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## 4.21 Design, Art and Architecture Application/ Aesthetics

### 4.21.1 Introduction

The design, art and architecture application/aesthetics analysis focuses on the potential for the Master Plan alternatives to adversely affect existing aesthetic quality and views at LAX and in surrounding areas. Technical Report 11, *Design, Art and Architecture Applications/Aesthetics Technical Report*, contains detailed information on existing visual conditions, and describes plans and guidelines for evaluating the aesthetic and visual considerations associated with the Master Plan alternatives.

### 4.21.2 General Approach and Methodology

Impacts on aesthetics and views were determined by comparing existing visual conditions on and around the airport with conditions expected under each of the proposed Master Plan alternatives. Existing visual conditions were documented through a series of site tours that involved photo-reconnaissance to record views from key vantage points on and around the airport. Key vantage points within the study area included scenic or valued views, views along major roadways, and other observation points where substantial visual change would occur with implementation of the Master Plan alternatives. The study area for the analysis comprises areas within and adjacent to existing and proposed LAX boundaries, areas along the proposed LAX Expressway right-of-way, and at the Off-Site Fuel Farm locations proposed for the Scattergood Power Generating Facility and oil refinery located south of the airport property (see **Figure F4.21-1**, Photograph Location Map). As several areas of the airport have been subject to new development or visual enhancement since the EIS/EIR baseline year of 1996, descriptions of visual conditions in certain areas reflect more recent conditions.

Establishing the basis for the analysis also involved collecting and reviewing existing plans and guidelines in effect at LAX that address design, architecture and landscaping. These plans, which include the LAX Street Frontage and Landscape Plan, the LAX Air Cargo Facilities Design Guidelines, and the LAX Interim Plan, present current standards for development at LAX which are assumed to be incorporated as minimum standards for development proposed under the Master Plan alternatives. Additionally, LAWA staff were contacted to gain an understanding of current beautification and enhancement efforts and current processes for architectural and design review.

The specificity with which future visual conditions can be forecast is a function of the level of detail in project plans. Because final design plans are not available at this point in the planning process, the analysis in this section is based on the conceptual site plans provided in Chapter 3, *Alternatives*. Generally, impacts were considered significant where scenic or valued views would be blocked, where scenic or valued resources would be lost, or where the introduction of contrasting features would degrade the aesthetic quality within the study area. As the site plans are conceptual and do not incorporate architectural detail, projected effects on views and aesthetics were based on the proposed locations of development, maximum building heights and massing, and on the location and extent of landscape buffers and open space. Setbacks from streets and surrounding land uses were, at a minimum, expected to follow current airport standards and guidelines except in areas where the Master Plan alternatives indicate otherwise.

A specific methodology assessed both aesthetic impacts (degradation of visual quality) and view impacts (loss or diminishment of important views). Impacts on aesthetics were considered adverse where the proposed action would eliminate scenic natural features or areas, remove urban features with aesthetic value, or introduce contrasting urban features into valued natural areas or urban settings. To assess contrasts between proposed and existing conditions, basic features (such as landform/water, vegetation, and structures) and basic elements (form, line, color, and texture) were identified, with the significance of change then based on how dissimilar introduced features and elements would be to those continuing to exist in the landscape. Contrast was assessed from the most critical viewpoints, which included scenic or valued views, as well as views along commonly traveled routes and at key observation points. Methodology for evaluating aesthetics considerations is further described in Technical Report 11, *Design, Art and Architecture Applications/Aesthetics Technical Report*.

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In addressing view blockage, the analysis focused on valued focal or panoramic views, and views from scenic highways, major roadways, and view-sensitive residential and commercial properties. Panoramic views or vistas capture a large geographic area, for which the field of view can be wide and extend into the distance. Focal views center on a particular object, scene, setting, or feature of visual interest. The significance of view blockage was based on the quality or importance of the view, portion of the field of view obstructed, and the duration of the obstruction where views along roadways were at issue.

This evaluation recognizes that individuals respond differently to changes in the visual environment and that an adverse visual scene to one person may represent an improved visual condition to another. As a result, the assessment of impacts in this section is necessarily influenced by a degree of subjectivity.

### **4.21.3 Affected Environment/Environmental Baseline**

LAWA exerts land use control over the aesthetic enhancement and development of property on the airport. A number of documents address aesthetic and visual considerations that are applicable to evaluating the proposed Master Plan alternatives. These documents are summarized below and are discussed in greater detail in Technical Report 11, *Design, Art and Architecture Applications/Aesthetics Technical Report*.

- ◆ **FAA Requirements for Design, Art, and Architecture.** The FAA Order 5050.4A, *Airport Environmental Handbook*, sets forth design, art, and architecture considerations that should be evaluated in an EIS. Considerations include evaluating adverse effects of encroachment onto residential or recreation areas, disruption of scenic vistas, and application of the principles of good design, art, and architectural treatment where airport development interfaces with the public.
- ◆ **California Coastal Act of 1976.** The LAX property between Vista del Mar and Pershing Drive is located within the California Coastal Zone. The California Coastal Act establishes policies related to visual considerations within the Coastal Zone.
- ◆ **Los Angeles Citywide General Plan Framework.** The Los Angeles Citywide General Plan Framework (adopted by City Council on December 11, 1996 and re-adopted on August 8, 2001) designates the Century Boulevard corridor between La Cienega Boulevard and the entrance to the airport's Central Terminal Area (CTA) west of Sepulveda Boulevard as the LAX/Century Boulevard Regional Center and provides policies on urban form and design.
- ◆ **LAX Interim Plan.** The Los Angeles International Airport Interim Plan, an element of the *City of Los Angeles General Plan*, includes plan features and policies for airport buffer areas and visual quality.
- ◆ **LAX Street Frontage and Landscape Development Plan.** The *LAX Street Frontage and Landscape Development Plan* (Street Frontage and Landscape Plan), dated June 1994, was drafted by LAWA's Environmental Management Division. The plan establishes policies and standards for landscaping and interface treatments for service and maintenance areas, approach areas, airport buffer areas, open space and aviation view areas, and airport entry areas.
- ◆ **LAX Beautification Enhancements Program.** LAWA is currently implementing a *Beautification Enhancements Program* (Beautification Program) for improving the image, function, circulation, and wayfinding of the airport through the use of architecture, graphics, landscaping, lighting, and art. The primary theme of the Beautification Program is the recognition of the airport as a gateway landmark. An important component of the project involves developing Gateway themes at Century Boulevard and Vicksburg Avenue, Sepulveda Boulevard and Lincoln Boulevard, and above the Sepulveda Boulevard tunnel, between Imperial Highway and Century Boulevard. Another feature creates a buffer zone along the south side of Century Boulevard, between Aviation Boulevard and the CTA entrance, to buffer airport facilities from the roadway and airport-related uses south of Century Boulevard.
- ◆ **LAX Air Cargo Facilities Design Guidelines.** The *Los Angeles International Airport Air Cargo Facilities Design Guidelines* (Cargo Guidelines) were developed in August 1998 to assist tenants, architects, and engineers in developing cargo facilities. The Cargo Guidelines include standards and design criteria to enhance the image of airport cargo facilities as viewed by pedestrians, passengers in vehicles, and occupants in hotels and offices.





- ◆ **Scenic Highways Plan.** The adopted *Scenic Highways Plan*, an element of the City of Los Angeles General Plan, designates Vista del Mar between Culver Avenue and the city boundary, south of Grand Avenue, as a scenic highway. The plan includes objectives for preserving scenic resources within the vicinity of scenic highways.

### **LAWA Architectural/Design Review Process**

Plans for airport improvement projects, from schematic to final, go through a series of reviews starting at the LAWA Engineering Department. The plans are then forwarded for review to various airport departments. In general, review is based on compliance with three design-related documents. The Environmental Management Bureau reviews projects for consistency with the Street Frontage and Landscape Plan and applies conditions for landscape and street frontage amenities. The Engineering Department reviews plans for consistency with the Cargo Guidelines and the Beautification Enhancements Program. As previously noted, and consistent with proposed Master Plan commitments, this evaluation assumes LAWA will maintain and continue to implement the key provisions in these plans or apply equivalent or more stringent guidelines through a comprehensive update to the plans.

### **Existing Visual Resource Conditions**

LAX is located just east of the Pacific Ocean within a broad coastal plain that is surmounted by rising land to the south and north, with more level terrain extending to the east. With the exception of the open coastal and ocean expanse to the west, the airport is surrounded by heavily urbanized development. Panoramic vistas of the airport, arriving and departing aircraft, and visually prominent airport structures, such as the curved arches of the theme building and the thematic Airport Traffic Control Tower, are visible from off-site approaches to the airport. The two most notable visual features on the airport property are the El Segundo Blue Butterfly Habitat Restoration Area (Habitat Restoration Area) at the western edge of the property and the arched theme building within the CTA. Although these features and the degree of attention to urban design exhibited along the airport's major approach roadways are notable, such as the landscaped parkways and medians along Sepulveda Boulevard and the Century Boulevard approach to the CTA, there are no other areas within the airport property that appear to be valued for their high aesthetic quality. The overall existing visual resource conditions in areas on and surrounding the airport are described below and are shown in **Figure F4.21-2**, LAX Site Photographs - Photographs A through I, and **Figure F4.21-3**, LAX Site Photographs - Photographs J through Q.

### **Century Corridor/Eastern Boundary**

Between Aviation Boulevard and the entrance to the airport, Century Boulevard has been upgraded with implementation of the Gateway LAX project, a component of the LAX Beautification Enhancements Program. The project included a series of 25- to 60-foot-high lighted columns with changing colors near the CTA entrance, in addition to new landscaping and 32-foot high letters noting "LAX" at the intersection of Century and Sepulveda Boulevards and at the Century Freeway (I-105) interchange at Sepulveda Boulevard. Extensive landscaping has been introduced within the Century Boulevard median, within which the lit columns extend to the east, as well as along either side of that street. The new landscaping, together with the rows of palm trees and the large-scale modern hotels along this roadway, create a "Southern California" thematic impression. While the recent improvements have substantially upgraded the visual quality along the Century Corridor, the same area contains a high concentration of billboards (approximately 29) which detract from the visual quality of this approach to the airport. The high-rise hotel development along Century Boulevard at the entrance of the airport is shown in **Figure F4.21-2**, Photograph A.

Airfield and aircraft operations are easily visible from the upper stories of hotels and office buildings located along the north side of Century Boulevard. Views of airport operations are much more limited from other residential and commercial properties in this area due to lower building heights, building orientation, and intervening development and landscaping.

Views into the airport along the south side of Century Boulevard, west of Aviation Boulevard, are dominated by the Century Cargo Complex. The most prominent features of the complex are the Delta facility, parking structures, the Post Office terminal annex, and various cargo carrier facilities. Landscaped setbacks along the airport property and other landscaping on Century Boulevard enhance street front views in this area. Many of the buildings within the cargo complex, between Aviation Boulevard and the entrance to the CTA, are equivalent in scale to the hotels on the north side of Century

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Boulevard. Together, the large structures on both sides of Century Boulevard help define this approach as a gateway to the airport. Several changes and renovations to cargo facilities have recently occurred within the Century Cargo Complex, along with appropriate landscape treatments. These buildings generally exhibit modern design elements with a higher degree of architectural interest than many of the older cargo facilities, and as such, they are considered an aesthetic improvement.

Sepulveda Boulevard is an additional primary approach roadway. Approaching the airport from the north, landscape strips front the airfield and parking Lot C. A view of the landscaped walls and entrance at Parking Lot C is shown in **Figure F4.21-2**, Photograph B. Approaching from the south at the intersection of Sepulveda Boulevard and Imperial Highway, the airfield is visible where it crosses over the Sepulveda Tunnel. Also figuring prominently in this view is the I-105 overpass, its supporting columns, and the merging lanes from the freeway. While it is clear from this vantage that you are approaching the airport, there is little in the way of landscape amenities and the view is not aesthetically notable. Continuing north toward Century Boulevard and exiting the Sepulveda Tunnel, there is more in the way of landscaping that contributes to a sense of gateway or arrival.

An Existing ANMP Relocation Plan was commenced in 1998, resulting in the acquisition of residential properties within the Manchester Square and Belford neighborhoods; several of the acquired residences have been removed to date.<sup>755</sup> As part of the program, all acquired properties are being hydroseeded and secured with green chain-link fencing for security.

### **Central Terminal Area**

Visual quality within the CTA is characterized by the same general Southern Californian landscape theme as on Century Boulevard and comprises an array of roadways and lanes turning into terminal departure and arrival bays. Parking structures with perimeter landscaping and overhead walkways occupy a large part of the center of the terminal area. The arched terminal theme building, a City of Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monument symbolizing a "Jet Age" theme, is prominently located in the center of the eight terminals and houses an observation deck and a restaurant. The new Airport Traffic Control Tower, rising above the west side of the theme building, is another monument of unusual design. Visible from all directions, and in some cases, from a relatively great distance, the new Airport Traffic Control Tower contributes to the airport's sense of destination and to a regional airport theme. The theme building and new Airport Traffic Control Tower are depicted in **Figure F4.21-2**, Photographs C and D, respectively.

In contrast to the valued aesthetic character of the theme building and new Airport Traffic Control Tower, the terminal buildings along the outside of the World Way ring road consist of concrete slab construction and are primarily designed for function and access. Whereas the Tom Bradley International Terminal (TBIT) exhibits a degree of architectural interest and incorporates landscape amenities, the other terminal buildings have little in the way of landscaping and do not contribute meaningfully to the aesthetic quality of the CTA. Within the CTA, views of the airfield and areas adjacent to the airport are blocked by the terminal buildings.

Since 1997, LAX has undergone a number of minor improvements within the CTA that have been consistent in aesthetic character with existing facilities and have neither detracted from the regional airport theme nor meaningfully altered panoramic views of or across the property.

### **Southern Boundary**

I-105 rises approximately 80 feet above the airport elevation as it crosses over the I-405 Freeway and provides a panoramic view of the airport to travelers approaching from the east. From Aviation Boulevard, the airfield and airplane operations are easily visible from the upper stories of hotels and office buildings located along the south side of Imperial Highway to Sepulveda Boulevard. The Imperial Cargo Complex can be viewed from Imperial Highway and the west side of Aviation Boulevard, south of the runways. Landscaped setbacks along the airport property on this section of Imperial Highway enhance the cargo sites in compliance with the Cargo Guidelines. A view of the Imperial Cargo Complex at

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<sup>755</sup> As part of a separate and ongoing program supporting the ANMP, LAWA will acquire the Belford and Manchester Square areas east of and adjacent to the airport. These properties are heavily impacted by noise, traffic, and incompatible adjacent land uses. Residents in those areas approached the airport and requested that their properties be acquired rather than soundproofed. The existing acquisition activities were previously approved as part of LAWA's Final Relocation Plan -- Voluntary Residential Acquisition/Relocation Program for the Areas Manchester Square and Airport/Belford, June 2000. Refer to Section 4.4.2, *Relocation of Residences or Businesses*, for further discussion.

Aviation Boulevard is shown in **Figure F4.21-2**, Photograph E. A view of the Imperial Terminal and South Cargo Complex, west of Sepulveda Boulevard from East Imperial Avenue is shown in **Figure F4.21-2**, Photograph F. Several upgrades to cargo facilities have recently occurred within the South Cargo Complex East, along with appropriate landscape treatments. These improvements generally exhibit modern design elements with a higher degree of architectural interest than many of the older cargo facilities, and as such, they are considered an aesthetic improvement.

The El Segundo bluff rises at the south side of Imperial Highway, generally running from Sepulveda Boulevard to Pershing Drive on the west. From vantages on Imperial Avenue between Sepulveda Boulevard and California Street looking north there are views of the airport from the upper stories of a seven-story office building and from upper story rooms of the Embassy Suites Hotel. The Imperial Terminal and ancillary and cargo buildings along Imperial Highway figure prominently in these airport views.

Further to the west on Imperial Avenue, from California Street to Pershing Drive, there are views of the airport, urban areas further to the north, and ocean views to the west/northwest from the bluff-top greenbelt and a number of residential properties. Benches along the bluff-top greenbelt are frequently used by the public for viewing arriving and departing aircraft as well as for taking in scenic long-range views. A general view of the airport from Imperial Avenue, near Sheldon Street in El Segundo is shown in **Figure F4.21-2**, Photograph G. The number and quality of views among residential properties in this area are highly variable due to changes in topography, intervening trees along the greenbelt, and the design and orientation of apartment buildings. While there are notable views from certain properties, few of the single-family homes or apartment buildings are oriented with the objective of taking in long-range scenic views. Residential areas on Imperial Avenue west of Loma Vista Street have views of the southwest end of the airport site. The southwest portion of the airport property has little development, and it is mainly limited to taxiways. A view of the southwest portion of the airport property is shown in **Figure F4.21-2**, Photograph H.

Views for travelers along Imperial Highway, west of Sepulveda Boulevard to Main Street, are predominantly of cargo and ancillary facilities. Although a number of these facilities have landscaping fronting Imperial Highway, these facilities do not present a cohesive image due to the variety of building types. Views of the airport from Imperial Highway, west of Main Street, are blocked by graded-fill berms; and both sides of Imperial Highway are bordered by a combination of wood and steel utility poles and lines. A view looking west on Imperial Highway, from east of Pershing Drive, is shown in **Figure F4.21-2**, Photograph I. Between Pershing Drive and Vista del Mar, Imperial Highway passes the Hyperion Sewage Treatment Plant on the south and the Habitat Restoration Area on the north. At the corner of Vista del Mar and Imperial Highway, the Hyperion facility, with street front landscaping features prominently in views.

### Western Boundary

Sandpiper Street, located south of Westchester Parkway between Pershing Drive and Vista del Mar, is a remnant residential street from a single-family neighborhood once established in the airport dunes area. At the time the Draft EIS/EIR was prepared, this roadway was open to the public and offered expansive ocean and airport views. A view from Sandpiper Street looking southeast toward the airport is shown in **Figure F4.21-3**, Photograph J. However, Sandpiper Street was closed to the public for security purposes following the events of September 11, 2001, and views are no longer available from this location.

Between Imperial Highway and Westchester Parkway, views to the east along Pershing Drive, approximately 90 feet above mean sea level (AMSL), are mostly obscured by the hilly terrain and the placement of fill which rises to 100 feet AMSL. The Habitat Restoration Area, a 203-acre portion of the LAX/El Segundo Dunes, is located on the west side of Pershing Drive, and is enclosed by green security fencing. Views of the ocean from Pershing Drive are obscured by the dunes, which rise to levels of approximately 130 to 180 feet AMSL. Large areas of the dunes are undeveloped and somewhat natural in appearance; other areas include remnant residential streets, radar, and other ancillary facilities. Overall, the rural open space appearance of this section of the airport is dominated by the Pershing Drive/World Way West interchange. A view of Pershing Drive, looking north, is shown in **Figure F4.21-3**, Photograph K.

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Vista del Mar, a City of Los Angeles Scenic Highway, bounds the westerly edge of the airport property, adjacent to the LAX/EI Segundo Dunes. Views of airport facilities are not possible from Vista del Mar due to the intervening dunes.

### Northern Boundary

The property which is currently entitled for development of the LAX Northside project, extends nearly 2.5 miles from the Westchester business district at Sepulveda Boulevard west to Pershing Drive. Formerly a residential area, the property was acquired by the airport as a buffer between the airport and residential neighborhoods located farther north. LAWA has determined that the property should be developed so it is aesthetically compatible with the adjoining neighborhoods while the land returns to a productive use.

Westchester Parkway runs through the LAX Northside property. The parkway is fully improved with a landscaped median and perimeter landscaping consistent with the landscape criteria in the airport's Street Frontage and Landscape Development Plan. East of Loyola Boulevard, the parkway offers open vistas of the airport. West of Loyola Boulevard, views of the airport are mostly obscured by landscaped berms.

The northern boundary of the LAX Northside site, along West 88<sup>th</sup> Place between Sepulveda West Way and the Westchester Golf Course, and then north to Manchester Avenue, primarily borders residential uses. To screen the airport property from this residential area, LAWA has constructed 20-foot high buffers, consisting of 12-foot high architecturally treated masonry walls on the crest of eight-foot-high landscaped berms within a 50-foot setback from 88<sup>th</sup> Street. The 50-foot setback was created from lots cleared for expansion of the airport. The landscaping associated with the completed wall project and associated buffering, east of the Westchester Golf Course, includes grass lawns with trees and sloping berms landscaped with ornamental vegetation, which are attractively designed and well-maintained. **Figure F4.21-3**, Photograph L, depicts the 20-foot high landscaped wall and berm, which effectively block views from these properties.

The northern boundary of LAX Northside, west of Lincoln Boulevard extending to Pershing Drive, also borders residential development. Views of LAX Northside from these neighborhoods are generally available only from the apartments located along the west side of Lincoln Boulevard, and from residences located along West 91<sup>st</sup> Street, north of St. Bernard High School, and west of Falmouth Avenue. The high-rise apartments on Lincoln Boulevard have views to the southeast and southwest. These views encompass undeveloped areas of LAX Northside, the airport, and more distant views of the ocean and city. Views from residences along 91<sup>st</sup> Street are limited, as they face away from LAX Northside and are separated from LAX Northside by a cinderblock wall and trees. A typical view of LAX Northside from an existing stubbed street adjoining single-family residential properties along 91<sup>st</sup> Street is shown in **Figure F4.21-3**, Photograph M. The westerly end of the airport's northern runways is clearly visible to residents adjacent to St. Bernard High School and in neighborhoods north of the airport and west of Falmouth Avenue. Views from these properties are oriented to the southeast.

Beyond LAX Northside, to the west of Pershing Drive along Waterview Street and Napoleon Street, residences also face airport property. These views include undeveloped dune areas and scenic ocean views where homes are oriented to the southwest. Like the Habitat Restoration Area, the dunes in this area have a hilly open space appearance with dune scrub vegetation.

### LAX Expressway

Single and multi-family residential units are adjacent to the proposed LAX Expressway right-of-way (ROW) along the south side of Thornburn Street and the north side of 74<sup>th</sup> Street and Midfield Avenue. The residences face away from the proposed LAX Expressway ROW, Centinela Creek, and the I-405 Freeway. A view of the Caltrans right-of-way is shown in **Figure F4.21-3**, Photograph N. A more detailed and comprehensive description of existing conditions for these and other areas along the proposed LAX Expressway rights-of-way is provided in Appendix K, *Supplemental Environmental Evaluation for LAX Expressway and State Route 1 Improvements*.



**A:** Highrise hotels and offices on Century Boulevard near Central Terminal entrance.



**B :** View of Parking Lot "C" wall and landscaped setback on Westchester Parkway.



**C:** Central Terminal Area theme building.



**D:** New Air Control Tower in Central Terminal Area.



**E:** View of landscaped setback and wall at Imperial Cargo Complex, looking west from Imperial Highway and Aviation Boulevard.



**F:** View of airport from Imperial Highway west of Sepulveda.



**G:** View of airport from Imperial Avenue in El Segundo, looking north. Cargo facilities are in the foreground.



**H:** View of the southwest corner of the airport from Imperial Avenue.



**I:** Above ground utility lines on Imperial Highway at airport southern boundary. Viewed from the east.





**J:** View of airport from Sandpiper Street.



**K:** View of Pershing Drive from the south. The Habitat Restoration Area is on the left, the airport runway westerly terminus is to the right.



**L:** Twenty-foot-high sound-blocking wall in 50-foot landscape setback on 88th Street.



**M:** View of LAX Northside property from residential neighborhood on 91st Street.



**N:** View looking south from La Tijera Boulevard overpass (east of 405 freeway) of Centinela Creek.



**O:** View of proposed Scattergood Fuel site with existing tanks looking east from bike path adjacent to beach.



**P:** View of proposed Scattergood Fuel Farm site looking east from Grand Avenue.



**Q:** View of Continental City site looking south from 111th Street.



### Proposed LAX Off-Site Fuel Farm Sites

The Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (LADWP) Scattergood Power Generating Facility is located on Vista del Mar south of LAX and the Hyperion property. The Scattergood property rises to the east and is surmounted on its easterly side by a large red and white stack, two large water tanks, a large power generating facility, and multiple-story administrative buildings, which front Vista del Mar. A portion of the Scattergood site, located approximately 700 feet east of Vista del Mar and south of Grand Avenue, is one of the two proposed off-site fuel farm sites. This portion of the Scattergood property contains four 50-foot high tan storage tanks. The base of the tanks is approximately 135 feet AMSL. The tanks are encircled by a landscaped earthen berm, which has an elevation approximately 153 AMSL. The berm partially obscures views of the tanks from a close view on Grand Avenue and Vista del Mar. A greater portion of the tanks' surface is visible from the west-bound lanes on Grand Avenue, because the roadway is set back a greater distance from the berm. The berm almost completely obscures views of the tanks from pedestrians on the south side Grand Avenue. Views of the Scattergood site are shown in **Figure F4.21-3**, Photographs O and P.

The residential properties on Loma Vista Avenue that border the site on the east are located approximately 145 feet AMSL. Although views of the ocean from these properties are primarily obscured by the tanks, which rise to approximately 185 feet AMSL, the four most northerly homes in the 200 block of Loma Vista have ocean views directly to the west. The tanks do not screen ocean views from Grand Avenue or from homes north of Grand Avenue. The tanks are also visible looking west from Franklin Avenue, west of Concord Avenue. Because of setbacks, the intervening topography, and a dense growth of landscape trees on the east side of the Scattergood property, the existing fuel tanks do not present an objectionable façade from this vantage point.

A 1,000-acre tract of refinery property south of the airport, part of which is slated as the alternative off-site fuel farm site, is bounded by Vista del Mar, El Segundo Boulevard, Sepulveda Boulevard, and Rosecrans Avenue. This fuel farm site is located along the south side of El Segundo Boulevard in the north central portion of the oil refinery. On El Segundo Boulevard, the property is largely obscured by a mature growth of eucalyptus trees. This area is located across from primarily industrial land uses. Typical of oil-refining facilities, this property contains large numbers of fuel storage tanks, pipeways, roads, stacks, and towers.

### 4.21.4 Thresholds of Significance

#### 4.21.4.1 CEQA Thresholds of Significance

A significant aesthetic or view impact would occur if the direct and indirect changes in the environment that may be caused by the particular build alternative would potentially result in one or more of the following future conditions:

- ◆ Introduction of features that would detract from the existing valued aesthetic quality of a neighborhood, community, or localized area by conflicting/contrasting with important aesthetic elements or the quality of the area (such as a theme, style, setbacks, density, massing, etc.) or cause an inconsistency with applicable design guidelines.
- ◆ Removal of one or more features that contribute to the valued aesthetic character or image of the neighborhood, community, or localized area such as demolition of structures, street trees, a strand of trees, or other landscape features that contribute positively to the valued visual image of a community.
- ◆ Obstruction, interruption, or diminishment of a valued focal or panoramic view or view from any designated scenic highway, corridor, or parkway.

These thresholds of significance are utilized because they address the potential concerns relative to aesthetic resources and views associated with the Master Plan build alternatives. All three thresholds reflect those contained in the *Draft L.A. CEQA Thresholds Guide* that are relevant to this project.

#### 4.21.4.2 Federal Standards

There are no federal standards that define significance thresholds for aesthetic or view impacts. Section 41(c) of FAA Order 5050.4A, *Airport Environmental Handbook*, requires, however, that design, art, and architectural application be considered with the environmental evaluation of a proposed project.

### **4.21.5 Master Plan Commitments**

As addressed in subsection 4.21.6, *Environmental Consequences*, implementation of any of the Master Plan alternatives would have potential impacts related to aesthetics and views. In recognition of these potential impacts, LAWA has included the commitments listed below in the proposed Master Plan coded "DA" for "Design, Art and Architecture Application/Aesthetics."

◆ **DA-1. Provide and Maintain Airport Buffer Areas (Alternatives A, B, C, and D).**

Along the northerly and southerly boundary areas of the airport, LAWA will provide and maintain landscaped buffer areas that will include setbacks, landscaping, screening, or other appropriate view-sensitive improvements with the goals of avoiding land use conflicts, shielding lighting, enhancing privacy and better screening views of airport facilities from adjacent residential uses. Use of the existing facilities in buffer areas may continue as required until LAWA can develop alternative facilities.

◆ **DA-2. Update and Integrate Design Plans and Guidelines (Alternatives A, B, C, and D).**

The following plans and guidelines will be individually updated or integrated into a comprehensive set of design-related guidelines and plans; LAX Street Frontage and Landscape Development Plan (June 1994), LAX Air Cargo Facilities Development Guidelines (April 1998; updated August 2002), and LAX Northside Design Plan and Development Guidelines (1989), including conditions addressing heights, setbacks, and landscaping. The update will serve as a basis for reviewing future public and private development projects at LAX. The update will incorporate key provisions in current plans with an equivalent or greater level of compatibility and visual quality supported between LAX and adjacent land uses.

◆ **DA-3. Undergrounding of Utility Lines (Alternatives A, B, C, and D).**

In conjunction with the extension of the Century Freeway and other roadway/right-of-way improvement projects, LAWA will pursue opportunities to place existing overhead utility lines underground wherever feasible and appropriate.

The following Master Plan commitment from another environmental discipline is also relevant to this analysis:

◆ **LI-1. Ring Road Landscaping (Alternative B).**

The above commitment is provided in its entirety in Chapter 5, *Environmental Action Plan*.

### **4.21.6 Environmental Consequences**

As described in the Analytical Framework discussion in the introduction to Chapter 4, the basis for determining impacts under CEQA is different from that of NEPA. Under CEQA, the impacts of a proposed project and alternatives are measured against the "environmental baseline," which is normally the physical conditions that existed at the time the Notice of Preparation was published (i.e., June 1997, or 1996 when a full year of data is appropriate, for the LAX Master Plan Draft EIS/EIR). As such, the CEQA analysis in this Final EIS/EIR uses the environmental baseline, or in some cases an "adjusted environmental baseline," as the basis by which to measure and evaluate the impacts of each alternative. Under NEPA, the impacts of each action alternative (i.e., build alternative) are measured against the conditions that would otherwise occur in the future if no action were to occur (i.e., the "No Action" alternative). As such, the NEPA analysis in this Final EIS/EIR uses the No Action/No Project Alternative as the basis by which to measure and evaluate the impacts of each build alternative (i.e., Alternatives A, B, C, and D) in the future (i.e., at buildout in 2015 or, for construction-related impacts, selected future interim year). Based on this fundamental difference in the approach to evaluating impacts, the nature and significance of impacts determined under CEQA are not necessarily representative of, or applicable to, impacts determined under NEPA. The following presentation of environmental consequences should, therefore, be reviewed and considered accordingly.

### 4.21.6.1 No Action/No Project Alternative

#### Proposed Development

The No Action/No Project Alternative (described in Chapter 3, *Alternatives*) contains various features that are especially pertinent to the analysis of aesthetic impacts. Some of these features are new and replacement cargo facilities along the south side of Century Boulevard and along Imperial Highway, development of the LAX Northside and Continental City projects, and acquisition and relocation activities proposed within the Manchester Square and Belford residential areas. Several of the features identified as part of the No Action/No Project Alternative have been implemented since publication of the Draft EIS/EIR, as indicated in subsection 4.21.3, *Affected Environment/Environmental Baseline*. Such features include a number of changes and renovations to cargo facilities within the Century Cargo Complex, cargo facility upgrades within the South Cargo Complex East, a landscaped setback along Century Boulevard, the Gateway LAX beautification improvements, taxiway upgrades and improvements, and commencement of acquisition and relocation activities within the Manchester Square and Belford residential areas. The improvements that have been implemented to date have resulted in conditions consistent with those anticipated under the No Action/No Project Alternative in the Draft EIS/EIR analysis and described below. Additionally, the acquisition and removal of residences in the Manchester Square and Belford areas is not expected to result in an adverse aesthetic impact.

#### Visual Effects

##### **Century Corridor/Eastern Boundary**

Along the south side of Century Boulevard, between Aviation and Sepulveda Boulevards, recent and proposed improvements within the Century Cargo Complex would continue to include new and replacement cargo facilities and a four-lane frontage roadway. An approximate 50-foot landscaped setback screens cargo uses from Century Boulevard and hotel and office uses to the north, consistent with specifications contained within the Cargo Guidelines. While the new and replacement cargo facilities would intensify development at the eastern portion of the LAX site, the proposed facilities would represent a continuation and upgrade of existing on-site facilities. Little contrast would be expected between new and upgraded facilities. The new facilities would not block valued focal or panoramic views.

The changes anticipated for the Century Cargo Complex under the No Action/No Project Alternative would, due to the addition of a 50-foot landscaped setback and upgraded facilities, continue to have a beneficial aesthetic affect on the appearance of the airport property in this area. The overall landscaping and design upgrades under the LAX Gateway Project have improved visual conditions along of the entire length of Century Boulevard.

Under the No Action/No Project Alternative, the airport acquires approximately 142 acres in the City of Los Angeles, east of the airport. Acquisition is currently taking place independent of the LAX Master Plan in conjunction with the existing Aircraft Noise Mitigation Program (ANMP). Under the No Action/No Project Alternative it is assumed that LAWA would acquire and relocate 583 multi-family dwellings on Belford Avenue, between Arbor Vitae and 96<sup>th</sup> Street; and 1,705 multi-family dwellings, and 280 single-family dwellings in the Manchester Square neighborhood. Under the No Action/No Project Alternative, these areas are assumed to be cleared of structures.

The approximately 19.5-acre Belford area is characterized by two-story apartment buildings, constructed between the 1940's and the 1960's. The dwellings have little continuity with the surrounding industrial land use and no unusual design, architectural, or landscape features to suggest particular aesthetic value. The approximately 122.5-acre Manchester Square area has streets laid out in a curved pattern with modest, neatly landscaped single-family homes and a public school. The site tends to contrast with the low rise industrial uses bounding all sides of the neighborhood and is not considered a unique or aesthetically significant resource. However, following acquisition, the cleared areas would remain vacant and unimproved (other than hydroseeding and security fencing) in strong contrast to existing surrounding development. This circumstance could result in an aesthetic impact if measures were not taken by LAWA to attractively screen or otherwise improve the property.

### **Central Terminal Area**

Under the LAX Beautification Enhancements Program, ongoing beautification efforts adjacent to and within the CTA would continue to improve the aesthetics of the area. As a result, no aesthetic or view impacts within the CTA are expected.

### **Southern Boundary**

New and replacement cargo facilities proposed north of Imperial Highway and west of Sepulveda Boulevard would somewhat intensify development in this area. The new cargo facilities would represent infill development, which would integrate with existing facilities. Little contrast would be expected between new and upgraded facilities and existing facilities. The facilities would be partially visible to north-bound motorists on Sepulveda Boulevard, but they would not figure prominently in these views due to intervening topography and support pilings from the I-105. As the new facilities would not detract from an important aesthetic area or block a valued focal or panoramic view, no impacts are expected.

### **Western Boundary**

The No Action/No Project Alternative would improve taxiways and runways on the western end of LAX. These improvements would represent a continuation and upgrade of existing on-site facilities. The improvements are generally at grade level and would not block any valued focal and/or panoramic view. As a result, no aesthetic or view impacts are expected.

### **Northern Boundary**

Under the No Action/No Project Alternative, the 340-acre LAX Northside project would be developed with approximately 4.5 million square feet (MSF) of commercial and research/development uses, including approximately 750,000 square feet (SF) of airport-related uses. The development would include low- and mid-rise offices, restaurant and retail uses, hotels, research park, and airport support facilities, and would retain the existing golf course and Westchester Parkway.

LAX Northside is subject to height restrictions, setback requirements, and landscape guidelines of the City of Los Angeles Ordinance 159,526. This ordinance, which contains a number of [Q] (Qualifications of Approval) zoning conditions for development of LAX Northside, is the basis for the *LAX Northside Design Plan and Development Guidelines* (Design Plan). This document establishes design standards to guide prospective property developers and to aid the airport in reviewing proposals for the site. Since approval of the LAX Northside project, the airport has completed a number of improvements on the site, including the Westchester Parkway; however, no private projects have yet been developed. In addition to the existing Westchester Golf Course, LAX Northside would have two development zones, the Westchester Center and the Research and Development Business Park. Each development zone would be designed to reflect a different character. The Westchester Center would be a mixed use urban center of moderate density and the Development Business Park would be a business and research park of relatively low density.

On the northern edge of LAX Northside, building setbacks and height restrictions and landscaped setbacks would be used to create a more visually open appearance. In addition, a buffer would be provided between LAX Northside and the adjoining residential neighborhoods. For most of its length, the buffer would serve as a physical and visual buffer; but in the westernmost area, the buffer would allow views across and through LAX Northside. The buffer would incorporate a variety of systems including fencing, shrubbery, trees, ground cover, walls, earth berms, and landscaped setbacks. Generally, landscape buffer setbacks would range between 10 and 50 feet in width, and building setbacks would range between 15 and 100 feet. A more detailed discussion of the Design Plan is provided in Technical Report 11, *Design, Art and Architecture Applications/Aesthetics Technical Report*.

A number of the [Q] zoning conditions that are in place specify building heights, landscape buffers, and setbacks along the LAX Northside residential interface. The provisions contained in these conditions were developed through an extensive planning and outreach process that led to approval of LAX Northside in 1983. The following excerpts from the [Q] conditions contained in Ordinance No. 159,526 most directly specify view and aesthetic concerns along the site's northern boundary:

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- ◆ No structure located within 100 feet of the north airport property line, between Loyola Boulevard and Hastings Avenue, shall exceed three stories (including parking levels) or 45 feet in height measured from the finished grade of the lot.
- ◆ All structures shall observe a minimum setback of 50 feet from the northern property line between Loyola Boulevard and Hastings Avenue.
- ◆ Buildings within 100 feet of the north property line between Loyola Boulevard and Hastings Avenue are not permitted on their north side to have transparent windows below six-feet from the floor level, on the second story or above. This provision protects the privacy of single-family residences to the north.
- ◆ Between Falmouth Avenue and Pershing Drive, no structure located within 200 feet of the north airport property line shall exceed 45 feet in height.
- ◆ All structures shall observe a minimum setback of 100 feet from the north airport property line between Falmouth Avenue and Pershing Drive.
- ◆ A 50-foot landscaped buffer setback is required along the north airport property line, between Falmouth Avenue and Pershing Drive, and includes low, minimum-view-obstructing shrubs and ground cover (no trees).
- ◆ Landscape buffers are required within a 15-foot setback along Cum Laude Avenue and 92<sup>nd</sup> Street, adjacent to the St. Bernard High School site and along Liberator Avenue, adjacent to the Emerson Manor School.
- ◆ A 30-foot-wide landscaped buffer setback is required along 88<sup>th</sup> Street between Sepulveda Westway and Liberator Avenue. The single-family homes on 88<sup>th</sup> Street would be separated from LAX Northside by the existing 20-foot landscaped berm and wall, within the current 30-foot setback.

These elements are intended to ensure that the project provides an aesthetically pleasing interface between existing residential and proposed commercial development and does not introduce features that would detract from the aesthetic quality of adjacent neighborhoods. Implementation of these conditions would promote a visually open landscaped northern boundary, and setbacks and height limits would reduce visual intrusion or obscuring of distant views.

### Continental City Development

The Continental City project, located on Imperial Highway west of the I-405 and north of I-105, is surrounded by airport, industrial, and high-technology uses. As currently entitled, the 28.5-acre Continental City project site is expected to include 3 MSF of office and hotel space and 100,000 SF of retail space. The project consists of 12 lots with 10 or more low-, mid-, and high-rise structures, ranging from 3 to 17 stories and varying from 30,000 SF to approximately 300,000 SF. Plans indicate that buildings ranging from 7 to 17 stories would be built around a 1.9-acre park referred to as the Central Green. The Continental City EIR<sup>756</sup> project description states that, wherever possible, each office/work station "whether large or small" would have a view of an interior garden from one side, or on the other side, a view of a glazed atrium or Central Green.

The Continental City project would upgrade a currently vacant site that has poor visual quality and no valued aesthetic resources. As the project would not contrast or be out of character with adjacent commercial development, and would not block valued views, no aesthetic or view impacts are expected. A view of the vacant Continental City property from 111<sup>th</sup> Street is shown in **Figure F4.21-3**, Photograph Q.

### Construction

The No Action/No Project Alternative would include airfield and new cargo facilities, and taxiway improvements. More concentrated and substantial construction would occur at the LAX Northside and Continental City project sites. With completion of the landscaped buffer along Century Boulevard, construction within the Century Cargo Complex would not degrade views along this airport approach roadway. Construction of LAX Northside would result in an incomplete, disrupted, and unattractive visual scene in comparison with the current open field appearance of the site. These temporary visual impacts

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<sup>756</sup> City of Los Angeles Planning Department, Environmental Review Section, Continental City Final Environmental Impact Report No. 407-82-SUB, February 1985.

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would affect apartment units located west of Lincoln Boulevard and north of Westchester Parkway, single-family residences along 91<sup>st</sup> Street and in the immediate vicinity of St. Bernard High School, and multi-family residential uses west of Falmouth Avenue. Existing landscaped berms would screen much of the construction activity from travelers along Westchester Parkway. The visual contrast of construction activities would be temporary and would not result in a permanent impact. Visual impacts from other construction activities would not be expected, because the activities would not be as extensive and widespread or in view along primary roadway or airport approaches.

### **4.21.6.2 Alternative A - Added Runway North**

#### **Proposed Development**

Under Alternative A, airport facilities would expand to the east, intensifying development in many areas of the site. Alternative A adds a northern runway, extends existing runways, adds a new terminal, new cargo and parking facilities, and improves circulation and public transportation systems. Approximately 273 acres of land to the north and east of the airport would be acquired and the vacant LAX Northside and Continental City project sites would be developed. A full description of Alternative A is provided in Chapter 3, *Alternatives*.

#### **Visual Effects**

##### **Century Corridor/Eastern Boundary**

New and replacement cargo complexes and ancillary facilities would be constructed along the south side of Century Boulevard from Aviation Boulevard west to Sepulveda Boulevard. The new and replacement facilities would intensify development in this area. Standards set forth in the Cargo Guidelines would apply to the new cargo facilities. Through LAWA review, compliance with guidelines that address the image along Century Boulevard would reduce visual effects on pedestrians, motorists, and hotel and commercial uses to the north. The guidelines for this area provide for landscaped parkways, clean aerial views of roofs, and interesting and diverse views. Consistent with the guidelines, plans for Alternative A would maintain an approximately 50-foot wide continuous landscaped parkway on the south side of Century Boulevard from just east of Aviation Boulevard to the CTA. With this parkway and incorporation of applicable design guidelines, the new and replacement facilities are expected to enhance the existing aesthetic quality of the area and the function of Century Boulevard as the "Gateway" to the airport. Furthermore, the infill development is not expected to significantly impact valued focal or panoramic views, which would remain accessible from the upper stories of hotels on Century Boulevard.

On the north side of Century Boulevard, just east of Sepulveda Boulevard, high-rise hotel and office uses would be acquired and redeveloped with ancillary uses and parking facilities. The adjacent Sheraton Hotel would be buffered from these uses and the change would open up long-range scenic views from the hotel to the west. This change would represent a beneficial visual effect.

Along with the upgrade and addition to existing airport facilities on Century Boulevard, new cargo facilities would be added along the eastern boundary of La Cienega Boulevard between Century Boulevard and Imperial Avenue. Replacing existing industrial, commercial, and parking uses, the new facilities would present a more cohesive image than currently exists in this area and contrast little with adjacent commercial and industrial uses. Furthermore, vantages adjacent to the eastern end of the site from adjacent commercial and industrial buildings do not support valued focal or panoramic views. As such, no significant aesthetic or view impacts are expected in this area.

Compared to the No Action/No Project Alternative, there would be visual improvements with more extensive facility and landscape upgrades under Alternative A, supporting a more cohesive image for the area.

##### **Central Terminal Area**

The core passenger buildings in the CTA as viewed from World Way would remain largely unchanged, and there would be no modifications to the theme building or air traffic control tower. The changes to the pier concourses would not be visible to pedestrians and motorists within the CTA, and would be too distant and limited to be a feature in views from off-airport areas to the north. No significant aesthetic or view impacts are expected within the CTA. The limited visual effects within the CTA would be similar to those of the No Action/No Project Alternative.

### Southern Boundary

The new cargo complexes would expand airport facilities along Imperial Highway. New cargo facilities would be added along Imperial Highway between La Cienega and Aviation Boulevards at the Continental City project site, and new and upgraded cargo facilities would be added between Aviation and Sepulveda Boulevards. The new facilities would be constructed on the currently vacant Continental City project site and/or sites currently occupied by industrial and commercial uses. Given the currently poor visual quality of the vacant Continental City project site and expectations for quality development and landscape amenities as prescribed in the Cargo Guidelines, no impacts from these facilities are anticipated. The new and replacement cargo facilities between Aviation and Sepulveda Boulevards would represent infill development and an intensification of cargo uses in an area with dominant industrial character and no notable aesthetic resources. It is expected that the new facilities would present a higher quality and more cohesive image than under current conditions and would have little contrast with adjacent commercial and industrial uses. Furthermore, no valued focal or panoramic views would be obstructed in both of these areas. As such, no significant aesthetic or view impacts are expected.

Under Alternative A, the Green Line would depart the existing Aviation Avenue Station, cross under the I-105 and over the Imperial Highway, and continue approximately 2,600 feet west on an aerial structure along the north side of the I-105. At a point near Douglas Street, it would continue below grade level to the new West Terminal Area. The Green Line aerial structure would be located on the airport side of the freeway and coordinated with the freeway development. As a primarily subterranean structure, the Green Line would be visible in the Imperial Highway crossover. This portion of the Green Line would be well integrated with existing transportation systems in the vicinity and, due to higher elevations from vantages to the south, would not block any valued focal or panoramic view. No significant aesthetic or view impacts from the Green Line are expected.

Under Alternative A, the existing On-Site Fuel Farm would be relocated to an area northwest of the Imperial Highway and Sepulveda Boulevard interchange. The 20-acre parcel would contain twelve 100,000-barrel tanks, a 6,000 square-foot office building, 15,000 square-foot fire house, fire water tank and pipeline receipt facilities, and IHP Pumps in a 20,000-square foot area. The fuel tanks would be aboveground with cone-roofed tanks. The tanks, depressed approximately 20 feet from grade level, would be 120-feet wide and 40-feet high; a proposed fire water tank would be 80-feet wide and 50-feet high.

Portions of the tanks would be visible from the intersection of Sepulveda Boulevard and Imperial Highway, from the I-105, and from office and hotel buildings south of Imperial Avenue and west of Sepulveda Boulevard. However, views of the tanks from most vantages would be largely obscured by I-105 support pilings, a Caltrans right-of-way fronting Imperial Highway, and a landscaped setback/buffer area approximately 100-feet wide that is proposed along the site's southern boundary. The landscaped buffer would ensure no deterioration of existing visual quality, and would likely improve views from the southern approach to the airport at the intersection of Sepulveda Boulevard and Imperial Highway. Although portions of the tanks would be visible, they would have little contrast with surrounding cargo and ancillary facilities. Therefore, a significant aesthetic impact is not expected from the proposed On-Site Fuel Farm.

Some of the On-Site Fuel Farm would be visible from hotel and office uses located south of Imperial Highway and east of Sepulveda Boulevard. From these vantage points there are also more long-range scenic views from upper stories. These long-range views would not be blocked or significantly diminished by the proposed On-Site Fuel Farm due to the distance between the sites of more than 450 feet and the substantially higher vantage points to the south. From vantages along Imperial Highway, the On-Site Fuel Farm and new consolidated ancillary facilities proposed further to the west would not have a significant impact on views due to proposed perimeter landscaping and the replacement of older buildings with upgraded facilities.

The new six-level parking/rental car facilities located on the corner of Imperial Highway and Pershing Drive would intensify development in this area. As the southwestern portion of LAX east of Pershing Drive is sparsely developed, the parking/rental car facilities would represent a substantial change from existing baseline conditions. These facilities would be visible from residential properties in El Segundo in the area generally between Loma Vista Street and Pershing Drive. While the new facilities would contrast with existing visual conditions by occupying largely undeveloped open space, the aesthetic quality of the

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area is currently poor, with views primarily of unimproved edge conditions, disturbed ground, roadways, and taxiways. Furthermore, edge conditions along this section of Imperial Highway would be improved with landscaping and an open-space buffer. Consistent with the Street Frontage and Landscape Plan, this buffer would include a greenbelt with trees and other landscaping to shield unsightly views from off-airport residential uses. Scenic long-range views from the vantage points in El Segundo that overlook the site would not be blocked by the new parking/rental car facilities. The facilities would be approximately 40 feet high and below the line of sight from the south. As the new facilities would not detract from an area of valued aesthetic quality and would not block a valued focal or panoramic view, no significant impacts are expected.

Compared to the No Action/No Project Alternative, Alternative A would have greater visual changes due to development of the Green Line extension, the On-Site Fuel Farm, and new parking facilities. These differences between the No Action/No Project Alternative do not however, represent a greater aesthetic or view impact.

### **Western Boundary**

The new West Terminal Area (WTA) facilities would intensify development in this area of the airport. The new terminal would be located on the east side of Pershing Drive approximately half way between Imperial Highway and Westchester Parkway. The WTA would include a two-level passenger processing terminal, a six-level parking structure, terminal concourses, and aircraft parking positions. The new terminal would have four sets of curbfront lanes on two levels between the terminal and the adjacent parking garage. Pershing Drive would be realigned and redesigned to accommodate access to the new terminal. As the southwest portion of the LAX site east of Pershing Drive is sparsely developed, the new WTA and parking facilities would represent a substantial change and contrast from existing baseline conditions. However, aesthetic impacts from vantage points along Pershing Drive and from more distant points north and south of the airport would not be significant because the area does not currently support a high level of visual quality or contain important aesthetic elements.

With the exception of minor changes to existing navigational aids, no development would take place in the dune Habitat Restoration Area, and so views of the dunes and views along the Vista del Mar Scenic Highway would not change. No significant impacts are expected as the new terminal facilities would not detract from a valued aesthetic area or block a valued focal or panoramic view, and the dune areas would remain largely unaffected and retain their existing aesthetic quality.

Alternative A development of new airport facilities in the western boundary area would contrast with the limited changes in this area under the No Action/No Project Alternative. These differences between the No Action/No Project Alternative do not however, represent a greater aesthetic or view impact.

### **Northern Boundary**

To accommodate an airport ring road and easterly extension of runways, residential, rental car, and parking uses north of Arbor Vitae from just east of Airport Boulevard to Sepulveda Boulevard would be redeveloped. Property acquisition in this area would extend the airport boundary northward and create new areas of interface between airport and residential uses. To buffer airport uses from residential areas to the north, most of the area north of the ring road from Bellanca Avenue to Sepulveda Boulevard is proposed for either recreation or open space/landscape buffers. Areas of airport open space proposed on either side of Airport Boulevard would be well-buffered from residential uses. The width of these buffer areas would range from approximately 150 feet to well over 500 feet. Overall, proposed landscaped berms, setbacks, and recreational uses would improve existing aesthetic conditions in this area. Views of airport uses are currently limited to perimeter walls, so no scenic long-range views or valued focal views in these areas would be affected.

The entryway to the airport at the ring road interchange with Sepulveda and Lincoln Boulevards would incorporate substantial areas of landscaped berms and open space. These amenities would enhance the existing aesthetic interface between the airport and commercial uses to the north. No impacts from this airport entryway are anticipated. Visual effects associated with this interchange and other improvements to State Route 1 are further described in Appendix K, *Supplemental Environmental Evaluation for LAX Expressway and State Route 1 Improvements*.

Westchester Southside would involve 2.6 MSF of development, a substantial reduction from the 4.5 MSF proposed under the LAX Northside plans that would be implemented under the No Action/No Project

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Alternative. With the exception of the Westchester Golf Course, which would be retained, development of the site would substantially change visual conditions when compared to existing conditions by converting largely unimproved vacant land to a combination of retail, low-rise office, research and development, hotel, and open space/recreational uses. Much of Westchester Southside borders residential uses to the north and, as a result, there is potential for both aesthetic and view impacts.

As described above under the No Action/No Project Alternative, the LAX Northside project involved an extensive planning and outreach process that lead to approval of the LAX Northside project with the incorporation of extensive [Q] zoning conditions. As part of Alternative A, these [Q] conditions will be incorporated by LAWA into a new LAX Zone/LAX Specific Plan. The provisions of the [Q] conditions will continue to address contemplated development within the LAX Northside/Westchester Southside project to the maximum extent feasible (refer to Master Plan Commitment LU-1, Incorporation of City of Los Angeles Ordinance No. 159,526 [Q] Zoning Conditions for LAX Northside into the LAX Northside/Westchester Southside Project (Alternatives A, B, C, and D)). Many of these conditions address the project's interface with residential uses. Although the LAX Northside Development Project FEIR<sup>757</sup> did not identify the visual and aesthetic impacts of the project as significant, the basis for many of the [Q] conditions were set forth as mitigation in the FEIR. As proposed, Westchester Southside would incorporate these same [Q] conditions that address building setbacks, building heights, and landscaped buffer areas to reduce visual intrusion and avoid obscuring distant views. Consistent with the [Q] conditions, a continuous area of landscaping and open space would be retained between adjacent residential uses. The setbacks, height limitations, and buffer areas set forth in the [Q] conditions, as described under the No Action/No Project Alternative, would preclude impacts on views and aesthetics from most residences to the north.

Although views from the high-rise apartment buildings on the west side of Lincoln Boulevard bordering the site would change, and some views would be blocked by intervening development, existing views of the airport and Westchester Southside property are not considered scenic or of high aesthetic quality as they encompass airport facilities and undeveloped disturbed land. While open areas of the Westchester Southside property in the vicinity of these buildings would become urbanized with light industrial/business park uses, this development would be attractively designed and would incorporate landscaping and landscaped buffer areas that for some would represent an improved visual condition. The contrast between the development and existing conditions, while notable, would not represent a significant aesthetic impact.

Overall, consistent with the conclusions in the LAX Northside Development Project FEIR and with incorporation of applicable [Q] conditions, no significant aesthetic or view impacts are expected with Westchester Southside.

When compared to the No Action/Project Alternative, Alternative A would substantially lower the density of development within Westchester Southside when compared to the LAX Northside Development Project. This reduced density of development under Alternative A could represent to some a more aesthetically pleasing environment.

### LAX Expressway

The Single Viaduct alignment for the LAX Expressway would parallel the I-405 right-of-way between Arbor Vitae Street and the SR-90. In this area, the LAX Expressway would be visible from single- and multi-family homes on Thornburn Street. At present, the setback and creek area are densely landscaped and provide a visual buffer between the freeway and the homes on Thornburn Street. The new LAX Expressway would be located closer to the homes and yards than the existing freeway and could eliminate much of the landscape buffer. Although final design plans for this facility are not available, the closeness of this proposed roadway could impact views from this residential area. Therefore, significant aesthetic and view impacts from the LAX Expressway in the I-405 right-of-way between La Tijera and La Cienega Boulevards are expected.

Additional areas along the I-405 would be subject to visual impacts under both the Single Viaduct and Split Viaduct alignments for the LAX Expressway. Residents on the west side of the I-405 on 74<sup>th</sup> Street and Midfield Avenue, and on the east side of the I-405 along Hyde Park Boulevard, Ash Avenue, and

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<sup>757</sup> Williams-Kuebelbeck & Associates, FEIR LAX North Side Development Project, April 1983.

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Centinela Boulevard would be subject to visual impacts from the LAX Expressway. Churchgoers and students at St. Jerome Church and School on Thornburn Street on the east side of the I-405 would also view the new LAX Expressway. These impacts and associated mitigation are described in Appendix K, *Supplemental Environmental Evaluation for LAX Expressway and State Route 1 Improvements*.

The No Action/No Project Alternative, in comparison to Alternative A, would not include an expressway or the associated potentially significant adverse visual impacts.

### **Construction**

Extensive and widespread construction during the demolition and construction of structures and roadways would create a strong visual contrast in and around the airport. Major areas of construction activity would be focused at the eastern end of the airport at the Continental City project site and in areas to the north, at the West Terminal Area, and along the northern boundary of the airport at Westchester Southside and areas east of Sepulveda Boulevard. Construction would be evident along the Century Boulevard and Sepulveda Boulevard approaches to the airport. Construction activities would also be visible along the southern boundary of the airport, near the Sepulveda Boulevard/Imperial Highway intersection and areas extending east to the I-405.

Areas most exposed and sensitive to views of the construction activities would include: residential and hotel uses along the southern boundary between Sepulveda Boulevard and Pershing Drive; residential areas adjacent to Westchester Southside; residential neighborhoods along the northern boundary east of Sepulveda Boulevard; and, areas along Sepulveda and Century Boulevards, two key approaches to the airport. Although construction would be phased from the time of approval of the LAX Master Plan through 2015, these construction activities would cause areas of the airport environs to have an incomplete, disrupted, and unattractive quality. The short-term aesthetic effects of construction on surrounding uses and airport visitors are considered to be significant. In comparison, the short-term aesthetic effects of construction under the No Action/No Project Alternative would not be as extensive.

### **4.21.6.3 Alternative B - Added Runway South**

#### **Proposed Development**

Under Alternative B, a number of project components would be equivalent or similar to what is proposed under Alternative A. Most notably, Westchester Southside would not change. The CTA as viewed along World Way would not be substantially altered; the dune areas on the west would be retained as open space; and the West Terminal Area and associated parking and rental car facilities, although slightly different in configuration, would be similar to what was proposed under Alternative A.

The primary changes in project development include a new southern, rather than northern runway, a proposed off-site fuel farm, changes in the LAX Expressway right-of-way, and development of the Manchester Square area with a major cargo facility. Land acquisition would increase from 273 acres under Alternative A to 345 acres, with most of the new acquisition in the area bounded by Airport Boulevard to the west, Aviation Boulevard to the east, Arbor Vitae Street to the north, and Century Boulevard to the south. A full description of Alternative B is provided in Chapter 3, *Alternatives*.

#### **Visual Effects**

##### **Century Corridor/Eastern Boundary**

Along the south side of Century Boulevard, Alternative B would replace and add new cargo facilities and ancillary uses. Similar to what was described under Alternative A, the new facilities would be designed in accordance with the Cargo Guidelines, and a landscape buffer area would be retained along the Century Boulevard frontage of these facilities. As proposed, the facilities would not degrade the aesthetic character of the area as viewed from hotel and commercial uses to the north. These environmental effects would be similar to those described under Alternative A, with no significant aesthetic or view impacts expected.

On the north side of Century Boulevard, changes in land use and effects in the area east of Sepulveda Boulevard would be similar to those described under Alternative A, with no resulting aesthetic or view impacts.

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Under Alternative B, the Manchester Square area would be developed with a cargo facility, representing a substantial change from current uses within this primarily residential area. As Manchester Square is largely an isolated pocket of residential development surrounded by industrial and commercial uses, the new facility would be more in character with surrounding development. The new cargo facility would contrast moderately in size with off-airport land use west of La Cienega Boulevard and south of Century Boulevard. The facility would also be located directly south of the City of Inglewood light industrial area, which is distinguished by moderate-sized, well-maintained buildings. The length of the building would front La Cienega Boulevard and would be visible from La Cienega Boulevard, from businesses directly across La Cienega Boulevard and from the San Diego Freeway (I-405).

The Cargo Guidelines include provisions to avoid large, low-rise big box appearance, and to create interest and diversity in views of airport cargo facilities. The Cargo Guidelines would be applied to the cargo facility during architectural design and development, which would reduce potential issues of mass and scale. Cargo Guideline provisions that apply include a rhythmic breakup and three-dimensional modulation of wall surfaces through structural bay expression, projected structural elements, recessed wall openings and landscaping. With application of the Cargo Guidelines and plan provisions for open space/landscape buffers, aesthetic impacts from this facility are considered less than significant.

Proposed cargo development further south along La Cienega Boulevard, would have effects similar to those described above for Alternative A. These facilities would not have a negative aesthetic effect on adjacent industrial and commercial uses, and no valued focal or panoramic views would be blocked or substantially diminished.

Compared to the No Action/No Project Alternative, Alternative B would have greater beneficial visual effects from facility upgrades that would contribute to a more cohesive image in the Century Corridor/Eastern Boundary area.

### **Central Terminal Area**

Changes to the CTA would not alter primary terminal facilities or views along World Way. No alterations to the theme building or air traffic control tower are proposed. As described under Alternative A, changes to pier concourses would not result in significant aesthetic or view impacts. No significant aesthetic or view impacts are expected within the CTA, which is consistent with and similar to the conclusions under the No Action/No Project Alternative.

### **Southern Boundary**

Similar to Alternative A, along Imperial Highway, Alternative B would replace and add cargo facilities, reconfigure ancillary uses, construct parking and rental car facilities at Pershing Drive and Imperial Highway, extend the Green Line, and where feasible place existing overhead utility lines underground. While the location and configuration of these facilities as viewed from vantages to the south would vary from Alternative A, the general character of development and conclusions regarding impacts would not change. One notable change along the southern boundary compared with Alternative A is that the on-site fuel farm proposed near the northwest corner of Sepulveda Boulevard and Imperial Highway would be relocated off-site. Similar to Alternative A, cargo development east of Sepulveda Boulevard would not obstruct valued focal or panoramic views, and the new and upgraded facilities would not significantly contrast with adjacent commercial and industrial uses.

Along Imperial Highway, west of Sepulveda Boulevard, there would be a substantial increase in ancillary facilities and a larger remote parking facility at Pershing Drive. Despite the intensification of development in this area, there would be no aesthetic impacts. The aesthetic quality of this area is currently poor. Plan provisions for Alternative B and application of Street Frontage and Landscape Plan guidelines would provide landscape buffers fronting these new areas of development. As stated for Alternative A, there would be no significant impacts on views because vantage points to the south are substantially elevated and views of aircraft activity and more scenic long-range views over the site would be maintained.

Compared to the No Action/No Project Alternative, Alternative B would have greater visual changes in this area due to development of the Green Line extension and new parking facilities. These differences between the No Action/No Project Alternative do not however, represent a greater aesthetic or view impact.

### **Western Boundary**

Effects on views from the new WTA facilities and minor changes to existing navigational aids would be similar to those described under Alternative A, with no significant view or aesthetic impacts expected. Development of new airport facilities in the western boundary area under Alternative B would contrast with the limited changes in this area under the No Action/No Project Alternative. These differences between the No Action/No Project Alternative do not, however, represent a greater aesthetic or view impact.

### **Northern Boundary**

While the mix and configuration of airport uses along the northern boundary east of Sepulveda Boulevard would change, substantial areas north of the ring road are designated for open space/landscape buffers, recreational uses, and airport open space. One area that is not well buffered exists where the alignment of the ring road is in close proximity to eight apartment buildings located on Morley Street, north of Arbor Vitae Street between Airport and Aviation Boulevards. Plans for Alternative B show little to no landscaped buffer between these residential uses and roadway facilities proposed immediately to the south. Under existing conditions, views from this area to the south are either completely screened by large industrial buildings or exhibit poor visual quality as they are focused on a warehouse yard or a rental car parking lot. Although the change in visual quality and impact on views from the apartment buildings is not considered adverse, the lack of a buffer in this area would conflict with general objectives and specific criteria contained in the Street Frontage and Landscape Plan. Under the discussion of "Airport Buffer Areas," a minimum landscaped setback of 20 feet is indicated for areas along major highways. As the ring road would be considered both a major highway and important approach roadway to the airport, this inconsistency with design guidelines is addressed through Master Plan Commitment LI-1, Ring Road Landscaping (Alternative B). Other than this area, the remaining northern boundary would be well buffered and no aesthetic impacts would occur. Additionally, these areas north of the airport do not support significant focal or long-range scenic views and, as a result, no significant view impacts would occur.

The environmental effects associated with Westchester Southside under Alternative B would be equivalent to effects described under Alternative A. With incorporation of applicable [Q] zoning conditions into a new LAX Zone/LAX Specific Plan, no significant aesthetic or view impacts from Westchester Southside are expected.

Compared to the No Action/No Project Alternative, Alternative B would have more substantial visual change along the northern airport boundary in the areas east of Sepulveda Boulevard. This visual change would not, however, result in significant impacts. Within the Westchester Southside site, development would be of lower density than under the No Action/No Project Alternative, which could represent a more aesthetically pleasing environment.

### **LAX Expressway**

The development of the LAX Expressway in the Caltrans setback between La Tijera and La Cienega Boulevards would create visual discord in the Thornburn Street residential neighborhood as described under Alternative A. One aspect of the LAX Expressway in Alternative B that differs from Alternative A is that the alignment at Florence Avenue would bridge over the I-405 and be elevated within the MTA (railroad) right-of-way along Florence Avenue.

In this area, where the alignment crosses over the I-405, the expressway would be visible from single-family homes on the west side of Midfield Avenue near the intersection of Midfield Avenue and 82<sup>nd</sup> Street. At present, the densely landscaped setback and the higher elevation of the homes provide a visual buffer between the freeway, adjacent roadways, and the homes on Midfield Avenue. The existing densely landscaped setback may provide a visual buffer between the freeway and the homes on Midfield Avenue. However, final design plans for this facility are not available; the closeness and elevation of this proposed roadway may not be adequately screened by existing landscaping and could impact views from this residential area. Therefore, significant aesthetic and view impacts from the LAX Expressway as it bridges over the I-405 at Florence Avenue are expected.

Other areas along the LAX Expressway right-of-way under Alternative B are bordered by industrial uses and, as a result, the visual effects in these areas are not considered to be significant.

The No Action/No Project Alternative, in comparison to Alternative B, would not include the LAX Expressway or the associated potentially significant impacts.

### Proposed Off-Site Fuel Farm Sites

One option under Alternative B is to relocate the fuel farm to the LADWP Scattergood Power Generating Facility site south of Grand Avenue and east of Vista del Mar. The area proposed for the Scattergood Fuel Farm currently contains 4 aboveground, 50-foot high, 180-foot wide storage tanks at a ground elevation of approximately 134 to 136 feet AMSL. The finished elevation of the tanks is approximately 184 to 186 feet AMSL. A landscaped berm varying in elevation from 150 to 153 feet AMSL surrounds the tanks and separates the tanks from Grand Avenue. The westerly base of the berm begins at the approximate 90-foot elevation of Grand Avenue where it rises 60 feet above the road and is 140 horizontal feet deep (to the 152-foot-high crest). At this location the closest tank at the west end of the site is set back approximately 220 feet from the road. Views of the Scattergood site are shown in **Figure F4.21-3**, Photographs O and P.

At the 135-foot elevation of Grand Avenue at the easterly end of the site, the landscaped berm rises approximately 18 feet above the road and is 70 horizontal feet deep (to the 150-foot-high crest). At this point the closest tank (on the easterly end of the site) is 160 feet to the road. The height of the berm, relative to the ground level of the tank pad, the proximity of the viewer to the base of the berm, and the setback of the tanks helps to obscure and soften views of the full mass of the storage tanks from Grand Avenue. The landscaped berm also helps to obscure existing views of the tanks' mass from Vista del Mar and Dockweiler Beach State Park.

Under Alternative B, the existing tanks would be removed and replaced at the Scattergood Fuel Farm facility with 10 fuel tanks 70 feet high and 120 feet wide, a 50 feet high and 80 feet wide water tank, a 62,000-SF retention basin, a parking lot and other related facilities. The berm along Grand Avenue would be removed and replaced with retaining walls of a similar height. The proposed tanks would be buried 10 feet and would reach a finished elevation between 194 to 196 feet AMSL.

The removal of the existing berm would require extensive grading and would significantly alter the appearance of the hillside. Grading would have a temporary effect on views from surrounding uses and a permanent effect on the topography of the site and the line of sight from adjacent roadways. Although detailed plans and a preliminary proposal for grading are needed, it is assumed that with removal of the berm and grading, the line of sight to the tanks would be widened and visual exposure of tank surfaces would increase. As proposed, the base of the 70-foot fuel tanks would be lowered 10 feet below the 134-to 136-foot elevations pad level, resulting in a finished elevation 10 feet higher than the existing 50-foot tanks. The higher tank elevation and the widened line-of-sight would result in greater visibility and incursion into views from southbound Vista del Mar, a designated Scenic Highway; east- and westbound Grand Avenue; Dockweiler Beach State Park; and the coastal bike path.

Another factor affecting the line-of-sight from adjacent roadways and properties would be the greater lot coverage under the proposed development. The ten 120-foot diameter tanks, the 80-foot diameter fire water tank, service structures, and a parking area would develop the site more extensively than under current conditions. This may require the reduction of the existing Grand Avenue setbacks now varying from 220 feet (at the Grand Avenue 90-foot elevation) to 160 feet (at the Grand Avenue 135-foot elevation). The reduction in setbacks would widen the line-of-sight to the tanks from the adjacent roadways and vantages to the west.

The combined effects of greater overall tank visibility, substantial landform alteration, and construction of a sizeable retaining wall would detract from and contrast with the aesthetic quality of the site. Under current conditions, the site is enhanced by a substantial landscaped dune area that serves as a setback/buffer between tank facilities and Grand Avenue. These same aesthetic effects would impinge on views from the Vista del Mar Scenic Highway, Grand Avenue, Dockweiler Beach State Park, and the coastal bike path. Even though the main focus of views from these areas is on coastal and ocean views to the west, the diminished aesthetic quality on this prominent site, visible from these public areas, is considered significant. Impacts on the highway, therefore, are considered to be significant. Vista del Mar is a designated Scenic Highway, and an objective of the Scenic Highways Plan is to provide for the protection and enhancement of views of scenic features within, or visible from, Scenic Corridors, without mitigation.

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In addition to aesthetic impacts, the increase in height tank and the potential reduction in setbacks from Grand Avenue may obstruct or diminish ocean views from four residential structures in El Segundo on the west side of Loma Vista, south of Grand Avenue. At present, the first four structures in the 200 block of Loma Vista have ocean views. If the setback from Grand Avenue is reduced, these ocean views would be encroached upon. This potential view impact is considered significant.

The proposed height increase could also affect more distant, non-ocean views from west-bound Franklin Avenue, an east-west trending residential street in the City of El Segundo. At present, the existing storage tanks are visible at the west end of Franklin Avenue. Located at the crest of a hill, they can be viewed from all west-facing vantages on the street between Concord Avenue and its terminus, west of Loma Vista. Views of the existing 50-foot tanks are partially screened by mature landscaping and trees on the east property boundary; however, the tanks presently rise above the trees. The greater the height of the proposed tanks, the taller the screening is required to achieve the same level of screening.

The relocation of the off-site fuel farm to the oil refinery site south of the airport, the other proposed off-site location, would not introduce a contrasting feature into an aesthetically valued area. The refinery facility is at the south side of El Segundo Boulevard across from Eucalyptus Drive and Arena Street. The site is largely screened from adjacent roadways by berms, landscaping, and topographic features. Aesthetic effects would be less than significant; the site is largely obscured from public view and would not contrast with adjacent industrial development.

The impacts of Alternative B in this area would not occur under the No Action/No Project Alternative, which does not include an off-site fuel farm.

### **Construction**

Impacts from construction activities would be similar to those described under Alternative A, with additional areas of construction at the Manchester Square and Belford sites, and at one of two optional fuel farm sites. The activities at the Scattergood site would be visible from coastal areas and the Vista del Mar Scenic Highway. As concluded under Alternative A, short-term impacts from construction activities would be considered significant, causing areas of the airport environs to have an incomplete, disrupted, and unattractive quality.

Construction impacts associated with Alternative B would be more substantial than under the No Action/No Project Alternative, where the short-term aesthetic effects of construction would not be as extensive.

### **4.21.6.4 Alternative C - No Additional Runway**

#### **Proposed Development**

Under Alternative C, a number of project components would be equivalent or similar to what is proposed under Alternatives A and B. Common features with these two alternatives include an equivalent proposal for the Westchester Southside and retention of the dune areas to the west as open space. Despite a different configuration for the West Terminal Area and associated parking and rental car facilities, the size and location of the uses would be similar to Alternatives A and B. Acquisition would total 216 acres, down from 273 acres under Alternative A, and 345 acres under Alternative B. A full description of Alternative C is provided in Chapter 3, *Alternatives*.

#### **Visual Effects**

##### **Century Corridor/Eastern Boundary**

Similar to the development planned in Alternatives A and B, along Century Boulevard between the CTA and La Cienega Boulevard, Alternative C would replace and add cargo and ancillary facilities. The consolidated and expanded facilities on the south side of Century Boulevard would be buffered from the roadway and from view of hotel and commercial uses to the north. With this buffer and compliance with the Cargo Guidelines, impacts from these facilities would be considered less than significant.

As previously described for Alternative B, the Manchester Square consolidated cargo facility could contrast in mass and scale with off-airport land use east of La Cienega Boulevard and south of Century Boulevard. However, with proposed open space/landscape buffers and application of the Cargo Guidelines, aesthetic impacts from this facility would be less than significant.

### Central Terminal Area

Changes to the CTA would not alter primary terminal facilities or views along World Way. No alterations to the theme building or air traffic control tower are proposed. As described under Alternatives A and B, changes to pier concourses would not result in significant aesthetic or view impacts. No significant aesthetic or view impacts are expected within the CTA. This is similar to the conclusions under the No Action/No Project Alternative.

### Southern Boundary

Similar to Alternatives A and B along Imperial Highway, Alternative C would replace and add cargo facilities, extend the Green Line, and develop a three-level parking structure and rental car facilities at the corner of Imperial Highway and Pershing Drive. While there would be an increase in cargo development near the northwest corner of Sepulveda Boulevard and Imperial Highway, much of the existing ancillary and cargo facilities further to the west along Imperial Highway would be retained. Although areas of open space/landscape buffer would be reduced compared with Alternatives A and B, there would be no significant impacts on aesthetics. The areas proposed for development are not valued for visual quality and the new development would be subject to compliance with the Cargo Guidelines and provisions for Airport Buffer Areas in the Street Frontage and Landscape Plan. The Street Frontage and Landscape Plan calls for a green belt of trees, shrubs, and grass to shield residential properties. Furthermore, Master Plan Commitment DA-3, Undergrounding of Utility Lines (Alternatives A, B, C, and D), would place existing overhead lines underground where feasible. As with Alternatives A and B, no valued focal or panoramic views from areas south of the airport would be affected, and so impacts on views would be considered less than significant. As with Alternatives A and B, no significant aesthetic or view impacts are expected in the southern boundary area.

Compared to the No Action/No Project Alternative, Alternative C would have greater visual changes in this area due to development of the Green Line extension and new parking facilities. These differences between the No Action/No Project Alternative do not, however, represent a greater aesthetic or view impact.

### Western Boundary

Similar to Alternatives A and B, a new WTA and associated public parking would be constructed on the east side of Pershing Drive between Imperial Highway and Westchester Parkway. Expansion of the fuel farm at its current location well within the airfield would not notably change or degrade aesthetic quality in this area. Effects on views and aesthetics would be similar to those with Alternative A, with no significant impacts expected.

Development of new airport facilities in the western boundary area under Alternative C would contrast with the limited changes in this area under the No Action/No Project Alternative. These differences between the No Action/No Project Alternative, however, do not represent a greater aesthetic or view impact.

### Northern Boundary

In areas north of the proposed ring road and east of Sepulveda Boulevard, open space/landscaped buffers occupy most of the area, as true for Alternatives A and B. In contrast with these two alternatives, two employee surface parking areas are proposed, one on each side of Airport Boulevard. The parking area on the west side is extensively buffered from residential uses by a landscaped berm and recreational uses. On the east side, an open space/landscaped buffer is also proposed. These lots would be constructed in accordance with standards and criteria for parking lot areas in the Street Frontage and Landscape Plan. These provisions include minimum 15-foot setbacks from streets, three- to six-foot decorative block walls, and a 4 percent or greater area of landscaping within parking lot interiors. With these provisions and the perimeter buffer areas shown on the plans, no significant aesthetic or view impacts are anticipated, consistent with Alternatives A and B.

The environmental effects of Westchester Southside would be equivalent to those described under Alternatives A and B with no significant aesthetic or view impact expected.

Compared to the No Action/No Project Alternative, Alternative C would have more substantial visual change along the northern airport boundary, primarily in areas east of Sepulveda Boulevard. This visual

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change, however, would not result in significant impacts. Within the Westchester Southside site, development would be of lower density than under the No Action/No Project Alternative, which could represent a more aesthetically pleasing environment.

### **LAX Expressway**

The development of the LAX Expressway in the Caltrans setback between La Tijera and La Cienega Boulevards would create visual discord in the Thornburn Street residential neighborhood resulting in a significant impact. As described in Appendix K, *Supplemental Environmental Evaluation for LAX Expressway and State Route 1 Improvements*, additional areas along I-405 would be subject to visual impacts under both the Single Viaduct and Split Viaduct alignments for the LAX Expressway. The additional areas that would be affected include neighborhoods on the west side of the I-405 along 74<sup>th</sup> Street and Midfield Avenue, and on the east side of the I-405 along Hyde Park Boulevard, Ash Avenue, Centinela Boulevard, and Thornburn Street, as discussed in Appendix K. The No Action/No Project Alternative, in comparison to Alternative C, would not include an expressway or the associated potentially significant impacts.

### **Construction**

As previously described for Alternative A and B, the extensive construction activities during the demolition and construction of structures and roadways, would create a strong visual contrast along the airport perimeters. Short-term impacts from these construction activities would be considered significant, causing areas of the airport environs to have an incomplete, disrupted, and unattractive quality. Construction impacts associated with Alternative C would be more substantial than under the No Action/No Project Alternative, where short-term aesthetic effects would not be as extensive.

## **4.21.6.5 Alternative D - Enhanced Safety and Security Plan**

### **Proposed Development**

A complete description of the facilities associated with Alternative D is provided in Chapter 3, *Alternatives*. The features of Alternative D that are relevant to the analysis of aesthetic and view impacts are summarized herein. Alternative D includes the extension, upgrade, and/or relocation of existing runways; new and reconfigured taxiways; new passenger terminal buildings and a new linear concourse that would replace existing Terminals 1 through 3 and existing CTA parking; a new GTC within the Manchester Square area, an ITC, a consolidated RAC facility, and an APM connecting these facilities to the CTA; limited new and redeveloped cargo facilities along Century Boulevard and Imperial Highway; a number of ancillary facilities; and development of LAX Northside. Property acquisition totaling approximately 77 acres would be required under Alternative D, reduced from 273 acres under Alternative A, 345 acres under Alternative B, and 216 acres under Alternative C. In contrast to the respective elements of the other build alternatives, Alternative D would not include the development of the LAX Expressway or the ring road, nor would it involve relocation of the LAX fuel farm.

### **Visual Effects**

#### **Century Corridor/Eastern Boundary and Continental City**

Under Alternative D, limited new and redeveloped cargo buildings and ancillary facilities would be constructed along the south side of Century Boulevard between Sepulveda and Aviation Boulevards. These facilities would not intensify development along the Century Corridor to the extent expected under Alternative A. Compliance with the Cargo Guidelines would reduce potential visual effects on pedestrians, motorists, and hotel and commercial uses to the north, similar to the other build alternatives. Similar to the other alternatives, Alternative D would include an approximately 50-foot wide continuous landscaped parkway on the south side of Century Boulevard from just east of Aviation Boulevard to the CTA. As such, the new and replacement facilities are expected to enhance the existing aesthetic quality of the area and the function of Century Boulevard as the "Gateway" to the airport. Furthermore, the infill development is not expected to significantly affect valued focal or panoramic views, which would remain accessible from the upper stories of hotels on Century Boulevard. In contrast to Alternatives A and B, acquisition and redevelopment of property on the north side of Century Boulevard just east of Sepulveda Boulevard would not occur.

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Under Alternative D, the Manchester Square area would be developed with the GTC, a group of parallel buildings consisting of two multi-level terminal-like structures, called "piers," adjacent parking facilities ranging from three to five stories, and a commercial vehicle holding area along Arbor Vitae Street. The maximum building heights in this area would be 60 feet. A network of ground-level and elevated access roadways and ramps would be provided throughout the area, along with interstitial pedestrian bridges connecting the piers to the parking structures. Development of the GTC would represent a substantial change from current uses within Manchester Square. However, as this area consists predominantly of an isolated pocket of residences bordered by industrial and commercial uses, the new facilities would be more in character with surrounding development. Efforts to promote the visual compatibility of the GTC with surrounding uses would be undertaken during the architectural design and development phases, in support of LAX Interim Plan objectives. Nonetheless, the new facilities would contrast in size with off-airport land uses to the north, south, and west.

The GTC would be surrounded by landscaped open space that would serve as a buffer for adjacent off-site uses and roadways. Edge and landscape treatments would be provided in compliance with the Street Frontage and Landscape Plan. With observance of applicable design guidelines and plan provisions for open space/landscape buffers, aesthetic impacts from this facility are considered less than significant. Furthermore, as the existing visual quality in portions of the Manchester Square area is low, development of the GTC would generally represent an upgraded condition.

With increased building heights relative to existing residential development, the GTC would be clearly visible from adjacent roadways and properties, as well as from distant, elevated viewpoints. However, the majority of surrounding vantages do not support valued focal or panoramic views due to the generally flat topography and commercial/industrial nature of the immediate area. Views of the GTC from the elevated I-405 freeway to the east would occur, though any resulting view obstruction would be fleeting for motorists traveling at high vehicular speeds, and intervening high-rise development immediately adjacent to I-405 north of Century Boulevard would diminish any potential effects on views. Similarly, I-105 to the south does not support valued views that would be appreciably obstructed by the GTC. Furthermore, the new facilities would not be of sufficient height to figure prominently in views from more distant, elevated vantages to the northwest and southwest. Therefore, no significant view impacts are expected.

South of the GTC, elevated access roadways ranging in height of up to 20 feet above grade would parallel the east side of Aviation Boulevard between Century Boulevard and Imperial Highway, with hook and loop ramps connecting to the surrounding streets. Support pilings would be visible along this segment of Aviation Boulevard. Also within this area, a surface parking lot would be developed on La Cienega Boulevard for remote long-term parking. Extensive open space/landscape areas would buffer these improvements and line all street frontages in this area in compliance with the Street Frontage and Landscape Plan. Replacing existing industrial, commercial, and parking uses, the new facilities would not be incompatible with adjacent commercial and industrial uses. Moreover, vantages from the commercial and industrial buildings adjacent to the eastern end of the site do not support valued focal or panoramic views. As such, no significant aesthetic or view impacts are expected in this area.

Under Alternative D, the Continental City site would be developed with a multi-level ITC and an associated three-level parking structure. Maximum building heights in this area would be approximately 40 feet. The ITC would include a pedestrian bridge with moving walkways connecting to the Green Line Light Rail Transit station across Imperial Highway to the south. This enclosed pedestrian bridge would cross over Imperial Highway and under I-105, with a minimum clearance of approximately 17 feet and a maximum height of approximately 32 feet. The design of the pedestrian bridge would be integrated with that of the adjacent ITC building and would generally exhibit modern design and architectural elements. These facilities would be sensitively designed for functional and visual compatibility with surrounding uses, and appropriate landscape amenities would be provided around the perimeter of the ITC in accordance with applicable guidelines in order to present a cohesive image for the site.

Development of the ITC would upgrade a currently vacant site that has poor visual quality and no valued aesthetic resources. The proposed facilities represent a substantial reduction in development relative to current entitlements for the property of approximately 3.1 MSF of mixed uses and buildings of up to 17 stories. As the facilities would not contrast with or be out of character with adjacent commercial development and transportation infrastructure, no significant aesthetic impacts are expected.

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As with the GTC, views of the ITC would be available from adjacent roadways and properties, the majority of which do not support valued focal or panoramic views. Although views of the ITC would be available from I-405 to the east and I-105 immediately to the south, any resulting view obstruction would be fleeting for motorists traveling at high vehicular speeds and would not affect a considerable portion of the field of view. Furthermore, northerly views of the mountains from I-105 would not be obstructed by the proposed approximately 40-foot high structure since the elevations of I-105 and associated connector ramps in the immediate vicinity of the ITC site range in height from 80 to 167 feet. Additionally, any resulting view obstruction from surrounding roadways would be substantially reduced relative to that expected under the currently entitled Continental City project development due to considerably reduced building heights. Moreover, the new facilities would not be of sufficient height or massing to figure prominently in views from more distant, elevated vantages to the northwest and southwest. Consequently, no significant view impacts are expected.

Throughout the Century Corridor, eastern boundary area, and Continental City property, a state-of-the-art APM and associated infrastructure would be visible. The APM would connect the CTA with the GTC, ITC, and RAC (described below), operating on a fixed dual-lane guideway in a landscaped exclusive right-of-way measuring approximately 50-feet wide. Much of the APM guideway would consist of an elevated concrete structure approximately 24 to 30 feet wide at an elevation of 22 to 24 feet above grade, with the APM cars adding an additional 12 feet of height. The elevated segments of the guideway would have support columns placed approximately 80 to 100 feet on center. The length of the APM trains would vary throughout the day based on demand, though in general the trains would consist of up to six cars, with each car measuring 40 feet or greater in length.

Within the CTA, between the new landside terminal facilities and Sepulveda Boulevard, the APM would run on a subterranean guideway. East of the CTA, a northern east-west APM alignment would transition to above-grade east of Sepulveda Boulevard and would generally follow 98th Street, servicing the RAC then turning south to the ITC, as shown in Figure F3-14, Alternative D - 2015 Enhanced Safety and Security Plan, in Chapter 3, *Alternatives*. South of Century Boulevard, the APM would parallel the GTC access roadways, continuing south to the ITC, the basement level of which would house an APM maintenance service facility. A southern east-west alignment, which would connect the CTA directly to the GTC would extend east from the CTA, cross Sepulveda Boulevard at an elevation (to the top of the guideway) of approximately 30 to 35 feet and would follow Avion Drive or the median between Avion and Century Boulevard. Near the intersection of Century and Aviation Boulevards, this southern alignment would cross over the existing Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) grade-separated right-of-way and split, with one branch reaching a height of 40 feet to the top of the guideway and the split crossing over at a height of 60 feet to the top of the guideway. At each of the APM stations, the guideway lanes would flare around a center platform. The APM alignment is designed to minimize interference with existing facilities and development along Century Boulevard and to preclude conflicts with traffic on surrounding roadways.

The APM would be clearly visible from adjacent roadways and properties, and certain segments, such as the cross-over at Century and Aviation Boulevards, could be visible from high rise buildings in the vicinity as well as more distant, elevated vantages. While development of the APM would introduce a new and unique feature in the project area, it would not require the removal of features that contribute to the valued aesthetic quality of the area, nor would the APM detract from the area's existing aesthetic character. The guideway would have little contrast with adjacent development and infrastructure, including existing warehouse-style cargo facilities, the MTA right-of-way and grade-separated overpass, the proposed GTC elevated access roadways, and surrounding parking facilities and airfield improvements. In several areas, such as along Aviation Boulevard south of Century Boulevard, the poor visual quality evident under existing conditions would be upgraded by the improvements. The APM would be designed to promote the Southern Californian landscape theme evident in the CTA and the Century Corridor, with extensive landscape amenities provided in accordance with the Street Frontage and Landscape Plan. APM landscaping would complement existing visual resources and create a cohesive image throughout the airport property. Along most of its alignment, the height of the APM guideway would be shorter than surrounding mid- and high-rise buildings, and thus would not create a vertical visual discord. Additionally, the spacing of the support columns would reduce the visual bulk or massing of the guideway, thereby retaining the visual openness and boulevard character of the Century Corridor. As such, significant aesthetic impacts would not be expected in conjunction with the APM.

As discussed above, the majority of surrounding vantage points do not support valued focal or panoramic views. Views of the APM from the I-105, as well as from nearby high-rises and distant, elevated vantages would be available intermittently; however, the shorter height of the APM guideway relative to adjacent facilities would limit the potential for view obstruction. The guideway would not be of sufficient height or massing to figure prominently in views from distant locations. Consequently, no significant view impacts are expected.

Compared to the No Action/No Project Alternative, Alternative D would involve more extensive visual changes in the Century Corridor and eastern boundary area due to development of Manchester Square and introduction of the APM. These differences would not, however, represent a greater aesthetic or view impact. Improvements south of Century Boulevard would be similar under both alternatives, and Alternative D would substantially lower the density of development within the Continental City property, which could be considered more aesthetically pleasing to some individuals. Alternative D would also result in more extensive facility and landscape upgrades, supporting a more cohesive image for the site.

### Central Terminal Area

As part of Alternative D, new passenger terminal buildings would replace the existing parking garages within the CTA, and a new linear concourse would replace existing Terminals 1 through 3 and a portion of the TBIT. Terminals 4 through 7 would be reconfigured as necessary to improve passenger facilities and integrate the concourses with the new passenger buildings. No modifications to the central theme building or air traffic control tower would occur. Since the existing terminal buildings are primarily designed for function and access and generally lack architectural interest or extensive landscaping, they do not contribute meaningfully to the aesthetic quality of the CTA. As such, their removal would not constitute the loss of valued visual resources. The reconfigured Terminals 1 through 4, which would be a maximum of five levels each, would connect via pedestrian bridges to the existing southern concourses and the new north linear concourse, which would comprise a maximum of three levels. These new facilities, while also designed for functionality, would likely incorporate more modern design elements, greater architectural articulation, and more extensive landscape amenities than present under existing conditions, consistent with the CTA's Southern Californian landscape theme. Thus, the new facilities would represent an aesthetic improvement within the CTA and would promote the airport's image as a Gateway to the City of Los Angeles. Significant aesthetic impacts would not occur.

The reconfigured terminal facilities would not affect views from within the CTA, since views of the airfield and adjacent areas are currently blocked by the existing terminals. While the proposed CTA changes would be visible from off-airport areas to the north, the gate positions and associated parked aircraft would continue to be the most visible features from off-site, the visual nature of which would not change substantially. The terminal facility building heights could potentially be approximately 20 to 30 feet taller than the existing structures; however, given the distance to off-site vantages to the north and south, long-range views would not be affected. Significant impacts to views would not result.

Additional CTA improvements proposed as part of Alternative D include a new West Satellite Concourse immediately west of the TBIT, a subterranean APM connecting the West Satellite Concourse to the TBIT, and the demolition of existing Terminal 8. The West Satellite Concourse would measure approximately 1,900 feet long by 120 feet wide and would be consistent in design and function with surrounding terminal facilities. It would replace several existing maintenance hangars and would not be of sufficient height to obstruct long-range views from off-site. The removal of Terminal 8 could potentially open up views from some on- and off-site vantages. Airfield improvements would include the extension, upgrade, and/or relocation of existing runways and new and reconfigured taxiways. Most notably, Runway 6R/24L would be moved approximately 338 feet to the south in order to provide a parallel taxiway between the north airfield runways. The proposed airfield improvements, while expanding the area in which visible aircraft activity occurs, would not contrast with existing airfield aesthetic conditions or cause view obstruction from off-site vantages. Associated changes in airfield lighting are addressed in Section 4.18, *Light Emissions* (subsection 4.18.6.5). Within the CTA, no significant aesthetic and view impacts would occur.

Under Alternative D, visual improvements with more extensive facility and landscape upgrades would occur compared to the No Action/No Project Alternative, supporting a more cohesive image for the area.

### **Southern Boundary**

Limited replacement and upgraded cargo and ancillary facilities would be developed along Imperial Highway along the southern site boundary, representing little change from the No Action/No Project Alternative plans. The vacant Continental City site, currently characterized by poor visual quality, would be developed with the ITC, the impacts of which are discussed above. Given expectations for quality development and landscape amenities prescribed in the Cargo Guidelines, visual upgrades would likely result and significant impacts would not be anticipated. As under the other alternatives, the replacement facilities would represent infill development that would integrate with existing facilities, resulting in a slight intensification of cargo uses in an area with dominant industrial character and no notable aesthetic resources. It is expected that the new facilities would present a higher quality and more cohesive image than under current conditions and would have little contrast with adjacent commercial and industrial uses. Implementation of Master Plan Commitments DA-1, Provide and Maintain Airport Buffer Areas (Alternatives A, B, C, and D), and DA-3, Undergrounding of Utility Lines (Alternatives A, B, C, and D), would also ensure visual quality by maintaining appropriate landscape buffers and undergrounding utility lines where feasible. Furthermore, no valued focal or panoramic views would be obstructed from the south, particularly from northbound Sepulveda Boulevard, due to intervening topography and the I-105 support pilings. With a distance of about 400 feet to the nearest sensitive receptors to the south, view obstruction affecting such uses would also be minimal. As such, no significant aesthetic or view impacts are expected.

In general, the visual changes resulting from Alternative D would be similar to those expected under the No Action/No Project Alternative, though visual improvements with slightly more extensive facility and landscape upgrades would occur under Alternative D, supporting a more cohesive image for the area.

### **Western Boundary**

Development within the western boundary area would also be somewhat limited under Alternative D. Improvements would include a new four-level employee parking garage immediately south of World Way West near Pershing Drive; new airline maintenance and ground run-up enclosure (GRE) facilities, in addition to a relocated fire station; and the removal of two airline maintenance complexes and the existing remote aircraft gates north of World Way West near Pershing Drive. The existing fuel farm would remain in its current location. Development in this area would not be appreciably intensified as a result, nor would the improvements represent a substantial change or contrast with existing facilities. Similar to the other build alternatives, aesthetic and view impacts from vantage points along Pershing Drive and from more distant points north and south of the airport would not be significant since the area does not currently support a high level of visual quality or contain important aesthetic elements.

The north airfield runways and taxiways would also be improved and extended near the western end of the site. These improvements would represent a continuation and upgrade of existing on-site facilities. The improvements would generally occur at grade level and would not block any valued focal or panoramic view. Additionally, with the exception of changes to existing navigational aids, no development would take place in the Habitat Restoration Area, and views of the dunes and views along the Vista del Mar Scenic Highway would not change. As a result, no significant aesthetic or view impacts are expected.

Alternative D development of new and upgraded airport facilities in the western boundary area would contrast with the limited changes in this area under the No Action/No Project Alternative. These differences with the No Action/No Project Alternative do not, however, represent a greater aesthetic or view impact.

### **Northern Boundary**

Implementation of Alternative D would include the development of the LAX Northside property, as would occur under the No Action/No Project Alternative. For the purpose of this analysis, the proposed site configuration and building density is assumed to be similar to that contemplated under the original LAX Northside Development Project, and new development would be subject to building height restrictions, setback requirements, and landscape guidelines specified in the Design Plan and the new LAX Zone/LAX Specific Plan, which will incorporate relevant provisions from City of Los Angeles Ordinance No. 159,526 and the associated [Q] zoning conditions originally established for LAX Northside (refer to Master Plan Commitment LU-1, Incorporation of City of Los Angeles Ordinance No. 159,526 [Q] Zoning Conditions for

LAX Northside into the LAX Northside/Westchester Southside Project (Alternatives A, B, C, and D), and Section 4.2, *Land Use* (subsection 4.2.6), for further discussion). Based on the proposed reduction in the LAX Northside trip cap that would occur under Alternative D, build out of LAX Northside would be less than the 4.5 million square feet of development that is currently entitled (refer to Chapter 4, *Affected Environment, Consequences and Mitigation Measures* (Analytical Framework section)). The Design Plan and design-related elements of the LAX Zone/LAX Specific Plan are intended to create a visually open appearance and promote design sensitivity to the residential interface. As under the No Action/No Project Alternative, implementation of these design provisions would create an aesthetically pleasing interface, and setbacks and height limits would reduce visual intrusion and the obscuring of distant views. Although views from certain high-rise apartment buildings on the west side of Lincoln Boulevard would change, existing views are not considered scenic or of high aesthetic quality. The contrast between the proposed development and existing conditions, while notable, would not represent a significant aesthetic impact. Consequently, no significant aesthetic or view impacts are expected in LAX Northside.

East of Sepulveda Boulevard, new consolidated RAC facilities would replace existing rental car facilities and long-term parking (Lot C). The RAC facilities would consist of a three-level, approximately 40-foot high, 150,000-square-foot customer service building and an adjacent four-level ready/return garage on the north side of 98<sup>th</sup> Street west of Airport Boulevard, a quick turnaround area (QTA) with cleaning and fueling facilities immediately to the north, and approximately 83 acres of surface parking for vehicular storage and overflow parking. The second level of the customer service building would connect to the APM system via a direct pedestrian bridge. Approximately 15 percent, or about 24 acres, of the RAC site would be dedicated to open space and landscape requirements, with edge treatments provided in accordance with the Street Frontage and Landscape Plan and particular sensitivity to the residential neighborhood to the north. Additionally, the Carl E. Nielsen Youth Park at the north end of the site would remain in place. Since the new facilities would be similar in nature to those now existing, a substantial change in visual character, and thus in views of the site, would not be expected. The new facilities would likely incorporate more modern design elements and architectural interest than the existing structures, and therefore, would represent an aesthetic improvement. While the new RAC facilities would include structures with taller building heights than currently exist in this area, scenic views from surrounding vantages would not be affected, as valued focal or panoramic views are limited by the generally flat topography. Furthermore, the facilities would not significantly alter existing views of rental car facilities and surface parking afforded from the upper stories of hotels on Century Boulevard. Significant aesthetic and view impacts would not be expected.

The visual changes expected at LAX Northside under Alternative D would be similar to, or less than, those of the No Action/No Project Alternative, depending on the ultimate nature and extent of build out development that would occur under the reduced trip cap. Greater visual changes would occur east of Sepulveda Boulevard due to development of the RAC facilities, however, these differences do not represent a greater aesthetic or view impact.

### **Construction**

Extensive and widespread construction during the demolition and construction of structures and roadways would create a strong visual contrast in and around the airport. Major areas of construction activity would be focused within the CTA; at the eastern end of the airport along Aviation Boulevard, within the Manchester Square area, and at the Continental City project site; along the northern boundary of the airport at LAX Northside; and east of Sepulveda Boulevard along 98<sup>th</sup> Street. Construction would be evident along the Century Boulevard and Sepulveda Boulevard approaches to the airport. Construction activities would also be visible along the southern boundary of the airport, near the Sepulveda Boulevard/Imperial Highway intersection and areas extending east to the I-405.

Areas most exposed and sensitive to views of the construction activities would include: residential areas adjacent to LAX Northside; residential neighborhoods along the northern boundary east of Sepulveda Boulevard; residential and hotel uses along the southern site boundary along Imperial Highway west of Sepulveda Boulevard; and areas along Sepulveda and Century Boulevards, two key approaches to the airport. Although construction would be phased from the time of approval of the LAX Master Plan through 2015, these construction activities would cause areas of the airport environs to have an incomplete, disrupted, and unattractive quality. The short-term aesthetic effects of construction on surrounding uses and airport visitors are considered to be significant. In comparison, the short-term aesthetic effects of construction under the No Action/No Project Alternative would not be as extensive.

### **4.21.7 Cumulative Impacts**

As discussed in subsection 4.21.3, *Affected Environment/Environmental Baseline*, LAX is located just east of the Pacific Ocean within a broad coastal plain that is surmounted by rising land to the south and north, with more level terrain extending to the east. With the exception of the open coastal and ocean expanse to the west, the airport is surrounded by heavily urbanized development.

#### **4.21.7.1 No Action/No Project Alternative**

Under the No Action/No Project Alternative, taxiway improvements and new parking and cargo facilities would add new development to the LAX site. Little contrast would be expected between new and upgraded facilities. The new facilities would not block valued focal or panoramic views. New development implemented in accord and with current guidelines, and ongoing improvements under the LAX Beautification Enhancements Program, would be beneficial and would not contribute to cumulative impacts. After acquisition and relocation activities, the Manchester Square and Belford areas would remain vacant, in strong contrast to existing surrounding development, if measures are not taken by LAWA to attractively screen or otherwise improve the property. Implementation of the LAX Northside and Continental City projects would develop currently vacant land. On the northern edge of LAX Northside, building setbacks and height restrictions, landscaped setbacks, and a number of [Q] conditions would buffer the development from areas to the north while maintaining views in key areas. The Continental City project would upgrade a currently vacant site that has poor visual quality and no valued aesthetic resources. It would not contrast or be out of character with adjacent commercial development, and would not block valued views.

The most sizeable related project in the immediate vicinity is the Playa Vista project. Combined with development of LAX Northside, the Playa Vista project would change the visual character of the area with large areas of unimproved open space being converted to development. This loss of undeveloped land could be considered an adverse cumulative impact for some viewers; however, much of the land being converted is unimproved and highly disturbed, and new development with landscaped amenities and upgrading of wetland areas within the Playa Vista project could represent an improved visual condition to viewers.

#### **4.21.7.2 Alternatives A, B, and C**

As previously discussed under subsection 4.21.6, *Environmental Consequences*, overall, changes in visual conditions from implementing Alternatives A, B, or C would be beneficial, with only limited areas experiencing impacts on aesthetic quality and views. The aesthetic quality of the built environment at LAX is expected to improve through redeveloped existing facilities, new facilities, and landscape amenities that would present a more unified and cohesive image than is evident today. Long-range scenic views from areas to the north and south of the airport and from high-rise hotels along Century Boulevard would be preserved. While Alternatives A, B, or C would develop the currently vacant LAX Northside site, the uses proposed adjacent to existing neighborhoods would, through design and compliance with project conditions, be of a compatible scale and setback and buffered to prevent adverse aesthetic impacts. Although the proposed West Terminal Area and associated parking and rental car facilities would substantially intensify development in this area of the airport, no valued visual resources or scenic views would be affected by this project component.

For Alternative B, the fuel farm site located on a portion of the Department of Water and Power Scattergood Power Generating Facility could introduce contrasting features into an aesthetically valued area and diminish views from adjacent residences. Significant impacts associated with the proposed right-of-way for the LAX Expressway would occur under Alternatives A, B, and C. With each of these alternatives, construction activities would cause the site to have a temporarily incomplete, disrupted, and unattractive quality. Through Master Plan design features, regulatory compliance, and mitigation measures, the proposed action's significant impacts on views and aesthetics associated with these alternatives would be reduced to less than significant levels and overall visual improvement to the area would result.

For other independent projects in the area, such as the Playa Vista project, the mitigation set forth in environmental documents and project compliance with adopted plans and regulations would support reasonable standards for urban development. The cumulative loss of vacant land associated with

Alternatives A, B, or C and the Playa Vista project may or may not represent a negative visual impact, depending on the subjective perception of the viewer. This is due to the highly disturbed nature of much of this area, the provision of landscaped amenities with new development, and the enhancement of large areas of degraded wetlands.

Considering that Alternatives A, B, or C would have an overall beneficial effect on visual quality by redeveloping the site and providing landscape amenities, the contribution of Alternative A, B, or C to significant cumulative impacts would be less than significant. Temporary construction activities associated with these alternatives and other future concurrent projects would, however, create visual discord and result in a temporary significant cumulative impact.

### 4.21.7.3 Alternative D - Enhanced Safety and Security Plan

The overall changes in visual conditions under Alternative D would be positive, and only limited aesthetic and view impacts would occur in conjunction with construction activities. A more unified and cohesive image throughout the airport property would result from the proposed improvements, enhancing the built environment at LAX and maintaining long-range scenic views of and across the site. While the currently vacant LAX Northside site would be developed, the uses proposed adjacent to existing neighborhoods would, through design and compliance with project conditions, be of a compatible scale and set back and buffered to prevent significant aesthetic impacts. However, construction activities would cause the site to have a temporarily incomplete, disrupted, and unattractive quality. With implementation of the Master Plan commitments and mitigation measures, in addition to adherence to applicable regulations, development standards, and guidelines, impacts on views and aesthetics associated with Alternative D would be less than significant.

For other independent development projects in the area, the mitigation set forth in environmental documents and project compliance with adopted plans and regulations would support reasonable standards for urban development. The cumulative loss of vacant land associated with Alternative D and the Playa Vista project may or may not represent a negative visual impact, depending on the subjective perception of the viewer. This is due to the highly disturbed nature of much of this area, the provision of landscaped amenities with new development, and the enhancement of large areas of degraded wetlands. Considering that Alternative D would have an overall beneficial effect on visual quality, the contribution of Alternative D to significant cumulative impacts would be less than significant. Temporary construction activities associated with Alternative D and other future concurrent projects would, however, create visual discord and result in a temporary significant cumulative impact.

### 4.21.8 Mitigation Measures

Potential significant project impacts identified for the build alternatives consist of temporary visual impacts associated with construction activities and, for Alternatives A, B, and C, impacts from the construction of the LAX Expressway along the I-405 right-of-way. Potential impacts are also associated with one of the two off-site fuel farm locations proposed for Alternative B. The following mitigation measures are recommended to reduce these impacts.

#### ◆ **MM-DA-1. Construction Fencing (Alternatives A, B, C, and D).**

Construction fencing and pedestrian canopies shall be installed by LAWA to the degree feasible to ensure maximum screening of areas under construction along major public approach and perimeter roadways, including Sepulveda Boulevard, Century Boulevard, Westchester Parkway, Pershing Drive, and Imperial Highway west of Sepulveda Boulevard. Along Century Boulevard, Sepulveda Boulevard, and in other areas where the quality of public views are a high priority, provisions shall be made by LAWA for treatment of the fencing to reduce temporary visual impacts.

#### ◆ **MM-DA-2. LAX Expressway View Analysis (Alternatives A, B, and C).**

As part of final design for the LAX Expressway, a view analysis shall be undertaken by LAWA to address aesthetic impacts on residential and other view sensitive properties. The view analysis shall document proposed roadway elevations, setbacks, and landscaped buffer areas, determining the extent to which existing views from residential and other view sensitive properties would be degraded. As a performance standard, project design features or conditions of approval shall ensure that the LAX Expressway is attractively screened from the view of significantly impacted properties to an equivalent or greater level than provided by existing landscaping or other intervening structures that

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screen views to the I-405. Screening shall be achieved through measures that may include, but shall not be limited to, decorative block walls and landscaped greenbelts.

### ◆ **MM-DA-3(a). Scattergood Visual Effects (Alternative B).**

Prior to approval of fuel farm plans for the Scattergood site and based on more detailed development and grading plans, LAWA shall complete a visual survey to determine the following:

- ◆ Existing views of the ocean and of the tank site from residences on Loma Vista Avenue.
- ◆ The effects of the planned development on existing views from residences on Loma Vista including staking of maximum tank heights.
- ◆ The line-of-sight and exposed tank surface area (including the 50-foot fire water tank) of the existing and proposed facility, from east- and west-bound Grand Avenue, south-bound Vista del Mar, west-bound Franklin Avenue (City of El Segundo), Dockweiler State Beach, and the South Bay Bicycle Trail located west of Vista del Mar.
- ◆ The changes to the site topography and tank exposure affected by the removal of the existing berm.

### ◆ **MM-DA-3(b). Scattergood Visual Effects (Alternative B).**

The visual survey shall specify measures to be implemented by LAWA which shall maintain or enhance the visual quality of the site and reduce to a less-than significant level visual impacts on views from Vista del Mar, Dockweiler State Beach, the regional bike path, Franklin Street, Grand Avenue, and affected residential uses on Loma Vista. Performance standards include:

- ◆ Avoiding view blockage from primary windows and viewing areas of adjacent homes; or, if not feasible, achieving a less than 10 percent diminishment of existing ocean views.
- ◆ Ensuring no net increase in surface tank exposure to views from Vista del Mar, Dockweiler State Beach, the regional bike path, Franklin Street, and Grand Avenue.
- ◆ Achieving an equivalent or greater level of aesthetic quality than currently exists on the site as viewed from public vantage points.

To achieve these performance standards, LAWA actions shall include but not necessarily be limited to the following:

- ◆ Placement of the proposed facilities to prevent incursion into existing ocean views.
- ◆ The use of contour grading to enhance the dune natural appearance of the site.
- ◆ Development of site topography to reduce the visual exposure of the fuel tanks and facilities from key vantage points.
- ◆ Reduction in the proposed height of individual fuel tanks to reduce visual exposure from key vantage points and avoid screening of existing ocean views.
- ◆ Provision of setbacks from Grand Avenue and from the northern property line equivalent to, or greater than, what exists.
- ◆ Installation of dense landscaped buffers along Grand Avenue and in other areas of the site to screen the industrial facilities from key vantage points along Vista del Mar and to the west.
- ◆ Development of walls or berms combined with landscaping for screening.
- ◆ Subtle coloring of the tanks and on-site structures consistent with earth tones.
- ◆ Verification of achievement of the performance standards prior to initiation of facility operations.

### **4.21.9 Level of Significance After Mitigation**

With implementation of the recommended mitigation measures, the aesthetic and view impacts associated with Alternatives A, B, C, and D would be reduced to less than significant levels.