

3.1 Aesthetics

This chapter assesses potential local and regional impacts on aesthetics from future development under the Proposed Project, including those related to scenic vistas, visual character, and light and glare. The chapter provides context regarding the Planning Area's existing visual character and scenic resources, as well as relevant federal, State, and local regulations and programs.

The City received no responses to the Notice of Preparation (NOP) and recirculated NOP regarding topics addressed in this section of the EIR.

Environmental Setting

PHYSICAL SETTING

Visual Character Overview

Fairfield is located in central Solano County, on the eastern side of the California Coastal Ranges and at the southwestern edge of the Sacramento Valley, just north of the Suisun Bay and salt marsh. The city is surrounded by undeveloped hills on its western and northern borders, and to its east and northeast are grazing and prairie grasslands. To the south, beyond the neighboring city of Suisun City, is the largest remaining wetland around San Francisco Bay, the Suisun Marsh. Suisun Valley, one of the most productive and intensive agricultural regions, adjoins Fairfield and separates the central city from the Cordelia planning area. Agricultural areas include orchards, vineyards, rangeland, and row crops. These agricultural landscapes, the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta and marshlands, and oak- and grass-covered hills are the primary natural aesthetic resources of the Planning Area.

The ridges of the Coast Range are visible from many parts of the Planning Area due to the flat topography in the eastern half of the county, and the hillsides are occupied by oak woodlands and grasslands. Limited hillside development has maintained most of the Coast Range ridgelines in their natural state, and these ridgelines have been identified by the County's General Plan as an important visual resource that should be protected. Meanwhile, parks throughout the city, agricultural lands to the northeast of the Planning Area, and the marshlands to the south provide visual open space and act as separators that define the cities of Solano County.

Scenic Resources and Vistas

The Planning Area has a unique geography that includes both prominent topographic features as well as scenic natural resources. The less sloped portions of the southern and eastern Planning Area

allow clear and largely unobstructed views of the natural open space and agricultural land to the north and west, particularly along stretches of Interstate 80 (I-80) and State Route 12 (SR-12). Scenic Vista Areas (SVAs) are identified by the City's Scenic Vistas and Roadways Plan (SVRP), adopted in 1999, and include Suisun Marsh, Green Valley, Suisun Valley, Nelson Hill, Vaca Mountains, Cement Hill Range, and Tri-City County Open Space. The SVRP includes policies and guidelines that apply to all development in or affecting SVAs. These policies include not significantly obstructing views of SVAs from scenic roadways, vista points, or parks; limiting land uses to primarily agricultural, open space, or low residential; encouraging compact development on smaller lots within an SVA; blending building materials and color schemes with the surrounding landscape; and utilizing native vegetation in planting, among others.

The SVRP also identifies four areas that serve as the best locations in the city to establish formalized vista viewing points. These areas are: South Cordelia, Nelson Hill, Rockville Hills Park, and Cement Hill. Three of these four locations are currently privately owned and have not been formally designated at this time. The SVRP includes policies and guidelines that apply to all development in or affecting SVAs, in addition to design guidelines for vista points.

The City has historically pursued strong preservation policies for its scenic resources. Hillsides within the city limits have been protected from intense development in order to maintain views and ensure a more rural feel. In exchange for approval of development plans in less visible portions of the city's hilly areas, the city has required preservation of significant open space, particularly in neighborhoods such as Eastridge, Rolling Hills, Rancho Solano, Serpas Ranch, and Paradise Valley. Additionally, the City acquired Rockville Hills Regional Park in the late 1960s to preserve its 633 acres of grasslands and oak woodlands for recreation as well as for its contribution as part of the city's visual character.

The City also participates collaborates with Solano County and its neighboring cities Benicia and Vallejo as part of a Joint Power Authority (JPA), the Tri-City and County Cooperative Planning Group for Agricultural and Open Space Preservation (Solano Open Space), aimed at planning for the preservation of existing open space and agricultural uses in the area generally defined by interstates I-80 and I-680 and Lake Herman Road. The City also collaborates with Solano County and the neighboring city of Vacaville as part of another open space Joint Power Authority, the Vacaville-Fairfield-Solano Conty Greenbelt JPA. This group supports preservation of an urban separator in open space and agricultural uses between Fairfield and Vacaville. Finally, it should be noted that the City strongly supports the activities of Solano Land Trust, which owns and operates several open space properties near Fairfield.

Scenic Routes and Gateways

A scenic road may be considered (often in the CEQA context) as a highway, road, drive, or street that, in addition to its transportation function, provides opportunities for the enjoyment of natural and human-made scenic resources. Scenic roads direct views to areas of exceptional beauty, natural resources or landmarks, or historic or cultural interests.

The City identifies I-680, Cordelia Road west of Hale Ranch Road, Green Valley Road north of Business Center Drive, Rockville Road west of Suisun Valley Road, Rancho Solano Parkway, Lyon Road north of Rollingwood Drive, Hillborn Road, and Manuel Campos Parkway as Scenic

Roadways in the SVRP. The SVRP includes policies and guidelines that apply to all development or improvements around Scenic Roadways or of the roadways themselves. The primary purpose of these guidelines is to ensure that new development adjacent to Scenic Roadways and visible from the public right-of-way should not significantly change the rural or natural character of the setting. Additionally, the Solano County General Plan includes policies and implementation programs aimed at protecting County-designated scenic roadways, including segments of I-80, I-680, SR-12, Suisun Valley Road, Rockville Road, Green Valley Road, and Mankas Corner Road/Oliver Road that are within the Planning Area. As indicated on the 2018 California State Scenic Highway System Map, no roads in the Planning Area have been designated as State Scenic Highways, and none have been identified as eligible for designation.

Community Character

Downtown

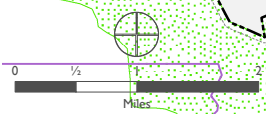
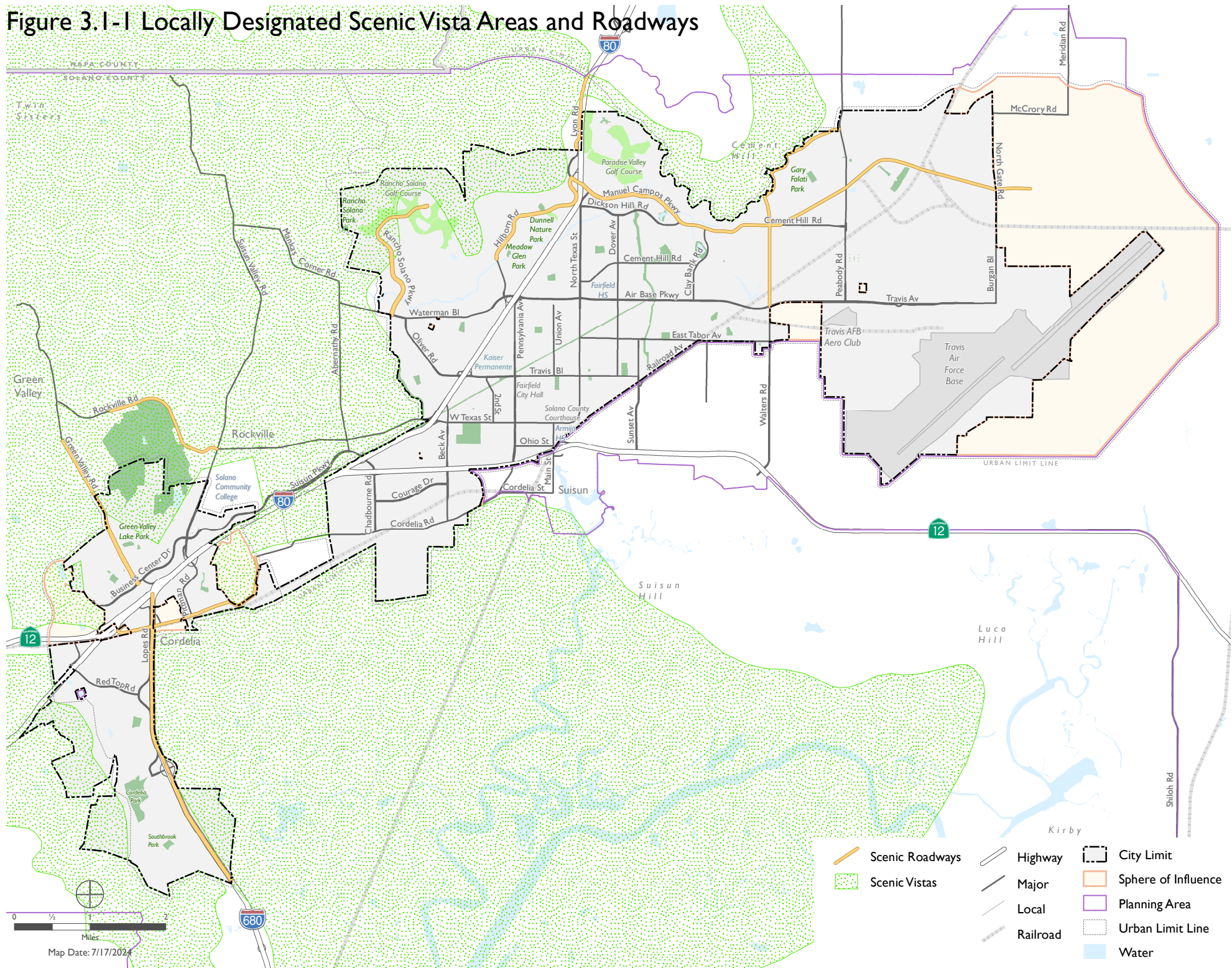
Downtown Fairfield contains a mixture of historic and newer buildings. The downtown area includes the original town center and surrounding neighborhoods dating from the 1940s through the 1990s that reflect postwar period suburban designs typical of the region, such as the ranch house. Commercial development in Fairfield's old downtown is similarly small in scale, with one- or two-story buildings lining Texas Street and adjacent blocks. New homes and commercial development are slightly larger and denser, including medium-density single-family and multifamily homes as well as structures that are visible from the freeways and adjacent arterials such as the Fairfield Civic Center, Solano County Government Center, Solano Mall, Anheuser-Busch, and Northbay Medical Center, which serve as landmarks for the city – particularly the mall and its colorful movie theaters and the Anheuser-Busch brewery. Public signs also contribute to community identity and placemaking, such as those installed near Solano Town Center that have a strong visual character tied to the community's past, including the downtown arch.

Open Space and Agriculture

Open space areas and agricultural lands provide a variety of benefits, including visual enjoyment and aesthetic beauty. Fairfield is surrounded by open space and farmland, which contribute to the regional identity and economic vitality of the city. These lands are part of the unincorporated county, portions of which are protected by Solano County General Plan overlays. The Planning Area also includes lands that are designated as Important Farmland—specifically, Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, and Unique Farmland—under the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP) by the California Department of Conservation Land Resource Protection Division. This designation also helps protect the character of these lands. County General Plan Overlays and the FMMP are discussed further in the Regulatory Settings section below.

As noted above and discussed further in Chapter 3.3: Biological Resources, the Planning Area also includes Suisun Marsh, which is the largest remaining wetland in the San Francisco Bay Area and contributes to the aesthetic value of Fairfield.

Figure 3.1-I Locally Designated Scenic Vista Areas and Roadways



Map Date: 7/17/2024

- | | | |
|-----------------|----------|---------------------|
| Scenic Roadways | Highway | City Limit |
| Scenic Vistas | Major | Sphere of Influence |
| | Local | Planning Area |
| | Railroad | Urban Limit Line |
| | Water | |

Source: Solano County GIS, 2020; City of Fairfield, 2020; Dyett & Bhatia, 2024

Light and Glare

Glare refers to the discomfort or impairment of vision experienced when a person is exposed to a direct or reflected source of light, causing objectionable brightness greater than that to which the eyes are adapted. Sources of glare in urban settings include sunlight reflected in the windows of buildings, including glass façades, and cars. Lighted signs on multi-story buildings are another source of light. Existing development and motor vehicles produce light and glare throughout Fairfield. Light and glare sources within the Planning Area are primarily associated with residential, commercial, and industrial land uses. More streetlights are provided with the greatest frequency along major streets, such as I-80, I-680, SR-12, and North Texas and West Texas Streets. Fewer streetlights are located in lesser frequencies in the more rural and agricultural portions of the Planning Area. In commercial and industrial areas, signage and cars in parking lots may produce light. Glass and reflective surfaces on buildings, residences, and vehicles traveling in the area and in parking lots in the downtown contribute to a limited amount of glare. Operation of the Travis Air Force Base (TAFB) is also a significant source of light and glare in the Planning Area. Overall, the light and glare that exist in developed areas of the city are typical for an urbanized setting.

REGULATORY SETTING

Federal Regulations

There are no relevant federal laws, policies, plans, or programs that apply to the Proposed Project.

State Regulations

California Department of Transportation (Caltrans)

Caltrans defines a scenic highway as any freeway, highway, road, or other public right-of-way that traverses an area of exceptional scenic quality. Suitability for designation as a state scenic highway is based on vividness, intactness, and unity of the view, as described in Guidelines for Official Designation of Scenic highways (Caltrans 1995).

- Vividness is the extent to which the landscape is memorable. This is associated with the distinctiveness, diversity, and contrast of visual elements. A vivid landscape makes an immediate and lasting impression on the viewer.
- Intactness refers to the integrity of visual order in the landscape and the extent to which the natural landscape is free from visual intrusions, such as buildings, structures, equipment, and grading.
- Unity describes the extent to which development is sensitive to and visually harmonious with the natural landscape.

There are no Designated or Eligible State Scenic Highways in the Planning Area as identified by Caltrans.

California Solar Shade Control Act

Under the California Solar Shade Control Act (Public Resource Code Sections 25980-25986), no property owner shall allow a tree or shrub to be placed or to grow so as to cast a shadow greater than 10 percent at any one time between the hours of 10:00 AM and 2:00 PM over an existing solar collector used for water heating, space heating or cooling, or power generation on an adjacent property. These limitations apply to the placement of new trees or shrubs, and do not apply to trees and shrubs that already cast a shadow upon that solar collector. The location of a new solar collector is required to comply with local building and setback regulations but must be set back not less than five feet from the property line and must be no less than 10 feet above the ground.

Title 24 Outdoor Lighting Zones

The Building Energy Efficient Standards (California Building Standards Code, California Code of Regulations, Title 24, Part 6, California Energy Code) specify outdoor lighting requirements for residential and non-residential development. The intent of these standards is to improve the quality of outdoor lighting and help reduce the impacts of light pollution, light trespass, and glare. The standards regulate lighting aesthetics, such as maximum power and brightness, shielding, and sensor controls to turn lighting on and off. Different lighting standards are set by classifying areas by lighting zone. The classification is based on U.S. Census Bureau population figures, and the areas can be designated as LZ0 (very low), LZ1 (low), LZ2 (moderate), LZ3 (moderately high), or LZ4 (high). Lighting requirements for dark and rural areas are stricter in order to protect the areas from new sources of light pollution and light trespass. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, portions of the Planning Area, like incorporated Fairfield, are defined as already developed areas or already developed clusters and are therefore designated as Lighting Zone 3 per the California Energy Commission outdoor lighting zone classification standards. Portions of the Planning Area beyond incorporated Fairfield, namely Green Valley and Rockville, are defined as rural areas and are therefore designated as Lighting Zone 2.

Local Regulations

Solano County LAFCO Standards and Procedures

Standard No. 5: Requirement for Pre-Approval

Government Code Section 56375(a)(6) prohibits LAFCO from imposing “any conditions that would directly regulate land use density or intensity, property development, or subdivision requirements.” Section 56375(a) (7), however, does require rezoning as a method to determine future land use, and consequently, to gauge the change of organization or reorganization’s impact on service delivery and conversion of open space lands and agency support for the proposal.

Prior to approval by LAFCO of a city change or organization or reorganization, the affected agency must have approved, a specific plan, pre-zoning or an equivalent providing similar detail of information on the proposed land use for the affected territory and where the change of organization or reorganization process is clearly described. Prior to approval by LAFCO of a district change of organization or reorganization, the affected agency must pass a resolution supporting the proposal.

Solano County General Plan (2008)

The Solano County General Plan Resources Element (RS) is designed to preserve the county's natural, cultural, and scenic resources; enhance and restore the natural environmental and the county's diverse landscapes; and ensure sustainable provision of energy, water, and mineral resources. The following goals and policies pertain to visual character and scenic resources within unincorporated portions of the Planning Area:

- **RS.G-4:** Preserve, conserve, and enhance valuable open space lands that provide wildlife habitat; conserve natural and visual resources; convey cultural identity; and improve public safety.
- **RS.G-6:** Preserve the visual character and identity of communities by maintaining open space areas between them.
- **RS.P-35:** Protect the unique scenic features of Solano County, particularly hills, ridgelines, wetlands, and waterbodies.
- **RS.P-36:** Support and encourage practices that reduce light pollution and preserve views of the night sky.
- **RS.P-37:** Protect the visual character of designated scenic roadways.

In addition, unincorporated portions of the Planning Area are subject to land use designations and overlay districts of the County General Plan. This includes the Resource Conservation, Travis Reserve, Tri-City/County Cooperative Planning Area, and Vacaville-Fairfield-Solano Greenbelt overlays, which are described below:

- **Resource Conservation:** Identifies and protects areas of the county with resource management needs by requiring study of potential effects if development is proposed in these locations and providing mitigation to support urban development in cities. Resources to be protected through this overlay are those identified through technical studies as the highest priority areas within the habitat conservation planning process. Conservation measures used to achieve the County's resource goals vary based on the targeted resource. Removal of a Resource Conservation Overlay from a subject property may be possible through a General Plan amendment.
- **Travis Reserve Area:** Protects the land within the overlay for continued agriculture, grazing and associated habitat uses until a military or airport use is proposed. No residential uses are permitted. Provides for future expansion of TAFB and support facilities for the base. If the status of the base changes, the construction of nonmilitary airport and support uses may be permitted.
- **Tri-City/County Cooperative Planning Area:** Identifies the area of Solano County subject to the Tri-City and County Cooperative Plan, which is incorporated within the County General Plan as a special policy document. The County defers to the cooperative plan in this area.
- **Vacaville-Fairfield-Solano Greenbelt:** Identifies the area between Vacaville and Fairfield to provide a permanent separation between the urban areas of Fairfield and Vacaville and

maintain the area in agriculture and open space uses consistent with the provisions of the Vacaville-Fairfield-Solano Greenbelt Authority agreement.

Suisun Valley Strategic Plan (2010)

Solano County adopted the Suisun Valley Strategic Plan in February 2010. The strategic plan area encompasses approximately 9,000 acres located to the north of the City of Fairfield, between the Cordelia and Central Fairfield areas. The majority of this land is designated for agricultural use (92 percent). The purpose of the plan is to guide, inform, and provide information on how to enable change in the valley while achieving profitable family farms and quality of life for residents of the valley and of the surrounding city. A major point of the strategic plan emphasizes the creation of Agricultural Tourism Centers (ATCs), as the valley is home to significant agricultural production in wine grapes as well as orchard fruits. The plan encourages collaboration with cities to attract business and tourism industries to the Suisun Valley through adequate infrastructure, wayfinding, marketing materials, community events, and other collaborations.

Middle Green Valley Specific Plan (2017)

Solano County adopted the Middle Green Valley Specific Plan on August 8, 2017. The plan covers the unincorporated area immediately north of the City of Fairfield boundary in the Cordelia neighborhood. To its north is the unincorporated area of upper Green Valley, including the Green Valley Country Club, to its east is Rockville Hills Regional Park, and to its west are the Elkhorn Foothills. The purpose of the specific plan is to resolve the conflict between the desire for open space and agricultural conservation by neighbors and community members, and the development rights and financial viability of area landowners. In order to avoid a piece-meal subdivision from playing out across the area, the plan envisions Middle Green Valley as a collection of small neighborhoods along the base of the surrounding foothills. It proposes up to 400 new primary residential units, along with land uses for agricultural tourism, local neighborhood retail, community facilities, and over 1,400 acres of protected agriculture and open space land. The Middle Green Valley Specific Plan emphasizes clustered development, conservation, and limited, appropriate settlement.

City of Fairfield Municipal Code

Chapter 5 Building and Housing Codes

The City of Fairfield has adopted by reference the 2022 California Building Standards Code (California Code of Regulations, Title 24). As specified in Section 5.2.1 of the Fairfield Municipal Code, this includes Parts 8 and 11 of Title 24, the California Historical Building Code (CHBC) and the California Green Building Standards Code (CALGreen), respectively.

The purpose of CALGreen is to improve public health, safety, and general welfare by enhancing the design and construction of buildings through building concepts that have a reduced negative impact or positive environmental impact and encouraging sustainable construction practices in planning and design, energy efficiency, water efficiency and conservation, material conservation and resources efficiency, and environmental quality. CALGreen includes both mandatory and voluntary measures for both residential and non-residential development. These include a

nonresidential mandatory light pollution reduction measure that establishes maximum allowable light and glare standards for outdoor lighting systems for new nonresidential projects (2022 California Green Building Standards Code, 5.106.8 Light pollution reduction).

The intent of the CHBC is to provide means for the preservation of the historical value of qualified historical buildings or structures and, concurrently, to provide reasonable safety from fire, seismic forces or other hazards for occupants of these buildings or structures, and to provide reasonable availability to and usability by, the disabled. The CHBC supplants the Uniform Building Code (UBC) and allows greater flexibility in the enforcement of code requirements.

Chapter 25 Zoning Ordinance

Chapter 25 of the Municipal Code constitutes the City's Zoning Ordinance, which carries out the policies of the City's General Plan, and is administered by the City Council, Planning Commission, and Director of the Community Development Department. Section 25.30 provides standards and regulations applying for land uses in all zoning districts to guide the location, design, and development of improvements and the operation of new or existing uses. Regulations include those that apply to height limits, setbacks, screening, and outdoor lighting. Under Section 25.30.4, outdoor lighting must be shielded or recessed so that direct light, glare, and reflections are confined to the maximum extent feasible within the boundaries of the site, and lighting must be directed downward and away from adjacent residential properties and public rights-of-way.

Section 24.28.4 establishes the Hillside Development Overlay District (H) to implement the City's General Plan through hillside regulations and management guidelines. These regulations and guidelines help preserve scenic hillside areas and topographic features, including ridgelines, steep slopes, and hillsides, as well as natural features, such as tree stands and riparian areas on slopes of five to 10 percent. Development within this overlay district is subject to the City's Hillside Management Guidelines (1996), which include grading requirements designed to mitigate visual impacts of hillside development.

Sections 25.30.4 and 25.32.4 establish regulations for outdoor lighting and satellite dishes, to avoid unreasonable impacts caused by light and glare, respectively.

City of Fairfield Scenic Vistas and Roadways Plan (1999)

The Scenic Vistas and Roadways Plan (SVRP) was developed to ensure that the visual integrity of the city's scenic views and scenic roads is preserved as the city develops and grows. The three primary objectives of this plan are to maintain and enhance the public views of Fairfield's scenic surroundings; to preserve and enhance the scenic qualities of prominent topographical and natural features within the city; and to preserve and enhance the qualities which characterize Fairfield's scenic roadways. The plan designates "Scenic Vista Areas" and "Scenic Roadways" and identifies mechanisms to preserve and enhance these designated resources. The SVRP establishes policies and guidelines to guide location and intensity of new development in order to minimize its impact on scenic resources.

Heart of Fairfield Specific Plan (2017)

The Heart of Fairfield Specific Plan (HOF SP) was developed to revitalize and transform the City's Downtown and West Texas Street areas. The plan covers approximately 513 acres and contains Fairfield's historic Downtown, the Solano County Government Center, the Fairfield Transportation Center regional bus and transit hub, diverse commercial and residential properties, and numerous amenities that serve both the local community and the wider region. The HOF SP sets out a vision for the plan's neighborhood as a social, economic, and cultural center of Fairfield, that attracts the community through thoughtful design, desired shopping and dining, lively activities, a range of housing options, and convenient access to regional transit.

The plan establishes development standards and design guidelines to clarify and streamline implementation of zoning within the specific plan area and to promote higher intensity uses near major nodes or corridors while also protecting and enhancing existing residential neighborhoods. Lighting requirements are addressed in these standards and design guidelines.

Train Station Specific Plan (2011)

The City of Fairfield Train Station Specific Plan (TSSP) was adopted in 2011 and amended in 2012 and is the first precedent for transit-oriented planning and design in Solano County. The specific plan area covers approximately 2,972 acres in the northeastern portion of the City of Fairfield, north of the TAFB, and includes the Fairfield-Vacaville Hannigan Train Station, industrial uses that provide opportunity for redevelopment, significant natural open space area, and the North Bay Water Treatment Plant. The TSSP focuses on creating a transit-oriented community, a model of walkable, multi-modal, mixed-use living for the region based around the opening of the Fairfield-Vacaville Hannigan Train Station. The plan also established a new Town Center, envisioned as a mixed-use activity center, and the Lake District, a mixed-use district organized around Lake Park. Design guidelines and development regulations protect the visual quality of the specific plan area.

City of Fairfield Standard Conditions of Approval

Section 25.40 of the Zoning Ordinance identifies required permits and provide standards for the final review, and approval or disapproval of the use permit applications. The City of Fairfield applies standard Conditions of Approval (COAs) for new development projects requiring either "Development Review", "Minor development Review", "Tentative Subdivision", or "Tentative Map" approval. Projects requiring Development Review, Minor Development Review, or Minor Discretionary Review are identified in Table 25-18. The following COA related to aesthetics would apply to major developments pursuant to the Proposed Project:

- COA 10.1** A detailed on-site exterior lighting and photometric plan shall be submitted for review and approval by the Community Development Department prior to issuance of building permits. The plan shall indicate fixture design, illumination, location, height, and method of shielding, so as not to adversely affect adjacent properties and so as to provide a minimum of one-foot candle luminance at all exterior parking lot locations. Buffering techniques to reduce light and glare impacts shall be required for projects adjoining residential land and at no time shall

light exceed one foot candle luminance at the property lines for any project.

Impact Analysis

SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA

For the purposes of this EIR, a significant adverse impact would occur if implementation of the Proposed Project would:

- Criterion 1:** Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista;
- Criterion 2:** Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway;
- Criterion 3:** In a non-urbanized area, substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings, or in an urbanized area, conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality;
or
- Criterion 4:** Create a new source of substantial light or glare that would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area.

METHODOLOGY AND ASSUMPTIONS

Aesthetics and visual resources are generally subjective by nature, and therefore the extent of visual impact associated with adoption and implementation of the Proposed Project can be difficult to quantify. In addition, it is difficult to estimate the impact future development would have on scenic resources, since individual development projects can be designed to be compatible with and/or enhance the aesthetic quality of an area. As such, this analysis was based on the overall amount of new development at buildout of the Proposed Project, the potential location of new development, and policies in the Proposed Project.

RELEVANT POLICIES

Land Use and Urban Design Element

- LU-6:** Minimize conflicts between land uses in Fairfield and promote development that is sensitive to its environmental and scenic context.
 - LU-6.1 Land Use Compatibility.** Require industrial and commercial development to minimize noise, heat, glare, dust, and odor impacts on adjacent uses.
 - LU-6.2 Land for Travis Air Force Base.** Integrate land use planning with the needs of the Travis Air Force Base community. Require proposed land uses to be consistent with the land use compatibility criteria, maps, and policies

of the Travis Air Force Base Land Use Compatibility Plan. *See the Travis Protection Element for more information.*

LU-6.3 Natural Features in Site Design. Preserve identified prominent topographical features, including ridgelines, steep slopes, and hillsides; and natural features such as tree stands and riparian areas.

LU-6.4 Clustered Development. Promote clustered development to minimize grading, preserve landforms, and minimize visual impacts.

LU-6.6 Avoid View Encroachment. Restrict development from significantly encroaching on public views of ridgelines, agricultural areas, the Cement Hill Range, and the Suisun Marsh.

LU-6.7 Scenic Vistas and Roadways. Any development in a Scenic Vista Area or along a scenic roadway shall not obstruct significant views. Refer to the city's Scenic Vistas and Roadways Plan for a complete set of standards for preserving designated scenic vista areas and scenic roadways.

LU-20: Require growth areas to meet City standards and requirements for site planning.

LU-20.1 Site Plans. All new development must prepare a site plan that addresses, at minimum:

- How development patterns minimize grading and visual dominance over any scenic resources or hillsides
- Provision of adequate emergency ingress and egress
- Provision of adequate utilities
- Pedestrian and bicycle circulation, including incorporation of future bikeway connections, as shown in Figure 4-3.

LU-20.2 Scenic Resource Protection. Plans shall conform to City's Scenic Vistas and Roadways Plan, including relevant general design policies and policies.

LU-21: Support a new low-medium density neighborhood with a neighborhood park contiguous with City limits in the rolling lands in the existing Sphere of Influence west of Business Center Drive. Require annexation to City as a condition of City services.

LU-21.1 Cordelia Neighborhood Development. Require development of a cohesive master plan with integrated residential and open space development, that avoids steeper slopes and ridgelines. Limit development to no more than 50 percent of the site area. Permit no more than 50 units of medium density housing and up to 250 units of low-medium density housing.

LU-21.3 Cordelia Neighborhood Clustering. Cluster development to avoid seismic impacts and visual impacts to hillsides and ridges. If grading, limit to within 50 feet from a ridgeline. Consider geologic faults and Alquist Priolo Zones as part of park and/or trail design.

LU-22: Promote reuse of Nelson Hill as a predominantly lower density residential neighborhood with publicly accessible open spaces, hiking trails and scenic vistas.

LU-22.1 Nelson Hill Development. Permit no more than 350 units of housing at the Nelson Hill site. Encourage developer to incorporate publicly accessible open space and hiking trails into site design that maximize views to surrounding scenic areas. Development may be clustered at the top of the hill and/or at its northwestern base.

LU-22.3 Hillside Development and Scenic Resource Protection. Require the following to protect scenic resources:

- Apply the Hillside Overlay Zoning District to the entirety of the area. Development of Nelson Hill shall be consistent with the related Hillside Management Guidelines including, but not limited to, requirements that rooflines not visually extend above ridgetops.
- Require a homeowner's association to own and maintain the scenic vista point required by the Scenic Vistas and Roadways Plan, with easement for public use during daylight hours. Access to the vista point shall be by public trails and road, or by similar private facilities with a public access easement. The vista point must be a minimum of 1 acre in size and designed to City park standards acceptable to the City's park planner. The vista point should be generally at the southern end of the hilltop and designed to provide views of the Suisun Marsh and surrounding area.
- Preserve in natural conditions the outer slopes of the hill. At the City's sole discretion, land to be preserved may be dedicated to the City or owned by a homeowners' association and protected with a conservation easement. Land to be preserved shall include wooded hillsides at approximately 60 feet in elevation and higher, and other significant open space resources identified by the City during project review.
- Reserve historic rock walls along Cordelia Road and the existing oak tree canopy along the road to the greatest extent practicable. Should the road need to be widened, incorporation of trees and walls within a median planter should be implemented wherever feasible rather than removal.

- Remove the static billboard on the north side of the hill, and any other off-site advertising that is not permitted by the City's Sign Ordinance prior to annexation. Should any existing sign contracts preclude removal prior to annexation, dedicate ownership rights to such signs and rights to all future advertising proceeds to the City.

LU-23: Develop the Hale Ranch Study Area with specific high-value employment uses in a way that is compatible with surrounding agricultural and agritourism uses.

LU-23.4 Landscape Buffer. Require planting of one or more rows of trees to the south and west of the property to visually separate development from agricultural lands.

Open Space, Conservation, and Recreation Element

OSCR-1 Support preservation of existing agricultural lands.

OSCR-1.1 Agricultural Lands. Preserve agricultural enterprises by supporting right-to-farm policies, and separating and buffering agricultural lands from new development areas.

OSCR-2.1 Areas Abutting Open Space. Address preservation of greenbelts and open space buffers in development master plans and specific plans abutting any existing agricultural or open space area. Require protection of view corridors, watersheds, and prominent ridges as part of site planning. See the Land Use and Urban Design Element for additional policies.

IMPACTS

Impact 3.1-1 Implementation of the Proposed Project would not have a substantial adverse effect on scenic vistas. (Less than Significant with Mitigation)

As noted in the Environmental Setting section and shown in **Figure 3.1-1**, the Planning Area contains a wide range of scenic resources that contribute to the unique and distinctive character of the community. SVAs are identified by the City's Scenic Vistas and Roadways Plan (SVRP), adopted in 1999. The SVA identifies essentially all land outside the City boundary in the General Planning Area as a potential SVA, including Suisun Marsh, Green Valley, Suisun Valley, Nelson Hill, Vaca Mountains, Cement Hill Range, and Tri-City County Open Space. A SVA is defined as an area of agricultural or natural character which either can be viewed from a distance or comprises a broad viewshed, is not clearly impacted by significant visual intrusions, and is clearly visible from public areas within Fairfield's Urban Limit Line. Implementation of the Proposed Project could have a significant impact on scenic vistas and roadways if development resulted in the obstruction or removal of existing scenic vistas and roadways.

Scenic Roadways are also identified by the City's SVRP as I-680, Cordelia Road west of Hale Ranch Road, Green Valley Road north of Business Center Drive, Rockville Road west of Suisun Valley Road, Rancho Solano Parkway, Lyon Road north of Rollingwood Drive, Hillborn Road, and Manuel Campos Parkway. The Solano County General Plan also designates scenic roadways, including segments of I-80, I-680, SR-12, Suisun Valley Road, Rockville Road, Green Valley Road, and Mankas Corner Road/Oliver Road that are within the Planning Area.

Implementation of the Proposed Project would allow development within and adjacent to the SVAs and Scenic Roadways, including the new Cordelia residential neighborhood Nelson Hill, and Hale Ranch growth areas (Areas A, B, and C, respectively, in **Figure 2-6**). Cordelia Road represents an SVR near Nelson Hill. A significant impact would occur if development pursuant to the Proposed Project would have a substantial adverse effect on any of these if development does not comply with standards and guidelines outlined in the SVRP or they comprise a use that is not listed as being consistent with land uses outlined in the SVRP as being consistent with the SVRP.

The Proposed Project includes numerous policies intended to preserve and enhance scenic resources within the Planning Area. Implementing Policy LU-6.7 requires any development in a SVA or along a scenic roadway to not obstruct significant views. Specifically, the policy requires any development to comply with City's SVRP, which includes standards and design guidelines for preserving designated scenic vistas and roadways for each scenic view area.

Additionally, all development in growth areas associated with implementation of the Proposed Project would be required to meet City standards and requirements for site planning as detailed in Implementing Policies LU-20.1 and LU-20.2. All new developments must prepare a site plan that addresses how development patterns minimize grading and visual dominance over any scenic resources or hillsides. Site plans must conform to the City's Scenic Vistas and Roadway Plan, mentioned above, and include relevant general design policies.

The Proposed Project includes policies to support a new low-medium density neighborhood contiguous with city limits in the rolling lands in the existing Sphere of Influence (SOI) west of Business Center Drive (identified as the new Cordelia neighborhood, or Area A in **Figure 2-6**). This area is within the Green Valley SVA. The recommendations, guidelines, and policies describe areas farther north in the Green Valley SVA than this growth area location. Implementing Policy LU-21.1 requires the development of a cohesive master plan with integrated residential and open space development, that avoids steeper slopes and ridgelines, that would minimize impacts to scenic resources, while Implementing Policy LU-21.3 requires neighborhood clustering to avoid both seismic and visual impacts to hillsides and ridges. As such, impacts to this SVA would be less than significant.

The Proposed Project sets forth policies to promote reuse of Nelson Hill (Area B in **Figure 2-6**) as a predominantly lower density residential neighborhood with publicly accessible open spaces, hiking trails and scenic vistas (Implementing Policy LU-22). This area represents a scenic vista point. Proposed Project policies are consistent with recommendations, guidelines, and policies for this vista point, including preparing a master plan, limiting visual intrusions, ceasing quarrying, undergrounding utility lines, minimizing visibility of antennas, appropriate grading of terrain, and preservation of a vista point. Implementing Policy LU-22.1 encourages the development of housing at the Nelson Hill site and encourages developer to incorporate publicly accessible open space and

hiking trails into site design that maximize views to surrounding scenic areas. Implementing Policy LU-22.3 would protect scenic resources by applying the Hillside Overlay Zoning District to the area, which would require development of Nelson Hill to be consistent with the related Hillside Management Guidelines in order to maintain and preserve scenic vista points. Section 24.28.4 establishes the Hillside Development Overlay District (H) to implement the City's General Plan through hillside regulations and management guidelines, where regulations and guidelines help preserve scenic hillside areas and topographic features. As such, impacts to this SVA are less than significant.

The Proposed Project outlines policies to develop the Hale Ranch Study Area (Area C in **Figure 2-6**) with specific high-value employment uses, such as food and beverage manufacturing or wine processing, in a way that is compatible with surrounding agricultural and agritourism uses (Implementing Policy LU-23). The Hale Ranch Study Area represents a small portion of the Suisun Valley SVA, which extends six miles wide and seven miles long. Specific SVRP recommendations, guidelines, and policies related to the Suisun Valley SVA refer to extension of SID service agreements, establishing a buffer at the edge of city limits, and applying Hillside Management Guidelines to the Rancho Solano area. The Proposed Project is consistent with these guidelines and policies. For example, Implementing Policies OSCR-1.1 and OSCR-2.1 address agricultural and open space buffers in the city's proximity, and no development is proposed in the Rancho Solano area. As indicated earlier, Implementing Policy LU-16.7 requires development to comply with standards and design guidelines to preserve scenic vistas. Implementing Policy LU 14.4 requires a landscape buffer for the Hale Ranch Study Area, where development would be required to plant one or more rows of trees to south and west of the area to visually separate development from agricultural lands.

As written, however, the SVRP includes a guideline that describes suitable land uses as being primarily agricultural, open space, or residential in character. Local-serving commercial uses may be acceptable if incorporated into a rural-village setting, and strip commercial or industrial uses are not acceptable. The Proposed Project's Hale Ranch land use designation is inconsistent with this as-written guideline, intended to protect scenic vista areas from obstruction. This represents a potentially significant impact.

The SVRP, adopted in 1999, is dated. Scenic character in the area south of I-80 has changed since the time the SVRP was written. Several structures that do not represent these land uses have developed in the unincorporated area south of I-80, including relocation of California Highway Patrol truck scales, and a large wine processing facility south of the Hale Ranch Study Area. Parcels to the west and adjacent to Suisun Creek retain a more agrarian feel. To ensure consistency between the Proposed Project and SVRP, reflect existing conditions, and protect other scenic areas south of I-80, Mitigation Measure MM-AE-1 is required.

Overall, with implementation of proposed policies, existing City regulations, and Mitigation Measure MM-AE-1, substantial adverse effects on SVAs and scenic roadways in the Planning Area would be minimized to the extent practicable and associated impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

MM-AE-1: Scenic Vista Plan Update. Revise the language of the 1999 Scenic Vistas Plan, A. Site Design Guidelines, (1) Land Use to ensure consistency with the General Plan land use proposal through one or more of the following methods:

- Removing the Hale Ranch area from the SVA;
- Removing industrial land use as an unacceptable use;
- Expanding the list of land uses to include industrial use; or
- Clarifying that the Scenic Vista policies do not apply to sites proposed in the General Plan within the city's Urban Limit Line.

Impact 3.1-2 Implementation of the Proposed Project would not substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway. (No Impact)

As stated in the Regulatory Setting above, there are no Designated or Eligible State Scenic Highways in the Planning Area. Therefore, there would be no impact related to scenic resources within a State scenic highway.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Impact 3.1-3 Implementation of the Proposed Project would not substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings in a non-urbanized area or conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality in an urbanized area. (Less than Significant)

Pursuant to CEQA, the City of Fairfield is an "urbanized area." As such, a significant impact would result if the development of the Proposed Project would conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality. Non-urbanized areas exist within the Planning Area, including the growth areas (Areas A, B, and C on **Figure 2-6**) proposed for annexation. For these presently non-urbanized areas, public views are those that are experienced from publicly-accessible vantage points, and a significant impact could occur if development were to substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of a public view and its surroundings.

Urbanized Areas

As shown in **Figure 2-6**, implementation of the Proposed Project would focus future development and redevelopment primarily into key areas of the city: eight "infill" focus areas within city limits and two "growth" focus areas within the city's existing SOI in an urbanized area. Much of the implementation of the Proposed Project is anticipated to be residential infill development within existing city limits, as older strip commercial uses and shopping centers are revitalized with multifamily residential and mixed-use development, which is similar and compatible to the visual character of the existing urbanized area within the Planning Area. The Proposed Project would permit higher densities and intensities than what currently exists in the City of Fairfield, which could result in development that obstructs scenic views or scenic quality within the Planning Area.

The City of Fairfield's regulations on lot size, building bulk, height, and other standards are included in the Zoning Ordinance. The City's Zoning Ordinance would be revised to implement the Proposed Project, as required by State Law (Government Code Section 65860[a]), and it would translate the Proposed Project policies into specific use regulations, development standards, and performance criteria to govern development on individual properties. The Zoning Ordinance would ultimately prescribe standards, rules, and procedures for development and the Zoning Map will provide more detail than the Proposed Project Land Use Diagram. For growth areas, where the City's zoning designations do not yet apply, LAFCO requires the City to approve a specific plan, pre-zoning, or an equivalent providing similar detail of information prior to approval of a city change or organization or reorganization, the affected agency shall have approved, a specific plan, pre-zoning or an equivalent providing similar detail of information on the proposed land use for the affected territory. Thus, existing City regulations will be made consistent and remain applicable to the General Plan.

Renovations and infill may have the benefit of making aesthetic identity more cohesive, and much new infill development in Fairfield city limits occurs on land with mixed use or commercial designations. Further, the Proposed Project's land use designations, policies, and implementing actions are intended to limit any visually incompatible development in the city while enhancing the area's overall visual quality. New development would be subject to policies in the Proposed Project that emphasize visual and land use compatibility with surrounding development and promote

development that is sensitive to its environmental and scenic context (Implementing Policies LU-6.1, LU-6.2, LU-6.3, LU-6.4, LU-6.5, LU-6.6, and LU-6.7).

Non-Urbanized Areas

Non-urbanized areas within the Planning Area are largely characterized by surrounding natural and agricultural landscapes. Implementation of the Proposed Project would include development in the three non-urbanized areas outside of city limits – the new Cordelia neighborhood, Nelson Hill, and the Hale Ranch Study Area.

As described in Impact 3.1-1, the Proposed Project establishes guiding and implementing policies for growth areas to shape the visual character and development of the areas (Implementing Policies LU-20.1, LU-20.2, LU-20.3, LU-20.4, and LU-20.5) by requiring site planning standards that would minimize grading and visual dominance, protect trees, and design infrastructure to visually blend into the area's natural setting. As described in Impact 3.1-1, the Proposed Project includes policies that require clustered development, avoidance of view encroachment, and compliance with City's SVRP to minimize visual impacts and restrict development from significantly encroaching on views of ridgelines, agricultural areas, the Cement Hill Range, and the Suisun Marsh.

Specifically for development at Nelson Hill, the Proposed Project promotes the reuse of Nelson Hill as a predominantly lower density residential neighborhood and requires site design to maximize views to surrounding scenic areas and retain the visual character of the neighborhood (Implementing Policies LU-22.1 and LU-22.3).

The new Cordelia neighborhood area is bordered by residential land uses to the east, and the planned Middle Green Valley Specific Plan to the north, and rolling hills to the south. For the new Cordelia neighborhood, policies require limited development and clustering to avoid visual impacts to hillsides and ridges (Implementing Policies LU-21.1 and LU-21.3).

While agricultural uses are present and partially adjacent to the Hale Ranch Study Area, it is also bordered by urbanized uses, including Anheuser-Busch and various wind turbines to the east; the Cordelia Winery, an agricultural manufacturing use, to the south; and California Highway Patrol truck scales, and other Solano County buildings to the west. Above-ground power lines punctuate this area. Like the wine processing building to the south, the Proposed Project outlines policies that emphasizes uses that are compatible with surrounding agricultural and agritourism uses and requires various landscape buffers to the south and west to visually separate development from agricultural lands. As described above in Impact 3.1-1, the Hale Ranch Study Area would be subject to development requirements that would minimize the impacts on SVAs and scenic roadways to the extent practicable. West of the Suisun Creek, more intensive agricultural lands and family farms exist, and the Proposed Project's Urban Limit Line would restrict any other urbanized development in the area from occurring, aside from any mutually beneficial agritourism opportunities outlined in an adopted County plan.

Conclusion

Implementation of policies from the Proposed Project and continued implementation of the Zoning Code and related specific plans would help ensure that new development pursuant to the

Proposed Project would not conflict with regulations governing scenic quality in urbanized areas, and would not substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings in a non-urbanized area. Therefore, the impact is less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Impact 3.1-4 Implementation of the Proposed Project would not create new sources of substantial light or glare that could adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area. (Less than Significant)

Existing developed areas in the city currently generate some light and glare, and new development that would be facilitated by the Proposed Project could result in increased light and glare. Some elements of the built environment, such as parking lots, commercial buildings, and signs, may emit light for 24 hours a day. New sources of daytime glare could include new buildings with reflective surfaces, such as office buildings with glazed windows. Such light and glare could affect residential areas.

Implementation of the Proposed Project would result in significant new development and redevelopment into key areas of the city, as shown in **Figure 2-6**, including eight “infill” focus areas within the city limits, and three “growth” focus areas where the City may annex land in order to meet economic and housing goals. As Fairfield is largely ‘built out’, most development pursuant to the Proposed Project is expected to be infill and would generally be in areas with urban development where sources of light and glare exist already. In addition, to ensure a diversity of housing supply, development pursuant to the Proposed Project is planned in two small growth areas—western Cordelia and Nelson Hill—both within the city’s existing SOIs, thereby increasing light and glare in and around these locations. Additional light and glare created under the Proposed Project in the Enhanced Use Lease Area could illuminate currently dark or unlit areas and could cause glare to TAFB operations as a result.

As described in Impact 3.1-2, Implementation of the Proposed Project (including zoning designations) is required to be consistent with the General Plan regarding urban design and aesthetics. LAFCO would require the City of Fairfield to apply and approve pre-zoning prior to making a determination on proposals for changes of organization or reorganization. All development associated with implementation of the Proposed Project would be regulated by the Fairfield Zoning Code, which contains standards for outdoor lighting. Implementation of the Proposed Project would be subject to Section 25.30.4 (Outdoor Lighting) of the Zoning Code, which stipulates outdoor lighting must be shielded or recessed so that direct light, glare, and reflections are confined to the maximum extent feasible within the boundaries of the site, and lighting must be directed downward and away from adjacent residential properties and public rights-of-way. Specifically, Sections 25.30.4 and 25.32.4 establish regulations for outdoor lighting and satellite dishes, to avoid unreasonable impacts caused by light and glare, respectively. Additionally, major development projects would be required to adhere to the conditions of approvals, namely, COA 10.1, which requires a detailed on-site exterior lighting and photometric plan for major development projects to indicate fixture design, illumination, location, height,

method of shielding, and buffering techniques, based on a performance standard that no project shall emit light exceeding one-foot candle luminance at any property line for any project. COA 10.1 would require the project lighting plan to meet City standards that are designed to minimize nighttime glare and light spill. Additionally, Implementing Policy LU-8.1 requires industrial and commercial development to minimize noise, heat, glare, dust, and odor impacts on adjacent uses.

The Proposed Project lighting characteristics are not expected to be substantially out of character with existing lighting conditions and the overall urbanized nature of the Planning Area, or to represent a source of substantial new light or glare which would adversely affect views and vision. Compliance with existing regulations and Proposed Project policies would ensure that development under the Proposed Project would result in less than significant impacts associated with increased light and glare.

Mitigation Measures

None required.