



Section 5.3

Aesthetics and Light/Glare



Aesthetics and Light/Glare

Section 5.3

5.3.1 PURPOSE

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

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

5.3.2 EXISTING REGULATORY SETTING

STATE

The California Scenic Highway Program was created in 1963 to preserve and protect highway corridors located in areas of outstanding natural beauty from changes that would diminish the aesthetic value of the adjacent lands. The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) designates highways based on how much of the landscape can be seen by travelers, the scenic quality of the landscape, and the extent to which views are compromised by development.

The California Scenic Highway Program is governed by the regulations found in the Streets and Highways Code, Section 260 et seq. Section 261 requires local government agencies to take the following actions to protect the scenic appearance of the scenic corridor:

- Regulate land use and density of development;
- Provide detailed land and site planning;
- Prohibit offsite outdoor advertising and control of on-site outdoor advertising;
- Pay careful attention to and control of earthmoving and landscaping; and,
- Scrutinize the design and appearance of structures and equipment.

There are no officially designated state scenic highways or eligible state scenic highways that traverse the City of Artesia.¹

¹ http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/LandArch/scenic_highways/index.htm, Accessed April 7, 2010.



CITY OF ARTESIA GENERAL PLAN

Land Use Element

The existing Land Use Element influences the visual character of the City by establishing the type, intensity, and location of development that is permitted in the City. The Land Use Element includes goals and policies to ensure compatible development throughout the City.

Urban Design Element

The existing Urban Design Element addresses the appearance of the City, specifically related to buildings, neighborhoods, and streetscapes within the City. The Urban Design Element includes goals and policies to ensure quality design and promote a positive image.

Open Space and Recreation Element

The Open Space and Recreation Element focuses on preserving open space areas within the City. Open space areas contribute to the City's visual character. Goals and policies support the provision and maintenance of open space areas within Artesia.

CITY OF ARTESIA ZONING CODE

The "Zoning Law of the City of Artesia" is provided in Title 9 Chapter 2, *Zoning*, of the City of Artesia Municipal Code (AMC). The purpose of this chapter is to:

Encourage, classify, designate, regulate, restrict, and segregate the highest and best locations and uses of buildings, structures, and land to serve the needs of residence, commerce, industry, and other purposes in appropriate places; to regulate and limit the height, number of stories, and size of buildings and other structures designed, erected, and altered; to regulate and determine the size of yards and other open spaces; to regulate and limit the density of population; to facilitate adequate provisions for community utilities, such as transportation, water, sewage, schools, parks, and other public requirements; to lessen congestion on streets; and to promote the public health, safety, welfare, and general prosperity with the aim of preserving a wholesome, serviceable, and attractive community.

The provisions of this chapter also assist with the implementation of the City's General Plan and other precise plans.

Development standards and regulations for residential and non-residential developments, which influence the City's visual character, are specified in the following Articles/Sections within AMC Chapter 2, *Zoning*:

- Article 8, *Lots*;
- Article 9, *Yards*;



- Article 10, *Streets and Highways*;
- Article 11, *Off-Street Parking and Loading*;
- Article 12, *Signs*;
- Article 12.5, *Lighting*;
- Article 13, *Performance Standards*;
- Article 14, *Fences, Walls, and Hedges*;
- Article 15, *Landscaping*; and
- Articles 27-42: Development Standards for each of the respective Zoning Districts and various specified land uses.

Additionally, the provisions of AMC Chapter 2 Article 20, *Design Review Approval*, are intended to establish a process by which certain types of development projects and structures are subject to a discretionary review approval process before the City’s Planning Commission, and under specified circumstances before the City Council or Planning Director. The following categories of development projects are subject to the design review approval process:

- (a) *Any building or structure requiring a building permit, or the modification of the exterior design or color of an existing structure or element thereof, including architectural accents, that is located on a site in any zone other than the Single-Family Residential (R-1) Zone or the Agricultural (A-1) Zone;*
- (b) *Any building or structure requiring a building permit, or the modification of the exterior design or color of any existing structure or element thereof, that is located in the Single-Family Residential (R-1) Zone or Agricultural (A-1) Zone that is designed for use other than as a dwelling unit or dwelling units; and*
- (c) *Any major wall sign as specified in Chapter 2 Article 12 or 12.5.*

AMC Section 9-2.1252, *Exposed Neon Lighting for Signs and Architectural Accents*, represents the City’s policy statement on the use of exposed neon lighting and states that it is the City’s policy to ensure that signs and building facades create an attractive appearance, do not negatively impact neighboring properties, and improve the City’s aesthetic character. Any use of exposed neon lighting for signs or as an architectural accent is required to conform to the following limitation, among others specified in AMC Section 9-2.1252:

- (1) *The exposed neon lighting, whether incorporated into signs or as architectural accents, shall only be proposed on a portion of a building or on a building facade that is oriented towards the street or a parking lot.*

5.3.3 EXISTING ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

SCENIC RESOURCES

No designated scenic vistas or other scenic resources are present within the City of Artesia.



VISUAL SETTING/CHARACTER

The City of Artesia is primarily built out (99 percent) and the City's aesthetic character is fully urbanized. The density of development is relatively low for all types of development in the City. Cities surrounding Artesia are also fully developed and urbanized with similar land use patterns, density, and character. The predominant land uses within the city are residential, commercial, and industrial. As of June 2010, the City's approximately 1,037 acres are approximately 99 percent built out, with only approximately 6.6 acres remaining vacant. The majority of the City (approximately 47 percent) is developed with residential uses. Single-family residential uses represent the largest land use within the City at approximately 39 percent. Commercial and industrial uses comprise approximately 11 and 5 percent of the City, respectively.

The City's present form has been influenced by its transportation infrastructure and system. The pattern of arterial roadways in Artesia reflects the standard land plotting system of a one-mile grid of arterial streets running north-south and east-west. Various highways (166th Street, Artesia Boulevard, 183rd Street, and South Street) and one freeway (State Route 91) bisect the City contributing to its formation. As a result, the community's design is largely reactive to those transportation facilities. Because of the dominant role roadways had in the City's development, streetscape appearance is a critical element in the City's visual character.

The following discussion provides a general overview of the City's existing visual character, according to primary land uses.

Residential Character

Much of the City's residential development occurred during the post-war boom evidenced in northern Los Angeles County during the 1950's and into the 1960's. In general, residential uses have dominated development and land use patterns in the City, with single-family residential neighborhoods mostly located cover most of the areas outside of the City primary corridors of Artesia Boulevard and Pioneer Boulevard.

Artesia's post-war residential development resulted in architecture that reflects the predominant styles of that period. The architectural style of the post-wartime tracts is characterized as small one-story buildings set on a concrete perimeter foundation with a pitched roof. More specifically, these homes were primarily built in the California Ranch architectural style, characterized by its one-story, pitched-roof construction, built-in garage, wood or brick exterior walls, sliding and picture windows, and sliding doors leading to patios. Over time, these single-family homes in established communities have been remodeled, altering the communities' cohesiveness. Landscaping in these areas is generally mature and extends out to the back of the curb face. Expansive front lawns and deep setbacks create a more rural feel in an otherwise urban environment. Artesia's multi-family residences typically include one- or two-story buildings set back from the street.



Commercial Character

Most of the City's commercial development is located along Pioneer Boulevard, Artesia Boulevard and South Street. Commercial activities range from neighborhood grocery stores to community shopping centers, motels, hotels, restaurants, and offices. Commercial development within the City previously focused on strip commercial development dominated by parking and automobiles. However, several commercial areas within the City have been developed that have common distinguishing characteristics and/or functions that make them identifiable as a distinct place from other areas within the community. Auto dealerships capitalize on the area's visibility from SR-91 located immediately adjacent to the west. Other commercial concentrations are found at key intersections of most major streets.

Industrial Character

Industrial development in Artesia is very diverse and consists of small business parks, heavy and light industrial and commercial service land uses. Industrial development is concentrated in the area north of Artesia Boulevard and west of Pioneer Boulevard. Architecture associated with industrial uses varies noticeably, from single story flat roof structures, to tilt-up concrete buildings with modern window treatments.

LIGHT AND GLARE

Lighting affects are associated with the use of artificial light during the evening and nighttime hours. There are two primary sources of light: light emanating from building interiors passing through windows and light from exterior sources (i.e. street lighting, building illumination, security lighting, parking lot lighting, and landscape lighting). Light introduction can be a nuisance to adjacent residential areas, diminish the view of the clear night sky, and if uncontrolled, can cause disturbances. Uses such as residences and hotels are considered light sensitive since occupants have expectations of privacy during evening hours and may be subject to disturbance by bright light sources. Light spill is typically defined as the presence of unwanted light on properties adjacent to the property being illuminated. With respect to lighting, the degree of illumination may vary widely depending on the amount of light generated, height of the light sources, presence of barriers or obstructions, type of light source and weather conditions.

Glare is primarily a daytime occurrence caused by the reflection of sunlight or artificial light by highly polished surfaces such as window glass or reflective materials and, to a lesser degree, from broad expanses of light-colored surfaces. Perceived glare is the unwanted and potentially objectionable sensation as observed by a person as they look directly into the light sources of a luminaire. Daytime glare generation is common in urban areas and is typically associated with buildings with exterior facades largely or entirely comprised of highly reflective glass. Glare can also be produced during evening and nighttime hours by the reflection of artificial light sources such as automobile headlights. Glare-sensitive uses include residences, hotels, transportation corridors, and aircraft landing corridors.



The City is approximately 99 percent built out and fully urbanized. The majority of light and glare sources presently within the City are associated with the residential, commercial, and industrial land uses. Additionally light sources within the City are associated with signal and vehicle lights on roadways within the City.

SHADE AND SHADOW

Shade and shadow pertains to the blockage of direct sunlight by on-site buildings, which affect adjacent properties. Shading is an important environmental issue because the users or occupants of certain land uses, such as residential, recreational, churches, schools, outdoor restaurants, and pedestrian areas have expectations for direct sunlight and warmth from the sun. These land uses are termed as “shadow-sensitive.”

The City of Artesia does not currently have many large structures that cast shade or shadows on “shadow-sensitive” land uses. There are very few, if any, high-density uses that cast shadows on adjacent residential uses.

5.3.4 SIGNIFICANCE THRESHOLDS AND CRITERIA

Appendix G of the *CEQA Guidelines* contains the *Initial Study Environmental Checklist Form* used during preparation of the Project Initial Study; refer to [Appendix 12.1, Notice of Preparation](#). The Checklist includes questions relating to aesthetics and light/glare, which have been utilized as thresholds of significance in this section. Accordingly, a significant environmental impact would occur if the Project would:

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

Based on these significance thresholds and criteria, the Project’s effects have been categorized as either “effects found not to be significant” or “potentially significant impact.” Feasible mitigation measures, which could avoid or minimize potentially significant impacts, are identified. If a potentially significant impact cannot be reduced to a less than significant level through the application of mitigation, it is categorized as a “significant unavoidable impact.”



5.3.5 PROJECT IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

□ GENERAL PLAN UPDATE POLICIES

The following Policies and Policy Actions relevant to aesthetics and light/glare have been proposed in the General Plan Update:

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND DESIGN ELEMENT

Land Use

Community Policy LU 1.3: Encourage active and inviting pedestrian-friendly street environments that include a variety of uses within commercial and mixed-use areas.

Policy Action LU 1.3.2: Develop design guidelines and standards that will build on the Zoning Code to promote high-quality design and address compatibility between new and existing structures, residential and adjacent non-residential uses and urban and natural areas.

Community Policy LU 1.4: Ensure mixed-use developments are integrated with surrounding uses to become part of the neighborhood by utilizing cohesive architecture, lively streetscapes, interesting urban spaces and attractive landscaping.

Policy Action LU 1.4.1: Amend the Zoning Code to implement mixed-use zoning districts that provide development standards for mixed-use development, which should address minimum density and intensity requirements; allowable uses; horizontal and/or vertical mix of uses; building heights; and parking standards.

Community Policy LU 2.1: Protect residential areas from the effects of potentially incompatible uses.

Policy Action LU 2.1.1: Maintain standards for circulation, noise, setbacks, buffer areas, landscaping and architecture to ensure compatibility between different uses.

Community Policy LU 2.2: Encourage uniformly high standards of residential property maintenance to preserve real estate values and high quality of life.

Policy Action LU 2.2.1: Continue to monitor maintenance standards in neighborhoods to maintain high standards of appearance and stability in the neighborhood.

Policy Action LU 2.2.2: Encourage the use of property owner and other neighborhood-based associations to maintain neighborhood amenities and character.

Community Policy LU 2.3: Prohibit uses that lead to deterioration of residential neighborhoods, or adversely impact the safety or the residential character of a neighborhood.



Policy Action LU 2.3.1: Require that the commercial and industrial developments adjoining residential uses be adequately screened and buffered from residential areas.

Policy Action LU 2.3.2: Monitor existing and review all requests to expand intensive commercial or industrial uses.

Community Policy LU 2.4: Ensure that the distinct character of Artesia’s neighborhoods are preserved and reflected in all new development and redevelopment projects.

Policy Action LU 2.4.1: Encourage new development to be similar in scale to the adjoining residential neighborhood.

Policy Action LU 2.4.2: Use set-aside or other appropriate funding to assist in the maintenance or improvement of ill-maintained housing.

Community Policy LU 3.2: Monitor the appearance of commercial and retail service facilities to prevent areas of decline by requiring improved maintenance of rehabilitation, as necessary.

Policy Action LU 3.2.1: Encourage façade renovation, enhanced parking area landscaping, improved lighting, and the use of pedestrian amenities.

Policy Action LU 3.2.2: Apply City plans and codes to rehabilitation efforts to ensure City standards for maintenance, landscaping and community design are met.

Community Policy LU 3.3: Work with property owners of commercial developments that are currently in a state of deterioration to revitalize these centers.

Policy Action LU 3.3.1: Assist property owners to secure financing for the appropriate rehabilitation of commercial property

Housing

Policy HE 2.1: Encourage the rehabilitation of the City’s existing low- and moderate-income housing.

Circulation and Mobility

Community Policy CIR 2.1: Provide landscaped medians and greenbelts along major arterials, highways, and freeways where economically feasible.

Policy Action CIR 2.1.1: Target and prioritize street beautification programs along major arterials.

Policy Action CIR 2.1.2: For targeted major arterials and entryways to the City, develop a comprehensive landscape, signage and entryway plan to efficiently direct traffic to appropriate routes and destinations.



Policy Action CIR 2.1.3: Select and locate landscape materials, streetscape furniture and public art in such a way as to avoid blocking motorists' sight distance or impeding vehicular movement.

Policy Action CIR 2.1.4: Work with Caltrans to ensure that sound walls along State facilities are landscaped and maintained with plant materials.

Policy Action CIR 2.1.5: Maintain and replace street trees as needed to achieve their aesthetic purpose and avoid damage to streets and sidewalks.

COMMUNITY RESOURCES AND WELLNESS ELEMENT

Open Space and Conservation

Community Policy OS 3.1: Promote visually appealing landscaped corridors and landscape buffers to introduce plant materials into urbanized areas.

Policy Action OS 3.1.1: Require landscaping and tree planting around structures and in parking areas in accordance with the landscaping requirements of the City Zoning Code.

Policy Action OS 3.1.2: Require street trees and median landscaping designs and installations in accordance with the landscaping requirements of the City Zoning Code.

Community Policy OS 3.2: Encourage redevelopment of underutilized land with public green spaces.

Policy Action OS 3.2.2: Continue and expand partnerships with schools and colleges to seek opportunities for community garden spaces and related education.

SUSTAINABILITY ELEMENT

Urban Design

Community Policy SUS 3.4: Promote neighborhood identity and conservation of individual neighborhood character. Retain Artesia's history and heritage.

Policy Action SUS 3.4.1: Promote code enforcement actions to advance proper maintenance of homes, buildings, yards and neighborhoods in all areas of the city.

Policy Action SUS 3.4.2: Encourage the preservation of existing housing stock in well-maintained condition.

Policy Action SUS 3.4.3: Support adaptive reuse and rehabilitation of existing residential, commercial, and industrial buildings where possible.



Urban Nature

Community Policy SUS 4.1: Increase tree canopy and provide natural landscape elements throughout the City.

Policy Action SUS 4.1.1: Explore community interest in conducting an inventory of existing tree canopy coverage, and creation of a prioritized list of planting sites within the City. Strive to plant additional trees and maintain canopy coverage on available sidewalk planting sites.

Policy Action SUS 4.1.3: Encourage property owners to landscape their property with plants and trees that are water-efficient, provide habitat for wildlife, produce food, treat stormwater, and/or offer shade.

Policy Action SUS 6.1.1: Coordinate with the school district and Cerritos College, as well as other institutions (including religious institutions and public parks), to create and support opportunities for community gardens.

❑ EFFECTS FOUND NOT TO BE SIGNIFICANT

In accordance with Section 15128, *Effects Not Found To Be Significant*, of the *CEQA Guidelines*, the following briefly discusses the reasons that various possible significant effects of the Project were determined not to be significant and were therefore not discussed in detail.

Threshold: *Would the Project have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?*

The City is approximately 99 percent built-out. The aesthetic character of the City is fully urbanized. No scenic vistas exist within the City of Artesia. Therefore, implementation of the proposed General Plan Update would not have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista.

Threshold: *Would the Project substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?*

The State Scenic Highway System involves highways, mainly state highways, which have been designated by the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) as scenic highways. There are no officially designated state scenic highways or eligible state scenic highways that traverse the City. Therefore, Project implementation would not damage scenic resources within a state scenic highway and no impact would occur in this regard.



□ POTENTIALLY SIGNIFICANT IMPACTS

SHORT-TERM VISUAL CHARACTER

- **GRADING AND CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITIES ASSOCIATED WITH FUTURE DEVELOPMENT PERMITTED BY THE GENERAL PLAN UPDATE COULD TEMPORARILY DEGRADE THE EXISTING VISUAL CHARACTER OR QUALITY OF THE DEVELOPMENT SITES AND THEIR SURROUNDINGS.**

Impact Analysis: Short-term construction-related activities associated with future development would temporarily alter the existing visual character of the development sites and their surroundings. The visual impact associated with construction activities would involve graded surfaces, construction materials, equipment, and truck traffic. Soil would be stockpiled and equipment for grading activities would be staged at various locations. In addition, temporary structures could be located on the respective development site during various stages of construction, within materials storage areas, or associated with construction debris piles on site. Exposed trenches, roadway bedding, spoils/debris piles and steel plates would be visible during construction of proposed street and utility infrastructure improvements. These construction activities and equipment could temporarily degrade the existing visual character and quality of localized sites within the City and their surroundings during the construction phase. The typical “window” of construction-related activities at a particular location would vary depending on the scale and nature of the proposed development.

Construction-related activities are not considered significant, because they would be short-term and temporary; construction activity would not be continuous and would proceed on a project-by-project basis. Temporary screening of a particular construction of staging site would partially relieve the visual impacts typically associated with construction activities. Moreover, development areas would vary within the City such that areas of temporary construction-related visual impacts would change throughout the implementation of the General Plan Update. Compliance with Mitigation Measure AES-1, which would be incorporated into construction documents, would reduce potential construction-related visual impacts to less than significant. Further review may be necessary on a project-by-project basis to evaluate site-specific construction-related impacts.

Mitigation Measure:

AES-1 For future non-residential development located in or immediately adjacent to residentially zoned properties, construction documents shall include language that requires all construction contractors to strictly control the staging of construction equipment and the cleanliness of construction equipment stored or driven beyond the limits of the construction work area. Construction equipment shall be parked and staged within the project site. Staging areas shall be screened from view from residential properties. Construction worker parking may be located off-site with approval of the City; however on-street parking of construction worker vehicles on residential streets shall be prohibited. Vehicles shall be kept clean and free of mud



and dust before leaving the development site. Surrounding streets shall be swept daily and maintained free of dirt and debris.

Level of Significance: Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated.

LONG-TERM VISUAL CHARACTER

- **FUTURE DEVELOPMENT PERMITTED BY THE PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN COULD SUBSTANTIALLY DEGRADE THE EXISTING VISUAL CHARACTER OR QUALITY OF THE DEVELOPMENT SITES AND THEIR SURROUNDINGS.**

Impact Analysis: The evaluation of aesthetic impacts can be termed a subjective exercise due to widely varying personal perceptions. However, future development under the proposed General Plan Update would permanently alter the visual character/quality of the development sites and their surroundings. The significance of these potential impacts would vary depending upon the scale and location of the future development and the character of the surrounding area.

The City is approximately 99 percent built-out and is entirely urbanized. The proposed General Plan Update focuses on preserving residential neighborhoods, guiding the remaining development and redevelopment opportunities, and encouraging the revitalization of selected areas. The General Plan Update also recognizes the importance of the City's image and visual character, and identifies the following guiding principles:

Land Use Element

- Community Planning Principle 1. The Artesia General Plan 2030 will focus on enhancing areas that will allow the development of mixed-use. This type of development involves a greater utilization of uses that blends residential, commercial, industrial, or civic/institutional....
- Community Planning Principle 2. The City of Artesia contains established residential neighborhoods, which are well-maintained and buffered from the impacts of freeway traffic or extensive industrial and commercial development. Established neighborhoods in the City include areas with the City's older homes, newer residential developments, and some marginally desirable areas where maintenance has been deferred. The City desires a diverse mix of housing types, along with high standards for residential property maintenance to preserve real estate values and high quality of life.
- Community Planning Principle 3. Existing neighborhood commercial centers and corridors serve as important employment centers in Artesia. These commercial areas have experienced some deferred maintenance and signs of property decline have been visible. The Artesia General Plan 2030 will focus on preserving and revitalizing these commercial centers and corridors.



- Community Planning Principle 4. The City of Artesia is a built out community, with most new development occurring at infill sites. Redevelopment is occurring throughout the City and some uses are transitioning to reflect the changing needs of residents and business owners....

Circulation and Mobility Element

- Community Planning Principle 2. The right-of-ways play a significant role in the aesthetics and imagery of the public realm in Artesia. The visual quality along the circulation network can be improved through a number of streetscape improvement opportunities.

Open Space and Conservation Element

- Community Planning Principle 2. The right-of-ways play a significant role in the aesthetics and imagery of the public realm in Artesia. The visual quality along the circulation network can be improved through a number of streetscape improvement opportunities.

The General Plan Update Land Use Element has identified as goals to provide stable, well-maintained residential neighborhoods, and also the revitalization of aging, underused or deteriorated commercial corridors, centers, and properties in the City. Compliance with the General Plan Update Policies and Policy Actions outlined above would ensure that future development would enhance the community's image, streetscape, and character, and that all new development would be visually compatible with surrounding uses. All future development within the City would be subject to compliance with the development standards and regulations for residential and non-residential developments that mitigate potential visual impacts (i.e., AMC Articles 8 through 15 of Chapter 2, *Zoning*). Moreover, future projects would be subject to compliance with the provisions of AMC Chapter 2 Article 20, *Design Review Approval*. These provisions establish a process by which certain types of development projects and structures are subject to a discretionary review approval process before the City's Planning Commission, and under specified circumstances before the City Council or Planning Director, to ensure that the site plan, building layout, size, shape, scale, mass, height, architectural design, architectural components, materials, colors, landscaping and other aspects of the physical plan for the development project are compatible with neighboring developments, are appropriate for the site, and achieve the highest level of design that is feasible for the project. The City uses this process to improve the aesthetic character of the community, to preserve and enhance property values, protect adjacent properties from adverse impacts caused by development projects, to assist private and public developers to be more cognizant of public concerns for the aesthetics of projects, and to bring about a community that is safe, functional, and attractive.

Following compliance with the proposed General Plan Update Policies and Policy Actions, the Code standards and regulations, and City's Design Review Approval process, future developments would result in less than significant impacts to the existing visual character of the development sites and their surroundings. It is noted further review may be necessary on a project-by-project basis, in order to evaluate site-specific impacts to visual character.



Additionally, future projects may undergo further environmental review pursuant to CEQA on a project-by-project basis. Implementation of the proposed General Plan Update would not substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the development sites and their surroundings. A less than significant impact would occur in this regard.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation is required.

Level of Significance: Less Than Significant.

LIGHT AND GLARE

■ **DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATED WITH THE PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN COULD CREATE NEW SOURCES OF SUBSTANTIAL LIGHT AND GLARE THAT WOULD ADVERSELY AFFECT SENSITIVE RECEPTORS.**

Impact Analysis: Existing sensitive receptors (i.e. residential, schools, medical office uses) are interspersed throughout the City. The proposed residential and commercial development would require lighting for building interior and exterior spaces (i.e., entryways and signs). In addition, future development would include lighting for activity areas involving nighttime uses, parking, lighting around the structures (security lighting and walkways), and lighting for interiors of buildings. Light spill and glare are the major environmental concerns associated with outdoor lighting installations. During evening hours, the new development could create new sources of substantial light and glare, which if not adequately focused or screened, may cause spill-over light and glare impacts that may present a nuisance to sensitive receptors. This could be particularly significant in areas where sensitive receptors are adjacent or in close proximity to either commercial or industrial uses throughout the City. Glare impacts are typically related to the use of modern, highly reflective surfaces such as glass, acrylic, and broad, flat surfaces that are painted with highly reflective colors. Future development is not anticipated to incorporate highly reflective or broad, flat surfaces.

Light and glare caused by car headlights associated with the increased traffic volumes would further influence lighting in the City. In addition, street lighting and traffic headlights could impact sensitive receptors, but not to a greater degree than other roadways elsewhere in the City.

The City is approximately 99 percent built-out and fully urbanized. The land uses anticipated with the proposed General Plan Update would involve primarily infill development of similar nature and scale, as existing uses. Therefore, future development is not anticipated to create substantial light and glare, which would result in an appreciable difference from existing levels. Notwithstanding, limiting the effects of lighting on the existing sensitive receptors would be an important aspect of the design of all new development. Compliance with AMC Section 9-2.1252, *Exposed Neon Lighting for Signs and Architectural Accents*, which represents the City's policy statement on the use of exposed neon lighting and states that it is the City's policy to ensure that signs and building facades create an attractive appearance, do not negatively impact neighboring properties, and improve the City's aesthetic character, would be required. Additionally, all future projects would undergo design review, pursuant to the provisions of



AMC Chapter 2 Article 20, *Design Review Approval*. Moreover, all future development would be subject to compliance with General Plan Policies and Policy Actions outlined above that would mitigate potential light and glare impacts. With the City's Design Review Approval process, and compliance with General Plan Update Policies and Policy Actions, potential light and glare impacts from implementation of the proposed General Plan Update would be reduced to less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation is required.

Level of Significance: Less Than Significant.

SHADE AND SHADOW

- **DEVELOPMENT OF THE PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN UPDATE COULD INTRODUCE SHADE AND SHADOW EFFECTS ONTO ADJACENT BUILDINGS WITHIN THE CITY.**

Impact Analysis: The proposed General Plan Update may result in future development which would cast new shadows on nearby buildings, public streets, and sidewalks throughout the City. This could negatively impact properties adjacent to new larger commercial, industrial, or residential areas.

The City is approximately 99 percent built-out and is entirely urbanized. The proposed General Plan Update focuses on preserving residential neighborhoods, guiding the remaining development and redevelopment opportunities, and encouraging the revitalization of selected areas. Through the City's Design Review Approval process, subsequent development projects would be reviewed to evaluate building design and height limitations, and ensure that the City Code standards and regulations are met. Compliance with local regulations would reduce impacts related to shade and shadow effects to less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation is required.

Level of Significance: Less Than Significant.

5.3.6 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

- **FUTURE DEVELOPMENT RESULTING FROM IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN UPDATE COULD RESULT IN CUMULATIVE AESTHETIC IMPACTS.**

Impact Analysis: The City of Artesia is approximately 99 percent built-out, with a typical southern California suburban landscape as a back-drop. The aesthetic character of the City is entirely urbanized. The General Plan Update focuses on preserving residential neighborhoods, guiding the remaining development and redevelopment opportunities, and encouraging the



revitalization of selected areas. As concluded above, aesthetics impacts associated with implementation of the proposed General Plan Update would be less than significant.

Surrounding cities are also fully developed and urbanized, with similar layout, density, and character, as Artesia. New development would contribute to subtle changes in the areas' urban characters. Implementation of the General Plan Update policies would enhance, rather than degrade, the City's visual character. New development would be evaluated on a project-by-project basis to ensure City standards are met and new development is compatible with the existing and desired regional and local urban and natural environments. Therefore, implementation of the proposed General Plan Update would not result in cumulatively considerable aesthetic impacts.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation is required.

Level of Significance: Less Than Significant.

5.3.7 SIGNIFICANT UNAVOIDABLE IMPACTS

Aesthetic impacts resulting from implementation of the proposed General Plan Update would be less than significant.

5.3.8 SOURCES CITED

California Scenic Highway Mapping System, http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/LandArch/scenic_highways/index.htm, Accessed April 7, 2010.

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