

5.1 Aesthetics

The analysis in this section of the EIR addresses the potential impacts associated with aesthetics that may occur due to implementation of the proposed Collier Park Renovations Project.

5.1.1 Regulatory Framework

5.1.1.1 State

California Scenic Highway Law

The California Scenic Highway Law of 1963 created the California Scenic Highways Program to preserve and protect scenic highway corridors from change that would diminish the aesthetic value of adjacent lands. The State Scenic Highway System includes a list of highways that are either officially designated as scenic highways by the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) or eligible for designation. Scenic highway nominations are evaluated using the following criteria:

- The proposed scenic highway is principally within an unspoiled native habitat and showcases the unique aspects of the landscape, agriculture, or man-made water features;
- Existing visual intrusions do not significantly impact the scenic corridor;
- Strong local support for the proposed scenic highway designation is demonstrated; and
- The length of the proposed scenic highway is not short or segmented.

Once a scenic highway is designated, the responsibility lies with the local jurisdiction to regulate development within the scenic highway corridor.

5.1.1.2 Local

City of La Mesa General Plan

The Land Use and Urban Design Element of the adopted La Mesa General Plan (City of La Mesa 1996) identifies the major elements of the City of La Mesa's community image, which are used as a base for developing the City's Urban Design Program (described below). The Conservation and Open Space Element identifies a varied landform of hillsides, canyons and mesas as a basic component which defines the character of La Mesa. Views of major landforms are considered important.

City of La Mesa Urban Design Program

The goal of the Urban Design Program (City of La Mesa 1987) is to preserve and enhance the City of La Mesa's existing community character and sense of place by developing projects and programs that build upon positive design features. The Urban Design Program identifies the following objectives:

- 1) Promote and preserve the positive community identity of the City of La Mesa.
- 2) Enhance the visual quality and continuity of the community through consistent circulation patterns, definition of community edges and boundaries, distinct gateways and nodes, and removal of visually disruptive elements.

5.1 AESTHETICS

- 3) Promote and protect the identity of the community's unique neighborhoods and districts.
- 4) Insure high quality community design for new construction and renovation, and conservation of historically and architecturally important districts, groupings, streetscapes, and structures.
- 5) Encourage energy conservation and safety conscious design methods for new development.
- 6) Continue the recognition of the hills and vegetation as dominant physical features and elements of the City of La Mesa.
- 7) Provide programs and plans that give direction and guidelines for the preparation, review, and establishment of specific design areas within the community.

The Urban Design Program incorporates a comprehensive approach to the issues of urban design, including community-wide, neighborhood, site-specific, and building guidelines for all new development and redevelopment. The Urban Design Program contains a Community Image Diagram which represents the location and interrelationships of the community image elements as they occur within La Mesa, including paths, edges, landmarks, districts, nodes, groupings, gateways, panoramic views, and vistas. The Urban Design Program also designates visually sensitive areas that may be incorporated into the Urban Design Overlay Zone (described below in the Zoning Ordinance discussion).

City of La Mesa Zoning Ordinance

La Mesa Municipal Code Title 24, Zoning, regulates the use of all land within the City of La Mesa through the establishment of zoning districts which are intended to implement the principal objectives of the Land Use Element and other related elements of the La Mesa General Plan. The Zoning Ordinance identifies specific development regulations and standards for each zoning district regarding the permitted structures and uses of zones, maximum allowable densities, minimum lot size and dimension, maximum structure height, and parking, as well as other limitations. The project site and surrounding area are designated for neighborhood commercial, residential business, and suburban and multiple unit residential development.

The Zoning Ordinance also establishes overlay zones that modify the provisions of the underlying zones for specific purposes, but do not modify the relative intensity of one zone to another. The overlay zone that applies to the project site is the Scenic Preservation Overlay Zone. The Scenic Preservation Overlay Zone establishes regulations for the recognized scenic areas within the City, the character of which could be permanently damaged by actions involving the development and use of land without special regulations to prevent or mitigate such damage. Section 24.09 of the City's Municipal Code includes the following regulations that apply to the Scenic Preservation Overlay Zone, including the project site:

- 1) The improvement of the building site either initially or after a principal use has been established shall not involve alteration of the surface of the land by construction, excavation, filling, or otherwise, through which trees would be removed, water courses would be altered, or earth banks exceeding three feet in height would be created unless the development is first submitted to and approved by the Planning Commission.
- 2) Insofar as feasible, natural topography, vegetation, and scenic features of the site shall be retained and incorporated into each proposed development. The design of the foundation and structure for each proposed building shall accommodate the natural terrain with minimal grading. All other uses of the land including swimming pools, parking areas, etc., shall be subject to the general requirements for buildings.

- 3) All building sites shall be landscaped and maintained. In connection with each proposed development, a landscaping plan shall be submitted with the application for building permit. Such plan shall show location, size, and type of all trees proposed to be removed together with the size, location, and type of all trees proposed for replacement. All specimen trees shall be replaced with healthy trees also of specimen size except where this requirement is relieved by the Planning Commission upon justification.
- 4) All natural or created earth slopes shall be provided with a permanent underground irrigation system. All disturbed earth must be planted to control erosion. All vegetation on either artificial or natural slopes shall be maintained.

Another overlay zone, the Urban Design Overlay Zone, does not apply to the project site but applies to areas south and west of the project site. The Urban Design Overlay Zone is used to supplement the required land use regulations reviewed under the standard provisions of the Zoning Ordinance. Projects developed within this Overlay Zone will be evaluated on their compliance with both the unique design criteria that pertain to the visually sensitive areas within the City and development guidelines established by the City's Urban Design Program.

Additionally, La Mesa Municipal Code Chapter 24.05 establishes permission, regulations, and requirements for the establishment and continuance of uses and structures in each residential zone. With regard to exterior lighting in all residential zones, the Zoning Ordinance states the following (La Mesa Municipal Code Section 24.05.020.D.15):

Exterior lighting shall be compatible with residential use. All lighting shall be designed, installed and maintained to project the light primarily on the owner's property. This may require the use of shields, and may limit the location, type and height of light fixtures. Any light falling on adjacent properties shall be minimal and incidental. Lighting shall be focused directly on the owner's property, and shall not be focused on adjacent properties.

5.1.2 Existing Conditions

5.1.2.1 On-Site Visual Elements

The project site is located within a Scenic Preservation Overlay Zone, as defined by the City's Zoning Ordinance (La Mesa Municipal Code Title 24). Collier Park is characterized by the presence of both developed and undeveloped areas. Only the southern and western portions of the park, referred to as the Panhandle area, have been developed. Existing recreational use facilities in the Panhandle area include a lit tennis court, tot lot playground, restrooms, picnic area with several tables and barbeques, and parking lot for 25 cars. In addition, a Spring House and drinking fountain are located in the Panhandle area. Collier Park and the Spring House are designated as a La Mesa Historical Landmark, but the Spring House has suffered considerable structural damage over the years and has been closed for occupancy since 1981 due to its deteriorated condition. Other built features of the park include a concrete-lined drainage channel and concrete rubble bridge and stairway. The drainage channel transects the southern half of Collier Park, running from Pasadena Avenue to just north of the existing playground, where it discharges into an underground storm drain line. A natural spring, emanating from beneath the Spring House, discharges into the drainage channel through a small pipe just east of the Spring House. A segment of Pasadena Avenue bisects the park and is used as a through street between

5.1 AESTHETICS

Palm Avenue and 4th Street/Upland Street to access surrounding residences. Pasadena Avenue winds through the park following the natural terrain along the base of the steep hillside that slopes up toward the northern boundary of the park.

The topography of Collier Park ranges from relatively flat, primarily in the Panhandle area, to steep hillsides sloping up to the primarily undeveloped northern and eastern portions of the park, corresponding to the History Hill and Collier Club House areas, respectively. Elevations range from approximately 500 feet above mean sea level to approximately 545 feet above mean sea level, generally from south to north. The History Hill and Collier Club House areas generally consist of steep hillsides with vegetation, including old-growth trees and ornamental plantings, as well as isolated patches of disturbed land. Three general vegetation communities or land use types occur with Collier Park: urban/developed land, non-native vegetation/ornamental, and disturbed habitat.

5.1.2.2 Off-Site Visual Elements

The area surrounding Collier Park is characterized by multi-family residential development to the north, single-family residential development to the east, commercial and multi-family residential development to the south, and commercial, institutional (church), and residential development to the west. The developments to the immediate east, south, and west of the park are located within the Scenic Preservation Overlay Zone, as defined by the City's Zoning Ordinance (La Mesa Municipal Code Title 24). The Scenic Preservation Overlay Zone is applied to recognized scenic areas in the City of La Mesa, the character of which could be permanently damaged by actions involving the development and use of land without special regulations to prevent or mitigate such damage. The area surrounding the project site includes rolling hill topography that is considered important to the City's character. Developments to the immediate south and west of the park are also located with the Urban Design Overlay Zone. The Community Image Diagram contained in the La Mesa Urban Design Program (City of La Mesa 1987) does not identify any panoramic views or vistas in the vicinity of Collier Park.

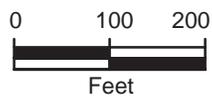
5.1.2.3 Key Vantage Points

Available views to and from a site are affected by distance, viewing angle, and the number and type of visual obstacles, both natural and man-made. Views can be from stationary sources, such as homes or businesses, or from mobile sources, predominately from vehicles. The visibility of an object or area mainly depends on the distance from the viewer. The further an object or area is from the viewer, the less distinct the object or area becomes, and there is greater possibility of intervening objects blocking all or part of the view.

Figure 5.1-1 illustrates the locations of key vantage points (KVPs) that provide representative views of Collier Park. KVP 1 through KVP 3 are views from within park and illustrate the existing on-site conditions. KVP 4 through KVP 6 are from off-site locations that depict views of the park from surrounding areas. The existing public view corridors of the park are the views looking east from Palm Avenue, west from 4th Street/Upland Street, and internally along Pasadena Avenue within the park. The existing view from each of the KVPs is described below.



Source: Google Map 2010



VANTAGE POINT LOCATIONS
FIGURE 5.1-1

KVP 1 (View Looking Northwest from Southeast Corner of Collier Park)

KVP 1, shown in Figure 5.1-2, presents the view looking northwest across the project site from the southeast corner of the park. The foreground of the view shows the slope and existing vegetation within the History Hill area. Views of the Spring House in the midground view are heavily obstructed by trees and vegetation. The playground, tennis court, and lawn within the Panhandle area are partially visible through the vegetation. A multi-family residential building on the top of the hill across Palm Avenue is visible in the background of the view. Any other background views are obstructed by onsite vegetation.

KVP 2 (View Looking South from Pasadena Avenue Just East of the Spring House)

KVP 2, shown in Figure 5.1-2, presents the view looking south across the project site from Pasadena Avenue near the middle of the park, east of the Spring House. This view consists of the Panhandle area. The foreground of the view features the Spring House on the west (right), drinking fountain structure in center and a concrete-lined drainage channel and stone bridge on the east (left). The slope and existing vegetation of the History Hill area toward the eastern boundary of the park can be seen in the midground and background along the east (left) side of the view. The center of the background view features the playground and tennis courts within the Panhandle area. Existing trees and structures block views of the residences and commercial development to the south of the project site.

KVP 3 (View Looking South From High Point at Northern Park Boundary)

KVP 3, shown in Figure 5.1-3, presents the view looking south from the high point of the park near the northern park boundary within the Collier Club House area. The elevation of this high point (approximately 545 feet above mean sea level) is approximately 45 feet above the low point of the park in the Panhandle area (approximately 500 feet above mean sea level). The foreground of the view shows a flat, disturbed area. Dense vegetation is visible in the background of the view, which is located at the top of a steep slope. Due to the difference in elevation, the remaining areas of the park are not visible from this viewpoint, with the exception of the tops of tall trees located throughout the park. An offsite slope is partially visible to the west (right) in the background of the view due to intervening vegetation.

KVP 4 (View Looking West from 4th Street/Upland Street Park Entrance)

KVP 4, shown in Figure 5.1-3, presents the view looking west from the intersection of Pasadena Avenue and 4th Street/Upland Street at the eastern entrance of the park. The foreground of the view consists of a paved segment of Pasadena Avenue, which follows the natural terrain along the base of the steep hill to the north. A chain-link fence restricts access to the undeveloped portions of Collier Park on both sides (north and south) of Pasadena Avenue. Pasadena Avenue does not include any streetscaping in this area of the park, although some rocks are visible along the southern side of the roadway, and a few trees are visible along the alignment in the midground and background of the view. The midground view includes the Spring House and the lawn area to the south of the structure. The tennis court in the Panhandle area is partially visible in the south (left) side of the view due to intervening vegetation. The slope and existing vegetation in the Collier Club House area can be seen in the northern (right) portion of the view. Background views are obstructed by onsite vegetation.



KVP 1: View looking northwest from the southeast corner of Collier Park.



KVP 2: View looking south from Pasadena Avenue, east of the Spring House.



KVP 3: View looking south from the high point of the park near the northern boundary.



KVP 4: View looking west from the intersection of Pasadena Avenue and 4th Street/Upland Street at the eastern entrance of the park.

KVP 5 (View Looking Southeast from Palm Avenue Park Entrance)

KVP 5, shown in Figure 5.1-4, presents the view looking southeast from the western entrance of the park at the intersection of Palm Avenue and Pasadena Avenue. A rock and landscaping feature is located at the entrance of the park in the foreground. A fire hydrant and wiring associated with an above ground utility line are located adjacent to the landscaping feature. The foreground of the view includes the lawn and picnic area within the Panhandle area. A patch of landscaping separates the picnic area from Palm Avenue in the western (right) midground view. Single-family residential lots are visible to the west along Palm Avenue. The existing restroom facilities are visible behind the picnic area in the center of the midground view. The steep hill that slopes up toward the northern boundary of the park within the Collier Club House area can be seen along the northern (left) periphery of the view. A portion of the commercial building adjacent to the southern boundary of the park is partially visible in the background of the view due to intervening trees and the restroom structure.

KVP 6 (View Looking East from Palm Avenue West of the Spring House)

KVP 6, shown in Figure 5.1-4, presents the view looking east from Palm Avenue just north of the parking lot toward the Spring House. The foreground of the southern portion of the view shows palm tree landscaping along the western edge of the park, the lawn and picnic area, and the restroom facilities. This vantage point provides a clear view of the steep hillside that slopes up toward the northern boundary of the park (Collier Club House area), with the alignment of Pasadena Avenue following the natural terrain along its base. Spring House, the Spring House lawn and picnic area, and an above-ground utility line are also visible in the center of the midground view. The slope and existing vegetation of the History Hill area toward the eastern boundary of the park are visible behind the Spring House in background of the view. Onsite trees obstruct views of the residences located east of the park.

5.1.2.4 State Scenic Highways

The two-mile segment of State Route 125 from State Route 94 to Interstate 8 is the closest designated scenic highway to Collier Park (Caltrans 2007). This segment is located approximately one-quarter mile southeast of Collier Park. Views from this roadway include Mount Helix, distant views of Cowles Mountain to the northwest, and Dictionary Hill and San Miguel Mountain to the south and southeast. Due to distance and intervening development and topography, Collier Park is not visible from this highway.

5.1.3 Thresholds of Significance

According to Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, a significant impact to aesthetics would occur if implementation of the proposed project would:

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



KVP 5: View looking southeast from the western entrance of the park at the intersection of Palm Avenue and Pasadena Avenue.



KVP 6: View looking east from Palm Avenue, north of the existing parking lot.

5.1.4 Impacts

5.1.4.1 Scenic Vistas

Threshold 1: Would the project have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?

Within the City of La Mesa, natural landforms such as hillsides, canyons, and gently sloping mesas create a dramatic and varied terrain. No scenic vistas are designated in the adopted La Mesa General Plan (City of La Mesa 1996). Major landforms and visual resources in the City include Cowles Mountain, Mount Helix, Mount Nebo, and Lake Murray. Views of these resources are currently not visible from the project site.

Views from within the park and from the surrounding areas looking toward the park are generally limited to the park itself due to existing onsite trees, structures and vegetation. Collier Park is located within a Scenic Preservation Overlay Zone that includes the residential development to the south, east, and west of the park. The project's consistency with the Scenic Preservation Overlay Zone requirements is provided in Table 5.1-1.

Table 5.1-1 Project Consistency with Scenic Preservation Overlay Zone

Scenic Preservation Overlay Zone Requirement (La Mesa Municipal Code Chapter 24.09)	Project Consistency
The improvement of the building site either initially or after a principal use has been established shall not involve alteration of the surface of the land by construction, excavation, filling, or otherwise, through which trees would be removed, water courses would be altered, or earth banks exceeding three feet in height would be created unless the development is first submitted to and approved by the Planning Commission.	As required by the zoning ordinance, the site plan for the proposed project would be subject to Planning Commission approval.
Insofar as feasible, natural topography, vegetation, and scenic features of the site shall be retained and incorporated into each proposed development. The design of the foundation and structure for each proposed building shall accommodate the natural terrain with minimal grading. All other uses of the land including swimming pools, parking areas, etc., shall be subject to the general requirements for buildings.	Although substantial grading would occur, the proposed project would generally maintain the existing topography of the site. The Collier Club House area would continue to be the high point of the project site, and the site would continue to slope upward toward the eastern boundary as well. The proposed amphitheater would utilize the existing terrain in the History Hill area, and the Collier Club House would be located in an existing graded, flat area at the highest point of the site. In addition, although much of the existing vegetation would be removed, the proposed project would include new landscaping and irrigation systems intended to upgrade the site.
All building sites shall be landscaped and maintained. In connection with each proposed development, a landscaping plan shall be submitted with the application for building permit. Such plan shall show location, size, and type of all trees proposed to be removed together with the size, location, and type of all trees proposed for replacement. All specimen trees shall be replaced with healthy trees also of specimen size except where this requirement is relieved by the Planning Commission upon justification.	A landscaping plan would be prepared and submitted with the building permit for the proposed project. The plan would show the location, size, and type of all trees proposed to be removed together with the size, location, and type of all trees proposed for replacement for each improvement phase.
All natural or created earth slopes shall be provided with a permanent underground irrigation system. All disturbed earth must be planted to control erosion. All vegetation on either artificial or natural slopes shall be maintained.	All excavation and grading would be conducted in accordance with the City's Grading Ordinance (La Mesa Municipal Code Chapter 14.05). All slopes would be vegetated and irrigated consistent with the requirements of the City's Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance (La Mesa Municipal Code Chapter 14.29).

As discussed in Table 5.1-1, the proposed project would be consistent with all applicable portions of the zone requirements. Therefore, the proposed project would be consistent with the Scenic Preservation Overlay Zone regulations and would not have an adverse effect on any scenic vistas. Impacts would be less than significant.

5.1.4.2 Scenic Resources within a State Scenic Highway

Threshold 2: Would the project substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?

As stated in Section 5.1.2.2 above, the two-mile segment of State Route 125 from State Route 94 to Interstate 8 is an officially designated state scenic highway. Scenic resources within this corridor include views of the rolling terrain dominated by Mount Helix, with distant views of Cowles Mountain to the northwest and Dictionary Hill and San Miguel Mountain to the south and southeast. The project site is not visible from this corridor due to existing topography and development. Implementation of the proposed project would not include any tall structures or other features that would be visible from this scenic highway. The project is limited to the existing boundary of Collier Park and would not result in any physical changes to offsite resources. Therefore, implementation of the proposed project would not substantially damage scenic resources within a state scenic highway. Impacts would be less than significant.

5.1.4.3 Visual Character

Threshold 3: Would the project substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings?

Implementation of the proposed project would redevelop an existing park with similar recreational facilities; however, the proposed improvements would alter existing views of the park. Potential changes to the existing visual character and quality of Collier Park are discussed below for each of the six KVPs described in Section 5.1.2.3 above (see Figures 5.1-2 through 5.1-4). Figure 5.1-5 provides a visual simulation from the perspective of a viewer at the southwest corner of the park along Palm Avenue (see Figure 5.1-1 for vantage point location). Potential impacts related to physical alteration of the Spring House and other historical elements of the site are evaluated in Section 5.4, Cultural Resources. This section evaluates the changes to existing facilities as they relate to the overall visual character and quality of the site.

Key Vantage Points

KVP 1

Following implementation of the proposed project, the view from KVP 1 would be dominated by the History Hill improvements. The foreground of the view would consist of walking pathways lined with trees and landscaping, as well as an open lawn area surrounded by trees. The slope along the eastern edge of the site would be graded to provide the flat area; however, the History Hill area would continue to slope to the west, consistent with the existing topography. The History Hill amphitheater would be visible in midground views. Trees and landscaping would still be visible in the background, but would be less dense than existing conditions.



Photo 1: Existing view looking northeast from the southwest corner of Collier Park in the Panhandle Area.



Photo 2: Simulated view looking northeast from the southwest corner of Collier Park in the Panhandle Area.

Source: KTU+A 2012



**EXISTING AND PROPOSED VIEWS OF PANHANDLE AREA FROM PALM AVENUE
FIGURE 5.1-5**

5.1 AESTHETICS

New trees and landscaping would partially obstruct views of the Panhandle and Collier Club House areas. With implementation of the proposed project, the character of the History Hill area would substantially change from undeveloped to developed parkland. However, the existing view from KVP 1 consists of disturbed hillside vegetation that is considered to have low visual quality. The History Hill renovations would be consistent with the character of the site as a neighborhood park, and would improve visual quality in the southeast area of the park by providing cohesive, maintained vegetation and hardscape features, such as the walking pathways, that connect the History Hill area to the surrounding community and other areas of the park. Therefore, implementation of the proposed project would substantially change but not degrade the existing visual character or quality of the History Hill area.

KVP 2

The post-project view from KVP 2 would be dominated by the renovations in the Panhandle area, and would include a portion of the History Hill renovations. The Spring House structure that dominates the existing view would be removed and replaced with an outdoor interpretive center that incorporates some elements of the existing structure. The chain-link fence, drinking fountain, and concrete and stone drainage feature and bridge that are clearly visible in this view would also be removed. Foreground views would consist of lawn area with trees and picnic facilities, similar to existing midground views. The chain-link fence and drainage channel currently provide a distinct separation between the developed Panhandle and undeveloped History Hill areas. Following project implementation, these features would be replaced with a bioswale that would provide a transition between the Panhandle lawn and terraced landscaping on History Hill. The tennis court and playground visible in the background of the existing view would be replaced by similar facilities. Trees would continue to be scattered throughout the Panhandle area, similar to existing conditions. Similar to KVP 1, implementation of the proposed project would change views of the History Hill area from disturbed vegetation with low visual quality to an amphitheatre, walking paths and improved landscaping that would improve the overall visual character of the park.

Following implementation of the proposed project, the Panhandle area would provide an active recreational character. The character of the Spring House would change from a dilapidated, uninhabitable structure to an outdoor passive recreational facility and the character of the History Hill area would change from undeveloped to developed parkland. However, these changes would be consistent with character of the site as a neighborhood park and would improve the visual quality of the site by providing cohesive landscaping and transitions between facilities in the park, replacing disturbed vegetation with healthy and maintained landscaping, and upgrading aging structures and park features, such as the Spring House, existing drainage channel, and other recreational facilities. Therefore, implementation of the proposed project would substantially change but not degrade the existing visual character or quality of the southern portion of Collier Park (Panhandle, Spring House, and History Hill areas).

KVP 3

Similar to KVP 1, following implementation of the proposed project, views from KVP 3 would substantially change from an undeveloped area of disturbed vegetation to developed parkland. New park facilities that would be visible from this KVP would include the Collier Club House, lawn and picnic areas, and passive recreational uses such as a bocce ball court and oversized chess game. The outdoor event area may be visible in the periphery and would be a major visual feature in this area. Trees and landscaping would still be visible in the background, but would be less dense than existing conditions,

such that the Panhandle, Spring House, and History Hill areas would be partially visible. Similar to KVP 1, the existing view of disturbed vegetation is not considered to provide high visual quality. The Collier Club House renovations would be consistent with the character of the site as a neighborhood park, and would improve visual quality by providing cohesive, maintained vegetation and distinctive features that establish the area as a part of the park, such as the club house and activity areas. Therefore, implementation of the proposed project would substantially change but not degrade the existing visual character or quality of the Collier Club House area.

KVP 4

Following implementation of the proposed project, the existing undeveloped areas on either side of Pasadena Avenue in KVP 4 would be replaced with developed parkland. The area along the south (left) side of Pasadena Avenue would consist of the landscaping and paved walkways of the History Hill area. A new entrance feature would be visible in the foreground on the northwest corner of the Pasadena Avenue/4th Street/Upland Street intersection at the entrance of the park. The entryway would incorporate landscaping and hardscaping features with pathways leading from the entrance to features within the Collier Club House Area to the north (right). Beyond the entrance features, the Collier Club House area to the north of Pasadena Avenue would consist of landscaping. The steep slope north of Pasadena Avenue would be graded to reduce the steepness of the slope. The chain-link fence that is clearly visible along both sides of Pasadena Avenue would be removed and two pedestrian crossings would be visible across Pasadena Avenue to connect the sidewalk facilities on either side of the roadway: one in the foreground of this view at the eastern site entrance, and one west of the Spring House in the midground of the view. Tall mature trees currently block all views beyond the site; however, to improve park safety, landscaping improvements would be designed to allow better police surveillance of the site. The Spring House would be replaced by an outdoor interpretive center and would continue to be a focal point in the midground of this view. Similar to existing conditions, views of the Panhandle area would continue to be partially obstructed by trees and landscaping, although landscaping improvements would be implemented to improve park safety by allowing enhanced police surveillance of the site.

Following implementation of the proposed project, the eastern entrance of the park would be more consistent in character with the western entrance of the park by providing an entry feature, sidewalk and walking paths. As discussed for KVP 2, the character of the Spring House would change from a dilapidated, uninhabitable historic structure to an outdoor passive recreational facility. The overall character of the park from this KVP would change from undeveloped to developed parkland. However, these changes would be consistent with the character of the site as a neighborhood park and would improve the visual quality of the site by constructing pedestrian sidewalks that improve safety, replacing disturbed vegetation with healthy and maintained landscaping and providing an entryway feature that clearly defines the site as a public amenity. Therefore, implementation of the proposed project would substantially change but not degrade the existing visual character or quality of views from the eastern park entrance.

KVP 5

Views from KVP 5 would be similar to existing conditions following implementation of the proposed project. This area of the Panhandle is proposed to remain as a lawn area with trees and other landscaping. The existing entrance feature would be replaced with the drinking fountain currently located near the Spring House. An enhanced bus stop with a seating area and hardscaping that would provide a visual connection between the bus stop and the park would also be constructed. Pasadena

Avenue would be realigned but would have the same visual character of the existing roadway. A small parking inlet would be provided along Pasadena Avenue, but would be screened from views by a grassy swale. The existing vegetation on the Collier Club House hillside would be replaced by landscaping consistent with the rest of the project site. The overall quality of the view would be improved through the implementation of landscaping and hardscaping improvements consistent with the other areas of the park. Therefore, views from KVP 5 would be enhanced but not substantially change from the existing condition. Implementation of the proposed project would not degrade the existing visual character or quality of views from the western park entrance.

KVP 6

Similar to KVP 5, views from KVP 6 would not substantially change with implementation of the proposed project. The foreground of this view would still consist of a lawn area with landscaping and trees and the restroom building would be replaced with a new structure with a higher quality design. The paved parking area would be repaved and would continue to provide some parking. The midground view would also continue to consist of lawn and picnic areas, trees, and landscaping. The Spring House would be replaced by an outdoor interpretive center that incorporates elements of the existing structure. Views of the Spring House are currently partially obstructed by vegetation so that the house is not a dominant feature in the view from KVP 6. Replacement of the Spring House with the interpretive center would not substantially alter the midground view from this KVP. The undeveloped Collier Club House area in the north (left) midground of the view would be graded to provide a smooth slope and disturbed vegetation would be replaced by landscaping, which would improve visual quality but would not substantially change the character of the hill from this view. Views of the History Hill area in the background would consist of landscaping and hardscaping for the amphitheater, but would continue to be partially obstructed by vegetation. Therefore, views from KVP 6 would be enhanced through the proposed park improvements but would not substantially change from the existing condition. Implementation of the proposed project would not degrade the existing visual character or quality of views from this KVP.

Visual Simulation

To illustrate the proposed changes to the visual character and quality of Collier Park, Figure 5.1-5 provides a visual simulation comparing the existing and proposed views of the park from the perspective of a viewer along Palm Avenue looking northeast into the park from the southwest corner of the park (see Figure 5.1-1 for vantage point location). As shown in Figure 5.1-5, implementation of the proposed project would enhance views of the park from Palm Avenue. The existing parking lot would be removed and replaced with a small parking inlet along Pasadena Avenue that would be screened from viewers along Palm Avenue. The tennis court would be relocated closer to Palm Avenue and would be a major visual feature in this area. The midground of this view would still consist of playground, lawn, and picnic areas with landscaping and trees, but the new recreational amenities would have a higher quality design. Landscaping improvements and changes to the layout of the Panhandle area would be implemented to improve park safety by allowing enhanced police surveillance of the site. An enhanced bus stop with a seating area and hardscaping that would provide a visual connection between the bus stop and the park would also be constructed along Palm Avenue. Trees and landscaping would still be visible in the background, but would be less dense than existing conditions, such that the improvements in the History Hill and Collier Club House areas would be partially visible. These changes would be consistent with character of the site as a neighborhood park and would improve the visual quality of the site by providing cohesive landscaping and transitions between facilities in the park, replacing disturbed vegetation with healthy and maintained landscaping, and upgrading aging structures and park features.

Therefore, implementation of the proposed project would not degrade the existing visual character or quality of views from Palm Avenue.

Summary

Although the proposed project would substantially change the character of some areas of the site, including as the Collier Club House and History Hill areas, from undeveloped to developed parkland; the proposed project would improve the visual quality of the site. Additionally, as discussed in Section 5.1.4.1 above, the proposed project would be consistent with the Scenic Preservation Overlay Zone requirements that apply to the project site. Therefore, the proposed project would change but not substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings. Impacts would be less than significant.

5.1.4.4 New Sources of Light and Glare

Threshold 4: Would the project create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?

The project site is located in a developed urban area with substantial existing nighttime lighting. Additionally, the developed areas of the park already include some lighting features for nighttime safety. Implementation of the proposed project would result in additional sources of lighting for safety in the Panhandle area, and new lighting in the Collier Club House and History Hill areas for security and to light nighttime events. Due to the urbanized nature of the site and surrounding area, the net increase in nighttime lighting would not be considered substantial on a citywide or regional scale. In addition, because the base zone for the project site is R1S (Suburban Residential), exterior lighting would be subject to the provisions of La Mesa Municipal Code Section 24.05.020.D.15, which requires exterior lighting to be compatible with residential use, as described in Section 5.1.1.2 above. Compliance with this regulation, which may require the use of shields, and may limit the location, type, and height of light fixtures, would prevent significant impacts from light spillover onto adjacent residential lots. Furthermore, the project does not propose any features that would include expanses of reflective material such as glass or metal. Therefore, the proposed project would not result in a significant impact related to new sources of light and glare.

5.1.5 Mitigation Measures

5.1.5.1 Scenic Vistas

No significant impacts related to scenic vistas would result from implementation of the proposed project. Therefore, no mitigation measures are required.

5.1.5.2 Scenic Resources within a State Scenic Highway

No significant impacts related to scenic resources within a state scenic highway would result from implementation of the proposed project. Therefore, no mitigation measures are required.

5.1.5.3 Visual Character

No significant impacts related to visual character would result from implementation of the proposed project. Therefore, no mitigation measures are required.

5.1.5.4 New Sources of Light and Glare

No significant impacts related to new sources of light and glare would result from implementation of the proposed project. Therefore, no mitigation measures are required.

5.1.6 Significance Determination

The significance of aesthetics impacts before and after mitigation is summarized in Table 5.1-2. Implementation of the proposed project would not result in any significant impacts related to scenic vistas, scenic resources within a scenic highway, visual character, or new sources of light and glare. Therefore, impacts associated with aesthetics would be less than significant and no mitigation is required.

Table 5.1-2 Summary of Significance of Aesthetics Impacts

Issue	Significance before Mitigation	Mitigation	Significance after Mitigation
Scenic Vistas	Less than Significant	None	Less than Significant
Scenic Resources within a State Scenic Highway	Less than Significant	None	Less than Significant
Visual Character	Less than Significant	None	Less than Significant
New Sources of Light and Glare	Less than Significant	None	Less than Significant