

SECTION 4.1

Aesthetics, Light and Glare

This section describes existing visual resources in the RSP Area and vicinity, and describes the changes to those conditions that would result from implementation of the proposed RSPU.

Descriptions of existing visual characteristics, both on site and in the vicinity of the RSP Area, are presented and changes to conditions since approval of the 2007 RSP are described. Existing plans and policies relevant to urban design and visual resource issues associated with implementation of the projects are provided and compared to the plans and policies in place in 2007. Potential impacts to aesthetic and visual resources due to the projects are evaluated in the context of existing conditions based on analyses of photographs, site reconnaissance, and project data. In addition, this section provides a comparison with the effects of the 2007 RSP. Pursuant to the requirements of the proposed Railyards Special Planning District, detailed evaluation of the design characteristics of specific development projects under the proposed RSPU would be undertaken as part of the required Site Plan and Design Review process.

A Notice of Preparation (NOP) for preparation of this Draft SEIR was circulated for public review beginning on June 26, 2015. During the public comment period, two letters were received that commented on aesthetic and visual resource issues related to the RSPU (see Appendix B). The comments addressed the following issues:

- Inclusion of planned development in the Washington Specific Plan and Bridge District Specific Plan (City of West Sacramento).
- Consideration of impacts related to stadium lighting and signage, as well as design of parking structures (The River District Business Association).

The analyses included in this section were developed based on site visits and documented photographs, as well as review of proposed plan policies and design guidelines, project-specific plans and renderings, and data provided in the City of Sacramento 2035 General Plan, the City of Sacramento 2035 General Plan Master Environmental Impact Report, the Central City Community Plan, the Central City Urban Design Guidelines, the Sacramento River Master Plan, and the Sacramento River Parkway Plan.

Issues Addressed in the 2007 RSP EIR

The 2007 RSP EIR evaluated the potential for high-rise buildings in the RSP Area to alter public views, the potential for building height and massing that would conflict with the character of the riverfront between Old Sacramento and the Jibboom Street bridge, the potential to create new sources of spillover light, the potential to create new sources of hazardous glare, and relevant cumulative impacts.

Although the overall height of buildings is anticipated to be generally lower in the proposed RSPU than was anticipated for the 2007 RSP, the issues addressed in the 2007 RSP EIR are all addressed in this SEIR. In addition, specific consideration is given to the proposed KP Medical Center, MLS Stadium and Stormwater Outfall projects.

Public Resources Code Section 21099

Public Resources Code (PRC) §21099 was added to CEQA in the adoption of SB 743 (2013) which sought to streamline CEQA review for qualifying transit oriented infill projects. Pursuant to PRC §21099(d)(1), the aesthetic effects of projects that meet the definition of “a residential, mixed-use residential, or employment center project on an infill site within a transit priority area are not considered significant impacts on the environment.” The RSP Area meets the definition of a Transit Priority Area because the entire RSP Area is within one-half mile of an existing or planned major transit stop. It also qualifies as an “infill site” by virtue of having been previously developed, as well as being largely surrounded by parcels that are developed with urban uses. It is anticipated that most, if not all, of the future projects that would be developed pursuant to the proposed RSPU would qualify as residential, mixed-use residential, or employment center uses.

Although aesthetic impacts of the proposed RSPU would not qualify as significant impacts pursuant to PRC §21099(d)(1), a full evaluation of the aesthetic effects of the proposed RSPU, KP Medical Center, MLS Stadium, and Stormwater Outfall projects is nonetheless provided in this section in order to fully understand how the proposed changes would affect the existing environment.

4.1.1 Environmental Setting

The aesthetic and visual resources setting is described on pages 6.13-1 through 6.13-19 of the 2007 RSP Draft EIR. The visual character of the Central City in general has not changed materially since certification of the 2007 RSP EIR; however, there have been some changes within the RSP Area and in the vicinity, including adjacent and nearby projects and the relocation of the Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) tracks, and the construction of the new passenger platforms. Therefore, the following discussion updates and replaces the 2007 RSP EIR setting. **Figure 4.1-1** provides a key of photo locations for photos taken of the RSP Area in 2007, and replicated in 2015. **Figures 4.1-2** through **4.1-11** demonstrate the differences in in the project site between 2007 and 2015.



SOURCE: ESA 2015

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Figure 4.1-1
Aesthetics Photo Location Map



2007



2015

SOURCE: PBS&J 2007; ESA 2015

Sacramento Railyards Specific Plan Update . 150286

Figure 4.1-2

Viewpoint 1: Central Shops Looking Northwest
2007 and 2015 Comparison



2007



2015

SOURCE: PBS&J 2007; ESA 2015

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Figure 4.1-3
Viewpoint 2: Central Shops Looking East
2007 and 2015 Comparison



2007



2015

SOURCE: PBS&J 2007; ESA 2015

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Figure 4.1-4
Viewpoint 3: Southwest of Central Shops, Looking South
2007 and 2015 Comparison



2007



2015

SOURCE: PBS&J 2007; ESA 2015

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Figure 4.1-5
Viewpoint 4: West of 7th Street Tracks, Looking South
2007 and 2015 Comparison



2007



2015

SOURCE: PBS&J 2007; ESA 2015

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Figure 4.1-6
Viewpoint 5: Eastern Portion, North of Tracks, Looking Northeast
2007 and 2015 Comparison



2007



2015

SOURCE: PBS&J 2007; ESA 2015

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Figure 4.1-7
Viewpoint 6: D Street, Near 8th Street, Looking West
2007 and 2015 Comparison



2007



2015

SOURCE: PBS&J 2007; ESA 2015

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Figure 4.1-8

Viewpoint 7: Heading South on 7th Street, Looking Southwest
2007 and 2015 Comparison



2007



2015

SOURCE: PBS&J 2007; ESA 2015

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Figure 4.1-9
Viewpoint 8: Northwest Corner Looking Southwest
2007 and 2015 Comparison



2007



2015

SOURCE: PBS&J 2007; ESA 2015

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Figure 4.1-10
Viewpoint 9: Central/Western Portion Looking West
2007 and 2015 Comparison



2007



2015

SOURCE: PBS&J 2007; ESA 2015

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Figure 4.1-11

Viewpoint 10: From West Sacramento Looking East onto Jibboom Street
2007 and 2015 Comparison

Regional Setting

The City of Sacramento is characterized by a downtown urban core surrounded by suburbs and agricultural land. To the east, on clear days the foothills of the Sierra Nevada Mountains provide a backdrop to the visual setting of the City. Downtown Sacramento is framed by a grid pattern of bisecting streets. Buildings range from small single-family residences to large high-rise office buildings. Buildings are comprised of a multitude of materials including metal, glass, wood, brick, and stone. Typical of the visual character of a downtown area of a city, the Central Business District (CBD) of Sacramento is characterized by larger multi-story buildings constructed of metal and glass. High-rise buildings in downtown Sacramento range in height from approximately 150 feet to 425 feet.

Sacramento's downtown skyline is visible from nearby locations such as the West Sacramento riverfront, the SR 160 and Business 80 bridges over the American River, as well as from miles around the City, including from eastbound I-80 on the Sacramento-Yolo Causeway, from westbound I-80 east of the City of Roseville, from northbound I-5 between Elk Grove and Sacramento, from southbound I-5 north of the downtown area, and from westbound US 50 as far east as El Dorado Hills. High-rise buildings are the distinctive features of the skyline, including the Wells Fargo Center, the California Environmental Protection Agency building, the U.S. Federal Courthouse, the U.S. Bank Plaza Building, the Sheraton Grande Hotel, the California State Capitol building, the Renaissance Tower Building, and, by night, the distinctive blue light of the Esquire Plaza building and the colorful LED lit top of the US Bank Plaza Building.

The City is bisected by a number of major freeways including Interstate 5 (I-5), which traverses the state from north to south; Interstate 80 (I-80), which provides an east-west connection between San Francisco and Reno, and US 50, which provides an east-west connection between Sacramento and South Lake Tahoe. In some areas, freeways are lighted by poles and overhead lamps. In most areas within the City, surrounding development generates light that provides ambient light in the vicinity. Headlights from motor vehicles contribute to the ambient light conditions. Some freeways in the City are landscaped. Such sections of freeways are improved by planting of lawns, trees, shrubs, flowers or other ornamental vegetation on at least one side or on the median of the freeway. None of the freeway segments within the City, including I-5 as it passes through downtown Sacramento near the Downtown project site, have been identified by the California Department of Transportation as scenic.¹

West Sacramento

The City of West Sacramento is visible from portions of the RSP Area. North of the I Street Bridge, across the Sacramento River from the RSP Area, the West Sacramento riverfront is largely in a natural condition between the Sacramento River and 2nd Street. From 2nd Street to

¹ California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), 2012. *California Scenic Highway Program*. www.dot.ca.gov/hq/LandArch/scenic/schwy.htm. Accessed August 5, 2013.

4th Street, north of C Street, are the recently constructed Metro Place and River's Side mixed use developments, largely 1-2 story mixed use and townhouse structures that are modern in design.

West Sacramento has adopted plans for intensive development of the west bank of the Sacramento River, across from Old Sacramento and the Docks Area, between the I Street Bridge and the Pioneer Bridge. The Washington Specific Plan area, located along the Sacramento River between the Tower Bridge and A Street, was originally developed with residential uses in the early part of the 20th century. The 1996 Washington Specific Plan noted that the area developed on a traditional street grid and included, at that time, many existing buildings that appeared to be blighted, as well as vacant lots.²

Several high-rise structures have been built or previously approved in West Sacramento, south of C Street, between the I Street Bridge and the Tower Bridge. In 1993, the Ziggurat Building was constructed as an 11-story, 158-foot office building with a distinctive ziggurat shape. In 2009, the California State Teachers Retirement System (CalSTRS) completed construction of a headquarters building on a site bounded by E Street, F Street, 3rd Street, and the Sacramento River. The CalSTRS Headquarters building is 19 stories over a two level parking garage, approximately 300-feet in height. The CalSTRS Headquarters project is part of the approved the Raley's Landing project, which includes two additional riverfront buildings ranging in height from 245 feet (River 1) to 268 feet (River 2). All of these buildings are across the river from the urbanized Old Sacramento riverfront. The heights of these buildings are presented in **Table 4.1-1**.

Railyards Specific Plan Area Characteristics

At the time that the 2007 RSP EIR was prepared, the visual character of the project site was dominated by reminders of its historic railroad past, including the UPRR main railroad lines, rail spur lines that traverse the site, the red-brick passenger rail depot and Railway Express Annex buildings, and the massive Central Shops buildings. Since that time, the UPRR lines have been relocated north to their current alignment immediately south of the Central Shops. An approximately 430-foot long pathway with a light-brown metal canopy and adjacent landscaping has been constructed to connect the north side of the Depot building to the concrete passenger tunnels (Steve Cohn Passageway) and new concrete platforms with light-brown metal canopies that provide passenger access to four of the six UPRR tracks. Earth and concrete bridges have been constructed that carry 5th and 6th streets over the realigned UPRR tracks, and 5th and 6th streets have been extended from H Street to meet the newly constructed Railyards Boulevard, which has been constructed from 7th Street to the future alignment of Bercut Drive.

The Depot is situated on the southernmost portion of the Railyards Area, adjacent to the REA building (outside of the RSP Area), and is highly visible from I Street and in views toward the Railyards from 3rd Street, 5th Street, and H Street, as well as from I-5. Both the Depot building and the REA building are distinguished by red brick facades with symmetrical elevations and

² City of West Sacramento, 1996. *Washington Specific Plan*, May 19, 1996, page II-2.

**TABLE 4.1-1.
DOWNTOWN SACRAMENTO AND RELEVANT WEST SACRAMENTO BUILDING HEIGHTS**

| Name | Number of Floors | Height (ft) | 2007 Status | 2016 Status |
|---|------------------|-------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| City of Sacramento | | | | |
| Wells Fargo Center | 30 | 423 | Completed in 1992 | Same |
| 621 Capitol Mall | 25 | 404 | Approved | Completed in 2008 |
| Bank of the West Tower/500 Capitol Mall | 29 | 397 | Proposed | Completed 2009 |
| U.S. Bank Plaza | 26 | 373 | Completed in 1992 | Same |
| California EPA Bldg | 25 | 371 | Completed in 2000 | Same |
| Renaissance Tower | 28 | 372 | Completed in 1989 | Same |
| Capitol Square | 25 | 351 | Completed in 1991 | Same |
| US Courthouse & Federal Bldg | 18 | 350 | Completed in 1999 | Same |
| Esquire Plaza | 22 | 322 | Completed in 1999 | Same |
| Sheraton Grande Hotel | 32 | 318 | Completed in 2001 | Same |
| Meridian Plaza 1 | 12 | 150 | Completed in 2003 | Same |
| Downtown Commons Mixed Use Tower | 19 | 260 | N/A | Under Construction |
| West America Bank Bldg | 18 | N/A | Completed in 1984 | Same |
| 12 th and K Tower | 18 | 240 | Completed in 1992 | Same |
| Dept of Justice Bldg | 18 | 226 | Completed in 1995 | Same |
| Elks Club Building | 15 | 226 | Completed in 1925 | Same |
| Capitol Western States Life | 15 | 216 | Completed in 1925 | Same |
| Citizens Hotel | 15 | 216 | Completed in 1925 | Same |
| California State Capitol | 6 | 210 | Completed in 1874 | Same |
| One Capitol Mall | 8 | N/A | Completed in 1992 | Same |
| Bridgeway Towers | 15 | 163 | Completed in 1980 | Same |
| Residence Inn at Capitol Park | 14 | 150 | Completed in 2007 | Same |
| California Fruit Building | 10 | 141 | Completed in 1929 | Same |
| Pioneer Towers | 12 | 124 | Completed in 1976 | Same |
| Embassy Suites Hotel | 8 | 90 | Completed in 2002 | Same |
| Golden 1 Center | 3 | 70 | N/A | Under Construction |
| Lorenzo Patino Hall of Justice | 16 | | Completed in 1989 | Same |
| Capitol Towers | 15 | | Completed in 1960 | Same |
| Hyatt Regency Sacramento | 15 | | Completed in 1988 | Same |
| Riverview Plaza | 12 | | Completed in 1992 | Same |
| City of West Sacramento | | | | |
| CalStrs Headquarters | 19 | 300 | Under Construction | Completed in 2009 |
| Raley's Landing River 2 Bldg | 24 | 268 | Approved | Approved |
| Raley's Landing River 1 Bldg | 18 | 245 | Approved | Approved |
| Ziggurat | 11 | 158 | Completed in 1993 | Same |

NOTE:

Several high-rise buildings that were identified in this table in the 2007 RSP EIR were cancelled and are no longer included. The cancelled projects include: Capitol Grand Tower a 701 foot high tower at 12th and J streets; Capitol Mall Towers I and II, 615 foot towers proposed at 3rd and Capitol Mall; Epic Tower, a 615 foot tower proposed at 12th and I streets; the Aura, a 443 foot tower proposed at Capitol Mall and 6th Street; 701 L Street, a 428 foot office tower proposed at 7th and L streets; and Meridian Plaza II, a 300 foot office tower proposed at 14th and K streets.

SOURCE: SkyscraperPage.com, <http://skyscraperpage.com/cities/?cityID=116>, accessed January 18, 2016; City of West Sacramento, 2016.

patterned bricks that frame the windows. Common elements of these buildings include pale bases, parapet cornices, and metal canopies. In addition, both incorporate two-story arched openings and patterned metal window mullions. The similarity of these two buildings lends the Depot District visual consistency. Renovation of the Depot building is ongoing with associated scaffolding and portions of the building covered in plastic shrink-wrapping for containment of construction dust. The former UPRR tracks and platforms remain, but in much of the area visible signs of ongoing construction include construction materials and worker trailers.

The Central Shops are historic buildings located north of the realigned UPRR tracks and consist primarily of large former manufacturing and maintenance shops. Historically these buildings were used for producing and maintaining rail equipment. They have been vacant since the early 1990s. The California State Railroad Museum leases the westernmost two of these buildings (the Boiler Shop and Erecting Shop) and uses them for repair, maintenance, and storage of its historic train stock (see the Boiler Shop in Figure 4.1-2).

Ongoing remediation activities involve disturbance of soils on the northern, western and eastern edges of the Central Shops district have been substantially completed (see **Figure 4.1-12**).

As reported in the 2007 RSP EIR, although the styles vary among the historic buildings, and exterior materials range from corrugated metal to decorative brick, particular design features persist within the Shops area. A common pattern can be established throughout these structures. Variation on the following components appear on buildings throughout the site: brick facades; a height range from one to three stories; gabled roofs, often metal-clad; rows of segmented arched windows and bays, frequently separated by shallow brick pilasters; grid patterns created by the recurrence of these bays and pilasters; multi-paned windows, and clerestory windows (see Figure 4.1-3).

Although historic, these structures have declined over the past years as they have sat vacant. Today views of the Central Shops include broken and/or boarded over windows and doors, and some roofs are protected by shrink wrapping or tarps (see **Figure 4.1-13**).

Along the western boundary of the RSP Area, the elevated section of Jibboom Street runs parallel to the Sacramento River, directly west of I-5, which is also elevated. The RSP Area is most visible from the elevated section of I-5. The riverfront section of the RSP Area is characterized by steep embankments and riparian woodland (dominated by several large cottonwood trees) along the riverbanks. Because of the height of the riverbanks (25-30 feet when the river is at summertime levels), the Sacramento River is only visible from the far western boundaries of the RSP Area.

Continuous approximately 20-foot high berms run along the northern and southeastern boundaries of the RSP Area. These berms were originally constructed as the foundation for railroad tracks. The southeastern berm is unbroken from 7th to 12th Street, and continues to serve as the base for the UPRR main line. The northern berm runs from the Sacramento Water



SOURCE: ESA 2015

Sacramento Railyards Specific Plan Update . 150286

Figure 4.1-12
Remediation North of Central Shops



SOURCE: ESA 2015

Sacramento Railyards Specific Plan Update . 150286

Figure 4.1-13
Boarded Windows in Central Shops

Treatment Plant to 12th Street, with a break where it is bisected by 7th Street, and no longer contains railroad tracks. These berms create a partial barrier, visually separating much of the RSP Area from the adjacent Alkali Flat neighborhood to the south and from the River District to the north and east.

North of the Central Shops and the UPRR tracks, the majority of the RSP Area is undeveloped, with the exception of the recently constructed Railyards Boulevard, 5th Street, and 6th Street; an historic water tower located on the west side of 6th Street, south of Railyards Boulevard; and a temporary concrete crushing facility with visible conveyors, crushing machines, and stockpiles, that is operating between 5th and 6th Street. Views of the recently constructed streets and bridges (5th and 6th streets crossing the UPRR tracks) are characterized by wide asphalt streets and concrete sidewalks, historic-character street lights, benches and trash receptacles (see **Figure 4.1-14**).

The 7th Street corridor is visually characterized by sidewalks and street trees in a landscaped planter strip on the western side of the street, and light rail tracks and electric trolley lines lining the eastern side of the street (see **Figure 4.1-15**).

East of 7th Street, the RSP Area is topographically varied due to earthmoving associated with soil remediation. Views are visually dominated by disturbed earth, scattered shrubs, large earthen piles of dirt that are undergoing bioremediation, and large piles of salvaged materials, including blocks of granite, scrap metal, and creosote-soaked timbers (see **Figure 4.1-16**).

Views to and From the Project Site

Because the site has historically been an industrialized railyard visually secluded from surrounding development by railroad embankments on the south and north, the Sacramento River and elevated section of I-5 on the west, and buildings on the southwest, views to and from the RSP Area are limited in number and range. The site is most visible from the elevated section of I-5 where drivers and passengers in vehicles can see the site in both the northbound and southbound directions. In addition, travelers on 7th Street are provided clear views of portions of the site, especially north of the UPRR mainline underpass. The site is also visible from higher floors of many high-rise buildings in the north and western portions of downtown. Views from the ground level are much more limited.

Views of the RSP Area from downtown are generally from I Street where the existing Depot and adjacent REA building are the most visible structures. Limited views past those buildings and the recently constructed passenger platforms and trains on the tracks provide glimpses of the Central Shops buildings and scattered vegetation in the RSP Area.

Views to the site from Alkali Flat, east of 7th Street, are limited by the height of the railroad embankment, as depicted from Viewpoint 6 on Figure 4.1-7. Views to the site from 7th Street previously provided visual access to the Depot, passenger platforms, and the north and east sides of the Central Shops at a distance, but today are limited by the presence of the 5th and 6th Street



SOURCE: ESA 2015

Sacramento Railyards Specific Plan Update . 150286

Figure 4.1-14
5th Street Bridge Looking North



SOURCE: ESA 2015

Sacramento Railyards Specific Plan Update . 150286

Figure 4.1-15
7th Street/Railyards Boulevard, Looking North



SOURCE: ESA 2015

Sacramento Railyards Specific Plan Update . 150286

Figure 4.1-16
Stockpiles on MLS Stadium Site, East of 7th Street

bridges, as well as the grade differential between 7th Street and the remainder of the RSP Area. Seventh Street is the only location from which the full extent of the RSP Area north of the UPRR tracks is visible, essentially from the Sacramento River and I-5 to 12th Street. Views from this area to the south include views of the downtown skyline, as well as views into the Alkali Flat neighborhood, including key features such as the KCRA television studio, the Globe Mills complex, the Creamery project (currently under construction), and the small scale residences of the neighborhood.

Views to the RSP Area from the River District, including along North B Street, are limited because of the height of the northern railroad embankment. These views are dominated by the vegetation that has grown along and on the embankment.

Other key views to downtown are present from the 5th and 6th Street bridges, which afford views to the current construction activity at Golden 1 Center (see **Figure 4.1-17**).

As is seen from Viewpoint 10, Figure 4.1-11, views from West Sacramento and the Sacramento River are very limited due to the height of the Sacramento River embankment, the elevated section of Jibboom Street, and the elevated I-5.

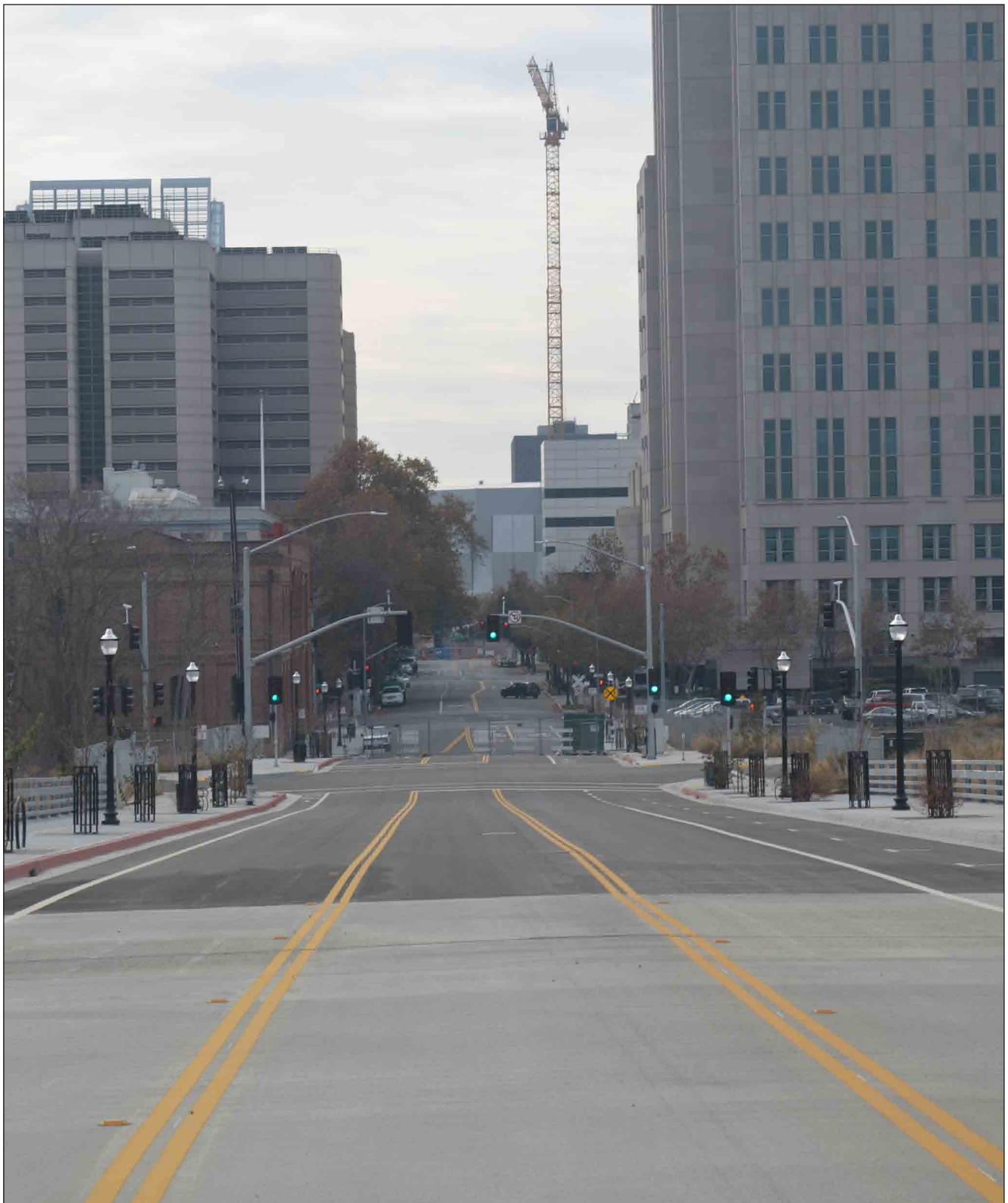
Visual Characteristics of Surrounding Uses

The City of Sacramento 2035 General Plan Background Reports identifies that “scenic resources” can include natural open spaces, topographic formations, and landscapes.³ Many people associate natural landforms and landscapes with scenic resources, such as oak woodlands, lakes, rivers, streams, and some historic areas. Scenic resources can also include urban open spaces and the built environment. Examples of these would include parks, trails, pathways, nature centers, archaeological and historical resources, and architectural features. With respect to the RSP Area, the Sacramento River, the Sacramento Valley Station (historic depot), the historic I Street Bridge, Old Sacramento Historic District, and the Central Shops buildings qualify as scenic resource under this definition.

The Sacramento River Water Treatment Plant is located immediately north of the RSP Area (east of I-5 and south of Bannon Street). Concrete block structures, mechanical equipment, piping, and at least three to four white cylindrical structures, and open water sedimentation basins are presently visible from the northern portion of the project site.

Adjacent to the water treatment plant to the north and extending towards the east are various industrial and commercial uses within the River District. The visual character of the area is defined primarily by large warehouses and distribution facilities that occupy most of the frontage along Richards Boulevard, and are surrounded by expansive paved parking and outdoor storage areas. These uses are not characterized by any architectural styles or features. No significant

³ City of Sacramento, 2015, *City of Sacramento 2035 General Plan Master Environmental Impact Report, Appendix C, Background Report*, February 24, 2015, page 6-121.



SOURCE: ESA 2015

Sacramento Railyards Specific Plan Update . 150286

Figure 4.1-17
Golden 1 Center from 6th Street Bridge

landscaping exists, giving the area a highly industrial appearance. Other than roadway views (heading south on 7th Street), minimal views of the project site are available from this area, primarily due to the existing structures as well as the northern embankment, which forms a visual barrier to and from the RSP Area.

The Alkali Flat neighborhood borders the RSP Area to the southeast and comprises 25 blocks of residential, commercial, and industrial uses. The Alkali Flat neighborhood is generally bounded by the UPRR tracks on the north, 12th Street to the east, G Street to the south, and 7th Street on the west. The Alkali Flat neighborhood is visually characterized by low-rise buildings with a mix of Victorian homes and more modern architecture with buildings ranging from one to three-stories in height, small neighborhood parks, and tree-lined streets. Typical buildings include single-family residences, apartment buildings, retail shops, and restaurants, commercial and office buildings, and warehouse-type industrial buildings.

The CBD of downtown Sacramento is largely built-up with a mix of building types and sizes, interspersed with parks and municipal uses. As discussed previously, the downtown area is distinguished by high-rise office towers, some in excess of 25 stories. As indicated in Table 4.1-1 above, more recently constructed (or planned) buildings tend to be taller than the older buildings. Sacramento's skyline is visible from miles around the City due to the flat terrain of the region. Building designs run from 1920's architecture to modern structures. Most blocks in the CBD are dominated by a few large buildings with uniform setbacks, block-like shapes, and exterior materials of concrete, glass, terra-cotta, and other similar building façade materials. Particular buildings tend to represent distinct areas of downtown, such as the Asian-influenced buildings of the Chinatown District across I Street from the RSP's Depot District. Buildings near the southern edge of the project site, including the Robert T. Matsui Federal Courthouse, the Sacramento County Jail, the County Administration Building, and further to the east, Sacramento City Hall, represent the Civic Center portion of downtown.

Located southwest of the RSP Area, Old Sacramento is a National Register Landmark and 28-acre State Historic Park, on the banks of the Sacramento River, in downtown Sacramento. With a mix of retail shops, restaurants, offices, and museums, the area contains 53 historic buildings and is generally characterized by Gold Rush and post-Gold Rush era western-style structures, with plank sidewalks and cobbled streets. The historic I Street Bridge frames the northern boundary of Old Sacramento and sits at the southwestern corner of the RSP Area. The historic bridge is an 854-foot long double-deck, metal truss swing bridge originally constructed in 1911. The metal bridge is painted black and sits on two large concrete supports, and swings on a 42-foot central pedestal.

The Sacramento River is located on the western edge of the RSP Area and represents the primary natural scenic resource in the vicinity. Along the edge of the RSP Area, the river has steep embankments with scattered vegetation; scattered broken concrete and concrete remains of old wharf footings; a small, approximately 8-foot tall rectangular wood and cylindrical metal

structure that is a river flow gauging station; and several large cottonwood trees lining the riverbank. Most of year when the river is running at lower levels, the top of the riverbank is 25-30 feet above river water level. Because of the height of the embankments, the river surface is difficult to see from most of the RSP Area. The River is largely visible as a vegetated edge, made up of shrubs and large cottonwood trees.

North of the RSP Area, key visible features include the Sacramento River water intake structure that was recently developed on the Sacramento River approximately 700 feet downstream of the original 1920's intake facility, approximately one-half mile south of the confluence with the American River. The new intake facility is designed with concrete and glass and is lined with lights, which provides a visual attraction along the waterfront at night. Approximately 400 feet north of the water intake structure is an historic PG&E powerhouse that is currently planned to be adaptively reused as the Powerhouse Science Center. Other planned features in this location include a modern glass and concrete structure that would house an earth and space science center and planetarium, and a landscaped Robert T. Matsui Waterfront Park.

Across the River in West Sacramento, the west bank of the Sacramento River north of the I Street Bridge is visually a predominantly undeveloped natural riverbank, not as steep or high as the east bank edge of the RSP Area. The only urban structures visible from the east bank of the river include an elevated water tank (located on 2nd Street), an elevated steel tower structure denoting the Riverwalk located at 3rd and B Street, and a boat landing to the north. Residential structures in the Broderick area of West Sacramento along C Street (including Metro Place and River's Side) are not visible from the RSP Area.

Sensitive Receptors

Eventual buildout of the RSPU anticipates high-rise development that could be highly visible from much of the surrounding area. Sensitive receptors include people using area parks and the Sacramento River, visitors to Old Sacramento, residents of Alkali Flat, and pedestrians along protected view corridors designated along 4th, 7th, 9th, and 10th streets. These receptors are considered sensitive because of their familiarity with the existing landscape, their ability to detect change, and the duration of their exposure to change in scenic quality in the project vicinity.

KP Medical Center Site Characteristics

The proposed KP Medical Center site is currently vacant land, graded flat with limited scattered weedy vegetation (see **Figures 4.1-18** and **4.1-19**). The site itself is visually unremarkable, having previously been cleared of buildings, remediated, and graded in preparation of future development. Views to the north include the grey, one-story, terra-cotta, historic Coagulant Building, tanks, and a microwave tower located at the Water Treatment Plant, weedy embankments of stored soil, and traffic lights at the future intersection of Bercut Drive and South Park Street. Views to the west include the elevated structure and earthen embankments supporting I-5, and glimpses of trees along the Sacramento River corridor visible through the I-5 support structures. Views to the south include the prominent buildings of the Central Shops (including the



SOURCE: ESA 2015

Sacramento Railyards Specific Plan Update . 150286
Figure 4.1-18
KP Medical Center Site, Looking Northeast



SOURCE: ESA 2015

Sacramento Railyards Specific Plan Update . 150286

Figure 4.1-19
KP Medical Center Site, Looking South

very large Boiler Shop and Erecting Shop buildings). The backdrop of these buildings include the historic Depot, Wong Center, and the 501 J Street office building, as well as a number of high-rise buildings in downtown that visually sit behind the Central Shops, such as the Robert T. Matsui Federal Courthouse, the Park Tower (980 9th Street), the CalEPA Headquarters building, U.S. Bank Tower, 500 Capitol Mall, and Wells Fargo Centre. Views to the east include 7th Street and the eastern portion of the RSP Area.

MLS Stadium Site Characteristics

The proposed Stadium site is currently vacant land with scattered shrubs, topographically varied due to ongoing stockpiling and movement of stockpiled soils associated with remediation activities (see Figure 4.1-17). The site has previously been excavated 10-20 feet below the grade of the railroad embankment as part of site remediation. Views to the north are dominated by the northern railroad berm, with scattered trees and low vegetation on the embankments. Distant views are limited to a few structures that rise above the horizon created by the berm, including the historic City Incinerator chimney, industrial building rooflines, and power lines. Views to the west include 7th Street, vacant weedy lands of the RSP Area with the elevated I-5, the Bannon Street microwave tower, and the CalSTRS Headquarters Building in the long distance. Views to the south include the prominent silo structures of the former feed and flour mill that has been converted into the Lofts at Globe Mills, the 573-foot transmission tower located on the grounds of the one- and two-story brick and stucco KCRA studio, the Creamery at Alkali Flat three-story modern residences, the CalEPA Headquarters Building and other high-rise structures in downtown, and trees that line the southern UPRR embankment.

Stormwater Outfall Site Characteristics

The proposed Stormwater Outfall site is located on the east bank of the Sacramento River. The outfall structure site is largely dominated by broken concrete and several large cottonwood trees on the embankment, the paved Sacramento River bicycle path, a large California sycamore tree and several oak trees in a landscaped median that separates the bicycle path from Jibboom Street (see **Figure 4.1-20**). The site is visible from the Sacramento River and the west bank of the River, including the City of West Sacramento's RiverWalk path (see Figure 4.1-11).

Light and Glare

Introduction to Light and Glare

Nighttime lighting is necessary to provide and maintain safe, secure, and attractive environments; however, these lights have the potential to produce spillover light and glare, and if designed incorrectly, could be considered unattractive. Although nighttime light is a common feature of urban areas, spillover light can adversely affect light-sensitive uses, such as residential units at nighttime.



SOURCE: ESA 2015

Sacramento Railyards Specific Plan Update . 150286

Figure 4.1-20
Sacramento Riverfront with Bike Path, Looking South

Ambient light levels or illumination is measured in foot-candles. **Table 4.1-2** lists typical ambient illumination levels in foot-candles for exterior and interior lighting. “Horizontal” foot-candles measure light illumination on a horizontal surface, such as a sidewalk or parking lot; “vertical” foot-candles measure light illumination on a vertical surface.

**TABLE 4.1-2.
TYPICAL ILLUMINATION LEVELS IN FOOT-CANDLES**

| Light Source | Foot-Candles |
|-----------------|--------------|
| Starlight | 0.0002 |
| Moonlight | 0.02 |
| Street Lighting | 0.6-1.6 |
| Direct Sunlight | 6,000-10,000 |
| Office Lighting | 70-150 |

SOURCE: City of Sacramento, 2014. *Sacramento 2035 General Plan Background Report*. Public Review Draft, August 2014. Table 6-13, p. 6-122.

Glare results when a light source directly in the field of vision is brighter than the eye can comfortably accept. Squinting or turning away from a light source is an indication of glare. The presence of a bright light in an otherwise dark setting may be distracting or annoying, referred to as discomfort glare, or it may diminish the ability to see other objects in the darkened environment, referred to as disability glare.

Regional Lighting

The City of Sacramento is largely built-out, and a significant amount of artificial light and glare from urban uses already exists. Existing sources of light and glare in the project vicinity are mostly from outdoor lamps in the parking lots surrounding existing commercial uses and from outdoor lights illuminating the existing buildings and businesses. The downtown area has a higher concentration of artificial light and reflective surfaces that produce glare than the outlying residential areas due to the amount of artificial light associated with exterior building lights, lighted signs, street lights, roadways, signal lights, and parking area lights. Some of the most notable sources of nighttime light in the downtown skyline include colored light features on high-rise buildings such as the Esquire Building and US Bank Tower. At the street level, the Crest Theater and Esquire Theater on K Street are visually notable at night due to bright neon signs.

Although many of the buildings in downtown Sacramento and in West Sacramento are clad in non-reflective surfaces such as stone or terra cotta, the project vicinity contains a few notable sources of reflective glare, including several buildings with exteriors dominated by mirrored glass, including 300 Capitol Mall, Renaissance Tower, 500 Capitol Mall, the US Bank Tower at 7th Street and Capitol Mall, and the CalSTRS Headquarters Building in West Sacramento. Finally, automobiles traveling along nearby and adjacent roadways and highways (i.e., I-5, I and J streets, 3rd, 7th and 12th streets, etc.) also contribute to nighttime sources of light and glare in the project vicinity.

RSP Area Light Sources

The Depot District of the RSP Area is lit with parking lot lights and lighted pathways to the passenger rail platforms, which are lit all night. In addition, this area is subject to spillover and area light generated in downtown Sacramento, at the Robert T. Matsui Federal Courthouse, and along I Street. The RSP Area north of the UPRR tracks is largely dark at night, with no sources of light other than street lights on 7th Street, and the recently constructed street lights and signals on Railyards Boulevard, 5th and 6th streets.

4.1.2 Regulatory Setting

The 2007 Draft EIR discusses the regulatory setting on pages 6.13-19 through 6.13-23. The following regulatory discussion updates and expands upon information provided in the 2007 Draft EIR, as explained in more detail below.

Federal

There are no federal regulations associated with aesthetic and visual resources that are applicable to the proposed projects.

State

The 2007 RSP DEIR stated that there were no State regulations governing visual resources and aesthetics that would apply to proposed projects. For the most part, this is true of the RSPU as well. The one exception is that, unlike the 2007 RSP, the RSPU may provide for digital billboards within the RSP Area. Such signs are regulated by State law and Caltrans, as described below.

California Scenic Highway Program

California's Scenic Highway Program was created by the Legislature in 1963 to preserve and protect scenic highway corridors from change that would diminish the aesthetic value of lands adjacent to highways. The state laws governing the Scenic Highway Program are found in the Streets and Highways Code, Section 260 et seq. The State Scenic Highway System includes a list of highways that are either eligible for designation as scenic highways or have been so designated. These highways are identified in Section 263 of the Streets and Highways Code. A highway may be designated scenic depending upon how much of the natural landscape can be seen by travelers, the scenic quality of the landscape, and the extent to which development intrudes upon the traveler's enjoyment of the view. When a city or county nominates an eligible scenic highway for official designation, it must identify and define the scenic corridor of the highway. A scenic corridor is the land generally adjacent to and visible from the highway. A scenic corridor is identified using a motorist's line of vision. A reasonable boundary is selected when the view extends to the distant horizon. The corridor protection program does not preclude development, but seeks to encourage quality development that does not degrade the scenic value of the corridor. Jurisdictional boundaries of the nominating agency are also considered. The

agency 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. These ordinances make up the scenic corridor protection program. County roads can also become part of the Scenic Highway System. To receive official designation, the county must follow the same process required for official designation of State Scenic Highways.

According to the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) list of designated scenic highways under the California Scenic Highway Program, there are no highway segments within the City of Sacramento that are designated scenic. SR 160 from the Contra Costa County line to the south city limit of Sacramento is the only officially designated state scenic highway near the City of Sacramento.⁴ The RSP Area is not visible from SR 160.

Local

The 2007 RSP EIR documented relevant policies and regulations from the City's General Plan and Zoning Ordinance. Since the certification of the 2007 RSP EIR, the City has adopted an updated General Plan and a new Planning and Development Code (replacing the prior Zoning Ordinance). Relevant portions of the City's new 2035 General Plan, adopted in March 2015, and the new Planning and Development Code are discussed below.

City of Sacramento 2035 General Plan

The 2035 General Plan includes the following goals and policies that are relevant to the proposed RSPU, KP Medical Center, Stadium, and/or Stormwater Outfall projects:

Land Use and Urban Design Element

The following policies of the Land Use and Urban Design Element of the 2035 General Plan address both the visual character of the City, the relationship of visual issues to new development, and how such issues relate to the usability and sense of place.

Goal LU 2.2 City of Rivers. Preserve and enhance Sacramento's riverfronts as signature features and destinations within the city and maximize riverfront access from adjoining neighborhoods to facilitate public enjoyment of this unique open space resource.

Policies

LU 2.2.1 **World-Class Rivers.** The City shall encourage development throughout the city to feature (e.g., access, building orientation, design) the Sacramento and American Rivers and shall develop a world-class system of riverfront parks and open spaces that provide a destination for visitors and respite from the urban setting for residents.

LU 2.2.3 **Improving River Development and Access.** The City shall require new development along the Sacramento and American Rivers to use the natural river environment as a key feature to guide the scale, design, and intensity of development, and to maximize visual and physical access to the rivers.

⁴ California Department of Transportation, 2012. *California Scenic Highway Program*. www.dot.ca.gov/hq/LandArch/scenic/schwy.htm. Accessed August 5, 2013.

Goal LU 2.3 City of Trees and Open Spaces: Maintain a multi-functional “green infrastructure” consisting of natural areas, open space, urban forest, and parkland, which serves as a defining physical feature of Sacramento, provides visitors and residents with access to open space and recreation, and is designed for environmental sustainability.

Policies

LU 2.3.1 **Open Space System.** The City shall strive to create a comprehensive and integrated system of parks, open space, and urban forests that frames and complements the city’s urbanized areas.

LU 2.3.2 **Adjacent Development.** The City shall require that development adjacent to parks and open spaces complements and benefits from this proximity by:

- Preserving physical and visual access;
- Requiring development to front, rather than back, onto these areas;
- Using single-loaded streets along the edge to define and accommodate public access;
- Providing pedestrian and multi-use trails;
- Augmenting non-accessible habitat areas with adjoining functional parkland; and
- Extending streets perpendicular to parks and open space and not closing off visual and/or physical access with development.

Goal LU 2.4 City of Distinctive and Memorable Places. Promote community design that produces a distinctive, high-quality built environment whose forms and character reflect Sacramento’s unique historic, environmental, and architectural context, and create memorable places that enrich community life.

Policies

LU 2.4.1 **Unique Sense of Place.** The City shall promote quality site, architectural and landscape design that incorporates those qualities and characteristics that make Sacramento desirable and memorable including: walkable blocks, distinctive parks and open spaces, tree-lined streets, and varied architectural styles. *(RDR)*

LU 2.4.2 **Responsiveness to Context.** The City shall require building design that respects and responds to the local context, including use of local materials where feasible, responsiveness to Sacramento’s climate, and consideration of cultural and historic context of Sacramento’s neighborhoods and centers. *(RDR)*

LU 2.4.3 **Enhanced City Gateways.** The City shall ensure that public improvements and private development work together to enhance the sense of entry at key gateways to the city. *(JP)*

LU 2.4.4 **Iconic Buildings.** The City shall encourage the development of iconic public and private buildings in key locations to create new landmarks and focal features that contribute to the city’s structure and identity. *(RDR/MPSP)*

LU 2.4.5 **Distinctive Urban Skyline.** The City shall encourage the development of a distinctive urban skyline that reflects the vision of Sacramento with a prominent central core that contains the city’s tallest buildings, complemented by smaller urban centers with lower-scale mid- and high-rise development. *(RDR/MPSP)*

Goal LU 2.7 City Form and Structure. Require excellence in the design of the city’s form and structure through development standards and clear design direction.

Policies

LU 2.7.3 **Transitions in Scale.** The City shall require that the scale and massing of new development in higher-density centers and corridors provide appropriate transitions in building height and bulk that

are sensitive to the physical and visual character of adjoining neighborhoods that have lower development intensities and building heights. *(RDR)*

- LU 2.7.4 **Public Safety and Community Design.** The City shall promote design of neighborhoods, centers, streets, and public spaces that enhances public safety and discourages crime by providing street-fronting uses (“eyes on the street”), adequate lighting and sight lines, and features that cultivate a sense of community ownership. *(RDR)*
- LU 2.7.5 **Development along Freeways.** The City shall promote high-quality development character of buildings along freeway corridors and protect the public from the adverse effects of vehicle-generated air emissions, noise, and vibration, using such techniques as:
- Requiring extensive landscaping and trees along the freeway fronting elevation
 - Establish a consistent building line, articulating and modulating building elevations and heights to create visual interest
 - Include design elements that reduce noise and provide for proper filtering, ventilation, and exhaust of vehicle air emissions *(RDR/MPSP)*
- LU 2.7.6 **Walkable Blocks.** The City shall require new development and redevelopment projects to create walkable, pedestrian scaled blocks, publicly accessible mid-block and alley pedestrian routes where appropriate, and sidewalks appropriately scaled for the anticipated pedestrian use. *(RDR)*
- LU 2.7.7 **Buildings that Engage the Street.** The City shall require buildings to be oriented to and actively engage and complete the public realm through such features as building orientation, build-to and setback lines, façade articulation, ground-floor transparency, and location of parking. *(RDR)*
- LU 2.7.8 **Screening of Off-street Parking.** The City shall reduce the visual prominence of parking within the public realm by requiring most off-street parking to be located behind or within structures or otherwise fully or partially screened from public view. *(RDR/MPSP)*

Goal LU 4.1 Neighborhoods. Promote the development and preservation of neighborhoods that provide a variety of housing types, densities, and designs and a mix of uses and services that address the diverse needs of Sacramento residents of all ages, socio-economic groups, and abilities.

Policies

- LU 4.1.3 **Walkable Neighborhoods.** The City shall require the design and development of neighborhoods that are pedestrian friendly and include features such as short blocks/ broad and well-appointed sidewalks (e.g., lighting, landscaping, adequate width), tree-shaded streets, buildings that define and are oriented to adjacent streets and public spaces, limited driveway curb cuts, paseos and pedestrian lanes, alleys, traffic-calming features, convenient pedestrian street crossings, and access to transit. *(RDR/MPSP)*
- LU 4.1.4 **Traditional Grid.** The City shall require all new neighborhoods to be designed with traditional grid block sizes. *(RDR)*
- LU 4.1.7 **Neighborhood Transitions.** The city shall provide for appropriate transitions between different land use and urban form designations along the alignment of alleys or rear lot lines and along street centerlines, in order to maintain consistent scale, form, and character on both sides of public streetscapes. *(RDR)*
- LU 4.1.9 **Neighborhood Street Trees.** The City shall encourage the strategic selection of street tree species to enhance neighborhood character and identity and preserve the health and diversity of the urban forest. *(RDR/MPSP)*

Goal LU 4.5 Urban Neighborhoods. Promote vibrant, high-density, mixed-use urban neighborhoods with convenient access to employment, shopping, entertainment, transit, civic uses (e.g., school, park, place of assembly, library, or community center), and community-supportive facilities and services.

Policies

- LU 4.4.1 **Well-Defined Street Forms.** The City shall require that new buildings in urban neighborhoods maintain a consistent setback from the public right-of-way in order to create a well-defined public sidewalk and street. (RDR)
- LU 4.4.2 **Building Orientation.** In buildings with nonresidential uses at street level, the City shall require that building facades and entrances directly face the adjoining street frontage and include a high proportion of transparent windows facing the street. (RDR)
- LU 4.4.3 **Building Design.** The City shall encourage sensitive design and site planning in urban neighborhoods that mitigates the scale of larger buildings through careful use of building massing, setbacks, façade articulation, fenestration, varied parapets and roof planes, and pedestrian-scaled architectural details. (RDR)
- LU 4.4.4 **Ample Public Realm.** The City shall require that higher-density urban neighborhoods include small public spaces and have broad tree-lined sidewalks furnished with appropriate pedestrian amenities that provide comfortable and attractive settings to accommodate high levels of pedestrian activity. (RDR)
- Goal LU 9.1 Open Space, Parks, and Recreation. Protect open space for its recreational, agricultural, safety, and environmental value and provide adequate parks and open space areas throughout the City.**

Policies

- LU 9.1.4 **Open Space Buffers.** The City shall use traditional, developed parks and employ innovative uses of open space to “soften” the edges between urban areas and the natural environment. (RDR/MPSP)

Urban Form Guidelines

The RSP Area is currently designated Urban Center High, Urban Neighborhood High, Parks and Recreation, and Public/Quasi-Public on the adopted Land Use and Urban Form Diagram included of the City of Sacramento 2035 General Plan.⁵ The RSP Area is proposed to be designated Central Business District, Urban Center High, Employment Center Low Rise, Parks and Recreation, and Public/Quasi-Public. The Urban Form Guidelines reflect the physical characteristics that are envisioned in each relevant land use designation. The 2035 General Plan includes Urban Form Guidelines for the Urban Center High and Urban Neighborhood High designations, as well as the Central Business District and Employment Center Low Rise designations, as presented below:

Central Business District

1. A mixture of mid- and high-rise buildings creating a varied and dramatic skyline with unlimited heights;
2. Lot coverage generally not exceeding 90 percent;
3. Buildings are sited to positively define the public streetscape and public spaces;
4. Building facades and entrances directly addressing the street and have a high degree of transparency;
5. An interconnected street system providing for traffic and route flexibility;

⁵ City of Sacramento. 2014. *Sacramento 2035 General Plan Land Use and Urban Form Diagram*. June 26, 2014.

6. Vertical and horizontal integration of residential uses;
7. Public parks and open space areas within walking distance of local residents;
8. Paring is integrated into buildings or placed in separate structures;
9. Minimal or no curb cuts along primary streets;
10. Side or rear access to parking and service functions;
11. Broad sidewalks appointed with appropriate pedestrian amenities, including sidewalk restaurant/café seating;
12. Street design integrating pedestrian, bicycle, transit and vehicular use and incorporates traffic-calming features and on-street parking; and
13. Consistent planting of street trees providing shade and enhance character and identity.

Urban Center High

1. A mix of low- and mid-rise buildings (two to twenty-four stories creating a varied and defined skyline);
2. Lot coverage generally does not exceeding 90 percent;
3. Building heights stepping down to not more than one story higher at the property line than permitted in the adjacent neighborhood unless separated by a roadway, rail corridor, or other setback or buffer;
4. Buildings sited to positively define the public streetscape and public spaces;
5. Building facades and entrances directly addressing the street and having a high degree of transparency;
6. An interconnected street system providing greater distribution of traffic and route flexibility;
7. Vertical and horizontal integration of residential uses;
8. Public parks and open space areas within walking distance of local residents;
9. Parking integrated into buildings or placed in separate structures;
10. Minimal or no curb cuts along primary street facades, with side or rear access to parking and service functions;
11. Broad sidewalks appointed with appropriate pedestrian amenities/facilities;
12. Street design integrating safe pedestrian, bicycle, transit and vehicular use and incorporates traffic-calming features on-street parking; and
13. Consistent planting of street trees providing shade and enhance character and identity.

Urban Neighborhood

1. Buildings establishing a consistent setback from street that produces a pleasing definition to the public right-of-way (e.g., sidewalk, parkway strip, and street);
2. Building facades and entrances that directly addressing the street and have a high degree of transparency (i.e., numerous windows)(on street-fronting facades;
3. Building heights generally ranging from four to twenty-four stories for High Density;
4. Lot coverage generally not exceeding 80 percent;
5. An interconnected street system providing for traffic and route flexibility;
6. Vertical and horizontal integration of complementary nonresidential uses;
7. Off-street parking integrated into the buildings or placed in separate parking structures;
8. Minimal or no curb cuts along street fronts and facades;
9. Side or rear access to parking and service functions;
10. Broad sidewalks appointed with appropriate pedestrian amenities/facilities;
11. Street design that integrates pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicular use and incorporates traffic-calming features and on-street parking;
12. Consistent planting of street trees providing shade and enhance a character and identity;
and
13. Public parks and open space areas within walking distance of local residents.

Employment Center Low Rise

1. Building heights generally ranging from one to three stories;
2. Lot coverage generally not exceeding 60 percent;
3. Building entrances oriented to the primary street frontage rather than to parking areas;
4. Sidewalks to accommodate pedestrian movement, with connecting walkways from sidewalks into individual sites;
5. Bicycle lanes along key roadways;
6. Transit stops near business park entries;
7. Location of surface parking behind or to the side of buildings rather than between primary street and primary street façade;
8. Location of outdoor storage and production yards so that they are screened from public view by buildings, fencing and/or landscaping; and
9. Easily accessible support uses.

Environmental Resources Element

Policies

- ER 7.1.1 **Protect Scenic Views.** The City shall seek to protect views from public places to the Sacramento and American rivers and adjacent greenways, landmarks, and urban views of the downtown skyline and the State Capitol along Capitol Mall. *(RDR)*
- ER 7.1.2 **Visually Complementary Development.** The City shall require new development be located and designed to visually complement the natural environment/setting when near the Sacramento and American rivers, and along streams. *(RDR)*
- ER 7.1.4 **Standards for New Development.** The City shall seek to ensure that new development does not significantly impact Sacramento's natural and urban landscapes. *(RDR)*
- ER 7.1.5 **Lighting.** The City shall minimize obtrusive light by limiting outdoor lighting that is misdirected, excessive, or unnecessary. *(RDR)*
- ER 7.1.6 **Glare.** The City shall require that new development avoid the creation of incompatible glare through development design features. *(RDR)*

Discussion

Section 15125(d) of the State CEQA Guidelines directs that “the EIR shall discuss any inconsistencies between the proposed projects and applicable general plans, specific plans, and regional plans.” The discussion that follows considers potential inconsistencies of the proposed RSPU, KP Medical Center, MLS Stadium, and Stormwater Outfall with relevant policies of the Sacramento 2035 General Plan. As part of its consideration of the projects, the Sacramento City Council will make the final determination of consistency or inconsistency with the General Plan.

RSPU

The proposed RSPU would be consistent with each of the General Plan goals and policies listed above. Consistent with Policy LU 2.4.1, the 2016 Railyards Design Guidelines encourage the design of unique buildings, consistent with the Core Area Design Guidelines, in distinct districts within the RSP Area. Consistent with Policy LU 2.4.2, RSPU would ensure that design reflects the context of the transportation-oriented Depot District with landscaping that draws from the Chinese influence on the historic railroad past of the site, and the historic Central Shops and Riverfront districts would require design that draws on those unique locations. By providing for such iconic uses and structures as an MLS Stadium and a new high-rise hospital tower, the RSPU would reflect the guidance of Policy LU 2.4.4. Consistent with Policy LU 2.4.5, the RSPU would allow for multiple multi-story structures that would be of sufficient height to enhance Sacramento's skyline.

The RSPU would respond to Policy LU 2.7.3 by incorporating the bulk and massing guidance of the Core Area Design Guidelines, including provisions for separation of towers, setbacks, and step downs that provide transition to adjacent uses. Finally, consistent with Policy LU 2.7.4, 2016 RSP Design Guidelines would require high levels of transparency for ground floor uses, ranging from 60 to 80 percent for non-residential uses and between 30 and 80 percent for residential uses.

The proposed RSPU, like the 2007 RSP, provides for high-rise residential and hotel high-rise development adjacent to I-5 in the Riverfront District. Although not designed at this time, future development in this location is called for to be immediately adjacent to I-5, with tall, slender towers aimed to maximize visual connections between the Central Shops and the Riverfront. The development in this area would be consistent with Policy LU 2.7.5 by ensuring high-quality buildings that are designed to protect public plazas and open spaces, as well as interior spaces in buildings, from the noise and emissions generated by vehicles passing on I-5.

While the proposed RSPU would eliminate the requirement for mid-block alleys, and would increase the size of several blocks, including the blocks to accommodate the proposed KP Medical Center and MLS Stadium, consistent with Policy LU 2.7.6, most blocks would be similar to the block size in downtown Sacramento, and for larger blocks the provision for pedestrian through-flow would achieve the goals of walkable blocks.

Consistent with Policies LU 2.7.7 and LU 2.7.8, the proposed 2016 RSP Design Guidelines would continue to require transparency for ground floor uses and screening of ground floor parking. However, temporary surface parking would be visible from nearby streets and sidewalks. Where improved, it would be paved, landscaped and lit to City standards. In cases where temporary parking is provided on graveled lots, the lots would be fenced and roadside improvements (curb, gutter, sidewalks, etc.) would be installed.

For these reasons, the proposed RSPU would not be inconsistent with the policies of the 2035 General Plan.

KP Medical Center

Based on the illustrative plan for the site, the proposed KP Medical Center would be consistent with the General Plan goals and policies listed above, though design requirements for the buildings may not allow for the type of entrance orientation or ground-floor transparency required under Policy LU 2.7.7. Consistent with Policy LU 2.4.1, the 2016 Railyards Design Guidelines provide the framework for the design of the KP Medical Center buildings to be distinctive, include pedestrian-friendly open spaces and signage, including the Stanford Street open space corridor through the site, providing connectivity between the Central Shops District and Vista Park to the north. Consistent with Policy LU 2.4.2, the 2016 RSP Design Guidelines would ensure that the design of the KP Medical Center reflects the context of Railyards and the Sacramento region. By providing for an iconic new high-rise hospital tower of sufficient height to enhance Sacramento's skyline, the KP Medical Center would reflect the guidance of policies LU 2.4.4 and LU 2.4.5.

As described in the illustrative plan, the KP Medical Center would respond to Policy LU 2.7.3 by locating the high-rise hospital tower centrally within the project site, with buildings that would step down in height both to the west and to the west. Consistent with Policy LU 2.7.4, the KP Medical Center would include activity areas around the project site, with high levels site lighting and wayfinding, open sight lines between the hospital, medical office buildings, parking

structures, and other uses on the site. Due to the nature of hospital uses with 24-hour activity and around-the-clock shifts, there would be continual eyes on the street as employees, patients, and visitors traverse the site.

The proposed KP Medical Center would be consistent with Policy LU 2.7.6 by constructing a series of buildings within the framework of the RSP Area block structure, providing pedestrian-scaled blocks, similar to the block size in downtown Sacramento. Signage and wayfinding would be provided throughout the KP Medical Center campus, supporting and helping facilitate high levels of pedestrian flow among medical center buildings.

The proposed hospital and medical office buildings, including the Hospital Support Building (HSB), would be designed to meet the programmatic needs of the healthcare providers and functional uses required in such buildings. While, based on the illustrative plans for the site, the physical relationship of the KP Medical Center buildings would be consistent with Policy LU 2.7.7, it is possible that the ultimate design requirements for the buildings may not allow for the type of entrance orientation or ground-floor transparency required under Policy LU 2.7.7. As an example, the requirements for an emergency room entry may exclude the possibility that the hospital building would actively engage South Park Street. Similarly, the desire for a front-door drop-off may or may not provide an opportunity for a hospital main entrance that directly engages Railyards Blvd. Similarly, the needs of ground floor uses to be visually private and potentially darkened may prohibit the hospital and medical office buildings from meeting the City's standards for ground floor transparency.

The parking structures planned in the KP Medical Center would provide for screening of ground floor parking and parking levels above the ground floor that cannot be wrapped with active uses. The Phase 1 parking lot, along with one or more smaller parking areas designed to be accessible to medical services (such as emergency or maternity) would be visible, or partially visible, from nearby streets, including Railyards Boulevard and 5th Street.

The evaluation above is based on illustrative plans that have been prepared by the applicant for the purposes of this SEIR. The ultimate design of the KP Medical Center would be subject to one or more Site Plan and Design Review Permits. Based on the illustrative plans, the proposed KP Medical Center would be consistent with the policies listed above, but may be inconsistent with Policy LU 2.7.7.

MLS Stadium

The proposed MLS Stadium would be consistent with most of the General Plan goals and policies listed above. Consistent with Policy LU 2.4.1, the design of the proposed MLS Stadium would be architecturally distinctive. As noted in Chapter 2, Project Description, the entrances of the Stadium would be made of up an integrated façade and canopy structure comprised of a range of textures and materials, including metal, glass, fabric, and translucent synthetic panels while also providing open views into the seating and field areas. Distinctive lighting and signage would be included to accentuate the design of the building and provide nighttime viewing and visibility. In

addition, the proposed Stadium would include a major public open space at the west entry plaza, anticipated to be an active open space that may include retail and ticketing storefronts, retail kiosks, small-scale performance venues, seasonal events, musical and cultural events, and gardens.

Consistent with Policy LU 2.4.2, the design of the proposed MLS Stadium would reflect the context of Railyards and the Sacramento region, including a continuous canopy that would protect attendees from sun and rain. Landscaping in the plazas around the proposed Stadium would be suited to the local climate, consistent with the landscaping requirements of the Central Core Design Guidelines and CalGreen water efficiency standards. As described above and consistent with the guidance of Policy LU 2.4.4, the design of the proposed Stadium would be unique and distinctive, unlike any other sports facility in the Sacramento region, and as a major public gathering location would create a new landmark in the Central City.

The proposed MLS Stadium would respond to Policy LU 2.7.3 by locating the stadium structure in the middle of a larger site, surrounded by open plazas. The height of the Stadium structure would be comparable to the height of development on blocks to the west. Surrounding open plazas, along with roads, railroad alignments, and other opens spaces would represent a step down in height to the Alkali Flat neighborhood to the southwest, and to the River District uses to the north. Consistent with Policy LU 2.7.4, the proposed MLS Stadium would include open plazas on the west, north, and east sides of the project site.

The design requirements of the proposed MLS Stadium require that it be constructed on a 14.7 acre site that is materially larger than the traditional block-size in downtown Sacramento. While this size is not what would traditionally be considered pedestrian-scale, the visual transparency of the stadium design allowing pedestrian level views into the stadium and field level, along with the development of pedestrian plazas on three sides of the stadium maximize consistency with Policy LU 2.7.6 to the extent feasible for such sports facilities. Extensive lighting, signage, and wayfinding would be provided throughout the MLS Stadium site, supporting and helping facilitate high levels of pedestrian flow to and from the proposed stadium. Nevertheless, due to the required physical dimensions of an MLS stadium, it is not possible for the proposed Stadium to be consistent with Policy 2.7.6.

The proposed Stadium is not a type of building that would engage the street in a manner similar to building types anticipated under the Central Core Design Guidelines. Because of the sizes of crowds that would attend events, it would necessarily be surrounded by plaza areas that would be capable of safely accommodating thousands of pre- and post-event pedestrians. Nevertheless, the proposed Stadium would actively engage the pedestrian environment by being designed to be transparent at the ground level, providing open views from the plazas into the seating and field areas. The design of the stadium structure would be highly articulated and visually interesting, with the structure constructed of materials (metal, glass, fabric, and translucent synthetic panels) unlike other buildings in the region. Parking would be provided on off-site parcels, and thus

would not interfere with pedestrian engagement of the site. As such, the proposed MLS Stadium would be consistent with Policy LU 2.7.7. However, temporary surface parking that may be provided on undeveloped parcels in the RSP Area, prior to ultimate development, would be visible from nearby streets and sidewalks, and may be inconsistent with Policy LU 2.7.8.

For these reasons, the proposed RSPU would be consistent with most of the policies listed above, but may be inconsistent with Policy LU 2.7.7 and Policy LU 2.7.8.

Stormwater Outfall

The proposed Stormwater Outfall structures would be largely hidden from view, either under the elevated I-5 freeway, underground, and/or largely invisible on the Sacramento River riverbank. Thus the proposed Stormwater Outfall would not be inconsistent with any of the policies of the 2035 General Plan listed above.

Central City Community Plan

The City of Sacramento currently has ten adopted community plans that include policies and land use diagrams that pertain to the respective community plan areas. The RSP Area is located within the Central City Community Plan (CCCP) area bounded by the Sacramento River on the west, the American River on the north, Business 80 and Alhambra Boulevard on the east, and parcels fronting southern edge of Broadway on the south. Community plans are part of the 2035 General Plan and are intended to supplement city-wide policies based on conditions or issues unique to the community plan area. Since adoption of the 2007 RSP, as part of the development of the 2030 General Plan program, the City reorganized, streamlined, and updated the policy content of the CCCP, and physically incorporated it into Part 3 of the General Plan.

The following policies from the CCCP are applicable to the visual characteristics of development within the RSP Area:

Land Use and Urban Design

Policies

- CC.LU 1.2 **Visual Qualities.** The City shall improve the visual qualities of improvements, especially signing, building and yard maintenance, commercial developments and overhead utilities. *(RDR)*
- CC.LU 1.3 **Interrelated Land Uses.** The City shall provide for organized development of the Central City whereby the many interrelated land use components of the area support and reinforce each other and the vitality of the community. *(RDR/MPSP)*

Consistent with the CCCP policies above, implementation of the proposed RSPU would transform the existing RSP Area from undeveloped, fenced-off open land that highly disturbed as a result of extensive remediation activities, with visible piles of soil, rock and concrete, creosote soaked timbers, rusty metal industrial waste, and weeds and shrubs, to a developed mixed-use community with buildings, streets, landscaping, renovated historic structures, and other features called for in the plan. Development within the RSP Area would be required to be consistent with

the RSP Design Guidelines, which are derived from and nearly identical to the Central City Urban Design Guidelines Central Core Design Guidelines.

More specifically, the proposed KP Medical Center would be designed to be visually cohesive, with a comprehensive and consistent set of building and façade materials. It would include an on-site Central Utility Plant that would underground all utilities within the site. It would include a comprehensive system of exterior lighting for the purposes of safety, security, and nighttime visibility, and a comprehensive signage program intended to identify the presence of the medical campus to passers-by on I-5 and other major roadways, to orient drivers and others who approach the campus on the local roadways in the Railyards, and to assist patients, staff, and other visitors who are walking in and around the campus.

The proposed MLS Stadium would be a rectangular structure with rounded corners, and would include a canopy roof that would encircle the stadium. The Stadium would be comprised of a range of textures and materials, including metal, glass, fabric, and translucent synthetic panels while also providing open views into the seating and field areas. Distinctive lighting and signage would be included to accentuate the design of the building and provide nighttime viewing and visibility.

The proposed Stormwater Outfall would be constructed on a portion of the Sacramento River riverbank that is strewn with broken concrete. The key features of the Outfall would be buried, including the majority of the pump station that would be located under I-5, and the outfall pipelines that would travel under the bicycle path and be buried under the surface until the outfall structures. The proposed Outfall would not be inconsistent with any policies of the CCCP.

City of Sacramento Planning and Development Code (Title 17)

The City of Sacramento’s Planning and Development Code (Sacramento City Code Title 17) is intended “[t]o implement the city’s general plan through the adoption and administration of zoning laws, ordinances, rules, and regulations” (§17.100.010(B)). To achieve this outcome the Planning and Development Code:

- regulates the use of land, buildings, or other structures;
- regulates the location, height, and size of buildings or structures, yards, courts, and other open spaces, the amount of building coverage permitted in each zone, and population density; and
- regulates the physical characteristics of buildings, structures, and site development, including the location, height, and size of buildings and structures; yards, courts, and other open spaces; lot coverage; land use intensity through regulation of residential density and floor area ratios; and architectural and site design.

The RSP Area is regulated by the Sacramento Railyards Special Planning District (SPD), which is addressed in Chapter 17.440 of the Planning and Development Code (Sacramento City Code, Title 17). The Railyards SPD establishes procedures to implement the policies, development standards, and design guidelines of the 2007 RSP.

Site Plan and Design Review

Pursuant to Chapter 17.808 of the City Code, all development in the City is subject to Site Plan and Design Review. The intent of this process is to (1) ensure that the development is consistent with applicable plans and design guidelines; (2) is high quality and compatible with surrounding development; (3) is supported by adequate circulation, utility, and related infrastructure; (4) is water and energy efficient; and (5) avoids environmental effects to the extent feasible. The aspects of design considered in the Site Plan and Design Review process include architectural design, site design, adequacy of streets and accessways for all modes of travel, energy consumption, protection of environmentally sensitive features, safety, noise, and other relevant considerations.

Through the Site Plan and Design Review process, the City has the authority to approve or require deviations from design and development standards to respond to site- and project-specific considerations. Deviations are subject to review and approval of either the City Design Director or the City Planning and Design Commission, depending on the nature of the deviation.

Site Plan and Design Review is conducted by staff, the City Design Director, or the Planning and Design Commission. The Planning and Design Commission review is required for certain large projects (more than 150 residential units or 125,000 sf for non-residential or mixed use projects), projects more than 60 feet in height, or where a deviation requires Commission. City Design Director review is required where a project is not in substantial compliance with applicable design guidelines, or requests a deviation. For projects taking place in a historic district or related to an historic landmark, Site Plan and Design Review is undertaken by the Preservation Commission or the City Preservation Director, as appropriate. All other projects not requiring review by the respective Commission or Director are reviewed by City staff.

Sacramento River Parkway Plan

The Sacramento River Parkway Plan (Parkway Plan) is a comprehensive plan for the Sacramento River Parkway adopted by the City of Sacramento in October 1997. The Parkway Plan area includes all land within 10 feet of the landside tow of the Sacramento River levee or the inland boundary of public land along the River, whichever is the most appropriate for land uses.⁶ The Parkway Plan contains specific goals and policies that address recreation, trails, public access, urban development, public safety, security, natural and cultural resources, erosion, and land use.

⁶ City of Sacramento, 1997. *Sacramento River Parkway Plan*, October 21, 1997, p. 3.

The primary policies of the Parkway Plan that are relevant to the aesthetic character of the RSP Area are the Urban Development Policies, as noted below:⁷

Policies

- D1. The City shall ensure that all developments which take place within and adjacent to the Parkway will adhere to the intent and purpose of the Parkway Concept.
- D3. Commercial and residential development within the Parkway, subject to the city's planning review process, shall be designed to visually blend with and be in scale with the surrounding riverine environment. Color, texture, style, height, width, and bulk should be considered in design.
- D4. Commercial, office, residential, or residential structures within the Parkway should be built so as to not obscure the view of or public access to the River. All development within or immediately adjacent shall have linear lot coverage no greater than 60%.
- D5. Proposed development within the Parkway should strive to create a visually appealing landscape along the river by incorporating, to the extent feasible, native or indigenous vegetation for landscaping consistent with the City's Plant List.
- D6. All commercial development within the Parkway shall incorporate amenities that enhance the public's enjoyment of the river resources. The following are examples of possible amenities:
- Public promenades
 - Public areas
 - Parks
 - Amphitheaters for public performances
 - Museums or interpretive centers
 - Bicycle paths.

The portion of the Sacramento River frontage that passes through the RSP Area is designated Urban Waterfront Recreation in the Parkway Plan. Uses that are considered appropriate for this area include "development and uses that provide opportunities for public access, commercial, and recreational activities for residents, employees, and visitors along the River." Examples of activities that are planned to occur in this area include scenic viewing, bicycling, public gathering, boating, fishing, short-term boat docking, marina, restaurant, and other river-related commercial uses.

Sacramento Riverfront Master Plan

The Sacramento Riverfront Master Plan (Master Plan) is intended as a blueprint for possible future actions that may be considered discretely as opportunities and resources arise; however, it does not have a legally binding effect on future actions. The Master Plan outlines a number of strategies to realize the four guiding principles – *creating riverfront neighborhoods and districts, establishing a web of connectivity, strengthening the green backbone of the community, and making places for celebration*. With respect to the RSP Area, the Master Plan envisions the Railyards Park as a broad expanse of public open space starting from and encompassing the old Central Shops and extending all the way to the River in order to create a public connection to the

⁷ City of Sacramento, 1997. *Sacramento River Parkway Plan*, October 21, 1997, p. 36.

River. The following goals and proposed policies are relevant to the visual character of the riverfront area.

Goal Treat the Sacramento River and the river's edge as a focus of the riverfront area

Proposed Policies

- Provide a strong public open space framework that is continuous along the riverfront and connects to the neighboring districts.
- Maintain a mostly natural and semi-formal character in the riverfront open space areas.
- Give the riverfront a public, open space emphasis.
- Site housing and other adjacent mixed-uses to capture maximum orientation to the river and to the riverfront open space, as well as to parkways and streets.
- Provide visual and physical connections among neighboring districts that emphasize the river and its public open space.
- Where feasible, orient private development toward open space features and the river.

Goal Provide for uses and amenities that complement the existing parks and visitor attractions

Proposed Policies

- Provide for visitor and community-serving uses and amenities.

Goal Establish the riverfront area as an active, vibrant, urban district and public precinct

Proposed Policies

- Provide people-oriented land uses, public space, and amenities that attract people and activity
- Provide for mixed/integrated land uses
- Vary development densities, intensities, and mix of uses along the riverfront edge

Sacramento Central City Urban Design Guidelines

The Central City Urban Design Guidelines (CCUDG) direct future growth in the Central City Community Plan area. The CCUDG generally provide guidance in three areas: the urban design framework, the public realm, and the private realm. They establish a framework of urban design concepts intended to inform all decisions relating to the physical form and character of public and private development throughout the Central City. The CCUDG are intended to provide direction rather than impose prescriptive requirements. The City Commission or Director responsible for design review has the authority to waive individual guidelines for specific projects where it is found that such waiver will better achieve the design policy objectives than strict application of the CCUDG. Key urban design framework concepts established for the whole of the Central City include:

- **The Central City Skyline.** High-rise towers should add visual interest to the skyline; that high-rise towers should reflect the role of the Central Core as the regional center of culture, commerce, and government; and that care is to be given to transitions from the Central Core to adjacent neighborhoods.

- Central City Gateways. Care should be taken to enhance the design of key entries to the Central City from freeways and on Capitol Mall.
- Primate Streets and the Street Grid. Protection and enhancement of the traditional street grid to improve connectivity around the Central City, including the re-connection of the Railyards/River District via Railyards street network, and north-south streets such as 5th, 6th, 7th, and 10th streets; and design of streets so as to accommodate high traffic volumes without creating barriers to a safe, convenient, and attractive pedestrian and bicycle environment.
- Transit Streets and Transit-Oriented Development. Location of higher density transit-oriented development within one-quarter mile of transit stops, and emphasis on transit-friendly street design.
- A Pedestrian- and Bicycle-Friendly Central City. Designation and design of special streets as primary pedestrian and bicycle routes, providing connections among Central City neighborhoods and to the riverfront open space and trail system; and a focus on enhanced pedestrian environment on streets and in alleys.
- A Healthy Urban Forest. Protection and enhancement of the Central City's urban forest, maximizing shade coverage from street trees; recognition of the important role that the urban forest plays in the economic and social well-being, and sustainability, of the Central City.
- Distinctive Urban Neighborhoods and Districts. Development that enhances existing and creates new neighborhoods and districts, such as the Railyards; high quality design that enhances the public realm and responds to the physical, historical and cultural context.
- Preserving Historic Resources. Recognition of the importance of the Central City's historic resources; protection of historic resources and features, and integration into new development; new development that positively responds and relates to the historic character of the Central City.
- Parks and Open Space. Enhancement of existing and provision of new parks to serve existing and future residents of the Central City; public streets as greenways that connect Central City neighborhoods to the riverfront and other major parks; provision of private open space and recreation facilities in high density residential projects; developing parks, trails, and other recreational amenities consistent with flood protection; balance in uses between public spaces and private development along the American and Sacramento River Corridors.

- **Creating a Complete, Well-served Community.** Plan for new accessible parks, schools, community centers, fire stations and other public facilities, as well as neighborhood retail and services, to meet the needs of the future residential population in the Central City.
- **Active Streetscapes and Sidewalk Cafes.** Design streets and alleys and adjacent development to promote active use, including sidewalk cafes.
- **The Retail Environment.** Promote retail development by requiring minimum retail frontages, identifying retail streets, and requiring ground-floor transparency to promote window-shopping.
- **A Well-defined Public Realm.** Continuity of street-wall, with consistent setbacks and build-to lines that define the pedestrian realm for retail and commercial streets, and reflect the historic character for institutional and residential uses.

Sacramento Central City Urban Design Guidelines – Railyards Design Guidelines

The 2007 Railyards Specific Plan contains design guidelines for future development. These guidelines have been incorporated as part of the CCUDG. The 2007 Railyards Design Guidelines (2007 RDG) were developed to work cohesively with the Railyards Specific Plan, the Railyards Special Planning District (SPD) and the Central Shops Historic District. The organization and format of the 2007 RDG was derived directly from the CCUDGP, and relevant guidelines from the CCUDGP were incorporated into the 2007 RDG.

The 2007 RDG are intended to provide design guidance, but do not establish prescriptive requirements. The 2007 RDG anticipate that the Design Director or Preservation Director will provide recommendations to the Planning Director regarding RDG compliance for specific projects, and the Planning Director has the authority to interpret the 2007 RDG for specific projects and to condition approval of the project's design to ensure compliance.

The CCUDG include guidelines specifically developed for the RSP Area. The 2007 RDG are organized in five primary chapters:

- **Railyards Framework** articulates the overall vision for the physical form and character of the Railyards area and the five districts that make up this area.
- **Public Realm** guidelines address the design of key components such as streets, sidewalks, and parks that comprise the public realm.
- **Private Realm** guidelines address the design of key components that comprise the private realm, including the placement of buildings, the design of buildings, and the treatment of off-street parking.

- Historic Resources guidelines provides direction for rehabilitation of existing historic buildings and resources, as well as construction of new structures within the Central Shops Historic District.
- Signage guidelines address all signage in the Railyards, from public realm signage such as wayfinding and street signage to private realm signage such as storefront signage and tenant signage.

The RDG are based on the following major framework concepts:

The Railyards Street Pattern

The RSP Area street pattern reflects that the Railyards is a part of the City where the street grid bends and rises to accommodate the presence of the UPRR tracks, the Central Shops, I-5, the Sacramento River, and other historic uses and features. Due to the presence of the UPRR tracks, only a limited number of RSP Area streets (5th, 6th, 7th streets) would connect to the original Sutter street grid. Those same streets as well as Jibboom Street, Bercut Drive, and 8th and 10th streets would connect to the River District street system. Southbound 12th Street would connect to Railyards Boulevard with a one-way slip lane. As proposed, the RSP Area street patterns would create distinctly shaped blocks that generally would be larger than blocks in the existing grid.

Railyards Districts

The Railyards is planned to include a variety of uses across five districts, each with its own identity and character, similar to the distinct neighborhoods and districts elsewhere in the Central City, The Railyards districts are intended to reflect the existing context of each area, compliment adjacent neighborhood uses and scale, integrate key historic elements and accommodate new activities that are appropriate to each district. The key visual concepts for each district is described below.

- *Depot District:* The historic Southern Pacific Railroad Sacramento Depot building (Sacramento Valley Station) is to serve as the focal point of the district, with dense development with continuous building frontages that have an engaging presence at street level, and that allow for the extension of the downtown grid.
- *Central Shops District:* Adaptive reuse of eight historic railyard buildings from the original Central Pacific Railroad Yard, and the adjacent plazas and open hardscaped areas, is intended to provide reclaim and celebrate its history.
- *West End District:* A pedestrian-oriented network of entertainment, cultural, and retail activities and uses, with a series of interconnected plazas, alleys and sidewalks landscaping elements and pedestrian amenities, that extends the city's existing urban fabric along 5th and 6th streets. New buildings along Camille Lane are to relate architecturally to existing historic structures in the Central Shops District in terms of style, scale and materials.

- *East End District:* Extends the pedestrian-scaled downtown grid to establish a new residential neighborhood, with fine-grained and diverse residential building frontages, that reflects Sacramento's traditional open space-oriented neighborhoods. The district includes a linear urban park running the length of the neighborhood, with ground floor neighborhood-serving uses facing onto the park.
- *Riverfront District:* Development and open space defined by the district's natural elements, creating spectacular views of the River corridor, while ensuring visual and physical access to the waterfront for the surrounding area. Building bases are intended to be carefully designed and landscaped to maintain the park-like quality of their surroundings.

The 2007 RDG establish that the design of the public realm is critical in establishing the visual context and overall character of the RSP Area, and contributes to the perceived unity, quality, and identity of the Railyards as a unique place. The RDP Public Realm Guidelines provide design guidance related to the Travelway Zone, the Pedestrian Zone, and Public Parks and Open Space. Guidelines for the Travelway Zone address Street Typology and Specific Street Design (Railyards Blvd, 5th, 6th, and 7th streets, Camille Lane, Minor Streets, and Alleys). Pedestrian Zone guidelines address Public Sidewalks, Street Furnishings and Amenities, Transit, Landscape, Street Lighting, and Public Art. Guidelines for Public Parks and Open Space establish the design intent and specific guidelines for the four public open spaces in the Central Shops District (Roundhouse Plaza, Powerhouse Court, Market Plaza, and Museum Park), Riverfront Park, 5th Street Steps, Hopkins Walk, Vista Park, Box Cars Station, Box Car Parks, Interpretive Walk, 5th Street Bridge Overlook, and Chinese Garden.

The 2007 RDG Private Realm Guidelines address Key Sites, Railyards Districts, Building Types, Site Planning, Massing and Building Configuration, and Parking and Vehicle Access. They provide design guidance related to height, building mass, architectural style, building materials and other design characteristics of buildings in the RSP Area. From a visual perspective, the guidelines related to facades provide the most direct guidance to the look and visual character of buildings. Facades are guided to be designed in order to achieve the following principles:

- *Ground Level Uses:* The ground floor, especially the area facing onto public sidewalks, shall incorporate the most public and active spaces within the building, to activate the street. Parking shall not be an appropriate use along a building's public frontage.
- *Transparency:* The facade of a building shall be appropriately transparent to allow active ground floor uses, such as retail, commercial or community uses, to be visible from the street.
- *Street-wall Articulation:* The street-walls defining urban blocks shall be articulated to create rhythm and variety, achieving a fine-grained pattern to the urban fabric.

- *Fenestration: Window and Facade Systems and Patterns:* Windows should provide human scale to buildings, windows shall be well-proportioned, varied across a project, articulate the wall system, and be operable where appropriate.
- *Entrances:* Entrances shall be well-designed, appropriately scaled, and easy to find. They shall be a special feature in the design of the building.
- *Canopies, Awnings and Sunshades:* Canopies, awnings and sunshade shall be used to provide shade and cover for people and buildings, contributing to comfort and sustainability.
- *Projecting Elements and Encroachments:* Elements that project from a building façade shall serve to animate the building’s elevations, by adding visual variety & interest while enhancing the connection between public & private realms.
- *Materials:* Buildings shall be constructed with exterior materials of the highest quality. Exterior materials, textures and colors shall be selected to further articulate the building design.
- *Lighting:* Building facades shall have illumination appropriate to their use and location, with light fixture design selected to best complement the architectural design of the project.

Proposed RSPU Design Guidelines

The proposed RSPU includes updates to the 2007 RDG, which were previously incorporated into the Central City Urban Design Guidelines (CCUDG). Implementation of the proposed RSPU would replace the existing guidelines with a new set of Sacramento Railyards Design Guidelines, discussed further in the Impacts section, below. The key changes proposed are to incorporate and bring the RDG into greater conformance with applicable guidance from the CCUDG Central Core Design Guidelines. Extensive sections of the 2007 RDG would be replaced by correlative sections of the Central Core Guidelines. In most cases, the guidelines being replaced are essentially identical in the two documents. Cases where material changes to the 2007 RDG have been proposed are described further below.

Public Realm Guidelines

Key changes proposed for the Public Realm Guidelines include:

- The addition of design guidelines for North B Street between 7th and 10th streets, identify four travel lanes, a center turn lane, and 6-foot Class II bike lanes on each side of the street, along with separated sidewalks, landscaped parkways with street trees on both sides of the street. North B Street between 5th and 7th streets would be two travel lanes, a center turn lane, and a 6-foot Class II bike lanes on each side of the street. Sidewalks on North B Street would be 16-feet on both sides of the street from 5th to 7th, and on the south side of the

street between 7th and 8th Street. All other sidewalks on North B Street would be 5.5 to 6 feet in width.

- A change in the RSP Area’s “Main Street” from Camille Lane to Stanford Street, with Camille Lane becoming a primary pedestrian-focused connection between the Riverfront and West End Districts.
- Where alleys in the commercial districts or residential are provided, they are to designed consistent with Section B.1 of the Central Core Design Guidelines.
- The 2007 RSPDG for public sidewalks would be replaced by the sidewalk design guidelines provided in Chapter 3, Section C of the Central Core Design Guidelines, with most sidewalks in the RSP Area would be 16 feet wide, except at locations that are existing, constrained by right-of-way, and/or recently constructed with narrower sidewalks;
- Elimination of most of the guidelines for street furnishings and amenities.
 - Landscape guidelines are referred to in Section D of the Central Core Design Guidelines, with the exception of a limited number of street tree guidelines which continue to require that street trees are 10 feet from building facades and 15 feet from street lights.
 - Street lighting guidelines would be removed. Street lighting referred to section C.3.d of the Central Core Design Guidelines, with the exception of limitation of street lights on pedestrian streets to 15 feet in height, and 30 feet in height on larger streets.
 - Small public places guidelines would be removed and replaced with the small public places guidelines for the Central Core Area provided in Chapter 3, Section E of the Central Core Design Guidelines; and
 - Public art guidelines would be removed and replaced with the public art guidelines for the Central Core Area provided in Chapter 3, Section F of the Central Core Design Guidelines.
- Parks and open space guidelines revisions, include changes to the following requirements:
 - Elimination of paving, site furniture, and light fixtures in Roundhouse Plaza be similar to those used in the Central Shops historic buildings;
 - Museum Park is refined to be Museum Plaza, with the addition of design features that commemorate the historic track alignment into the street pavement, street furniture, signage, etc.;
 - Elimination of the requirement that the 5th Street Steps use the same paving, planting, and site furnishings used along 5th Street;

- Hopkins Walk would be reconfigured to be a connection between Stanford Street and Vista Park;
 - Addition of a requirement that Vista Park have active play areas that can be used for various sports activities; and
 - Elimination of the 5th Street Bridge Overlook that was to provide 30-foot wide viewing platforms (note that the 5th Street Bridge was constructed with 12-16-foot wide sidewalks on the west side, and shade structures to facilitate viewing of the Central Shops, the Depot District, downtown Sacramento, and other points to the west).
- Parks and open space guidelines also include replacement of guidelines for the “Box Car Parks” included in the 2007 RSP with guidelines for East End Neighborhood Parks oriented around the intersection of 6th/South Park streets, and a greenway that follows the alignment of South Park Street between 7th and 8th streets. The East End Neighborhood Parks are encouraged to include amenities for young children and families, including tot lots and adventure play areas.
 - Parks and open space guidelines would also eliminate the requirement for a Chinese Garden in exchange for requirements that a Chinese landscape theme be included in the design of landscape and open spaces in the Depot District.

Private Realm Guidelines

Key changes proposed for the Private Realm Guidelines include:

- In the Depot District, a change to allow mid-rise as well as high-rise commercial mixed use buildings;
- In the West End District, elimination of residential/commercial mixed use low rise buildings as the primary building type on 7th Street near the Alkali Flat neighborhood, a change to allow mid-rise as well as high-rise commercial mixed use buildings, and the addition of health care and hospital buildings as a building type;
- In the East End District, elimination of a requirement for mid-block alleys on all blocks, and of requirements for buildings to step down to adjacent parks. Buildings would be limited to a maximum of 320-foot frontage, with alleys or lanes used to break up the building mass. Building types would be changed to eliminate low-rise residential mixed-use buildings, to add commercial mixed-use mid-rise and high-rise buildings, to allow residential mixed use buildings near Vista Park to include ground-floor neighborhood serving businesses and services rather than strictly retail uses, and to provide for residential mixed use high-rise buildings along the 7th Street corridor rather than along the northern

and southern edges of the District. In addition, soccer stadium is identified as a building type allowable in the District;

- In low-rise (5 stories or less), mid-rise (6-8 stories), and high-rise residential buildings, a strict requirement for the facades of ground floor uses to be 75% transparent and activated;
- In high-rise residential buildings, above an street-wall, maximum average floor plates would be raised from 7,500 square feet (sf) to 10,000 sf, and other massing and building configuration requirements (e.g., maximum plan and diagonal dimensions) would be eliminated;
- In hospital high-rise buildings, the maximum average tower floor plate would be set at 50,000 sf;
- In commercial high-rise buildings, street-wall heights ranging from 65 feet in most of the RSP Area, with 85 feet along Railyards Boulevard and up to 125 feet on portions of the H zoned block along Bercut Drive and South Park Street west of Hopkins Walk, would be allowed prior to application of bulk controls, compared to 60 to 85 feet in the 2007 RSPDG;
- 2007 RSPDG site planning guidelines for build-to lines and setbacks, tree setbacks, lot coverage, open space, small public spaces, landscaping, project size and building type, and service areas and access would be replaced with the relevant portions of the Central Core Design Guidelines;
- 2007 RSPDG massing and building configuration guidelines for street-wall and building base height, massing and bulk controls, facades, rooftops and mechanical penthouse enclosures, development along alleys, sustainability, and public and private art would be replaced with relevant portions of the Central Core Design Guidelines, with the following key exceptions:
 - Maximum street-wall heights that were previously 60 to 85 feet would be changed to 65 feet, except on Railyards Boulevard where the maximum street-wall height would remain at 85 feet, and around the H Zone parcels would be 85 feet along Railyards Boulevard; 125 feet along Bercut Drive, and along South Park Street from Bercut Drive to Hopkins Walk; and 65 feet along 5th Street, and along South Park Street from Hopkins Walk to 5th Street; and
 - 2007 RSPDG bulk controls would be replaced with the bulk controls included in Central Core Design Guidelines, Chapter 4, Section D.3;
- 2007 RSPDG parking and vehicle access guidelines for location and configuration, and bicycle parking would be replaced with relevant portions of the Central Core Design Guidelines, with the following key exceptions:

- The 2007 RSPDG guideline that required ground floor parking to be wrapped with an active street front use would be amended to also allow ground floor parking to not be exposed to the street through design and architectural treatments; and
- On limited sites approved by the City, specific design requirements for surface parking (such as requirements for landscaping, sustainable stormwater management, and screening, and prohibition on chain link fencing) would be eliminated and replaced with a guideline reflecting that surface parking is allowed as an interim use prior to development of such undeveloped parcels.

Historic Resources

The following revisions to the Historic Resources chapter of the 2007 RSPDG are proposed:

- It would be clarified that Transition Zone Guideline 1, which requires that new buildings be placed a minimum of 20 feet from an historic structure, does not apply to additions to existing buildings; and
- The requirement that new buildings in the Transition Zone be “slender or modulated” would be eliminated, but the requirement that such buildings be designed to allow intermittent views from the Central Shops to I-5, Camille Lane, and 5th Street would remain.

Signage

The following revisions to the Signage chapter of the 2007 RSPDG are proposed:

- A requirement is added for a master sign program that reflects the character of each district; and
- In the Central Shops District, provision would be made for tenant signage on walls, in addition to the prior allowed signs on door openings, painted on glass, or on free-standing poles/structures.

Building Heights

The 2007 RSP established no building height limits for most of the RSP Area. There were specific building height limits in the East End District, north and south of the Box Car Parks; in the Transition Zone around the Central Shops Historic District, and in the Riverfront District between I-5 and the Sacramento River. The height limits proposed in the RSPU are shown on Figure 2-8, Building Height Limits. The primary changes in the height limits in the proposed RSPU respond to the reconfiguration of parks and open space in the East End District, and the configuration of the Central Shops Historic District and realignment of Camille Lane. The following are proposed changes to the 2007 RSP Building Height Limits:

- Elimination of 120-foot limits covering the half block south of South Park Street and the half block north of the prior North Park Street, from 7th to 10th streets. This would be replaced with 250-foot limits in the R-5 SPD zone, and unrestricted height on the blocks east of 7th Street;
- Reduction in the height limit on Parcel 22, between Car Shop #3 and the Paint Shop building, from 67 feet to 24 feet;
- Reduction in the height limit on Parcel 23, immediately south of Car Shop #3, in the Central Shops, from 78 feet to 24 feet;
- Reconfiguring Parcel 18 and reducing the 67-foot building height limit to 40 feet, in the Transition Zone east of the Central Shops;
- Increasing the limit from 67 feet to 100 feet on the area identified as Block 8, south of Camille Lane and west of the Roundhouse, in the Transition Zone;
- Decreasing the height limit from unrestricted to 120 feet on Blocks 49, 50 and 51;
- Increasing the height limit on the eastern side of Block 46 (facing 7th Street) from 85 feet with a 35-foot street-wall, to 120 feet with a 65 foot street-wall;
- Decreasing the height limit for any structures built on the Vista Park block (Block 72) from unrestricted to 35 feet; and
- Changing the height limits on the southern building footprint of Parcel 35 in the Riverfront District. The change would be from a 450-foot height limit, with a required building base height of 85 feet, and then a step down to 35 feet within 100 feet of the riverbank, to a height limit of 450 feet with a stepdown toward the River, and a 65-foot street-wall to the property line.

4.1.3 Analysis, Impacts, and Mitigation

Significance Criteria

Consistent with the standards of significance considered in the 2007 RSP EIR, a significant impact on aesthetics and visual resources would occur if:

- The project has a demonstrable negative aesthetic effect;
- The project casts glare in such a way as to cause a public hazard or annoyance for a sustained period of time; or

- The project casts light onto oncoming traffic or nearby residential uses.

For the purposes of this SEIR, a demonstrable negative aesthetic effect is defined as follows:

- An obstruction of public views of scenic resources or a scenic vista, such as the riverfront, that degrades the visual unity of the aesthetic resource;
- The project is located on a visually prominent site and, due to its height, bulk, architecture, or signage, would be in such contrast to the surrounding development or environment that it would degrade the visual unity of the area; or
- The project would result in the introduction of an architectural feature, building mass, or height that clearly conflicts with the character of adjacent buildings.

These significance criteria are the same as those used in the 2007 RSP EIR.

Methodology and Assumptions

Consistent with the methods used in the 2007 RSP EIR, the analysis of aesthetics is a qualitative analysis that compares the existing built and natural environment to the future built and natural environment. Key view corridors were examined, and existing views to and from the site were compared to those that would be expected to occur in the future. In addition, the project elements were evaluated in the context of adopted City urban design policies and regulations.

The aesthetic characteristics of future development under the proposed RSPU were assessed based on the provisions of the development standards included in the proposed Railyards SPD, as well as the provisions of the proposed Railyards Design Guidelines. The aesthetic characteristics of the proposed KP Medical Center were based on the illustrative plans for the proposed site provided by the project applicant. In the case of future development under the proposed RSPU, including the proposed KP Medical Center, the ultimate designs of future development in the RSP Area would be determined through the City's Site Plan and Design Review permit process which would be based on specific project architectural and engineering design.

Because Site Plan and Design Review for the proposed MLS Stadium and the Stormwater Outfall is anticipated to be concurrent with the City's consideration of SEIR certification and other project entitlement and approvals related to the RSPU, specific project designs for the MLS Stadium and the Stormwater Outfall are included in Chapter 2, Project Description, and form the basis of the evaluation of aesthetics, light and glare addressed in this section.

Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Impact 4.1-1: The implementation of the RSPU, including the potential development of large-floor plate and high-rise buildings in the RSP Area east of I-5, could alter public views.

2007 RSP EIR Impact 6.13-1(pages 6.13-23 to 6.13-25 of the RSP DEIR) noted that the 2007 RSP would establish five distinct districts that would contain varying mixtures of building heights and aesthetic characteristics that would visually create an “urban village” in downtown Sacramento. New structures would range in height from one or two-stories, up to 35 or more stories, effectively extending the visual continuity of the western boundaries of downtown Sacramento towards the north, contributing to a more prominent and distinctive skyline with planar changes that would create visual interest in the area.

2007 RSP EIR Impact 6.13-1 acknowledged “the existing limited views of the site that do exist would be significantly altered with introduction of new development. Views of the project site from the I-5 would be altered most, as the project area as a whole is most visible when travelling north and south along this route.” It was explained that the “existing downtown skyline of varying building forms and heights would be extended to the north by the new development [in the RSP Area], and would not degrade views from adjacent roadways or uses. Under the Specific Plan, the new design guidelines are intended to create a unified identity within the RSP Area, with buildings that are compatible in scale, design, character, quality, and style. While some portions of the project site are more visually prominent than others due to location of streets and existing view corridors, policies of the [2007 RSP] would require that new structures utilize building materials that are complimentary to the existing downtown character.”

The particular policies that were identified as ensuring that future development would complement existing uses included the following:

Policies

- CC-2.1 Ensure that the form and massing of buildings contribute to the creation of a cohesive urban fabric that:
- Extends the pattern of downtown Sacramento
 - Complements the historic Central Shops and Depot complex
 - Reinforces the civic scale and role of the 7th Street corridor
 - Transitions in scale to the surrounding areas
- CC-2.2 Ensure that the form, height, and treatment of buildings reinforce the prominence and role of major urban spaces and streets.
- CC-2.3 Ensure an appropriate scale transition to the Alkali Flat neighborhood.
- CC-2.4 Ensure that any new buildings in the Central Shops district or extensions to existing buildings in the district respect the scale, design, and character of existing historic structures.
- CC-2.5 Ensure an appropriate scale transition between the Central Shops and new districts adjacent to the Central Shops district.

With implementation of these policies, it was determined that “the height, bulk, architecture, and/or signage would not be in vivid contrast to the visual character and scale of development in the nearby downtown area, and would not degrade the visual unity of the area.”

Impact 6.13-1 found that the visual characteristics of the RSP Area would be altered as a result of implementation of the 2007 RSP, but concluded that “it would visually enhance an unattractive area and improve conditions on the project site, particularly by redeveloping the deteriorated historic buildings. Project implementation would also create contiguous landscaped pedestrian areas throughout the site that would be connected with the Sacramento River waterfront; thus creating a visual relationship from downtown Sacramento to the Sacramento River through the Railyards project area.”

Impact 6.13-1 concluded that despite the modification of the RSP Area compared to existing conditions, “the proposed project would not degrade the visual character or quality of the site and its surrounding. Rather, development consistent with the (2007 RSP) would contribute to the visual character and interest of downtown Sacramento, and would improve the visual quality of the downtown area. As such, development under the (2007 RSP) would not degrade the existing visual quality of the area or obstruct key existing views and/or vistas in the vicinity.” The impact was therefore determined to be less than significant.

Railyards Specific Plan Update

As described for the 2007 RSP, the proposed RSPU would change the visual character of the RSP Area from an undeveloped former industrial area to a highly urbanized set of five distinct districts comparable in visual character to Sacramento’s CBD and immediately surrounding neighborhoods, developed around the visually prominent Central Shops buildings. As acknowledged in the 2007 RSP EIR, views of the RSP Area east of I-5 would be substantially changed, particularly from locations that afford prominent views into the Railyards, such as from the elevated I-5 freeway, and views east and west from 7th Street that traverses the RSP Area. The policies of the RSPU relevant to visual character and aesthetics of future development would be identical to those that were included in the 2007 RSP, including policies CC-2.1 through CC-2.5. As with the 2007 RSP, the proposed RSPU would include adoption of an updated set of Railyards Design Guidelines that are intended to create a unified identity within the RSP Area, with buildings that are compatible in scale, design, character, quality and style. The updated Railyards SPD provides for Site Plan and Design Review and/or Preservation Review for all future development within the RSP Area.

Since certification of the 2007 RSP EIR, the City has adopted an updated General Plan. The 2030 General Plan was a comprehensive update of the City’s General Plan, which had last been comprehensively updated in 1988. In 2015, the City adopted the 2035 General Plan, a technical update to the 2030 General Plan. In adopting the newer versions the General Plan, the City included considerable attention to urban form and visual resources, including policies LU 2.2.1, LU 2.2.3, LU 2.3.2, which emphasize the importance of visual access to the Sacramento River, and the importance of ensuring that future development respects the scale, design and intensity of development.

Building Height and Massing/Block Sizes and Configuration

There would, however, be visual differences between the proposed RSPU and what was anticipated under the 2007 RSP. Like the 2007 RSP, the proposed RSPU would allow for development in the area east of I-5 that could range from 1-2 stories up to 35 or more stories. While such a range of building heights would be allowable, the changes to the private realm design guidelines would support the applicant's current expectation that buildings in the Railyards would tend to be mid-rise (5-10 stories). Those changes include the creation of larger blocks compared to the 2007 RSP, provisions for larger maximum average floor plates in residential buildings (increasing from 7,500 sf to 10,000 sf in residential high-rises) and modest increases in street-wall height in large portions of the RSP Area (increasing from a range of 60 to 85 feet to a range of 65, 85 feet and up to 125 feet). The combined effect of these changes would allow the achievement of the land use intensities in larger, lower buildings that anticipated under the 2007 RSP.

As noted above, the proposed RSPU would create blocks of a variety of sizes. South of the RSP Area and the UPRR tracks, Sacramento's Central City is made up of a grid street system that creates a standardized block size of approximately 2.8 acres, or 320 feet by 340 feet (back-of-sidewalk to back-of-sidewalk, including the mid-block alley). In the Central City, this standardized block arrangement is interrupted by several "super blocks" where streets have been abandoned and two block combined to create blocks of approximately five acres that are approximately 800 feet long (examples include the Governor's Square housing development, the CalPERS headquarters buildings, the Sacramento Bee headquarters, and Sutter's Fort). Larger 10-acre "super blocks" have been assembled with four blocks to accommodate the development of the former Downtown Plaza (made up of two 10-acre super blocks bisected by 5th Street), the Sacramento Commons housing development, and the Sacramento Convention Center.

The configuration of the RSP Area, along with numerous physical features such as the UPRR tracks, the Central Shops, the northern embankment, I-5, and the Sacramento River, does not allow for the simple extension of the Central City grid into the RSP Area. The street system in the 2007 RSP was designed to create a grid system of approximately 400 foot blocks, although the unique features of the resulted in blocks of a variety of shapes and sizes. The proposed RSPU is constrained by the same physical features, but is also designed to accommodate the proposed KP Medical Center site (approximately 17.8 acres) and the proposed MLS Stadium site (approximately 14.7 acres). Along with those development sites, the proposed street system would create a wider array of block sizes than the 2007 RSP, with some blocks as large as approximately 600 feet by 300 feet.

The construction of fewer high-rise buildings, and more large floor plate, mid-rise buildings, in the RSP Area on blocks of varying sizes, would tend to decrease visual sense that the RSP would be an extension of the CBD, and instead it would visually appear distinct, as a transition both in terms of height, scale and massing between the CBD and the lower density River District. Like the 2007 RSP, the RSPU would change the visual character of the RSP Area from an

undeveloped and visually blighted area adjacent to downtown Sacramento, to an urbanized extension of the urbanized Central City. These effects would be **less than significant**.

Street-wall Height and Neighborhood Transition

The proposed RSPU would provide for maximum street-wall heights on the majority of streets in the Depot (except on 7th Street between F Street and the UPRR tracks), East End, West End, and Riverfront Districts of 65 feet, an increase of five (5) feet over the maximum street-wall in these districts in the 2007 RSP. Exceptions to the 65-foot street-wall height limit would be along Railyards Boulevard where the limit would be 85 feet, and on the H zoned blocks along Bercut and South Park Street west of Hopkins Walk, where the maximum street-wall height would be 125 feet. The maximum street-wall height in the Central Shops Historic District would remain to be the tops of the historic Central Shops buildings with new buildings limited to 24 feet in height.

Street-wall height is viewed in the context of the travelway width. As an example, where street-wall height is substantially less than the width of the road right-of-way, the visual character is one of openness, where sunlight is accessible, views to the sky are more expansive, and the visual character of the streetscape is more “pedestrian scale.” When street-wall height is materially higher than the width of the travelway, a tunnel effect can be created, where the sky is only accessible above, sunlight is more limited (especially in winter), and the character of the street is less in scale with pedestrians.

As proposed, the rights-of-way for major streets in the Depot, West End, and East End districts range from approximately 103 feet for Railyards Blvd. in the West End District to about 80 feet for other major streets. Camille Lane would have a right-of-way of 80 feet between Bercut Drive and 5th Street, and 90 feet between 5th and 6th streets. Fifth and Sixth streets would have rights-of-way of 80 feet, except where crossing the UPRR tracks. Seventh Street would have a right-of-way of 80 to 100 feet between F Street and the UPRR tracks, 56 feet under the tracks, 44 feet between the tracks and Railyards Boulevard, 160 feet between Railyards Boulevard and South Park Street, and 103 feet from South Park Street to North B Street. In the R-5 area of the East End District, Judah Street would have a right-of-way of 76 feet and South Park Street would have a right-of-way of 90 feet. Thus, a 65-foot street-wall would range from about 83% of the Railyards Blvd. street width to about 100% of the street width for a minor street such as Judah Street. The 2007 RSP and the proposed RSPU would have very comparable street-wall to street-width relationships.

In the Depot District, on the east side of 7th Street, between F Street and the UPRR tracks, there are a mixture of one story office buildings, and two story residences and historic homes that have been converted to office use. South of F Street on the east side of 7th Street is a six-story parking structure and multi-story office building (approximately 50 feet in height). Under the 2007 RSP, the properties on Block 46, on the west side of 7th Street between F Street and the UPRR tracks would be limited to 85-feet in height with a maximum 35-foot street-wall. This would effectively create a step down from the unrestricted heights allowed on the parcels facing 6th Street, or on

those facing 7th Street south of F Street. Under the proposed RSPU, the overall height of structures built on Block 46, facing 7th Street between F Street and the UPRR tracks, would increase to 120 feet or less, and the required step down from the RSP Area to the adjacent Alkali Flat neighborhood would be changed as a result of an increase in the maximum street-wall height from 35 feet to 65 feet. This change could reduce sun access, increase afternoon shadows, and create visual continuity with the existing five to six story buildings along 7th Street south of F Street.

Notwithstanding the changes in the street-wall heights and building massing described above, the proposed RSPU would continue to change the visual character from a large vacant area to an urbanized extension of the Central City. Views to and from the project site would, for the most part, not be materially affected or would be improved. As noted above, however, the proposed street-wall height on Block 46 on the west side of 7th Street between F Street and the UPRR tracks would adversely affect the visual character of this portion of the corridor by reducing views to the west toward the Central Shops, sky access, and sunlight to residential and office uses on the east side of 7th Street. This would be considered a **significant** impact.

Grading and Topographic Changes

Under existing conditions, the project site is relatively flat, with extensive elevation changes that are a result of extensive past grading to accommodate railroad activities, as well as extensive soil movement, including excavation and stockpiling, as part of remediation activities undertaken over the last 25 years. The proposed RSPU would result in substantial grading activities along with import of fill to result in a relatively flat topography that would gently slope from east to west. As part of the site grading, the embankment that forms the northern edge of the East End District would be lowered. Finished lots facing along North B Street would be about 4 to 5 feet above grade, and streets would be graded to an elevation consistent with the North B Street elevation (see Figure 2-16, Berm Elevation Exhibit).

The changes to the topography and finished grades in most of the RSP Area would be largely unremarkable, with stockpiles removed or graded smooth, and depressions filled to create a designed gradient. However, the lowering of the northern embankment and the development of urban uses along North B Street would change the visual character of this street from an undeveloped edge to an urban street. The vegetated embankments on the south side of North B Street would be replaced by residential and non-residential building frontages. The visual level of activity along North B Street, including pedestrian flows as well as bicycle and vehicle activity, would substantially increase with substantial numbers of homes and/or apartments, storefronts, and other urban uses. Development along this edge would create a cohesive visual edge and transition to the River District, compared to the existing vegetated embankment that forms a visual blockage and perceived barrier between the RSP Area and the River District. This impact is considered **less than significant**.

Railyards Specific Plan Update Land Use Variant

Under the RSPU Land Use Variant, the visual effects of the development that would occur on the KP Medical Center and MLS Stadium blocks would be of similar character as that described for other parts of the West End and East End districts.

The RSPU Land Use Variant would include the same proposed increase in street-wall height on Block 46, along 7th Street between F Street and the UPRR tracks as described above for the proposed RSPU. For the same reasons articulated above, this would be considered a **significant** impact.

KP Medical Center

As is described in Chapter 2, Project Description, illustrative plans the KP Medical Center include a hospital with a three- to four-level base (approximately 42 to 60 feet above grade) that would feature the hospital entry on the west and the three-level emergency room and related facilities on the north, and a main hospital tower that would rise to 14 stories in the center of the block, to a maximum height of approximately 230 feet. The hospital tower would be clad in metal with approximately 30% glazing using dual-pane, low-E glass. The hospital would be surrounded on the south and east by the three- to four-level, 42 to 60-foot high HSB, which would face Railyards Blvd. The HSB would be clad in pre-cast and metal, with approximately 38% glazing using dual-pane, low-E glass. Based on the illustrative site plans, the hospital building and tower would be centrally situated on the portion of the 17.8-acre site, generally between the alignment of Huntington Street and Hopkins Walk.

Based on the illustrative plans, to the west of the hospital, the most prominent feature of the KP Medical Center would be the Phase 1 Parking Structure, which would rise seven (7) floors, approximately 70 feet, above the intersection of Bercut Drive and Railyards Blvd. To the east of the hospital, during Phase 1 would be a surface parking lot that would cover the majority of the block bounded by Railyards Blvd., 5th Street, the Hopkins Walk greenway, and South Park Street. In addition, small parking areas would be provided around the hospital building for patients with urgent access needs (e.g., emergency, maternity) and for short-term parking for patient drop-off and pick-up. As described in the RSPU Design Guidelines, the surface parking lot would be fully improved, with landscaping, lighting, signage, and streetfront improvements. These parking lots would be visible from nearby streets and sidewalks, especially the proposed Phase 1 Parking Lot near the intersection of Railyards Boulevard and 5th Street. The smaller parking areas on the site may be partially or fully screened by buildings and landscaping.

During Phase 2, the Phase 1 parking lot would be redeveloped to include two medical office buildings, and a Phase 2 Parking Structure. The Phase 2 Parking Structure would be 8 floors above grade, and approximately 85 feet in height. The specific design and materials of the parking structures and surface parking lots would be determined through the City's Site Plan and Design Review permit process.

The Phase 2 medical office buildings would be on the south and east sides of the site, along Railyards Blvd. and the Stanford Street greenway, respectively, and would each be approximately six (6) floors, and 150 feet in height, with facades of pre-cast and metal, with 37.5% glazing of dual-pane, low-E glass.

At the northeast corner of the site, near the intersection of Bercut Drive and South Park Street, the KP Medical Center would include a 1 to 2-story Central Utility Plant. Immediately to the east of the CUP may be a surface helistop, which would be connected with pathways to the emergency entrance to the hospital. The ground-level helistop would be paved asphalt and fenced for safety purposes. Alternatively, the helistop may be placed on the top of the hospital tower.

As described above for the RSPU, the KP Medical Center would alter current views of the site from undeveloped land to a developed multiple building medical campus. The hospital tower would be prominently visible from nearby streets and highways, including the elevated section of I-5, Railyards Blvd., the 5th and 6th Street overpasses, Bercut Drive, North B Street, and other locations in the River District. Because of the presence of the elevated section of I-5, which near the site is located on a solid earthen embankment, the hospital tower would be unlikely to be materially visible from the Sacramento River, nearly 1,000 feet to the west. As such, there are no existing views or vistas that would be altered or obstructed as a result of construction of the proposed KP Medical Center.

The KP Medical Center would have a comprehensive signage program, including landmark signage on the top level of the hospital tower. These landmark signs would be installed on the west and south sides of the tower, and would include six-foot illuminated letters spelling out “Kaiser Permanente” in Kaiser’s distinctive blue color scheme. Additional prominent signage would include a monument Welcome sign located at the corner of 5th and Railyards Blvd.; this sign would be 9-feet, three inches high, with a 20-foot marker pylon. Additional 20-foot marker signs (denoting Emergency, Hospital, Parking, Medical Offices) would be located at prominent locations around the perimeter of the site to assist in wayfinding.

The buildings and associated signage that would comprise the KP Medical Center would visually enhance a currently highly visible, barren and unattractive area. The urban uses in the KP Medical Center would be designed to be consistent with the proposed RSPU Design Guidelines, themselves largely identical to the Central Core Design Guidelines, and would be subject to detailed Site Plan and Design Review by the Planning and Design Commission prior to final approval. Thus, the development of the KP Medical Center would replace the existing conditions with development visual consistent and cohesive with the existing Sacramento CBD, and, therefore, would improve conditions on the project site.

The proposed KP Medical Center would not degrade the visual quality or character of the site and its surrounding. Rather, development consistent with the illustrative site plans would contribute to the visual character and interest of downtown Sacramento, and would improve the visual quality of the downtown area. As such, development of the KP Medical Center would not degrade the

existing visual quality or obstruct key existing views and/or vistas in the vicinity. This impact would be considered **less than significant**.

MLS Stadium

Changes in the visual character or quality of a site are often perceived as subjective and individual. The 2035 General Plan and the 2007 RDG provide guidance that reflects the diverse nature of the built environment in Sacramento, the complex nature of urban design in the community, and the established design intent for the RSP Area. Policies such as LU 2.4.1 and LU 2.4.2 reflect Sacramento's traditional character and places a priority on design that "respects and responds to the local context," and, at the same time, policies such as LU 2.4.4 and LU 2.4.5 reflect the City's aspiration for iconic buildings and a distinctive skyline that creates landmarks and visually reinforces downtown Sacramento's role as the region's business and governmental core.

The RDG, incorporated as part of the CCUDG, represent an articulation of community's goals and values surrounding urban design and architectural quality in the RSP Area, and create an objective framework in which to consider aesthetic changes that may otherwise be considered subjective. They are intended "to promote the improved aesthetic and functional quality of the Railyards community." As such, for the purposes of this analysis, the proposed MLS Stadium is considered in light of the RDG. Substantial compliance with the RDG was used as the measure of significance.

The MLS Stadium would be located in the East End District of the Railyards, generally north of Railyards Blvd., between 8th Street and 10th Street. The Stadium itself would be rectangular in shape with round edges and corners. A large entry plaza along 8th Street would frame the west side of the Stadium. There would be smaller plaza areas also on the north and east sides of the Stadium, along with smaller entrances. The design, shape and scale of the Stadium would be distinctive from other existing residential, commercial, office, or other buildings in downtown Sacramento, the River District, Alkali Flat, or other planned development within the RSP Area. However, it is worth noting there are other buildings in the Central City that are distinctive and uniquely recognizable by their design, including the State Capitol, the Golden 1 Center, the Central Shops buildings, the Sacramento River Water Treatment Plant buildings, the 1215 K Street building, the Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament, and the City Hall Annex. By adding another architecturally distinctive structure, the Stadium would reflect the urban design heritage of Sacramento's Central City.

Views

The approximately 95-foot tall, rectangular Stadium structure itself, with its integrated façade and canopy structure comprised of a range of textures and materials, including metal, glass, fabric, and translucent synthetic panels, would be a distinctive, highly visible, iconic structure that would be instantly recognizable due to a design unique in the region, especially at night when it would be accentuated by bright lighting and signage. Despite its distinctive design, the Stadium would

be visible only in varying degrees from view corridors looking west on South Park Street, south and west on southbound 12th Street, eastbound on Railyards Blvd, east of 7th Street, and from North B Street and 10th Street. The Stadium structure would be visible from private homes in The Cremery at Alkali Flat project (currently under construction approximately 400 feet to the south), and from the Globe Mills residences (approximately 750 feet southeast). If the Stadium were built prior to development of other portions of the RSP Area, it is likely that it would be visible from I-5, approximately three-quarters of a mile to the west; however, as the RSP Area develops, it is reasonable to expect that intervening buildings would largely block views of the Stadium from travelers on I-5. In these ways, the proposed Stadium would reflect the City's goals for distinctive and iconic buildings.

2007 Railyards Design Guidelines

The 2007 Railyards Design Guidelines (RDG) provides direction to encourage and promote an array of visual and aesthetic characteristics of building and landscape design in the RSP Area. The Stadium would be a unique structure designed to accommodate large events and by virtue of its size and mass would not be able to meet every specific element addressed in the RDG. The RDG's principles are not prescriptive, however, and on balance, the design of the proposed Stadium would substantially comply with the aspirations expressed in the RDG principles, as discussed below. With a focus on the most visible parts of building design, the following discussion is organized around the key principles related to building facades articulated in the Private Realm Guidelines of the 2007 RDG.

Ground Level Uses. At the main entrance from the 8th Street plaza on the west side the proposed Stadium, the Main Concourse level would face onto and be integrated with the active public space of the entry plaza. This plaza would be directly connected, both functionally and visually, west to 8th Street, and to smaller plazas on the north, south facing Railyards Blvd., and east facing 10th Street. These public spaces and their adjacent streets would be activated by virtue of a close visual connection to activities within the Stadium, as well as with retail and ticketing storefronts, retail kiosks, small-scale performance venues, seasonal events, musical and cultural events, and gardens.

Transparency. It is anticipated that the façade of the Stadium, including the portions that face the entry plazas, would be comprised of a variety of materials including transparent glazing, providing open views into the seating and field areas. At street level, multiple entrances to the Stadium, the ticket booths, and a team retail store would provide a high degree of permeability, and combined with distinctive signage and plaza area landscaping would minimize the potential for blank opaque faces along the street frontages.

Street-wall Articulation. The Stadium would be highly articulated both vertically and horizontally. Around the majority of the building, facing 8th Street, Railyards Blvd., and 10th Street, and the plazas around the west, north, and east sides, the Stadium façade would extend from the ground level to the parapet and canopy. Along adjacent streets, the structure would be

set back; the setback would be approximately 100 feet from 8th and 10th streets, and 40 to 70 feet from Railyards Blvd. These setbacks would accommodate public plazas necessary for crowd flow before and after events, pedestrian circulation, service delivery and VIP drop-offs, and landscaping.

From the plaza or street level, the structure would be highly articulated with entrances for attendees, employees, media, and others; above the street level, the multi-textured façade and canopy would be the dominant design feature. The 8th Street entry plaza would be highly visible at the eastern terminus of the South Park Street corridor. As described above, a multitude of activities, including ticketing, retail, kiosks, entertainment, signage and lighting would create visual interest, accentuated by the highly articulated façade of the Stadium. The 10th Street entry would cross a landscaped setback from 10th Street and provide connectivity to parking, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities to the east on 12th Street.

Fenestration: Window and Façade Systems and Patterns. The Stadium would use a combination of metal, glass, fabric, and translucent synthetic panels, in a manner that would be unique in downtown Sacramento. The multi-faceted façade of the Stadium would include translucent colored panels that would be highly articulated from the ground level to the canopy parapet, and with extensive variation would create an undulating sense of depth and irregular shadows and silhouettes.

Entrances. The main entrances would be located on the west, northwest, and southwest corners of the Stadium and would open to the 8th Street entry plaza. The creation of wide entries from the entry plaza and from 8th Street and Railyards Blvd. would maximize the visibility to and through the Stadium entrances. Distinctive building materials, signage and lighting that denote the main entrances would create additional emphasis on the visual importance of the key entry points. The public and private realms would be integrated through the use of three large entrances each opening to the west plaza. A way-finding program would be implemented throughout the Stadium site and on nearby streets throughout the Railyards, increasing the accessibility of the Stadium to pedestrians and other visitors to the project vicinity.

Canopies, Awnings and Sunshades. While the Stadium pitch would be open to the sky, a distinctive feature of the Stadium would be a fabric and metal canopy that would wrap the parapet and provide shade and rain cover for the seating bowl. Cantilevered cornices on the Stadium façade at the roof parapet would create the potential for shade and cover of portions of the surrounding plaza areas. During warm weather, the canopy structure would provide shade that would cool the inside of the Stadium, and make the portions of the plazas around the Stadium shadier.

Projecting Elements and Encroachments. As can be seen in the elevations presented in **Figure 4.1-21**, the building facades would reflect a design that would be unique in downtown Sacramento. From Railyards Blvd. and 8th Street, the multi-textured Stadium structure would rise above the street with tall, vertical panels of metal and/or translucent panels that would be highly



MATERIALS

- | | | | |
|---|--|---|---|
| 1 | EXPOSED STRUCTURAL STEEL WITH HIGH PERFORMANCE COATING | 5 | SPECIAL SHAPE BRICK VENEER - ROMAN PROFILE |
| 2 | METAL ROOF DECK WITH HIGH PERFORMANCE COATING | 6 | STRUCTURAL-SEALANT-GLAZED CURTAIN WALL SYSTEM |
| 3 | FIBERGLASS & PTFE COMPOSITE MESH PANEL SYSTEM | 7 | SELF-SUPPORTING GLASS GUARDRAIL |
| 4 | METAL PAN STAIR W/ STEEL PLATE GUARDRAIL & HSS SUPPORT FRAME | | |

articulated and would appear to create facets in a repetitive pattern. Portions of the elevations could be brightly and colorfully lit. Some of the translucent panels could be colored, and could include visual displays either through large-scale signs and banners that would be visible through to the plaza. Along all of the structure's faces, the façade would extend from the ground to the roof parapet, creating a lit and colorful multi-faceted elevation that would create striking views from close up and viewed from a distance down view corridors such as looking south on 10th Street from North B Street or Richards Blvd., looking east on South Park Street from 7th Street or points further west, and southwest on 12th Street from North B Street, and other viewscales.

Materials. The Stadium structure would be made of a variety of materials, including metal, glass, fabric, and translucent synthetic panels. Some materials, such as glass or translucent panels, may be reflective while others like metal or fabric would be matte. Translucent panels would be key features of all Stadium faces. Distinctive lighting and signage would be positioned inside the glass and translucent panels, and could be visible from inside and outside the Stadium, making the glass and translucent features of the façade visually distinctive and highly visible from outside of the Stadium structure.

Lighting. The proposed Stadium and its main entry plaza would be brightly lit for visibility during and between events. Exterior lighting for the Stadium would be provided to illuminate different areas of the building and surrounding plazas. The type of lighting and its intensity would vary, however, depending on how the venue is being used at any given time.

Around the Stadium, in the entry plaza and other open spaces, a variety of different lighting techniques would be employed depending on the location. These would range from lighting integrated into the landscape to LED lights and video screens in the plaza and/or along the façade. Some of these elements would be signage opportunities as well, and so there would be some overlap between signage and lighting in these instances.

The proposed Stadium would respond positively to most of the principles of the 2007 RDG to the extent feasible for such a structure. The Stadium would be a unique large structure with a distinctive and iconic design, and would be a type of structure that was not originally anticipated by the 2007 RDG. The proposed Stadium would be generally consistent with and would substantially comply with the direction articulated in the 2007 RDG for the structure design and materials. Because of the need for the site to accommodate thousands of pedestrians and event attendees, the proposed Stadium would be less responsive to the elements of the 2007 RDG that address the placement of structures on the site and the relationship to the street.

As a result of the proposed Stadium, the visual character of the project site would be changed from a vacant, highly disturbed property to a large, visually-iconic sports and entertainment facility with interesting pedestrian plazas and open spaces. The changes in the height, design, and visual prominence of development on the project site would be in substantial compliance with City policy regarding urban design in the project vicinity as articulated in the 2035 General Plan

and the 2007 RDG. While the changes in the visual character of the project site would be dramatic, the analysis demonstrates that they would not be adverse within the context of the City's articulated aesthetic values. For these reasons, the proposed Stadium would not substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings, and this impact is considered **less than significant**.

Stormwater Outfall

The proposed Stormwater Outfall site would be located approximately 75 feet upstream of the existing USGS river gage station. It is most visible to bicyclists and pedestrians on the Sacramento River bike trail that traverses the site, motorists on Jibboom Street, boaters on the Sacramento River, and people who view the Sacramento River riverbank from the Riverwalk in West Sacramento (see Figure 4.1-11). The only visible elements of the proposed Stormwater Outfall would be above ground features of the pump station and the outfall structure itself, located on the bank of the Sacramento River. All other elements of the Outfall project, including the wet well, pumps, and conveyance pipelines would be buried and not visible to casual observers.

The site of the wet well and pump station would be under the elevated structure of I-5, and is not an area that is readily visible to anyone other than people who travel on Jibboom Street or use the bike trail. The visible elements of the pump station would include a couple of small utility structures that would house backup generators and vents that are part of the pump station cooling system. These would be approximately 10 feet tall and would be visually unobtrusive among the pilings that support I-5.

On the Sacramento River riverbank, the outfall structure would be a concrete and metal structure of approximately 60 feet in length and about 10 feet in height. It would be contoured to be consistent with the slope of the riverbank. Its construction would require removal of one large shrub and two trees from the riverbank, and one tree located on the top of the bank adjacent to the bike trail. This tree removal would be the most visible change as a result of the Stormwater Outfall project. The outfall structure would be invisible to viewers from the Sacramento side of the river, unless then walk to the top of bank and look down the slope to see the concrete structure from the top.

Views from the river and from the West Sacramento bank of the River would be altered by removal of the trees and construction of the outfall structure. From the west, views of the riverbank between the I Street Bridge and the Sacramento River Water Treatment Plant intake structure, including along the RSP Area, are dominated by riverbank trees and shrubs, with the elevated I-5 and Jibboom Street structures in the background. The riverbank itself is dirt and weeds, with broken concrete and urban trash scattered along the river edge. The most prominent opening in the tree canopy is the location of the river gage, an approximately 100-foot long stretch with no trees, and the river gage structure, including a cylindrical concrete tower, concrete

steps from the top of bank to the river level, chain link fences and a small metal-sided building at the top of the bank.

The effect of the construction of the proposed Stormwater Outfall, and associated tree/shrub removal, would be to increase the length of this stretch of riverbank without trees, and the addition of another utility structure on the riverbank. Views from the west would include the approximately 60-foot long outfall structure as an added feature to a riverbank that is already visually disturbed by other manmade features. While the tree canopy would be reduced, the overall visual character of the riverbank would not be materially changed. As is noted above, the riverfront along the RSP Area is designated Urban Waterfront Recreation in the Sacramento River Parkway Plan. These changes to the visual character of the Sacramento River riverbank would be consistent with the type of activity associated with an urban waterfront.

The proposed Stormwater Outfall would be less visually intrusive than the outfall that was anticipated under the 2007 RSP. That outfall was anticipated to be located at the top of the riverbank, with a spillway structure that would extend down the entire length of the riverbank to the low water mark. Conversely, the proposed Stormwater Outfall would be largely buried in the riverbank, with the only visible structure to be the contoured outfall located just above the normal low-water level of the River. At higher water levels, the outfall would be below the water surface; at low water levels, a small spillway would be visible before released stormwater reaches the river.

Thus, the effect of the proposed Stormwater Outfall on visual quality and character, including views, would be considered **less than significant**.

Summary

As described above, implementation of the proposed RSPU would create a series of visual changes to the RSP Area, changing it from an undeveloped, vacant former industrial site to an urbanized extension of downtown Sacramento, and a visual transition from the CBD to the lower-scale more industrial visual character of the River District. All projects in the RSP Area would be subject to the City's Site Plan and Design Review and/or Preservation Review permit process. Projects consistent with the RSPU, including the KP Medical Center, the MLS Stadium, and the Stormwater Outfall, would alter their sites from existing conditions, but in ways that would be largely consistent with the policy direction of relevant plans, policies, and guidelines. Thus, the effects of the proposed RSPU, KP Medical Center, MLS Stadium, and Stormwater Outfall on visual quality, character and views would be a **less-than-significant** impact.

However, because the proposed street-wall height on Block 46 on the west side of 7th Street between F Street and the UPRR tracks would adversely affect the visual character of this portion of the corridor by reducing views to the west toward the Central Shops, sky access, and sunlight to residential and office uses on the east side of 7th Street, this would be considered a **significant** impact for the proposed RSPU, including the Land Use Variant.

Mitigation Measure

Mitigation Measure 4.1-1 (RSPU)

Within Block 46, the maximum street-wall height for structures facing 7th Street shall be 35 feet in height.

Impact Significance After Mitigation: Implementation of Mitigation Measure 4.1-1 would ensure that the street-wall height of development on Block 46 facing 7th Street between F Street and the UPRR tracks would be no greater than 35 feet, which would ensure an appropriate visual transition from the intensity of development in the RSP Area to the adjacent properties in the Alkali Flat neighborhood. Such a street-wall height would also protect against significant increases in after shading and reductions in sky access. With the implementation of **Mitigation Measure 4.1-1**, this impact would be reduced to a **less-than-significant** level.

Impact 4.1-2: The potential development of high-rise buildings adjacent to the riverfront could conflict with the character of the riverfront between Old Sacramento and the Jibboom Street Bridge.

2007 RSP EIR Impact 6.13-2 (pages 6.13-25 to 6.13-31 of the RSP DEIR) addressed the potential for development of a hotel/residential mixed-use project with buildings up to 450 feet above grade (up to 30-stories) on land that is between I-5 and the River, with open space and park uses surrounding the hotel/residential structure. The analysis explained that the 2007 RDG included the following site planning, massing and building configuration guidelines specific to the Riverfront District:

- Projects in the Riverfront District should be sited to maximize, to the extent possible, views from the Railyards to the Sacramento River, as well as physical connections through the district to the River;
- The building development should provide permeability at plaza level to facilitate movement between the Riverfront District and the adjacent Districts; and
- In the Riverfront District, maximum height of the street-wall (that is, the part of the building with no bulk limit) should be no more than 85 feet. There is no step back requirement in the Riverfront District, and towers are encouraged to rise from the ground to the top.

In addition, specific controls on the location and height of future structures in the Riverfront District were established on a Riverfront District Height Diagram that was presented in 2007 RSP EIR Figure 6.13-7.

The analysis also stated that on the east bank (Sacramento side) of the River, building heights in Old Sacramento and to the north along Jibboom Street were (and remain) substantially lower than the proposed mixed use development. It also noted that there were high-rise buildings of 157 and 300 feet across the River in West Sacramento's Washington Specific Plan Area (specifically, the Ziggurat and the CalSTRS Headquarters Building). The analysis further explained that the evaluation of visual compatibility of a new building with the scale of existing development is inherently subjective; and that in light of such subjectivity it is possible that a high-rise hotel/residential building could be seen as out of scale with the riverfront environment and could be seen as creating a visual barrier between the riverfront and the remainder of the RSP Area.

Impact 6.13-2 (page 6.13-27) concluded that the Riverfront District Design Guidelines, including the Height Diagram "would ensure that views of the river are maintained and enhanced by facilitating increased pedestrian access and public open space along a portion of the river that has been previously of limited access. More specifically, the analysis found that "[t]he Guidelines provide for the tall structures on the site to be situated away from the River, adjacent to Interstate 5. On the south side of the District, adjacent to the I Street Bridge, building height would be a maximum of 450-feet adjacent to I-5, and then would step down toward the River, first to 85 feet, and then to 35 feet, with an 80-foot wide open space adjacent to the Sacramento River parkway. At the northern end of the District, the Guidelines allow for a 350-foot tower that would step down to an 85-foot building base, again with an 80-foot wide open space adjacent to the Parkway. The two structures would be separated by a visually-permeable open space that would allow pedestrian access and views between the River and the Railyards site to the east."

The analysis concluded that the requirements of the 2007 RDG would "ensure the creation of slender towers with sufficient separation that through-views to the River from I-5 would remain," and that implementation of the 2007 RDG would "guide development so that it would be consistent with the intent of the relevant policies of the Sacramento River Parkway Plan," eliminating the potential for a significant visual conflict or blockage of views. The impact was therefore determined to be less than significant.

Railyards Specific Plan Update

Development in the Riverfront District under the proposed RSPU would be similar to that described and allowed for under the 2007 RSP. Site planning considerations would be changed, with both high-rise tower development sites allowing development up to 450 feet, both immediately adjacent to I-5. An additional stepdown towards the River would be required. As with the 2007 RSP, these sites would only be developable following removal of the elevated Jibboom Street roadway and connection to the I Street Bridge.

Like with the 2007 RSP all development in the Riverfront District would be set back a minimum of 80 feet from the parcel edge, and a gap of approximately 120 feet would be provided between the two building sites to provide a view corridor between the River and the Central Shops Historic District.

Under the proposed RSPU, the base height for buildings would be 65 feet, a decrease from 85 feet under the 2007 RSP. With the elevated structure of I-5 at approximately 70 feet above grade, the building bases would not be above I-5, opening up views between towers to the River corridor and downtown Sacramento. Further, as described above under Impact 4.1-1, the proposed RSPU would increase the average maximum floor plate for residential towers from 7,500 sf to 10,000 sf. The marginal increased floor plate size could exacerbate the visual blockage for passers-by on I-5 for a stretch of approximately 500 feet, blocking views of downtown Sacramento, Old Sacramento, the Sacramento River, the I Street Bridge, and West Sacramento beyond. Although the building base would be lower, the increased floor plates would result in a view blockage greater than under the 2007 RSP, which required development that would be more visually permeable than proposed under the RSPU, and would have allowed for continued intermittent views between towers.

Sacramento River Parkway Plan policy D.3 states that “[c]ommercial and residential development within the Parkway, subject to the city’s planning review process, shall be designed to visually blend with and be in scale with the surrounding riverine environment. Color, texture, style, height, width, and bulk should be considered in design.” Since the adoption of the 2007 RSP, the City has adopted two new General Plans which include policies that address future development along the City’s key rivers, the American and the Sacramento. As noted above, policies LU 2.2.1 and 2.2.3 emphasize the importance of maximizing visual access to the Sacramento River, and how the natural environment of the river corridor should “guide the scale, design, and intensity of development.” Policy 2.3.2 requires development adjacent to open spaces to preserve visual access.

The creation of towers with average floor plates of 20,000 sf and 10,000 sf, rising immediately adjacent to the required 80-foot setback from the river edge would be a height that would tower over the bike trail and river edge, and would be out of scale with the river environment.

Further, the proposed building envelope that would allow 65-foot building within 80 linear feet of the River would be a substantial departure from the development envelope allowed for in the 2007 RSP and that exists to the south of the site in Old Sacramento. The 2007 RSP requires a specific step down from east to west that would have required a building base of no more than 85 feet in height for approximately 300 feet from I-5, and then a step down to a maximum of 35 feet in height for 80 linear feet, before the 80-foot open setback from the river edge. The 35-foot limit on the westernmost building face was intended to create a building edge more compatible with the River environment and comparable to the building heights in Old Sacramento to the south, and of the former PG&E powerhouse to the north. A building height stepdown would be required toward the River, but the lack of a specific stepdown requirement would allow for a building base height of 65 feet immediately adjacent to the river edge setback.

Although future development in the Riverfront District would be subject to the City’s Site Plan and Design Review process, the height and bulk of development that would be allowed in the

Riverfront District would conflict with the character of the riverfront between Old Sacramento and the Jibboom Street Bridge, and would be inconsistent with the proposed RSPU Design Guidelines which states that in the Riverfront District it is the intent that “[t]owers should be slender on their upper stories so as to preserve visual access to the River for Interstate 5 motorists.” Importantly, the development in this District, including but not limited to the changes proposed in the RSPU, would reduce the degree of visual access to the River both at the pedestrian level and from the elevated section of I-5 and would be inconsistent with the direction of policies of the 2035 General Plan. This impact would be considered **significant**.

Railyards Specific Plan Update Land Use Variant

Under the RSPU Land Use Variant, development in the Riverfront District would be identical to that described above. Since there would be no changes to the effects described for the proposed RSPU, the impact would be considered **significant**.

KP Medical Center

The proposed KP Medical Center would not be located in the Riverfront District and would not contribute to potential conflicts with the character of the riverfront between Old Sacramento and the Jibboom Street Bridge. This would be considered **no impact**.

MLS Stadium

The proposed MLS Stadium would not be located in the Riverfront District and would not contribute to potential conflicts with the character of the riverfront between Old Sacramento and the Jibboom Street Bridge. This would be considered **no impact**.

Stormwater Outfall

The proposed Stormwater Outfall would be located in the Riverfront District and would not contribute to potential conflicts with the character of the riverfront between Old Sacramento and the Jibboom Street Bridge. This would be considered **no impact**.

Summary

Although future proposed development in the Riverfront District would be subject to the City’s Site Plan and Design Review process, the height and bulk of development that would be allowed in the Riverfront District under the proposed RSPU would conflict with the character of the riverfront between Old Sacramento and the Jibboom Street Bridge. This impact would be considered **significant**.

Mitigation Measure

Mitigation Measure 4.1-2, described below, would be required to eliminate conflicts with the character of the Sacramento River riverfront as a result of development in the RSPU Riverfront District. This mitigation measure was not included in the 2007 RSP EIR.

Mitigation Measure 4.1-2 (RSPU)

For development within the allowable footprints on Parcel 35, the following base height requirements shall be added to the RSPU Design Guidelines and enforced through the SPD and the City's Site Plan and Design Review permit process:

- *On the southern development lot, any building within 80 feet of the required setback from the riverbank shall be no greater than 35 feet in height.*

Impact Significance After Mitigation: Implementation of Mitigation Measure 4.1-2 would ensure a building height step down toward the Sacramento River to create a development edge similar in scale to other built environment on the east bank of the River between Old Sacramento and the Jibboom Street Bridge. With the implementation of **Mitigation Measure 4.1-2**, this impact would be reduced to a **less-than-significant** level.

Impact 4.1-3: The proposed projects could create substantial new sources of light.

New development can result in increases to ambient nighttime lighting and spillover light that can affect nearby uses. These lighting issues are considerations that are typically addressed by the City through its Site Plan and Design Review permit process; all future development in the RSP Area would be subject to this review process. 2007 RSP effects on ambient nighttime light and effects as a result of spillover light on nearby sensitive uses were addressed in 2007 RSP EIR Impact 6.13-3 (pages 6.13-31 to 6.13-33 of the RSP EIR).

As it pertains to increases in ambient nighttime lighting, while the analysis presented in Impact 6.13-3 stated that there would be an increase in ambient light in the project area as a result of implementation of the 2007 RSP, because the surrounding area is already urbanized and subject to substantial amounts of existing nighttime ambient light, the increase in such light that would be attributable to the 2007 RSP “would not significantly affect nighttime views of the sky (ability to see the stars), because such views are already limited in city settings.”

Related to spillover light effects, Impact 6.13-3 recognized that the potential construction of high-rise buildings in the East District, adjacent to the Alkali Flat neighborhood could result in spillover light effects on existing or future sensitive uses (such as residences). The analysis recognized the presence of 2007 RDG guidelines related to lighting design and illumination in both public and private realms, but nevertheless acknowledged that “the construction of new buildings to the west and north that could reach as high as 25 to 30 stories (300 to 360 feet) could result in light spillover onto adjacent residential properties. This impact was determined to be potentially significant.

The City concluded that Mitigation Measures 6.13-3(a) through 6.13-3(c) were sufficient to reduce the impact to a less-than-significant level. Measure 6.13-3(a) required that east of 6th Street all exterior lighting, including signage, be directed toward the intended area to be illuminated, and shielded away from adjacent properties and public rights-of-way; set a maximum height of 25 feet for all light structures for surface parking areas, vehicular access ways and walkways; and prohibited monument lighting and night-lit signage on building facades facing toward residential neighborhoods. Measure 6.13-3(b) required the approval of a project lighting plan by the Development Services Department prior to issuance of a site development permit. Measure 6.13-3(c) required that landscape illumination and exterior sign lighting comply with the City Code.

Railyards Specific Plan Update

As described in the 2007 RSP EIR, implementation of the proposed RSPU would result in an increase in ambient light in the project area. Under current conditions, there is essentially no ambient lighting emanating from large portions of the RSP Area, especially that portion north of the UPRR tracks. The limited ambient light that is emitted is from light sources south of the tracks in and around the Sacramento Valley Station, from street lighting along 7th Street. With full implementation of the RSPU, there would be extensive urban development, with nighttime light being emitted from buildings, streetlights, signage, vehicles, and other sources. Because the surrounding areas, including the CBD, Alkali Flat, and the River District are already urbanized and subject to substantial amounts of existing nighttime ambient light, the increase in such light attributable to the proposed RSPU would not significantly affect nighttime views of the sky (ability to see the stars), because such views are already limited in city settings.

Although the applicant currently expects that construction under the proposed RSPU would be lower than anticipated for the 2007 RSP, the SPD and Design Guidelines allow for the potential construction of high-rise buildings in the East District, adjacent to the Alkali Flat neighborhood. Such buildings could result in spillover light effects on existing uses. In addition, the proposed RSPU would allow for the construction of a sports and entertainment complex that could have substantial nighttime lighting of open plazas and fields, and could include signage that emits light, some of which could spill over to existing or future residences in the Alkali Flat neighborhood. The effects of the proposed MLS Stadium are discussed in further detail below.

Aside from nearby residences in Alkali Flat, the only adjacent residential uses include two homes that are located on the south side of Water Street, near its intersection with Bannon Street and North B Street. Those homes are currently in an industrialized area near the City Sacramento River Water Treatment Plant, across the street from a three-story office building and the parking lot for the Volunteers of America Bannon Street Shelter. There are few, if any, streetlights in the vicinity, and other than parking lot lighting, there are few visible light sources in this area.

Because of the planned location and height of Vista Park, the two existing Water Street residences would be shielded and of sufficient distance from many of the major light sources in

the RSP Area. However, the extension of 5th Street through to North B Street, and the nearby development in the R-5-zoned portion of the East End District, could introduce new light sources around these residences. The residences would be immediately adjacent to the new intersection of 5th and North B streets, and approximately 200 feet from new development in the East End District. Compared to the relatively dark existing conditions, new sources of light, including streetlights, could result in some amount of spillover light into the yards and onto the windows of the Water Street residences. While existing mature trees on the east side of the residential yards may provide shielding of new light sources, there is no guarantee that those trees would remain into the future, or would fully shield the residences from potential spillover lighting.

The proposed RSPU Design Guidelines include provisions that would regulate lighting design and illumination in both public and private realms. For example, in the public realm, street lights are to be no more than 18 feet in height, except on large streets where they could rise to 30 feet, and would require to be shielded and downward facing. In the private realm, levels of illumination would be required to avoid “over illuminating,” and façade lighting would be encouraged to “include internal reflector caps, refractors, or shields that would avoid glare or reflection across property edges onto adjacent buildings.” In addition, the lighting characteristics of future development in the RSP Area would be subject to and considered in the City’s Site Plan and Design Review permit process. Nevertheless, the construction of new buildings that could reach as high as 25 to 30 stories (300 to 360 feet), as well as a potential sports and entertainment complex, in the East End District could result in light spillover onto adjacent residential properties in Alkali Flat and the Water Street residences. The proposed RSPU’s effects on the existing environment would be similar to those described for the 2007 RSP, although somewhat exacerbated by the effects of the light associated with the proposed sports and entertainment complex in the East End District. This impact is considered to be **potentially significant**.

Railyards Specific Plan Update Land Use Variant

Under the proposed RSPU Land Use Variant, the spillover lighting that could be associated with the sports and entertainment complex in the East End District would be eliminated, but the potential for high-rise development would remain in this area. Thus the impacts of the Land Use Variant would remain **potentially significant**.

KP Medical Center

As described in Chapter 2, Project Description, the KP Medical Center would include a comprehensive system of exterior lighting designed to achieve safety, security, and nighttime visibility within the Medical Center campus. Based on illustrative plans for the project site, interior building lighting would be visible at night through windows and other glazed surfaces. Exterior lighting would include lighting of private roads, parking lots and garages, pedestrian walkways and entries, exterior stairs, ramps, and handicap lifts. As described in Table 2-6, KP Medical Center Preliminary Lighting Plan, lighting would range in intensity based on the purpose. Based

on conceptual studies, road lighting would have an average horizontal foot candle of 0.25.⁸ Lighting of pedestrian walkways would be an average of approximately 1.25 to 1.50 horizontal foot candles, and lighting at exterior stairs, ramps/lifts, and in parking structures would be an average of approximately 5.00 to 7.00 horizontal foot candles.

The exterior lighting plan would position lights in manner to reduce light pollution/sky-glow. All lights mounted to a pole/base/pedestal that gives the overall height 12 feet or greater would be full cut-off lights,⁹ with those mounted below 12 feet as semi cut-off lights.¹⁰ Wall mounted lights would not be mounted more than 15 feet above finished floor, and would have a full cut-off distribution. Lights mounted to walkway canopies would not distribute visible light above the visible canopy and each light would be limited to no more than 5,000 lumens.

In addition to exterior lighting, the hospital patient rooms and numerous other parts of the hospital would be active and lit throughout the night. Patient rooms, treatment rooms, and other elements of the hospital would have windows that equipped with shades, which could reduce the visibility of interior lighting from outside the building. Nevertheless, the windows in the hospital tower and base would have visible light throughout the night. Because this interior light is designed for the purposes of lighting interior spaces, it is unlikely that these light sources would contribute to spillover light effects.

The proposed KP Medical Center site is located at substantial distances to nearby residences. The Water Street residences would be approximately 750 feet from the closest edge of the Medical Center, and over 1,000 feet from the proposed hospital tower. In addition, the intervening land would include Vista Park, which would be of sufficient height so as to block any ground-level lighting from these residences. The closest residence in the Alkali Flat neighborhood, near the intersection of D and 8th streets, would be over 1,500 feet away from the Medical Center site.

The measures proposed to be included would substantially reduce the contribution of the KP Medical Center to nighttime lighting, and would be further addressed during the City's Site Plan and Design Review process for each phase of development. These measures, combined with the substantial distances of the proposed Medical Center to existing residences would eliminate the potential that the project would contribute to spillover light on existing nearby residences. Thus, the impacts associated with increased ambient and spillover light from the proposed KP Medical Center would be **less than significant**.

⁸ One foot candle is equivalent to one lumen per square foot.

⁹ A full cut-off light emits no light at 90 degree from the light source, and have no uplight.

¹⁰ A partial, or semi, cut-off light emits an intensity of no more than 5% of lamp lumens at or above 90 degrees (horizontal), and no more than 20% of lamp lumens at or above 80 degrees.

MLS Stadium

Construction

Nighttime construction activities could add to the existing low ambient light levels that are currently characteristic of the eastern end of the RSP Area. Because under existing conditions the project site is essentially dark, project construction lighting could represent a substantial change in artificial light conditions. Nighttime lighting sources during construction could consist of floodlights that would be focused on the work area to minimize spillover light. Views of light sources emanating from the proposed Stadium site from residences in the Alkali Flat neighborhood, including at The Creamery at Alkali Flat development, the Lofts at Globe Mills, and homes and apartments along D Street would be obstructed by the height of the UPRR track embankment, but would be largely unobstructed by upper level views. Views of the Stadium site construction lights from residences along D Street would be buffered by the existing KCRA studio buildings on the north side of D Street, between 9th and 10th streets, and by existing street trees that line D Street. These intervening buildings and trees would limit views of light sources.

For approximately one year, when the building frames would be erected, high-brightness lights and illuminated surfaces could be directly visible from residential uses or other affected light-sensitive uses and could result in substantial changes to existing artificial light conditions or interfere with off-site activities. Therefore, impacts related to construction lighting could be **significant**.

Operations

The proposed Stadium would include a variety of lighting and illuminated signage that would create a high degree of visibility during and between events. As was previously described in Chapter 2, Project Description, a variety of different lighting techniques would be employed depending on the location.

Exterior lighting for the Stadium would be provided to illuminate different areas of the Stadium and surrounding plazas, and would include street lighting, sidewalk lighting, building perimeter lighting, emergency lighting, and outdoor security lighting along walkways, driveways, and plaza areas. Vertical walls of the Stadium would be visibly lit in most directions, both from the outside as well as from the inside where translucent panels and openings through the Stadium structure would permit light from inside to be visible to outside observers. This lighting would be to accentuate and create visibility of the Stadium structure as well as lighting for signage and advertising purposes. Facade lighting may include LED lights or video screens located on or constructed as part of the Stadium façade. Some of these elements would be signage opportunities as well, and so there would be some overlap between signage and lighting in these instances.

While the canopy would cover the majority of the Stadium seating areas, it would open over the pitch. Field lighting would be located under or along the inside edge of the canopy and would be directed downward toward the field. Nevertheless, lighting would indirectly be emitted from the open areas over the pitch. In addition, the Stadium canopy may be lit to create visibility from

above. Unique large events may occasionally include additional temporary lighting, such as searchlights, intended to be viewed from long distances and identify the location of a major event.

Increased lighting and reflective materials on the site could directly or indirectly create light spillover onto nearby residences that could disturb building occupants (e.g., those living in the Lofts at Globe Mills, the Creamery at Alkali Flat, and/or residences along D Street). In particular, residents of the Lofts at Globe Mills and the Creamery at Alkali Flat with upper level windows that have views to the north in the direction of the Stadium could have light spillover from the Stadium into the windows of their units, lighting otherwise darkened rooms and potentially interfering with sleep or other activities. These direct light spillover effects would be most likely with lighting of the Stadium south façade or canopy. These same residents could also experience indirect spillover lighting created by light emitted through openings in the façade, reflected from the vertical translucent panels on the Stadium façade, or exterior plaza lighting.

The intent of the lighting, including animated, changing, colorful lights, would be to increase the visibility of the Stadium compared to other structures and buildings in the vicinity. Thus, in addition to light spillover on adjacent properties, lighting from all of the project's features including building lights, signs, the potential use of LED on the sides of the Stadium and/or the use of high speed laser light projection technology would make the Stadium substantially brighter and more visible at night than the existing vacant project site and more visible than other existing buildings in downtown Sacramento. Many views of the proposed Stadium would be limited by intervening development. Views of animated signage, which could be adhered to the Stadium façade or on signs in the surrounding plazas, would become increasingly intermittent as the elevation of the signage decreases and as the signage becomes more internal to the site, because of the effects of intervening structures or landscaping. Nevertheless, project lighting and signage could result in brightly illuminated surfaces that could be directly visible from residential uses or other affected light-sensitive uses and could result in substantial changes to existing artificial light conditions or interfere with off-site activities. This increased visibility could disturb or distract individuals observing the area from homes, offices, automobiles, or while walking as pedestrians on streets in Alkali Flat or other nearby neighborhoods.

For the reasons discussed above, lighting associated with the proposed MLS Stadium could significantly affect the ambient nighttime light in the downtown area, including light spillover to nearby residential uses. This impact is considered **potentially significant**.

Stormwater Outfall

It is anticipated that the proposed Stormwater Outfall would be constructed during daytime hours, and would have no operational or area lighting. Thus, the proposed Stormwater Outfall would have **no impact** related to increases in ambient lighting or potential spillover light.

Summary

The construction of new buildings that could reach as high as 25 to 30 stories (300 to 360 feet) in the East End District, as well as the proposed MLS Stadium, could result in light spillover onto adjacent residential properties in Alkali Flat and the Water Street residences. The effects described for the proposed RSPU would be similar to those described for the 2007 RSP, although somewhat exacerbated by the effects of the light associated with the proposed Stadium in the East End District. This impact is considered **potentially significant**.

Mitigation Measure

Mitigation Measure 4.1-3(a), described below, is similar to those measures included as Mitigation Measure 6.13-3 in the 2007 RSP EIR. It has been updated to address changes proposed in the RSPU, the proposed Stadium, and changes in the Planning and Development Code and proposed SPD. Mitigation Measure 4.1-4 addresses potential impacts specific to the proposed Stadium and was not part of the 2007 RSP EIR.

Implementation of Mitigation Measures 4.1-3(a) and (b) would be required to reduce these potentially significant lighting impacts to a less-than-significant level.

Mitigation Measure 4.1-3(a) (RSPU, MLS)

- i. East of 6th Street, all exterior lighting and advertising (including signage) shall be directed onto the specific location intended for illumination (e.g., parking lots, driveways, and walkways) and shielded away from adjacent properties and public rights-of-way to minimize light spillover onto adjacent areas. Light structures for surface parking areas, vehicular access ways, and walkways shall not exceed a height of 25 feet. Monument lighting and night-lit signage is prohibited on building facades that face existing residential neighborhoods.*
- ii. Prior to issuance of a Site Plan and Design Review Permit for each specific development project, the applicant shall submit a lighting plan to the Development Services Department for review and approval. The plan shall specify the lighting type and placement to ensure that the effects of security and other outdoor lighting are minimized on adjacent uses and do not create spillover effects.*
- ii. Landscape illumination and exterior sign lighting shall follow the City Code.*

Mitigation Measure 4.1-3(b) (MLS)

- i. The project applicant shall require construction contractors to ensure that all lighting related to construction activities shall be shielded or directed to restrict any direct illumination onto property located outside of the Stadium project site boundaries that is improved with light-sensitive uses.*

- ii. *Prior to issuance of a building permit, the project applicant shall submit to the Community Development Department a signage and lighting design plan for the Stadium which establishes lighting design standards and guidelines. The lighting design plan shall, at a minimum:*
- *Require exterior lighting included within the Stadium to incorporate fixtures and light sources that focus light on-site to minimize spillover light;*
 - *Ensure that project lighting shall not cause more than two foot-candles of lighting intensity or direct glare from the light source at any residential property. This would preclude substantial spillover light from bright lighting sources; and*
 - *Require that for exterior LED lighting, all light emitting diodes used within the integral electronic display shall have a horizontal beam spread of maximum 165 degrees wide and 65 degrees vertically, and shall be oriented downwards to the plaza/street, rather than upwards.*
- iii. *Prior to issuance of a building permit for the Stadium signage displays, the project applicant shall retain a lighting design expert who shall develop plans and specifications for the proposed lighting displays, establish maximum luminance levels for the displays, and install and test the displays to insure compliance with all City lighting regulations and these mitigation measures.*
- iv. *The project applicant shall comply with City Code Section 8.072.010, which establishes regulations regarding the use of searchlights.*

Impact Significance After Mitigation: Implementation of Mitigation Measure 4.1-3(a) and (b) would reduce potential lighting impacts to surrounding areas through appropriate site design and configuration. Review and approval of the proposed lighting plan through the City's Site Plan and Design Review process would ensure that the potential that spillover lighting would be reduced and potential to create light pollution disturbances to adjacent uses minimized. Notwithstanding the implementation of these measures, the development of the Stadium on a site that is currently vacant and dark would result in a substantial change in the existing environment. This impact associated with the proposed MLS Stadium would remain **significant and unavoidable**.

Impact 4.1-4: The proposed projects could create a new source of glare.

Glare is caused by light reflections from pavement, vehicles, and building materials such as reflective glass and polished surfaces. During daylight hours, the amount of glare depends on the intensity and direction of sunlight. Glare can create hazards to motorists and nuisances for

pedestrians and other viewers. It can also contribute to a heat island effect. Glare is a consideration addressed by the City through the Site Plan and Design Review process.

2007 RSP EIR Impact 6.13-4 (pages 6.13-33 to 6.13-34 of the RSP DEIR) acknowledged that because detailed site design plans were not included in the RSP, “it is presently unknown what materials would be used to construct individual structures” within the RSP Area. The 2007 RDG included guidelines that provide direction but do not prescribe future façade materials:

The uses of reflective glass, mirrored glass and dark colored glass should be avoided.

Light fixtures should include internal reflector caps, refractors, or shields that provide an efficient and focused distribution of light and avoid glare or reflection into upper stories of adjacent buildings.

Impact 6.13-4 found that if buildings along 5th, 6th, or 7th streets, Railyards Boulevard, or in the vicinity of I-5 were clad in reflective façade materials, “glare could be created when the sun is low in the sky,” and that such glare effects could “obscure the vision of drivers travelling along these routes, causing safety concerns. Further, intense glare during the summer could adversely create heat islands which could limit the usefulness of open spaces or cause substantial increases in energy use for building air conditioning.” The analysis concluded that because of the lack of certainty about future building designs, “it is possible that the cladding of future buildings could cause substantial increases in the amount of glare in the project area if the surfaces are highly reflective.” This impact was determined to be potentially significant.

Mitigation Measure 6.13-4 prohibited the use of “highly reflective mirrored glass walls” for more than 35 percent of building facades adjacent to major roadways, and required the use of Low-E glass to reduce the reflective qualities of such buildings. Implementation of this measure was determined to reduce the glare impacts of the 2007 RSP to a less-than-significant level.

Railyards Specific Plan Update

Implementation of the proposed RSPU could result in the construction of numerous new structures within the RSP Area. Development pursuant to the proposed RSPU would be undertaken by developers and builders based on architectural designs unique to the specific proposed site and use. It is presently unknown what materials would be used to construct and clad individual structures. The proposed RSPU Design Guidelines incorporate the following guidelines from the Central Core Design Guidelines for the private realm that address the façade materials of future buildings, as presented below:

- Light fixtures should include internal reflector caps, refractors, or shields that provide an efficient and focused distribution of light and avoid glare or reflection across property edges or onto adjacent buildings.

- External lighting should avoid glare and be unobtrusive, attractive and in character with the architecture of the building.
- The uses of reflective glass, mirrored glass and dark colored glass should be avoided.

These guidelines are essentially the same as those included in the 2007 RSP Design Guidelines.

Although the guidelines suggest avoidance of highly reflective surfaces, in districts other than the Central Shops it is possible that buildings could include substantial amounts of glass or other reflective materials on the surfaces of facades.

As disclosed in the 2007 RSP EIR, highly reflective surfaces could pose the most significant impact along major road corridors, such as I-5, Railyards Boulevard, and 5th, 6th, and 7th streets depending upon the height and façade materials used for buildings. Although the applicant anticipates construction of largely mid-rise buildings in the foreseeable future, the maximum height of structures built adjacent on the west side of I-5 could rise to 30 or more stories, and on the east side of I-5 could vary in height from two stories in the Central Shops Historic District to 30 or more stories with street-wall heights of up to 65 feet throughout a majority of the West End, East End, and Depot districts. If buildings along these key streets are clad in reflective façade materials glare could be created when the sun is low in the sky. These glare effects could obscure the vision of drivers traveling along these routes, causing safety concerns.

Further, intense glare during the summer would adversely create heat islands which could limit the usefulness of open spaces and/or cause substantial increases in energy use for building air conditioning. The details of construction materials to be used in the future are unknown, and will be considered in the City's Site Plan and Design Review permit process that will be implemented for all future development in the RSP Area. Nevertheless, it is possible that the cladding of future buildings could cause substantial increases in the amount of glare in the project area if the surfaces of structures are highly reflective. This is a **potentially significant** impact.

Railyards Specific Plan Update Land Use Variant

Under the proposed RSPU Land Use Variant, the potential exists for use of reflective materials that could produce glare on parcels that are otherwise proposed for the KP Medical Center and MLS Stadium in the proposed RSPU. The effects in these areas would be similar to other parts of the West End and East End districts, described for the proposed RSPU, above. Thus the impacts of the Land Use Variant would remain **potentially significant**.

KP Medical Center

As noted above, Kaiser has developed illustrative plans for the proposed KP Medical Center. Once detailed project designs have been prepared, Kaiser would seek approval of a Site Plan and Design Review permit from the City. The analysis below is based on evaluation of the illustrative plans for the site described in Chapter 2, Project Description.

The proposed buildings in the KP Medical Center would be designed with a comprehensive and consistent set of façade materials. The buildings would be clad in a combination of glazed and non-glazed surfaces, ranging between approximately 30% and 40% glass. More specifically, it is anticipated that the 14-story, approximately 230-foot tall hospital tower would be clad in metal with approximately 30% glazing using dual-pane, low-E glass. The three- to four-level, 48 to 60-foot high HSB would be clad in pre-cast and metal, with approximately 38% glazing using dual-pane, low-E glass. The Phase 2 medical office buildings would each be approximately six floors, and 150 feet in height, with facades of pre-cast and metal, with approximately 38% glazing of dual-pane, low-E glass.

Because the proposed buildings in the KP Medical Center would be clad with a combination of glazed and non-glazed surfaces, with the maximum glazing of approximately 40%, it is unlikely that substantial glare would be produced. This impact would be considered **less than significant**.

MLS Stadium

Because of the multi-textured design of the Stadium structure and façade, including the use of translucent panels, metal, glass, and other materials, the movement of the sun would create the potential for glare from reflected sunlight in a multitude of directions, but would tend to ensure that glare from any particular feature on the Stadium façade would last only a short time from any particular orientation. Given its location, the Stadium façade would not be highly visible from any major thoroughfares or highways. From Railyards Blvd., 10th Street, and 12th Street, the portions of the Stadium most visible to passing motorists, and facing the southern sun, would be the southern Railyards Blvd. façade. The western 8th Street frontage of the Stadium would be exposed to late afternoon sun angles that could create instances of glare from reflective façade features. These building faces would be primarily clad in multi-textured surfaces, largely metal structural supports, translucent panels, fabric, or glass façade materials. Glass curtain walls would not be a feature of any faces of the Stadium facade.

From the adjacent streets, individual features on the building façade could create glare under certain sun angles. These potentially glare-producing facets would be most visible to motorists traveling on 8th Street, Railyards Blvd., or 10th Street immediately in the vicinity of the Stadium site. The design of the façade at the street level on 8th Street would not be multi-faceted and would be comprised of a combination of opaque surfaces with glazing for windows associated with building entries, ticket or box office booths, and the team retail store.

During periods of the day when the sun is low on the horizon, on its north and west sides the reflective façade of the Stadium would potentially create new glare that would be visible from the entry plaza, as well as 8th and Railyards Blvd., or through view openings between existing and future buildings visible to motorists on other streets in the vicinity. Similarly, these reflective surfaces would potentially create glare that would be visible from a variety of angles on city streets and from residences and other land uses around the project vicinity. Other than in the entry plaza area, the ground level angles to the project site (viewed by motorists and pedestrians) would

be limited and quickly passed; thus, it is unlikely that the glare that might be created by the project would be of insufficient duration to be highly distracting or create hazards.

In the plaza area on the west side of the Stadium structure, it is possible that afternoon light during summer days could create reflective glare that could exacerbate the heat in these pedestrian open spaces. The presence of landscaping in and around the Stadium and plaza areas, as well as future development on the west side of 8th Street, would tend to decrease any potential heat effects that could be created by glare from reflective surfaces of the Stadium in the vicinity of the west plaza.

Because any potential reflective glare would tend to be short-term and would not affect people travelling on high-speed and/or high volume streets or highways, the reflective portions of the structure would not create hazards to motorists on adjacent roads and streets. Due to the site design and orientation of the Stadium structure as well as the design of and material used in the Stadium façade, new glare that may be created would be of limited visibility and/or duration. Thus, the glare that may be created by the proposed would not disturb nearby residents, workers, or pedestrians, and would not create a public hazard. This impact would be **less than significant**.

Stormwater Outfall

The proposed Stormwater Outfall would be largely hidden from view of most motorists, pedestrians, and bicyclists. Where it would be visible, it would be constructed of matte, opaque materials that would not be reflective. Portion of the pump station structure would be located under I-5 and would be in shade nearly all of the day. This impact would be **less than significant**.

Summary

Because the details of construction materials to be used on future buildings developed pursuant to the proposed RSPU are unknown, it is possible that the cladding of future buildings could cause substantial increases in the amount of glare in the project area if the surfaces of structures are highly reflective. This is a **potentially significant** impact.

Mitigation Measure

The following mitigation measure was included in the 2007 RSP EIR to reduce the significance of glare impacts of future development. Mitigation Measure 4.1-4, listed below, is identical to Mitigation Measure 6.13-4 from the 2007 RSP EIR.

Mitigation Measure 4.1-4 (RSPU)

Highly reflective mirrored glass walls shall not be used as a primary building material (no more than 35 percent) for building facades adjacent to major roadways. Instead, low emission (Low-E) glass shall be used in order to reduce the reflective qualities of the building, while maintaining energy efficiency.

Impact Significance After Mitigation: Implementation of Mitigation Measure 4.1-4 would substantially lessen and avoid potential glare impacts by limiting the permitted construction materials of new buildings to non-reflective materials. With the implementation of **Mitigation Measure 4.1-4** listed above, this impact would be reduced to a **less-than-significant** level.

Cumulative Impacts

As described in the 2007 RSP EIR, the geographic context for the analysis of cumulative aesthetic and visual resources impacts varies by threshold. The cumulative context for each threshold is presented in the impact discussions below.

Impact 4.1-5: The proposed projects could contribute to substantial cumulative degradation of the existing visual character or quality in the vicinity.

This impact corresponds to RSP EIR Impact 6.13-5, pages 6.13-34 to 6.13-35 of the RSP EIR.

Cumulative Context

The geographic context for cumulative impacts associated with the degradation of visual quality includes the areas adjacent to and visible from the RSP Area or from locations that currently afford views of the RSP Area. Aside from the RSP Area, the surrounding areas are largely built out. Due to the Sacramento River Water Treatment Plant to the northwest, the Alkali Flat historic neighborhood to the southeast, and Old Sacramento to the southwest, it is assumed that the majority of cumulative development surrounding the project site would occur either south of the project site in the CBD or northeast of the site in the River District.

As described above, under Regulatory Setting, pursuant to Chapter 17.808 of the City Code, all development in the City is subject to Site Plan and Design Review to ensure its compliance with applicable plans and design guidelines, and consistency with surrounding development.

The 2007 RSP EIR Impact 6.13-5 noted that there were numerous cumulative projects that planned in these areas. At that time, in the River District, such projects as Township 9, Continental Plaza, and Discovery Center had been previously approved by the City. In the CBD, such projects as the Towers, the Aura residential tower, the 500 Capitol Mall office tower, and others had been approved or were under construction along Capitol Mall. There was a pending application for a reconfiguration and expansion of Downtown Plaza and several other commercial projects on the K Street Mall. However, because of the relative visual isolation of the RSP Area, and the distance of the RSP Area to other cumulative development locations in the vicinity, none of these projects were anticipated to add to the visual effects of the proposed projects.

RSP Area

Immediately adjacent to the RSP Area, the proposed I Street Bridge Replacement project proposes to construct a new bridge across the Sacramento River, connecting C Street in West

Sacramento to Railyards Boulevard and Jibboom Street in the RSP Area. This project is currently being designed and evaluated pursuant to both CEQA and NEPA.

Within the RSP Area, planned projects include SMUD's Station A replacement project on Block 52 (the northern half of the block bounded by 6th, 7th, H, and G streets), and the Judicial Council of California's planned new Sacramento County Courthouse building to be constructed on Block 41 (between 5th, 6th, H and G streets).

Downtown Sacramento

Today cumulative conditions in the CBD are substantially different from those described in the 2007 RSP EIR. The 500 Capitol Mall office tower was completed. Several of the identified projects, including the Towers, the Aura, and the planned reconfiguration of Downtown Plaza never occurred and are no longer approved projects. The former Downtown Plaza site has undergone substantial changes with the approval and current construction of Golden 1 Center, the Downtown Commons Mixed Use Tower, and the further reconfiguration of other portions of what is now called Downtown Commons. Also within the Downtown Commons block, the approved Hyatt Place project will preserve the façade of the historic Marshall Hotel while constructing a new 10-story hotel on the site.

Other relevant planned, approved, or under construction projects in the immediate vicinity of the RSP Area include the 26-story Vanir Tower at 6th and J streets (planned but not approved), the 700 Block of K Street (under construction), the Creamery at Alkali Flat project (under construction at D and 10th streets), and the Powerhouse Science Center (approved) located on Jibboom Street immediately north of the Sacramento River Water Treatment Plant intake.

River District

Today in the River District, the Township 9 has been cleared and graded, and the first phase project constructed (the 5-story Cannery Place Apartments). The remaining portions of Township 9 remain to be constructed. No further progress has occurred on the Continental Plaza Phase IV project (planned high-rise office tower on the northeast corner of Richards Boulevard and North 7th Street). The Sacramento Housing and Redevelopment Agency is currently evaluating a proposed project located at the Dos Rios Housing Project. The Twin Rivers project would redevelop the existing 218 low-rise units, constructing 487 new units, as well as developing the currently vacant parcels on the triangle shaped site situated between 12th and 16th streets, Sproule Street, and Richards Boulevard. These projects are sufficiently low in profile and distant from the RSP Area that they would not contribute to cumulative visual changes associated with the proposed RSPU. Finally, the Sacramento River Water Treatment Plant (SRWTP) is currently undergoing renovation, involving the construction of new buildings and treatment ponds. These improvements are largely interior to the SRWTP site and would not contribute to the visual effects of the proposed RSPU.

2007 RSP EIR Impact 6.13-5

2007 RSP EIR Impact 6.13-5 stated that the cumulative changes anticipated in the RSP Area as well as other portions of the Central City would be part of the existing pattern of urban development, and that “changes in land use that would substantially degrade the visual characteristic of the area south of the project site would generally not be permitted to occur under the General Plan or CEQA review, thereby protecting the visual character of these areas.” The analysis noted that there were no other cumulative projects that would add to the effects of the development proposed in the Riverfront District of the RSP. Thus, the analysis concluded that the project contribution to the cumulative change in the visual character of the area would be less than significant.

Proposed RSPU

The Sacramento Planning and Development Code and the Central City Urban Design Guidelines, implemented through the City’s Site Plan and Design Review process, are intended to ensure that the uses, site planning, design, and landscaping of future public and private development occurs in a manner that is reflective of, and not inconsistent with, its surroundings. Additional infill development within areas surrounding the RSP Area, including the northern edge of the CBD, Alkali Flat, and the River District, would constitute further intensification of an area that is visually urban and largely built-out. In conjunction with the development of the RSP Area, cumulative development would not be expected to result in substantial degradation of the visual quality of the area.

Although Impact 4.1-2 identifies a significant impact with respect to incompatible visual character and massing of the proposed hotel/residential buildings adjacent to the riverfront, this project-specific impact constitutes one of only two proposed developments along the riverfront within the identified cumulative context, the other being the Powerhouse Science Center which proposes shorter buildings constructed along Jibboom Street, set back from the riverbank. In short, development on the identified parcels in the Riverfront District represents a small portion of the larger framework in which the cumulative context was established for the overall visual character and quality of the area, including the Sacramento River from the Old Sacramento to the Jibboom Street Bridge. As such, because the proposed RPSU, including the KP Medical Center, MLS Stadium, and Stormwater Outfall, would not degrade the existing visual quality of the area, the project would not have cumulatively considerable contribution to this impact. Consequently, the cumulative change in the visual character of the areas surrounding the project site would be **less than significant**.

Mitigation Measure

None required.

Impact 4.1-6: The proposed projects could cause and introduction of building height and mass that conflicts with the character of the Sacramento River riverfront between Old Sacramento and Discovery Park.

This impact corresponds to RSP EIR Impact 6.13-6, pages 6.13-35 to 6.13-36 of the RSP EIR.

Cumulative Context

The 2007 RSP EIR characterized the cumulative context for riverfront visual conflicts as the “portion of the Downtown/Land Park Area of the Sacramento Riverfront, as defined in the Sacramento River Parkway Plan, from 25th Avenue to the Jibboom Street Bridge at the confluence of the American River.” In 2007 it was explained that in addition to the 2007 RSP, cumulative development in this reach of the River included future development in the Docks Area, south of Old Sacramento, as well as cumulative development on the west bank of the Sacramento River in West Sacramento. Today the cumulative context remains similar, including development on both the Sacramento and West Sacramento sides of the River. In Sacramento, development is largely limited to the Docks Area Plan, south of the RSP Area, and the Powerhouse Science Center project immediately to the north. In addition, the I Street Bridge Replacement project, connecting Railyards Boulevard in the RSP Area to C Street in West Sacramento would be a major project within the cumulative context of the RSP Area. On the west bank of the River, cumulative development would include the remaining unbuilt portions of the Raley’s Landing project within the Washington Specific Plan area, development within the Bridge District of West Sacramento, and further development south of the Tower Bridge.

2007 RSP EIR Impact 6.13-6

The analysis in Impact 6.13-6 acknowledged that, although the Sacramento Riverfront Master Plan calls for revitalization to provide more high-quality open space along the riverfront, high-rise development allowed in the RSP Riverfront District, combined with future development in the Docks Area of Sacramento and the Raley’s Landing and Triangle (now Bridge District) areas of West Sacramento, “would cumulatively alter the riverfront in ways that fail to visually blend with and be in scale with the surrounding riverine environment, as called for in policy D3 of the Sacramento River Parkway Plan, and may reduce the visual openness of the river corridor.” The impact concluded that “[b]ecause future cumulative development could adversely affect public views to and from the river, and because some of that development could conflict with the desired scale and mass of the riverfront,” the impact would be potentially significant.

The impact analysis further stated that the 2007 RGD for the RSP Riverfront District required (1) structures to be set back as far as possible adjacent to I-5, (2) buildings to be stepped down toward the riverfront, and (3) creation of slender towers with sufficient separation to protect through-views to and from the river. As a result of these provisions in the 2007 RGD, the analysis concluded that the contribution of the 2007 RSP to the cumulative visual effects along the Sacramento River would be less than significant.

Proposed RSPU

In conjunction with the proposed RSPU, cumulative development on the Sacramento and West Sacramento riverfronts may have a substantial cumulative adverse effect on the character of the riverfront, including effects on public views of scenic vistas.

As described in the 2007 RSP EIR, the major public views within proximity to the project site consist of views to and from the Sacramento River. Although the Sacramento River defines the western boundary of the City, existing public views of the river from the downtown area and other portions of the City are quite limited due to the presence of I-5 (which visually separates the City from the Sacramento River riverfront), intervening structures and landscaping, the topography of the levee which is raised over grade in areas, as well as the sloping edge of the river bank. In addition to the pedestrian path along the riverbank, most public viewing opportunities are afforded while driving across along frontage roads (like Front Street and Jibboom Street), bridges or I-5. Key views from the west bank of the River, in West Sacramento, are afforded from the Riverwalk which starts at the A Street Boat Ramp and travels south toward the Bridge District.

The 2003 Sacramento Riverfront Master Plan calls for revitalization in order to provide more high quality open space along the riverfront around which dense urban redevelopment could occur. On the east bank of the river, the long-planned Docks Area project is consistent with this guidance; on the West Sacramento side of the river, the Washington Specific Plan and Bridge District Specific Plan both call for substantial development in the vicinity of the riverfront. In addition, the I Street Bridge Replacement Project would introduce a major new river crossing in the midst of the RSP Area Riverfront District. Thus, new cumulative development would occur along the riverfront.

All development on the riverfront in the City of Sacramento would be subject to the City's Site Plan and Design Review process. While some of the development activities may occur in areas intended for development (such as the Docks Area or Raley's Landing area of the West Sacramento riverfront), construction of cumulative projects, particularly high-rise development as would be allowed in the Railyards Riverfront District, high-rise development in the Raley's Landing and Bridge District areas of West Sacramento, intensive development in the Dock's Area, and projects such as the I Street Bridge Replacement Project and the Powerhouse Science Center would cumulatively alter the riverfront in ways that fail to visually blend with and be in scale with the surrounding riverine environment, as called for in policy D3 of the Sacramento River Parkway Plan, and may reduce the visual openness of the river corridor. Because future cumulative development could adversely affect public views to and from the river, and because some of that development could conflict with the desired scale and mass of the riverfront, this cumulative impact is considered potentially significant.

As described above, under Impact 4.1-2, the height and bulk of development that would be allowed in the Riverfront District would conflict with the character of the riverfront between Old

Sacramento and the Jibboom Street Bridge, and would be inconsistent with the proposed RSPU Design Guidelines which states that in the Riverfront District it is the intent that “[t]owers should be slender on their upper stories so as to preserve visual access to the River for Interstate 5 motorists.” For these reasons, the contribution of the proposed projects to the cumulative visual effects on along the Sacramento River would be cumulatively considerable, and therefore this cumulative impact would be **potentially significant**.

Mitigation Measure

Mitigation Measure 4.1-6 (RSPU)

Implement Mitigation Measure 4.1-2.

Impact Significance After Mitigation: Implementation of Mitigation Measure 4.1-6 would ensure a building height step down toward the Sacramento River to create a development edge that would be similar in scale to other built environment on the east bank of the Sacramento River between Old Sacramento and the Jibboom Street Bridge. With the implementation of **Mitigation Measure 4.1-6**, contribution of the proposed RSPU to the cumulative impact would be **less than considerable**, and this impact would be reduced to a **less-than-significant** level.

Impact 4.1-7: The proposed projects could contribute to cumulative increases in light.

This impact corresponds to RSP EIR Impact 6.13-7, page 6.13-36 of the RSP EIR.

Cumulative Context

The 2007 RSP EIR recognized that Sacramento is an urbanized city and contains numerous existing sources of nighttime lighting. It identified the cumulative context for lighting as areas surrounding the RSP Area, both to the south in the CBD, and to the north in the River District. The cumulative context remains the same today.

2007 RSP EIR Impact 6.13-7

The analysis in Impact 6.13-7 stated that nighttime lighting already exists in the nearly built-out areas around the RSP Area, and that “a significant amount of ambient lighting currently exists due to the urbanized nature of the City as a whole.” It went on to state that “[i]ncreases in nighttime lighting that would occur under cumulative development would not significantly affect nighttime views of the sky because such views are already limited.” In concluding, the analysis stated that the development of the 2007 RSP in combination with other cumulative development in the vicinity “is not anticipated to result in the creation of new sources of light that could negatively affect nighttime views,” and that the cumulative impact related to nighttime lighting would be less than significant.

As it relates to spillover lighting on properties in the Alkali Flat neighborhood, because there were no other cumulative projects known that could add to potential spillover effects along 7th Street or on the northern edge of Alkali Flat between 7th and 12th streets, the RSP EIR found that there would be no cumulative impact associated with spillover lighting.

Proposed RSPU

Ambient Nighttime Light

As discussed above, additional development within the areas surrounding the project site would constitute further intensification of an already urban and nearly built-out area and would generally occur through infill development. Nighttime lighting currently exists in these surrounding areas.

Although cumulative new development or redevelopment could include direct illumination of project structures, features, and/or walkways, the increase in ambient nighttime lighting levels in these areas would only rise minimally because a significant amount of ambient lighting currently exists due to the urbanized nature of the City as a whole, and because lighting is addressed through the City's Site Plan and Design Review process. Increases in nighttime lighting that would occur under cumulative development would not significantly affect nighttime views of the sky because such views are already limited. Because the project site is currently vacant, future development under the proposed RSPU would increase the ambient nighttime lighting in the area. However, because nighttime views of the sky are already limited due to the urbanized nature of the City, cumulative development within the areas surrounding the project site, in combination with development under the proposed projects, is not anticipated to result in the creation of new sources of light that could negatively affect nighttime views. Therefore, cumulative impacts associated with ambient nighttime lighting would be considered less than significant.

Spillover Light

The cumulative context for spillover light would be other development that could add to the spillover light effects of the project on properties in the Alkali Flat neighborhood or the Water Street residences, adjacent to the project site.

Spillover light is a site-specific effect that could only be added to by other projects in the immediate vicinity of the affected property. There are no other known projects along the 7th Street or northern edge of Alkali Flat between 7th Street and 12th Street, or in the North B Street/Bannon Street corridor. Therefore, there would be no cumulative impact associated with spillover lighting.

Mitigation Measure

None required.

Impact 4.1-8: The proposed projects could contribute to cumulative sources of glare.

This impact corresponds to RSP EIR Impact 6.13-8, page 6.13-36 and 6.13-37 of the RSP EIR.

Cumulative Context

The 2007 RSP EIR identified the cumulative context for glare effects as areas surrounding the RSP Area potentially affected by glare produced from development in the RSP Area. It noted that the only other known project in immediate proximity to the I-5 corridor was the Towers on Capitol Mall project, which was an approved high-rise residential and hotel project located at 3rd Street and Capitol Mall, about four blocks south of the RSP Area; that project is no longer considered a cumulative project today. Today, cumulative projects in close proximity to I-5 include the I Street Bridge Replacement project and the Powerhouse Science Center. Other cumulative projects in downtown Sacramento are sufficiently set back from I-5 as to not fall into the immediate viewshed of drivers; similarly, glare from cumulative projects in West Sacramento would be unlikely to affect drivers on north or southbound I-5.

Impact 6.13-8 noted that “[f]or potential glare effects internal to the Railyards area, there would be no cumulative projects that could add to the effect generated by the project itself.” As a result, the cumulative glare analysis was limited to the effects in the I-5 corridor. Those same conditions remain today.

2007 RSP EIR Impact 6.13-8

The analysis in Impact 6.13-8 explained that the cumulative effects of potential glare from buildings constructed in the RSP Area, combined with the Towers on Capitol Mall project, and other existing buildings that could generate glare, such as the One Capitol Mall building (located on Capitol Mall west of I-5) “would result in potential glare effects along a longer stretch of I-5 as it passes through downtown Sacramento.” While the analysis acknowledged that the potential increases in glare would likely be “minor and consistent with the existing built environment due to limited development potential and existing City regulations,” and that CEQA review of other future projects would likely result in requirements for mitigation to avoid glare, since the buildings in the RSP Area would be designed in the future and could produce glare effects, cumulative daytime glare along I-5 could be potentially significant, and the buildings constructed in the RSP Riverfront District “could result in a *cumulatively considerable contribution to this significant cumulative impact.*”

Implementation of Mitigation Measure 6.13-4, described in Impact 4.1-4, above, was determined to reduce the project contribution to a less-than-considerable level, thus reducing the impact to insignificance.

Proposed RSP Update

The cumulative effect of glare generated by the proposed projects in conjunction with the glare effect generated other buildings along I-5 that could generate glare include the One Capitol Mall building and the Embassy Suites Hotel, both on Capitol Mall immediately west of I-5. It is possible that in the future additional high-rise structures would be constructed near the I-5 corridor in downtown Sacramento, but those projects are not reasonably foreseeable today. These potential increases in glare are likely to be minor and consistent with the existing built environment due to limited availability of development parcels near I-5 and existing City regulations as articulated in the Planning and Development Code and Central City Urban Design Guidelines which would be implemented through the City's Site Plan and Design Review process. Further, future projects would in many cases be subject to CEQA review and the City would have the authority to require mitigation for glare effects, which could likely also reduce the impacts to a less-than-significant level. However, since the buildings to be developed pursuant to the proposed RSPU have yet to be designed and could produce glare effects, cumulative daytime glare along these major roadways in the project vicinity would be a potentially significant impact. The buildings built adjacent to I-5 in the Railyards could result in a significant daytime glare impact, therefore the proposed projects could result in a cumulatively considerable contribution to this **significant cumulative impact**.

Mitigation Measure

Mitigation Measure 4.1-8 (RSPU)

Implement Mitigation Measure 4.1-4.

Impact Significance After Mitigation: Implementation of Mitigation Measure 4.1-8 would substantially lessen and avoid potential glare impacts of the proposed RSPU by limiting the permitted construction materials of new buildings to non-reflective materials. With the implementation of **Mitigation Measure 4.1-8** listed above, the contribution of the proposed RSPU to this cumulative impact would be less than considerable, and the impact would be reduced to a **less-than-significant** level.