4.2 VISUAL QUALITY AND SHADOW

A. SUMMARY

The topography of the CCSF Main Campus is generally divided into three broad zones ranging about 125 feet in elevation: (1) a prominent hilltop (about 350 feet above mean sea level [msl]) at Cloud Hall and the Science Building, (2) the mid level (about 295 to 350 feet above msl), structured around Cloud Circle, and (3) the lower levels (240 to 260 feet above msl) along the campus periphery. Steep slopes tend to separate these areas. The visibility of the Main Campus is somewhat limited due to a combination of intervening topography and developed uses, although unobstructed views of parts of the campus are available from publicly-accessible McLaren Park and Mount Davidson.

Overall buildout of the Master Plan would involve the construction of new College buildings and parking structures, plus demolition of some of the existing buildings, in an area that is already developed. The heights of the new buildings would be similar to those of the existing buildings on the campus. The Master Plan would not substantially block or alter scenic vistas from public viewpoints in the area. Also, for the most part, the addition of the new buildings would not substantially change the character of the surrounding area. However, the proposed buildings west of Phelan Avenue would negatively affect the character of the surrounding area due to the large scale and more visible nature of the proposed buildings. This is considered to be a significant effect. CCSF would implement mitigation measures for individual Master Plan projects that would reduce this impact, but some of the impact could be inherent in the size and placement of the buildings. For this reason and in the absence of specific design information, the impact would remain significant after mitigation.

The proposed Community Health & Wellness Center would be built into the existing hillside and would be visually separated from most of the campus by intervening topography. In addition, its visibility from Ocean Avenue would be limited due to its location. Therefore, the Community Health & Wellness Center would not have a substantial negative effect on scenic views or the visual character of the area. The Student Health Center & Classroom Building (Health Center) and Child Development Center would be relatively small buildings with limited visual impact.

Although the Master Plan involves the removal of trees, this action would not result in a significant change to the visual character of the area. The majority of the trees on the campus would be retained, including the stands of trees in the northeastern part of the campus and on the southeastern perimeter. Therefore, the project would not result in a significant visual character impact associated with tree removal. The removal of mature trees would be a significant impact to visual resources; mitigation identified in this section would require that trees be retained to the extent feasible. These and other measures would reduce the impact to a less-than-significant level.

The Master Plan would create a shift in light sources and would introduce new light sources in certain portions of the campus (and on the reconfigured reservoir site). These changes would not represent a new source of substantial light given the developed nature of the area. In addition, the proposed lighting fixtures would be designed to...
minimize glare and off-site impacts. Therefore, impacts associated with light and glare would be less than significant.

A detailed shadow analysis of the Master Plan was conducted to estimate project shadow relative to the requirements of Section 295 of the San Francisco Planning Code. The analysis indicated that most of the new buildings proposed as part of the Master Plan would not cast any additional shadow on Recreation and Park Department properties. Moreover, while the proposed parking garage would cast a shadow on the Recreation and Park tennis courts, the extent of future shadow would decrease compared to the existing shadow. Therefore, the shadow impacts of the project would not be significant.

B. INTRODUCTION

This section describes of existing visual conditions and evaluates potential aesthetic effects associated with implementation of the proposed project, including visual changes in the context of alteration or obstruction of scenic views from public areas, impacts to visual character of the campus and surrounding area, tree removal, and potential light and glare impacts. The analysis of the project’s potential visual effects is based on field observations of the Main Campus and surroundings in addition to review of the following materials: project drawings and technical data, aerial and ground-level photographs of the project area, topographic data, computer-generated visual simulations from representative viewing locations, and public planning documents. Digitized photographs and computer modeling and rendering techniques were utilized by Square One Productions to prepare the simulation images, which are based on conceptual planning data provided by the Master Plan and Community Health & Wellness Center project teams.

Section 295 of the City Planning Code was adopted in response to Proposition K (passed in November 1984) in order to protect public open spaces from shadowing by new structures during the period between one hour after sunrise and one hour before sunset, year-round. Section 295 restricts new shadow upon public open spaces under the jurisdiction of the Recreation and Park Department by any structures exceeding 40 feet unless the City Planning Commission, in consultation with the General Manager of the Recreation and Park Department, finds the impact to be insignificant.

As an entity within the State California Community Colleges system, CCSF is generally not subject to local regulations. In addition, CCSF may choose to exempt itself from local planning and zoning requirements with respect to classroom uses. However, there are several uses proposed as part of the Master Plan, including the Community Health & Wellness Center and the free-standing parking structure, that would be constructed near I-280 and could cast shadow impacts on the tennis courts owned by the Recreation and Park Department in the eastern part of the campus.\footnote{The tennis courts are operated by CCSF.}  \footnote{The presence of the freeway would prevent those uses from resulting in shadow impacts on Balboa Park. See discussion later in this section.}
campus buildings would generally vary from two to four stories high, with heights of up to 65 feet. (The proposed parking structure would be 30 feet high.) Therefore, a shadow analysis was prepared for informational purposes and to analyze and assess the project’s impacts on visual resources.

C. EXISTING CONDITIONS

C1. Visual Characteristics of the Main Campus

Topographic elevations across the CCSF Main Campus vary by about 125 feet, from the eastern edge of the campus to the prominent hilltop at Cloud Hall and the Science Building. The topography can be described as falling within three broad zones: (1) the hilltop (about 350 feet above mean sea level [msl]), (2) the mid level (about 295 to 350 feet above msl), structured around Cloud Circle and accommodating the bulk of campus buildings and plazas, and (3) the lower levels (240 to 260 feet above msl) along the campus periphery. Steep slopes tend to separate these areas.

Existing buildings are distributed throughout the campus. The northern and central areas of the Main Campus are dominated by academic uses. The east side of the campus has mostly athletic and recreation uses, including the stadium (football/track) and the tennis courts. The southwest area, including a bookstore west of Phelan Avenue, is dominated by student services and administration uses. The reservoirs west of Phelan Avenue are solely devoted to parking. The southeast corner of the campus contains almost equal percentages of athletic, physical plant, academic support, and parking uses.

Existing buildings on the campus are one to four stories tall. The variation in topography on the campus means that the prominence of some buildings (such as Cloud Hall and the Science Building, large buildings on the hilltop) is accentuated, while the prominence of other buildings (such as the North and South Gyms, along the lower eastern periphery) is diminished.

The existing buildings were constructed from 1940 through the present, and exhibit a variety of architectural styles. The Science Building, constructed in 1940 and designed by architect Timothy Pflueger, has plain massing and a classical composition. More modern buildings that are prominent include Batmale Hall (built in 1978) and the Rosenberg Library (built in 1995).

The general types of vegetation on campus include tree cover, shrubs, lawn areas, mulch, horticultural gardens, and naturalized (unmaintained) trees and grasses. The higher campus elevations contain large pine and cypress trees and wide expanses of lawn, while the mid-campus elevations are dominated by smaller areas of groundcover or mulch with stands of pine and cypress and ornamentals and accent trees at some plazas. The lower elevations are dominated by playing fields, with areas of trees on the eastern and southern edges of campus as well as in the naturalized area east of the Horticulture buildings.
Dominant tree species across the campus include Monterey Pine, Monterey Cypress, and Eucalyptus, species suited to low water use and frequent winds.3

C2. Existing Off-Site Views of the Project Site

Views of portions of the CCSF Main Campus are available mainly from nearby residential areas to the northwest, north, and northeast, and residential and commercial areas to the south and southwest. The Main Campus is also visible from publicly-accessible viewpoints in the vicinity, including McLaren Park, Mount Davidson, parts of Balboa Park, and sidewalks along Ocean, Phelan and Judson Avenues. The visibility of the campus is somewhat limited due to a combination of intervening topography, vegetation, and other developed uses. Based on a visit to the vicinity, the Main Campus is not visible from residences to the immediate west of the Balboa Reservoir. The Reservoir itself is somewhat visible, especially from residences on the hills above the campus to the north and northwest. Visibility from areas east of the campus and I-280 varies considerably.

Four viewpoints of the project site from publicly-accessible areas near the site were selected for analysis. These viewpoints were determined by CCSF and the Master Plan team to provide representative views of the site from off-site locations. The selected viewpoints provide one long-range view and three short-range views. Figure 4.2-1, Key to Viewpoint Locations, depicts the locations of the selected viewpoints; Figures 4.2-2 through 4.2-5 provide photographs of the viewpoints selected and show the existing view and the simulation of the view with Master Plan buildout.

Viewpoint 1: John McLaren Park

John McLaren Park is a 317-acre public park approximately 1-1/2 miles east/southeast of CCSF.4 It has over seven miles of improved trails and a range of unimproved paths and provides users with vistas of the surrounding areas. The existing view from McLaren Park is shown in the top portion of Figure 4.2-2, View 1: Looking West from McLaren Park. The view direction is west and is representative of what a pedestrian would see from the base of the park’s water tower, which sits 495 feet above mean sea level on a crest in the northwest corner of the park. This vantage point provides an unobstructed view of the CCSF campus and surrounding areas, including portions of Balboa Park in front of the campus (toward the left side of the photograph). Ocean Avenue is near the left-hand side of the image and extends away from the viewer toward the Pacific Ocean in the background. Mount Davidson Park can be seen in the extreme right part of the photograph. Among the most prominent CCSF features seen in the view are the stadium bleachers in the east-central part of the campus, the eastern sides of the Library, Batmale Hall, and Cloud Hall, the top floors of the Science Building, and the eastern side of the Creative Arts Building.

3 City College of San Francisco, Master Plan (Draft), November 19, 2003, “Open Space and Landscape” graphic.
4 Welcome to John McLaren Park Homepage (www.jennalex.com/projects/fomp/homepage/).
Viewpoint 2: South along Phelan Avenue

The top portion of Figure 4.2-3, View 2: Looking South along Phelan Avenue, shows an existing view looking south along Phelan Avenue from the intersection with Judson Avenue. On the left side of the photograph, the bungalows on the northwestern corner of the Main Campus are visible, with trees mostly obstructing Science Hall in the middle ground. The front of Riordan High School is visible on the right side of the image. Although not visible in this image, the Balboa Reservoir is also located on the right, just south of Riordan High School.

The current view is of development of varied scale. The more massive character of Riordan High School contrasts with the low-scale character of the bungalows. The trees east of Phelan Avenue provide visual relief and help to screen the larger-scale buildings in the central campus. The buildings visible to the south of the campus are generally low scale and the view is punctuated by vegetation. Part of the western slope of San Bruno Mountain is visible in the background. The large areas of parking within the reservoirs are not visible from this location, nor are the large-scale campus buildings east of Phelan Avenue. These features of the campus contribute to an overall visual character somewhat different (more intensely developed with structures of greater scale) from what is visible in the photograph.

Viewpoint 3: North Along Phelan Avenue

The existing view north along Phelan Avenue from the intersection with Ocean Avenue is shown in the top portion of Figure 4.2-4, View 3: Looking North Along Phelan Avenue. The right-hand side of the photograph shows the southwestern corner of the campus. Although no buildings are visible, the trees close to Conlan Hall and one of the campus’ surface lots are shown, along with some of the lawn area west of the Science Building. The far left side of the image shows a portion of the Fire Station as well as the California Bookstore building farther north along Phelan Avenue. Although not visible in this photograph, the Balboa Reservoir is just north of the California Bookstore. The peak of Mount Davidson Park can be seen in the background; homes in the Westwood Highlands and Sherwood Forest neighborhoods are visible on and in front of the southern slopes of Mount Davidson.

The current view is one of generally low-scale development. The fire station is two stories tall, and the California Bookstore is a relatively small building. The landscaping east of Phelan Avenue and trees to the west provide visual relief. The homes along the slopes of Mount Davidson appear as a series of low-scale, light-colored bands alternating with vegetation. The large areas of parking within the reservoirs are not visible from this location; nor are the large-scale campus buildings east of Phelan Avenue. These features of the campus contribute to an overall visual character somewhat different (more intensely developed with structures of greater scale) from what is visible in the photograph.
Viewpoint 4: Ocean Avenue

The existing view northeast from the block of Ocean Avenue between Geneva Avenue/Phelan Avenue and Howth Street is shown in the top portion of Figure 4.2-5, View 4: Looking Northeast from Ocean Avenue. The far right-hand side of the image shows the Ocean Avenue I-280 overpass, with portions of the residential areas across I-280 visible in the background. The MUNI bus electric lines above Ocean Avenue and the utility poles along Ocean Avenue are visible. This image shows the extent of trees (including Monterey Cypress and Eucalyptus) separating the southern edge of the campus from Ocean Avenue. The parked cars in the central part of the image indicate the location of one of the campus' surface lots (B-Lot). The Library is partly visible beyond the lot on the left side of the photograph. The fence visible along Ocean Avenue in the central and right-hand portions of the image separates Ocean Avenue from the campus' southeastern practice field.

The existing view is of varied character, with the presence of the busy road, utility/transportation lines and utility poles, and fencing providing variation but not necessarily high visual quality. The presence of trees helps to soften the view. The Lick-Wilmerding High School across Ocean Avenue to the south reinforces the character of larger-scale academic buildings; the two- to three-story residential buildings across Ocean Avenue are of smaller scale. Transportation-related uses contribute substantially to the character of this area, with the presence of the MUNI platform and pedestrian overpass within and over Ocean Avenue, I-280 and the southbound off-ramp adjacent to the campus, and the BART station and MUNI railyard nearby.

Other Views

As noted previously, views of the campus are also available from portions of Mount Davidson. From a trail on the southeastern side, a viewer can see the central part of the campus (including the upper floors of Cloud Hall, the Science Building, Batmale Hall, and the Library), Phelan Avenue, and most of the southern basin of the Balboa Reservoir.

Southwest of the campus along Ocean Avenue, intermittent views are available of the berm flanking the southern Balboa Reservoir and portions of the Science Building. North and northeast of the campus along Judson Avenue, views of the campus are limited because of the intervening vegetation and topography. From the western end of Marston Avenue, views are available of Batmale Hall and the hillside in the northeastern part of the campus; views of the remainder of the campus are generally blocked.

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5 Based on a review of photographs from a number of vantage points in the vicinity of the campus.
C3. Existing Trees
As discussed previously, numerous trees are present on the Main Campus, including Monterey Pine, Monterey Cypress, and Eucalyptus. The trees vary in height and maturity, with many trees that are more than 50 feet tall. Trees along the southern and southeastern borders of the campus provide a buffer for existing views of the campus from Ocean Avenue. Trees near the northwestern corner of the campus help to screen views from Phelan Avenue and Judson Avenue. The eucalyptus trees in the northeastern part of the campus help to screen views from Judson Avenue.

C4. Existing Light and Glare
The existing buildings on the Main Campus are a source of light and glare, and the student and faculty/staff cars accessing the campus may also be a source of light and glare. Sources of light within the campus include lighting on the outsides of buildings, lighting within the buildings and lighting in the parking lots (including the Reservoir lots). Street lights are present on the east side of Phelan Avenue and both sides of Judson Avenue and Ocean Avenue. Lighting is also present along Cloud Circle and Science Center Drive. The existing practice field at the southern end of the campus is not lit.

Sensitive receptors near the campus that may be affected by light and glare include residential neighborhoods, churches, a child care facility, and schools. As shown in Figure 4.1-1, Existing Land Uses in Campus Vicinity, and discussed in Section 4.1, Land Use and Planning, residential neighborhoods dominate the surrounding areas to the north, west and south. Two private high schools are immediately adjacent to the campus - Lick Wilmerding High School across Ocean Avenue and Bishop Riordan High School across Phelan Avenue at Judson Avenue. The Main Campus itself is also considered a sensitive receptor.

C5. Existing Shadow Environment

Summer and Winter Solstice
“Solstice” is defined as either of the two points on the ecliptic (the great circle representing the annual path of the sun) that lie midway between the equinoxes (separated from them by an angular distance of 90 degrees). At the solstices, the sun’s apparent position on the celestial sphere reaches its greatest distance above or below the celestial equator, about 23 1/2 of the arc. The two annual solstices occur on two specified days of the year. At the time of summer solstice, around June 21st, the sun is directly overhead at noon at the Tropic of Cancer. In the Northern Hemisphere, the longest day and shortest night of the year occur on this date, marking the beginning of summer. At winter solstice, around December 21st, the sun is overhead at noon at the Tropic of Capricorn; this marks the beginning of winter in the Northern Hemisphere. For several days before and after each solstice, the sun appears to stand still in the sky (i.e., its noontime elevation does not seem to change from day to day). Shadows cast on the summer
solstice are the shortest shadows during the year, becoming progressively longer until winter solstice when the shadows are the longest they are all year.

Spring and Fall Equinox
The vernal and autumnal equinoxes are the two points where the ecliptic crosses the celestial equator. At the vernal equinox, the sun appears to be moving across the equator from the southern celestial hemisphere to the northern celestial hemisphere. The arrival of the sun at the vernal equinox usually occurs on or about March 21st and represents the beginning of spring. The arrival of the sun at the autumnal equinox on or about September 21st marks the beginning of autumn. Shadows cast at the vernal equinox are approximately the same length as shadows cast at the autumnal equinox, are longer than shadows cast at the summer solstice, and shorter than shadows cast at the winter solstice. (For the purposes of this EIR, vernal equinox and autumnal equinox will be referred to as spring equinox and fall equinox.)

Campus Shadows
There are a number of public open spaces and recreational or athletic spaces on the Main Campus. However, most of these areas are not under the jurisdiction of the San Francisco Recreation and Park Department (SFRPD). The SFRPD owns two triangular parcels to the east and in the southeast corner of the campus; the east parcel is used for tennis courts, and the southeast parcel is vacant. Both parcels are maintained by CCSF.

Public open spaces in the vicinity of the Main Campus include Balboa Park, east of the campus and across I-280; the Monterey Conservatory, about 0.4 mile northeast of the campus; Dorothy Erskine Park; about 0.6 mile northeast of the campus; Sunnyside Playground, about 0.4 mile northeast of the campus; Mount Davidson Park, about 0.6 mile northwest of the campus; Aptos Playground, about 0.7 mile west of the campus; Merced Heights Playground, about 1.0 mile southwest of the campus; Brooks Park, about 0.8 mile southwest of the campus; Ocean View Playground, about 0.5 mile southwest of the campus; and Cayuga Playground, about 0.6 mile south of the campus. All of these sites are under the jurisdiction of the SFRPD.6

There are a number of existing structures on the campus; the major structures include Cloud Hall, the Science Building, Batmale Hall, and the Library. Structures in the vicinity of the tennis courts and the vacant SFRPD-owned parcel include the North Gymnasium, Bungalows 602 through 623D, a shed adjacent to the tennis courts, the Central Shop Facility, and a storage structure. Existing structures on the campus range from one to four stories in height.

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6 Based on a review of area maps and the Recreation and Park Department and Real Estate Division websites on www.sfgov.org, October 2003.
Appendix 4.2 contains diagrams with projections of existing shadows at the following dates and times:

- June 21, 10:00 AM, 12:00 PM, and 3:00 PM;
- September 21, 10:00 AM, 12:00 PM, and 3:00 PM;
- December 21, 10:00 AM, 12:00 PM, and 3:00 PM; and
- March 21, 10:00 AM, 12:00 PM, and 3:00 PM.

These diagrams illustrate the existing shadow on and in the vicinity of the campus in light gray shading. As shown, most of the existing shadow is created by the taller, more massive structures such as Cloud Hall and the Science Center/Planetarium building, and by groupings of buildings such as those near Judson Avenue and Gennessee Street. As shown in the figures, most of the shadows cast by existing structures are limited to the campus boundaries. One of the three exceptions includes shadows cast by the Environmental, Horticulture, and Floristry building near the intersection of Judson Avenue and Gennessee Street. At worst, these shadows cast a few feet out onto Judson Avenue in the afternoon during the winter solstice.

The second exception includes shadows cast by the North and South Gymnasiums and Bungalows 620 through 623D at the eastern edge of the campus, and the Central Shop Facility in the southeastern portion of the campus. Shadows cast by these structures during the summer solstice until after mid-afternoon are limited to the campus boundaries. However, 3:00 PM summer shadows begin to creep onto the adjacent Havelock Street and residential properties to the north. Shadows progressively grow longer as the seasons change from summer to fall to winter, with the longest shadows cast from the North and South Gymnasiums and Bungalows 620 through 623D falling onto adjacent SFRPD-owned lands to the east, including the tennis courts.

The third exception includes shadows cast by the small shed that is adjacent to the tennis courts to the south. During the winter solstice, the shed casts shadow onto portions of three tennis courts. No other shadows cast by the shed fall onto the tennis courts during any of the other time of year.

D. EXISTING PLANS, POLICIES AND REGULATIONS

D1. San Francisco Community College District

CCSF does not have follow any formal policies or practices with respect to building design or campus visual quality. The College establishes architectural review committees for projects on a project-specific basis.
D2. City and County of San Francisco

San Francisco General Plan

Relevant policies from the San Francisco General Plan are presented below. As noted previously, CCSF may choose to exempt itself from local planning and zoning requirements with respect to classroom uses. Therefore, these policies are presented for informational purposes (and to provide a general sense of the visual resources considered important by the City). (Project consistency with relevant General Plan policies is discussed in Section 4.1, Land Use and Planning.)

Urban Design Element

- Objective 1: Emphasis of the characteristic pattern which gives to the city and its neighborhoods an image, a sense of purpose, and a means of orientation.
  - Policy 1.1: Recognize and protect major views in the city, with particular attention to those of open space and water,

- Objective 2: Conservation of resources which provide a sense of nature, continuity with the past, and freedom from overcrowding.
  - Policy 2.4: Preserve notable landmarks and areas of historic, architectural or aesthetic value, and promote the preservation of other buildings and features that provide continuity with past development.
  - Policy 2.5: Use care in remodeling of older buildings, in order to enhance rather than weaken the original character of such buildings.
  - Policy 2.6: Respect the character of older development nearby in the design of new buildings.

The Main Campus is not identified as an “outstanding and unique area” under Urban Design Element Policy 2.7.

- Objective 3: Moderation of major new development to complement the city pattern, the resources to be conserved, and the neighborhood environment.
  - Policy 3.1: Promote harmony in the visual relationships and transitions between new and older buildings.
  - Policy 3.2: Avoid extreme contrasts in color, shape and other characteristics which will cause new buildings to stand out in excess of their public importance.
  - Policy 3.4: Promote building forms that will respect and improve the integrity of open spaces and other public areas.
  - Policy 3.5: Relate the height of buildings to important attributes of the city pattern and to the height and character of existing development.
4.2 Visual Quality and Shadow

- Policy 3.6: Relate the bulk of buildings to the prevailing scale of development to avoid an overwhelming or dominating appearance in new construction.
- Policy 3.7: Recognize the special urban design problems posed in development of large properties.
- Policy 3.8: Discourage accumulation and development of large properties, unless such development is carefully designed with respect to its impact upon the surrounding areas and upon the city.

- Objective 4: Improvement of the neighborhood environment to increase personal safety, comfort, pride and opportunity.

- Policy 4.15: Protect the livability and character of residential properties from the intrusion of incompatible new buildings.

Draft Balboa Park Station Area Plan

As with the San Francisco General Plan, CCSF may choose to exempt itself from the jurisdiction of the Balboa Park Station Area Plan. In addition, the Plan has not been approved by the City, and the timing for approval is not known. Therefore, visual/design policies from the Plan are presented for informational purposes only.

Key Strategy #8: Integrate City College Into the Community

- Objective 2: Better integrate the existing campus, and future expansions, with the surrounding neighborhood and the transit station.

  - Policy 2.1: Direct development of new campus facilities to the eastern edge of the campus first.
  - Policy 2.2: Direct certain new campus facilities to the Balboa Reservoir, including housing.
  - Policy 2.3: Develop active campus facilities along Ocean Avenue to contribute to enlivening the street.
  - Policy 2.5: Develop a new southern gateway to the campus.

Key Strategy #9: Realize the Potential of the Balboa Reservoir

- Objective 1: Redevelop the Reservoir so that it becomes better connected with its surroundings.

  - Policy 1.1: Regardless of the type of new development that occurs on the reservoir, it should be planned so as to respect the grid structure of the surrounding neighborhoods so that the reservoir in the future can become an amenity connected to the neighborhood rather than isolated from it.
4.2 Visual Quality and Shadow

- Objective 3: Ensure that the east basin of the reservoir is developed in a manner that embraces the surrounding neighborhood.
  - Policy 3.1: Continue Phelan Loop Plaza with a central promenade.
  - Policy 3.2: Create a new east to west pedestrian pathway.
  - Policy 3.3: Create a strong system of streets and pathways and make sure new buildings are designed to address them.
  - Policy 3.4: Ensure parking facilities are well designed and not larger than necessary.

**Tree Protection**

The removal of “street trees” (trees within the public right-of-way or on land within the jurisdiction of the Department of Public Works) requires a permit under Article 16 of the San Francisco Public Works Code. Section 810 of Article 16 provides for the Board of Supervisors to designate “landmark trees,” which can be removed only upon determination of the Board following a public hearing. Few trees are currently designated as landmark trees; a group of trees has been proposed for landmark status that does not include any trees on the Main Campus.

Chapter 5, Article XXIII of the San Francisco Administrative Code provides for the establishment of an Urban Forestry Council to “ensure that San Francisco realizes the full range of tree benefits into the future.” Among the responsibilities of the Council are to review project plans for major publicly-sponsored developments as they may affect trees, to establish criteria for a landmark/heritage tree program “to provide for the protection of valuable trees on public and private property,” and to adopt guidelines for protecting trees during project design and construction. The Council has been established (as of May 2003), and is currently working on a Citywide plan for urban forestry; there are no adopted plans at this time.7

**E. SIGNIFICANCE THRESHOLDS**

For purposes of this EIR, thresholds were used from both the City and County of San Francisco Initial Study Checklist and Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines (Environmental Checklist Form).

The City and County of San Francisco typically uses the following criteria (from the City’s Initial Study Checklist) when determining whether a project could have a significant effect on the environment:

Could the project:

a. Have a substantial, demonstrable negative aesthetic effect?

4.2 Visual Quality and Shadow

b. Substantially degrade or obstruct any scenic view or vista now observed from public areas?

c. Generate obtrusive light or glare substantially impacting other properties?

In addition, Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines (Environmental Checklist Form) lists the following items to be considered when determining whether a project could have a significant effect on the environment:

Would the project:

• Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista;

• Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to trees, rock outcroppings, or historic buildings within a scenic highway;

• Significantly degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings; or

• Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area.

If implementation of the project exceeds any of the standards outlined above, the project would result in a significant impact.

Design and aesthetics are by definition subjective, open to interpretation by decision-makers and members of the public. A proposed project would therefore be considered to have a significant adverse effect on visual quality only if it would cause a substantial and demonstrable negative change, such as construction of an industrial facility in a pristine, natural area. Given that the Main Campus is already developed and the proposed buildings would have heights similar to those of the existing buildings, the project is unlikely to result in a “substantial demonstrable negative aesthetic effect.” Moreover, the architecture design guidelines of the Master Plan call for establishing a consistent sense of style and architectural cohesiveness on campus, as well as developing a palette of consistent building materials and colors to relate new buildings to existing buildings.

At the same time, the proposed Master Plan could result in changes to existing views of the campus from several public viewpoints in the vicinity, including park and recreation areas. Therefore, visual changes in the context of alteration or obstruction of scenic views from public areas, changes in visual character (including tree removal), and potential light and glare impacts are evaluated in this EIR.

As noted previously, Section 295 of the City Planning Code restricts shadow upon public open spaces under the jurisdiction of the Recreation and Park Department by any structure exceeding 40 feet unless the Planning Commission finds the impact to be insignificant. Although CCSF may choose to exempt itself from Section 295 of the Planning Code, some of the proposed buildings would exceed a height of 40 feet. Therefore, a Proposition K shadow analysis is included for informational purposes.
In addition, Section 147 of the City Planning Code states that any new development in a C-3 district should be shaped, consistent with the dictates of good design and without unduly restricting the development potential of the site in question, to reduce the substantial shadow impacts on public plazas and publicly accessible spaces. Factors to be taken into account in the determination of shadow impacts include the amount of open space area shadowed, the duration of the shadow, and the importance of sunlight to the utility of the type of open space being shadowed.

As discussed in Section 4.1 Land Use and Planning and shown in Figure 4.1-2, Existing Zoning Districts in Project Vicinity, the Main Campus and Balboa Reservoir are located within the P (Public Use) zoning district. Therefore, the proposed project would not be subject to Section 147 of the Planning Code. However, Section 147 was used generally to determine the significance of the shadow effects of the project.

F. IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

The analysis of visual impacts was based in part on computer-generated visual simulations. To create the simulations, a digital model of the proposed project was generated utilizing the proposed illustrative plan and building height information provided by the Master Plan team. This model was then superimposed on the existing photographs to create simulated photos of how the views would appear with development of the proposed project. It should be noted that for the most part, the visual simulations of the project are only massing diagrams, intended to illustrate the height and bulk of the proposed buildings, and do not represent the actual design or architectural features of the proposed project. (The simulations of the Community Health & Wellness Center presented in this section provide somewhat more detail and are based on the current preliminary design.) Tree removal resulting from the building development is reflected in the simulations (see Impact Visual-2 below for more information on tree removal). The simulations also reflect generalized potential landscaping of the campus based on a conceptual landscaping plan.

**Visual-1 Impacts to Scenic Views**

**Impact**

*Master Plan Buildout*

The proposed Master Plan would result in the alteration of views by demolishing existing structures and introducing new buildings to the Main Campus and eastern part of the Balboa Reservoir. The primary public viewing areas generally recognized as providing scenic views of the Main Campus are McLaren Park and Mount Davidson.
McLaren Park. The lower portion of Figure 4.2-2 shows a simulated view of the campus after buildout of the Master Plan, as viewed from the base of the park’s water tower on a crest in the northwest corner of the park. The upper floors of the proposed parking structure would be visible in front of the stadium from this viewpoint. Although the parking structure would be four stories tall, the building pad (base of the structure) would be downhill from the stadium. Other buildings that would be visible include the Community Health & Wellness Center (in the left portion of the simulation, to the left of the Library) and part of the Arts Center (also in the left portion, behind the Community Health & Wellness Center). Other buildings would not be visible because they would have low heights or would be obscured by Cloud Hall and the Science Building.

The additional buildings would not obstruct views of the Pacific Ocean. The buildings would be similar in scale to some of the existing buildings on the campus, and they would comprise a relatively small part of the field of view. For those reasons, the project would not substantially block or obstruct scenic views from this location and the impact to views from McLaren Park would be considered less than significant.

Mount Davidson. Although the view of the campus from this location was not simulated, some conclusions can be made about potential impacts based on what is known about the Master Plan. The proposed buildings west of Phelan Avenue would be most visible from this location. The heights of those buildings would be similar to that of Riordan High School, which is one to three stories tall. Although the proposed buildings would add to an increased sense of mass in the area of the reservoir, the impact on the view would not be substantial because (1) the building heights would be similar, (2) the area west of Phelan Avenue is already occupied by the large paved parking lots within the Balboa Reservoir and (3) the area occupied by the new buildings would be a small part of the field of view. (For purposes of comparison, Cloud Hall, to the east of the reservoir, has several stories and is on top of a hill, but is a very small part of the field of view and does not block the view’s panoramic features.) Panoramic views of areas in San Francisco to the south and San Bruno Mountain would not be affected.

Near-Term Development

The impacts to scenic views resulting from construction of the near-term projects (Community Health & Wellness Center, Student Health Center & Classroom Building [Health Center], Child Development Center, practice field, and reservoir berm removal/wall construction) are addressed by the discussion of the impacts of Master Plan buildout, above. These projects would not result in significant impacts on scenic views.

Reservoir Configuration

If the MOU between CCSF and SFPUC were not approved and the Balboa Reservoir were not reconfigured, Master Plan development would occur within the southern reservoir only. In the simulated view from McLaren Park shown in Figure 4.2-2, this development would be behind the Arts Center visible in the left portion of the photograph. The extent of building mass visible in that part of the
simulation would increase only slightly, as the other buildings would be of similar heights as the Arts Center (an average of three stories). No other changes to the simulated view would occur. Therefore, construction within the southern reservoir only would not substantially block or obstruct scenic views from this location. From Mount Davidson, there would still be an increase in mass, but the new buildings would appear similar to the existing buildings on the campus, and would not block panoramic views of the City or San Bruno Mountain. Therefore, no significant impacts to scenic views would occur.

Mitigation

No mitigation is required.

Significance After Mitigation

Less than significant.

Visual-2 Impacts to Scenic Resources

Impact

Master Plan Buildout

The major visual features on the Main Campus include Science Hill, campus topographical and use zones, Cloud Circle, the campus’s hillside setting, mature landscaping, the Diego Rivera mural, and the Balboa Reservoir. Most of these features would not be negatively affected by Master Plan buildout. (Impacts to significant historic architectural resources are addressed in Section 4.9, Cultural Resources.)

The Master Plan would result in the removal of existing trees from the campus. Where feasible, trees would be preserved. Construction of the buildings west of Phelan Avenue would result in minimal tree removal because there are only a few, isolated trees along the Balboa Reservoir berms. The design and construction of the Health Center and Child Development Center would attempt to preserve the trees in the northwestern corner of the campus to the extent possible. The proposed parking structure east of the stadium would not result in tree removal because it would be constructed where the North and South Gyms are now. Construction of the Community Health & Wellness Center might require the removal of some trees at the eastern edge of the slope between the Statler Wing and the Community Health & Wellness Center, as well as the trees between the practice field and B-Lot. The existing tree buffers along the edges of the campus would remain, as would the trees within the naturalized area east of the Horticulture gardens. In addition, trees and other landscaping would be planted as the proposed buildings are constructed.

Depending on the siting and design of individual buildings, some mature trees could be removed as the result of the project. The trees that could be affected include a Monterey cypress tree just west of Phelan Avenue, at the south end of the reservoir; Monterey cypress trees adjacent to Parking Lot F; and Monterey
cypress trees and conifers on the west side of the practice field. None of these trees is considered a “landmark” tree by the City. Most of the mature trees on the Main Campus would be preserved, and the Master Plan includes tree planting. These factors would support a conclusion that the Master Plan would not result in substantial damage to a scenic resource. However, the extent of actual tree removal is not known at this time, and construction adjacent to or near existing mature trees could result in the potential loss of additional trees. For those reasons, the potential impacts to mature trees as a scenic resource would be significant.

Near-Term Development

The impacts to scenic resources resulting from construction of the near-term projects (Community Health & Wellness Center, Health Center, Child Development, practice field, and reservoir berm removal/wall construction) are addressed by the discussion of the impacts of Master Plan buildout, above. Construction of the Community Health & Wellness Center, Health Center, and Child Development Center could result in the direct removal or indirect damage to mature trees; the potential impact from the direct and indirect tree loss would be significant.

Reservoir Configuration

If the MOU between CCSF and SFPUC were not approved and the Balboa Reservoir were not reconfigured, Master Plan development would occur within the southern reservoir only. The impacts to scenic resources would be the same as those resulting from development on the reconfigured reservoir.

Mitigation

Visual-2a: Prior to the final design of each project, a landscape architect shall review the construction footprint of the project. All feasible measures, such as changes to the building footprint, shall be used to preserve and protect healthy mature trees.

Visual-2b: If the removal of healthy mature trees is required, a certified arborist shall evaluate the trees and determine their “value” using the criteria developed by the Council of Tree and Landscape Architects. CCSF shall relocate the trees, to the extent feasible, based on recommendations from a qualified arborist. The trees shall be moved to locations consistent with the College landscape plan.

Visual-2c: CCSF shall replace mature trees that cannot be saved (as the result of Measures a or b above) with new trees of the same species at a ratio of at least 1 to 1 (or higher if recommended by the arborist). The sizes of replacement trees shall be determined by a qualified arborist. The locations of the replacement trees shall be selected by the College landscape architect to be consistent with the landscape plan, but the visibility and scenic benefits of the existing trees shall be considered. All replacement trees shall be monitored for at least five years to ensure the success of the new tree plantings. If a tree
dies during this period, the tree shall be replaced and the replacement tree shall be monitored for an additional five years.

**Visual-2d:** CCSF shall implement measures to minimize impacts to trees adjacent to or near project construction. The measures shall be developed by a qualified arborist, but may include:

- Identification of a “protection zone” (based on accurate plots of trunk locations and driplines) for all trees to be preserved adjacent to or near proposed development areas.
- Prohibition of any soil disturbance or change in grade within the protection zone.
- Protective measures for any excavation that must occur within the protection zone.
- Use of special foundation, footing and pavement designs to minimize interference with any structures built within the protection zone.
- Limits on placement of irrigation lines and application of irrigation.
- Requirement that new plantings be compatible with the water and nutrient requirements of the existing trees.
- Design of drainage improvements to maintain or improve the current water conditions for existing trees.

**Significance After Mitigation**

With implementation of Measures **Visual-2a** through **-2d**, potential impacts to trees as a scenic resource would be less than significant.

**Visual-3 ** Impacts to Visual Character

**Impact**

_Master Plan Buildout_

Computer-generated visual simulations were prepared for the other three views of the Main Campus presented in the Existing Conditions portion of this section, and are shown in the lower portions of **Figure 4.2-3** through **4.2-5**. As noted earlier, these viewing areas (as well as McLaren Park, discussed under **Visual-1**) provide representative views of the campus from off-site locations. The simulations were created using the techniques described at the beginning of the impacts discussion. As stated previously, the specific designs of most of the proposed buildings are not known at this time, and the evaluation of impacts is based mainly on the general building mass, height and location.
South and North along Phelan Avenue. Figure 4.2-3 shows a simulated view of the campus after buildout of the Master Plan, as viewed from the intersection of Phelan Avenue and Judson Avenue. Part of the proposed Health Center is visible in the left portion of the simulation, and parts of the proposed Technology Center, Student Services/Admin, and Arts Center buildings are visible in the right portion of the simulation. Figure 4.2-4 shows a simulated view of the campus after buildout of the Master Plan, as viewed from the intersection of Phelan Avenue and Ocean Avenue. Parts of the Arts Center, Student Services/Administration and Technology Center buildings are visible in the left-center portion of the simulation.

Buildout of the Master Plan would extend the mass and scale of campus buildings to the west of Phelan Avenue. Although the expanses of asphalt in the eastern part of the reservoir would be removed, they would be replaced with three-story structures. This development would extend the larger mass of Riordan High School to the south. Development in the northwest corner of the campus (Child Development Center, Health Center) would appear more massive than the existing bungalows. The resulting visual character would be less open, more built-up, and larger scale. The western part of the reservoir would still serve as a buffer between the campus and the neighborhood to the west, and the outer portion of the western berm would remain, obscuring views of most of the campus from residences to the west. The impacts to the visual character of this part of the campus could be seen as beneficial, but impacts to the visual character of the vicinity could be significant (as explained further below).

Northeast from Ocean Avenue. Figure 4.2-5 shows a simulated view of the campus after buildout of the Master Plan, as viewed from Ocean Avenue looking eastward. The only component of the Master Plan that would be visible in this view is the proposed Community Health & Wellness Center and associated parking. Design of the Community Health & Wellness Center is in progress, and the simulated view reflects “articulated massing” based on the preliminary design.

Although the Community Health & Wellness Center would be visible from Ocean Avenue, it would be screened somewhat by existing and proposed vegetation. From this viewpoint, the building would also appear less prominent because it would be built into the existing hillside. The parking and roadways supporting the Community Health & Wellness Center would be visible, and the development as a whole would replace the green expanse of the practice field with developed uses. The building would be larger-scale than the two- and three-story residences across Ocean Avenue, but similar in scale to Lick-Wilmerding High School directly across the roadway. The proposed Master Plan Design Guidelines intend for the Community Health & Wellness Center to serve as a new “front door” to the campus, with a pedestrian entry, a “South Gate” and entry plaza, and a green area adjacent to Ocean Avenue. For these reasons, the impact on the visual character of this part of the campus and its vicinity would be less than significant.

Tree Removal. The Master Plan would result in the removal of existing trees from the campus. The types of impacts that could occur are described under Impact Visual-2, above. As noted, most existing trees
would be preserved (including the trees along Judson Avenue in the northeastern portion of the campus), and additional trees would be planted. In particular, the proposed landscaping around the campus boundaries would help to improve visual character by providing a green buffer. Therefore, there would be no substantial adverse changes in visual character due to tree removal. (The impacts to scenic resources from tree removal are analyzed as part of Impact Visual-2.)

**Conclusion.** The new buildings would be constructed in an area that is already developed, and the heights of the new buildings would be similar to those of the existing buildings. The heights of the proposed buildings would range from 22 feet to 65 feet (building base to parapet). The proposed heights in terms of elevation above sea level are not known at this time, because the proposed grading for individual projects is not known.

The general effect of Master Plan buildout would be to extend the mass and scale of campus buildings to the west of Phelan Avenue. The expanses of asphalt in the eastern part of the reservoir would be removed and replaced with three-story structures. This change could be seen as visually beneficial. However, the resulting visual character could also be perceived as less open, more built-up, and larger scale. Depending on the ultimate design, mass and placement of the proposed buildings, they could contrast substantially with the generally smaller, finer-scale character of development in the area. The area of the campus already contains some uses that are larger-scale (such as Riordan High School and Lick-Wilmerding High School) and utilitarian (such as the BART station and MUNI yard, I-280 and overpass), so this contrast would not be as great as it would be in an area dominated by smaller-scale development.

The *San Francisco General Plan* includes policies that call for the height and bulk of new buildings to relate to the character of existing development, and that focus on protection of residential properties from the intrusion of incompatible new buildings. The *Balboa Park Station Area Plan* has not been adopted, but it indicates a desire for development on the campus to be concentrated on the eastern edge and along Ocean Avenue. Policies regarding the Balboa Reservoir emphasize the relationship between the reservoir and the surrounding neighborhoods. Depending on the ultimate design of the buildings, the proposed Master Plan development could be perceived as visually out of scale with these neighborhoods. In addition, some of the proposed buildings could be in conflict with the height and bulk requirements of the San Francisco Planning Code (see Section 4.1, Land Use and Planning, for further discussion).

The Master Plan does not discuss the interface between the proposed development west of Phelan Avenue and uses to the west. (Some illustrations in the Master Plan show a buffer of trees along the western edge.) CEQA requires that the impacts of a project be compared to existing conditions; the existing condition directly west of the Master Plan development is one of large areas of (sunken) surface parking. Several options are being considered for future use of the area, but there are no land use plans or specific projects approved at this time. Although not a CEQA issue, there could be visual conflicts between the Master Plan and potential future uses in the western part of the reservoir.
These changes in visual character would not necessarily constitute a “substantial degradation” of the visual character of the area, but could be perceived as such. The proposed Master Plan does include Urban Design and Architecture Guidelines that could help to minimize visual impacts, but the ameliorating effects of these guidelines are not known at this time. For those reasons, and in the absence of specific design information, the potential impact to visual character would be significant.

Near-Term Development

The impacts to visual character resulting from construction of the near-term projects (Community Health & Wellness Center, Health Center, Child Development Center, practice field, and reservoir berm removal/wall construction) are addressed by the discussion of the impacts of Master Plan buildout, above. The primary impact to visual character would be from the development west of Phelan Avenue, though the development of the Health Center and Child Development Center would contribute to the impact. The Community Health & Wellness Center would not have a substantial, demonstrable negative effect on visual character.

Reservoir Configuration

If the MOU between CCSF and SFPUC were not approved and the Balboa Reservoir were not reconfigured, Master Plan development would occur within the southern reservoir only. In the views along Phelan Avenue, the result could be perceived as more open and less built-up. Southwest of the campus along Ocean Avenue, the proposed buildings would be visible along more of the roadway, and would contrast with the smaller-scale development in the area. Development would occur directly adjacent to part of the neighborhood west of the reservoir, and the conflict between uses could be greater in this area.

Mitigation

Visual-3a: As individual Master Plan buildings are designed, the designers shall employ the following guidelines from the Master Plan to reduce the perceived scale of the structures.

   i. Respect the proportions and scale of existing buildings.

   ii. Break larger building masses into several, smaller volumes to enhance human scale.

   iii. Avoid large horizontal patterns and elements, which can accentuate building mass.

   iv. Design well-recessed window openings and changes in depth of exterior walls to delineate building form through the use of shadow and light.

   v. Design all new buildings forms with either a flat or low-pitched roof.
vi. Integrate exhaust and plumbing stacks as architectural design features. Where applicable, employ articulation to reduce larger-scale elements.

vii. Use building materials that are visually compatible with the existing character of the campus.

viii. Using building colors that fall within the range of beige tones that existing on the campus.

ix. Use public art to diminish the impacts of a blank building façade at a pedestrian level.

Visual-3b: CCSF shall establish a Design Review Committee, to consist of members of the CCSF Board of Trustees, to review the design of all major structures on the Main Campus. The review shall consider compliance of the design with the Master Plan principles and design guidelines and the mitigation in this EIR. The review shall be open to the public.

Although not a requirement for mitigation under CEQA, it is recommended that special attention be given to the design of the “back” (western side) of the buildings west of Phelan Avenue, to reduce the perceived scale of the buildings as seen from the west. It is also recommended that CCSF coordinate with the City and County of San Francisco (Planning Department and SFPUC) regarding the interface with the potential future uses on the western part of the Balboa Reservoir.

Significance After Mitigation

Although implementation of Measures Visual-3a and -3b would reduce the potential impact to visual character, some of the impact may be inherent in the size and general placement of the proposed structures. The individual buildings constructed as part of Master Plan buildout could have architectural merit, and the replacement of the eastern part of the reservoir with buildings could be seen as beneficial. However, the Master Plan could still result in the addition of larger-scale structures to an area with smaller-scale neighborhoods. In addition, some of the buildings could exceed the City’s height and bulk requirements. For those reasons (and in the absence of specific building designs), the potential impact to visual character would remain significant after mitigation.

Visual-4 Light and Glare

Impact

The proposed project would shift some light sources and might increase light in portions of the campus, due to the new campus buildings and parking. These changes could affect daytime and nighttime views. New light sources would be introduced on the eastern part of the Balboa Reservoir where the Performing Arts, Technology Center, and other buildings are proposed. In addition, the proposed Academic Facility
(Joint Use) would increase light sources in the northeastern part of the campus, next to Batmale Hall. Increases in lighting would also occur at the site of the proposed Community Health & Wellness Center in the southern part of the campus, and where the parking garage is proposed east of the Stadium. The increase in day and nighttime lighting that would occur as a result of the proposed Master Plan would not significantly affect sensitive receptors in the project vicinity, including the residential neighborhoods and schools. The area of the campus is urban and already has numerous lighting sources as described in the setting. In addition, the Main Campus is screened from some sensitive receptors due to the trees located in the southeastern, southwestern, northwestern, and northeastern parts of the campus, and due to the variation of topography of the area. For those reasons, visual impacts associated with the introduction of and increase in light sources are considered less than significant.

Mitigation

No mitigation is required.

Significance After Mitigation

Less than significant.

Visual-5   Increased Shadow

Impact

Implementation of the proposed project would result in the construction of new buildings, which could cast new shadows, some of which might affect lands under the jurisdiction of the SFRPD. As mentioned earlier, since some of the proposed buildings would exceed the height threshold established by Section 295 of the City Planning Code (greater than 40 feet), a Proposition K shadow calculation was prepared for information purposes. Appendix 4.2 contains diagrams with projections of future shadows at the following dates and times:

- June 21, 10:00 AM, 12:00 PM, and 3:00 PM;
- September 21, 10:00 AM, 12:00 PM, and 3:00 PM;
- December 21, 10:00 AM, 12:00 PM, and 3:00 PM; and
- March 21, 10:00 AM, 12:00 PM, and 3:00 PM.
These diagrams show the location of the proposed buildings on the CCSF campus and new shadows that would be cast from those buildings.\textsuperscript{8} (The figures also depict existing shadows, shown in lighter gray; new shadow is shown in dark gray.) The figures show that some of the proposed buildings would cast new shadows that extend beyond the existing shadows at various times of the year. As can be seen in Table 4.2-1, \textbf{New Shadow Impact}, most of the proposed buildings would not cast new shadows that would extend beyond the CCSF campus boundaries. Some of the proposed buildings would cast new shadows beyond existing shadows and onto adjacent off-campus streets and/or lands not owned by the SFRPD. During the winter solstice, shadows cast by the proposed parking garage at 3:00 PM would fall onto lands that are under the jurisdiction of the SFRPD (i.e., the tennis courts and adjacent land). Although this building would not exceed the height threshold (greater than 40 feet) established by Section 295 of the Planning Code, a Proposition K shadow calculation was prepared for information purposes. Based on the Proposition K analysis, the future shadow would constitute a 13.91 percent decrease over existing shadow on SFRPD land. Thus, for the reasons noted above and considering that the project would result in a net reduction in the amount of shadow cast onto property under the jurisdiction of the SFRPD, project shadow impacts would be less than significant.

\textbf{Mitigation}

No mitigation is required.

\textbf{Significance After Mitigation}

Less than significant.

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\textsuperscript{8} The figures show the proposed Academic Facility, Technology Center, Administrative, and Classroom Lab buildings as one large building. The reason for this is that because of the proximity of the buildings to each other, shadows cast from each of the buildings overlap creating a cumulative shadow that appears to have been cast from one structure. For the purposes of this shadow analysis, this amalgamation of buildings will be referred to as the Technology building.
Table 4.2-1
New Shadow Impact

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A: New shadow does not fall beyond CCSF campus boundaries.
B: New shadow falls onto adjacent non-campus streets and/or onto land not owned by the SFRPD.
C: New shadow falls onto SFRPD-owned land, but does not extend beyond existing shadow.

Source: Impact Sciences and CADP Associates

Visual-6 Impacts of Citywide Master Plan Development

Impact

As stated in the Project Description, changes at most of the other CCSF campuses would be minor, such as the remodeling of existing interior space. These changes would not result in any significant negative visual impacts.

The visual impacts associated with the Mission and Chinatown/North Beach campuses have already been analyzed in certified EIRs (see Section 3.0, Project Description, for full citations of these documents). That analysis has been incorporated into this EIR by reference.
The 1998 EIR on the Chinatown/North Beach campus concluded that the facility would add mid-rise building elements that would contrast with the existing structures in the area, but that the project would not substantially affect the visual character of the site environs or substantially degrade scenic views. The 1999 EIR Addendum also noted that the revised project would preserve the Colombo Building with a one-story addition rather than constructing a new, taller structure, and that the effect would be to preserve the overall scale of the Colombo Building. The Addendum concluded that the project would not have significant, adverse aesthetic effects.

The 2003 EIR Addendum on the approved Mission Campus concluded that the size of the campus would be larger than many of the residential buildings in the surrounding area. The height of the new building along Valencia Street would be about 56 feet, and the height of the project would be about 62 feet along Bartlett Street and 22nd Street. The Addendum concluded that, while the project would introduce a new element into the vicinity, it would not affect short-range or long-range view from public open space, and would be consistent in scale with the existing institutional building at the site.

Although the proposed Main Campus Master Plan would have significant visual effects, those effects would not combine with aesthetic changes at the other campuses because the campuses are not within the same “viewshed.” In addition, the effects at the other campuses would be less than significant. Therefore, there would be no cumulative aesthetic impacts from Citywide campus development.

Mitigation

No mitigation is required.

Significance After Mitigation

Less than significant.

Visual-7 Cumulative Impacts

Impact

As stated in Section 4.1, Land Use and Planning, there are no major projects within the vicinity of the Main Campus. An apartment complex is under construction on Ocean Avenue several blocks west of the campus and a new library is planned for construction south of the west end of the Balboa Reservoir. The apartment complex would be far enough from the campus that it would not be within the campus “viewshed” (except in longer-range views). The library would be a small-scale building, similar to the existing buildings south of the reservoir and nearby. Therefore, these projects would not combine with the proposed Master Plan to create significant cumulative impacts.

The Draft Balboa Park Station Area Plan includes a recommended development program for the Phelan Loop Area. The program would include the extension of Harold, Lee, and Brighton Avenues across
Ocean Avenue; relocation of the MUNI layover facility; several public open spaces; mixed-use development of up to five stories (45 to 55 feet); possible redevelopment of the fire station/bookstore parcel near the corner of Phelan and Ocean Avenues; and possible development of a branch library. The Station Area Plan is still in draft form and the anticipated date of approval is unknown; no specific projects within the Phelan Loop have been formally initiated. Therefore, future use of the area is considered too speculative to analyze in detail (and thus is not included in the cumulative impacts analysis). From a general standpoint and for informational purposes, the recommended Phelan Loop redevelopment could improve the visual character of the Ocean Avenue frontage, as well as provide an attractive gateway to CCSF. The recommended mixed-use development would have heights similar to those of the adjacent Arts Complex, and could help to provide a visual transition between the smaller-scale uses across Ocean Avenue and the larger Arts Complex buildings. The draft CCSF Master Plan Design Guidelines include recommendations for visual/pedestrian connections between the Arts Complex and the future Phelan Loop Plaza. For those reasons, the CCSF Master Plan and Phelan Loop redevelopment (if it occurs) would not combine to create adverse visual impacts.

The draft Balboa Park Station Area Plan proposes that public open space be developed on top of the western part of the Balboa Reservoir if the SFPUC uses it for water storage. Should the SFPUC determine that the reservoir is not needed or not feasible, the Plan proposes that housing and open space be developed. As noted above, the Plan has not been approved by the City, and the MOU between CCSF and the SFPUC states that the PUC does not intend to allow any use or activity on top of the reservoir should it be constructed. Construction of the Balboa Reservoir is not currently proposed by the SFPUC, nor is it in the SFPUC Capital Improvement Program. For these reasons, any future use of the western part of the reservoir is speculative to analyze in detail (and thus is not included in the cumulative impacts analysis).

From a general standpoint, though, development on top of the western reservoir would provide a transition between the College and the neighborhood west of the reservoir. The draft Balboa Park Station Area Plan states that any new development on the western half of the reservoir should respect the existing character and block pattern established in the surrounding neighborhoods. Although the draft Plan does not identify specific building heights, it is expected (based on the potential number of dwelling units identified) that heights would be similar to or less than those of the CCSF buildings on the eastern half of the reservoir. If housing were built on the western half of the reservoir, the draft Plan shows open space and pedestrian paths between the housing and the neighborhood to the west. In addition, the draft Station Area Plan calls for a visual buffer between any open space developed on the site and the houses abutting the reservoir to the west. For those reasons, the CCSF Master Plan and development of the western half of the reservoir (if it occurs) would not combine to create adverse visual impacts.

Mitigation

No mitigation is required.
Significance After Mitigation

Less than significant.

G. CONCLUSION

Although implementation of Measures **Visual-3a** and **–3b** would reduce the potential impact to visual character, the impact would remain significant after mitigation.
4.2 Visual Quality and Shadow

Figure 4.2-1, Key to Viewpoints p 29

Figure 4.2-2, View 1: Looking West from John McLaren Park p 31

Figure 4.2-3, View 2: Looking South along Phelan Avenue p 33

Figure 4.2-4, View 3: Looking North Along Phelan Avenue p35

Figure 4.2-5, View 4: Looking Northeast from Ocean Avenue p37