4.5 AESTHETICS

This section describes the existing visual setting of the project site, the regulatory background that applies to the project, and the potential impacts on aesthetic resources that could result from implementation of the Downtown Roseville Specific Plan.

This project DEIR has been prepared to meet the requirements of a project-level EIR. The City's intention in preparing this project EIR is that no further environmental review under CEQA would be required for subsequent projects which are consistent with the Specific Plan to provide for the streamlined approval of projects proposed within the Plan area that are consistent with land use designations, adhere to design guidelines (specifically prototype development), or fall within the scope of the Specific Plan and EIR.

4.5.1 Existing Conditions

The descriptions of the existing setting are accompanied by photographs of representative views taken during a site visit on January 19, 2008.

VISUAL CHARACTER OF THE PLAN AREA

The Plan area consists primarily of existing urban development. Views are generally focused down roadways and in-between buildings. Views of surrounding vistas are limited by existing buildings and street trees.

The Plan area has been historically developed as an urban center of the City and is representative of historical downtowns. The Plan area is dominated by single-story and two-story buildings, roadways, sidewalks, and street trees. However, open viewable areas exist in the Plan area including surface parking lots (e.g., Oak Street adjacent to Dry Creek, south of the Vernon and Bulen Street intersection) and business-specific surface parking (e.g., southwestern portion of Vernon Street, surrounding City Hall). Residential neighborhoods are dominated by California bungalow style homes and full-grown trees which are representative of single-family detached housing. Royer/Saugstad Park and Dry Creek dominate the easternmost portion of the Plan area. Dry Creek is bounded by natural vegetation and full-grown trees along with an adjacent recreation trail. Royer/Saugstad Park incorporates large, open grass fields interspersed with full-grown trees, picnic areas, and sport-specific facilities (e.g., baseball diamond, tennis courts). As shown in Exhibit 4.1-1, the UPRR rail yard, adjacent to the central portion of the Plan area, extends in a northeast-southwest direction and creates a mid-ground view from streets located nearby (e.g., Vernon Street, Pacific Street, Lincoln Street).

VISUAL CHARACTER OF THE SURROUNDING AREA

Areas surrounding Downtown Roseville primarily consist of single-family, detached residential neighborhoods (i.e., Cherry Glen, Folsom Road, Enwood, Roseville Heights). In addition, commercial uses extend away from the Plan area along Riverside Avenue to the south, Atlantic Street to the northeast, and Douglas Boulevard to the east, along with industrial uses along Washington Boulevard to the north.

The general character of the surrounding area is described below.

- ▶ **North:** Areas to the north of Downtown Roseville primarily consist of single-family residential neighborhoods. In addition, the UPRR tracks border the eastern boundary of the Plan area and extend north and westward.
- ► East: Areas to the east of Downtown Roseville primarily consist of single-family residential neighborhoods along with a mixture of commercial and light-industrial uses adjacent to Atlantic Street. Dry Creek flows into the Plan area from the northeast. In addition, the UPRR tracks extend northeastward adjacent to Atlantic Street.

- ► **South:** Areas to the south of Downtown Roseville primarily consist of single-family residential neighborhoods, with commercial uses along Riverside Avenue to the southeast. Dry Creek flows away from the Plan area to the south.
- ▶ **West:** Areas to the west of Downtown Roseville primarily consist of single-family residential neighborhoods. The primary portion of the UPRR rail yard is located adjacent to the Plan area and is situated between the Plan area and residential neighborhoods beyond the rail yard.

Views of the Plan Area

Distant views of the Plan area from off-site areas are limited because of the relatively flat topography of the City and the presence of full-grown trees throughout the downtown area. Views of the Plan area would primarily be available to people traveling along Park Drive, Douglas Boulevard, Folsom Road, Atlantic Street, Roseville Street, Riverside Avenue, and Church Street in the project vicinity. Travelers along these roads would generally have short-distance, direct views of the Plan area but views would dissipate quickly when traveling further distance away from the Plan area along any connecting roads.

Four viewpoint locations (discussed below) were chosen to represent areas that would be most sensitive to visual change or have relatively unobstructed views of the Plan area. The general nature of views of the Plan area is described from these four representative locations.

Views from Lincoln Street (Viewpoints 1 and 2)

This viewpoint extends along the northeastern edge of the Plan area in Historic Old Town. Two-story buildings fronting on the street dominate the views from sidewalks and the street. Outside of the center of Historic Old Town, detached single-family residences dominate the views along with full-grown street trees lining the sidewalks. The street trees and multi-story buildings at the heart of Historic Old Town obstruct views across the entire Plan area. Similarly, distant background views are not available from any portion of Historic Old Town. Representative views of this portion of the Plan area from Lincoln Street are provided in Exhibit 4.5-1.

Views from Oak Street (Viewpoints 3 and 4)

This viewpoint extends along the central portion of the Plan area near Vernon Street. Single-family, detached residences dominate the views from Oak Street along with full-grown street trees lining the sidewalks. At the northern extent of Oak Street, views of residences give way to dominant views of a multi-story parking garage and the Civic Center. Multi-story buildings lining Vernon Street create the middle-ground views from Oak Street. However, distant background views are not available from along Oak Street because of full grown street trees. Representative views from this portion of the Plan Area are provided in Exhibit 4.5-2.

Views from Vernon Street (Viewpoints 5 and 6)

This viewpoint extends along the northern central portion of the Plan area near the UPRR rail yard. Multi-story buildings associated with Downtown Roseville's retail and commercial businesses dominate views from Vernon Street. The Civic Center stands out from other buildings lining Vernon Street because of the Civic Center building's larger size. The UPRR rail yard can be seen in the middle-ground at breaks between existing buildings and at roadway intersections. Street tree planters within on-street parking stalls dominate foreground views from the street and multi-story buildings fronting on the street dominate views from sidewalks. At the southern end of Vernon Street, the compact building pattern gives way to individual, detached buildings. Distant background views are not available from the northern extent of Vernon Street because of multi-story buildings; however, distant background views can be seen sporadically from the southern extent. Representative views of the Plan area from Vernon Street are provided in Exhibit 4.5-3.



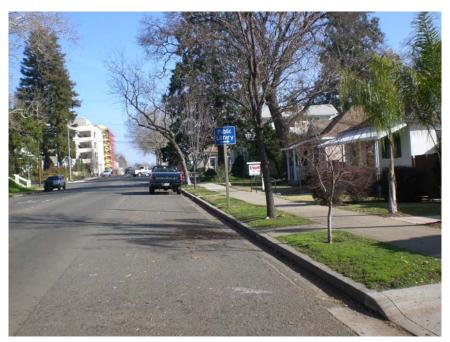
View from intersection of Lincoln Street and Main Street looking west along Main Street (Viewpoint 1)



View from intersection of Lincoln Street and Placer Street looking north along Placer Street (Viewpoint 2)

Representative Photographs of the Plan Area

Exhibit 4.5-1



View from intersection of Judah Street and Oak Street looking northeast along Oak Street (Viewpoint 3)



View from intersection of Taylor Street and Oak Street looking northeast along Oak Street (Viewpoint 4)

Representative Photographs of the Plan Area

Exhibit 4.5-2



View from intersection of Vernon Street and Taylor Street looking southwest along Vernon Street (Viewpoint 5)



View from the intersection of Vernon Street and Taylor Street looking east across Vernon Street (Viewpoint 6)

Representative Photographs of the Plan Area

Exhibit 4.5-3

Views from Douglas Boulevard (Viewpoint 7)

This viewpoint is located along the southern extent of the Plan area. Detached buildings that provide commercial and retail businesses and spaces dominate views along Douglas Boulevard. Full grown trees line the entire stretch of Douglas Boulevard in the Plan area. Sidewalks are sporadic in this portion of Douglas Boulevard; therefore, the street right-of-way is the primary viewpoint along Douglas Boulevard. Single-family, detached residences can be seen in the middle-ground to the north of Douglas Boulevard along with a large canopy of full grown trees. Trees growing along Douglas Boulevard and in the adjacent areas block distant background views. A representative view from Douglas Boulevard is provided in Exhibit 4.5-4.



View from intersection of Douglas Boulevard and Bulen Street looking west along Douglas Boulevard (Viewpoint 7)

Representative Photographs of the Plan Area

Exhibit 4.5-4

Existing Light and Glare Setting

The project site is developed with urban uses and structures that use nighttime lighting and create daytime glare from reflective surfaces. Nighttime lighting primarily consist of advertising and displays for commercial businesses and street lighting. The nighttime glow from the urban development obscures the night sky with stars not easily visible. However, the nighttime glow created in Downtown Roseville blends in with surrounding development, is consistent with the goals of an active urban environment, and does not standout from surrounding areas.

4.5.2 REGULATORY BACKGROUND

CALIFORNIA SCENIC HIGHWAY PROGRAM

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) manages the California Scenic Highway Program. The goal of the program is to preserve and protect scenic highway corridors from changes that would affect the aesthetic value of the land adjacent to highways. Caltrans requires developers of projects located adjacent to a

State scenic highway to consult with the agency to determine whether the project would constitute an intrusion to the scenic quality of the corridor. There are no designated scenic highways within the project vicinity and this issue will not be analyzed further in this DEIR.

CITY OF ROSEVILLE GENERAL PLAN

The following City of Roseville General Plan policies are relevant to the project's aesthetic resources:

Community Form Goal 5: Design new development to be integrated, connected and related to existing development areas within the City.

Community Form Goal 6: Roseville will strive to be a balanced community with a reasonable mix of land uses, housing types and job opportunities.

- ► Community Form (General) Policy 1: Ensure high quality development in new and existing development areas as defined through specific plans, the development review process and community design guidelines.
- ► Community Form (General) Policy 4: Promote a diversity of residential living options (e.g., density ranges, housing types, affordability ranges) while ensuring community compatibility and well-designed residential development.
- ► Community Form (General) Policy 5: Promote land use patterns that result in the efficient use of urban lands and preservation of open space as specified in the Open Space and Conservation Element.
- ► Community Form (Relationship to Transit, Pedestrian, Air Quality [RTPAQ]) Policy 1: Promote land use patterns that support a variety of transportation modes and accommodate pedestrian mobility.
- ► Community Form (RTPAQ) Policy 2: Allow for land use patterns and mixed use development that integrate residential and nonresidential land uses, such that residents may easily walk or bike to shopping, services, employment and leisure activities.
- ► Community Form (RTPAQ) Policy 3: Concentrate higher intensity uses and appropriate support uses within close proximity of transit and bikeway corridors as identified in the Bicycle Master Plan. In addition, some component of public use such as parks, plazas, public buildings, community centers and/or libraries should be located within the corridors.
- ► Community Form (RTPAQ) Policy 5: Where feasible, improve existing development areas to create better pedestrian and transit accessibility.
- ► Community Form (Downtown, Neighborhoods) Policy 1: Create and maintain a strong identifiable downtown that offers the surrounding community a cluster of municipal offices and services, commercial, office and higher density residential uses.
- ► Community Form (Downtown, Neighborhoods) Policy 4: Support the redevelopment and revitalization of areas that are in decline or economically underutilized.
- Community Form (Downtown, Neighborhoods) Policy 5: Encourage infill development and rehabilitation that:
 - upgrades the quality and enhances the character of existing areas;
 - enhances public transit use and pedestrian access;

- efficiently utilizes and does not overburden existing services and infrastructure; and
- results in land use patterns and densities that provide the opportunity for the construction of household types affordable to all income groups.

Community Design Goal 1: Achieve a consistent level of high quality aesthetic and functional design through the development of, and adherence to, superior design concepts and principles as defined in the Community-wide Design Guidelines.

Community Design Goal 2: Encourage, promote and support the maintenance and expansion of a wide range of programs that serve to increase public understanding, appreciation and enjoyment of cultural and artistic forms, and the display of artistic expression in public spaces to contribute to the cultural experience and the sense of place and community.

Community Design Goal 3: Encourage the planning and building of a city which sensitively integrates open space and natural resources, and promotes compatibility within and between the natural and the urban environments.

Community Design Goal 4: Emphasize the preservation and enhancement of historically and culturally significant buildings, native oak trees, woodlands and other significant features, as a primary element in defining Roseville's community character.

- ► Community Design Policy 1: Through the design review process, apply design standards that promote the use of high quality building materials, architectural and site designs, landscaping signage, and amenities.
- ► Community Design Policy 6: Through the design review process, encourage site and building designs that are in scale and compatible with adjacent development with respect to height, bulk, form mass, and community character.
- ► Community Design Policy 8: Encourage and promote the preservation of historic and/or unique, culturally and architecturally significant buildings, features and visual environments.

CITY OF ROSEVILLE DESIGN REVIEW

The City of Roseville requires all development projects to be reviewed to determine their consistency with City community design guidelines. The primary body responsible for design review is the Design Committee. The Design Committee reviews Design Review Permit applications for multiple-residential, commercial, and industrial land use projects and reviews site plans, architecture, and landscaping for conformance with the City General Plan, specific plans, and community design guidelines.

5.10.3 Environmental Impacts

METHOD OF ANALYSIS

This visual impact analysis evaluates the visual changes that would occur at the project site using the standards of quality, consistency, and symmetry typically used for a visual assessment. The visual impacts were compared against the thresholds of significance discussed below. The visual impacts of the proposed project were evaluated assuming full project buildout. This approach was followed because certain impacts, such as light and glare, would be greatest at full buildout.

THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

The proposed project would cause a significant impact related to aesthetic resources, as defined by the State CEQA Guidelines (Appendix G), if it would:

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

IMPACTS ANALYSIS

IMPACT 4.5-1

Aesthetics - Impacts on Scenic Vistas. Views on or near the project site include the UPRR yard and surrounding residential neighborhoods. There is not any prominent scenery (e.g., mountain range) viewable form the Plan area and there are no scenic highways within the Plan area. Urban redevelopment projects envisioned as part of the Plan would not block views of any scenic vista from on-site of off-site locations. Therefore, this impact would be **less than significant**.

A scenic vista is generally considered a view of an area that has remarkable scenery or a resource that is indigenous to the area. Because of flat topography in the Roseville area, distant views are hampered or blocked by forms (e.g., buildings, trees) located in the foreground and mid-ground. The prominent scenic vistas in the Roseville area encompass the Sierra foothills and very distant Sierra Nevada. These two vista resources are not generally visible from the Plan area because of existing development (e.g., buildings, trees) in and around Downtown Roseville. Existing development tends to obscure or completely block views beyond the foreground or mid-ground into the background. Buildings and full-grown trees currently dominate the Downtown Roseville area and would continue to dominate with implementation of the proposed project. Implementation of the Plan would not reduce or eliminate views of any scenic resources from on-site or off-site locations because future development would be similar in nature to existing development in the Plan area. Therefore, this impact is considered less than significant.

IMPACT 4.5-2

Aesthetics – Degradation of Visual Character. Implementation of the project would not substantially alter the existing visual character of the Plan area through redevelopment projects. The Plan area is currently developed primarily with urban land uses and would continue to be developed with urban land uses with implementation of the Plan. The existing open space and natural character of Dry Creek and Royer/Saugstad Park would not change also. Therefore, the project would not degrade the existing visual character in Downtown Roseville. This would be a less-than-significant impact.

The Plan area consists primarily of urban development in the Downtown Roseville area except for Dry Creek and Royer/Saugstad Park which encompass a recreational, open space, and natural character. The Plan would allow for new development projects to occur in the Plan area, however all new development projects would occur at currently developed sites with existing urban land uses and would be consistent with design criteria specified in the Downtown Roseville Specific Plan. The most noticeable changes to visual characterizations from implementation of the Plan would occur at sites currently absent of any buildings or structures. For example, the parking area adjacent to Oak Street between Grant and Lincoln Streets has the potential to change from a site devoid of any structures to a mixed-use, multi-story building overlooking Dry Creek. Although the visual character would change noticeably at that specific site, the overall urban character in the Plan area would not be degraded. In addition, the City of Roseville has a design review process in place that would require all new development projects in the Plan area to be reviewed for its meeting, or not meeting, design guidelines established by the Plan. Because the Plan envisions development of urban land uses similar in nature to existing urban development in the Plan area and design review would be required of all new development projects, this impact is considered less than significant.

IMPACT 4.5-3

Aesthetics – Impacts from Lighting and Reflective Surfaces. The Plan area is currently developed with urban land uses that use nighttime lighting and incorporate architectural elements that include reflective surfaces. Redevelopment projects that would occur under the Specific Plan could construct additional facilities with reflective surfaces and nighttime lighting. The potential increase of reflective surfaces and nighttime lighting constructed would not substantially affect day and night views in the Plan area. In addition, the Specific Plan identifies development of a night-lighted golf course that would place high intensity lighting near or adjacent to residents. Although nighttime lighting is currently used at a baseball park at this location that emits nighttime lighting, the proposed golf course would add substantially new high intensity lighting to this portion of Roseville that could affect nearby residential users. This impact is considered potentially significant.

The Plan area is developed with urban uses and buildings that use nighttime lighting and create daytime glare from reflective surfaces (e.g., windows). Existing nighttime lighting primarily consist of advertising and displays for commercial businesses and street lighting. The nighttime glow from the existing urban development obscures the night sky effectively obscuring views of stars and other features of the night sky.

Redevelopment projects envisioned as part of the Specific Plan would involve development of urban land uses similar in nature to existing urban land uses in Downtown Roseville. Similarly, future urban land uses would incorporate nighttime displays (e.g., signs) and lighting to promote their business or provide safety for visitors and residents in accordance with development standards established in the Specific Plan. These new nighttime light sources would also be similar in nature to existing light sources in Downtown Roseville and would create similar nighttime glow. Although the Specific Plan envisions development of additional commercial square footage and residential units which would result in additional nighttime light sources, the current nighttime glow created in Downtown Roseville blends in with surrounding development and additional nighttime light sources would not standout from surrounding areas.

The Specific Plan also envisions improvements to recreational facilities at Royer/Saugstad Park including development of a pitch-and-putt golf course that would be lighted at night. Although the specific type of lighting that would be used at the golf course is unknown, it is anticipated that nighttime lighting would consist of high-powered floodlights mounted on poles approximately 25 to 30 feet high. These lights are anticipated to create a similar amount of nighttime light and glare as existing lights used to light a baseball field in Royer/Saugstad Park (see Exhibit 4.5-5). Although the golf course would require a substantial amount of light that would be placed in an area that currently experiences nighttime lighting (i.e., Royer/Saugstad Park) and would be located near or adjacent to residences, mitigation is recommended to limit the type of nighttime lighting used at the golf course.

Redevelopment projects in the Plan area would also incorporate windows as an architectural feature of buildings and would have the most potential to create daytime glare. The types of glass and other materials with reflective surfaces used in future redevelopment projects would be similar in nature to existing development in the Plan area. Although the Specific Plan envisions development of additional commercial square footage and residential units which would result in additional sources of glare, increased glare would not change daytime views in the Plan area. Because the increase of daytime glare would not adversely affect existing daytime views in the Plan area, this impact is considered less than significant.



View of Saugstad Park looking south from parking lot adjacent to Douglas Boulevard



View of adjacent house from Saugstad Park looking east

Nighttime Photographs at Saugstad Park

4.5.4 MITIGATION MEASURES

No mitigation measures are necessary for the following less-than-significant impact:

4.5-1: Aesthetics – Impacts on Scenic Vistas

4.5-2: Aesthetics - Degradation of Visual Character

The following mitigation measures are provided for significant impacts.

Mitigation Measure 4.5-3: Aesthetics – Impacts from Lighting.

Operation of the golf course at nighttime would require the use of high-powered floodlights mounted on poles approximately 25 to 30 feet high that would be placed near or adjacent to existing residences. Prior to installation of nighttime lighting at the golf course, the City shall coordinate with a company specializing in or expertise with exterior lighting systems for golf courses (e.g., Abacus). Floodlighting used shall consist of a double asymmetric beam distribution that ensures minimum upward light and tight control of light overspill into adjacent areas. The golf course shall be designed to incorporate a line of trees located along the outermost boundary between the golf course and all adjacent residences.

This measure would retain existing nighttime lighting and glare impacts after construction of the golf course at a less-than-significant level.

4.5.5 RESIDUAL SIGNIFICANT IMPACTS

With implementation of the mitigation measure described above, all impacts related to aesthetics would be reduced to less than significant.