

4.3 AESTHETICS

This section evaluates the visual quality of Cerritos and assesses the potential for visual impacts associated with implementation of the proposed General Plan Update. Where significant impacts are identified, mitigation measures are provided to reduce these impacts to a less than significant level.

Difficulties arise when evaluating visual quality and the degree of impact resulting from visual change. This is because few objectives or quantitative standards exist to analyze visual quality and individual responses differently to changes in the visual environment. What may be considered to be an adverse visual condition to one person may represent an improved visual scene to another.

4.3.1 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

The City of Cerritos has a rich history and as it has developed, the City has become a unique place by maintaining, enhancing and creating physical features that distinguish Cerritos from surrounding communities. The City was incorporated on April 24, 1956. As a reflection of the agricultural heritage of the area, the name Dairy Valley was chosen. At that time, agriculture and dairy farms were the primary uses in the City with the population being outnumbered 29 to 1 by cows.

By the mid 1960s, as a result in the increase in land values and property taxes, the City voted to allow the development of residences on lots smaller than five acres. This allowed the City to begin more traditional development and allowed it to develop into the City it is today. On January 10, 1967, the City officially named the community Cerritos, paying homage to the historic connection with their Spanish heritage and the Rancho Los Cerritos Spanish land grant that bears the City's name.

As the population and development increased in Cerritos, the City emphasized creating a well-planned community that respects the environment, provides a lush, park like setting and contributes to a high quality of life. The City wanted to ensure that it developed in a well-planned manner with a balance of residential, commercial and industrial development.

Today, the City continues to thrive with the growth and diversification of its commercial centers, the maturing of the urban landscape and development of state-of-the-art community centers and facilities, which all contribute to the aesthetic value of the community.

To help understand existing conditions in Cerritos, it is necessary to first understand the components of the City's urban design framework. The following is a discussion of the elements that contribute to the City of Cerritos' urban form and character, which have been extracted from the proposed Community Design Element. The community

design elements are: community image, streetscape, private development, signs and vacant parcels.

COMMUNITY IMAGE

The perceived “image” of a community is made up of a complex array of physical elements and the relationship between them. The community’s visual image is not static; it changes over time and from location to location within the community. Ideally, a City’s visual image matches the values and aspirations of its citizens. Through the implementation of these values and goals, physical development takes place resulting in an image that residents can identify with and visitors can understand.

The majority of Cerritos is already developed (over 99 percent) and the major physical features that define it as a place (e.g., boundaries, circulation routes, San Gabriel River, etc.) have existed for a long time. However, there is an ongoing process of refining and improving elements of the built environment in a positive way that continues to reinforce Cerritos’ image as a progressive community and a quality place to live.

LANDMARKS

A landmark is a physical element that provides a point of reference or serves as a community identity marker. A landmark can be a structure, space, or a natural feature that helps identify a particular area in the City. Cerritos contains a significant number of objects and places that provide visual and functional points of reference (refer to [Exhibit 4.3-1, *Landmarks*](#)). Among these are:

- ❑ Cerritos City Hall;
- ❑ Cerritos Library;
- ❑ Cerritos Center for the Performing Arts;
- ❑ Cerritos Towne Center;
- ❑ Los Cerritos Center;
- ❑ Cerritos Auto Square;
- ❑ Fountain at Cerritos Towne Center and the SR-91 Freeway (Gore Project); and
- ❑ Cerritos Senior Center at Pat Nixon Park.

GATEWAYS

Gateways are significant points of entry into a community. They provide a clear sense of a community’s boundaries while exhibiting a sense of the community’s character. Because they often provide the first impression of a community, gateways represent an important opportunity to convey a positive and lasting image.

There are currently 16 entry monument signs at gateways throughout the City (refer to [Exhibit 4.3-2, *Districts, Paths, Edges and Gateways*](#)). Other community entry identifiers include street signs with the City name and seal included on the face.

C E R R I T O S G E N E R A L P L A N E I R

Link to Exhibit 4.3-1

Landmarks

11 x 17 – b&w

Link to Exhibit 4.3-2
Districts, Paths, Edges and Gateways
11 x 17 – b&w

PUBLIC SPACES

Public places are areas that unite a community and provide a sense of connection with the city. They are essential to the social cohesion of a community in providing a context where people of all ages can participate together. In Cerritos, outdoor public places are found in City parks, plazas and courtyards around public buildings and pedestrian enclaves. These areas give the residents a sense of ownership and create a shared sense of appreciation between Cerritos residents and their City government. These spaces include:

- ❑ Public Spaces;
- ❑ Cerritos Towne Center;
- ❑ Cerritos Civic Center;
- ❑ Los Cerritos Center;
- ❑ South Street Cerritos;
- ❑ 17 Community Parks; and
- ❑ 1 Regional Park.

PUBLIC ART

Public art can play an integral part adding beauty and distinction to a community. Public art helps to express the City's cultural and social heritage while contributing to the aesthetic environment of a community and adding a unique human dimension to the outdoor environment. Recognizing the importance of public art, Cerritos requires developers who have projects valued at more than \$350,000 to devote one-half of one percent of the building permit valuation to the City's Art in Public Places Program.

The City of Cerritos has installed figurative and abstract public art sculptures at the Civic Center, Cerritos Library, the Cerritos Senior Center at Pat Nixon Park, Heritage Park, Pioneer Villas, Emerald Villas, Avalon at Cerritos, and the Cerritos Center for the Performing Arts. Cerritos developers with projects valued at more than \$350,000 are also required to devote one-half of one percent of the building permit valuation to the City's Art in Public Place Program. In addition, a number of art pieces were installed on private properties as required by the City. In 2000, the City Council formally recognized the importance of public art in the community and adopted the Arts in Public Places Program, Section 22.94 of the Cerritos Municipal Code, which requires developers of privately-owned projects with a building permit valuation of more than \$350,000 to contribute one-half of one percent of the value to the Art in Public Places Trust Fund, or install artwork, as approved by the City, of an equal value. To allow the general public to participate in and express their support for public art, individuals may also contribute to the program.

The City has also provided a municipal art collection that is located within the Cerritos Public Library and the Cerritos Center for the Performing Arts. The collection is composed of pieces of various medium and styles to further enhance the art experience for our residents and visitors to these facilities. The public art collection not

only adds beauty and distinction to the community environment, it also contributes to the economic growth and promotes educational opportunities for the community. The location of existing art pieces is shown in Exhibit 4.3-3, *Public Art*.

PATHS

A path can be defined as those corridors (streets, sidewalks, etc.) along which people move to get from one place to another. A “path” provides the means of vehicular or pedestrian movement within the community. There are two types of paths: “Primary Corridors” are the principal corridors carrying larger volumes of traffic and typically crossing through community boundaries and “Secondary Corridors” carrying less traffic and often originating or terminating within the City’s boundaries. The key paths within the City of Cerritos are classified accordingly below (refer to Exhibit 4.3-2, *Districts, Paths, Edges and Gateways*).

Primary Corridors

- Alondra Boulevard
- Artesia Boulevard
- Bloomfield Avenue
- Carmenita Road
- Del Amo Boulevard
- Pioneer Boulevard
- South Street
- Studebaker Road
- Valley View Avenue

Secondary Corridors

- Allington Street
- Gridley Road
- Shoemaker Avenue
- 166th Street
- 183rd Street
- 195th Street
- Industrial

Multi-Use Trails

- Southern California Edison Right-of-Way
- San Gabriel River Channel Trail
- Coyote Creek Channel Trail

DISTRICTS

A “district” is defined as a part of a larger urban area that has common distinguishing characteristics and function. It is identifiable as a place distinct from other areas of the community due to building architecture, neighborhood design, streetscape, land use, etc. Distinguishing features may include building type, use, activity, inhabitants and/or topography. The City’s principal districts are described in the following paragraphs (refer to Exhibit 4.3-2, *Districts, Paths, Edges and Gateways*).

C E R R I T O S G E N E R A L P L A N E I R

Link to Exhibit 4.3-3
Public Art
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Civic Center District

The Civic Center District is generally defined as the portion of Bloomfield Avenue between Artesia Boulevard and South Street. Within this district is the Cerritos City Hall, the Cerritos Sheriff Station, the Cerritos Library, Cerritos High School, Heritage Park, the Cerritos Towne Center, Cerritos Center for the Performing Arts and Museum. Functionally this district serves all civic purposes for the community and also includes cultural, commercial, recreational and educational services. The District also serves as a center for Cerritos on Wheels (COW), the local City transportation system.

Auto Square District

This district primarily encompasses the Cerritos Auto Square, which is located on the western edge of the City. Bounded by Interstate 605, South Street, 183rd Street and the San Gabriel River Channel, the Auto Square is at the crossroads of several predominant paths of Cerritos. The Auto Square draws consumers from throughout the Southern California region. The district also includes land north of the existing Auto Square, between 183rd Street and Artesia Boulevard in anticipation of the future expansion of the Auto Square.

Regional Commercial District

The Regional Commercial District encompasses a variety of regional-serving commercial uses generally located east of I-605 and bordering three major streets in the city: South Street, 183rd Street and Gridley Road. The commercial centers within this district include Los Cerritos Center, Best Plaza, South Street Cerritos, Cerritos South and Babies "R" Us Center.

Industrial Park District

This district encompasses ADP-1 Industrial Park, which is located in the northern part of the City, bounded on the north by Alondra Boulevard, on the south by 166th Street, on the west by Bloomfield Avenue and on the east by Carmenita Road. The industrial park offers sites for office and light industrial uses in a well designed high-quality environment.

EDGES AND BARRIERS

Edges are linear elements that serve as a visual or physical boundary, barrier, or transition between districts defining the boundaries of a place. Elements such as freeways, railroad tracks, flood control channels and natural features may be considered as edges. The prominent edges within the City of Cerritos area (refer to [Exhibit 4.3-2, *Districts, Paths, Edges and Gateways*](#)):

- ❑ Coyote Creek Channel

- ❑ San Gabriel River Channel
- ❑ SR-91 and I-605 Freeway Corridors

STREETSCAPE

The City's streetscape is a powerful and immediate indicator of the community's image. The view from the road consists of many elements, including trees, landscaping in parkways and medians, street furniture (benches, trash receptacles, etc.) lighting, walls and utilities. Also included is private development in the form of buildings, landscaping and signs.

For many people who pass through Cerritos, but are not residents, the view from the road is often their only impression of the City. For residents, the quality of the street environment has a more direct impact on their daily lives. Roads are a valuable open space asset and should be treated as such. They affect the daily lives of residents running errands, children walking to school, recreational walkers and joggers and residents driving to work. People are touched daily by the quality that the streetscape presents.

The City is responsible for providing, maintaining and designing the quality of the street environment which is an integral part of the City's image. Cerritos has made a concerted effort to create and maintain a park-like environment in the City, particularly along major thoroughfares, with generously landscaped parkways and medians within the public right-of-way. The following provides a description of the various elements that make up the public street environment.

STREET TREES

The National Arbor Day Foundation has named the City of Cerritos a "Tree City USA". The City recognized how important trees are in humanizing the hard edge of the urban street environment. Trees enhance the public environment by creating comfortable outdoor spaces, serene settings and pleasant fragrances. They provide a habitat for wildlife, shade for pedestrians and motorists, contribute to fresh air and reduce reflected heat from buildings and pavement.

In order to provide for an aesthetically pleasing and serene environment for residents and visitors, the City has established the street tree program. Trees are selected by the City from a list of approved varieties rather than private property owners in order to ensure continuity in the streetscape and that the trees selected are appropriate to the surrounding area and climate.

MEDIANS

Medians help distinguish the City's most significant circulation routes and gateways and contribute to the City's image. Overall, medians can make streets more attractive

and motorists more comfortable by reducing the perceived road width. Medians also increase safety by separating oncoming cars.

PEDESTRIAN PATHWAYS

Sidewalk and other pedestrian pathways are important for providing connections to schools, parks, shopping, jobs and between neighborhoods. Additionally, all developments intended for use by the general public should provide direct public access to the adjacent public sidewalk.

Since Cerritos is a relatively new city, it has developed contemporary standards of street cross section design with sidewalks primarily adjacent to the curb in residential areas and with a planting strip and curvilinear sidewalks along major non-residential thoroughfares. Handicapped ramps have been provided throughout the City in compliance with requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

STREET FURNITURE

Street furniture consists of the hardware items typically found along sidewalks for the convenience of the pedestrian and transit user. Such items include benches, trash receptacles, drinking fountains, bus shelters, shade structures, newspaper racks, information kiosks and similar items. Currently, the City maintains a coordinated palette of street furniture at Cerritos Towne Center and Cerritos Auto Square.

While not currently provided by the City, newspaper racks are usually placed within the public right-of-way and become a part of the street environment. The City should standardize the design of newspaper racks located within the public right-of-way.

UTILITIES

Other forms of street hardware include utility cabinets, transformers, cable television boxes, standpipes, utility poles and overhead lines. However, utility hardware often creates clutter, interferes with pedestrian movement and has a negative visual impact on the street environment. Efforts should be made to locate such items underground and/or visually screened from passersby.

PRIVATE RESIDENTIAL WALKS

Private perimeter walls affect the aesthetic view along public right-of-ways and thoroughfares. The amount of care and maintenance the walls receive and the compatibility of adjacent walls can add either negatively or positively to the street environment. As such, wall extensions should be regulated in accordance with the provisions of the Municipal Code.

PRIVATE DEVELOPMENT

Cerritos' zoning regulations and standards coupled with the development review process has had a positive effect in ensuring that new development is attractive and compatible with conditions on surrounding properties. Area development plans have been used as a means of encouraging quality development by allowing flexibility in the strict application of zoning regulations.

To have a positive impact on the City's image, projects should function well on the site, be compatible with surrounding properties and have architectural merit. Generally, there are two parts to development that determine how successfully a project meets these criteria: the site design and the building design. With good design, these two elements are fully integrated and complimentary to each other and at the same time are compatible with surrounding environments.

SIGNS

Commercial signage is a highly visible part of the City's environment. Because signs are intended to communicate visually, they have the potential to conflict with the goal of achieving visual and aesthetic quality in the environment. Therefore, Cerritos has adopted effective sign regulations to ensure that signs are attractive, easy to read, compatible with the district in which they are located and not distracting to motorists. The premise of the Sign Ordinance is that signs should identify businesses, not advertise them.

Establishing neighborhood identity is another purpose signage serves. The City effectively uses low-profile monument signs at neighborhood entryways to serve as both a gateway and landmark for local residents.

VACANT PARCELS

Throughout the community there are a number of small vacant parcels, mostly former service station sites, located on corner lots. The vacant, unused nature of these parcels has a negative effect on surrounding properties and the community as a whole due to their unkempt nature, such as the accumulation of trash and the overgrowth of weeds.

On an interim basis, the negative effects of these vacant parcels could partially be mitigated by restoring the subject site to its original condition and through the provision of perimeter landscaping to screen the parcels (refer to Exhibit 4.3-4, *Conceptual Site Plan for Vacant Parcels*).

C E R R I T O S G E N E R A L P L A N E I R

Link to Exhibit 4.3-4
Conceptual Site Plan for Vacant Parcels
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4.3.2 STANDARDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA

In accordance with CEQA, the effects of a project are evaluated to determine if they will result in a significant adverse impact on the environment. An EIR is required to focus on these effects and offer mitigation measures to reduce or avoid any significant impacts which are identified. The criteria, or standards, used to determine the significance of impacts may vary depending on the nature of the project. Aesthetic impacts resulting from the implementation of the proposed General Plan Update may be considered significant if they cause any of the following results:

- ❑ Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista (refer to Section 7.0, *Effects Found Not To Be Significant*);
- ❑ Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway (refer to Section 7.0, *Effects Found Not To Be Significant*);
- ❑ Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings; and/or
- ❑ Create new sources of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area.

Based on these standards, the effects of the proposed Project have been categorized as either a “less than significant impact” or a “potentially significant impact.” Mitigation measures are recommended for potentially significant impact. If a potentially significant impact cannot be reduced to a less than significant level through the application of mitigation, it is categorized as a significant and unavoidable impact.

4.3.3 IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

COMMUNITY DESIGN ELEMENT

The proposed General Plan Update includes an optional element on community design. The Community Design Element establishes goals and policies to enhance the livability of the City and encourage and protect investment in the City by ensuring the highest level of quality in the design and re-design of the City’s physical form. This commitment has and will continue to set Cerritos above the majority of communities in Southern California. The Community Design Element illustrates those design concepts that are applicable to the enhancement of Cerritos’ physical identity. The majority of these design concepts apply to generalized situations. Thus, in addition to setting goals and policies, the Community Design Element can also be utilized as a source

book of possible solutions for design problems as the opportunity for implementation arises.

The Element aims to recognize the many positive design features of Cerritos, preserve and enhance those features, improve the livability of the community through physical design considerations in public areas that need improvement and encourage quality private development through appropriate development policies. The result is a livable community defined by quality, cohesiveness and human needs.

Most of the topics presented in the Environmental Setting section were developed as part of the Community Design Element and articulate the City's conditions and commitment to community image, streetscape, private development, signs and other design issues.

VISUAL QUALITY

- NEW PROJECTS CONSTRUCTED UNDER THE PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN UPDATE COULD RESULT IN DEVELOPMENT THAT IS OUT OF SCALE OR CHARACTER WITH THE SURROUNDING URBAN ENVIRONMENT.

Level of Significance Before Policies/Mitigation: Potentially Significant Impact.

Impact Analysis: Future development under the proposed General Plan Update has the potential to degrade the existing high quality development that the City of Cerritos has maintained so far. Recognizing the importance of a city's image through the development of public spaces and the building design and site planning of private development, the City of Cerritos has included the Community Design Element. The Community Design Element would ensure that future development would enhance the community image, streetscape and private development by ensuring that all new development would be compatible and consistent with the surrounding uses. Additionally, in order to ensure that future development projects would continue to be of high quality, both in design and function, projects would undergo environmental and design review on a project-by-project basis. It should also be noted that the proposed General Plan Update does not propose any land use plan changes; and thus, the land use pattern would remain as it exists today.

Implementation of the Community Design Element of the proposed General Plan Update would maintain and enhance the quality of the visual environment and character of Cerritos. The goals proposed in the Community Design Element would be designed to preserve, promote and protect the existing aesthetically enhanced physical development that characterizes the City by preserving the positive qualities of Cerritos and strengthening and maintaining Cerritos' image as a unique place as a livable community. Additional goals in the Land Use, Circulation, Housing, Conservation, and Open Space/Recreation Elements (Goals LU-1, LU-6, LU-9, LU-10, LU-16, CIR-9, HOU-3, CON-6 and OSR-1) provide supplemental support to maintain and enhance the aesthetic quality of the City. The aforementioned goals range from preserving existing

housing to enhancing freeway corridors to removing incompatible uses to landscaping street medians to distinguishing Cerritos as a livable community. The policies listed below, along with project-specific environmental and design review by the City, would reduce visual quality impacts to a less than significant level.

Policies in the Proposed General Plan Update: The Land Use, Community Design, Circulation, Housing, Conservation, Open Space/Recreation and Growth Management Elements contain the following policies:

- LU-1.1 Encourage high-quality design and construction for development that is a positive addition to and compatible with the City's existing ambiance. Development shall enhance the character and unique identity of existing commercial, industrial and/or residential uses. Development shall be defined to include landscaping, parking, lighting, business identification signs and buildings.
- LU-6.1 Encourage compatible land uses to locate in appropriate areas of the City.
- LU-9.1 Protect residential areas from the effects of potentially incompatible uses. Where new commercial or industrial development is allowed adjacent to residentially zoned districts, maintain standards for circulation, noise, setbacks, buffer areas, landscaping and architecture, which ensure compatibility between the uses.
- LU-9.2 Allow non-residential activity in residential areas only when the character and the quality of the neighborhood can be maintained.
- LU-9.3 Prohibit uses that lead to deterioration of residential neighborhoods, or adversely impact the safety or the residential character of a residential neighborhood.
- LU-9.4 Assure that the type and intensity of land use shall be consistent with that of the immediate neighborhood.
- LU-10.1 Encourage "area development plans" which incorporate a more comprehensive and creative approach to residential design.
- LU-11.1 Encourage a variety of housing types and sizes that are balanced throughout the City and also compatible with the character of the surrounding neighborhood.
- LU-11.2 Ensure that new development is a positive addition to the City's environment and does not detract from the nature and character of appropriate nearby established development.

- LU-11.3 Maintain the character and identity of existing neighborhoods. Ensure that proposals for new construction, remodels, and additions that are larger than those of the neighborhood be designed to be compatible with and blend in with the existing neighborhood, and minimize impacts on adjacent parcels.

- LU-15.1 Continue to implement an active Code Enforcement Program.

- LU-15.2 Develop incentive programs for the improved appearance of residential, commercial and industrial areas.

- LU-15.3 Continue to promote and expand programs such as the City Wide Pride Beautification Program, which recognizes excellence in property upkeep.

- LU-15.4 Continue to support the City's Property Preservation Commission in maintaining the high development standards of private property within the community.

- LU-15.5 Continue to maintain graffiti suppression and removal programs.

- LU-16.1 Work with Caltrans to provide and maintain an attractive freeway environment in Cerritos, including access ramps and freeway interchanges.

- LU-16.2 Require commercial and industrial development adjacent to, and visible from, the freeways and their ramps, to incorporate enhanced landscape and architectural treatment to the building, which shall include screening of roof top equipment.

- CD-1.1 Develop a comprehensive gateway improvement program to select significant gateways along major arterials for improvements including monument-type "City of Cerritos" identification signs, special enhanced landscaping and paving, public art and unique private development standards.

- CD-1.2 Cooperate with Caltrans to improve freeway landscaping, especially at the on- and off-ramps and at the I-605/SR-91 interchange.

- CD-1.3 Work with Caltrans to implement and maintain a unique City feature within the freeway right-of-way at the I-605/ SR-91 interchange.

- CD-1.4 Continue the Art in Public Places Program with an emphasis on attaining a variety of artistic pieces located in both exterior and interior spaces.

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- CD-1.5 Develop a Master Plan for art work in public places. The Master Plan should address art pieces (i.e., sculptures, paintings), but should expand the Art in Public Places Program to allow for the creation of landscape environments as usable and functional art, and to establish appropriate settings for the display of art, including within public rights-of-way and landscape medians.

- CD-1.6 Support measures that will enhance the identity of special districts and neighborhoods to create variety and interest in the built environment.

- CD-2.1 Continue to implement the City's street tree program through an established street tree palette.

- CD-2.2 Review the list of street trees to phase out trees that do not adapt well to the requirements of an urban environment and introduce new trees that are more suitable.

- CD-2.3 Continue to provide planted medians to distinguish major thoroughfares in the City. The City should prepare a study to determine which streets could accommodate landscape medians and then implement the plan through the capital improvement budget.

- CD-2.4 Create unique landscape designs and standards for medians for each major thoroughfare to distinguish each from the other and to provide a special identity to adjacent districts and neighborhoods.

- CD-2.5 Promote pedestrian circulation throughout the community through the provision of sidewalks and other pedestrian paths that connect neighborhoods, parks, schools, shopping, employment centers and other major activity centers.

- CD-2.6 Provide sidewalks and landscaping with an average 50-foot right-of-way, whenever feasible adjacent to non-residential development.

- CD-2.7 Create consistent entry/water features for select intersections throughout the City (e.g., at the Cerritos Auto Square and the Cerritos Civic Center intersections).

- CD-2.8 Develop a coordinated street furniture palette including waste containers and benches, to be implemented throughout the community at appropriate locations.

- CD-2.9 Provide a standard newspaper rack design for newspaper racks located in the public right-of-way.

- CD-2.10 Provide a well-designed, comfortable bus stop at all MTA, COW or other transportation stops in the City, including waste containers and benches, etc.
- CD-2.11 Continue to require undergrounding of utilities on private property.
- CD-2.12 Develop a priority-based program of utility undergrounding along public rights-of-way.
- CD-2.13 Study the locational requirements of utility, traffic control and other cabinets and hardware located in the public right-of-way to determine alternative locations for these items in less obtrusive areas of the street environment.
- CD-2.14 Continue to require that public rights-of-way be landscaped with temporary softscape materials to allow for City and/or service utility company access to utility lines.
- CD-2.15 Work with utility providing agencies to coordinate the design of utility facilities (e.g., substations, pump stations, switching buildings, etc.) to ensure that the facilities fit within the context of their surroundings and do not cause negative visual impacts.
- CD-2.16 Ensure the coordinated design of walls on residential lots that back onto highways to achieve a uniform appearance from the street. Walls should be uniform in height, use of materials, and color.
- CD-2.17 Study opportunities to provide landscape pockets with automatic irrigation systems along arterial streets that do not currently have landscaping to soften the visual effect of the block wall.
- CD-2.18 Ensure that focal points in the public right-of way and on publicly and privately owned property (i.e., Public Art, new and/or renovated developments) are appropriately accented and illuminated by requiring the preparation and implementation of lighting plans.
- CD-3.1 Continue to place a high priority on quality architecture, landscape, and site design to enhance the image of Cerritos, and create a vital and attractive environment for businesses, residents, and visitors.
- CD-3.2 Continue to use precise plans for all developments, (which should include architectural design, site plans, landscaping and signing) to review and evaluate projects prior to issuance of building permits to determine their compliance with the objectives and specific requirements of the Development Code, General Plan and appropriate zone or Area Development Plans.

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- CD-3.3 Require the preparation of specific plans for various sections of the City identified as Area Development Plans, in order to coordinate land use, the location and design of buildings and open spaces and the arrangement of traffic circulation, parking, and landscaping.
- CD-3.4 Ensure that good project landscape and site design creates places that are well organized, attractive, efficient, safe and pedestrian friendly.
- CD-3.6 Encourage quality architectural design to maintain and enhance the City's identity and inspire creativity.
- CD-3.7 Ensure that buildings are appropriate to their context and designed to be compatible with surrounding uses and special districts.
- CD-3.8 Consider obtaining temporary landscape easements over identified vacant parcels to enhance continuity of landscaping with adjacent parcels and screen the negative visual effects of the parcels.
- CD-3.9 Ensure that vacant parcels, including former service station sites, are appropriately screened from the street to reduce the negative visual effects of the parcel. The screening shall include, but is not limited to, wood fences, ground cover or turf, shrubs, trees and a maintenance access, as illustrated in Exhibit CD-4. The screening is intended as an interim measure until the site is developed and/or redeveloped.
- CD-4.1 Continue to regulate the use of signs based on the premise that good design is an asset to the City and that signs should identify businesses, not advertise them.
- CD-4.2 Vigorously enforce provisions of the Sign Ordinance to ensure that all businesses have an equal opportunity to identify their location and that unsafe or hazardous conditions are avoided.
- CD-4.3 Maintain citywide sign design guidelines that promote creativity and high-quality design.
- CD-4.4 Encourage the use of common design elements in signs for multi-tenant commercial and industrial centers. Use planned sign programs to improve center identity and appearance.
- CD-4.5 Encourage homeowners' associations and neighborhoods to maintain existing housing tract entrance signs in an attractive manner and encourage the placement of new signs at the entrance of developments that do not have identification.

- CD-4.6 Allow for the provision of comprehensive sign programs for multi-tenant centers to allow flexibility in the application of sign regulations in order to encourage creativity and promote a unified appearance within commercial centers. The development of sign programs is appropriate for new or redeveloping commercial or industrial centers.
- CD-4.7 Encourage the use of common design elements in signs for redeveloping commercial centers through the development of planned sign programs to improve center identity by publicizing the benefits of such programs to developers and local business operators.
- CD-4.8 Discourage the use of internally illuminated cabinet/can signs in favor of signs composed of individual letters on opaque backgrounds.
- CD-6.1 Continue to regulate the siting and design of wireless telecommunication facilities, accessory buildings, structures, and associated equipment to minimize their aesthetic impacts on the community.
- CD-6.2 Encourage the use of stealth designed wireless telecommunications facilities so that the facilities, including all supporting equipment are concealed or camouflaged so as to blend with surrounding land uses.
- CIR-9.1 Provide attractive streetscapes in a cost-effective, low-maintenance manner.
- CIR-9.2 Develop and implement a consistent street and landmark signing program throughout the City.
- CIR-9.3 Maintain and replace street trees as needed to achieve their aesthetic purpose and avoid damage to streets and sidewalks.
- CIR-9.4 Provide street lights compatible with the character of existing neighborhoods.
- CIR-9.5 Design and maintain landscaped parkways, decorative median islands and entrance planters at freeway on-ramps and off-ramps.
- CIR-9.6 Select and locate landscape materials, streetscape furniture and public art in such a way so as to avoid blocking motorists' sight distance or impeding vehicular movement.
- CIR-9.7 For targeted major arteries and entryways to the City from the freeway system, develop a comprehensive landscape, signage and entryway plan to efficiently direct traffic to appropriate routes and destinations.

- CIR-9.8 Develop and maintain Design Guidelines to ensure attractive City signs, streetscapes and freeway frontages and compatibility with adjacent land uses.

- HOU-3.1 Encourage the maintenance and repair of existing housing.

- HOU-3.2 Support neighborhood associations in the pursuit of City Wide Pride.

- CON-6.1 Enforce the City's Tree Preservation Ordinance in order to preserve the City's existing urban forest.

- CON-6.3 Ensure the continued planting and proper maintenance of tree resources within the City.

- CON-6.4 Strive to identify and honor "Landmark" trees that have been identified as having significant historical or cultural significance as "Heritage Trees."

- CON-6.5 Ensure that the City retains its Tree City USA designation with the continued implementation of the City's tree care, planting and conservation measures.

- OSR-1.1 Promote the development of aesthetically pleasing landscaped corridors that promote a sense of the natural environment.

- OSR-1.4 Promote the development of open space amenities, such as artwork, sitting areas, etc. in parks and other open space areas to encourage their use.

- GM-7.2 Ensure that private development contributes financially to the quality of civic, educational and cultural environment.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures beyond the policies identified in the proposed General Plan Update are required.

Level of Significance After Policies/Mitigation: Less Than Significant Impact.

LIGHT AND GLARE

- LIGHT AND GLARE FROM NEW DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATED WITH IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN UPDATE MAY ADVERSELY AFFECT SENSITIVE RECEPTORS SUCH AS RESIDENTIAL USES.

Level of Significance Before Policies/Mitigation: Potentially Significant Impact.

Impact Analysis: During evening hours, street lights, security lighting, recreational lighting and lighting from multi-story structures, if not adequately focused or screened, may cause spill-over lighting and glare that may present a nuisance to residential uses. This is especially significant due to the fact that a majority of the City is residential (47.9 percent) and that a significant amount of residential development is adjacent to either commercial or industrial uses throughout the City. For example, residential developments are adjacent to light industrial facilities along 166th Street and Marquardt Avenue. Additionally, residential development surrounds the Cerritos Towne Center, which is a major commercial center that includes commercial uses and office uses. During daylight hours, glare from materials used in new buildings may also present a nuisance or potential safety hazard by distracting motorists.

However, the City of Cerritos is primarily built out (99.4 percent), therefore, the majority of light and glare sources are currently in place. New development would incrementally contribute to the existing built environment. Future development projects would be subject to environmental and design review on a site-specific basis to ensure that glare impacts would not substantially impact adjacent uses. The City recognizes the impacts associated with light and glare and establishes goals in the Community Design and Land Use Elements that provide development guidelines to protect adjacent properties from obtrusive light and glare. Both Goal CD-3 and LU-4 strive for compatible and well-designed developments adjacent to one another, so that sensitive receptors are not subject to obtrusive light and glare impacts. Therefore, the policies proposed in the proposed General Plan Update, along with project-specific environmental and design review by the City, would reduce lighting and glare impacts to a less than significant level.

Policies in the Proposed General Plan Update: The Land Use and Community Design Elements contain the following policies:

- LU-4.1 Require that commercial and industrial development that abuts residential or educational uses be adequately screened and buffered from the residential neighborhood or educational facility.

- LU-6.1 Encourage compatible land uses to locate in appropriate areas of the City.

- LU-9.1 Protect residential areas from the effects of potentially incompatible uses. Where new commercial or industrial development is allowed adjacent to residentially zoned districts, maintain standards for circulation, noise, setbacks, buffer areas, landscaping and architecture, which ensure compatibility between the uses.

- LU-9.3 Prohibit uses that lead to deterioration of residential neighborhoods, or adversely impact the safety or the residential character of a residential neighborhood.

CD-3.2 Continue to use precise plans for all developments, (which should include architectural design, site plans, landscaping and signing) to review and evaluate projects prior to issuance of building permits to determine their compliance with the objectives and specific requirements of the Development Code, General Plan, and appropriate zone or Area Development Plans.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures beyond the policies identified in the proposed General Plan Update are required.

Level of Significance After Policies/Mitigation: Less Than Significant Impact.

4.3.4 UNAVOIDABLE SIGNIFICANT IMPACTS

All aesthetic impacts associated with implementation of the proposed General Plan Update would be less than significant by adherence to and/or compliance with policies in the proposed General Plan Update and with project-specific environmental and design review by the City. No unavoidable significant aesthetic impacts would occur as a result of buildout of the proposed General Plan Update.

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