fills;
 - b. Limit grading to the smallest practical area of land;
 - c. Limit land exposure to the shortest practical amount of time;
 - d. Replant graded areas to ensure establishment of plant cover before the next rainy season;
 - e. Create grading contours that blend with the natural contours on site or with contours on property immediately adjacent to the area of development; and
 - f. Provide and maintain site-specific construction Best Management Practices (BMPs).
- Policy 1.K.5 The County shall require that new roads, parking, and utilities be designed to minimize visual impacts. Unless limited by geological or engineering constraints, utilities should be installed underground and roadways and parking areas should be designed to conform to the natural terrain.
- Goal 1.O To promote and enhance the quality and aesthetics of development in Placer County.
- Policy 1.O.9 The County shall discourage the use of outdoor lighting that shines unnecessarily onto adjacent properties or into the night sky.
- Goal 6.D To preserve and protect the valuable vegetation resources of Placer County.
- Policy 6.D.12 The County shall support the retention of heavily vegetated corridors along circulation corridors to preserve their rural character.



Dry Creek-West Placer Community Plan

The relevant goals and policies from the DCWPCP related to aesthetics are presented below.

Land Use Plan

Goal 2 To preserve outstanding visual features, natural resources, and landmarks.

Goal 6 To encourage compatibility between neighboring land uses.

Community Design Element

Goal 1 This plan strives to preserve the natural land forms, natural vegetation, and natural resources of the area as much as possible, while also recognizing the deleterious effects of intense development in the surrounding areas.

Goal 2 It is a goal of the plan to encourage and support projects which exemplify good design characteristics when judged against the goals and policies of this plan as well as other applicable design and landscape guidelines.

Goal 5 It is a goal to maintain the heavily vegetated corridors that exist along circulation routes to preserve their rural nature and their value as natural noise buffers.

Goal 6 It is a goal to create residential development which allows the following elements: human interaction, bicycle and pedestrian circulation, an appropriate relationship to existing development in the area, and the creation of a neighborhood identity and/or focus (i.e. parks, schools, natural open space areas, creek site of historical or archaeological significance, etc.).

Goal 8 A major goal of the plan is to utilize and improve the Dry Creek environs as a focal point of existing and new neighborhoods to be created in the area through the placement of park facilities, roadways, trails, interpretive areas, visibility, etc.

Policy 1 Wherever possible, natural features should be retained as buffers between different, potentially incompatible uses. Where natural features are not available, landscaped buffer yards shall be provided to minimize the adverse effects of higher intensity uses upon lower intensity uses.

Policy 3 Preservation of natural features, noise exposure, road access, and relationship to the surrounding properties shall be considered in preparing subdivision designs. Subdivision density, or total number of lots, will ultimately be determined by these factors. The development of the maximum number of lots permitted by the zoning will not be possible in most cases due to these and other design considerations required by this Plan.

Policy 9 Night lighting, visible from the exterior of buildings shall be limited to that necessary for security, safety, and identification.



- Policy 10 Projects within the Plan area will comply with the Placer County Landscape Guidelines, the Placer County Design Guidelines, and the specific design guidelines contained in the Plan.
- Policy 11 Landscaping shall be used to reduce the visual impact of all structures, including solid fences. Natural vegetation should dominate where possible. Where existing vegetation is inadequate the use of native plant materials is encouraged. Landscaping materials provide an informal character and smooth transition between buildings, parking lots, adjoining roadways and open areas.
- Policy 12 Large, bulky and unscreened structures shall be discouraged, particularly if they are visible from the road.
- Policy 13 The use of natural materials (i.e., wood siding, brick, block, and field stone) is required. Primary exterior colors shall blend with the surrounding natural landscape. The use of “earthtones” or natural finishes which blend with the natural background is encouraged.
- Policy 15 In place of sound wall construction, require, wherever possible, the use of greater setbacks to provide a scenic corridor for all parcels fronting on all the major circulation routes (2, 4, or 6 lanes of traffic). Long expanses of sound walls are not consistent with the desired character of the Plan area and the use of open space setbacks and landscaping instead, will be a major difference between this area and surrounding areas to the north and south.
- Policy 18 Utility lines shall be installed underground to ensure minimum disruption to the environment and as little disturbance as possible to vegetation, particularly in scenic corridors.

Placer County Landscape Design Guidelines

The Placer County Landscape Design Guidelines were adopted by the Placer County Board of Supervisors on May 7, 2013. The overall purpose of the Placer County Landscape Design Guidelines is to provide County staff, prospective developers, and stakeholders with a basic framework for designing landscaped areas within unincorporated Placer County and to ensure continuity, consistency, and quality design. In addition, the Guidelines are used to assist the Planning Services Division with their review of submitted plans for landscape improvements by providing consistent and specific design criteria intended to help determine if a proposal is acceptable. The Guidelines focus on landscaping requirements for streetscape and parking lots.

Placer County Design Guidelines Manual

The Placer County Design Guidelines Manual includes guidelines and standards that aim to remove as much design discretion as possible at the staff level in order for prospective developers to assess their chances of approval based on consistency with the manual. The overall goal of the Placer County Design Guidelines Manual is to promote visual environments in the communities of western Placer County that are of high aesthetic quality, offer variety in developing



community design images reflective of community heritage, and, in some cases, maintain an overall rural continuity while, in others, identify an appropriate urban design theme.

There is no particular "style" proposed for residential or institutional structures in western Placer County but the focus should be on constructing a high quality residential environment which is sensitive to the surrounding neighborhood character. The Guidelines strive for "quality" architecture through the descriptions of appropriate and inappropriate materials and architectural expression. The proposed project would include a variety of architectural styles, including craftsman, California Farmhouse, Monterey, Tuscan, French country and traditional elevation styles. Exterior materials would include a mix of stucco, hardboard siding, stone and masonry. Building colors would be selected to compliment and blend with the project environment.

4.4 IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

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

Standards of Significance

Consistent with Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, an aesthetic impact is considered significant if the proposed project would:

- Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista (see Chapter 16, Effects Not Found to be Significant);
- Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a State scenic highway (see Chapter 16, Effects Not Found to be Significant);
- In a non-urbanized area, substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings (public views are those that are experienced from publicly accessible vantage point) or, in an urbanized area, conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality; or
- Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area.

As noted above, issues related to whether the proposed project would result in any of the following impacts are discussed in Chapter 16, Effects Not Found To Be Significant, of this EIR:

- A substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista; or
- Substantial damage to scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a State scenic highway.

Method of Analysis

The section below gives full consideration to the development of the proposed project and acknowledges physical changes to the existing setting. Impacts to the existing environment of the project area are to be determined by the contrast between the visual setting before and after buildout of the proposed project. The standards of significance listed above are used to delineate the significance of any visual alterations of the site, including alterations that would impact views from public viewsheds in the project area.



It should be noted that in addition to the 119 single-family residential units included in the proposed project, the Project Description chapter of this EIR recognizes the potential for up to 12 additional on-site residential units (Accessory Dwelling Units) to be included in the project in order to meet the County's affordable housing requirements. However, the total number of residential lots would remain unchanged, as would the overall disturbance area associated with the project. Therefore, from an aesthetics perspective, the potential inclusion of an additional 12 units on-site would not result in new impacts or substantially more severe impacts beyond the analysis presented herein.

Project-Specific Impacts and Mitigation Measures

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

4-1 In a non-urbanized area, substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings (public views are those that are experienced from publicly accessible vantage point) or, in an urbanized area, conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality. Based on the analysis below, the impact is *less than significant*.

Generally, the project site is located within an urbanizing area. The area to the east of the site within the City of Roseville is built out with residential subdivisions, apartments, and various commercial uses. In addition, extensive development has occurred within the surrounding environs to the north and south of the site, outside of the DCWPCP area. Nonetheless, given that the existing development in the immediate vicinity of the site to the north, west, and south is primarily rural in nature, the analysis within this chapter considers the project area to be non-urbanized in order to provide a conservative analysis.

The proposed project would develop the site with a total of 119 single-family residences and various associated improvements, including new internal roadways, and a new on-site sewer lift station. A total of 6.34 acres of the site would be retained as open space (Lot E), including areas planned for an on-site trail. Within Lot E, a total of 1.25 acres are planned for development with three linear parks. In addition, 1.44 acres within the site would consist of landscape lots (Lots B, C, and D). The three-acre NAPOTS area within the southwestern portion of the site would remain vacant and undeveloped.

It should be noted that trench locations for all necessary utility improvements, including off-site proposed water and sewer improvements within Vineyard Road and Brady Lane, would be located within previously disturbed areas in or adjacent to existing roadways. All utilities would be placed underground. As such, installation of utilities would not result in significant alteration to existing vegetation or otherwise permanently degrade the visual character or quality of the project area.

The proposed project would be landscaped with both existing and proposed native trees, shrubs and groundcover (see Figure 3-7, Preliminary Landscaping and Fencing Plan). While the project would require removal of a small number of existing trees along the



project frontage at Vineyard Road in order to accommodate the proposed road widening, the project would retain oak woodland and riparian area along the western border of the site and would also involve the replanting of various other native trees, shrubs and groundcover. Open iron fencing would be constructed in the rear yards of residences backing to Brady Lane and Vineyard Road and also along the western property line of the church property. Front yards would be more traditional, with street trees, and a five-foot sidewalk along the street.

As discussed above, public views of the project site are afforded from Vineyard Road and Brady Lane. Changes to the aforementioned public views due to development of the proposed project are discussed separately in further detail below.

Views from Vineyard Road

With development of the proposed project, views of the project site from Vineyard Road would change from a predominantly undeveloped rural landscape to a single-family residential development. While the project would require removal of a small number of existing trees along the project frontage at Vineyard Road in order to accommodate the proposed road widening, the majority of the existing riparian vegetation associated with the on-site tributary would be retained as part of the project and would continue to partially obscure views of the site for sensitive viewers to the southwest of the site along Vineyard Road. Remaining vegetation, additional plantings, and a chain-link fence with privacy slats would also help to screen views of the proposed sewer lift station within Lot A. In addition, to the south of the proposed lots along Vineyard Road, the project would include a nearly 35-foot buffer (minimum 25-foot from back of right-of-way to southern property line of project site) with an elevated berm, landscaping trees, and shrubs/groundcover plantings to help further screen views of the site (see Figure 4-5). The berm may include a short masonry base wall, with portions including a five-foot-tall open iron fence on top, designed consistent with the Placer County Landscape Design Guidelines. Furthermore, the project would provide for a meandering decomposed granite path along the north side of Vineyard Road at the project frontage to allow for a more pedestrian-oriented streetscape, consistent with Goal 6 from the Community Design Element of the DCWPCP.

Given that 24.1 acres of the approximately 32-acre project site are currently designated Rural-Low Density Residential (RLDR) per the DCWPCP, the County has previously considered development of the project site with residential uses. While the project would include a General Plan/DCWPCP Amendment and rezone to allow for development of the site at an increased density, the proposed 5,000 sf-minimum lot sizes would be consistent with the lot sizes within the existing single-family residential subdivision to the east of the site across Brady Lane. Approximately 50 percent of the homes backing onto Vineyard Road would be limited to single-story homes, with all two-story homes being separated from each other by at least one single-story home, to increase the visual cohesion between the project site and the existing residences in the project area. In addition, views of scenic resources (e.g., ridgelines, other unique terrain, or State scenic highways) beyond the site do not currently exist and, thus, would not be blocked by the project.

The proposed project would be consistent with the Placer County Design Guidelines, the specific design guidelines contained in the DCWPCP, and all applicable sections of Article 17.54, General Development Regulations, of the Placer County Code. Based on the above, public views of the project site from Vineyard Road would not be considered to be



substantially degraded. Furthermore, public views of the project site would be temporary, occurring only as motorists, pedestrians, and cyclists pass by the site.

Views from Brady Lane

Similar to views from Vineyard Road, with development of the proposed project, views of the project site from Brady Lane would change from a predominantly undeveloped rural landscape to a single-family residential development. However, the project would include a nearly 35-foot landscaped buffer with an elevated berm along the length of the project frontage at Brady Lane to help screen views of the site (see Figure 4-5). The buffer would include street trees, shrub/groundcover plantings, and a berm which may include a short masonry base wall, with portions including a five-foot tall open iron fence on top, designed consistent with the Placer County Landscape Design Guidelines. A fence would continue along the shared property line with the existing church, helping to screen views of the proposed homes from the church parking lot.

At the project site access at Brady Lane, the gated project entryway would be landscaped with native vegetation and marked with enhanced hardscape features, including a stone/concrete project identification monument (see Figure 4-6). The identification monument would be designed consistent with Part VII, Section 6, Neighborhood Entries, of the Placer County Landscape Design Guidelines.

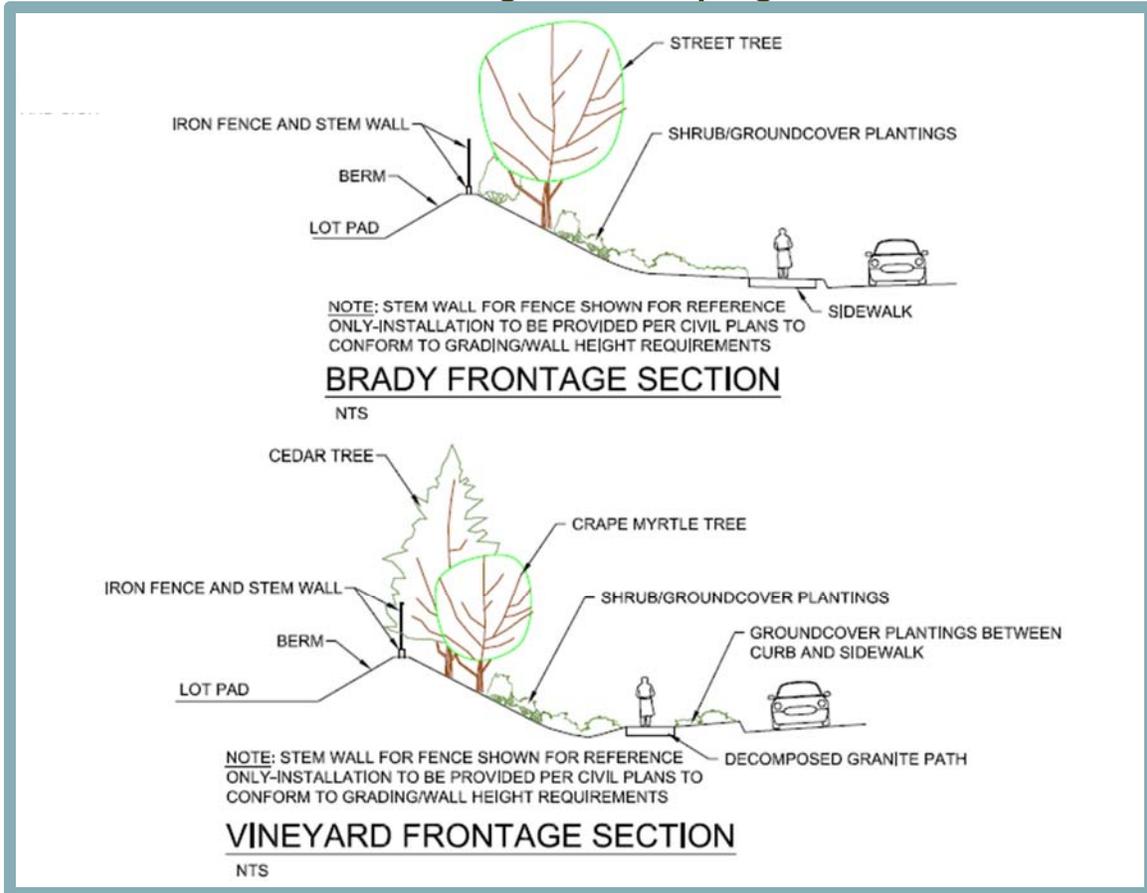
Overall, the proposed development on the southern parcel would change the visual character of the parcel from that of a rural and agricultural nature to that of a single-family development similar to the land uses found adjacent to and in the vicinity of the project site. While the project would include a General Plan/DCWPCP Amendment and rezone to allow for development of the site at an increased density, the proposed 5,000 sf-minimum lot sizes would be consistent with the lot sizes within the existing single-family residential subdivision to the east of the site across Brady Lane and The Vineyards residential subdivision southeast of the site. Approximately 50 percent of the homes backing onto Brady Lane would be limited to single-story homes to increase the visual cohesion between the project site and the existing residences in the project area. In addition, views of scenic resources (e.g., ridgelines, other unique terrain, or State scenic highways) beyond the site do not currently exist and, thus, would not be blocked by the project.

The proposed project would be consistent with the Placer County Design Guidelines, the specific design guidelines contained in the DCWPCP, and all applicable sections of Article 17.54, General Development Regulations, of the Placer County Code.

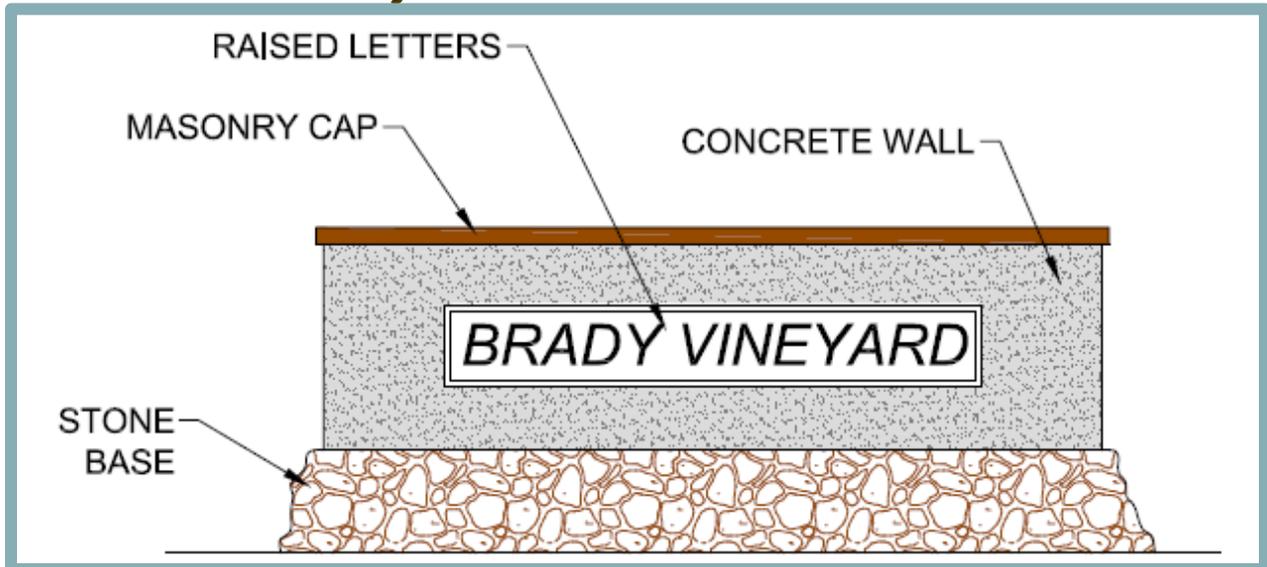
Highly visible residences along Brady Lane, Vineyard Road, and at the project entrance will be required to have enhanced façades that may include a combination of varied roof forms, façade element breaks, second-story balconies, a combination of horizontal and vertical elements, a combination of sheathing materials, enhanced windows, shutters, accents, or other details to provide visual interest. Residential units on the proposed lots along these frontages deemed not visible, i.e. a one-story design screened by the proposed berming and/or entry features/wall, would not be required to comply with the enhanced façade requirement. This will be a project Condition of Approval.



**Figure 4-5
Frontage Landscaping**



**Figure 4-6
Project Identification Monument**



Based on the above, public views of the project site from Brady Lane would not be considered to be substantially degraded. In addition, public views of the site for motorists, cyclists, and pedestrians traveling on Brady Lane would be temporary, occurring only briefly as such viewers pass the site.

Conclusion

As discussed above, the project site currently consists primarily of ruderal grasses. With the exception of the existing on-site tributary to Dry Creek and the associated riparian vegetation, which would be preserved by the proposed project, the project site does not contain any distinctive scenic resources. While the proposed single-family residential development would result in noticeable changes to the existing visual character of the project site as viewed from public vantage points along Vineyard Road and Brady Lane in the project vicinity, the project would not substantially degrade the character of a site having high visual quality. Views of the riparian vegetation would be partially obscured with development of the proposed project, but would continue to be visible for motorists, cyclists, and pedestrians travelling east on Vineyard Road. Furthermore, the visual quality of views beyond the site from Vineyard Road and Brady Lane is limited.

Changes to the visual character and quality of the site associated with development of a currently vacant lot have been anticipated by the County, and the proposed project would be designed to maximize the visual quality of all project frontages. In addition, all project elements would comply with applicable guidelines and regulations related to visual quality, including the Placer County Design Guidelines, the specific design guidelines contained in the DCWPCP, and Article 17.54 of the Placer County Code. Therefore, the proposed project would not be considered to substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings, or conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality. Thus, a **less-than-significant** impact would occur.

Mitigation Measure(s)

None required.

4-2 Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area. Based on the analysis below and with implementation of mitigation, the impact is *less than significant*.

As noted previously, the proposed project site is primarily characterized by an undeveloped, unlit landscape. Thus, development of the project site with single-family residences and associated improvements would introduce additional sources of light and/or glare to a site where none currently exist.

Individual homes within the project site would introduce new sources of night lighting in the form of exterior light sources such as porch and patio lights, architectural accent lighting, motion activated security lighting, driveway lighting, landscape lighting, and interior lighting visible through windows. With the exception of low-voltage, LED landscape accent lights that would be provided at the gated entry, streetlights and other lighting elements are not proposed along the subdivision streets; however, a streetlight may be required at the intersection of the subdivision road and Brady Lane as well as the



northwest corner of the intersection of Brady Lane and Vineyard Road. Per Section 17.54.070(A)(2)(i) of the Placer County Code, the project would be subject to compliance with the applicable sections of the Placer County Design Guidelines related to light pollution, including, but not limited to, shielding of fixtures such that direct rays do not pass property lines.

However, because the types of lighting and the specific locations have not yet been determined, the proposed project could increase the amount of light and glare generated on-site, which could be visible from the surrounding residential development and roadways in the project vicinity. Therefore, the proposed project could be considered to create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area, and a **significant** impact could occur.

Mitigation Measure(s)

Implementation of the following mitigation measure would reduce the above impact to a *less-than-significant* level.

4-2 *Prior to Improvement Plan approval, the project applicant shall submit a lighting plan for the project to the Placer County Design Review Committee (DRC) for review and approval, demonstrating that proposed lighting is Dark-Sky compliant as specified by the International Dark-Sky Association. The lighting plan shall include, but not necessarily be limited to, the following provisions:*

- *Shield or screen lighting fixtures to direct the light downward and prevent light spill on adjacent properties;*
- *Place and shield or screen flood and area lighting needed for construction activities and/or security so as not to disturb adjacent residential areas and passing motorists;*
- *For public lighting, prohibit the use of light fixtures that are of unusually high intensity or brightness (e.g., harsh mercury vapor, low-pressure sodium, or fluorescent bulbs) or that blink or flash;*
- *Use appropriate building materials (such as low-glare glass, low-glare building glaze or finish, neutral, earth-toned colored paint and roofing materials), shielded or screened lighting, and appropriate signage to prevent light and glare from adversely affecting motorists on nearby roadways.*

Cumulative Impacts and Mitigation Measures

As defined in Section 15355 of the CEQA Guidelines, “cumulative impacts” refers to two or more individual effects which, when considered together, are considerable, compound, or increase other environmental impacts. The individual effects may be changes resulting from a single project or a number of separate projects. The cumulative impact from several projects is the change in the environment that results from the incremental impact of the project when added to other closely related past, present, and reasonably foreseeable probable future projects.

Some types of impacts to aesthetic resources are localized and not cumulative in nature. For example, the creation of glare or shadows at one location is not worsened by glare or shadows created at another location. Rather these effects are independent, and the determination as to



whether they are adverse is specific to the project and location where they are created. Projects that block a view or affect the visual quality of a site also have localized aesthetic impacts. The impact occurs specific to a site or area and remains independent from another project elsewhere that may block a view or degrade the visual environment of a specific site.

Two types of aesthetic impacts may be additive in nature and thus cumulative, including night sky lighting and overall changes in the visual environment as the result of increasing urbanization of large areas. As development in one area increases and possibly expands over time and meets or connects with development in an adjoining exurban area, the effect of night sky lighting experienced outside of the region may increase in the form of larger and/or more intense nighttime glow in the viewshed.

Similarly, as development in one area changes from rural to urban, and this pattern continues to occur throughout the undeveloped areas of a jurisdiction, the changes in visual character may become additive and cumulatively considerable. The proposed project's incremental contribution to night sky lighting and changes in visual character are addressed below.

4-3 Long-term changes in visual character associated with cumulative development of the proposed project in combination with future buildout of the DCWPCP. Based on the analysis below, the project's incremental contribution to this significant cumulative impact is *less than cumulatively considerable*.

The geographic setting for analysis of long-term cumulative changes in visual character associated with the proposed project is the area covered by the DCWPCP, as development within the DCWPCP has the potential to affect many of the same views analyzed for the proposed project. Specific views of the project site from Vineyard Road and Brady Lane are identified in Figure 4-1 through Figure 4-4 of this EIR. Currently, a number of projects within the cumulative geographic setting are under construction or are planned, including the Riolo Vineyards Specific Plan (under construction) and the Placer Vineyards Specific Plan (planned).

Future development within the DCWPCP would result in changes to the existing land use environment through conversion of vacant land to developed uses that would result in a change in visual character. The goals and objectives of the DCWPCP are to identify those features of the DCWPCP area that characterize the unique nature and identifying traits of the community and then to specify standards of site development for proposed projects which would implement the goals and policies of the DCWPCP.

Planned development within the DCWPCP area includes the Riolo Vineyards Specific Plan and the Placer Vineyards Specific Plan; both areas are located approximately 2.2 miles west of the project site and are separated from the site by intervening residential and agricultural uses. Similarly, the Double S Ranch project, located along Vineyard Road to the west of the project site, is bordered by agricultural uses and rural single-family homes to the north, east, and west. Development of other approved projects, as well as the proposed project site, would change the existing visual character of those specific locations from vacant or minimally developed land to more intensively developed residential areas with one- and two-story homes on various sized lots. However, such



development would be subject to existing regulations and guidelines designed to ensure compatibility with adjacent land uses and ensure a pleasing visual character.

Specifically, such projects would be required to comply with the Placer County Landscape Guidelines, the Placer County Design Guidelines, the specific design guidelines contained in the DCWPCP, and all applicable sections of the Placer County Code. The Placer County Design Guidelines Manual provides instruction on the design direction to be implemented with the construction of new buildings, which includes setbacks, extensive use of wood, colors consistent with earth tones and significant amounts of landscaping. Such standards serve to reduce impacts on visual character and maintain consistency with the project surroundings. The proposed project would use natural building materials (e.g., masonry, stucco, wood, and stone) and colors (complementary natural, earth tones) consistent with the Placer County Design Guidelines. While cumulative projects in the DCWPCP would result in conversion of vacant land to developed land, the projects, including the proposed project, would develop new residential uses that would be well designed and consistent with other residential developments in the larger project vicinity. Development patterns would include landscaping and setbacks that would both screen the proposed project from the adjacent neighbors and provide a transition space from existing surrounding rural residential lots.

Cumulative buildout in the geographic area would result in a substantial change in visual character of region and, thus, a significant cumulative impact would occur. However, as discussed under Impact 4-1 above, the proposed project would not result in substantial degradation of the visual character and quality of public views of the site and its surroundings. While the proposed single-family residential development would result in noticeable changes to the existing visual character of the project site, as viewed from public vantage points along Vineyard Road and Brady Lane in the project vicinity, the proposed project would be designed to maximize the visual quality of all project frontages, and 50 percent of the proposed single-family homes closest to the roadways would be limited to one-story homes to increase the visual cohesion between the project site and the existing residences in the project area. In addition, visible rear and/or side façades along Brady Lane, Vineyard Road, and at the project entrance will be required to have enhanced façades that may include a combination of varied roof forms, façade element breaks, second-story balconies, a combination of horizontal and vertical elements, a combination of sheathing materials, enhanced windows, shutters, accents, or other details to provide visual interest.

The proposed project would be required to comply with the Placer County Landscape Guidelines, the Placer County Design Guidelines, the specific design guidelines contained in the DCWPCP, and all applicable sections of the Placer County Code, which would ensure that the proposed project incorporates natural building materials, colors, and landscaping. Therefore, the project's incremental contribution to the significant impact would be ***less than cumulatively considerable***.

Mitigation Measure(s)

None required.



4-4 Creation of new sources of light or glare associated with cumulative development of the proposed project in combination with future buildout of the DCWPCP. Based on the analysis below, the impact is *less than significant*.

Cumulative effects of lighting are visible over a wide area, due to the potential for lighting from a number of projects to create sky glow. Cumulative development throughout the DCWPCP area, particularly conversion of rural or currently vacant sites to urban uses, would increase the sources of light and glare, which would have the potential to contribute to sky glow in the area. Such sources of light would be typical of existing residential development in the project area, such as the residential subdivisions located to the west and south of the project site.

However, cumulative development within the DCWPCP area, including the proposed project, would be subject to existing regulations and guidelines related to light and glare. For example, Section 17.54.070(i) of the Placer County Code requires that lighting in new development is consistent with the lighting standards contained within the Placer County Design Guidelines Manual. As described in Impact 4-2 above, the proposed project in particular would be required to submit a lighting plan for the project to the Placer County Planning Services Division for review and approval prior to Improvement Plan approval (see Mitigation Measure 4-2). Mitigation Measure 4-2 requires the project's lighting to be Dark-Sky compliant as specified by the International Dark-Sky Association.

Based upon the above analysis, cumulative development within the DCWPCP area would be subject to Section 17.54.070(i) of the Placer County Code requiring that new development within the County comply with lighting standards, and prior to project implementation, a lighting plan must be submitted showing that the proposed project would avoid contribution to sky glow through Dark-Sky design compliance. Thus, the proposed project, in combination with cumulative development of the DCWPCP area, would not be anticipated to result in a significant cumulative impact related to light and glare and the impact would be ***less than significant***.

Mitigation Measure(s)

None required.

