

5. Environmental Analysis

5.1 AESTHETICS

This section of the updated Draft Program Environmental Impact Report (PEIR) discusses the potential impacts to the visual character of the City of Santa Ana and its sphere of influence (plan area) associated with the General Plan Update (or GPU). This section includes a discussion of the qualitative aesthetic characteristics of the existing environment that would be potentially altered by the project's implementation and the consistency of the project with established relevant policies.

5.1.1 Environmental Setting

5.1.1.1 REGULATORY BACKGROUND

Local laws, regulations, plans, or guidelines related to aesthetics that are potentially applicable to the proposed project are summarized below.

State

California Scenic Highway Program

The California Department of Transportation's California Scenic Highway Program was created in 1963, and it maps and describes all scenic highways within the state. The program protects these state scenic highway and adjacent corridors through special conservation treatment. There are no Caltrans-designated scenic highways in Santa Ana.

California Building Energy Efficiency Standards

Title 24, Part 6 of the California Code of Regulations outlines mandatory provisions for lighting control devices and luminaires for all new developments. This code encourages buildings (both residential and nonresidential) to engage in energy-efficient development strategies.

California Government Code

Pursuant to Government Code Section 65860, zoning ordinances shall be consistent with the general plan. In the event that a zoning ordinance becomes inconsistent with a general plan by reason of amendment to the plan or to any element of the plan, the zoning ordinance shall be amended within a reasonable time so that it is consistent with the general plan as amended (Gov. Code § 65860(c)).

Local

City of Santa Ana Zoning Code

The zoning code (Chapter 41 of the municipal code) identifies land use categories, development standards, and other general provisions that ensure consistency between the General Plan and proposed development projects.

Chapter 41, Article III, regulates the location, height, bulk, and size of buildings and structures, and the size of yards and other open spaces for each of the zoning districts. The city has two height districts, each with its own

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structure height standards. Unless otherwise designated on the appropriate sectional district map, all land within or subsequently annexed or incorporated into the city is declared in height district I. Santa Ana Municipal Code Section 41-602 discusses height districts I and II. Height district I is subject to the heights specified for each zoning designation. Height district II is an additional designation where development may exceed 35 feet. Both height districts provide provisions where a height of 35 feet may be exceeded when certain conditions are met.

Specific Development

Per Chapter 41, Article III, Division 26 of the municipal code, specific developments (SD) provide classification and development of land as comprehensive special district plans. The SD District is authorized and established for the purpose of protecting and promoting the public health, safety, and general welfare of the city and its residents by:

- 1) Protecting and enhancing the value of properties by encouraging the use of good design principles and concepts, as related to the division of property, site planning and individual improvements with full recognition of the significance and effect they have on the proper planning and development of adjacent and nearby properties.
- 2) Encouraging, securing and maintaining the orderly and harmonious appearance, attractiveness and aesthetic development of structures and grounds in order that the most appropriate use and value thereof be determined and protected.
- 3) Providing a method whereby specific development plans are to be based on the general plan as well as other regulations, programs, and legislation as may in the judgment of the city be required for the systematic execution of the general plan.
- 4) Recognizing the interdependence of land values and aesthetics and providing a method to implement this interdependence in order to maintain the values of surrounding properties and improvements and encouraging excellence of property development, compatible with the general plan for, and character of, the city, with due regard for the public and private interests involved.
- 5) Ensuring that the public benefits derived from expenditures of public funds for improvements and beautification of streets and public facilities shall be protected by exercise of reasonable controls over the character and design of private buildings, structures and open spaces.

Any use or development of property within an SD district shall be in compliance with the ordinance adopting the specific development plan for such property. The City of Santa Ana currently has 96 SD districts. The different Special Development designations provide development standards, such as height limits, and other requirements specific to the district.

City of Santa Ana Design Guidelines

The Santa Ana Citywide Design Guidelines assist developers and project designers to understand the City's goals and objectives for achieving, enhancing, and maintaining high-quality development in various areas. The design guidelines are organized by development type:

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- Citywide Urban Design
- Streetscape
- Downtown Urban Design
- Single and Two-Family Residential
- Multiple Family Residential
- Downtown Development
- Commercial Development
- Special Use Commercial/Industrial
- Industrial Development
- Parking Structures
- Historic Structures
- Signage
- Public Art

The Citywide Design Guidelines consolidate the City's discretionary review documents and provide supplementary design guidance for issues not explicitly stated in the municipal code. The guidelines aim to protect Santa Ana residents from unsightly conditions and to preserve and maximize the image, character, and history of Santa Ana (Santa Ana 2019).

City of Santa Ana Specific Plans and Overlay Zone

Aesthetics are addressed in three specific plans governing certain areas of the city. The following areas currently fall under the jurisdiction of specific plans enforced by the City:

- Harbor Mixed Use Transit Corridor Specific Plan
- Bristol Street Corridor
- Midtown
- MainPlace Specific Plan

Each specific plan acts as a regulatory document that the City uses as a development guide in that area. The specific plans include detailed development standards and design guidelines. In addition to these specific plans, the Metro East Mixed-Use Overlay Zone adopts development standards for each district within the overlay area.

5.1.1.2 EXISTING CONDITIONS

Visual Character

Santa Ana was founded in 1869 by William Spurgeon. The original town laid out by Spurgeon consisted of 24 blocks and served as a shopping center and post office for surrounding agricultural areas. In 1878 the Southern Pacific Railroad arrived, the Santa Fe Railroad followed in 1886, and in 1889 the county seat was established in Santa Ana. These events stimulated the development of businesses, stores, financial institutions, and hotels. The area from First Street to 17th Street was subdivided during the building boom of the 1880s, and many of

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the structures in downtown and the surrounding bungalow homes were built in the early 1900s and 1920s (Santa Ana 2010a).

The development of Santa Ana resembles a classic urban development pattern characterized by a series of concentric rings that radiate outward from the original settlement. The city center includes the downtown area (generally defined by 17th Street, Bristol Avenue, 1st Street, and Main Street), residential neighborhoods, and older industrial areas near the rail lines. Subsequent urbanization surrounds the core in a series of concentric rings, with the most recent residential developments in the southwest and northeast corners of the city. Under this arrangement, Santa Ana's urban form has a defined downtown center with other urban form components arranged around it. This urban form has become increasingly blurred with new infill projects such as MainPlace and MacArthur Place/Hutton Center on the city's periphery.

The residential neighborhoods surrounding the downtown exhibit a wide range of architecture and site design. Older neighborhoods are usually nearer the downtown area, and newer residential developments are farther from it. The industrial uses are confined to areas along the railroads as well as in the eastern, southwestern, and southeastern sections of the city. Newer industrial developments are to the east and southwest.

The Santa Ana Freeway (I-5) cuts through the northeastern section of the city. The Costa Mesa Freeway (SR-55) generally defines the southwestern boundary of the city, and the San Diego Freeway (I-405) is just south of Santa Ana. The Santa Ana River runs through the western section of the city, and Santiago Creek runs through the northern section.

Character of Focus Areas

South Main Street Focus Area

Throughout its length, the South Main Street corridor has a consistent pattern of retail and service commercial fronting the right-of-way, with lower density residential neighborhoods filling in behind to the east and west boundaries. In the southwest corner, a row of warehouses constitutes the only current industrial uses in the focus area. The focus area also has four public schools—Manuel Esqueda Elementary School, Cesar E. Chavez High School, Lathrop Intermediate School, and Benjamin Franklin Elementary School. Existing buildings in the focus area generally range between one to two stories. However, some existing buildings exceed two stories, including the Southtown Apartments building (4 stories) at 2140 South Main Street. Additionally, multiple three-story apartment buildings occur along Broadway, adjacent to the focus area.

More than half of the land (54.2 percent) in the South Main Street focus area has a General Plan land use designation of Low Density Residential, and approximately 40 percent of the land is designated General Commercial (see Figure 3-6, *Current General Plan Land Use Plan*, and Table 3-3, *Current General Plan Land Use Designations and Statistics*). The remaining 5.8 percent of the focus area has the following land use designations: Institutional (3.1 percent), Industrial (2.3 percent), and District Center (0.5 percent). Table 5.1-1 summarizes the general intensity and height in the focus area. This focus area generally allows heights up to 35 feet. In addition, this focus area includes multiple SD districts including SD 40 (Heninger Park) and SD 72 (Artist Gateway), which allow development up to 45 feet.

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Table 5.1-1 Intensity and Height Comparison: Current General Plan vs. GPU

Land Use Designation	Acres		Intensity/Density		Maximum Height	
	Current GP	GPU	Current GP	GPU	Existing Height ¹	GPU
Grand Avenue/17th Street						
General Commercial	113.3	19.9	FAR 0.5-1.0	FAR 1.0	Generally 1–2 stories, but up to 5 stories	2 stories
Institutional	7.7	-	FAR 0.2-0.5	-		-
Low Density Residential	34.5	-	7 du/ac	-		-
Open Space	1.1	1.1	FAR of 0.2	n/a		n/a
Professional and Administrative Office	14.8	-	FAR 0.5-1.0	-		-
Industrial/Flex	-	7.1	-	FAR 1.5		3 stories
District Center	-	23.7	-	FAR 2 or 90du/ac		6 stories
Urban Neighborhood	-	119.7	-	FAR of 1.5 or 40du/ac		4 stories
55 Freeway/Dyer Road						
District Center	1.8	158.0	FAR 1.7	FAR 2.0 or 90 du/ac	Generally 1–2 stories, but up to 10 stories	6 stories
General Commercial	66.9	68.0	FAR 0.5-1.0	1.5 FAR		2 stories
Industrial	9.2	-	FAR of 0.45	-		-
Industrial/Flex	-	127.4	-	FAR 3.0		10 stories
Open Space	3.5	1.1	FAR of 0.2	n/a		n/a
Professional and Administrative Office	273.2	-	FAR 0.5-1.0	-		-
South Bristol Street						
District Center	90.9	108.3	FAR 1.0	FAR 2.0 -5.0 or 90du/ac-125 du/ac	Generally 1–2 stories, but up to 3 stories in focus area	10 stories (between MacArthur & Alton) or 25 stories (between MacArthur & Sunflower)
Urban Neighborhood	-	85.7	-	FAR 1.5 or 30 du/ac		3 stories
General Commercial	92.6	-	FAR 0.5-1.0	-		-
Medium Density Residential	13.0	-	15 du/ac	15 du/ac		-
Open Space	3.4	6.0	FAR of 0.2	n/a		n/a
South Main Street						
District Center	1.7	-	FAR 1.0	-	Generally 1–2 stories, but up to 4 stories	-
Urban Neighborhood	-	101.7	-	FAR 1.0 or 20 du/acre		3 stories
General Commercial	124.8	-	FAR 0.5-1.0	-		-
Industrial	7.1	-	FAR of 0.45	-		-
Industrial/Flex	-	29.0	-	FAR 1.5		3 stories
Institutional	9.6	19.2	FAR 0.2-0.5	FAR 2.0		3 stories
Low Density Residential	169.1	162.3	7 du/ac	7 du/ac		2 stories

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Table 5.1-1 Intensity and Height Comparison: Current General Plan vs. GPU

Land Use Designation	Acres		Intensity/Density		Maximum Height	
	Current GP	GPU	Current GP	GPU	Existing Height ¹	GPU
West Santa Ana Boulevard						
General Commercial	26.7	21.5	FAR 0.5-1.0	FAR 1.5	Generally 1–3 stories, but up to 11 stories	2 stories
Industrial	85.4	-	FAR of 0.45	-		-
Industrial/Flex	-	87.9	-	FAR 1.5		3 stories
Institutional	46.2	45.5	FAR 0.2-0.5	FAR 2.0		2 stories
Corridor Residential	-	10.0	-	30 du/ac		3 stories
Low Density Residential	146.9	108.1	7 du/ac	7 du/ac		2 stories
Low-Medium Density Residential	-	6.8	-	11 du/ac		2 stories
Medium Density Residential	27.0	27.0	15 du/ac	15 du/ac		3 stories
Open Space	133.6	133.6	FAR of 0.2	-		2 stories
Professional and Administrative Office	13.5	6.2	FAR 0.5-1.0	FAR 2.0		3 stories
Urban Neighborhood	2.4	35.0	FAR 0.5-1.5	FAR 1.5 or 30du/ac		3 stories
Balance of City						
District Center	124.2	124.2	FAR 1.0-5.0	FAR 1.0-5.0	Varies ²	No Change ²
General Commercial	424.2	424.2	FAR 0.5-1.0	FAR 0.5-1.0		
Industrial	2,159.6	2,159.6	FAR of 0.45	FAR of 0.45		
Institutional	886.7	886.7	FAR 0.2-0.5	FAR 0.2-0.5		
Low Density Residential	6,173.3	6,173.3	7 du/ac	7 du/ac		
Low-Medium Density Residential	429.0	429.0	11 du/ac	11 du/ac		
Medium Density Residential	335.3	335.3	15 du/ac	15 du/ac		
One Broadway Plaza District Center	4.1	4.1	FAR of 2.9	FAR of 2.9		
Open Space	793.8	793.8	FAR of 0.2	FAR of 0.2		
Professional and Administrative Office	260.4	260.4	FAR 0.5-1.0	FAR 0.5-1.0		
Urban Neighborhood	4.1	4.1	FAR 0.5-1.5	FAR 0.5-1.5		

¹ The "Existing Heights" column documents the existing heights found within the city. The City's zoning code establishes maximum heights within the city. It generally allows up to 35 feet in height. However, as discussed under Section 5.1.1.1, *Regulatory Background*, 35 feet may be exceeded provided that certain provisions are met. In addition, the City has specific development zones, overlay zones, and specific plan zones that provide specific development specifications for that zone. For example, the Transit Zoning Code allows up to 25 stories in the Transit Village designation.

² Height district I generally allows up to 35 feet (some residential zoning districts limit height to 27 feet and 2 stories). Provisions in height district I and height district II allow heights to exceed 35 feet. Moreover, additional height limits are set by applicable specific development, overlay zone, or specific plan. For example, the One Broadway Plaza District Center allows development up to 493 feet.

Grand Avenue and 17th Street Focus Area

The area is currently primarily business oriented, with offices and commercial storefronts occupying more than 125 acres. A number of large apartment complexes also line the Grand Avenue corridor, constituting roughly one-fifth of the focus area. The United States Postal Service North Grand office and Edison substation, near

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the corners of Grand and Santa Clara Avenue, account for the remaining acreage. Existing buildings in the focus area generally range between one to two stories. However, some existing buildings exceed two stories, such as the Santa Ana Medical Arts Building (5 stories) at 1125 17th Street, and the Orange County Register building (5 stories) at 625 North Grand Avenue.

More than half of the focus area (approximately 66.1 percent) has a General Plan land use designation of General Commercial. Approximately 20.1 percent of the focus area has a General Plan land use designation of Low Density Residential. The remaining 13.8 percent of the focus area is characterized by Professional and Administrative Office (8.6 percent), Institutional (4.5 percent), and Open Space (0.6 percent). Table 5.1-1 summarizes the general intensity and height within the focus area. This focus area generally allows heights up to 35 feet. In addition, this focus area also includes SD 21 (The Orange County Register), which allows development up to 150 feet.

West Santa Ana Boulevard Focus Area

The area is primarily a mix of residential (174 acres), commercial (43 acres), and a variety of industrial (85 acres) uses, with large county and federal government complexes on the east end leading to the Downtown/Civic Center. Willowick Golf Course is also within the focus area and occupies approximately 134 acres adjacent to the Santa Ana River Channel. Existing buildings within the focus area generally range between one to two stories, with three-story buildings scattered throughout the focus area. However, some existing buildings exceed three stories, such as civic and apartment buildings in and near the northeast corner of the focus area that extend up to 11 stories. Adjacent to the focus area are a number of multistory buildings, including a four-story mixed-use building at 3630 Westminster Avenue.

Low Density Residential land use designation and Open Space account for more than half of this focus area—30.5 and 27.7 percent, respectively. Industrial land use designation accounts for 17.7 percent of the focus area. The remaining 24.1 percent of the focus area consists of Institutional (9.6 percent), General Commercial (5.5 percent), Medium Density Residential (5.6 percent), Professional and Administrative Office (2.8 percent), and Urban Neighborhood (0.5 percent). Table 5.1-1 summarizes the general intensity and height within the focus area. This focus area generally allows heights up to 35 feet. In addition, the focus area includes a number of SD districts, including SD 55 (Hutton Development), which allows development up to 138 feet. The Bristol Street Corridor Specific Plan area traverses the focus area and allows for a maximum height of 35 feet.

55 Freeway and Dyer Road Focus Area

Office parks and a variety of industrial facilities make up the majority of the focus area (253 acres), with hotels and other service-oriented commercial uses concentrated around the freeway (94 acres). Santa Ana recently approved the development of a large apartment complex (currently under construction) near the intersection of Dyer Road and Red Hill Avenue that will introduce residential uses to the area for the first time. The focus area also sits adjacent to the Tustin Legacy redevelopment in Tustin. This focus area generally includes one- to two-story office and industrial buildings. Multi-story hotel buildings are on the west side of the focus area and extend up to 10 stories. A three-story hotel building is at 2600 Red Hill Avenue in the focus area.

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The majority of this focus area has a General Plan land use designation of Professional and Administrative Office (77.1 percent). The remaining 22.9 percent of the focus area has the following designations: General Commercial (18.9 percent), Industrial (2.6 percent), Open Space (1.0 percent), and District Center (0.5 percent). Table 5.1-1 summarizes the general intensity and height in the focus area. This focus area generally allows heights up to 35 feet. In addition, the focus area includes a number of SD districts, including SD 88 (The Heritage), which allows development up to 100 feet.

South Bristol Street Focus Area

The South Bristol Street focus area sits on the southern border of Santa Ana, directly adjacent to South Coast Plaza in Costa Mesa. Extending from Warner Avenue to Sunflower Avenue, the 1.5-mile-long corridor is currently almost entirely commercially focused, with more than 180 acres occupied by a variety of retail and service businesses. Commercial uses tend to be less intense north of Alton Avenue and gradually intensify toward South Coast Plaza. Although residential uses make up less than 10 percent of the focus area, the corridor is surrounded by neighborhoods on its east and west sides, with lower density neighborhoods in the north and more intense multifamily neighborhoods in the south. Existing buildings along Bristol Street in the focus area generally range between one to two stories (with occasional 3-story structures). The southern side of the focus area is adjacent to the South Coast Plaza shopping mall and has multiple high rises of up to 21 stories.

The General Plan land use designations of District Center and General Commercial characterize most of this focus area at 91.8 percent (45.5 and 46.3 percent, respectively). Medium Density Residential makes up 6.5 percent of the focus area, and Open Space accounts for 1.7 percent. Table 5.1-1 summarizes the general intensity and height within the focus area. This focus area generally allows heights up to 35 feet. The South Bristol Street focus area encompasses SD 48 (South Coast Village), which allows for development up to 35 feet.

Historic Districts

As discussed in Section 5.4, *Cultural Resources*, the City of Santa Ana has three designated historic neighborhoods—Downtown, French Park, and Heninger Park (see Figure 5.4-1). The French Park Historic District is a 20-square-block residential district northeast of Santa Ana’s historic core and includes Victorian and Craftsman residences, including some still existing from the 1880s. Additionally, residential development surrounding Santa Ana’s downtown historic core established many of Santa Ana’s oldest neighborhoods today, such as Heninger Park. By the 1930s, the French Park neighborhood and other neighborhoods surrounding downtown were fully developed. By the late 1940s, Downtown Santa Ana was thriving with construction of many department stores. During this time, the need for postwar housing impacted the historic character of many neighborhoods and their historic buildings, such as French Park. The early 1960s through the late 1970s exhibited a trend of downtown business decay. Today, notable residential resources are concentrated in early residential neighborhoods such as the French Park Historic District, Heninger Park Historic District, Floral Park, Wilshire Square, other Historically Sensitive Neighborhoods, and surrounding the Downtown Santa Ana Historic District, although an increasing number of post-World War II properties have also been recognized. Notable commercial resources are concentrated in the Downtown Santa Ana Historic District along Fourth Street and the adjacent streets and along the Main Street and Broadway corridors. Downtown also contains notable examples of institutional and infrastructural resources (Chattel 2020).

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The French Park neighborhood generally consists of one- to two-story single-family and multifamily residential homes. The Heninger Park neighborhood generally consists of one- to two-story single-family and multifamily residential buildings, with dispersed three-story multifamily buildings. Downtown Santa Ana includes commercial and civic use buildings that range in height from one to six stories.

Natural Resources

Santa Ana is a built-up, urban community with open space and vacant land scattered in various locations. As a result, readily apparent resources, such as natural habitat and wildlife, are limited. Certain stretches of Santiago Creek offer undisturbed plant and wildlife environments. Some conserved land adjacent to the creek in the northeastern portion of the city contains coast live oak trees.

Outside of these areas are only remnants of native habitats and vegetation communities. However, open space lands held for park and recreational uses offer opportunities for enjoyment of a rare urban resource. River View Golf Course, Willowick Golf Course, Centennial Regional Park, Angels Community Park, Heritage Park, and other community parks within the city boundaries contain maintained landscaped areas with ornamental vegetation.

Landforms

Santa Ana is in the Santa Ana Valley in southwestern California. Situated on the Santa Ana River, it is 10 miles east of the Santa Ana Mountains and about 12 miles from the Pacific Ocean.

The headwaters of the Santa Ana River are in the San Bernardino Mountains, and the river travels nearly 100 miles before it spills into the Pacific Ocean. In Orange County, the Santa Ana River traverses seven cities, including Santa Ana. Within Santa Ana, the river extends from SR-22 to MacArthur Boulevard. This corridor represents 116 acres of open space in the city. The city is near the bottom of the watershed and therefore receives the runoff from the upper watershed. Though the majority of the river has been channelized for flood protection, it also provides open space relief to the adjacent urbanized areas. Despite its channelization, there are regional riding and hiking trails along the river.

Scenic Corridors

According to the California Scenic Highway Mapping System, there are no state-designated scenic highways in or near the plan area (Caltrans 2019). However, the City has identified scenic corridors that form the image of Santa Ana in the scenic corridors element of the existing General Plan. The scenic corridors are linear features for the movement of people and vehicles, such as streets, highways, and waterways and their associated pedestrian and bicycle trails. The foundation of the scenic corridors is the series of mixed-use corridors. The scenic corridors element defines five scenic corridors, shown in Figure 5.1-1, *Scenic Corridors*, and summarized following.

- **Primary street corridors** that are significant transportation and activity corridors in the city and are accessible from all freeways. They include the 1st/4th Street, Main Street/Broadway, and MacArthur Boulevard corridors. At the edges of the city, these primary corridors form major city entry points.

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- **Secondary street corridors** link neighborhoods, district centers, and mixed-use corridors. They include 17th Street, Edinger Avenue, and Bristol Street.
- **Water-course corridors** operate at a regional scale and are part of the county open space network. They include the Santa Ana River and Santiago Creek.
- **Intercity corridors** run through multiple jurisdictions and are major image makers for the city. They include Harbor Boulevard and Fairview Street.
- **High-speed scenic corridors** operate at a regional scale and influence the city's image. They include SR-55, SR-22, and the Santa Ana Freeway (I-5). These corridors provide views of the City of Santa Ana and largely influence the public's aesthetic and visual experience of the city (Santa Ana 2010b).

Landmarks

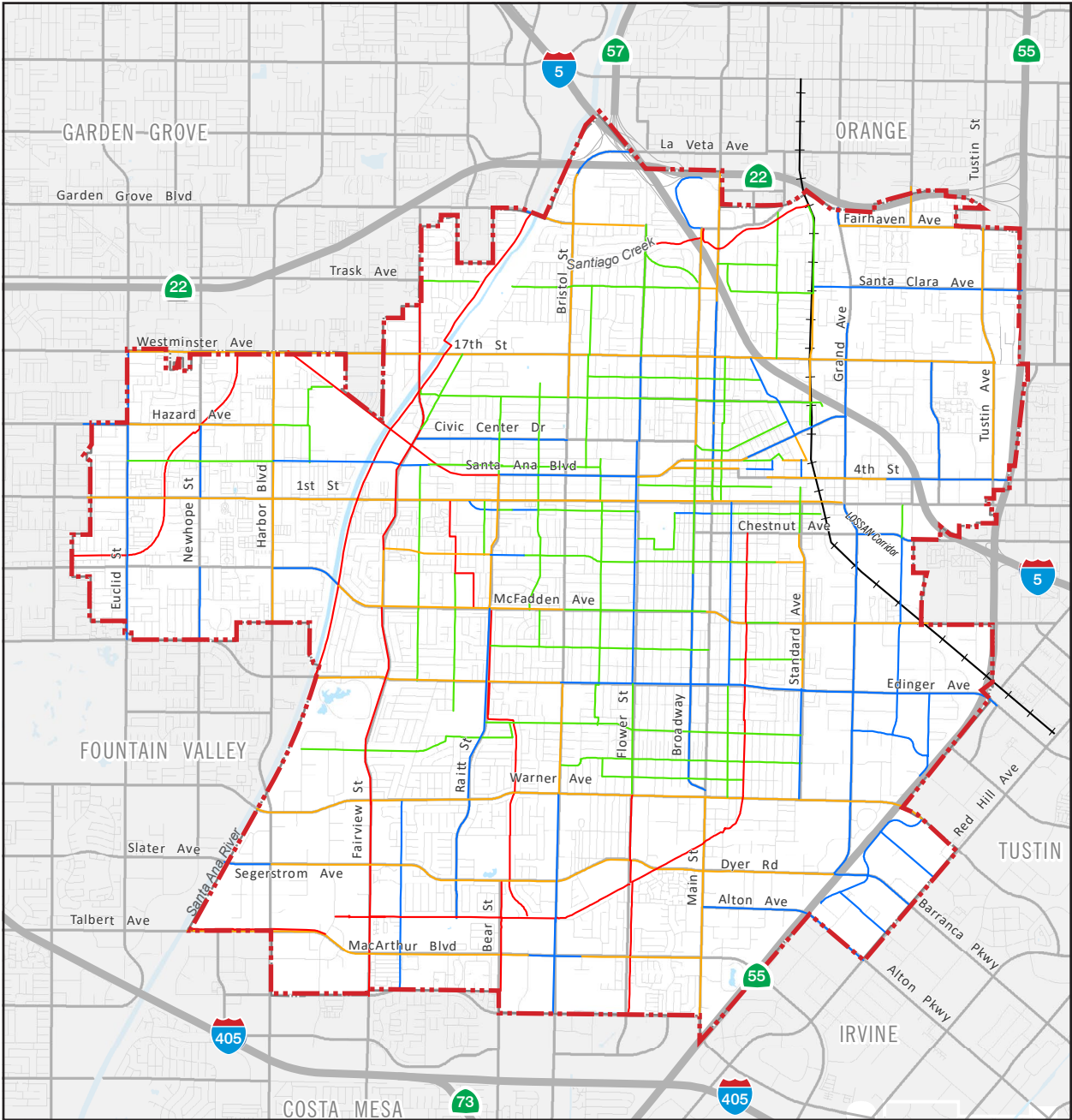
Landmarks are elements of the urban form containing design features that reinforce their uniqueness and memorability. Landmarks, by their nature, attract and hold people's attention. Most of the existing landmarks in the city are concentrated along I-5 and in the downtown, with relatively few in other locations. Some of these landmarks have been in the city for many years and are well known. Good examples of this are the old Orange County Courthouse on Santa Ana Boulevard in the downtown area, Bowers Museum on north Main Street, and the water tower along I-5 (see Figure 3-5a). Other landmarks are newer, though they still have established reputations as recognizable landmarks. Good examples are the Discovery Cube, Xerox Center tower, and Hotel Terrace, or the Vietnamese Catholic Community Center and Chapel at Seventeenth Street and Harbor Boulevard. In addition, most neighborhoods have reference points that serve as local landmarks and generally include schools, parks, church buildings, or even a well-established corner store (Santa Ana 2010c).

Light and Glare

Light pollution refers to a general glow in the night sky that is common in an urbanized setting. The major concern is related to light trespass, that is, bothersome lighting or intense lighting that spills over to uses that may be sensitive to light, especially at night. Glare is the sensation of brightness within a visual field that is greater than the surrounding brightness or the brightness to which the eyes are adapted. Glare is often caused by light sources directly within the line of sight or reflective surfaces at the same and opposite angle as a light source and can temporarily impair vision.

Sources of light and glare in the plan area include building lights (interior and exterior), security lights, sign illumination, field lighting at local schools, and parking-area lighting. Other sources of nighttime light and glare include street lights and vehicular traffic along surrounding roadways. Additionally, a significant amount of ambient lighting comes from surrounding communities and roadways because the plan area is adjacent to highly urbanized portions of the cities of Orange to the north, Tustin to the east, Irvine and Costa Mesa to the south, and Fountain Valley and Garden Grove to the west. Large, light-intensive institutions and facilities near the city's boundary include John Wayne International Airport to the south and Angel Stadium of Anaheim to the north.

Figure 5.16-4 - Master Plan of Bikeways



- - - - - City of Santa Ana
- Class I Path
- Class II Bike Lane
- Class III Bike Route/Boulevard
- Class IV Cycle Track



Source: City of Santa Ana, 2020

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The types of land uses that are typically sensitive to excess light and glare include homes, hospitals, senior housing, and other types of uses where excessive light may disrupt sleep. In addition, excessive light and glare may interfere with the vision of drivers.

5.1.2 Thresholds of Significance

According to Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, a project would normally have a significant effect on the environment if the project would:

- AE-1 Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista.
- AE-2 Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway.
- AE-3 In non-urbanized areas, substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings (Public views are those that are experienced from publicly accessible vantage point). If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality.
- AE-4 Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area.

5.1.3 Regulatory Requirements and General Plan Update Policies

5.1.3.1 REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS

- RR AE-1 The City shall enforce adherence with the California Building Code, including provisions of the Building Energy Efficiency Standards related to lighting.
- RR AE-2 The City shall enforce development standards and other general provisions as detailed in the Zoning Code (Chapter 41 of the Municipal Code) to ensure consistency between the City's General Plan and proposed development projects. This includes compliance with the requirements of any ordinance adopting specific development plans.
- RR AE-3 The City shall enforce the development standards and design guidelines of adopted specific plans. In addition to these specific plans, the City will enforce the development standards of the Metro East Mixed-Use Overlay Zone for each district within the overlay area.

5.1.3.2 GENERAL PLAN UPDATE POLICIES

The following are relevant policies of the Santa Ana General Plan update, which may reduce potential impacts to aesthetics as a result of implementation.

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Circulation Mobility Element

- **Policy 1.6 Complete Streets.** Transform travelways to accommodate all users through street design and amenities, such as sidewalks, trees, landscaping, street furniture, and bus shelters.
- **Policy 1.8 Environmental Sustainability.** Consider air and water quality, noise reduction, neighborhood character, and street-level aesthetics when making improvements to travelways.
- **Policy 3.2 Nonmotorized Travelway Amenities.** Enhance nonmotorized travelways with amenities such as landscaping, shade trees, lighting, benches, crosswalks, rest stops, bicycle parking, and support facilities that promote a pleasant and safe experience.
- **Policy 3.7 Complete Streets Design.** Enhance streets to facilitate safe walking, bicycling, and other nonmotorized forms of transportation through community participatory design.
- **Policy 4.5 Land Use Development Design.** Ensure that ~~building placement~~ **the placement of buildings, and design features, and street environment** create a desirable and active streetscape.
- **Policy 5.1 Enhanced Street Design.** Improve the beauty, character, and function of travelways with amenities such as landscaped parkways and medians, bike lanes, public art, and other amenities.
- **Policy 5.2 Rail Corridors.** Coordinate with rail service providers to improve **and maintain** the aesthetics of rail corridors, reduce noise levels, and mitigate traffic conflicts and other environmental hazards.
- **Policy 5.3 Travel Views.** Promote the undergrounding of utilities and the reduction of visual clutter along travelways.
- ~~**Policy 5.9 Street Trees.** Support the greening of City streets through the establishment and maintenance of an urban forest to improve street aesthetics, filter pollution, and address GHG emissions.~~

Conservation Element

- **Policy 2.1 Native Wildlife Habitat Protection.** Protect and enhance natural vegetation in parks and open spaces for wildlife habitat, erosion control, and to serve as noise and scenic buffers.
- **Policy 2.4 Scenic **Linkages Preservation.**** Ensure that development, **open space** and travelways surrounding key destinations, historic sites, recreational areas, and open space ~~preserve~~ **protects visual corridors, community aesthetics, and create scenic linkages preservation.**

Economic Prosperity Element

- **Policy 3.11 Improve Image.** Create vibrant public spaces through arts and culture projects that enhance urban quality of life, expand the tax base, and improve regional and community image.

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Historic Preservation Element

- **Policy 1.1 Architectural and Design Standards.** Preserve unique neighborhoods and structures in Santa Ana through implementation of the Citywide Design Guidelines and historic preservation best practices.
- **Policy 1.2 Federal Standards for Rehabilitation.** Ensure rehabilitation of historic buildings comply with the Secretary of Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties and that new construction in historic districts is compatible with context.
- **Policy 1.3 Historic Districts and Design Standards.** Explore opportunities to preserve neighborhoods with largely intact historic buildings and character through the creation of historic districts, **identification of historically sensitive areas, or neighborhood context sensitive design standards.** ~~or neighborhood design standards.~~
- **Policy 1.6 Lead by Example.** Ensure that all City-owned historic resources and cultural facilities reflect exceptional architecture and historically appropriate features to celebrate Santa Ana as a world-class city.
- **Policy 1.8 Reuse of Historic Buildings.** Support flexible land use standards to facilitate the adaptive reuse of historic buildings with a variety of economically viable uses, while minimizing impacts to the historic value and character of sites and structures.
- **Policy 1.9 Historic Downtown.** Strengthen the image and identity of Downtown through unifying design and architectural themes that are compatible with existing historic fabric.

Land Use Element

- **Policy 1.1 Compatible Uses.** Foster compatibility between land uses to enhance livability and promote healthy lifestyles.
- **Policy 2.8 City Image.** Encourage land uses, development projects, and public art installations that promote the City's image as a cultural and business friendly regional center.
- **Policy 3.1 Community Benefits.** Support new development which provides a net community benefit and contributes to neighborhood character and identity.
- **Policy 3.4 Compatible Development.** Ensure that the scale and massing of new development is compatible and harmonious with the surrounding built environment.
- **Policy 3.7 Attractive Environment.** Promote a clean, safe, and creative environment for Santa Ana's residents, workers, and visitors.
- **Policy 4.2 Public Realm.** Maintain and improve the public realm through quality architecture, street trees, landscaping, and other pedestrian-friendly amenities.

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- **Policy 4.10 Thriving Downtown.** Encourage new development and enhancement of Downtown Santa Ana through creative, sustainable, and innovative design solutions.

Noise Element

- **Policy 1.2 Sound Design.** Encourage functional and attractive designs to mitigate excessive noise levels.

Open Space Element

- ~~**Policy 1.7 Community Building.** Ensure that park facilities and programs reflect the priorities of residents in the surrounding neighborhoods, with attention to place-making elements that foster social interaction and community pride such as art, landscape, monuments, murals, play equipment, and seating.~~
- ~~**Policy 2.4 Urban Forest.** Maintain, preserve, and enhance the city's urban forest as an environmental, economic, and aesthetic resource to improve residents' quality of life.~~
- **Policy 2.12 Park and Facility Character.** Ensure that parks and recreation facilities incorporate placemaking elements that foster social connections and community pride such as art, landscaping, murals, and amenities and facilities that reflect site character and local needs.
- ~~**Policy 3.5 Visual Corridors.** Protect visual corridors of and adjacent to public open spaces from intrusive and incompatible development.~~
- **Policy 3.7 Urban Forest.** Maintain, preserve, and enhance the City's urban forest as an environmental, economic, and aesthetic resource to improve residents' quality of life.

Public Services Element

- **Policy 1.1 Maintenance and Design.** Provide and maintain public facilities that reinforce community identity through high quality design.

Urban Design Element

- **Policy 1.1 Design Quality.** Ensure all developments feature high quality design, materials, finishes, and construction.
- **Policy 1.2 Public Art.** Require public art as part of major developments and the public realm improvements.
- **Policy 1.3 Delineation of Public Spaces.** Encourage site design that clearly defines public spaces through building placement and orientation.
- **Policy 1.4 Safety through Design.** Incorporate ~~public safety crime prevention~~ design features into private and public developments to prevent loitering, vandalism, and other undesirable activities.

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- **Policy 1.5 Attractive Public Spaces.** Encourage community interaction through the development and enhancement of plazas, open space, people places, and pedestrian connections with the public realm.
- **Policy 1.6 Active Transportation Infrastructure.** Support the creation of citywide public street and site amenities that accommodate and promote an active transportation-friendly environment.
- **Policy 1.7 Visual Clutter.** Promote the beautification and accessibility of the public realm through the undergrounding of utility lines and aboveground equipment.
- **Policy 2.1 Enhanced Public Realm Experience.** Encourage development to enhance the existing environment through the use of creative architectural design and sustainable streetscape treatments that are consistent on each corridor.
- **Policy 2.2 Compatibility and Use with Setting.** Employ buffers and other urban design strategies to encourage the compatibility of new development with the scale, bulk, and pattern of existing development.
- **Policy 2.3 New Life for Old Buildings.** Encourage the preservation and reuse of historic and architecturally significant structures to maintain urban fabric and reduce overall energy consumption associated with new construction.
- **Policy 2.4 Intentional Design.** Encourage design and architecture on private and public property that accentuate focal points, activity nodes, and historic areas.
- **Policy 2.5 Relation to Surroundings.** Ensure new development exhibits a functional, comfortable scale in relation to its neighborhood.
- **Policy 2.6 Preserve Neighborhood Character.** Preserve the character and uniqueness of existing districts and neighborhoods.
- **Policy 2.7 Building and Strengthening Identity.** Collaborate with community stakeholders to strengthen and foster development of community and neighborhood identity and district character through complementary architecture, unique streetscapes, and programming.
- **Policy 2.8 Innovative Development Strategies.** Explore development and subdivision options that promote new opportunities for sustainable, livable, and affordable development.
- **Policy 2.9 Visual Aesthetic of Built Environment.** Ensure that on and off-premise signs and communication equipment are situated to minimize detrimental impacts to the aesthetic quality, character, and image of the surrounding area.
- **Policy 2.10 Greening the Built Environment.** Promote planting of shade trees and require, where feasible, preservation and site design that uses appropriate tree species to shade parking lots, streets, and other facilities with the goal of reducing the heat island effect.

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- **Policy 2.11 Sustainable Practices.** Encourage sustainable development through the use of drought tolerant landscaping, permeable hardscape surfaces, and energy efficient building design and construction.
- **Policy 3.1 Landscaped Travelways.** Promote visually appealing and sustainable landscaping along freeway corridors, roadway medians, and parkways.
- **Policy 3.2 Activate Paths.** Strengthen and activate the design of paths and adjacent development through enhanced and cohesive streetscapes, architectural themes, and landscaping.
- **Policy 3.3 Foster Community Building.** Promote a safe environment that facilitates social interaction and improves active transportation along corridors.
- **Policy 3.4. Improvements to Streetscape.** Promote streetscape improvement plans that are responsive to community needs, the nature of adjacent uses, path characteristics, street classification, pedestrian scale, and view corridors.
- **Policy 3.5 Activity Node Linkages.** Promote streetscape designs that link major destination points, landmarks, and local activity nodes.
- **Policy 3.6 Linear Park System.** Support open space improvements along roadways and non-vehicular paths, such as bike or multi use trails, *to create linear open space that connect to a network of parks and activity areas throughout the city.*
- **Policy 3.7 Natural Recreational Amenities.** Enhance natural and recreational features of Santiago Creek and the Santa Ana River corridors and provide linkages throughout the community.
- **Policy 3.8 Pleasant Travel Experience.** Maximize the use of street trees and parkway landscaping to create a pleasant travel experience and positive City image.
- **Policy 3.9 Scenic Views.** Preserve and enhance scenic views along corridors and other travelways.
- **Policy 3.10 Coordinated Street Improvement Plans.** Coordinate citywide landscape medians and street trees with land use plans and development projects.
- **Policy 3.11 Urban Forest.** Create a diverse urban forest with a variety of sustainable trees in medians, parkways, public open space, and private development.
- **Policy 4.1 Intentional Development.** Support development growth in nodes consistent with the City's vision as the dynamic urban center of Orange County.
- **Policy 4.2 Image Making through Architecture.** Promote development within nodes to reflect the significance of the area and cultivate a positive image of Santa Ana through high quality architecture.
- **Policy 4.3 Activate Open Space.** Ensure architectural and landscape design activates open space, as a means to promote community interaction and enhance the aesthetic quality of development.

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- **Policy 4.4 Vibrant Street Life.** Encourage development within nodes that promote pedestrian activities, enhanced amenities, and engaging designs that allow for discovery, excitement, and social interaction.
- **Policy 4.5 Open Space at Nodes.** Promote creative, multipurpose public space within nodes, major development projects, and people places.
- **Policy 4.6 Community Led Installations.** Provide for opportunities to incorporate distinctive, innovative and community informed public art in plazas and open spaces, to promote pedestrian activity.
- **Policy 5.1 Building Presence at Intersections.** Create a strong presence at focus intersections by locating intense building mass and open space areas along the street that include high quality design and materials.
- **Policy 5.2 Linkages Between Public Art.** Promote public art in conveniently accessible and prominent places to physically and visually link development with streetscape and paths.
- **Policy 5.3 Activating Intersections.** Encourage projects at focal intersections that incorporate vertical design features or mixed use development as a means to provide visual presence and encourage pedestrian activity in these areas.
- **Policy 5.4 Intersections for all Travel Modes.** Strengthen active transportation connections and amenities at focal intersections to promote a pleasant and safe experience for non-motorized forms of travel.
- **Policy 6.1 Design with Landmarks.** Strengthen the design of development to frame and enhance landmarks, natural features, and view corridors.
- **Policy 6.2 Appropriate Design Near Landmarks.** Ensure development near existing landmarks is supportive and respectful of architecture, site, and other design features of the landmark.
- **Policy 6.3 Create New Landmarks.** Encourage new development that will lead to the creation of new landmarks in the City and bolster community pride.
- **Policy 7.1 First Impression.** Strengthen the architectural design of developments near gateways to communicate a sense of arrival and inspire positive images of the City.
- **Policy 7.2 Streetscape Improvements.** Enhance Santa Ana's gateways to include unique and distinctive streetscape improvements.
- **Policy 7.3 Improved Freeway Interface Design.** Collaborate with Caltrans and adjacent jurisdictions to enhance freeway interchanges that create a sense of place and arrival.
- **Policy 7.4 Monuments at Gateways.** Promote imaginative and distinctive features, such as entry monuments, public art, decorative landscape, directional signs, landscape statements, and architectural elements that project a positive image and community character at City gateways.

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- **Policy 7.5 Transit Corridor Beautification.** Improve transit and rail corridors and interfaces to create a welcoming experience for all travelers.
- **Policy 7.6 Neighborhood Signage System.** Encourage the creation of a citywide signage system that identifies and promotes a sense of place for the city's various neighborhoods.

5.1.4 Environmental Impacts

The evaluation of aesthetics and aesthetic impacts is highly subjective, yet it requires the application of a process that objectively identifies the visual features of the existing environment and their importance. The characterization of aesthetics involves establishing existing visual character, including resources and scenic vistas unique to the project area. Visual resources are determined by identifying existing landforms (e.g., topography and grading), views (e.g., scenic resources such as natural features or urban characteristics), viewing points/locations, and existing light and glare (e.g., nighttime illumination). Changes to the existing aesthetic environment that would result due to implementation of the GPU are identified and qualitatively evaluated based on the proposed modifications to the existing setting and the viewer's sensitivity. Impacts are compared to the context of the existing setting, using the thresholds above.

The following impact analysis addresses thresholds of significance for which the Notice of Preparation disclosed potentially significant impacts. The applicable thresholds are identified in brackets after the impact statement.

Impact 5.1-1: The proposed project would alter the visual appearance of the General Plan Update area. [Thresholds AE-1 and AE-3]

The General Plan Update identifies five focus areas throughout the city where General Plan land use designations would change. The City determined that these areas are suited for new growth and development. These five areas are along major travel corridors, the future OC Streetcar line, and/or linked to the Downtown. The General Plan Update would not change land use designations outside of the five focus areas, including the seven other planning areas throughout the city that represent specific plans and other special zoning areas.

Santa Ana is highly urbanized, and therefore views of the city are characterized by an urban landscape. Visual relief of the urban landscape is provided by the Santa Ana River along the western side of the city and Santiago Creek along the northern end of the city. The existing open space land use designations along these corridors will remain under the GPU. Because the city is highly urbanized, buildout in accordance with the GPU would consist mainly of infill and redevelopment efforts. Although new development would alter the visual appearance of the existing conditions, it would not create a substantially adverse impact on scenic vistas nor degrade the city's visual character or quality.

Proposed land use designations within the focus areas include mainly intensification of already developed and urbanized areas in the city. For example, many areas currently designated for General Commercial and Professional Office will be redesignated Urban Neighborhood or District Center, which allows for expanded mixed-use residential opportunities. Additionally, existing Industrial land use designations in the focus areas will be redesignated to Industrial/Flex, which allows for cleaner industrial and commercial uses with live-work

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opportunities. Table 5.1-1 compares the existing floor area ratio (FAR) and height under existing conditions and the General Plan Update.

South Main Street Focus Area

The South Main Street focus area is characterized by a mix of residential and nonresidential uses that are generally one to two stories in height. Three-story apartment buildings exist intermittently throughout and adjacent to the focus area. Densities are up to 7 units per acre for Low Density Residential designation and up to 1.0 FAR for General Commercial and District Center designations. Development is generally up to 35 feet.

The GPU will generally maintain existing low-density residential areas. Existing General Commercial and District Center will be redesignated to Urban Neighborhood, which allows for higher density development and up to three stories. New and/or expanded Industrial/Flex and Institutional areas also allow for higher density development and up to three stories. Artist rendering Industrial/Flex is provided in Figure 5.1-3. The GPU allows for increased density in the focus area compared to existing conditions; however, maximum height is similar to existing conditions.

Grand Avenue/17th Street Focus Area

As discussed under Section 5.1.1.2, *Existing Conditions*, this focus area is characterized by businesses and large apartment complexes along Grand Avenue. Low-density residential areas are dispersed throughout the focus area. Current buildings generally range between one to two stories with some buildings up to five stories (the Santa Ana Medical Arts building and the Orange County Register building). The focus area currently contains an FAR of up to 1.0 and allows for a maximum height of 35 feet above grade (approximately 3 stories¹).

The GPU continues the business-oriented character of the focus area and allows for mixed-use buildings, infill development, and maintaining the compatible nodes of commercial activities. The GPU allows for an FAR of up to 1.5 north of I-5 and up to 2.0 south of I-5. Similarly, the Urban Neighborhood land use designation, which will characterize most of the northern portion of the focus area, allows buildings up to four stories. The District Center land use designation south of the freeway allows heights up to six stories. The four-story building height limit is visually similar to existing buildings in the focus area. The six-story building height limit is one story taller than existing five-story buildings. Under the GPU, density would increase in this focus area compared to existing conditions. Figure 5.1-2 provides an illustration of Urban Neighborhood in the focus area.

West Santa Ana Boulevard Focus Area

The West Santa Ana Boulevard focus area is characterized by a range of residential and nonresidential uses and a mix of intensities. The Willowick Golf Course characterizes the west side of the focus area. The Santa Ana River traverses the western side of the focus area. Existing buildings generally range between one and three stories. Buildings on the eastern side of the focus area and adjacent to the focus area reach up to 11 stories. Existing residential densities allow up to 15 units per acre (medium density residential) and 27 feet in height or

¹ Assuming approximately 10 feet per story.

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two stories. Existing nonresidential densities allow up to 1.0 FAR and 35 feet in height (approximately three stories²).

As shown in Table 5.1-1, the GPU introduces Low-Medium Density Residential and Corridor Residential into the focus area and expands areas designated Urban Neighborhood. The Corridor Residential and Urban Neighborhood designations allow residential densities of 30 dwelling units per acre (du/acre). Nonresidential intensity would increase up to 2.0 FAR. Therefore, the General Plan Update would increase intensity and density of land uses in the focus area. However, heights would be maintained at a maximum of three stories, so development under the GPU would be consistent with existing conditions of the focus area. No changes would occur to the Willowick Golf Course nor parcels that encompass the Santa Ana River. Therefore, visual relief through these areas would be maintained. Figure 5.1-3 provides an illustration of the Industrial/Flex in the focus area.

55 Freeway/Dyer Road Focus Area

As discussed under Section 5.1.1.2, *Existing Conditions*, industrial facilities and office parks comprise the majority of the focus area, with hotels and other service-oriented commercial uses near SR-55. Existing industrial and office structures range between one to two stories, and hotel uses extend up to 10 stories. Generally, existing intensities are at an FAR of up to 1.7. The GPU increases FAR to 3.0 in new Industrial/Flex areas and allows structures up to 10 stories in height. Additionally, the General Plan Update allows for residential uses in the 55 Freeway/Dyer Road focus area at a density of 90 du/acre within the District Center land use designation. The GPU therefore increases intensity of allowed uses compared to existing conditions; however, maximum heights are similar to existing conditions. The addition of residential uses would convert the focus area from an office/industrial character to a mixed-use urban character while enhancing opportunities for office and industrial space.

South Bristol Street Focus Area

As discussed under Section 5.1.1.2, *Existing Conditions*, this focus area is generally characterized by commercial uses, with its southern end adjacent to the South Coast Plaza. The South Bristol corridor is surrounded by residential neighborhoods on both sides. Development intensities and height limits are currently provided up to 1.0 FAR and 35 feet above grade. Residential intensity and maximum height are provided at 15 units per acre and 27 feet above grade (two stories). Existing buildings in the corridor generally range between one to two stories in height with occasional three-story structures. High rises are to the south of the focus area and up to 21 stories in height.

² Assuming approximately 10 feet per story.

Figure 5.1-2 - Artist Rendering of Urban Neighborhood Land Use Designation



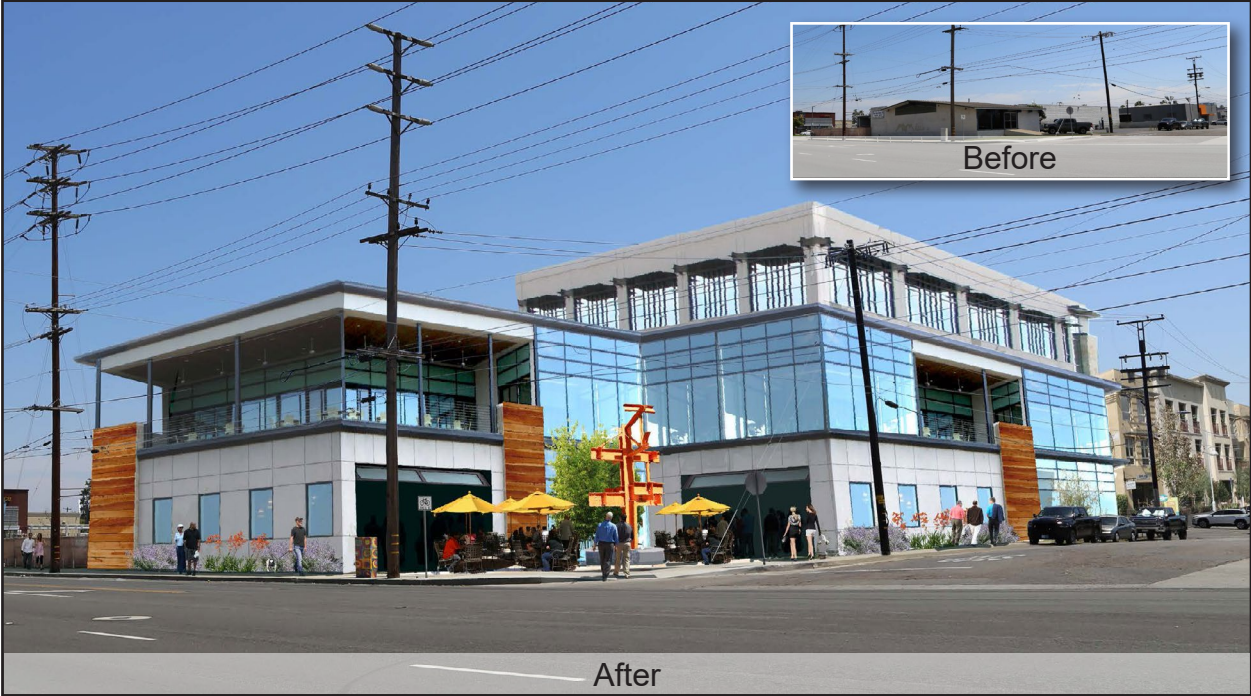
Urban Neighborhood up to Four Stories (e.g. Grand Avenue/17th Street Focus Area).

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Figure 5.1-3 - Artist Renderings of Industrial Flex



Industrial Flex Rendering (e.g. South Main Focus Area).



Industrial Flex Rendering (e.g. West Santa Ana Focus Area).

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The GPU contributes to this focus area's commercial and mixed-use character and redesignates the focus area as District Center and Urban Neighborhood. The GPU designs the focus area to increase in intensity and height from north to south, with greatest intensities and heights near the South Coast Plaza and existing high rises. On its northern end, the proposed Urban Neighborhood allows densities FAR 1.5 or 30 du/acre and heights up to three stories. The Urban Neighborhood designation increases intensity compared to existing conditions but would allow for development heights consistent with existing conditions. The District Center land use designation in the focus area allows development intensities of 2.0 FAR or 90 du/acre to 5.0 FAR or 125 du/acre; corresponding maximum heights would be 10 stories and 25 stories, respectively. Compared to existing development in the focus area, the GPU allows development at a greater intensity and height. However, maximum height would be visually similar to existing high-rise buildings adjacent to the focus area (see Figure 5.1-4).

Historic Districts

As shown in Figure 5.4-1, in Chapter 5.4, *Cultural Resources*, none of the focus areas encompass the French Park and Downtown historic districts. However, the South Main Street focus area contains the eastern side of the Heninger Park Historic District (east of Broadway). Heninger Park is generally characterized by one- to two-story multifamily and single-family residential uses. East of Broadway, higher density residential (such as three-story multifamily buildings) and nonresidential uses are near the major intersections, such as Broadway with 1st Street and Broadway with McFadden Avenue. The GPU generally maintains the Low Density Residential designation of parcels in the Heninger Park Historic District. In the part of Heninger Park in the focus area, the GPU provides new land use designations near the major intersections. Near 1st Street, existing Low Density Residential, District Center, and General Commercial land use designations would be designated to Urban Neighborhood. Near McFadden Avenue, existing Low Density Residential and General Commercial land use designations would be designated to Urban Neighborhood and Institutional. These designations allow greater density of development compared to existing designations, up to 1.0 FAR or 20 du/acre for Urban Neighborhood or 2.0 FAR for Institutional. While the land use designations allowed under the GPU would increase density at the borders of Heninger Park, maximum height would be maintained at three stories, which is consistent with existing development within and near Heninger Park.

Additionally, GPU policies in the historic preservation element (listed below) would ensure that development in Heninger Park is respectful of its historic character.

- **Policy 1.1 Architectural and Design Standards.** Preserve unique neighborhoods and structures in Santa Ana through implementation of the Citywide Design Guidelines and historic preservation best practices.
- **Policy 1.2 Federal Standards for Rehabilitation.** Ensure rehabilitation of historic buildings comply with the Secretary of Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties and that new construction in historic districts is compatible with context.
- **Policy 1.3 Historic Districts and Design Standards.** Explore opportunities to preserve neighborhoods with largely intact historic buildings and character through the creation of historic districts, [identification](#)

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of historically sensitive areas, or neighborhood context sensitive design standards. ~~or neighborhood design standards.~~

- **Policy 1.8 Reuse of Historic Buildings.** Support flexible land use standards to facilitate the adaptive reuse of historic buildings with a variety of economically viable uses, while minimizing impacts to the historic value and character of sites and structures.

With regard to the French Park and Downtown National Register Districts, the GPU does not change the land use designations in these districts. Therefore, the visual character of these districts would not be substantially impacted.

Existing Scenic Corridors

The existing scenic corridors element identifies scenic corridors through the city that shape an image of the City and serve as mixed use corridors. Many of the focus areas are centered on an identified scenic corridor, and buildout in the focus areas would contribute to the mixed-use character of these corridors. For example, the South Main Street focus area and the West Santa Ana Boulevard focus area are along primary street corridors, and South Bristol Street focus area is along a secondary street corridor. Seventeenth Street is identified as a secondary street corridor and intersects the Grand Avenue/17th Street focus area. The General Plan Update would redesignate parcels along the corridors as Urban Neighborhood, District Center, or Industrial/Flex.

While the 55 Freeway/Dyer Street focus area is not along a scenic corridor it is located in close proximity to a major City entry. The focus area currently has land use designations of Professional & Administration Office, General Commercial, and District Center. The GPU redesignates the area with Industrial/Flex, District Center, and General Commercial and allows for an urban environment with a mix of uses instead of an area that is almost exclusively focused on professional office and industrial.

The existing scenic corridors element identifies selected views of the city from SR-55 and I-5. Development consistent with the GPU, specifically the proposed land use plan (see Figure 3.7), would enhance views of the city from the SR-55 and I-5. The proposed land use plan reflects a plan that can accommodate growth while preserving its low density residential areas, open space, and areas that provide visual relief from the urban landscape. The GPU enhances primary and secondary scenic corridors and largely nonresidential areas.

Conclusion

As discussed above, buildout under the GPU will be at a greater intensity/density in all five focus areas compared to existing conditions. While maximum height would generally be similar to existing buildings, the overall increase in allowed intensity and height across the focus areas lead to a visually denser urban setting and alter Santa Ana's existing skyline. Buildout under the GPU would not have a substantial adverse effect on scenic vistas (such as the Santa Ana River and Santiago Creek) since these existing open space parcels would remain unchanged.

Figure 5.1-4 - Artist Renderings of South Bristol Street Focus Area



District Center Between MacArthur Boulevard and Sunflower Avenue.



District Center Between Alton Avenue and MacArthur Boulevard.

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Buildout under the GPU would be in conformance with State regulations, such as Title 24 (Building Code), and local regulations, such as the City's municipal code and the seven existing specific plan/special zoning areas that guide design and aesthetic quality. Further, development of projects consistent with the GPU would be required to comply with the design and development specifications outlined in the updated land use and urban design elements (see Section 5.1.3.2, *General Plan Update Policies*). The City is in the process of updating the zoning code since it is legally required to bring the zoning code in compliance with the General Plan Update. The City will update the zoning districts in terms of permitted land uses, development intensity, and building height. Consistency with existing state and local regulations and the GPU policies would ensure that future development in Santa Ana would not degrade the views and visual character of the city and would not conflict with zoning and other regulations that govern scenic quality. The City is in the process of updating the zoning code to bring the code in compliance with the General Plan update. The City will update the zoning districts in terms of permitted land uses, development intensity, and building height. Impacts would be less than significant.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation: With the implementation of RR AE-2 and AE-3 and General Plan Update policies identified above, Impact 5.1-1 will be less than significant.

Impact 5.1-2: The proposed General Plan Update will not alter scenic resources within a state scenic highway. [Threshold AE-2]

As discussed in Section 5.1.1.2, *Existing Conditions*, no state scenic highways, eligible or officially designated, traverse the city nor are located near the city. SR-1, approximately 5.6 miles south of the city, is the closest eligible scenic highway to Santa Ana. SR-91 is the closest officially designated scenic highway, approximately 4.8 miles north of the city (Caltrans 2019). SR-91 runs east-west, and SR-1 runs northwest-southeast. Though buildout consistent with the GPU would lead to infill development and intensify the urban landscape, it would not damage scenic resources, including rock outcroppings, trees, and historic buildings within state scenic highways. Therefore, no impact would occur.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation: No impact.

Impact 5.1-3: The proposed project would generate additional light and glare. [Threshold AE-4]

Nighttime illumination and glare impacts are the effects of buildings and developments' interior and exterior lighting upon adjoining uses and areas. Excessive light and/or glare can impair vision, cause annoyance, affect sleep patterns, and generate safety hazards for drivers. Light sources include security lighting, sign illumination, street lights, lighting in parking areas, and vehicle headlights. Light reflecting off passing and parked cars and large expanses of glazing (i.e., glass windows) or other reflective surfaces can also generate glare. Daytime glare is caused by sunlight reflecting off of reflective surfaces such as parked cars and cars traveling on adjacent roadways, light-colored building material, and windows.

Sources of light and glare within the confines of the city include building lighting (interior and exterior), security-lighting, sign illumination, and parking-area lighting. These sources are mostly associated with the residential, commercial, and industrial uses throughout the city. Other sources of nighttime light and glare include street lights and headlights from vehicular traffic along surrounding roadways. Existing sources of

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daytime glare include light reflecting off of parked cars and cars traveling on adjacent roadways, light-colored building material, and windows. Additionally, the city is bordered by other cities, including Orange, Tustin, Irvine, Costa Mesa, Fountain Valley, and Garden Grove, and some ambient lighting comes from surrounding communities and roadways.

Development under the General Plan Update would be focused in five focus areas throughout the city. Growth outside of the focus areas is expected to be incremental, limited, and consistent with the existing land use designations. New development and increased density in the five focus areas will generate additional sources of light and glare in the focus areas and in the areas surrounding them, both from increased development and vehicles within and around the focus areas. As discussed in Table 3-7, *General Plan Update Existing and Buildout Population*, in Chapter 3, *Project Description*, each focus area would experience a population growth under the buildout under the General Plan Update. Populations in the 55 Freeway / Dyer Road focus area and the Grand Avenue / 17th Street focus area would increase by 244 and 243 percent, respectively. The population in the South Bristol Street focus area would increase by 129 percent. Therefore, buildout under the General Plan Update would bring more development and more residents to the focus areas that would generate new and intensify existing sources of light and glare.

All future development accommodated by the General Plan Update would be required to comply with the California Building Energy Efficiency Standards for Residential and Nonresidential Buildings (Title 24, Part 6, of the California Code of Regulations) as amended by the Santa Ana Municipal Code Chapter 8, Article II.

By complying with the building codes pertaining to light and glare sources from new developments, nighttime lighting and glare impacts and potential spillover caused by the full buildout of the General Plan Update would be minimized and impacts would be less than significant.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation: With the implementation of RR AE-1 through AE-3, Impact 5.1-3 would be less than significant.

5.1.5 Level of Significance Before Mitigation

Upon implementation of regulatory requirements and standard conditions of approval, the following impacts would be less than significant: 5.1-1, 5.1-2, and 5.1-3.

5.1.6 Mitigation Measures

No significant impacts were identified and no mitigation measures are necessary.

5.1.7 Level of Significance After Mitigation

Impacts 5.1-1 through 5.1-3 would be less than significant with compliance with all applicable federal, state, and local regulations.

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5.1.8 References

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