

## Appendix B

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### Visual Impact Assessment

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**DRAFT**

**Visual Impact Assessment  
for the  
Marisol Project**

*Prepared for:*

**Zephyr Partners**  
700 2nd Street  
Encinitas, California 92024  
*Contact: Jim McMenamin*

*Prepared by:*

**DUDEK**  
605 Third Street  
Encinitas, California 92024  
*Contact: Josh Saunders, AICP*

**NOVEMBER 2019**



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### ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Acronym/Abbreviation	Definition
3-D	three dimensional
amsl	above mean sea level
City	City of Del Mar
Specific Plan	Marisol Specific Plan

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# **1 INTRODUCTION**

## **1.1 Purpose of the Visual Impact Assessment**

This study serves as an independent visual impact assessment for the proposed Marisol Specific Plan Initiative and subsequent project approvals (Project). The purpose of this study is to evaluate Project impacts to existing ocean views, neighborhood character, landform alteration, and architectural and development features to ensure compatibility with the surrounding neighborhood characteristics and the City of Del Mar (City) development regulations.

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## 2 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Plan Area includes approximately 17.45 acres of land, located at Border Avenue and west of Camino Del Mar, as well as a portion east of Camino Del Mar, in the northwestern corner of the City of Del Mar (see Figure 1, Project Location). The Plan Area is comprised of 16.55 acres of privately owned land, 0.78 acres of public right-of-way along Camino Del Mar, and a 0.12-acre City coastal viewing access parcel located at the northern extent of the Plan Area. The Specific Plan Area would be accessible from the intersection of South Sierra Avenue and Border Avenue on the northern side of the Plan Area.

The Project is a specific plan that includes five land use sub-designations: Visitor Serving Accommodations (VSA), Parkland/Passive Open Space (PPOS), Coastal Bluff Protection Area (CBPA) and Steep Slope Protection Area (SSPA). Land use sub-designations are illustrated on Figure 2a, Land Use Plan. The VSA land use sub-designation allows for the development of approximately 65 resort guest rooms, 31 villas (some of which may be used as resort guest rooms when not in use by owners, subject to provisions in the Specific Plan), 10 lower-cost shared visitor-serving accommodations, 22 affordable housing units, and associated amenities. Amenities include, but are not limited to, restaurants, bar/lounge, special event space, meeting space, swimming pools, a spa and fitness center and retail. Details of the Specific Plan land use concepts are illustrated on Figure 2b, Conceptual Site Plan.

The PPOS land use sub-designation allows for public amenities such as trails, vista points, picnic areas, public access stairway and public restrooms, and passive recreational uses. Passive recreational uses are defined in the Specific plan as low intensity recreational activities that require little or no infrastructure and that are geared toward the viewing and appreciation of scenic and environmentally sensitive areas.

The CBPA and SSPA land use sub-designations serve as protection areas. The only disturbance allowed within the CBPA is the minimal amount necessary to install drainage control measures to protect a coastal bluff area from degradation and/or erosion. Shoreline protection devices are prohibited in this area. The only disturbance allowed within the SSPA is the minimal amount necessary to provide a public access stairway, public restrooms, and related facilities for hotel and public visitor services at the toe of slope; to implement drainage control measures to protect the steep slope area from degradation and/or erosion; and to allow interpretive signage and pathway lighting.

Development of the Project site would also include the implementation of a site lighting plan, fencing plan, signage plan, and general planting plan. See Figure 3, Conceptual Lighting Plan, Figure 4, Conceptual Fencing, Figure 5, Conceptual Signage, and Figure 6, Conceptual Planting Plan.

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The Specific Plan establishes development standards and design guidelines that regulate land uses and development of property within the Specific Plan Area. Development standards pertinent to visual resources include density, setbacks and buffers, height, open space areas and landscape and lighting. Table 1 identifies specific development standards that will inform the visual characteristics of the Project.

**Table 1**  
**Summary of Development Standards Pertinent to Visual Resources**

Issue Area	Development Standard
Maximum density	4 dwelling units per acre (applies to VSA land use designation)
Setback Buffer from Top of Bluff	The greater of 40 feet (per City of Del Mar Municipal Code Section 30.55.080); or in accordance with the factor of safety as recommended by the geotechnical engineers (see subsections A through C below)
Maximum height	46 feet from natural grade <sup>1</sup> ; 1-3 stories
Minimum percentage of open space within the Specific Plan area	35%
Landscaping	Landscaping within the VSA and POS land use designations shall be composed of drought-tolerant vegetation and/or native plants defined as those indigenous to the southwestern United States.  All existing on-site invasive, exotic (non-native) plant species shall be removed,
Lighting	Limited to (1) accent lighting (1 to 5 foot candles; located low to ground or in locations out of sight), (2) architectural lighting (5 to 10 foot candles; intended to illuminate certain structures and walls), (3) pathway lighting (1 to 5 foot candles; intended to frame any emergency access or pedestrian pathways), and (4) roadway lighting (to illuminate driving surfaces within the VSA land use; maximum pole height of 26 feet).  Lighting that is adjacent to open space areas shall be directed away from those areas. When necessary, lighting shall be adequately shielded to protect open space areas from spill over or night lighting.

<sup>1</sup> Buildings shall be terraced to maximize preservation of coastal views for residents and visitors of the hotel; maximum height of buildings shall be in accordance with Figure 3-8, Building Height, of the Specific Plan.

Site Design, Architectural and Landscaping Guidelines are included in the Specific Plan. Regarding Site Design, proposed buildings would be sited so that the low intensity structures are located closest to the bluff to provide edge treatment and preserve views and open space. Further, the placement of buildings should consider organic, undulating edges that follow the natural topography in order to achieve a design that preserves views and open space (Dudek 2019). Architectural guidelines envision a coastal-inspired architectural character that blends harmoniously with the character of existing surrounding development and coastal bluff. In addition, the design of the Project emphasizes horizontal elements over vertical ones to tie the buildings to the landscape. Lastly, architectural styles would implement a coastal-inspired architectural character including a mix of contemporary materials and styles that mimic natural materials. The colors of materials consist of warm, natural tones and may include the following materials: wood siding/rain screen, terra-cotta rain screen, synthetic wood composite, and cementitious composite siding.

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Guidelines for Building Orientation, Scale, and Exterior Materials and Finishes are included within the Architectural Guidelines. For example, buildings should be placed, oriented, and spaced to preserve important vistas from, to, and over the site. Buildings should also follow the natural contours of the site. Regarding scale and height, the Specific Plan Area may have a combination of one-, two-, and three-story structures, with the highest structures setback from the Specific Plan Area boundary. Architectural finish materials should consist of natural and/or “natural looking” material sources that are durable and suitable for the coastal environment and compatible with the VSA’s architectural character. Roofing materials may include polyvinyl chloride (PVC) membrane roofing, thermoplastic polyolefin (TPO) membrane roofing, recycled rubber tile, metal tile, clay tile, slate. In addition, proposed roofs would be light-colored “cool roofs” to follow best practices for minimizing solar heat gain into buildings. Siding materials may include steel, stone veneer, cast stone, fiber cement, exterior insulation finish systems, treated wood, solid naturally decay-resistant wood, masonry and concrete. Ground plane finishes may include architecturally exposed cast-in-place concrete (Type 3 “warm” cement) with sand finish or form liners, cement plaster in natural colors, stone or wood. Lastly, glazing/glass should be extensive to capture the expansive ocean views. Further, glass specifications should be highly transparent, low reflectivity, with little to no color tinting, while also meeting California Building Code standards.

Regarding landscaping, a Mediterranean and coastal California plant palette is encouraged throughout the Specific Plan Area to combine drought tolerance with aesthetic impact. In addition, the overall landscape palette should feature native plant species to unify the Specific Plan Area with the surrounding landscape. Landscaping should predominantly use drought-tolerant, native plants that require minimum irrigation and maintenance. Lastly, a variety of colors and textures of plants, foliage, bark, and flowers should be used to create a visually stimulating environment.

For purposes of this analysis, future buildings along the northern and eastern perimeter of the site (i.e., those most likely to be visible by receptors in the surrounding area) were assumed to be two- to three- stories in height with terraces on the upper floors and flat rooflines. For purposes of this analysis, building materials for the ground floors and upper floors of development included natural appearing wood, and highly transparent glass was assumed for building elevations and along building terraces. As indicated in the Specific Plan, development was assumed to follow the contours of the site and as such, Project buildings would appear at a greater scale in the central and western portion of the site than in the eastern portion. In addition to the shrubs described above and identified on Figure 4-9 of the Specific Plan, the installation of flowering shrubs and regular to irregularly spaced trees on the Project site and specifically, at the main Project entrance off Border Avenue, along the northern property line and along the eastern property line was assumed.

### **2.1 Zoning and Land Use Designations**

The Project site is zoned R1-14 (Modified Low Density) and R1-40 (Very Low Density) (see Figure 7, Zoning). The City's 1985 Community Plan designates the Project site as Very Low Residential Density (City of Del Mar 1976). The Project proposes to redesignate the site as "Marisol Specific Plan" land use category and rezone the site as "MSP (Marisol Specific Plan)". Surrounding land is zoned Public Parkland to the south, R1-40 (Very Low Density) to the north, Beach Commercial to the northeast along Highway 101, and Floodway to the east.

### **2.2 Regulatory Framework**

#### **2.2.1 Federal**

There are no federal regulations or policies pertaining to visual resources that are applicable to the Project or Project site.

#### **2.2.2 State**

##### **California Coastal Act**

Adopted by the state legislature in 1976, the California Coastal Act (CAA) established the State Coastal Commissions to oversee the long-range planning and development of coastal areas. In addition, the CAA established resource planning and management policies applicable to lands within the Coastal Zone. Management policies pertaining to development (Article 6) are applicable to the Project and Project site.

Section 30251, Scenic and Visual Qualities, of the CAA, states "the scenic and visual qualities of coastal areas shall be considered and protected as a resource of public importance" (Public Resources Code Division 20, Chapter 3, Article 6, Section 30251). Further, permitted development "shall be sited and designed to protect views to and along the ocean and scenic coastal areas, to minimize the alteration of natural land forms, to be visually compatible with the character of surrounding areas and where feasible, to restore and enhance visual quality in visually degraded areas."

##### **State Scenic Highway Program**

California's Scenic Highway Program was created by the Legislature in 1963. Its purpose is to preserve and protect scenic highway corridors from change, which would diminish the aesthetic value of lands adjacent to highways. There are no designated or eligible scenic highways in the area listed in the California Scenic Highway Program in the proposed Project area.

### 2.2.3 Local

#### City of Del Mar Community Plan

The City's Community Plan, also known as a General Plan, is its "constitution for development" (City of Del Mar 1976). The Community Plan includes multiple elements including elements related to environmental management, transportation, community development, housing and recreation. According to the Community Plan, Del Mar (and the coastal communities of Carlsbad, Leucadia, Encinitas, Cardiff, and Solana Beach) are characterized by scenic stretches of coastal beaches, picturesque sea cliffs, flat-topped coastal areas, steep mesa bluffs, broad level-floored stream valleys, and gently rolling hills (City of Del Mar 1976). The Project site is located within the North Bluff District of the City of Del Mar. According to the Community Plan, the North Bluff District includes a four-acre city-owned natural preserve, two residential estates and vacant parcel of land planned for modified low-density residential land use.

Applicable policies of the Del Mar Community Plan related to visual resources and the character of development include the following:

- Limit building height to two stories in all residential areas, prohibit three-story facades, and encourage single story development in areas where two-story construction would be disruptive to neighborhood character and scale of development.
- Strengthen height controls to protect scenic vistas from both private and public areas. Construction in areas of view sensitivity should require design approval to ensure protection, in an equitable manner, or the right to view scenic vistas from both near and far.
- Encourage harmonious development which is in scale with the character of existing development.

On page 66 of the Community Plan, a figure titled "Community Development Plan" designates the Project site as Very Low Density.

On page 69, the Community Plan identifies the Project site within the bluffs, slopes and canyon preserve areas map. These areas are identified as having special conservation sensitivities, and the Community Plan includes the following General Criteria for the evaluation of future development within areas of bluffs, slopes and canyons:

1. Encourage one story, wood frame construction in order to maximize the seismic resistance of structures, preserve views and preserve the open space appearance of the areas from a distance.
2. Protect steep slopes by prohibiting construction or grading within 20 feet of the top and ten feet of the bottom of substantial slopes exceeding 25 percent grade. No structures shall over such slopes of setbacks.

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3. Harmonize construction and landscaping with the natural as well as the man-made environment, and ensure that the protection of the natural values of the landscape take precedence over architectural values.
4. Require that future development not obstruct scenic views from public streets, roads, or pedestrian trails.

For non-residential area criteria, the following General Criteria is established:

1. Ensure that future development is sensitive to bluff, lagoon, and ocean views, and blends with the open character of the land.
2. Limit development to low intensity uses that maintain a low profile character and are of low mass and lot coverage (10 to 20 percent).

### **City of Del Mar Municipal Code**

According to the City of Del Mar Zoning Map (City of Del Mar 1988), the Project site is located in the City's Coastal Bluff Overlay Zone. Allowable uses within the Coastal Bluff Overlay Zone include those allowed by the underlying zone. Regarding development within the overlay zone, "no building, improvement, structure, or portion thereof shall be erected, constructed, converted, established, altered or enlarged; nor shall any lot or premises be excavated or graded for any purpose including, but not limited to, in-ground structures such as swimming pools or spas; nor shall clearance of vegetation occur until both a Conditional Use Permit and a Coastal Development Permit are obtained from the Planning Commission" (City of Del Mar Municipal Code Section 30.55.070). A minimum 40-foot setback from the top edge of the coastal bluff is also established for development on lands within the Coastal Bluff Overlay Zone.

Chapter 23.51, Trees, Scenic Views, and Sunlight, acknowledges that scenic views of the Pacific Ocean, nearby lagoons, canyons, the community and its landscapes and urban forest character, or other scenic vistas, "produce a variety of significant and tangible benefits for residents, property owners and visitors" (City of Del Mar Municipal Code Section 23.51.010[C]). The municipal code defines scenic views as views of the ocean, lagoons, canyons, the community and its landscapes and urban forest character, or other scenic vistas, from the Primary Living Area of a residence. Further, the municipal code establishes a process for private property owners to seek restoration and preservation of their scenic views as follows:

"A person shall have the right to seek restoration and preservation of Scenic Views or Sunlight that existed at the time they purchased or occupied a property or in the last ten years, whichever is shorter, when such Scenic Views from the Primary Living Area, or Sunlight available to the Primary Living Area or solar energy system of a residence, have subsequently been unreasonably obstructed by the growth of Trees or Vegetation located within the Del Mar City limits and 300 feet of the Applicant's property boundary."



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The procedure for resolving a conflict between Trees, Scenic Views, and Sunlight is described in Section 23.51.040 – Procedure – of the municipal code. Standards for Determining Unreasonable Obstruction are established in Section 23.51.050.

Chapter 23.50 specifically references the preservation of natural vegetation, including tree species. The code establishes that Monterey Cypress (*Cupressus macrocarpa*), Torrey Pine (*Pinus torreyana*) and all species of trees located within the Central Commercial zone and the environmentally sensitive Open Space Overlay zone are of particular significance to the City, and should therefore be protected to conserve the environmental qualities of the City. Permits are required to cut, remove, destroy or move a protected tree.

### **City of Del Mar Local Coastal Program Land Use Plan and Implementing Ordinances**

The Coastal Act requires each local jurisdiction along California's coastline to prepare and submit for state certification, a Local Coastal Program for the portion of its areas within a specified Coastal Zone. The Project site is within the City's coastal zone boundary. The following general land use development goals and policies from the City of Del Mar Local Coastal Program Land Use Plan (City of Del Mar 1993) are applicable to the Project site:

- Policy II-1: Maintain the existing small-scale character of the community and permit only one- and two-story, low intensity development with a maximum allowable height of 26 feet.
- Policy II-2: Insure that future development, whether commercial or residential, retains the aesthetic quality of the community by protecting and preserving public views to the ocean and other significant natural resources; and by minimizing the disturbance of natural topography and vegetation.
- Policy III-9a: A minimum of 40 feet from the edge of the coastal bluff top shall be provided in the construction of all principle structures and all accessory structures.
- Policy III-9e: Native and other drought-tolerant plant species shall be utilized in all new bluff top construction projects so as to minimize irrigation requirements and to reduce potential slide hazards due to over watering of the bluffs.
- Policy IV-22: Enhance public improvements along appropriate bluff top areas which provide significant scenic vistas when such improvements are not in conflict with bluff preservation policies.

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The Project site is located in the LCP Land Use Plan's Bluff, Slope and Canyon Overlay Zone. Applicable development review policies of the Bluff, Slope, and Canyon Overlay zone include the following:

- Regulation E (1): In order to preserve viewsheds and the open space appearance of the area from a distance, no structures shall exceed a height of 14 feet as measured pursuant to the provisions of the Del Mar Municipal Code unless it is found that scenic viewsheds and the open space appearance of the areas will be less affected by structures of a greater height.
- Regulation E (2): New development shall be sited and designed to minimize grading and alteration of natural topography and shall be subservient to and complement the natural topography of the area. Protection of the natural values of the surrounding topography and landscape shall take precedence over architectural values.
- Regulation E (7): No primary scenic views or scenic views from public streets or pedestrian trails shall be obstructed unless it is found that there is no feasible alternative siting which eliminates or significantly reduces the obstruction. In such cases, the bulk and scale of the proposed structure shall be minimized to the greatest extent feasible commensurate with preserving the physical characteristics of the site.
- Regulation E (8): In order to maximize and preserve natural open space, natural open space, natural landforms and views projects involving more than one dwelling unit on a lot shall be clustered on the flatter portions of the site, if determined to be practicable and desirable. "Clustering" in this context shall mean the siting of dwelling units in proximity to each other so as to maximize the amount of undeveloped open space. A clustered project within this overlay zone may disregard existing interior lot line and is not bound to comply with the minimum lot size, width, depth and setback provision of the underlying Del Mar Zoning Ordinance. A suitable site plan showing the clustered proposal shall be submitted for subdivisions and multiple unit construction projects in this overlay zone.

### 3 PROJECT SETTING

The Project is located in north coastal San Diego County in the City of Del Mar (Figure 1). The Project site is located atop a relatively flat mesa and noticeable bluff –top that encompasses a triangular shaped portion of land located in the northwestern corner of Del Mar. The bluff-top Project site overlooks the Pacific Ocean and features descending slopes on its west, east, and south sides. On-site elevations range from approximately 93 feet mean sea level (MSL) in the northern portion of the site to approximately 0 feet MSL at the base of cliffs along the western site boundary.

Photographs of the Project site and surrounding area are referenced below as support for the description of the Project setting. The location of the referenced photographs is depicted on Figure 8, Project Setting Photographs Key Map, which includes the boundaries of the City of Del Mar and City of Solana Beach for clarity.

Bound by Border Avenue/South Sierra Avenue to the north, Camino Del Mar to the east, North Beach to the south, and beach and ocean to the west, the fenced, approximately 16.6-acre Project site is comprised of eight parcels. Seven of the eight parcels are currently vacant. The northernmost portion of the Project site previously supported residential buildings that have been removed and currently consists of open land with scattered ice plant and grasses. The elevation gradually rises from east to west across the site and several mature palm trees and three abandoned telephone poles and lines also dot the northernmost portion of the Project site (see Photo A on Figure 9, Project Setting [1 of 5]). The property abuts Border Avenue and a two-story condominium development on the north (Del Mar Beach Club; see Photo B on Figure 9). A narrow view access easement is also located between the property and the two-story condominium development however, no coastal access is provided via the wood-chipped covered easement. In addition, the property is occasionally used for overflow parking for beach and other local events. The central portion of the Project site previously supported residential homes and ancillary structures that have been demolished. Mature trees and other landscaping line the northern, southern, and western boundaries of the central portion of the site (fencing is also installed along the perimeter) and grasses, exposed soils, and gravel typically cover the site interior (see Photo C and Photo D on Figure 9).

The southernmost parcel of the Project site is supports an occupied 5,800-square-foot single-story residence and guesthouse with a pool. Photo E on Figure 10, Project Setting (2 of 5), includes the residence, roof of the guesthouse, landscaping, and pedestrian paths. The residence is setback from the bluff but the property provides long and broad views south and north along the coastline and to the west. Photo F on Figure 10 that depicts a southerly view from the southern portion of the Project site. The parcel is landscaped with turf, iceplant, various shrubs, and tall and mature pine (*Pinus* sp.), cypress (*Cupressus* sp.), and palm trees (*Phoenix canariensis*; *Washingtonia robusta*). Photo G on Figure 10 depicts landscaping installed along the southern boundary of the Project site

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as viewed from the James G. Scripps Preserve Bluff. Access to the property is provided from a private access road that serves the adjacent central portion of the Project site property. The access driveway parallels Camino Del Mar and runs perpendicular to Border Avenue (see Photo H on Figure 10). The access driveway is approximately 20 feet wide and lined by cypress and other mature trees on the west and pine and other trees and shrubs on the east. Limited public access currently exists north of the northernmost Project boundary.

The location of the Project site, development in the surrounding area, and major natural and built features are depicted in Figure 1. Residential and commercial land uses in Solana Beach border the Project site to the north. The residences are primarily two-story multifamily developments including the gated Del Mar Beach Club that is located west and east of South Sierra Avenue. A low, beige masonry wall topped with short metal bars is situated atop a 25-foot wide slope landscaped with groundcover and a few tall pine and paperbark (*Melaleuca quinquenervia*) trees located west of South Sierra Avenue (see Photo I on Figure 11, Project Setting [3 of 5]). This fence lines the eastern extent of the Del Mar Beach Club development. Attached homes within the development consist of two-story boxy structures featuring a beige/off-white stucco exterior and flat, wood-shingled roofs. Homes to the east across South Sierra Avenue display similar design elements including landscaping. A three-story office building is located east of the residential development and west of Highway 101. The rectangular, light cream-colored stucco and natural-looking wood building is partially obscured from view by mature pine and *Podocarpus* sp. trees installed to the immediate south and east of the building (see Photo J on Figure 11). Located in Solana Beach, the stuccoed office development features terraces on the upper floors and a rectangular and flat roofline. Additional two- and three-story multifamily residential developments are located further north along South Sierra Avenue and include the green-blue and off-white painted wood and stucco exterior La Playa Del Mar buildings, the beige /nude stucco and flat, red tile roof Del Mar Shores buildings, and the wood-clad, asymmetrical, and angular roofline Seascape Chateau and Seascape buildings designed in the Shed architectural style, commonly built as second homes or primary residences in suburban areas of California between 1965 and 1990 (see Photo K on Figure 11).

Each of the development properties feature varying densities of landscaping including mature trees and tall hedges. Residential properties are consistently fenced along South Sierra Avenue.

In the City of Solana Beach, one- to three-story residential and commercial uses are located along the Highway 101 corridor and to the north of the office building. Development includes restaurants and shops in one- and two-story wood structures with long pitch roofs and rectangular glass windows and hotels operating out of warm, two and three-colored stucco exterior and red tile roof buildings (see Photo L on Figure 11). Further, the concrete and glass Solana Beach City Hall building, and the Beachwalk neighborhood retail plaza that features one- and two story buildings painted in browns, light green, or light gold colors are also located along the Highway 101 corridor on the southbound approach towards the Project site (see Photo M, Photo 12). As with residential uses, commercial and other development along Highway 101 are situated on properties with generally small or narrow

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planters featuring turf, low shrubs, flowers, and tall trees including palm, pine, and conifers (i.e., *Podocarpus* sp). The City of Solana Beach General Plan designates the area to the north of the Project site and west of Highway 101 as Multi-family Residential (generally west of South Sierra Avenue) and Commercial and Office (east of South Sierra Avenue and west of Highway 101).

North Beach and the mouth of the San Dieguito River (i.e., location where river flows into the Pacific Ocean) is located south of the Project site. The eastern portion of the beach adjacent to Camino Del Mar features posts for volleyball nets and a native demonstration garden. The southern portion of the beach is open and popular with local residents and dog owners (see Photo N on Figure 12, Project Setting [4 of 5], that depicts the mouth of the San Dieguito River, North Beach, and the Project site). Public access to the James G. Scripps Bluff Preserve is provided via North Beach and a paved access path is constructed into the east-facing slope of the bluff landform visible in Photo N. The south- and east-facing slopes of the bluff are covered with low, coastal sage scrub vegetation that displays tones of brown, grey and green. Tan exposed soils are also evident on the bluff slopes visible from Camino Del Mar and the visible trees atop the bluff are located on the Project Site. A private, beachfront residential development is located to the south of North Beach and west of Camino Del Mar. North and south of the river crossing, public beach parking is available along Camino Del Mar, a two-lane road with a raised median that features low grasses, shrubs, and near the Project site, mature pine trees.

A local restaurant and a surface parking lot are located east of Camino Del Mar. The restaurant (the Brigantine) is situated atop a bluff overlooking the San Dieguito Lagoon (see Photo O on Figure 12) and a local rail corridor to the south and east. Condominium development is located further to the south (south of the San Dieguito Lagoon) and the Del Mar Fairgrounds are located southeast. Tall palm trees are planted along the property frontage of Camino Del Mar and shorter palms and low, flowering shrubs occupy narrow planters that line the sidewalk. The restaurant and underlying bluff is located approximately 40 to 50 feet higher in elevation than the lagoon and Fairgrounds. Notable visual elements of the Del Mar Fairgrounds include the wide oval shaped, turf and dirt track with water features and collection of single-story buildings in the infield, the large, multistory Mission style offices and grandstand building, and the many long, rectangular stable buildings (see Photo P on Figure 12). Vegetation on the fairgrounds property is scattered and somewhat limited; however, the inner track is planted with turf, trees, and shrubs surrounding the interior water features. North-south railroad tracks are located east of the lagoon and west of the fairgrounds. North of Via de la Valle and in the City of Solana Beach, the tracks are located at a lower elevation than lands to the west and east. Seven boxy and white painted stucco exterior, two-story residential homes in the City of Del Mar are located east of the restaurant and railroad tracks and immediately south of Via de la Valle. The small bluff-top development is gated and in addition to palm trees and bird of paradise plantings, a six-foot high, lightly colored masonry wall borders the development on the north (see Photo Q on Figure 13, Project Setting [5 of 5]).

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Additional single-family and multifamily residential development is located north of Via de la Valle in Solana Beach and the local terrain rises from south to north and west to east, creating opportunities for ocean view lots and terraced residential development (see Photo R on Figure 13). Scenic views to the Pacific Ocean are available from these higher elevation residential areas in Solana Beach including condominiums off Solana Circle and single –family homes located off East and West Solana Circle (see Photo S on Figure 13). Residential developments incorporate tans to bluish stucco and grey to brown wood exteriors, flat to slightly pitched wood shingle or tiled roofs, stone and/or brick accents, and large to small expanses of glass windows on elevations (see Photos S and T on Figure 13). Architectural styles of individual multifamily developments and single-family homes vary. Residential properties are landscaped with turf, low shrubs and hedges, and trees including palm, pine, and occasionally, coral (*Erythrina* sp.), eucalyptus, and pepper trees. Relative to apartment or condominium uses, single-family residential lots tends to include a more diverse assortment of shrubs and trees.

### 4 VIEWER GROUPS, RESPONSE AND EXPOSURE

Because the Project site is located atop a noticeable bluff and due to the characteristics of topography within the surrounding area, views to the Project site are available throughout southern Solana Beach, northern Del Mar, and from bluff-top homes in the City of San Diego. In addition, the Project site is visible from North Beach and other local beaches, trails within/near the San Dieguito Lagoon River, Interstate 5 (I-5) and from parks and local roads. Viewer groups with a view to the Project site include residential viewers (Del Mar, Solana Beach, and City of San Diego), motorists on I-5, Camino Del Mar, Via de la Valle and various local roads, and recreational groups including trail users, beach and park goers, and surfers, kayakers, and others recreating in the ocean. Other groups provided views to the Project site include visitors to the Brigantine restaurant and workers at the nearby office complex to the north, rail users (i.e., Coaster and AMTRAK riders), and persons attending events at the Del Mar Fairgrounds.

While the discussion below describes the general availability of views to the Project site in the surrounding area, select key public views have been identified to assess the potential visual impacts including view blockage of the Project.

#### 4.1 Residential Groups

Within the City of Del Mar the nearest residence provided views to the Project site is located approximately 330 feet to the east at 103 Via de la Valle. Despite the proximity, private views to the Project site from the residence may be obstructed by private yard landscaping in the foreground and by intervening landscaping located within the railway corridor and along the eastern boundary of the Project site. Approximately eight homes are located east of this residence (and south of Via de la Valle) and may be provided views to the Project site from west-facing windows on the second story of homes however; these private views may be partially obstructed or blocked by intervening landscaping. Residences are also located to the south of North Beach and south of the mouth of the San Dieguito River. Residences within the gated Sandy Lane development are located as close as 600 feet from the southern portion of the Project site and homes are located approximately 50 feet or lower in elevation than the bluff-top portions of the Project site. Generally, the residences are constructed close to one another and have small, narrow side yards. Due to the close proximity of neighbors to the north and south, valued views from the majority of residences in the Sandy Lane development tend to be to the west towards the Pacific Ocean. With the exception of the northernmost residences in the development, northward views towards the Project site may be regularly blocked from residences by intervening development and landscaping located on adjacent properties in the foreground. Due to the partially to fully screened nature of views toward the Project site due to intervening topography, vegetation, and/or distance, some residential viewers are expected to have moderate to low sensitivity.

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Views to the Project site extend to the south and southeast of the Sandy Lane development and are available at residential properties to the west and east of Camino Del Mar. With the exception of two or three-story multifamily residential development with available and unimpeded northerly views, the Project site is screened from view from the majority of homes due to the presence of intervening residential development, private yard landscaping and street trees located in the foreground and middle ground. Views to the Project site generally extend to the southern extent of the San Dieguito Lagoon and to homes located off Racetrack Drive. A small, 23 home single-family residential development is located near the eastern terminus of Racetrack Drive. From these residences the Project site is located in the background of available views and the presence of tall and mature Torrey Pines in the foreground may somewhat obscure longer views to the northwest. South of Coast Boulevard, the local topography rises and the landform to the east of Camino Del Mar consists of a locally prominent hill. Residential development climbs the west-facing slope of the hill and private lots are provided sweeping views to the north, west, and southwest. Hillside homes provided elevated and relatively clear vantage points to the Project site are located within 0.65 miles of the ocean bluff underlying the Project site. While visible from these elevated residences, the Project site is generally located in the background of the visible landscape and as a result, details and changes occurring on the Project site are somewhat muted and difficult to detect.

The nearest residential viewers in Solana Beach are located to the immediate north of the Project site. While residents in the southern portion of the private Del Mar Beach Club are provided foreground views to the Project site, residential buildings in the central and northern areas of the development are provided partially to fully screened southerly views. As experienced from these residences, neighboring residential development and landscaping in the foreground obscures the Project site from view. For similar reasons, the Project site is obscured from the majority of residential development to the north of the Del Mar Beach Club and west of South Sierra Avenue. However, the topography of southern Solana Beach rises to the east and northeast away from the Project site and creates a noticeable hill to the north of Via de la Valle and west of Stevens Avenue. Nardo Avenue somewhat functions as a “ridgeline” to the locally prominent hill and several residential developments to the west and southwest of Nardo Avenue are provided elevated and relatively unimpaired views to the Pacific Ocean and the Project site. For example, homes constructed off West Solana Circle are oriented to the west and are situated at an elevation of 150 feet to 170 feet. The residences are located within 0.35 miles of the north portion of the Project site that lies some 70 to 90 feet lower in elevation in the middle ground of the visible landscape. As experienced by these residences from elevated vantage points, clear views to the Project site are available and visual change occurring in the middle ground (including potential view blockage) would be particularly noticeable. The local terrain falls to the west of West Solana Circle and therefore, homes constructed to the west are located below the line of sight to the Project site. Lastly, middle-ground views to the Project site are provided to select homes constructed atop hilly terrain off Sea Turf Circle, Shoemaker Court, and Cofair Court.



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Within the City of San Diego, views to the Project site are limited but extend to homes lining the San Dieguito River Valley and homes to the east of El Camino Real through the river valley. For example, homes off Ocean Vista Road, High Bluff Drive, and Landfair Road are constructed on elevated, ridgetop terrain overlooking the river valley. Views from private yards and High Bluff Drive are expansive and include the river valley, I-5 corridor, San Dieguito Lagoon, Del Mar Fairgrounds, Project site, and Pacific Ocean. As experienced from these homes and High Bluff Drive, the Project site is located in the background of the visible landscape and details and changes occurring on the Project site are somewhat muted and difficult to detect. The homes are located over two miles from the Project site and are situated at an elevation of between 300 and 315 feet (the highest point on the Project site is 93 feet). Descending slopes are located to the north of residential development off Ocean Vista Road, High Bluff Drive, and Landfair Road and the elevated vantage points and lack of intervening development between ridgeline residential development. While visible, the Project site is located in the background of the visible landscape and details on the Project site are difficult to detect. As El Camino Real descends the elevated terrain of the Del Mar Highlands area and enters the San Dieguito River Valley, development disappears from the foreground to the west. Westerly views towards I-5 and the coast consist of an undeveloped river valley. Homes to the east of El Camino Real are provided views that include the distant Project site in the background. Due to distance, details and changes occurring on the Project site as experienced from these residences are somewhat muted and difficult to detect.

Due to the private nature of views, the partially to fully screened nature of views of existing features on the Project site, and the availability of views to coastal and lagoon resources in the area, residential viewer are considered to be highly sensitive to changes occurring in the Project viewshed.

### **4.2 Motorist Groups**

#### **Interstate 5**

The viewshed of the Project site extends to the east across the San Dieguito River Valley and encompasses an approximately 1.2 mile long segment of northbound I-5 as it descends elevated terrain located north of Del Mar Heights Road, traverses the river valley and approaches Via de la Valle. However, north of the San Dieguito River span, long westward views from I-5 are significantly shortened in length by the presence of fairground buildings in the middle ground and later, by hotel development and landscaping in the foreground. Between Del Mar Heights Road and Via de la Valle, average daily traffic on I-5 is over 250,000 vehicles (Caltrans 2018). Outside of peak hours, prevailing travel speed is approximately 65 to 70 miles per hour (travel speeds are substantially reduced during morning and evening peak hours). The segment of I-5 within the Project viewshed is located over 1.2 miles from the Project site. While the Project site is located in the background of the available view, the flat bluff and the dense grouping of mature trees are at times distinct in westerly views across the San Dieguito River Valley and beyond fairground development.

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Assuming a prevailing travel speed of 65 miles per hour, views to the Project site are available for approximately 66 seconds over the 1.2-mile segment of the interstate included in the Project viewshed. However, the Project site occupies a small percentage of the westward view available to motorists and passengers and the foreground river valley landscape tends to dominant the visual environment. As a result, motorists and passengers are often attracted the elements in the foreground as opposed to elements in the background including the Project site. Lastly, interstate motorists and motorists in general tend to focus on the road instead of fixating on specific points or features in the landscape.

Due to the factors discussed above, the exposure of interstate motorists and passengers is moderate and sensitivity is reduced the distant location of the Project site in the available view and competing elements of interest in the foreground and middle ground (i.e., fairgrounds buildings) of the interstate.

### **Camino Del Mar**

Camino Del Mar is the major north-south route through Del Mar. North of the San Dieguito River, the two-lane divided road features parallel and diagonal street parking and a bike lane adjacent to the southbound travel lane. North of the river, bike lane and parallel street parking are also available in the northbound direction. The western boundary of the Project site is within 20 feet of Camino Del Mar however, near the native demonstration garden at North Beach, the site is approximately 60 feet higher in elevation than the surface of the road. North of the demonstration garden, Camino Del Mar rises in elevation such that near the intersection with Via de la Valle, Camino Del Mar is approximately 5 feet lower in elevation than the northeast corner of the Project site. Based on traffic counts conducted as part of the Traffic Impact Analysis prepared for the Project, average daily traffic on Camino Del Mar near the Project site (from Via de la Valle to 27th Street) on a typical weekday is approximately 15,300 vehicles (LLG 2019). Near the Project site, the posted speed limit on the road is 30 mph.

The Project site is visible to northbound and southbound motorists on Camino Del Mar. On the northbound approach, the Project site is briefly visible at the Camino Del Mar/Jimmy Durante Boulevard intersection. Specifically, the background bluff top (located 0.90 miles away) is noticeable over an approximate 370-foot long segment of the road. Along this stretch, views are available for approximately 8 seconds assuming a travel speed of 30 mph. Beyond this segment, the Project site is abruptly obscured from view as the elevation of the road descends and homes and trees shorten the length of the available northward views. The slopes along the eastern Project site boundary are visible from as far as approximately 25th Street (approximately 0.6 miles away from the Project site) and a larger portion of southernmost area of the bluff landform is revealed to motorist at the San Dieguito River Bridge. From the bridge north, the Project site is visible in the foreground from northbound Camino Del Mar over an approximate distance of 0.40 miles.

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Assuming travel speed of 30 mph, views are available for approximately 50 seconds. While views of the Project site are available, the San Dieguito River, ocean, San Dieguito Lagoon and Del Mar Fairgrounds all compete with the Project site for the attention of motorists and passengers. In addition, as Camino Del Mar climbs in elevation near the demonstration garden, a line of twelve (12) mature trees installed in the Camino Del Mar median briefly obscures views to the Project site and along this segment, the close proximity and elevation of the bluff landform obscures the central, northern, and western portions of the Project site from view. Near the Brigantine restaurant, the central median breaks and median plantings are no longer present. Despite the lack of median plantings, the dense line of cypress trees installed along the eastern boundary of the Project site and approximately 100 feet of motorists limits the availability of views to the interior of the site from northbound Camino Del Mar. The combination of this low exposure with the potential for more sustained exposure of the Project parcels when traveling north along Camino Del Mar results in a moderate level of exposure for northbound travelers. Sensitivity is equally moderate, as there are many competing elements in the view.

The northeastern corner of the Project site is visible to southbound motorists as Highway 101 passes through the Via de la Valle intersection and enters City of Del Mar boundaries and becomes Camino Del Mar. However, as previously discussed, south of the intersection the line of mature cypress trees installed along the eastern site boundary screens the interior of the Project site from view of Camino Del Mar motorists. Due to proximity to the Project site, westward views from southbound Camino Del Mar fully encompass the steep east-facing slopes of the bluff landform and views beyond the elevated eastern edge of the Project site are not available. The southbound travel lane of Camino Del Mar parallels the Project site for approximately 0.20 miles and motorists are within the Project site viewshed for approximately 24 seconds (assuming a travel speed of 30 mph), available westward views consists of steep sloped terrain and the crowns of mature trees atop eastern boundary of the bluff.

North of Via de la Valle, Camino Del Mar becomes Highway 101 and proceeds north through the cities of Solana Beach and Encinitas. While the Project site is outside of the normal field of vision of northbound motorists as they pass through the Highway 101/Via de la Valle intersection, the Project site is briefly visible (i.e., for approximately 4 seconds assuming 30 mph travel speed) to southbound Highway 101 motorists. South of Dahlia Drive and on the approach to Via de la Valle, the presence of one- and two-story commercial, hotel, civic, and office development, and street trees located west of the road screen the Project site from view of southbound Highway 101 motorists. However, at the Highway 101/Via de la Valle intersection, the northern portion of the Project site is visible to the first three to four cars queued in the three southbound travel lanes. As experienced from the southbound travel lane and during a red light, view exposure would be greatest for the first three to four cars queued in the three southbound travel lanes. Due to generally low exposure of the Project site combined with the opportunity for more sustained exposure for a small number of viewers (the first three to four vehicles queued at the intersection), exposure is moderate to low for southbound travelers. Sensitivity

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is considered low for southbound travelers, as there are many competing elements in the view and, with the exception of the Camino Del Mar/Via de la Valle intersection, the Project site is generally outside of the normal field of view, as it is either directly west or at the backs of southbound motorists as they travel along Camino Del Mar.

### Via de la Valle

Via de la Valle serves as a major east-west access corridor between southern Solana Beach, northern Del Mar, and Interstate 5. At its intersection with Highway 101, Via de la Valle is situated at an approximate elevation of 60 feet amsl, which is approximately 2 to 3 feet lower than the northeast corner of the Project site located approximately 150 feet away. Based on traffic counts conducted as part of the Traffic Impact Analysis prepared for the Project, average daily traffic on Via de Valle near the Project site (S. Cedros Avenue to Jimmy Durante Boulevard) on a typical weekday is approximately 18,800 vehicles (LLG 2019).

Due to the characteristics of local terrain, the Project site is screened from westbound Via de la Valle motorists east of Solana Circle. West of Solana Circle (i.e., approximately 0.28 miles west of the Project site), mature trees and a sliver of previously disturbed lands comprising the northern portion of the Project site are generally visible in the middle ground. As measured from Solana Circle to the west, these features of the Project site remain visible for approximately 24 seconds assuming a 40 mph travel speed. Due to the narrow view available through the Via de la Valle corridor, private yard landscaping tends to attract the attention of westbound motorists and passengers on Via de la Valle. In addition, due to the screening effects of landscaping in the foreground, the visible sliver of the northern portion of the Project site represents a small percentage of the available view. Further, with the exception of an approximate 175-foot long segment of Via de la Valle between the bridge span over railroad tracks and Highway 101, the central and southern portions of the Project site are entirely screened from view of westbound motorists by mature landscape trees and residential development in the foreground of the visible landscape. At the bridge span, available views to the west encompass the road corridor and the rising terrain of the northern portion of the Project site. At the bridge, views to the southwest look across the Brigantine restaurant parking lot and Camino Del Mar to existing trees on the southern portion of the Project site in the middle ground. The cluster of cypress trees along the site's eastern boundary are also noticeable and partially block the central portion of the Project site from view. Exposure to views of the Project site is elongated when cars begin to queue at the Via de la Valle/Highway 101 intersection such as during a red light event. At the intersection, the Project site is located in the foreground and while partially screened from view by trees planted along the eastern boundary, the Project site occupies a substantial portion of the visible landscape to the west. Excluding the potential to be stopped at the Via de la Valle intersection with Highway 101, motorists generally have relatively low exposure.

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The Project site is located outside of the normal field of vision for eastbound motorists on Via de la Valle. Much of the road (east of Solana Circle) does not have views of the Project site, and eastbound travelers have the site at their back, and therefore do not have views toward the Project site. Therefore, for purposes of this report, eastbound Via de la Valle motorists are not considered to have views to the Project site.

The combination of this low exposure with the potential for more sustained exposure when stopped at the northeast corner of the Project parcels results in a moderate level of exposure. Sensitivity is equally moderate, and many of the viewers may be locals with frequent views of the site, while viewers on this primary roadway may be passing through with no expectations.

### **Jimmy Durante Boulevard**

Jimmy Durante Boulevard is a primarily north-south corridor that roughly parallels Camino Del Mar before extending east over the San Dieguito River and along the eastern perimeter of the Del Mar Fairgrounds. Near its confluence with Camino Del Mar, Jimmy Durante Boulevard is situated at an approximate elevation of 55 feet amsl. North of this point and as the northbound travel lane approaches the San Dieguito River Bridge, the elevation of the road gradually decreases and ultimately reaches a low point of approximately 8 feet amsl at the intersection with San Dieguito Drive. Jimmy Durante Boulevard is a two-lane road with a raised median and sidewalk paralleling the northbound lane between Camino Del Mar and the San Dieguito River Bridge. North of the bridge, the road expands to four lanes, include sidewalks adjacent to north and southbound travel lanes and a wide (approximately 20 feet) painted median. Based on 2018 traffic counts conducted by the City, the average number of vehicles per hour on northbound Jimmy Durante Boulevard (238) as measured at the bridge is noticeably greater than the average number of vehicles per hour on southbound Jimmy Durante Boulevard (137) at the bridge (City of Del Mar 2018).

Limited background views to the Project site are available to northbound Jimmy Durante Boulevard motorists at and near the confluence with Camino Del Mar and at the San Dieguito River crossing. With the exception of at the river crossing, southbound motorists are not provided views to the Project site. Near Camino Del Mar as the road descends into the San Dieguito River valley, the crowns of tall trees on the Project site are somewhat detectable in the background but not overly distinct in the available northward view. Partially obscured background views to the Project site are available for approximately 9 seconds over a distance of 400 feet and as experienced from this segment, vegetation on the Project site occupies an extremely small portion of the landscape. North of this short segment, mature pine trees planted in the Jimmy Durante Boulevard median in the foreground and intervening development and landscaping to the northwest in the middle ground block the Project site from view. On the San Dieguito River Bridge, the Project site (located 0.60 miles away) is visible for approximately seven seconds in the background of the available northwestward view. While visible, the bluff landform occupies a relatively small portion of the

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visible landscape and foreground elements including the San Dieguito River and the distinct hall and grandstand buildings at the Del Mar Fairgrounds tend to dominate the northwestward view. East of the river crossing, long, one- and two-story buildings (and eventually, the grandstands) at the Del Mar Fairgrounds enter the foreground and block the Project site from view. Similar brief views to the Project site lasting less than 7 seconds are available to southbound motorists on the bridge span. However, as experienced from the southbound travel lane, the Project site tends to be located in motorists' peripheral view and is then outside of the normal field of vision south of the San Dieguito River along the approach to downtown Del Mar. Therefore, viewer exposure is relatively low due to numbers of roadway users and the short duration of time in which the site is visible at a distance. Similarly, the distance of the site from the viewers, combined with competing view elements, results in traveler sensitivity being relatively low.

### Local Roads

In addition to the major transportation corridors and routes listed above, the Project site is visible from a number of local roads in the cities of Del Mar, Solana Beach, and San Diego. For example, partially screened views of the Project site are available from westbound San Dieguito Drive and narrow roads on the west-facing slope of prominent terrain developed with single-family residences to the southeast. Roads to the north and northeast of the Project site in Solana Beach including Border Avenue and South Sierra Avenue offer unobstructed foreground views to the northern and central portions of the Project site. For example, Border Avenue parallels the northeastern portion of the Project site for approximately 350 feet and for approximately 8 seconds, the Project site occupies a substantial portion of the available southward view. North of the Project site, Border Avenue turns into South Sierra Avenue and the road is aligned perpendicular to the Project site for approximately 0.80 miles. While visible from southbound South Sierra Avenue, the Project site occupies a small percentage of the view and is generally indistinct north of Del Mar Shores Terrace (located 0.15 miles north of the Project site). South of Del Mar Shores Terrace, the Project site is centrally located in the view and increasingly dominates the landscape as motorists approach Border Avenue. Motorists on Highway 101 and South Cedros, southbound Solana Circle (for approximately 140 feet) and East and West Solana Circle are also provided fleeting foreground and middle-ground views to the Project site that are partially screened by intervening development and landscaping to open and unencumbered. Within the City of San Diego, High Bluff Drive and El Camino Real (between approximately Derby Downs Road and the southern parking lot of the Harvest Evangelical Church (a distance of 0.60 miles) provide motorists longer distance background views in which the Project site occupies a very small portion of the visible landscape. At its closest point, High Bluff Drive is situated at an elevation of approximately 330 feet amsl and 2.1 miles to the southeast of the Project site. El Camino Real (at its closest point) is situated at an elevation of 45 feet amsl and located approximately 1.8 miles to the southeast of the Project site. Viewer exposure from local roads is considered moderate, due to the combination

of areas with intervening development and distracting elements in the view and areas with open, unencumbered views to the Project site. Sensitivity is considered low to moderate, as there are multiple competing elements in the view and the Project site generally composes a small percentage of the available views; however, the Project site is dominant in the view along some portions of local roads.

### 4.3 Recreational Groups

The viewshed of the Project site encompasses several recreational areas in the surrounding environment including bluff tops and overlook parks, beaches and open water, and trails. For example, trails and vista points within the James G. Scripps Bluff Preserve are located to the immediate south and on the same bluff top as the Project site. The trails and westerly oriented vista points are accessible via a set of existing stairs located along the northwestern boundary of North Beach and a long paved pathway that climbs the east-facing slope of the bluff from south to north. While the southernmost portion of the Project site is visible to recreationists from the bluff preserve in the foreground and occupies a substantial portion of the visible landscape to the north, preserve benches are generally oriented to the south and west towards the coastline and ocean. In addition, approach trails lead to an approximately 170 foot long trail that parallels the western edge of the bluff top. Both the vista points and bluff top trail provide long, wide, and unencumbered views to the south and west and therefore, the valued views from the bluff preserve are assumed to be to the south and west. Recreationists at vista points and along the bluff top trail are considered to be transitory receptors however, these receptors are assumed to have moderate to high sensitivity to changes to visual resources that make up the valued coastal and ocean views.

Located adjacent to the James G. Scripps Bluff Preserve, north of the San Dieguito River mouth, and west of Camino Del Mar, the City of Del Mar's North Beach is a popular beach for recreation (primarily volleyball) and dog owners. The City permits dogs to be leash free on city beaches nine months of the year. Elevations on the northern triangle-shaped portion of North Beach bound by the preserve, San Dieguito River mouth, and Camino Del Mar range from approximately 6 to 10 feet amsl and vista points and trails atop the James G. Scripps Bluff Preserve are situated at an elevation of approximately 47 and 57 feet amsl. As such, foreground views to the southern portion of the Project site and the south- and east-facing slopes of the underlying bluff are available to recreationists and dog owners at North Beach. As these viewer types are considered to be temporary receptors (i.e., views are available during their duration of visit to North Beach), view exposure is considered to be temporary. In addition, the primary purpose of recreationists and dog owners in visiting North Beach is assumed recreational activities as opposed to general scenic enjoyment. Therefore, recreationists and dog owners at North Beach are considered to have low to moderate sensitivity to changes to visual resources.

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Stretches of ocean to the west and southwest of the Project site provide water-based recreationists (swimmers, surfers, stand-up paddle boarders, boaters and other) primarily low-angle views to the western slope of the bluff top underlying the Project site. Landscaping along the western edge of the bluff top on the Project site is visible to these receptors and the extent of views to the Project site tends to widen with increases in distance from the shoreline. With the exception of the western edge of the bluff top, foreground and middle-ground views to the Project site available to water-based recreationists are limited and experienced over a temporary duration. While focused on the ocean and their recreational activities, the sensitivity of these receptors to changes in visual resources is assumed low to moderate.

Several trails in the Project area provide trail-based recreationists opportunities and views to the San Dieguito River and Lagoon and Project site. Extending north from Jimmy Durante Boulevard near the San Dieguito River bridge, the River Path is situated atop the southern bank of the river. The river path provides pedestrian access between Jimmy Durante Boulevard and Camino Del Mar. The approximately 0.40-mile segment of the path located north of Jimmy Durante Boulevard (the path extends to the south of the boulevard) provides pedestrians opportunities for relatively clear and temporary middle-ground views to the east-facing slope and landscaping atop the Project site. In addition, the southern terminus of the Solana Beach Coastal Rail Trail provides opportunities for southbound pedestrians and runners to view the northern portion of the Project site. The series of arches at the southern terminus of the Solana Beach Coastal Rail Trail are located approximately 170 feet to the northeast of the Project site. As experienced from this location, relatively unencumbered foreground views to the northern portion of the Project site are available and the site occupies a relatively large portion of the available southward view. However, view exposure and sensitivity of coastal rail trail users is considered temporary and low to moderate.

Lastly, the elevated Project site is visible from trails in the San Dieguito River Lagoon including the low-lying Coast to Crest Trail (west of I-5 the average elevation of the trail is approximately 9 feet amsl) and the Dust Devil Nature Trail (located east of I-5). The Coast to Crest Trail passes beneath I-5 and roughly parallels the northern bank of the San Dieguito River for approximately 0.75 miles to Jimmy Durante Boulevard. Due to its elevated location atop a prominent coastal bluff, the Project site is visible above Del Mar Fairground building from portions of the trail. Views from the trail are experienced over a temporary duration by recreationists (walkers, hikers, and trail-runners) and users are considered to have moderate sensitivity to changes in the visual environment. The Dust Devil Nature Trail is approximately 1.75 miles long and consists of three intersecting loops (North, East, and West) that provide views of the San Dieguito Lagoon east of I-5. A staging/parking area is provided off El Camino Real and the eastern extend of the North Loop Trail and from this trail, recreationists can access the East and West Loops. While the topography of the Project site is detectable across the San Dieguito Lagoon, I-5 and above Del Mar Fairgrounds buildings, the Project site is located over 1.5 miles from the nearest trail segment and in the background of the available view. As such, the



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distant Project site is not a dominant feature in westward views available from the Dust Devil Nature Trail. At the southwesterly oriented lookout point located at the westernmost extension of the West Loop trail, the Project site is located approximately 1.6 miles to the northwest and in the background of the visible landscape. Views from the loops trail are experienced over a temporary duration by recreationists (walkers, hikers, and trail-runners) and users are considered to have moderate sensitivity to changes in the visual environment.

Located in the City of San Diego and paralleling High Bluff Drive, Overlook Park is comprised of three irregularly shaped turf areas lined (and connected by) concrete paths. Overlook Park is bordered on the northwest by low and mounded flowering shrubs and wood, post and rail fence that is installed along the nearby bluff's edge. The turf areas and paths are situated at elevations ranging from 320 to 325 feet amsl and provide wide views to the north and northwest, across the San Dieguito River and to rising, developed and undeveloped terrain to the north of Via de la Valle, the Del Mar Fairgrounds and the Pacific Ocean. While located over 2 miles away and in the background of the available view, the Project site is located at a lower elevation than Overlook Park and is visible due to its elevated, bluff top location. View exposure to recreationists at Overlook Park is temporary and viewers are considered to have moderate to high sensitivity to changes to resources that make up the existing view. However, due to distance and competing features in the available broad view, visual change occurring on the Project site would be obscured and may be difficult to detect.

### 4.4 Commercial Groups

Commercial groups provided views to the Project site consist of nearby office employees, customers at the Brigantine restaurant, and customers of third-story shops and restaurants at the Del Mar Plaza.

A three-story office building is located at the northwestern corner of the Highway 101/Via de la Valle intersection and approximately 70 feet north of the Project site. As described in Section 2.1, above, the natural-looking wood building is partially obscured from view by mature pine and *Podocarpus* sp. trees installed to the immediate south and east of the building. In addition to partially screening the structure, existing landscaping partially screens the Project site in views from windows along the south and west elevations of the building. Employees are provided views to the Project site as they travel on Via de la Valle and Border Avenue to access the building's surface parking lot (approximately 40 spaces are available). However, views are experienced over a temporary duration and as a specific viewer group, office employees are considered to have a low to moderate sensitivity to visual change in the surrounding area.

The Brigantine restaurant is located west of Camino Del Mar and approximately 130 feet from the Project site. From the restaurant's parking lot adjacent to Camino Del Mar, customers are provided

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westerly foreground views to the low, east-facing slope comprising the easternmost boundary of the Project site. Foreground views to the Project site are also available through windows constructed on the west elevation of the restaurant building however, these views are limited in number and inside diners are likely more inward focused than outside diners seated on the restaurant's outside patio. The Project site is visible in the foreground of views available from a small outdoor seating area constructed off the building's south elevation, however, the visible landscape also includes the Del Mar Fairgrounds and thus, the Project site is not a focal feature in the available view. Further, as customers are more likely to be attracted to the wider and more diverse views to the Del Mar Fairgrounds or focused inwardly on their dining companions, westerly foreground views to the Project site are not considered to be particularly valued by customers for purposes of this report. Additionally, a garden area is located on the east side of the building, facing away from, and without views to, the Project. Therefore, from the Brigantine restaurant, view exposure to the eastern portion of the Project site is temporary and viewer sensitivity is considered low.

### **4.5 Rail User Groups**

North of the confluence of Camino Del Mar and Jimmy Durante Boulevard, the AMTRAK and NCTD rail corridor roughly parallels Camino Del Mar. Over an approximately 0.50-mile long segment of the track beginning at the San Dieguito River and continuing north, northbound AMTRAK and NCTD Coaster riders are provided westerly views to the Project site. At its closest point, rail track and riders are located within approximately 380 feet of the Project site. Over the approximately 0.50-mile long segment of track within the Project's viewshed, available views primarily encompass the east-facing slope and landscaping installed along the eastern edge of the bluff top. Due to generally high travel speeds and mobile nature of views from train cars, view exposure to rail users is brief. Viewer sensitivity for AMTRAK and NCTD Coaster commuters and leisure riders is therefore considered low to moderate.

### **4.6 Leisure Groups**

The Del Mar Fairgrounds and nearby equestrian center are located approximately 630 feet east of the Project site and are bounded by Via de la Valle to the north, Jimmy Durante Boulevard to the east, Jimmy Durante Boulevard and the San Dieguito River to the south and the AMTRAK and NCTD Coaster rail corridor to the west. The terrain underlying the fairgrounds and equestrian center is generally flat and the average elevation across the 340-acre area is approximately 9 feet amsl. Managed and operated by the 22nd District Agricultural Association (22nd DAA), the fairgrounds and horse park host approximately 350 events each year. Events include those produced by the 22nd DAA (National Horse Show, San Diego County Fair, Scream Zone, and Surfside Race Place (off-site race book) and events/activities produced by companies that rent or lease facilities including horse races from July to September and in November, and consumer, trade and private events (Del Mar Fairgrounds 2018).

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The Project site is visible from the westerly paved portion of the fairgrounds, grandstands, track infield, and the driveway and parking lot accessible through the Solana Gate. The Project site is primarily screened from view of fairgrounds visitors at the eastern paved parking lot off Jimmy Durante Boulevard by existing structures and landscaping constructed and installed to west and north of the parking lot in the foreground and middle ground. Specifically, the 3-story Surfside Race Place facility, the approximately 4 to 5 story Del Mar Arena, nearby palm trees, 2 to 3 story barn and expo center buildings, and the 5 to 6 story grandstands block the Project site from view of visitors at the easterly parking lot. Although views of to the Project site are available from publicly accessible locations within the Del Mar Fairgrounds, the views of visitors to the county fair, horse races and other popular events are generally focused inward on activities occurring at or on the fairgrounds property. Further, the views to the Project site available to fairgrounds visitors are temporary. Due to their primarily inward focus and brief duration of available views, leisure groups at the Del Mar Fairgrounds are considered to have low sensitivity to visual change occurring in the environment.

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## 5 KEY VIEW ASSESSMENT

### 5.1 Methodology

Because it is not feasible to analyze all the views in which the Project is visible, it is necessary to select a number of key viewpoints that clearly display the visual effects of the proposed Project. Key views generally represent the primary viewer groups that would potentially be affected by the Project. To determine the extent of available views to the Project site, Dudek created a viewshed analysis that included the Project site and surrounding area. The viewshed analysis used the height of Project buildings and on- and off-site terrain to present a graphical representation of the extent of available views to the Project site. However, the viewshed analysis solely references on- and off-site terrain in depicting the extent of available views to the Project site (elements including existing structures and vegetation that could impede off-site views to the Project site are not considered). Therefore, the viewshed analysis represents a worst-case scenario regarding the geographic extent of available views to the Project site. The viewshed analysis is provided as Figure 14, Viewshed Analysis.

Following completion of the viewshed analysis, Dudek performed a desktop-level review of candidate key view locations by using the Google Street View application. Seven candidate key view locations were identified by Dudek and included locations in the surrounding City of Del Mar and City of Solana Beach areas from which the public is provided views to the Project site. Once visibility to the site from candidate key view locations was confirmed, Dudek conducted a field investigation of the Project site and surrounding area and took photographs of the available view toward the Project site at each of the seven candidate key view locations. Photographs from each of the candidate key view locations were then shared with the applicant and City staff. Based on comments received by City staff, an additional five candidate key view locations were identified, and Dudek took photographs from each of these new locations. The original seven candidate key views and those added by the City compose the key views from which the Project is evaluated in this visual impact assessment. The location of the key views from which photo simulations of the Project were prepared and effects to existing views and visual character were assessed are depicted on Figure 15, Key Views. Further, the distance zones (foreground [FG], middle ground [MG] or background [BG]) and distance from each key view to the Project site is described in Table 2.

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**Table 2**  
**Key View Distance Zones**

Key View	Distance to Project Site	Distance Zone (FG/MG/BG)
Key View 1 – West Solana Circle (City of Solana Beach)	0.25 miles	MG
Key View 2 – South Sierra Avenue (City of Solana Beach)	130 feet	FG
Key View 3 – Via de la Valle at Highway 101	150 feet	FG
Key View 4 – Via de la Valle at South Cedros Avenue	450 feet	MG
Key View 5 – Del Mar Coastline northwest of North Beach	120 feet	FG
Key View 6 – Camino Del Mar (North of Lagoon Bridge)	230 feet	FG
Key View 7 – Camino Del Mar (South of Lagoon Bridge)	0.25 miles	MG
Key View 8 – Del Mar Coastline south of North Beach	0.3 miles	MG
Key View 9 – Jimmy Durante Boulevard at San Dieguito River Bridge	0.65 miles	MG
Key View 10 – Balboa Avenue (City of Del Mar)	0.8 miles	BG
Key View 11 – Camino Del Mar at Jimmy Durante Boulevard	0.9 miles	BG
Key View 12 – Del Mar Plaza Roof Deck	1.2 miles	BG
Key View 13 – James Scripps Bluff Preserve Trail	190 feet	FG

### 5.2 Photo Simulations

Three-dimensional (3-D) photo simulations of the Project on finished grade were prepared from each of the 13 key view locations. The 3-D simulations include existing site photographs taken by Dudek during field investigations as background images and true-scale 3-D models prepared in 3D Studio Max (a modeling and rendering software). Using available topography maps or digital elevation maps, a 3-D surface was created for the existing terrain, and then imported into 3D Studio Max. This 3-D surface was used to camera-match the background photos to the terrain model. 3-D models for the Project elements, including resort structures, graded slopes, retaining walls, roadway improvements, driveways, parking lots, fencing, and landscaping, were rendered onto the existing photographs. Landscaping is shown at estimated 10-year growth, and only facilities and elements visible to the 3-D model cameras were modeled by Dudek designers and appear in the photo simulations. These 3-D models were then merged into the 3-D scene at their finished grade elevations. Lighting was added to the scene to match the time of day the photographs were taken and to cast realistic shadows. Each view was rendered to a high-resolution image. The final product is a photorealistic before-and-after simulation that depicts the existing condition and the constructed Project and accompanying landscaping.

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Visual simulations of the Project are conceptual in nature and reflect architectural characteristics and building materials that may be implemented. Design Guidelines established in the Specific Plan would govern development of the Project. Architectural guidelines would permit a mix of contemporary styles and a range of exterior materials and finishes including both natural and human-made material sources. Due to the range of architectural styles and building materials and finishes that would be permitted by the Specific Plan Design Guidelines, the final design of the Project may differ from the Project buildings depicted in the photo simulations prepared for this Visual Impact Assessment.

### **5.3 Key View Assessment**

Key Views were analyzed for the potential contrast from existing to proposed conditions. The analysis below provides a discussion of existing and proposed conditions as viewed from each Key View, and

#### **5.3.1 Key View 1 – West Solana Circle (City of Solana Beach)**

##### **Existing View**

Key View 1 is located on West Solana Circle, near Solana Circle, and provides broad and long views to the south and west toward the Project site and the Pacific Ocean. Key View 1 is representative of views to the Project site available to nearby City of Solana Beach residents and motorists located on West and East Solana Circle atop locally prominent terrain. Further, a view corridor is identified in Exhibit 4 of the Solana Beach General Plan consisting of westerly, northwesterly, and southwesterly views from West Solana Circle (City of Solana Beach 1988). From Key View 1, the eastern boundary of the Project site is visible in the middle ground approximately 0.25 miles away and is situated at an elevation of approximately 60 feet above mean sea level (amsl). Key View 1 is situated at an elevation of approximately 165 feet amsl, and as such, panoramic coastal and ocean views are available from Key View 1 and along West Solana Circle (Figure 16a, Key View 1 – West Solana Circle [City of Solana Beach]).

As shown in the Key View 1 existing view (Figure 16a), the elevated vantage point available at Key View 1 provides motorists and a limited number of homes (approximately 10) long and broad ocean views that extend to the distant western horizon. Motorists traveling at 25 mph along West Solana Circle are afforded views to the coast and Project site for an approximately 0.25-mile stretch. Therefore, views available to motorists along this portion of West Solana Circle are available for approximately 36 seconds over an approximate distance of 0.25 miles at which point southbound West Solana Circle turns to the east and joins East Solana Circle. Exhibit 4 of the City of Solana Beach General Plan identifies the hilltop area near Key View 1 as a view corridor within the City of Solana Beach, with coastal scenic views to the west, northwest and southwest (City of Solana Beach 1988). At Key View 1, views extend beyond the sloped, grey and reddish tiled roofs of nearby multifamily

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housing and the flat, white-topped roofs of office and residential development in the City of Solana Beach and to the southwest and west towards North Beach (obscured by tall palm trees) and the Project site. From Key View 1, the Project site appears as an elevated bluff with steep and vegetated southeasterly facing slopes and dense to, at times, clumped landscaping (primarily mature trees) on the southern portion in the middle ground of the view. While partially obscured by tall and spreading residential landscaping located east of Highway 101 and in the middle ground, the northern portion of the site gently climbs to the west and is covered by low golden grasses.

### Analysis

The proposed mass, scale, and bulk of the proposed Project would be evident from Key View 1 and would create visual contrast compared to the existing visual character of the vacant and vegetated site. Under existing conditions, the primarily vacant Project site is scattered with mature trees that shield the existing on-site residence from view. The Project includes resort structures that would appear as a cluster of rectangular buildings displaying flat rooflines. At Key View 1, viewers would be able to distinguish building materials on the facades of resort structures, including natural wood elements and glass windowpanes and partitions (see Figure 16b, Key View 1 – West Solana Circle [City of Solana Beach]). The flat roofline of the proposed structures would mimic the relatively flat topography of the bluff top and building colors would consist of warm tan, grey and brown earth tones found in the surrounding landscape.

As viewed from the elevated vantage point at Key View 1, the site coverage with the proposed resort development would be apparent. Similar to existing visible development in the view, portions of the resort development would be partially screened by existing and proposed landscaping that would help break up the bulk of the proposed buildings. Further, resort buildings would be partially screened by intervening development and vegetation, and scale and line contrasts would be relatively weak as viewed from Key View 1. The contrast in scale between Project structures and existing two and three-story development in the view would be relatively minor. It should also be noted that the City's municipal code identifies scenic views as "views of the ocean, lagoons, canyons, the community and its landscapes and urban forest character." The Project would result in an overall reduction in the site's natural appearance, vegetation and trees, which contribute to the community's landscapes and urban forest character. While protected trees that are proposed for removal as part of the Project would be appropriately mitigated, the Project would alter the existing visual character of the bluff-top landscape. Existing ocean views would be slightly changed in Key View 1. However, these views to the ocean would not be substantially obstructed or altered because the panoramic views of the ocean would continue to dominate the scene. Additionally, the Project would be similar in bulk and scale to surrounding development as pictured in Key View 1; (see Figure 16b, Key View 1 – West Solana Circle [City of Solana Beach]). Therefore, although the Project would result in a contrast from the existing visual character of the site, it would not substantially degrade the existing views to the ocean or substantially degrade the visual character of the site.



### 5.3.2 Key View 2 – South Sierra Avenue (City of Solana Beach)

#### Existing View

Key View 2 is located on South Sierra Avenue, approximately 130 feet north of the Project site, and looks to the south toward the Project site (Figure 17a, Key View 2 – South Sierra Avenue [City of Solana Beach]). The Project site is located in the foreground from Key View 2, and views from this location are representative of views of the Project site available to local City of Solana Beach residents and motorists on South Sierra Drive. Additionally, the entrance to an existing bluff access trail is located immediately north of the Project site and stretches to the west along the property line, north of the chain link fence. Thus, this viewpoint is also representative of views afforded to recreationists utilizing the bluff access trail. The northern portion of the Project site and Key View 2 are located at a similar elevation (approximately 82 feet amsl); however, as discussed in the Key View 1 existing view description, the Project site gently climbs to the west and is covered by low grasses, shrubs, mature trees and patches of unvegetated land. A chain link fence separates the site from the road, creating thin and greyish horizontal and vertical lines in front of the naturally vegetated bluff top. A seemingly dense row of mature trees (including cedar and pines) spreads across the Project site from east to west and screens the southern portion of the site from view. The hazy silhouette of densely vegetated prominent terrain in the City is visible to the southeast beyond the Project site. Lastly, due to the location and orientation of Key View 2 and the presence of street trees and two-story residential development to the west of South Sierra Avenue, ocean views are not available at Key View 2. A view corridor is identified in Exhibit 4 of the Solana Beach General Plan consisting of westerly, northwesterly, and southwesterly views from near Key View 2 (City of Solana Beach 1988). It should be noted that Key View 2 is not representative of the westerly views available in the view corridor, as Key View 2 looks directly north toward the Project site.

#### Analysis

As depicted on Figure 17b, Key View 2 – South Sierra Avenue (City of Solana Beach), views of the primarily vacant, vegetated bluff top would be replaced with landscaping, access roads and multistory resort buildings constructed in a modern architectural style. The facades of proposed resort guest room buildings would incorporate expanses of unadorned concrete, natural wood, and glass windowpanes. The exterior materials and neutral tones of the guest room buildings would contribute a natural look to the development. As seen in the visual simulation presented on Figure 17b, a low-lying entryway monument sign would be installed at the main resort access road and would incorporate similar wood elements as the resort guest room building facade, creating a cohesive look between buildings and signage. The bluff access path would be improved as part of the Project. A short post and wire fence would replace the existing chain link fence along the access path that extends to the west along the northern site boundary. As no ocean views are

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available from Key View 2, development of the site would not result in blockage of ocean views as viewed from Key View 2. However, distant views to the southeast of dark, densely vegetated hillsides in the City would be screened from view by the Project, and existing views to the naturally vegetated bluff top would be replaced by large structures, paved roads and landscaping.

As proposed and depicted on Figure 17b, the Project would introduce building scale and bulk that would contrast with the sloping, vacant and natural character of the northern portion of the Project site as viewed from Key View 2. The proposed Project's vertical bulk and scale would change the visual setting, in contrast to the gently sloping, natural bluff top. Further, proposed landscaping would noticeably shorten views across the Project site from the existing bluff access trail. Although the character of the site would substantially change, the existing visual quality of the site is moderately low. As viewed from Key View 2, the site lacks particularly memorable features and cohesive elements. For example, a dilapidated chain-link fence lines the Project site and abuts a recently mowed strip of undeveloped land bordered by a row of seemingly random tall and shorter trees (see existing conditions image on Figure 17a). In comparison to the undeveloped portions of the Project site that are visible under existing conditions from this viewpoint, implementation of the Project would introduce cohesive landscaping and modern buildings. Further, development of the modern three-story structure visible from Key View 2 would be located in close proximity to existing two- and three-story development (not visible in Key View 2). Specifically, existing two-story multifamily development buildings are located north of the site along Border Avenue and South Sierra Avenue and a three-story office building is located approximately 70 feet away at the northwestern corner of Highway 101 and Border Avenue. These existing structures display primarily stucco exteriors and wood paneled roofs, and contribute multistory building scale and multibuilding properties to the immediate area that relate to the Project and site layout. As such, the Project would change the visual character of the site, but would not substantially contrast from surrounding existing development.

### **5.3.3 Key View 3 – Via de la Valle at Highway 101**

#### **Existing View**

Key View 3 is located at the northeastern corner of the Via de la Valle/Highway 101 intersection and looks southwest across the intersection toward the Project site. The Project site is visible in the foreground approximately 150 feet away and at an approximate elevation of 62 feet amsl. Key View 3 is representative of view accessibility and blockage provided by locales in close proximity to the Project. The recently mowed, tan-colored surface of the northern portion of the Project site is visible through an approximately 5-6 foot tall chain-link fence (see Figure 18a, Key View 3 – Via de la Valle at Highway 101). The east-west slope across the northern portion of the site is evident in the view from Key View 3, as is the wall of dense and spreading trees along the site's eastern boundary. This row of trees limits the availability of views to the Project site from locations

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to the east, such as the Brigantine seafood restaurant and the handful of residences located south of Via de la Valle in the Boca Del Mar development. The existing image from Key View 3 is focused on the Project site and located in proximity such that existing structures and land uses to the north and east are not visible in the image. The southern portion of the site is hidden from view due to perimeter and interior trees. A local distribution utility line supported by wood poles is visible traversing the Project site from east to west. As at Key View 2, oceans views are not available at Key View 3.

### Analysis

At Project buildout, views of the gently sloping, tan-colored surface of the northern portion of the Project site would be replaced with views of a multistory, terraced resort development. The majority of trees along the site's eastern boundary would be retained. Existing trees combined with additional landscaping would largely screen views into the eastern portion of the Project site. Portions of the top stories of resort structures toward the southeast boundary of the site would be visible from this point through and above the existing tree line bordering the eastern side of the access road. Architectural details of the proposed development, including concrete and wood facades, wooden balcony partitions, low glass balcony walls, concrete overhangs, and large glass windows are identifiable from Key View 3 (see Figure 18b, Key View 3 – Via de la Valle at Highway 101). The primary building materials (i.e., wood, concrete, glass, etc.) utilized for the proposed development are typical of materials displayed in remodeled residences, residential complexes, and commercial and hospitality structures in the Del Mar and Solana Beach communities. The Project site would be landscaped with low-lying shrubs, small and large trees surrounding the eastern and northern boundaries of the Project site. Additionally, several proposed trees, including palms and jacaranda, dot the Project site. Development of the Project site would not block any views of the ocean from this point since no ocean views are available under existing conditions.

The existing visual quality of the site is defined by a long tan strip of recently mowed land and a row of tall trees that traverse the Project site from east to west. The central, southern, and western portions of the site are obscured from view by dense clusters of mature trees. Visual quality of the site is moderately low because particularly striking visual features or patterns are lacking and existing site elements are not especially cohesive. The site has been previously disturbed and is currently covered with low grasses and exposed soils. While implementation of the Project would enhance site unity through introduction of consistent visual elements, the bulk and scale of the proposed development would dominate the scene. The Project would result in a **substantial change** from existing views of the primarily vacant site. Proposed landscaping, in addition to existing landscaping that would be retained, along the eastern and northern Project boundary would partially to fully screen some of the proposed resort structures and break up the mass of visible Project components. However, the mass of the Project would be noticeable and visible from this key view. Given the low visual quality of the site in its current state, and the presence of

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existing two- and three-story office, residential and civic development along the Highway 101 corridor that contributes long and tall building mass and scale to the visual landscape, the Project would not substantially degrade the visual character of the site and surrounding area. 5.3.4

### **5.3.4 Key View 4 – Via de la Valle at South Cedros Avenue**

#### **Existing View**

Located on Via de la Valle, approximately 300 feet east of Key View 3 and approximately 450 feet east of the Project site, Key View 4 looks west across wide east- and westbound travel lanes and an undivided median toward the Via de la Valle/Highway 101 intersection and the northern portion of the Project site. The Project site is visible in the middle ground from Key View 4, which is representative of views afforded to motorists traveling westward on Via de la Valle. As viewed from Key View 4, the Via de la Valle corridor is flanked by tropical residential landscaping and street trees, tall streetlights, and wooden support poles (see Figure 19a, Key View 4 – Via de la Valle at South Cedros Avenue). Residential development including the boxy white exteriors of residences in the Boca Del Mar development to the southwest of Key View 4 is also located north and south of the road. With the exception of the low and tan-colored grasses and soils of the gently climbing northern portion, the Project site is largely blocked from view by a dense cluster of residential landscaping to the south of Via de la Valle.

#### **Analysis**

Due to existing landscaping installed adjacent to the eastbound travel lanes of Via de la Valle, the majority of the proposed development is blocked from view at Key View 4. However, the portion of the Project site that is visible would be completely built out and represent a visual change in comparison to existing conditions. The proposed bulk and multistory scale of the Project (located near the Via de la Valle/Highway 101 intersection) and taller resort guest room buildings to the west would be apparent. The proposed development would bear a resemblance to the boxy form of existing residential structures located in the foreground and to the south of Via de la Valle (see Figure 19b, Key View 4 – Via de la Valle at South Cedros Avenue). While the proposed development would display greater scale and mass than the existing view, the development would display a familiar form as visible residential buildings viewed from KOP 3. Further, while not visible in the particular vantage point presented in Figure 19b, two- and three-story development incorporating wood, glass, stucco, and concrete building materials are typical along the nearby Highway 101 and Via de la Valle corridors. Existing development establishes one- to three-story residential, office, commercial/retail, hotel, and civic uses in the visual landscape and tempers the expectations of mobile receptors for pristine and undeveloped properties and unencumbered views. Therefore, implementation of the Project would result in a noticeable change, but would not result in substantial degradation of visual character as viewed from Key View 4.

### 5.3.5 Key View 5 – Del Mar Coastline northwest of North Beach

#### Existing View

Key View 5 is located west of the City's North Beach and looks toward the broad and striated western face of the bluff that underlies the Project site. The bluff is located in the foreground from Key View 5, which is located approximately 120 feet from the prominent bluff terrain, and is representative of views to the Project site available to beachgoers and others engaged in water-based activities to the immediate west. As shown on Figure 20a, Key View 5 – Del Mar Coastline northwest of North Beach, views to the bluff top are limited to the westernmost edge of the site that currently supports a low, wood-post and chain fence and chain-link fencing. Instead, viewers are provided views of a sandy beach that transitions to clusters of rocky outcrops and the sheer, striated, and granular western face of the ocean bluff. With the exception of bluff top fencing and signage, no development is visible from Key View 5.

#### Analysis

The proposed development would be setback from the edge of the coastal bluff, and as a result, Project components would not be visible from Key View 5. As seen on Figure 20b, Key View 5 – Del Mar Coastline northwest of North Beach, existing and proposed views from this point are identical. With consideration that the visual character of the Project site would not change as viewed from Key View 5, there would be no substantial degradation to existing views. Although some elements would be visible to boaters and other ocean recreationists located at greater distance from the coastline, there would be a substantial variation in elevation between the viewer on the ocean and the development atop the bluff. Additionally, view focus could be expected to be oriented toward the open water views and coastline, rather than the elevated bluff-top. As such, the Project would result in no contrast or change as compared to the existing visual character or quality of the Project site and surrounding area as viewed from Key View 5 would occur.

### 5.3.6 Key View 6 – Camino Del Mar (North of Lagoon Bridge)

#### Existing View

Located to the east on Camino Del Mar, Key View 6 is situated approximately 230 feet from the eastern boundary of the Project site. At Key View 6, the Project site is visible in the foreground, and viewers are situated at an approximate elevation of 16 feet amsl, approximately 60 feet amsl lower than the bluff top of the Project site. Key View 6 is representative of views of the Project site afforded to motorists, cyclists and pedestrians traveling on Highway 101. Public beach parking and coastal access is available near Key View 6, and therefore, beachgoers would be afforded similar views of the Project site when arriving or departing the beach. As shown on Figure 21a, Key View 6 – Camino Del Mar (North of Lagoon Bridge), the Project site is

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characterized by a broad and relatively steep east-facing slope covered with low, grey-to-green mounded vegetation separated by expanses of unvegetated sandy soil. The faint horizontal line of a black chain-link fence is visible along the Project site's eastern extent and moderate-to-tall, dark green, and spreading trees rise from the flat bluff top. The reddish tan color and angular lines of a gate and residential structure are barely visible on the Project site from Key View 6. Small, rectangular white signs are installed along the fence and interrupt the otherwise cluster of green on the bluff top. Low, greyish green vegetation and scant trees are installed in the Camino Del Mar median and cars parked along the southbound travel lane of the road also occupy the scene at Key View 6.

### Analysis

Implementation of the Project would alter the existing visual character of the Project site as viewed from Key View 6. Architectural elements of proposed three-story resort villa buildings located along the eastern Project boundary, including light brown wood facades, glass windows, and flat and thin concrete balconies and building, would be evident from Key View 6 (see Figure 21b, Key View 6 – Camino Del Mar [North of Lagoon Bridge]). In comparison to the scattered and varying tree and shrub species that characterize the existing bluff top, Project development would create a consistent silhouette of angular lines displayed by concrete balconies and building overhangs. In addition to proposed resort buildings atop the bluff, the proposed restroom facility, roof observation deck, and stair system that would provide access to the James G. Scripps Bluff Preserve would be visible from Key View 6. As proposed, the rectangular, single-story restroom facility may incorporate a variety of suitable materials that would be identified in the Specific Plan. For purposes of this analysis, a split-face concrete block structure covered with a concrete and wood slat observation deck was assumed. The stair system was assumed to be constructed of concrete support pylons and wooden decks, stairs, and railing.

The proposed restroom facility would create a boxy yet low profile form that would block a small portion of the base of the bluff from view. However, the restroom facility would negate the need for temporary restroom facilities (“port-o-potty”) to be deployed along Camino Del Mar and would avoid the color contrast associated with the presence of bright blue structures at the base of the bluff (see Figure 21a). A system of concrete stairs would climb the east-facing slope of the bluff and would create hard, lightly colored angular lines (see Figure 21b) that would contrast with the scattered shrub and grass covered slope terrain.

Incorporation of natural wood and earth-toned materials and colors in the exterior of proposed Project structures would create a visual connection between the resort and existing tan-colored soils of the bluff top and would reduce overall contrast. While the restroom facility and stair system would be a noticeable new feature in the visual landscape at Key View 6, Project components would not produce overly strong contrast and the stairs would create relatively thin lines against the greys and tans displayed by nearby soils and soils. As such, the addition of these Project

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components would not dominate the scene. In addition, a significant portion of the east-facing slope would remain unaltered and the restroom facility and stair system would improve public services and enhance bluff top access. As viewed from Key View 6, both the proposed Project would represent visual change along the Camino Del Mar visual corridor however, existing characteristics of the slope and bluff top would remain prominent in the view. Therefore, the Project would not substantially degrade the visual quality or character of the site and surrounding areas as viewed from Key View 6.

### **5.3.7 Key View 7 – Camino Del Mar (South of Lagoon Bridge)**

#### **Existing View**

Key View 7 is located on Camino Del Mar, just south of the lagoon crossing, approximately 0.25 miles southeast of the Project site. The Project is visible in the middle ground from Key View 7. Situated at an approximate elevation of 14 feet amsl, Key View 7 looks to the north-northwest along the divided travel lanes of Camino Del Mar toward the flat bluff top of the Project site, which is situated at approximately 85 feet amsl. Key View 7 is representative of views available to motorists and cyclists traveling northbound on Camino Del Mar, private residences located immediately west of Key View 7 in the City of Del Mar, beachgoers and recreationist on the San Dieguito Lagoon trail. The low horizontal and vertical lines created by the road, bridge fencing and railing (see Figure 22a, Key View 7 – Camino Del Mar [South of Lagoon Bridge]) draw the viewer's attention along the Camino Del Mar corridor to a focal point to the north comprised of the coastal bluff underlying the Project site. Visual focus tends to be directed toward the activity of cars and cyclists on Camino Del Mar, but then transitions to the tan-to-brown colored slopes, trapezoidal form, and dense, dark green vegetation of the prominent bluff. Although partially obscured, ocean views are available to the northwest, and the lifeguard tower and the sandy surface of North Beach are also visible. As viewers travel north on Camino Del Mar, ocean views to the west become wider and more prominent as the road spans the lagoon. Estuarine habitat consisting of wetlands, sandy shores and low grasses and shrubs is visible east of the road. From Key View 7, Camino Del Mar appears busy with activity; however visible development is largely screened by vegetation and limited to the grayish exterior and white angular lines of the Brigantine seafood restaurant and boxy, lightly colored exterior of partially obscured structures to the north and northeast. Fencing and a gate installed on the bluff top are difficult to detect from Key View 7, and the existing residential structure located on site is blocked from view by dense clusters of mature trees and vegetation on the Project site.

#### **Analysis**

Implementation of the Project would alter the existing view from Key View 7, a visual simulation of the Project is provided in Figure 22b, Key View 7 – Camino Del Mar (South of Lagoon Bridge).

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Once constructed, the proposed development would be visible atop the bluff from this location. The introduction of the proposed resort development would result in a noticeable visual change along the eastern property boundary due the lack of any visible development currently atop the bluff as viewed from Key View 7. As proposed, the south-elevation of three-story resort villas along the eastern portion of the Project site would be partially screened by existing and proposed landscaping. However, the warm colors of natural wood elements, large windows and flat, angular rooflines and balconies on the structures would contrast from the round, dark green treetops under existing conditions. In addition to these structures, landscaping and structures displaying a natural wood element exterior in the southwestern corner of the Project site would be visible. These structures would display a low vertical profile and due to the warm color of exterior finishes, would tend to blend into surrounding landscaping and flat terrain in the westernmost portion of the bluff top.

In addition to the bluff top resort development, the proposed stairs that would provide beach access for the Project as well as new pedestrian access to the James G. Scripps Bluff Preserve, would add sharp angular lines and shadows to the east-facing slope of the bluff. The proposed restroom facility and roof observation deck would display tan and grayish tones and boxy shapes at the base of the east-facing slope. The light grey concrete supporting pillars and natural wood stairs and railing would zigzag from the roof of the restroom facility to the top of the bluff. Apart from the proposed restroom facility, roof observation deck and stair system the majority of the south- and east-facing slopes would remain unaltered and would retain its dense to dotted shrub and grass covered appearance and natural character.

While development would be visible, the majority of the Project would be obscured from view by existing and proposed landscaping and by intervening development on the Project site (i.e., the visible three-story villas). Visible development on the easterly portion of the Project site would be located in relatively close proximity to existing development in the view along the Camino Del Mar and Via de la Valle corridors that tend to display similar architectural elements (i.e., warm tones on building exteriors, flat rooflines, wood and glass building materials) as the Project. The bluff serves as a prominent focal point in the view, and the Project would change the visual character of the landform, but it would not result in substantial degradation.

### **5.3.8 Key View 8 – Del Mar Coastline south of North Beach**

#### **Existing View**

Located south of North Beach and the mouth of the San Dieguito River, Key View 8 is situated on the Del Mar coastline approximately 0.30 miles from the Project site. The Project site is visible in the middle ground from Key View 8, and is representative of views to the Project site available to beachgoers (local beach access is provided to the public off Camino Del Mar at 29th Street) and nearby beach residents located west of Camino Del Mar. As shown on Figure 23a, Key View 8 –



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Del Mar Coastline South of North Beach, the view looks north across the coastal waters and the sandy coastline of North Beach to the prominent southern and western bluff faces and bluff top underlying the Project site. The horizontal and vertical lines and light exterior colors of single-family beachfront residences to the immediate east of Key View 8 are visible. The shoreline and sandy beach is visible directly in the view and the Pacific Ocean is visible to the north and west. The lightly colored North Beach lifeguard tower is visible on the sand against a backdrop of the southeastern bluff face. The south- and southeast-facing slopes of the bluff are covered with primarily dry grasses and vegetation ranging from light to dark brown and dark green. An existing bluff access trail forms a faint, diagonal line across the southeastern bluff face that climbs the slope from west to east. The west-facing slope has exposed tan and gold sandy soils with horizontal striated lines and jagged crevices that cast dark shadows on the lower half of the bluff face, and slanted vertical lines from the top of the bluff with occasional patches of brown, dry vegetation on the upper half of the bluff face. North Beach appears to be characteristically busy with the activity of beachgoers. The existing structure located atop the bluff is not visible from Key View 8; instead, dense clusters of dark green, tall trees form soft, rounded lines atop the bluff.

### Analysis

A visual simulation of the Project as viewed from Key View 8 is provided on Figure 23b, Key View 8 – Del Mar Coastline South of North Beach. The top one to two stories of proposed three-story resort buildings would be partially visible from Key View 8, resulting in visual change atop the bluff. The natural wood elements in building exteriors, and flat, horizontal rooflines of three-story villas on the eastern portion of the Project site would be visible above the round, soft lines displayed by existing bluff top vegetation and landscaping. However, Project buildings would not dominate the view. Rather, the natural dark brown and grey colors displayed by exterior finishes in the south elevations of buildings depicted in Figure 23b would help the proposed development blend into the existing setting created by the dark greens displayed by existing landscaping. As a result, scale and color contrasts would be weak. Further, the subtle diagonal line created by the existing road/access trail would be removed and replaced with appropriate native shrubs (revegetation of the road is not depicted in Figure 23b). The proposed stairs would create a thin zigzag line on the east-facing slope of the bluff that would be noticeable but would not be visually prominent in the view. Vertical, concrete support pillars would be the most noticeable feature of the stair system, as the natural wood color of the stairs and railing would blend into the surrounding bluff landscape. As viewed from Key View 8, the introduction of the Project would not substantially degrade the existing character or quality of the site and surrounding area and views would not be substantially altered.

### 5.3.9 Key View 9 – Jimmy Durante Boulevard at San Dieguito River Bridge

#### Existing View

Key View 9 is located on Jimmy Durante Boulevard at the San Dieguito River crossing. As opposed to a view from the road in which the concrete walls and parallel metal railing of the bridge walls would be visible, Key View 9 approximates westerly views from the bridge available to pedestrians and hikers/walkers along the nearby San Dieguito River trail (see Figure 24a, Key View 9 – Jimmy Durante Boulevard at San Dieguito River Bridge). Located 0.65 miles away, the Project site is visible in the middle ground of Key View 9, which looks to the northwest across the San Dieguito River, beyond the Del Mar Fairgrounds to the brownish stippled, east-facing slope and flat bluff top of the Project site. From Key View 9, foreground views are dominated by the bluish waters and vegetated banks of the San Dieguito River, long, tan buildings topped with pitched, red, metallic roofs of the Del Mar Fairgrounds structures located north of the river and the taller, tan, and red-roof Del Mar Fairgrounds grandstand building to the north. The northern extent of a bridge that supports the railroad tracks is visible as it spans the river. The numerous dark support beams and flat, horizontal deck of the bridge create dark horizontal and vertical lines in the view. In the middle ground, mottled brown vegetation is visible on the east facing slopes of the bluff and dense clusters of trees are visible atop the bluff. The lightly colored roof and rectangular form of the existing structure located on the Project site is visible, but additional details are indistinct from Key View 9 due to the distance. With the exception of this element of development, dense and dark green trees characterize the Project site bluff top.

#### Analysis

A visual simulation of the Project at viewed from Key View 9 is provided on Figure 24b, Key View 9 – Jimmy Durante Boulevard at San Dieguito River Bridge. Due to the distance of the Project site from Key View 9 and the greater elevation of the Project site compared to the key view, indistinct and partially screened views of Project components atop the bluff would be available. As shown on Figure 24b, rooflines of proposed resort development would create a barely visible, stepped horizontal line atop the bluff that would replace the irregular, curved line displayed by the crowns of existing trees. Visible flat rooflines would generally replicate the horizontal lines displayed by foreground buildings and the warm colors of architectural finishes of the proposed development would help the Project blend in with the existing bluff terrain and vegetation (see Figure 24b). Further, the inclusion of two- to six-story buildings within the Del Mar Fairgrounds contributes multistory building mass and scale to the view. In addition to distance between Key View 9 and the Project site that reduces the apparent scale of Project buildings, these existing features establish a developed character in the view that reduce effects to the visual setting resulting from the introduction of the Project. Implementation of the Project would not result in substantial changes to the existing view in comparison to existing conditions.

### 5.3.10 Key View 10 – Balboa Avenue (City of Del Mar)

#### Existing View

Key View 10 is situated on Balboa Avenue, approximately 0.80 miles to the southeast of the Project site in a hilly, residential neighborhood of the City. From the elevated vantage point available at Key View 10, the existing view is an expansive, panoramic view of the Pacific Ocean and coastline. The Project site is visible in the background from Key View 10. The view encompasses residential development in the foreground, undeveloped terrain located south of the San Dieguito River and east of the railroad line, single-family and multifamily development and residential landscaping located west of the railroad line. In addition, the western extent of the Del Mar Fairgrounds, North Beach, and the bluff top Project site are visible from Key View 10 (Figure 25a, Key View 10 – Balboa Avenue [City of Del Mar]). Existing structures located on the southern parcel of the Project site are visible as slivers of light colors and angular lines from Key View 10. The density of landscaping on the Project site obscures existing structures such that available views are broken and structures are not visually prominent. Visible development tends to display boxy and rectangular forms and grayish tones as viewed from Key View 10 and lots routinely incorporate moderate to dense site landscaping that effectively obscures elements of development from view. Panoramic ocean views are prominent from Key View 10.

#### Analysis

A visual simulation of the Project as viewed from Key View 10 is provided on Figure 25b, Key View 10 – Balboa Avenue (City of Del Mar). Implementation of the Project would alter the existing visual character of the Project site from Key View 10. Although distant and indistinct, the majority of the structures associated with the proposed resort would be visible. Existing and proposed trees and shrubs that currently run along the southern boundary of the Project site would shield the ground-level elements of the Project from view; however, the mounded forms and lines and dark green color displayed by existing dense vegetation on site would be replaced by rectangular and lightly colored multilevel resort buildings (Figure 25b). Additionally, the proposed stair system on the southeast face of the bluff would be visible as it zigzags down the bluff face. However, the natural wood and warm color of the stair system would blend into the existing topography and vegetation and is not visually prominent. Both the restroom facility and stairs would be visible but faint.

Ocean views directly beyond the Project site from Key View 10 are not visually prominent in comparison to the uninterrupted ocean views available to the south of the site. Further, in some areas beyond the Project site, ocean views are generally not available due to the elevated form of the bluff and the presence of dense, mature vegetation atop the bluff. With implementation of the proposed development, vegetation would be removed from the site to accommodate resort buildings and grounds. The introduction of a

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multistory resort development on the primarily vacant site would alter existing views from this point; however, available ocean views would be minimally altered when compared to existing conditions. Furthermore, the quality and extent of existing unimpeded and uninterrupted ocean views available at Key View 10 to the west would not be altered by proposed development.

The flat bluff top would continue to display a primarily flat, horizontal form. As shown on Figure 25b, proposed development would contribute warm tan/brown tones and long rectangular forms to the bluff top. However, the buildings would display flat rooflines and as viewed from approximately 0.80 miles away, the Project would appear to exhibit comparable site coverage to that of existing development located west of the AMTRAK and NCTD Coaster rail corridor (see Figure 25b). In addition, existing development present in the view displays a varied architectural character and Project architecture would contribute to the existing visual variety displayed by visible commercial and residential development. While the proposed development would be evident from this view and would alter the existing character of the bluff top, the visual change depicted in Figure 25b would be experienced by a relatively limited of private residents and motorists, and the anticipated change would not constitute substantial degradation of the site and surrounding area.

### **5.3.11 Key View 11 – Camino Del Mar at Jimmy Durante Boulevard**

#### **Existing View**

Key View 11 is located on northbound Camino Del Mar, near the Jimmy Durante Boulevard split and Luzon Avenue. Situated approximately 0.90 miles south of the Project site, Key View 11 looks to the north along the northbound travel lane of Camino Del Mar to the partially screened Project site bluff top visible in the background. The view from Key View 11 includes hilly terrain developed with seemingly continuous rows of whitish and tan-colored residences in the City of Solana Beach (Figure 26a, Key View 11 – Camino Del Mar at Jimmy Durante Boulevard). From Key View 11, dense plantings are installed along the Camino Del Mar corridor and foreground vegetation to the north partially blocks the south-facing slope of the Project site from view. Further, at a distance of approximately 0.90 miles, architectural details of the existing structure located on the Project site are indistinct, and clear views to these elements are interrupted and partially concealed by existing site landscaping. The hilly and prominent terrain to the north in the City of Solana Beach is densely developed by residential structures, and the whitish to tan tones of building exteriors marked the distant terrain. While discontinuous due to the presence of mature, spreading vegetation along the Camino Del Mar corridor, ocean views are available to the northwest from Key View 11.

#### **Analysis**

A visual simulation of the Project as viewed from Key View 11 is provided on Figure 26b, Key View 11 – Camino Del Mar at Jimmy Durante Boulevard. As viewed from Key View 11, the resort

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development would display a low vertical profile and flat rooflines. These elements would be generally located central to the view and just above mature landscaping installed immediately adjacent to the bridge in the foreground. Due to the low profile and flat rooflines, proposed development atop the bluff would not be visually prominent in the landscape. The density of visible vegetation on site would be reduced to accommodate the Project; however, existing vegetation would be retained along the eastern and southern property boundary. As a result, the site would retain a semblance of its existing characteristics. In addition, the distance between Key View 11 and the Project site (approximately 0.90 miles) reduces the visual prominence of proposed resort buildings as experienced by local motorists on northbound Camino Del Mar at the Jimmy Durante Boulevard split. Further, Camino Del Mar and Jimmy Durante Boulevard are the dominant elements in the landscape and motorists are not provided continuous and long-duration opportunities for views away from the road and towards the Project site. Rather, glimpses to the Project site are available and motorists must pay attention to the immediate foreground (i.e., the road) to safely navigate the Camino Del Mar and Jimmy Durante Boulevard split and watch for other vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians. Further, the background bluff top (located 0.90 miles away) is noticeable over an approximate 370-foot long segment of the road. Along this stretch, views are available for approximately 8 seconds assuming a travel speed of 30 mph. Beyond this segment, the Project site is abruptly obscured from view as the elevation of the road descends and homes and trees shorten the length of the available northward views. Because the Project would not result in a substantial visual change from this point in comparison to existing conditions and the proposed resort buildings would not be visually prominent in the fleeting views to the Project site, the Project would not substantially degrade the existing character or quality of the site and surrounding area.

### 5.3.12 Key View 12 – Del Mar Plaza Roof Deck

#### Existing View

Key View 12 is located atop the rooftop dining and seating area within Del Mar Plaza, a shopping mall in the City, approximately 1.2 miles from the Project site, and looks to the north along Camino Del Mar and into the City of Solana Beach. The Project site is visible in the background from Key View 12. At Key View 12, restaurant furniture atop the rooftop deck, travel lanes, and median and streetscape plantings occupy immediate foreground views. Streetscape plantings, including the installation of tall and spreading pine trees and dense ficus trees (*Ficus* sp.), effectively conceal residential and resort development located to the northwest of Del Mar Plaza from view at Key View 12 ( Figure 27a, Key View 12 – Del Mar Plaza Roof Deck). The tan and gold colors of the south-facing slope of the Project site are visible from Key View 12, and faint, light colored lines displayed by the existing structures located on site are detectable. However, development on the Project site is indistinct and not visually prominent. Ocean views are available at Key View 12, and viewers are attracted to long and broad views of the ocean available from the elevated vantage point of the Del Mar Plaza.

### Analysis

A visual simulation of the Project as viewed from Key View 12 is provided on Figure 27b, Key View 12 – Del Mar Plaza Roof Deck. With implementation of the Project, views of the Project site from Key View 12 would be altered. However, due to distance between Key View 12 and the Project site, proposed resort development would be indistinct and would not be visually prominent (Figure 27b). While the scale and materiality of resort villas proposed near the southern property boundary would be visible from the Del Mar Plaza, the bulk of the proposed resort development would not be evident due to partial screening of the site associated with dense ficus trees installed in the foreground along Camino Del Mar. In addition, the Project would blend with the existing topography and landscape of the Project site due to distance and would not result in a substantial visual change as viewed from Key View 12.

### 5.3.13 Key View 13 – James Scripps Bluff Preserve Trail

#### Existing View

Key View 13 is located approximately 190 feet south of the Project site within the James Scripps Bluff Preserve area, atop the same bluff as the Project site. This area is comprised of the southern extent of the bluff-top with low-lying coastal shrub habitat and a small trail system where visitors are afforded panoramic views of the Pacific Ocean to the west. Key View 13 looks north toward the Project site along a bluff-top trail (see Figure 28a, Key View 13 – James Scripps Bluff Preserve Trail), and is representative of views of the Project site afforded to recreationists visiting the James Scripps Bluff Preserve. The Project site is visible in the foreground, beyond two parallel sandy, dirt trails, a vista point and surrounding low lying coastal shrub habitat. A low wood-post and chain fence is installed along the westernmost edge of the bluff, and a meandering, black chain-link fence chain continues along the bluff edge as it forms the western boundary of the existing on-site residential property. Chain-link fencing with barbed wire and periodic small, white rectangular signage separate the southern edge of the residential property from the James Scripps Bluff Preserve area, and delineates the northern Project site boundary. Existing vegetation and landscaping within the residential property is prominently visible. Vegetation consisting of dense clusters of various shrubs, and tall and mature pine (*Pinus* sp.), cypress (*Cupressus* sp.), and ficus trees (*Ficus* sp.) effectively conceal the existing residence, apart from small portions of the sandy-beige colored roof tiles and stone chimney. The Pacific Ocean and western face of the bluff are visible to the northwest. Viewer's attention is drawn to the expansive, panoramic views of the Pacific Ocean to the west.

#### Analysis

A visual simulation of the Project as viewed from Key View 13 is provided on Figure 28b, Key View 13 – James Scripps Bluff Preserve Trail. With implementation of the Project, views of the Project site from Key View 13 would be altered. The introduction of the Project would result in a

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noticeable visual change along the southern property boundary. Existing views of dense vegetation and trees would be replaced with views of one- to three-story resort development with flat, angular rooflines. As proposed, the south-elevation of three-story resort villas would be partially screened by existing and proposed landscaping. However, the warm colors of natural wood elements, large windows and flat, angular rooflines and balconies on the structures would contrast from the light to dark shades of green presented by existing vegetation. While the bulk, scale and materiality of structures proposed near the southern property boundary would be visible from Key View 13, these structures would display a low vertical profile with flat rooflines. Also, the Project would use warm colors for exterior finishes and screening landscape.

Additionally, it should be noted that views of the ocean and western face of the bluff landform would remain unchanged. Further, notable views from this location not exemplified in Figure 28a include panoramic views of the Pacific Ocean to the west, coastline views to the north and south, river and estuarine habitat to the southeast, and distant hilly terrain to the east.

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### 6 VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

The following significance criteria are based on Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines (14 CCR 15000 et seq.), and are used throughout this report to determine the significance of potential aesthetic impacts associated with construction and operation of the Project. Impacts to aesthetics and visual resources would be significant if the proposed Project would:

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

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

An important consideration of coastal development proposals in the City of Del Mar is the preservation of scenic views. The preservation of scenic views is established within the City's Municipal Code (see Section 2.2.3) and the City has a process for the restoration and preservation of private scenic views. Further, scenic views within the City of Del Mar include "views of the ocean, lagoons, canyons, the community and its landscapes and urban forest character" (City of Del Mar 2019). As demonstrated in Section 5 above, views of the ocean are available from public roads adjacent to the Project site and from public roads located atop elevated topography to the north and south in the Cities of Solana Beach and Del Mar. To assist in view preservation efforts the City has enacted height restrictions and a comprehensive design review process. For purposes of this assessment, a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista or view would occur where the majority of an existing view would be blocked or substantially interrupted or where a distinct landscape (or landform) is evident and implementation of a project would result in strong visual contrast in existing views.

As detailed in the Specific Plan (Dudek 2019), the Project would be oriented and spaced such that the proposed buildings and open space areas would maintain important vistas to the west, south, and east. For example, the proposed building orientation design has a transect that clusters the majority of development at its center (see Figure 2b) and a reduced scale of building along the perimeter, providing a transitional edge treatment for the areas visible from public spaces, such as nearby roadways and the beach. As proposed, the Project would feature a combination of one- to three-story structures, with the highest structures clustered in the central portion of the Project site. In accordance with the Specific Plan and City regulations for bluff development, structures would be required to be set back from the top of the bluff a minimum of 40 feet, further

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condensing structures toward the central, eastern and northern portions of the site. The heights of the proposed structures would be similar to the canopies of existing mature trees on site in order to minimally disrupt available coastal views from the surrounding area.

As described in Section 5.1 above, thirteen key views were identified and assessed to determine the anticipated visual contrast that would occur with implementation of the Project. While the key views are representative of views to the Project site available from roads, residences, and recreational areas in the proposed Project area, ten of the key views have been selected to assess potential Project impacts to scenic vistas and views. The selected key views (Key Views 1, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 and 13) include public vantage points in the Cities of Solana Beach and Del Mar at which “blue water” views and the Project site are experienced alongside one another. In addition, the selected key views include public vantage points at which the prominent, elevated form of the bluff comprising the Project site is distinct such that it may be considered by viewers a valued component of the City’s landscape. Key Views that were not selected for the following scenic vista analysis (Key Views 2, 3, 4) were excluded due to their lack of “blue water” views to the ocean or the prominent bluff landform. As such, these Key Views are not representative of scenic views. While key views did not specifically include residential views from private property, several of the key views (i.e., Key Views 1, 7, 8, 10 and 12) are located on public roads within/near residential neighborhoods and due to proximity, are representative of permanent private views available to residents. The potential adverse effects to scenic views resulting from the Project are addressed more specifically below for each identified key view.

### ***Key View 1: West Solana Circle View (City of Solana Beach)***

While located on West Solana Circle and representative of existing public views to the Project site provided to motorists, Key View 1 is also representative of existing private views to the Project site provided to nearby Solana Beach residences. Further, westerly views from this location are identified as a view corridor in Exhibit 4 of the Solana Beach General Plan (City of Solana Beach 1988). The Project site is visible in the middle ground approximately 0.25 miles from Key View 1.

At Key View 1, “blue water” ocean views are currently available to local motorists and residents on West Solana Circle and the elevated bluff underlying the Project site is evident due to the proximity of lower elevation land (e.g., North Beach) to the south (see Figure 16a). From Key View 1, the Project site appears as an elevated coastal bluff with steep and vegetated southeasterly facing slopes and dense to, at times, clumped landscaping (primarily mature trees) on the southern portion in the middle ground of the view. As illustrated in the visual simulation of the Project prepared from Key View 1, the introduction of a one- to three-story resort development on the primarily vacant Project site would alter the existing ocean view. The Project would result in a change in the site’s natural appearance, vegetation and trees, which contribute to the community’s landscapes and urban forest character. However, as described in Section 5.3.1, although the Project would result in a contrast from the existing visual character of the site, it would not substantially degrade the existing views to the ocean.

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### ***Key View 5 and 8: Del Mar Coastline Views***

Key Views 5 and 8 are both located on the beach and are representative of existing public views to the Project site provided to nearby beachgoers and water-based recreationists in the Pacific Ocean. The Project site is visible in the foreground approximately 120 feet from Key View 5 and middle ground approximately 0.3 miles from Key View 8.

At Key Views 5 and 8 the prominent form and distinct topography of the bluff are evident to viewers. While Project development would not be visible from Key View 5 (see Figure 20b; proposed buildings, landscaping, and amenities would be setback from the edge of the coastal bluff and obscured in the foreground view), these elements would be visible to boaters and other ocean recreationists located a greater distance from the coastline. However, as demonstrated in Key View 8 (see Figure 23b), at vantage points more distant than Key View 5, proposed development would occupy less of the visible landscape and would be viewed in the context of existing residential development. As such, implementation of the Project would not result in strong visual contrast or obscure scenic views as seen from Key Views 5 and 8.

### ***Key Views 6 and 7: Camino Del Mar Views***

Key Views 6 and 7 are both located on Camino Del Mar and are representative of foreground (Key View 6) and middle ground (Key View 7) views to the Project site afforded to motorists on public roads, private residences located immediately west of Key View 7 in the City of Del Mar, beachgoers and recreationist on the San Dieguito Lagoon trail. In addition, Camino Del Mar is designated as a scenic corridor by the City of Del Mar and the Community Plan specifically identifies ocean and lagoon views as scenic views available from the road (City of Del Mar 1976). The Project site is visible in the foreground approximately 230 feet from Key View 6 and middle ground approximately 0.25 miles from Key View 7.

While implementation of the Project would noticeably alter the existing character of the bluff top and east-facing slope as viewed from Key Views 6 and 7 (see Figures 21b and 22b), existing coastal and lagoon views from Camino Del Mar would not be obstructed or otherwise affected. Therefore, the Project would have no impact on existing scenic views (blue water” coastal and lagoon views) from Camino Del Mar that are specifically identified in and protected by the Community Plan; see also Section 5.3.6 and 5.3.7.

### ***Key View 9: Jimmy Durante Boulevard at San Dieguito River Bridge***

Key View 9 is located on Jimmy Durante Boulevard on a bridge that spans the San Dieguito River. Key View 9 is representative of westerly views from the bridge available to pedestrians and hikers/walkers along the nearby San Dieguito River trail (motorists’ views from the bridge would

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include intervening concrete walls and parallel metal railing of the bridge walls). The Project site is visible in the middle ground approximately 0.65 miles from Key View 9.

At Key View 9, “blue water” views of the San Dieguito River are prominent in the foreground, and views to the Project site are available in the distance beyond long white and red buildings within the Del Mar Fairgrounds and the railroad tracks. The prominent bluff top rises above the intervening development, and the mottled brown and tan appearance of the eastern bluff face is visible. The stepped, horizontal roofline of the Project would replace the crowns of existing dark green trees on site, however, the change in the scene would not attract attention. In addition, the distance between Key View 9 and the Project site would reduce the apparent scale of Project buildings, which would mimic the flat bluff top. Views of the San Dieguito River, which dominate the view, would remain unchanged.

### ***Key View 10: Balboa Avenue Views (City of Del Mar) and Key View 12: Del Mar Plaza Views***

Key Views 10 and 12 are both located in more distant, higher elevation vantage points within the City of Del Mar and are representative of both public and private views to the Project site and the coast and ocean. Viewers from these locations include motorists, patrons of the Del Mar Plaza mall and eateries, and private residences. The Project site is visible in the background approximately 0.8 miles and 1.2 miles from Key Views 10 and 12, respectively.

At Key Views 10 and 12, proposed resort development atop the bluff would be noticeable in the background in views from private and public vantage points. However, from relatively distant vantage points, Project development would be visible but would not dominate the scene, and the scale and mass of the Project would display similarities with the scale and mass of existing development in the surrounding area (see Figures 25b and 27b). Also, as viewed from these vantage points, one- to three-story structures on the Project site would not substantially alter coastal views (existing ocean views would primarily be maintained) and would not interrupt the scenic features of the view. Further, the prominent bluff landform would remain visible, and Project development would not attract visual focus because “blue water” ocean and lagoon views would dominate the scene.

### ***Key View 11: Camino Del Mar at Jimmy Durante Boulevard***

Key View 11 is located on northbound Camino Del Mar, near the Jimmy Durante Boulevard split and Luzon Avenue, and is representative of views of the Project site afforded to motorists. The Project site is visible in the background approximately 0.9 miles away from Key View 11.

At Key View 11, motorists are provided intermittent “blue water” ocean views and views to the bluff underlying the Project site. Views are interrupted or partially screened by intervening vegetation and infrastructure as motorists travel along the roadway. The Project would display a low vertical profile and flat rooflines atop the flat bluff (see Figure 26b). While the density of visible vegetation on site would be reduced, the replacement of existing on-site trees with resort

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development would be barely noticeable from Key View 11. Further, the Project would not result in increased blockage of “blue water” ocean or coastal views. The Project would not result in substantial visual changes from Key View 11.

### *Key View 13: James Scripps Bluff Preserve*

Key View 13 is located approximately within the James Scripps Bluff Preserve area, atop the same bluff as the Project site, and is representative of views of the Project site afforded to recreationists visiting the James Scripps Bluff Preserve. The Project site is visible in the foreground approximately 190 feet away from Key View 13.

At Key View 13, recreationists are afforded immediate foreground views of the Project site and the southern extent of the bluff-top with low-lying coastal shrub habitat and two parallel trails. The western bluff face and “blue water” ocean views are available to the northwest from Key View 13. The small trail system within the James Scripps Bluff Preserve provides visitors with panoramic views of the Pacific Ocean to the west. The introduction of the proposed resort development would result in a noticeable visual change along the southern property boundary. Existing views of dense, green vegetation and trees would be replaced with tan colored building facades, large windows and flat, angular rooflines. While Project development would be visible from Key View 13, Project structures and amenities would not substantially affect the long and broad westerly views of the ocean, coastline views to the north and south, river and estuarine habitat to the southeast, and distant hilly terrain to the east.

### *Summary*

As previously discussed, Project development would be visible in the key viewpoints analyzed for purposes of this threshold. Project elements (buildings, landscaping, and bluff access improvements) would be noticeable but would not be visually prominent or substantially detract from existing scenic views. As proposed, Project buildings would be sited so that the low intensity structures are located closest to the bluff to provide edge treatment and preserve views and open space. Taller buildings would be constructed along the more south, central and eastern portions of the Project site in an effort to reduce impacts on existing coastal views. As specified in the Specific Plan, buildings would be designed to follow the natural topography and display flat rooflines in order to preserve existing views to the extent practicable and minimize the appearance of bulk and massing. In summary, the Project not have a substantial effect on scenic vistas and impacts would **be less than significant**.

## Draft Visual Impact Assessment for the Marisol Project

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

There are no officially designated state scenic highways within close proximity to the City of Del Mar, nor any within the northwestern San Diego County region (Caltrans 2018). The nearest facility included in the State Scenic Highway Program, I-5, is located approximately 1.2 miles east of the Project site. From roughly Coronado north to SR-74 near San Juan Capistrano, I-5 is an Eligible State Scenic Highway under Caltrans' Scenic Highway Mapping System (Caltrans 2018).

Within this portion of Eligible State Scenic Highway, the Project site is temporarily visible to northbound I-5 motorists as the interstate passes Del Mar Heights Road and makes a noticeable descent as it approaches the San Dieguito Lagoon State Marine Conservation Area. Along this approximately 1.2-mile stretch of the interstate, the prominent bluff outcropping that underlies the Project site is visible in the distance in northwesterly views to the coast. As the Interstate spans the San Dieguito Lagoon State Marine Conservation Area motorists are provided views of estuarine habitat to the east and west. Westerly views also include densely vegetated hillsides with scattered development, coastal development within the City of Del Mar, the Del Mar Fairgrounds and the Pacific Ocean; easterly views also include densely vegetated hillsides with scattered development, the San Dieguito River valley framed by distant hills.

The westerly and northwesterly views to the coast and Project Site are available to motorists for approximately 66 seconds before being abruptly obscured by tall buildings at the Del Mar Fairgrounds. As such, motorists would be traveling through the scenic landscape as the I-5 spans the San Dieguito Lagoon State Marine Conservation Area for over 1 minute. However, the distance between I-5 and the Project site would reduce the apparent scale and mass of proposed development, and the Project would be relatively indistinct in views from northbound I-5. Further, due to the variety of visual elements in the scene it is anticipated that motorists would be primarily focused on the road and the foreground views of estuarine habitat rather than distant views to the coastal bluff located over one mile away.

The Project site is generally located outside the normal field of vision of southbound I-5 motorists in this area. As such, existing views available to motorists from southbound I-5 would not be noticeably altered by development of the Project. Lastly, proposed development would not entail removal or damage to historic buildings or trees within a state scenic highway. There are no historic buildings on site and trees proposed for removal as part of the Project would be appropriately mitigated. Specifically, there are 42 protected trees proposed for removal that require mitigation as part of the Project and 49 protected trees that would be retained on site. The 42 protected trees proposed for removal would be replaced with 77 new protected specimen trees. It should also be noted that trees within the Project site are not particularly discernible from I-5. No impact to an officially designated scenic highway would occur and the introduction of proposed

## Draft Visual Impact Assessment for the Marisol Project

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development on the Project site would result in minor visual change as experienced from I-5, an Eligible State Scenic Highway. Therefore, as I-5 is not an officially designated state scenic highway and visual changes would be minor as viewed from such a distance, impacts to scenic resources within the eligible state scenic highway would be **less than significant**.

### **Threshold C: Would the Project substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings?**

The development standards and design guidelines of the Specific Plan aim to carry out the goals and policies of the City's Community Plan and LCP, as amended in the Specific Plan. According to City regulations, proposed designs must be "appropriately scaled with other structures in the neighborhood" (23.08.077, C) and must be "in harmony with neighborhood character" in terms of design, scale, bulk, coverage and exterior appearance (30.31.060). In order to maintain scenic quality and ensure harmony with existing neighborhood character, the Specific Plan Design Guidelines govern site design, architectural character, building orientation, massing and scale, exterior materials and finishes, exterior lighting, walls, fencing and screening, landscaping and signage.

In accordance with the Specific Plan Design Guidelines (Dudek 2019), the Project would feature a combination of one-, two- and three-story structures, with the highest structures (maximum of 46 feet tall) clustered in the middle of the Project site to minimally disrupt existing coastal views available from off-site locations. Based on the Conceptual Site Plan (see Figure 2b), the siting and positioning of on-site buildings and the parking structure achieve a low profile resulting in primarily maintained coastal views from nearby private residential properties and outdoor gathering spaces (see Figure 16b, Figure 25b, and Figure 27b). Additionally, architectural design would emphasize horizontal elements over vertical ones to tie the buildings to the landscape. The placement of buildings considers the organic, undulating edges of the bluff and the existing natural topography in order to achieve a design that conceals building mass and scale and preserves views. The heights of the proposed structures (maximum of 46 feet) would be similar to the canopies of existing mature trees on site in order to minimally disrupt available coastal views from the surrounding area. Further, in accordance with the Specific Plan and City regulations for bluff development, structures would be required to be set back from the top of the bluff a minimum of 40 feet, condensing structures toward the central and eastern portions of the site.

Existing neighboring development adjacent to the north in Solana Beach consists of three- and four-story, multifamily condominium structures (e.g., the Del Mar Beach Club and Del Mar Shores Terrace). However, southerly views toward the Project site from the residential neighborhood immediately north of the Project site would be noticeably shortened (see Figure 17b). Southerly views of views of the primarily vacant, vegetated bluff top would be replaced with landscaping, access roads and multistory buildings. From certain public vantage points that view

## Draft Visual Impact Assessment for the Marisol Project

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the Project site from foreground and middle ground distances (see Key Views 1, 6, and 7), the Project would alter the primarily natural appearance of the bluff.

As previously mentioned, the removal of select vegetation from the Project site would be required to accommodate the proposed Project and would be noticeable from public vantage points in the surrounding area. However, site development would include the installation of new landscaping, and select tree species would be retained and relocated on site. Transitional edge treatments would be included in the areas visible from public spaces. Where appropriate, the edge treatment would include installation of landscaping to further soften the edge appearance. In addition, and as depicted on Figure 6, development of the site would include installation of bluff top restoration planting zones that would consist of a tailored plant palette of endemic shrub species to promote stabilization and beautification of the coastal environment. This area would provide a backdrop to the public access trail and enhance user experience of the walking and seating areas. It should be noted that the Project would result in the creation of new public vantage points with ocean and coastal views. Large open-space courtyard areas would provide coastal views and the proposed access path would provide new and improved pedestrian access to the James Scripps Bluff Preserve where visitors are provided panoramic ocean views.

The scale of proposed development would be noticeable when viewed from an immediate foreground distance such as from Border Avenue/South Sierra Avenue (see Key View 2; Figure 17b) or from within the James Scripps Bluff Preserve (see Key View 13; Figure 28b). From more distant viewing locations the apparent scale of proposed structures would be reduced. For example, as experienced at Key View 4, (i.e., Via de la Valle at South Cedros Avenue), the one- to three-story scale of proposed buildings (see Figure 19b) would be visible but would be comparable to the two- and three-story scale of surrounding development in the Via de la Valle corridor. Further, at Key View 8 (located 0.3 miles southwest of the Project site) the scale of the proposed development would be moderated by distance and existing trees on site that display comparable scale (see Figure 23b). And from coastal viewing locations and relatively distant and elevated vantage points such as Key View 11 and Key View 12, the mass and scale of the Project would be partially obscured by distance as well as existing and proposed landscaping (see Figures 26b and 27b).

In accordance with the Specific Plan, the Project would implement coastal-inspired architectural character that blends harmoniously with the character of existing surrounding development and coastal bluff. The colors of materials consist of warm, natural tones and may include the following materials: wood siding/rain screen, terra-cotta rain screen, synthetic wood composite, and cementitious composite siding. As experienced at Key Views 1, 2, 3 and 4, use of contemporary materials (primarily natural appearing wood) in architectural finishes of proposed buildings would be evident as the structures would display warm tones of brown that mimic natural wood (see Figures 16b, 17b, 18b, and 19b). Project architecture would incorporate lightly colored concrete



## Draft Visual Impact Assessment for the Marisol Project

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in the structural aspects of buildings. Similarly, lightly colored (and darker) finishes are currently displayed in the surrounding area by existing residential, office, and commercial development (see Figures 11, 12, and 13). As such, incorporation of lightly colored finishes would not be unique to the Project site and would not result in the substantial degradation of existing visual character and quality. Further, the architectural design would emphasize horizontal elements over vertical ones to tie the building to the landscape and to help reduce the appearance of height and scale. The horizontal form of proposed buildings is depicted in visual simulations prepared from Key Views 1, 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11 (see Figures 16b, 22b, 23b, 24b, 25b, and 26b). Subtle variations and site-specific adjustments of architectural facades would also be incorporated to help reduce scale and to appear as a more organic pattern of development while creating visual interest.

As detailed above, implementation of the Project would change the existing character of the primarily vacant site. From a visual perspective, the mass and one- to three-story scale of buildings on the Project site would be consistent with the massing of the surrounding area that includes two- to three-story scale buildings north of the Project site. Specifically, existing two-story multifamily development buildings are located north of the site along Border Avenue and South Sierra Avenue and a three-story office building is located approximately 70 feet away at the northwestern corner of Highway 101 and Border Avenue. These existing structures display primarily stucco exteriors and wood paneled roofs, and contribute multistory building scale and multibuilding properties to the immediate area.

Overall, implementation of the Project would alter the existing character and quality of the natural appearance of the site. As viewed from Key Views 1, 2, 6, 7, the natural bluff-top character would be replaced with that of resort development. Therefore, the introduction of multiple one- to three-story structures to the primarily vacant site would result in a substantial change to the character and quality of the distinct landform. However, as analyzed Section 5.3, Kew View Assessment, these changes do not represent a substantial degradation of visual character to the Project site and surrounding area.

**Threshold D: Would the Project create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?**

### *Construction*

The site is primarily undeveloped and contains limited sources of existing lighting and glare associated with the existing on-site residence. Construction of the Project would be limited to daylight hours between 7:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m., and construction lighting would not generally be required. However, construction activities including the delivery of materials and more focused earthwork or building construction occurring in later months of the year may temporarily require or result in a need for artificial lighting during nighttime hours. In these limited instances, construction

## Draft Visual Impact Assessment for the Marisol Project

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lighting would be focused on the active area of construction and would be directed downward to minimize the potential for light trespass and skyglow. Because potential sources of nighttime lighting during construction would not be regularly occurring, temporary use of limited construction lighting would not substantially affect existing nighttime views. Therefore, lighting and glare impacts to existing nighttime and daytime views during construction would be **less than significant**.

### *Lighting*

Operation of the proposed Project would introduce numerous sources of permanent exterior nighttime lighting. For example, new sources of lighting would be associated with proposed resort pathway/safety lighting, accent lighting, and architectural lighting (refer to Figure 3). As depicted on Figure 3, and as described in Chapter 4 and 5 of the Specific Plan (Dudek 2019), pathway lighting would be primarily located along the perimeter of the resort, framing the emergency access pathways. Illumination from pathway lighting would range from 1-5 foot-candles, and fixtures would be relatively low in profile, and would be directed away from adjacent properties and public rights-of-way. Also, low foot-candle lighting elements would primarily be installed along the development side (i.e., eastern side) of the loop trail closest to the bluff edge. Siting and the installation of low foot-candle fixtures would prevent light spillover from these sources onto the beach. Additionally, low-voltage lighting fixtures would be used along the loop trail. Accent lighting would be located throughout internal portions of the resort among open space areas and landscaping; providing lighting on focal points and objects surrounding the main road leading to the arrival court, pools and spas, fountains, and events garden. Illumination from accent lighting would range from 1-5 foot-candles and fixtures would be located low to the ground or in locations out of sight. Further and as stated in Table 1, lighting that is installed adjacent to open space areas (including the James G. Scripps Bluff Preserve) would be shielded and directed away from those areas so as to prevent light spillover. Architectural lighting would be located throughout the development in order to illuminate areas around the resort guestrooms and resort villas, and to emphasize elevation changes and barriers. Illumination from architectural lighting would range from 5-10 foot-candles.

Consistent with Design Guidelines outlined within Chapter 5 of the Specific Plan, lighting fixture selection for the Project would be tailored to frame each distinct area within the property while concentrating on prevention of light pollution and glare. Further, all lighting materials would be selected for their durability, suitability for the coastal environment, and compatibility with the resort's architecture. In addition, all exterior lighting fixtures would be positioned to illuminate outdoor use areas such as pools, spas, event gardens, internal walkways, and the arrival court and other drop-off areas. Energy conservation, safety, and security would be emphasized when designating the lighting system. The Project would incorporate gradual reduction of light intensity between major points of activity, in order to provide the desired modulation of light without sacrificing safety and utility. Additionally, lighting illumination would be directed downward to minimize the spread of the beam, and all exterior lights would be hooded or shielded.

## Draft Visual Impact Assessment for the Marisol Project

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Lighting fixture types, quantities, and locations would be taken into consideration to accommodate on-site needs, the surrounding environment, and City lighting policies. In addition, the Specific Plan indicates the installation of low foot-candle lighting elements across the majority of the Project site and lighting installed adjacent to open space areas would be shielded and directed away from those areas to prevent light spillover. However, implementation of the proposed Project would substantially increase of the amount of operational lighting atop the bluff in comparison to existing conditions. As existing development on site is primarily shielded from public viewing by existing landscaping and setback, the visibility of nighttime lighting at the Project site under existing conditions is extremely limited. Therefore, the introduction of multiple sources of nighttime lighting to the primarily vacant site associated with the proposed development would result in a **potentially significant impact** related to existing nighttime views and more specifically, light trespass onto adjacent residential properties to the north.

With implementation of Mitigation Measure VIS-1, impacts associated with Project lighting and light trespass onto adjacent residential properties would be reduced to a less than significant level.

**Mitigation Measure VIS-1:** The Project applicant shall prepare a detailed Lighting Plan and photometric study for the proposed development. The Lighting Plan shall be prepared by a qualified lighting engineer or lighting profession. The Lighting Plan shall indicate the location of all lighting fixtures to be installed and the intensity/characteristics of each luminaire. A detailed lighting schedule shall be included in the Lighting Plan. A photometric study that details anticipated light spillover and light levels on adjacent properties and roads shall also be prepared and submitted to the City of Del Mar for review and comment.

### *Glare*

The architectural and environmental design of the Project would include potentially reflective surfaces. Glass and rooftop solar panels are the primary sources of potential glare that would be installed on the Project site. Regarding glass associated with windows, walls or other elements of proposed buildings, the Specific Plan includes glass specifications that would minimize potential glare generated by glass elements. For example, the Specific Plan includes specifications that installed glass should be highly transparent with low reflectivity and little to no color tinting. Also, all installed glass shall be required to meet California Building Code standards. Installation of low reflectivity glass would minimize opportunities for Project buildings to generate daytime glare that would be received by off-site receptors and adversely affect the quality of daytime views. Further, proposed building roofs would be lightly colored “cool roofs” in order to minimizing solar heat gain into buildings and minimize the potentially reflective properties of roof finishes.

## Draft Visual Impact Assessment for the Marisol Project

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As indicated in the Specific Plan, solar panels may be installed on proposed buildings to generate on-site electricity for use in Project operations. If installed, rooftop solar panels would primarily display flat, horizontal form that would mimic the horizontal form of proposed building roof line. While specific panels and racking systems to support the rooftop panels are not yet known, this analysis assumes that the greatest potential for glare to be generated by proposed solar panels and received at off-site land uses (including residential land uses to the east) would be during late afternoon/evening hours. In the hours approaching sunset, the sun lowers towards the western horizon and displays an increasingly low angle in the sky. Despite the potential for rooftop solar panels to generate glare received at off-site viewing locations, photovoltaic solar panels would feature a dark surface and anti-reflective coating. In addition, photovoltaic solar panels are designed to be highly absorptive of all light that strikes the panel surfaces, generating electricity rather than reflecting light. In regards to glare and reflectance levels, typical solar panels have a lower index of refraction/reflectivity than common sources of glare in residential and commercial environments include steel, standard glass, plexiglass, and smooth water (Shields 2010). The glare and reflectance levels of most modules are further reduced with the incorporation of stippled glass “texturing” that allows more light energy to be channeled/transmitted through the glass while weakening the reflected light. With application of anti-reflective coatings and use of modern glass technology, proposed rooftop solar panels installed at the Project would display overall low reflectivity. As such, the potential installation of solar panels atop proposed buildings would not create a new source of substantial glare that would adversely affect daytime views in the area. Impacts would be **less than significant**.

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SOURCE: DUDEK

FIGURE 1

Project Location

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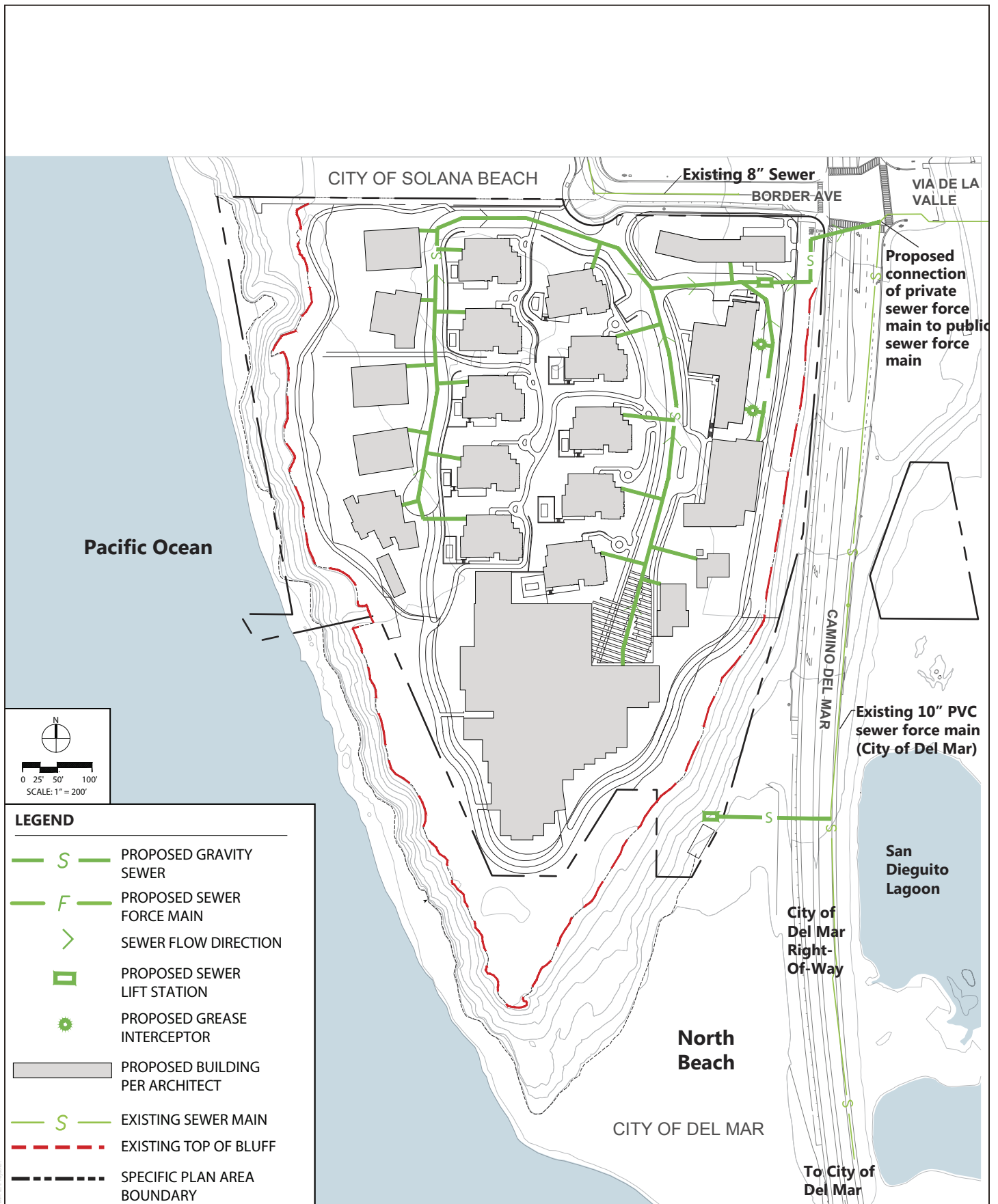
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**FIGURE 2a**

**Land Use Plan**

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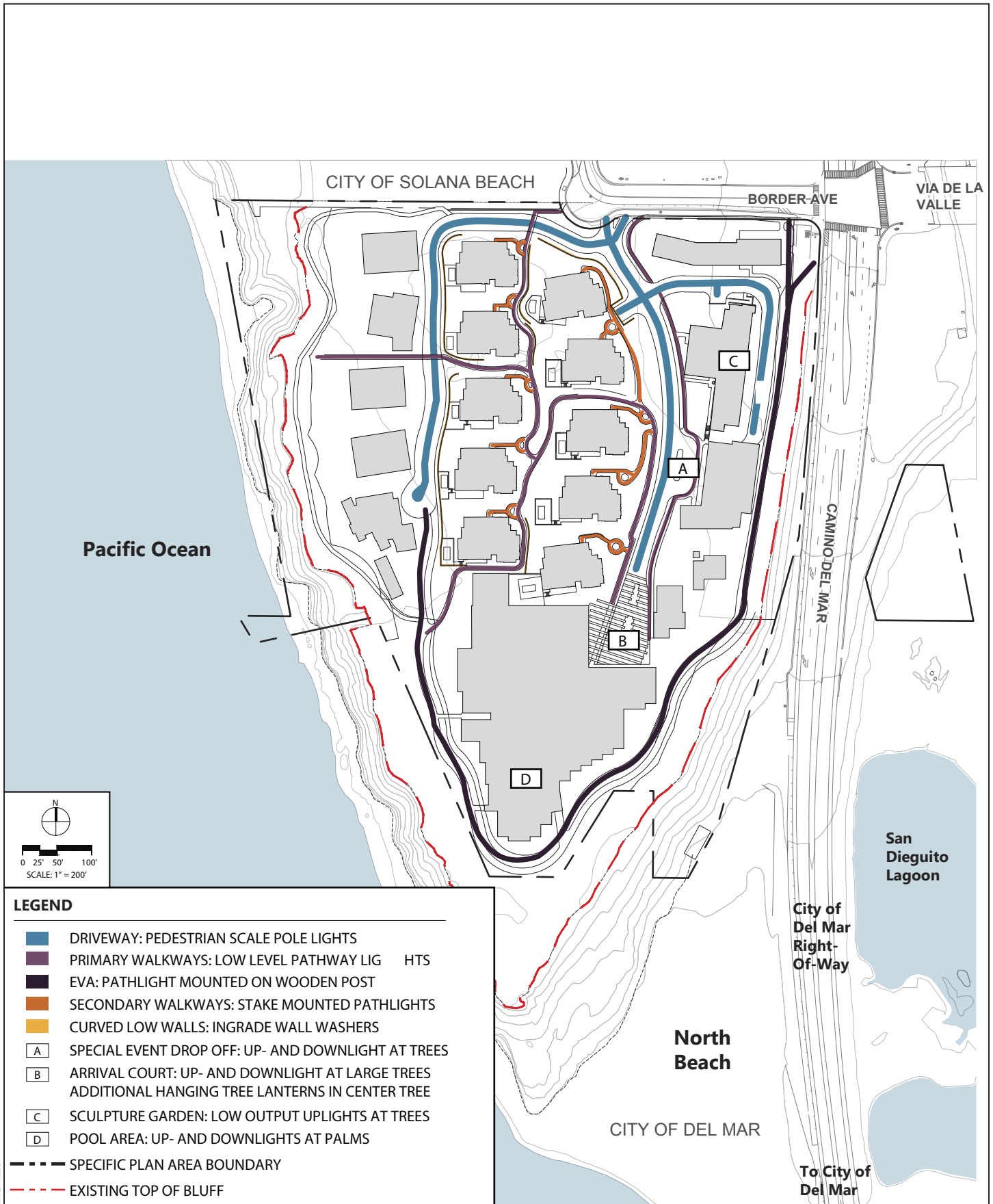
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**FIGURE 2b**

**Conceptual Site Plan**

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SOURCE: DUDEK

**FIGURE 3**

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SOURCE: MARSOL

**FIGURE 4**

## Conceptual Fencing

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SOURCE: MARSOL

FIGURE 5

## Conceptual Signage

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SOURCE: DUDEK

FIGURE 6

## Conceptual Planting Plan

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SOURCE: SANGIS 2017



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Photo A: Looking southwest from northeastern corner of the Project Site



Photo B: Looking west from Border Avenue to north portion of Project Site, access easement/path (no coastal access provided), and adjacent residential buildings



Photo C: Looking west from previously disturbed central portion of Project Site



Photo D: Looking east to landscaping on previously disturbed central portion of Project Site

**FIGURE 9**

**Project Setting (1 of 5)**

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Photo E: Looking north from southern portion of Project Site to existing on-site residence, landscaping and paths



Photo F: Looking south from southern portion of Project Site towards Del Mar coastline



Photo G: Looking north from James G. Scripps Bluff Preserve (Del Mar) to southern portion of Project Site



Photo H: Looking south from Border Avenue to driveway to central and southern portions of Project Site

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**FIGURE 10**

## Project Setting (2 of 5)

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Photo I: Looking northwest from South Sierra Avenue to two-story residential development and landscaping in Solana Beach



Photo J: Looking north from Border Avenue to three-story office development in Solana Beach



Photo K: Looking west from South Sierra Avenue to two-story residential development in Solana Beach



Photo L: Looking west from Highway 101 sidewalk to three-story hotel and two-story Solana Beach City Hall development

**FIGURE 11**

**Project Setting (3 of 5)**

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Photo M: Looking southwest from Highway 101 sidewalk to commercial, residential, and hotel development in Solana Beach



Photo N: Looking north from Camino Del Mar pedestrian bridge (Del Mar) to North Beach and Project Site



Photo O: Looking southwest from Camino Del Mar to the Brigantine Restaurant and San Dieguito Lagoon in Del Mar



Photo P: Looking east from James G. Scripps Bluff Preserve (Del Mar) to San Dieguito Lagoon, Del Mar Fairgrounds and surrounding area

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**FIGURE 12**

**Project Setting (4 of 5)**

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Photo Q: Looking west from Via de la Valle (Del Mar) to residential development, landscaping, and Project Site



Photo R: Looking north from River Path (Del Mar) across San Dieguito Lagoon to Project Site and Del Mar and Solana Beach residential development



Photo S: Looking southwest from West Solana Circle (Solana Beach) to residential development, Project Site, and ocean



Photo T: Looking southeast from South Cedros Avenue (Solana Beach) to two-story residential development in varied architectural styles

**FIGURE 13**

**Project Setting (5 of 5)**

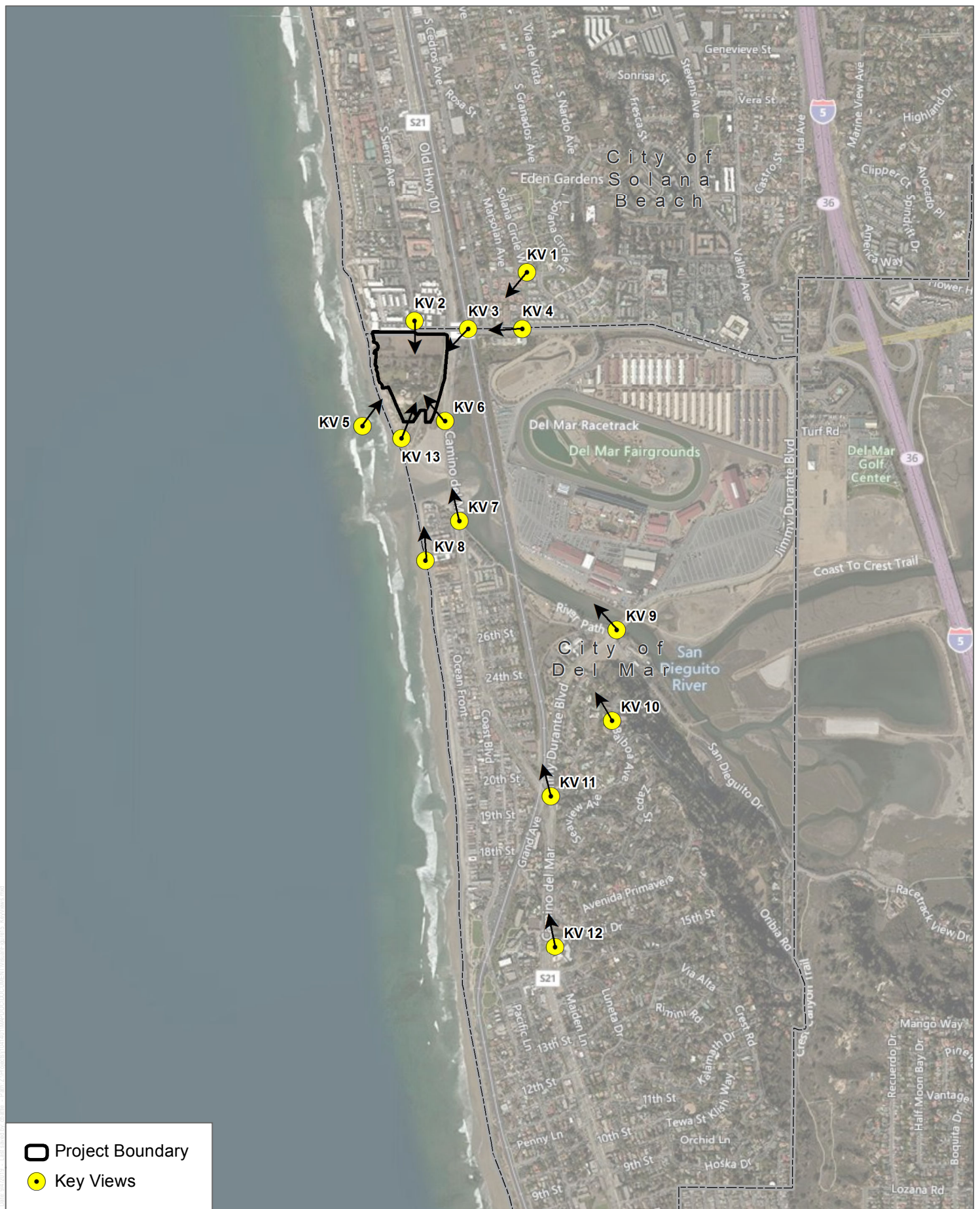
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SOURCE: Bing Maps 2018

**FIGURE 15**  
**Key Views**

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Existing view southwest from West Solana Circle towards Project Site (located approximately 0.25-mile away)

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Existing view south from South Sierra Avenue towards Project Site (located approximate 130 feet away)

**FIGURE 17a**

**Key View 2 - South Sierra Avenue (City of Solana Beach)**

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Conceptual Visual Simulation of Project

**FIGURE 18b**

**Key View 3 - Via de la Valle at Highway 101**

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Existing view west from Via de la Valle towards Project site (located approximately 420 feet away)

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Existing view east from the Del Mar Beach towards the Project site (located approximately 120 feet away)

**FIGURE 20a**

Key View 5 - Del Mar Coastline northwest of North Beach

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Conceptual Visual Simulation of Project (Project Not Visible)

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Existing view northwest from Camino Del Mar towards the Project site (located approximately 230 feet away)

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Conceptual Visual Simulation of Project

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Existing view northwest from Camino Del Mar towards Project site (located approximately 0.25-mile away)

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Existing view north from Del Mar coastline towards Project site (located approximately 0.30-mile away)

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Existing view northwest from Balboa Avenue towards Project site (located approximately 0.80-mile away)

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### Conceptual Visual Simulation of Project

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Existing view northwest from Camino Del Mar towards Project site (located approximately 0.90-mile away)

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Existing view north from Del Mar Plaza towards Project site (located approximately 1.2 miles away)



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Existing view north from James Scripps Bluff Preserve Trail towards Project site (located approximately 190 feet away)

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Conceptual Visual Simulation of Project

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