

3.1 AESTHETICS

This section of the Draft EIR (DEIR) addresses the existing visual resources on the project site and in the vicinity, and discusses the potential visual, aesthetic, and light/glare impacts associated with implementation of the proposed project.

3.1.1 SETTING

REGIONAL SETTING

The aesthetic character of Nevada County is characterized by views of the valleys created by the South Fork of the Yuba River and its smaller tributaries, as well as the many peaks of the mountains comprising the Sierra Nevada range such as Castle Peak. In addition, land use patterns and areas preserved as open space contribute significantly to the county's aesthetic quality. The ownership and operation of forests by the U.S. Forest Service in the Tahoe National Forest and the open lands under the control of the Bureau of Land Management also preserve a significant portion of the county for permanent scenic quality (Nevada County 1996, p. 18-1).

LOCAL SETTING

Visual Character of the Project Site

The 215-acre project site is primarily undeveloped and features varied topography, natural vegetation, and multiple surface water features. Existing development includes a 14,000-square-foot single-family residence constructed in 2001 and located on a bluff in the site's southwestern corner overlooking the Bear River. Associated with this residence are auxiliary buildings, unpaved access roads, a garden area with raised planting beds, landscaping, and fencing. In addition, a golf driving range is located at the northwestern corner of the site near its primary access point at Rincon Way. The range consists of a large, narrow grassy area and tall net fencing. Various types of fencing and gates, including livestock corrals, and unpaved access roads are also located throughout the site.

Surface water features on the project site include an unnamed tributary that flows southwest from the site's northeastern corner and drains into an approximately 3.25-acre pond located near the center of the site. In addition, segments of two Nevada Irrigation District (NID) irrigation canals traverse the site: the Weeks Canal crosses the northwestern portion of the site and the Magnolia Ditch crosses the eastern portion of the site. Portions of these canals are open and unlined while other segments are lined with gunite or are encased entirely and feature concrete and metal gates. The Bear River is located immediately south of the project site. This portion of the Bear River is free flowing and in a relatively natural state.

The topography of the site ranges from approximately 1,300 feet along the southern portion of the site near the Bear River to approximately 1,700 feet in the eastern portion of the project site. There is somewhat flatter terrain near the center of the site. Natural slopes range from gently rolling hills (less than 5:1 horizontal to vertical) to steep slopes (greater than 1.25:1 horizontal to vertical). Site vegetation consists of moderately dense annual grasses and deciduous trees including black, live, and blue oaks. North-facing slopes support moderate to heavy underbrush and some evergreen trees such as ponderosa pine. Riparian vegetation such as tall green grasses, reeds, blackberries, trees, and other bushes delineate the unnamed tributary and pond. There are also small numerous rock outcrops located throughout the site. Depending on location and elevation, certain areas of the site feature expansive, unobstructed views of the surrounding rural area (Acacia CE 2011; Lumos 2007).

3.1 AESTHETICS

Figures 3.1-1a through 3.1-1d provide photographs of the project site in its current condition, including views of surface water features.

Visual Character of Adjacent Land Uses

The area surrounding the project site is characterized by rural residential development, open space, and grazing land as well as the Bear River riparian corridor. Scattered rural residential development is located in all directions. Immediately west of the project site, south of Rincon Way, are three existing residences along Connie Court. West of the site, north of Rincon Way, are numerous residences along Rincon Way and Hidden Ranch Road. Beyond these immediate uses is State Route (SR) 49, a four-lane, north-south-oriented regional highway. Immediately south of the site is the Bear River. North of the site is also characterized as rural with numerous residences off of Hidden Ranch Road, Beaver Court, Pleasant Court, Starfire Court, and Rodeo Flat Road. East of the site is more rural open space and grazing land with scattered residences.

SCENIC HIGHWAYS

There are several highways within Nevada County that are officially designated or eligible for designation as state scenic highways through the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) Scenic Highways Program. These include the following (Nevada County 1996, p. 18-1):

- State Route 20 from near Grass Valley to Interstate 80 near Emigrant Gap (officially designated)
- Remaining segments of SR 20 (eligible for designation)
- SR 49 throughout the entire county (eligible for designation)
- SR 174 throughout the entire county (eligible for designation)
- Interstate 80 (I-80) throughout the entire county (eligible for designation)
- SR 89 throughout the entire county (eligible for designation)

In addition, the County has also identified SR 49 as a scenic highway and has adopted a scenic corridor ordinance that applies a Scenic Corridor (SC) combining district to applicable properties within the SR 49 corridor. The project site is located approximately one-half mile east of SR 49, is not visible from its corridor, and is not zoned SC (Caltrans 2011).

LIGHT AND GLARE

Given the rural character of the project site and surrounding area, it is expected that only minimal nighttime lighting is visible on or near the project site associated with existing residences and vehicles traveling on area roadways. Similarly, there is minimal daytime glare visible in the area associated with glass and other reflective building materials and vehicle windows.



EAST FACING VIEW FROM CLUBHOUSE



SOUTH FACING VIEW FROM NORTH CENTRAL AREA



NORTH EAST FACING VIEW THROUGH THE WEST AREA OF THE SITE



SOUTH WEST FACING VIEW OF THE POND LOCATED ON SITE

Source: Acacia CE Consulting & Engineers

Figure 3.1-1a
Project Site Photographs



**NORTH WEST FACING VIEW
OF THE POND WITHIN THE
SITE**



**WEST FACING VIEW OF THE
CANAL LOCATED AT THE
NORTH EAST CORNER OF
THE SITE**



**EAST FACING VIEW OF THE
CANAL LOCATED AT THE
NORTH EAST CORNER OF
THE SITE**



**ROCK OUTCROP LOCATED
IN THE NORTH WEST AREA
OF THE SITE**

Source: Acacia CE Consulting & Engineers

Figure 3.1-1b
Project Site Photographs



CENTRAL AREA OF SITE



WEST FACING VIEW ALONG SOUTH BOUNDARY



EAST FACING VIEW ALONG SOUTH BOUNDARY



NORTH WEST AREA OF SITE

Source: Acacia CE Consulting & Engineers

Figure 3.1-1c
Project Site Photographs



NORTH WEST AREA OF SITE



ROCK OUTCROP IN NORTH WEST AREA OF SITE



ROCK OUTCROP IN EAST AREA OF SITE

Source: Acacia CE Consulting & Engineers

Figure 3.1-1d
Project Site Photographs

3.1.2 REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

STATE

California Scenic Highway Program

The California Scenic Highway Program intends to preserve and protect scenic highway corridors from change that would diminish the aesthetic value of lands adjacent to scenic highways. The State Scenic Highway System includes a list of highways that are either eligible for designation as scenic highways or have been so designated. Cities and counties can nominate eligible scenic highways for official designation by identifying and defining the scenic corridor of the highway. The municipality must also adopt ordinances to preserve the scenic quality of the corridor or document such regulations that already exist in various portions of local codes.

SR 49, which is located one-half mile west of the project site, is eligible for designation as a state scenic highway (Caltrans 2011). The County has also identified SR 49 as a scenic highway and has adopted a scenic corridor ordinance. This ordinance is discussed further below.

LOCAL

Nevada County General Plan

The Nevada County General Plan serves as the overall guiding policy document for the unincorporated areas of Nevada County. A summary of the project's consistency with applicable General Plan aesthetic policies is contained in **Appendix 3.0-A**. While this Draft EIR analyzes the project's consistency with the General Plan pursuant to California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Section 15125(d), the Nevada County Board of Supervisors makes the ultimate determination of consistency with the General Plan.

Nevada County Land Use and Development Code

Section L-II 2.7.7 – Scenic Corridor Combining District (SC)

The Nevada County Land Use and Development Code, Chapter II, Article 2.0, Section L-II 2.7.7, includes regulations applicable in the Scenic Corridor combining district. The purpose is to protect and preserve the scenic resources of areas which are adjacent to highways and roads which have been identified as having high scenic quality and requiring protection for the benefit of residents and visitors. The County has identified SR 49 as a scenic highway. However, the project site is not visible from the SR 49 corridor and has not been zoned SC. Therefore, the County's scenic corridor ordinance does not apply to the proposed project.

Chapter II, Article 4.0 – Comprehensive Site Development Standards

Chapter II, Article 4.0 of the Nevada County Land Use and Development Code provides regulations to guide the design, location, and development of new land uses and the alteration of existing uses in the unincorporated county. The standards assist in furthering numerous Nevada County General Plan goals, objectives, and policies that provide for the preservation and enhancement of Nevada County's rural quality and small-town character. They also assist in promoting General Plan provisions for maintaining the county's high quality natural landscape and scenic resources, as well as protecting existing historic resources.

3.1 AESTHETICS

Section L-II 4.2 – Community Design Standards

The County's community design standards are intended as a framework to assist in understanding the County's goals and objectives for high quality development. They provide design interpretations for commercial, industrial, and residential development. The community design standards address building height, building setbacks, height limits for fencing and hedges located within yard setbacks, landscaping requirements, parking lot design standards, requirements for permanent open space and maximum impervious surfaces, equipment screening, and signage standards.

Section L-II 4.2.8 – Lighting

The Nevada County Land Use and Development Code, Chapter II, Article 4.0, Section L-II 4.2.8, Lighting, establishes standards to provide for efficient, safe and attractive outdoor lighting while minimizing nighttime light pollution and energy waste. This section of the code requires all discretionary projects that propose to install outdoor lighting to submit a lighting plan. This section of the code also requires all outdoor light fixtures to be fully shielded to prevent the light source or lens from being visible from adjacent properties and roadways and the use of fixtures with high efficiency lamps. Light poles in the rural zoning districts, including the proposed project site, are restricted to a maximum height of 15 feet.

Section L-II 5.3 – Design Review

The Nevada County Land Use and Development Code, Chapter II, Article 5.0, Section 5.3, Design Review, provides a procedure by which new development is reviewed for compatibility with surrounding development, natural resources, and/or historic features within the project area. Design review ensures that a proposed development project reflects and retains the rural and historic, small-town character of the county; ensures each community's unique character, identity, and distinctiveness; encourages visual relief through varied forms, patterns, and styles unified through landscaping, screening, and selected architectural features; and retains natural landforms and native landscaping, protects sensitive environmental resources, and encourages open space. Design Review is required for all development permits and use permits for commercial, industrial, and multi-family projects, for structural changes to the exterior of commercial or industrial buildings, and for exterior visual changes to a project approved by a previous land use permit, unless specifically exempted within a specific section or article of Chapter II of the Land Use and Development Code.

Western Nevada County Design Guidelines

The Western Nevada County Design Guidelines provide a menu of design concepts and techniques to assist project developers in enhancing the character of Nevada County by encouraging the highest level of design quality while at the same time provide the flexibility necessary to promote economic viability. The guidelines promote new development that encourages a sense of place and that adds to community identity by inviting pedestrian activity, i.e., placing buildings closer to roads, limiting building size to a human scale, clustering buildings, placing parking behind buildings, breaking up parking lots with trees and walkways, and creating clearly visible entries and public places (Nevada County 2002).

3.1.3 IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

STANDARDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

The impact analysis provided below is based on the following State CEQA Guidelines Appendix G thresholds of significance, which state that a project would have a significant aesthetic impact if it would:

- 1) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista.
- 2) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway.
- 3) Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings.
- 4) Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area.

As discussed in the Setting subsection above, the project site is not located within the corridor of a state or local scenic highway and therefore cannot damage scenic resources within a state scenic highway. The issue (Standard of Significance 2 above) will not be addressed further in this DEIR.

METHODOLOGY

The following analysis is based on field observations, aerial photography, and review of the topographic conditions from GIS maps for the project site and surrounding area as well as the visual simulations prepared for the proposed development (the visual simulations do not include simulations of how the light fixtures would appear). It should be noted that any analysis of impacts to visual character is subjective by nature since the qualities that create an aesthetically pleasing setting will vary from person to person. For the purposes of this analysis, site reconnaissance, aerial photos, and topographic maps were used to analyze the existing visual character of the project site, while visual simulations and proposed site plans were used to determine how the project would alter the existing character. The analysis further considers whether the anticipated alterations to the visual character of the site would constitute a significant adverse effect to existing public views and scenic resources and would clearly dominate the visual character of the view.

PROJECT IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

Substantial Adverse Effect on Scenic Vista (Standard of Significance 1)

Impact 3.1.1 The proposed project would not substantially alter scenic vistas of the surrounding natural area, including the Bear River corridor. Therefore, development of the proposed project would have **less than significant** effects to scenic vistas.

Although there are no officially designated scenic vistas in the project area, depending on location and elevation, certain areas of the site feature expansive, unobstructed views of the surrounding rural area. These views extend for many miles, generally include natural vegetation

3.1 AESTHETICS

and scattered residential development, and are considered an important component of the area's visual character. The higher elevations on the project site are located along the southern and eastern portions of the site. There is somewhat flatter terrain, and thus fewer scenic vistas, near the center and along the western portion of the site.

Approval and implementation of the proposed project would result in the phased construction of a variety of large structures and associated infrastructure. However, proposed development associated with the project would be limited to 48 acres total, with all development except the proposed emergency access road, trails, barbeque areas, water tank, and sewer lift station to be clustered within the northwest portion of the site. Approximately 4 acres of the site would be used for agricultural uses (gardens), with 163 acres remaining as undeveloped open space. The proposed clustered development site design is consistent with the Nevada County General Plan, which includes several policies that encourage the clustering of development as a method to reduce environmental impacts, including aesthetic concerns (Nevada County General Plan Policies 1.5(t), 1.12, 1.17, 1.18, and 6.2). The concept of clustered development is to group, or "cluster," urban development together on a site while leaving large portions of the site, generally those containing important visual, biological, agricultural, or other natural resources, as open space. Clustering development allows for greater contiguous open space and preservation of existing conditions on a site than would occur if urban development were to be dispersed throughout a site and open space were parceled out to accommodate individual yards and/or other development. Therefore, because clustering preserves existing site conditions and contiguous open space to a greater extent than traditional urban development, and because clustering generally promotes development in less visually prominent areas, clustering allows for urban development to be placed on a project site while retaining the visual character of a less urbanized area. In regards to the proposed project and the alteration of scenic vistas, the clustering of development on the northwestern portion of the project site would assist in retaining much of the existing views of natural vegetation and scattered residential development. Building heights in the developed portion of the project site would not exceed three stories or 45 feet. Furthermore, the only development proposed in the higher elevation portions of the site would be the emergency access road and the water tank. As shown in **Figure 2.0-17** in Section 2.0, Project Description, of this Draft EIR the proposed water tank would be screened from view by existing vegetation. The proposed building heights, and the fact that they are located in the lower elevations (northwest portion) of the project site, would not be expected to block expansive views from the higher elevations of the project site. Therefore, this impact would be considered **less than significant**. Impacts associated with the overall change in visual character of the project site, as well as impacts associated with views of the project site from the surrounding area, are discussed under Impact 3.1.2 below.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Degrade Existing Visual Character of the Site and Surroundings (Standard of Significance 3)

Impact 3.1.2 Implementation of the proposed project would convert approximately 48 acres of the project site from moderately disturbed land to a mixed-use continuing care retirement community. Such a conversion would fundamentally alter the visual character of a portion of the site. This is a **less than significant** impact.

Implementation of the proposed project would convert approximately 48 acres of the project site from moderately disturbed rural residential, open space, and grazing land to a mixed-use

continuing care retirement community (CCRC) including numerous structures and associated infrastructure. In addition to the proposed development, construction of the proposed project would result in the removal of trees and vegetation as well as grading and land contouring. These activities would fundamentally alter the visual character of a small portion of the site. However, construction-related visual impacts would be temporary and would be addressed as the site develops.

As the area surrounding the project site is characterized by rural residential development, open space, and grazing land, public viewpoints of the site are limited to portions of the site visible from surrounding roadways, including Rincon Way and Rodeo Flat Road. For the most part, existing trees/vegetation and topography block views of the site from public roadways.

Currently, those traveling east on Rincon Way do not encounter views of the site until reaching Connie Court, as Rincon Way is bordered on each side by trees and other vegetation. Views of the project site from the current terminus of Rincon Way and Connie Court consist mainly of views of trees interspersed with open space and some paths leading through the site. Views onto the project site from the residences along the western boundary of the site (located on Connie Court and the eastern end of Rincon Way) consist primarily of trees interspersed with open space and some paths as well; however, the existing residence and pond may also be visible although any views would be obstructed by trees. After implementation of the project, views of the proposed CCRC will be visible to those traveling toward the project site along Rincon Way, as well as from residences located on Connie Court and on the eastern end of Rincon Way. From Rincon Way and Connie Court, the two-story gatehouse would be visible at the western entry to the project site. In addition, views of the event lawn, Village Center buildings, and single-story, detached cottages will be visible from Connie Court and from private residences along Connie Court. The private residence located north of Rincon Way along the western boundary of the project site could have some views of the proposed tennis courts and single-story, detached cottages; however, a large cluster of trees between this residence and the project site would block views of proposed development.

In addition, there are several rural residences located along the northern boundary of the project site along Hidden Ranch Road, Pheasant Court, Starfire Court, and Beaver Court. The project site is visible only from those residences along Starfire Court, as well as from Starfire Court itself, due to the topography and vegetation of the area. Views of the site from Starfire Court consist of open space and some paths on the site. After implementation of the project, the access road, hilltop recreation area, gazebo, agricultural uses, and some cottages will be visible.

At the terminus of Rodeo Flat Road, existing trees and topography currently block views of the site; this would remain true after implementation of the project. However, those traveling on Rodeo Flat Road would have views of the secondary emergency access road and gate after project implementation. These views may also be visible from private residences located at the southern terminus of Rodeo Flat Road. However, the visibility of project features would be obscured by the trees and topography of the project site to the extent that the project would not alter the overall rural character of the project area.

Conversion of a portion of the site from a rural residence to a large CCRC would affect a limited number of public views of the site and would be considered an alteration to the site's visual character. In order to reduce these impacts, development would be primarily clustered within the northwest portion of the site, with approximately 77 percent, or 167 acres to remain undeveloped (163 acres open space + 4 acres agricultural uses). As discussed under Impact 3.1.1 above, clustering on the project site would retain much of the existing view as well as the

3.1 AESTHETICS

visual character of a less urbanized area; thus reducing the impact of changes to the overall visual character of the project site. In addition, the more intense residential and commercial uses associated with the project site would be located primarily at the center of the community (i.e., the Village Center) with lower-density housing and recreational uses providing visual transition toward the surrounding rural residences. Furthermore, the project proposes to preserve most of the natural features on the project site in order to maintain the rural character of the area as much as possible. The developed areas would be landscaped (see **Figure 2.0-10** in Section 2.0, Project Description, of this Draft EIR) to incorporate areas of native vegetation and would utilize native and adaptive plant materials.

Elevations and visual simulations of the proposed project's Village Center buildings, common houses, duplexes, and barns are shown in **Figures 3.1-2a** through **3.1-5**. Per Section L-II 5.3, Design Review, of the Nevada County Zoning Regulations, the proposed project would be reviewed for ultimate consistency with applicable, adopted design standards, including the Western Nevada County Design Guidelines, prior to issuance of development permits. The Western Nevada County Design Guidelines encourage environmentally sensitive site design that is consistent with the overall architectural character of the project and community. As such, project architectural design would incorporate building materials that blend with the environment and landscaping that would assist in screening the urban nature of portions of the site. For example, the guidelines require new development to minimize the visual impact of large buildings with the proper use of windows, structural bays, roof overhangs, awnings, and other details. The guidelines also require new development to use earth tones that are similar to the tones found in the area and on adjacent buildings and to incorporate the color from primary building materials, such as stone, brick, and hardwood, as base colors. The proposed project would be generally consistent with the Western Nevada County Design Guidelines. The CCRC would add to a sense of place with the incorporation of several miles of existing surface trails providing recreational access to the 163 acres of open space on the project site as well as 6-foot-wide trails within the Village Center and clustered development areas to connect the housing areas to project amenities. Design review would ensure that the project would be of a high quality design and that building materials, massing, and style would not visually contrast with the natural environment of the site.

The project would also result in the construction of off-site infrastructure, including improvements to Rincon Way and water service mainline and sewer force main along Rodeo Flat Road. Proposed improvements to Rincon Way could result in limited tree removal and additional paving within the existing 30-foot-wide public roadway and utility easement. While these improvements could slightly change existing views of Rincon Way, the overall visual character of the roadway and surrounding area would not be adversely affected. The water service mainline and sewer force main proposed within the existing Rodeo Flat Road Public Utility Easement (PUE) would be placed underground; therefore no visual impacts would occur.

The project proposes to preserve the majority of the project site in its current condition by clustering development; only the emergency access roads, trails, water tank, water tank access road, and sewer lift station would be constructed outside of the clustered development envelope. Both the water tank and sewer lift station would be screened by existing vegetation as shown in **Figure 2.0-17**. Clustering of development and screening of the proposed water tank and lift station would reduce impacts to the visual character and views of the site. In addition, the project would be required to be consistent with the provisions of the Western Nevada County Design Guidelines, with the final design plans being reviewed by the County to ensure compliance prior to the approval of any development permits. Therefore, while the project would fundamentally alter the visual character of a small portion of the site, the overall visual character of the site would not be degraded. This impact would be considered **less than significant**.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Create New Sources of Light and Glare (Standard of Significance 4)

Impact 3.1.3 Implementation of the proposed project would introduce some urban uses to a primarily undeveloped and rural area that currently includes few existing sources of light or glare. This impact is **less than significant**.

Implementation of the proposed project would introduce a variety of building materials to the site. Glass, roofing, car windshields, etc., have the potential to reflect light and create glare visible for some distance from the site. However, as discussed under Impact 3.1.2 above, the proposed project would be reviewed for consistency with the Western Nevada County Design Guidelines prior to issuance of development permits. The guidelines require that new projects avoid bare metal, highly reflective surfaces (glass, metallic paint, etc.), illuminated roofing, and high contrast or brightly colored glazed tile. Compliance with the design guidelines would substantially reduce the potential for glare from the proposed project. While it is always possible that glare from reflected car windshields, building windows or other sources could occur, these impacts are considered transitory and based on environmental conditions (e.g., time of day, angle of observer) rather than as part of the design of the project. Impacts from glare would be expected to be **less than significant**.

Implementation of the proposed project would also introduce new sources of light that currently do not exist on the project site. Project site lighting would include 88 pole lights, 40 of which would be 8 feet tall and 48 of which would be 12 feet tall, as well as 26 bollard-style lights and 90 wall-mounted lights. Individual residential units would also have porch entry lights. These new light sources could adversely affect adjacent areas with light spilling over and could contribute to skyglow conditions in the project area. As discussed under Impact 3.1.2, rural residences both north and west of the project site would have views of various components of the project. Project site lighting would also be visible from these residences, primarily those along Connie Court near the five pole lights near the Village Center as shown in **Figure 2.0-9**.

The use of low-intensity lighting, the strategic placement of landscaping, and proper shielding techniques can assist in reducing nighttime lighting levels. The Nevada County Land Use and Development Code, Section L-II 4.2.8, Lighting, establishes standards to provide for efficient, safe, and attractive outdoor lighting while minimizing nighttime light pollution and energy waste. In addition, the code requires all outdoor light fixtures to be fully shielded to prevent the light source or lens from being visible from adjacent properties and roadways. The proposed project would be subject to these lighting standards, which also require that projects submit a lighting plan depicting the location, height, type, style, and positioning of all light fixtures. A photometric (lighting) plan has been prepared for the proposed project (**Figure 2.0-9** in Section 2.0, Project Description) and, as shown, the proposed light fixtures would be approved by the IDA (International Dark-Sky Association), meaning that they would minimize glare, reduce light trespass, and would not pollute the night sky. In addition, perimeter landscaping and natural vegetation would also screen adjacent areas from light intrusion. Therefore, this impact would be considered **less than significant**.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

3.1 AESTHETICS

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Source: McCamant & Durrett Architects

Not to Scale



Figure 3.1-2a
Village Center Entry - Visual Simulation



Source: McCamant & Durrett Architects

Not to Scale



Figure 3.1-2b
Village Center Main Pedestrian Way - Visual Simulation





Source: McCamant & Durrett Architects

Not to Scale

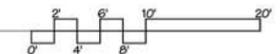


Figure 3.1-2c
Village Center Promenade - Visual Simulation

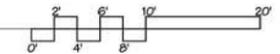




2 BLDG. 5 - PARTIAL WEST ELEVATION (BLDG. 3 & 4 SIM)
Scale: 1/8" = 1'-0"



1 BLDG. 5 - NORTH ELEVATION (BLDG. 3 & 4 SIM)
Scale: 1/8" = 1'-0"



Source: McCamant & Durrett Architects

Not to Scale



Figure 3.1-2d
Village Center Building Elevations





Source: McCamant & Durrett Architects

Not to Scale

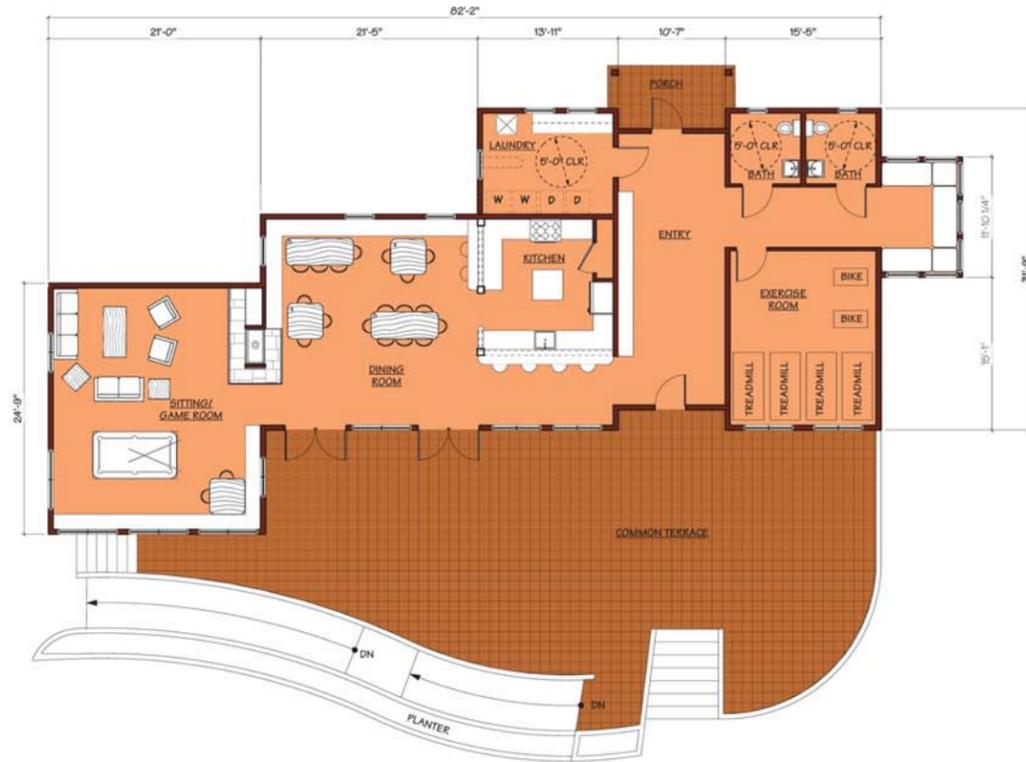


Figure 3.1-2e
Village Center Building Elevations



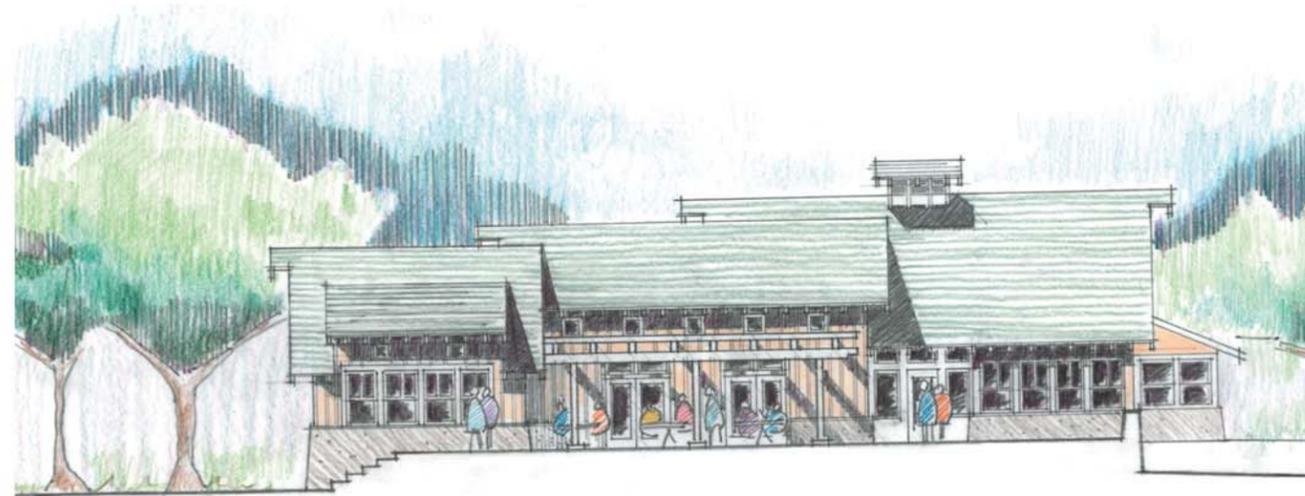


4 COMMON HOUSE - FRONT ELEVATION
Scale: 1/8" = 1'-0"



2 COMMON HOUSE - FLOOR PLAN
Scale: 1/8" = 1'-0"

2182 SQUARE FEET



3 COMMON HOUSE - PATIO ELEVATION
Scale: 1/8" = 1'-0"



1 COMMON HOUSE - SIDE ELEVATION
Scale: 1/8" = 1'-0"

Source: McCamant & Durrett Architects

Not to Scale



Figure 3.1-3
Common House Building Elevations





4 DUPLEX - PERSPECTIVE W/ ALTERNATE PORCH DESIGN
N.T.S.



2 DUPLEX - FLOOR PLAN
Scale: 1/8" = 1'-0"

1143 SQUARE FEET - EACH UNIT
2285 SQUARE FEET - TOTAL



3 DUPLEX - SIDE ELEVATION
Scale: 1/8" = 1'-0"



1 DUPLEX - FRONT ELEVATION
Scale: 1/8" = 1'-0"

Source: McCamant & Durrett Architects

Not to Scale



Figure 3.1-4
Duplex Visual Simulation and Elevations



2 ELEVATION
Scale 1" = 10'



3 SITE PLAN
Scale: 1" = 20'



1 PERSPECTIVE VIEW

Source: McCamant & Durrett Architects

Not to Scale



Figure 3.1-5
Barn Visual Simulation and Elevations



3.1.4 CUMULATIVE SETTING, IMPACTS, AND MITIGATION MEASURES

CUMULATIVE SETTING

The cumulative setting for visual resources consists of the project site, as well as all existing, approved, proposed, and reasonably foreseeable development in the immediate area. The area within this cumulative setting is characterized by rural residential development, open space, and grazing land as well as the Bear River riparian corridor. Refer to **Table 3.0-2** in Section 3.0, Introduction to the Environmental Analysis and Assumptions Used, for a list of approved and proposed projects in Nevada County.

CUMULATIVE IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

Cumulative Aesthetic Impacts

Impact 3.1.4 Implementation of the proposed project would contribute to the cumulative conversion of the area from moderately disturbed rural residential, open space, and grazing land to other urban uses. In addition, the proposed amendments to the County's General Plan and Zoning Ordinance would permit CCRCs in either PD or SDA land use designations with approval of a zone change. This impact is considered to be **less than cumulatively considerable**.

Proposed CCRC Development

As described in Impact 3.1.2 above, development of the project site with the proposed CCRC would have less than significant impacts associated with degrading the visual character and views of the project site as well as introducing new sources of light. Significant urban development in the surrounding area (cumulative setting) is not expected given that the area is designated by the Nevada County General Plan for rural residential development and agricultural (grazing) land. Furthermore, the County's General Plan, Chapter 18, Aesthetics, includes policies to protect aesthetic resources, as do the Land Use and Development Code and the Western Nevada County Design Guidelines. Any future projects in the cumulative setting would be designed consistent with these policies, and project-specific mitigation would reduce visual impacts on a project-by-project basis. Therefore, this impact would be considered **less than cumulatively considerable**.

General Plan and Zoning Ordinance Text Amendments

In addition to development of the proposed CCRC, implementation of the proposed project would result in amendments to the County's General Plan and Zoning Ordinance in order to establish a CCRC land use designation and zoning district. The proposed text amendments are policy actions that would not directly degrade visual character and views or create new sources of light and glare within the cumulative setting. However, future cumulative development in Nevada County would be subject to the new uses allowed by the proposed amendments, meaning that, after implementation of the proposed project, CCRCs would be permitted in either a PD (Planned Development) or SDA (Special Development Area) land use designation with approval of a zone change. As discussed in further detail in Section 4.0, Cumulative Impacts Summary, currently 22 areas in the county meet the acreage criteria for CCRCs per the proposed text amendments that could be proposed for CCRC use in the future.

3.1 AESTHETICS

Given that it is currently unknown which, if any, of these 22 areas would be proposed for CCRC development in the future, identification of site-specific aesthetic impacts resulting from the proposed text amendments would be speculative at this time. At a programmatic level, the environmental impacts associated with development of all PD and SDA designated areas in the county were analyzed in the Nevada County General Plan Environmental Impact Report, Volume I, SCH #1995102136 (1995). In addition, any future CCRC development projects would be required to submit a rezoning application in order to establish CCRC Combining District zoning for an individual CCRC use on any of the sites identified above. Such rezoning applications would be subject to further CEQA analysis of project-specific impacts (proposed Zoning Ordinance amendment Section L.II 2.7.11(C)(4)), including aesthetic and light and glare impacts. It is reasonable to assume that future site-specific CEQA analysis would result in project-specific mitigation to address impacts.

Furthermore, all future CCRC development projects located elsewhere in the county would be required to be consistent with the proposed text amendments to the General Plan and Zoning Ordinance as well as County regulations and requirements, including applicable design guidelines and the Nevada County Land Use and Development Code. The proposed text amendments require each CCRC Master Plan to include detailed architectural renderings and plans allowing for design review with each Master Plan application (proposed Zoning Ordinance amendment Section L.II 2.7.11(H)). The proposed text amendments also include the following requirements to ensure that future CCRC development in the cumulative setting would be designed for aesthetic compatibility with the surrounding area:

- Architectural planning and design shall incorporate energy-efficient design techniques, such as natural heating and cooling systems, use of sun and wind energy generation systems, etc.;
- Structures located near the project property lines shall be designed and located in a manner that reflects consistency and compatibility with neighboring areas, and shall include appropriate use of building density, heights and design to minimize any intrusion on neighbors;
- Outdoor recreation or gathering areas, particularly those that may generate significant noise and/or light and glare, shall be located to minimize intrusion on neighboring properties;
- Structures shall be clustered to reduce site disturbance and protect open spaces, natural and environmentally sensitive areas;
- Building design shall avoid use of long, unbroken facades and shall include use of balconies, offset walls, trellises and other design features; and
- Building design, colors and materials shall generally correspond to the natural setting of the project site and to any prevalent design styles that may occur in neighborhoods within the general project area.

Given that the proposed text amendments would not directly degrade visual character and views or create new sources of light and glare within the cumulative setting, and the proposed text amendments include a regulatory framework that addresses potential aesthetic impacts, cumulative aesthetic impacts associated with the proposed General Plan and Zoning Ordinance text amendments are considered **less than cumulatively considerable**.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

3.1 AESTHETICS

REFERENCES

- Acacia CE Inc. 2011. *Geotechnical Existing Conditions Review of the Rincon del Rio Continuing Care Retirement Community Project*.
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- . 2002. *Western Nevada County Design Guidelines*.