

## 4.1 AESTHETICS

This chapter describes the existing aesthetic character of Chino and its Sphere of Influence (SOI) and evaluates the potential aesthetic impacts associated with the Proposed General Plan and the Focused Growth Plan.

### *A. City of Chino Municipal Code*

In addition to the existing General Plan, the City of Chino's Municipal Code regulates the form and character of development in the City through the Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances. Revisions to these ordinances are a part of both proposed projects evaluated by this EIR.

#### **1. Zoning Ordinance**

The purpose of the Zoning Ordinance (Title 20 of the Municipal Code) is to provide specific requirements for development in the City to achieve the general arrangement of land uses identified in the General Plan. Among the primary objectives of the Zoning Ordinance are the regulation of building form, placement, and density, and the provision of sufficient parking and open spaces in conjunction with development.

#### **2. Subdivision Ordinance**

The Subdivision Ordinance (Title 19 of the Chino Municipal Code) ensures the orderly development of lands within the incorporated City. The ordinance also provides standards for surveying, design, and construction and installation of relevant infrastructure.

### *B. Existing Conditions*

This section provides a general description of the existing urban character and visual quality of Chino.

## 1. Visual Character

Following is a brief description of the primary areas in Chino with a discussion of the visual character of each.

### a. Chino's Civic Center

This area is the core of the City, located at Central Avenue and Chino Avenue, which features key civic components, such as the City Hall, a branch of the County Library, and the Chino Transit Center.

### b. Downtown

A limited number of older, commercial buildings adjacent to the Civic Center constitute Chino's Downtown. These buildings survive from the early days of Chino and provide a connection to the City's past.

### c. Central Neighborhoods

These are the oldest residential areas surrounding the Civic Center. They fit the pattern of traditional neighborhoods and contain one- and two-story bungalows, many of which predate the 1920s. Many of the streets have good tree cover that provides shade for streets, sidewalks and front yards. An alley system exists so that front sidewalks are not interrupted by driveways. The design of these homes has historically included front porches and other features that emphasize a pedestrian scale. Such details are not as evident in recent construction and remodels.

### d. 20th Century Suburban Neighborhoods

These neighborhoods were built in the decades following World War II up to the 1980s and later. They are primarily auto-oriented, with limited sidewalks and prominent garages. The street network is less regular than the central neighborhoods, including more cul-de-sacs that restrict connectivity within the neighborhoods.

### e. East Chino

This area was primarily developed beginning in the late 1980s through the present, and is characterized by a loop road that connects single-family resi-

dential neighborhoods to a series of school sites and parks. The properties between Fern and Euclid Avenues form an “activity corridor” of higher-intensity uses, such as multi-family housing, shopping centers and business parks. Neighborhood entry monuments located on arterial streets are also a defining characteristic of this area.

f. Rural Neighborhoods

The rural neighborhoods predominate in the northwest part of Chino, as well as the unincorporated SOI. They are marked by parcels that are deeper than they are wide, and streets that lack curbs, gutters, sidewalks, and trees. The homes in these neighborhoods are more varied than in the 20th Century suburban neighborhoods, reflecting development in different time periods. Some of these areas focus on rural uses such as horse-raising or small-scale crops.

g. The Preserve and College Park

These two Specific Plan areas were designed in the early 2000s using New Urbanist principles. They incorporate mixed-use development, which brings community services close to where people live. Walkability is also a central theme of the design of these two areas. The homes are more varied in size and design than in other parts of the City.

h. Retail Corridors

Chino includes several retail corridors in close proximity to where people live and work. The main corridors are along Central Avenue and Riverside Drive. They were built as the City expanded over the past fifty years, but have never developed a cohesive look and feel. They include a wide range of development types, including small offices, mini-malls, some multi-family housing, and restaurants. Some buildings are close to the street, while others have extensive front parking lots.

i. Shopping Centers

Unlike retail corridors, which developed gradually, a shopping center in Chino was more likely developed, or redeveloped, all at one time. The primary shopping centers are The Spectrum and those near the intersection of

State Route 60 and Central Avenue. They include extensive parking areas and pedestrian connections between the stores, allowing patrons to stroll from one store to another.

j. Industrial Areas

Chino's industrial areas are primarily located in the southern part of the City, and consist of very large warehouse and manufacturing buildings. These buildings feature large loading docks and are separated from the rest of the City by driveways and employee parking lots. Some small-scale industrial uses, including those just to the south of the Civic Center, are more integrated into the surrounding area, with smaller buildings, driveways, and loading areas.

k. Agricultural Areas

Agricultural uses remain throughout Chino. Most are dairy operations in the southern part of the City. These consist primarily of feeding areas and barns. Some open agricultural fields with accompanying windrows are found in the City. Although these areas are now limited in size, they provide a strong connection to Chino's agricultural past.

l. Open Space Areas

Open space areas in Chino consist primarily of open fields in the southern part of the City, below the 566-foot elevation line associated with the Prado Dam.

m. Institutions

By far the largest institution in Chino is the California Institution for Men, a large prison facility in the southern part of the City. Its main buildings are not visible from public roads, but the facility separates southern parts of Chino, including The Preserve and the Chino Airport, from the older, more established parts of the City.

## 2. Scenic Vistas

Some parts of Chino have views toward the San Gabriel Mountains to the north and Chino Hills to the south. These views orient visitors to Chino's location in the Chino Valley and contribute to the City's unique sense of place.

## 3. Scenic Highways

There are no State-designated scenic highways in Chino.

## 4. Light and Glare

Light pollution refers to all forms of unwanted light in the night sky, including glare, light trespass, sky glow and over-lighting. Light pollution in Chino may result from night-time illumination of industrial and commercial buildings and prison facilities. Sky glow currently results from regional urbanization throughout the Inland Empire and the Los Angeles Basin.

### *C. Standards of Significance*

The Proposed General Plan and Focused Growth Plan would create a significant aesthetic impact if it would:

- ◆ Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings.
- ◆ Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista.
- ◆ Substantially degrade the view from a scenic highway, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings and historic buildings.
- ◆ Expose people on- or off-site to substantial light or glare.

### *D. Impact Discussion*

This section discusses the impacts of the Proposed General Plan and Focused Growth Plan on Chino's aesthetic character. The Proposed General Plan and

Focused Growth Plan would guide development in the same areas and differ only in the resulting intensity of development. Therefore, the two plans are discussed together in this section. As was discussed above, both plans include revisions to the Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances. This discussion is organized by and responds to each of the potential impacts identified in the Standards of Significance.

### **1. Visual Character or Quality**

The introduction of new or redeveloped uses in existing community areas, and new development on currently vacant lands, might alter the visual character of Chino. However, the proposed projects contain updates to the Subdivision and Zoning Ordinances to ensure that new development complements the existing aesthetic environment of the City and adjacent areas. In addition, the goals and policies of the proposed projects encourage high quality design. For example, Goal CC-1 of the Community Character Element calls for high standards of community design in Chino. Policy P1 under Objective CC-2.1 requires high quality infill development, and Policy P3 calls for new multi-family development to be designed in scale with surrounding residential neighborhoods. Policy P7 under Objective CC-3.2 calls for the exterior of residential buildings to be of the highest architectural design and construction quality. Policy P8 calls for infill development, secondary residential units and multi-family housing to be consistent in scale and character with existing neighborhoods. These various goals and policies would reduce the potentially adverse city-wide impacts of new development allowed under the proposed projects to a *less-than-significant* level.

### **2. Scenic Vistas**

The proposed projects contain policies that would assure that there would be a *less-than-significant impact* on scenic vistas in Chino. The Community Character Element includes Goal CC-6, which calls for the preservation of Chino's view corridors. Objective CC-6.1 calls for new development to be designed and sited to support views of Chino's unique geographic and environmental features. Policy P1 under that Objective would ensure that new development does not obstruct, detract from, or negatively affect views of the

San Gabriel Mountains to the north and the Chino Hills to the south. Finally, Policy P2 dictates that new development should preserve views of the surrounding environment through building design and orientation. With these goals and policies, there would be a *less-than-significant impact* on scenic vistas.

### **3. Scenic Highways**

There are no scenic highways in Chino. Therefore, there would be a *less-than-significant impact* from the proposed projects.

### **4. Light or Glare**

New development under the proposed projects has the potential to create additional light or glare. Policy P5 under Goal CC-1.1 in the Community Character Element calls for lighting on private and public property that minimizes light spillage to adjacent properties and the night sky. As a result, there would be a *less-than-significant impact* from the proposed projects.

## ***E. Cumulative Impacts***

As stated above, the proposed projects would have a *less-than-significant impact* on aesthetics in Chino. Any development occurring in incorporated areas adjacent to Chino would be subject to the regulations adopted by the Cities of Chino Hills, Ontario, Montclair, and Pomona, as well as the unincorporated areas of San Bernardino and Riverside Counties. These municipalities regulate the aesthetic character and impact of development within their boundaries. These regulations would ensure that there would be a *less-than-significant* cumulative impact on aesthetics.

## ***F. Impacts and Mitigation Measures***

Since there are no significant impacts related to aesthetics as a result of the proposed projects, no mitigation measures are required.

