

4.1 AESTHETICS

This section of the EIR analyzes the potential environmental effects on aesthetics from implementation of the proposed project.

Data for this section were taken from the Beach and Edinger Corridors Specific Plan (BECSP) Environmental Impact Report and the Huntington Beach General Plan Urban Design Element. Full reference-list entries for all cited materials are provided in Section 4.1.5 (References) and project studies.

4.1.1 Environmental Setting

The project site is located in the urbanized central portion of the City of Huntington Beach in western Orange County, California. The 2.7-acre project site is a rectangular lot, located on the southeast corner of Beach Boulevard and Ellis Avenue identified as Town Center Neighborhood within the Five Points District of the BECSP. Development occurring on the project site is subject to the BECSP Development Code, and more specifically development standards included as BECSP Section 2.1.4 (Town Center Neighborhood).

The project site is located approximately 2.4 miles from the Pacific Ocean. As shown in Figure 3-2 (Project Site and Surrounding Land Uses). The project site is bound by Ellis Avenue to the north, Beach Boulevard to the west, commercial uses immediately adjacent to the south, and quasi-residential uses immediately adjacent to the east.² Building heights in the immediate vicinity of the project site typically range from one to three stories.

■ Surrounding Area Characteristics

Beach Boulevard Corridor

Overall, the visual character of the Beach Boulevard Corridor can be characterized as a linear pattern of strip commercial buildings, typically low-rise with some visible exceptions, set back behind surface parking lots and monument signs. A number of auto-related uses, including dealerships, tire stores, and gas stations exist along both sides of the corridor; signage is very prevalent in these areas. Landscaping along Beach Boulevard consists of trees and ornamental shrubs that are located along the edges of the retail/commercial centers and within the center median of Beach Boulevard.

Five Points District

The 160,000-square-foot (sf) single-story Five Points Shopping Center located west of Beach Boulevard on Main Street is the primary attraction in this segment, with a mix of national and regional retailers. This commercial center is setback behind an expansive surface parking area; however, mature landscaping outlines the perimeter of the center, partially obstructing views of the parking lot. The area south of Main Street/Ellis Avenue along Beach Boulevard is characterized by smaller lots with a mix of uses and building types.

² The primary use immediately adjacent to the project site to the east is a single-room occupancy (SRO) project, which is classified by the City as a quasi-residential use and is only allowed on property zoned Commercial General or Industrial.

Surrounding Area

Ellis Avenue, east of the project site is a wide roadway that supports four lanes of traffic. Utility lines parallel the length of the roadway along the north side of the street. Street lights are widely spaced and the streetscape is not coordinated. However, most development in the area includes landscaped frontages consisting of trees, lawns, and shrubs. Street parking is not permitted along Ellis Avenue.

Immediately east of the project site, setback from on-site development by a wide private alleyway and a row of surface parking, is a three story, white, single-room occupancy (SRO) structure, surrounded by landscaping including palm trees and shrubs. Rectangular windows are arranged in a row along the second and third floors of the building. The flat roof of the building varies in height and features a cornice molding. A path beginning at the sidewalk, and transitioning into a covered walkway extends the length of the building along the west side. The building is setback from the Ellis Avenue sidewalk by landscaping, and is secured by a low wall and fence.

At the corner of Beach Boulevard and Ellis Avenue, north of the project site, a Jack in the Box is setback from the corner by landscaping including grass, palm trees, as well as signage, and a surface parking lot. Adjacent to the Jack in the Box, to the east, is a liquor store, that appears to be a converted single-family house, making it look visually consistent with single-family homes along the north side of Ellis Avenue. Further east along Ellis Avenue at the northwest corner of Patterson Lane is a paved lot surrounded by a cinder block wall that is partially covered in vines. One-story, single-family houses are located northeast of the project site across Ellis Avenue. These homes are setback from the sidewalk by front lawns, landscaping, driveways, and walkways. Homes are well maintained, and feature pitched roofs, covered entries, chimneys, and front windows. A two-story church is also located across Ellis Avenue, and features a pitched roof, long rectangular windows, and an overhang supported by columns. The church is setback from the street by grass and a loosely spaced row of palm trees.

■ Project Site Characteristics

The proposed project site is currently developed with the 27,546 square foot Town and Country Plaza, a restaurant and a Shell Gas Station (on the corner). Figure 4.1-1 (Views of the Existing Development) includes pictures of the existing development on the project site. The Town and Country Plaza is a cottage style, L-shaped, multi-tenant commercial shopping center, built in 1965, at the southeast corner of the project site. The shopping center is primarily one-story with a pitched roof, and a small second story in the corner. An overhang creates a covered walkway along the length of the shopping center. A landscaped surface parking lot includes planters that create rows of parking, surrounds the perimeter of the parking lot, and separates the shopping center from the Shell Gas Station situated at the immediate corner of Beach Boulevard and Ellis Avenue. The gas station appears to have been recently updated and has two covered bays and one main building. Landscaping along the perimeter of the gas station includes a row of palm trees, grass, and signage with landscaping at the corner. The restaurant is located on the southern boundary of the project site setback from Beach Boulevard by a grassy area and other landscaping, including trees and shrubs. A pedestrian path connects the restaurant to Beach Boulevard; however, the entrance is oriented north towards the surface parking lot. Generally, existing development on the project site is oriented toward the corner of Beach Boulevard and Ellis Avenue, and does not have any visual or physical connection to development located immediately to the south or east.



View 1



View 2



View 3



View 4

100000407 | Beach and Ellis Mixed-Use Project

Source: Atkins, 2010.

Figure 4.1-1
Views of the Existing Development

■ Views to and from the Project Site

Due to the built-out nature of Beach Boulevard and the surrounding area, as well as the overall flat terrain of the area, views are of a typical urban landscape. No views of scenic resources, such as the ocean, open space, historical resources, or unique architectural features, are available from the proposed project site. Expansive views are not available from this area. Most views consist of the immediately adjacent, low-scale commercial and residential development. Features visible in the foreground include roadways, automobiles, streetscape (streetlights and landscaping), surface parking lots, landscaping, and signage, as well as commercial or residential development.

Because of the substantial width and straight orientation of both Beach Boulevard and Ellis Avenue, long-range, channelized views are available down these roadways. These views are framed by urban development and landscaping. As development is typically setback from the roadways by sidewalks, landscaping and parking lots, when looking down these roadways the types and styles of development are often not distinguishable. Mid-ground views may also include signage, transmission lines, street lights, trees, and landscaping. Background views consist of sporadic tall buildings along Beach Boulevard, transmission lines, tall trees, signage, and sky.

Views into the project site are only available from adjacent roadways, and are mostly limited to the existing gas station located at the corner of Beach Boulevard and Ellis Avenue, and the restaurant located in the southwest corner of the project site. Views of the Town and Country Plaza building are limited due to the presence of the gas station and restaurant, and perimeter landscaping consisting of trees. Views of the project site from the residential neighborhood located immediately north, northeast and east are not available, with the exception of uses located adjacent to the project site to the east and immediately north of the project site on Ellis Avenue.

■ Light and Glare

The project site and the surrounding area currently have ambient nighttime lighting levels typical of an urbanized area. A variety of sources from both the project site and surrounding area produce artificial light, including streetlights, illuminated signs, automobile headlights, security lights associated with buildings and parking lots, and interior and exterior lighting from development.

Glare results from sharply reflected light caused by sunlight or artificial light reflecting from highly finished surfaces such as window glass or brightly colored surfaces. Surrounding commercial and residential development presents limited potential for glare due to the lack of substantial reflective surfaces, however glare can result from light reflected off vehicle windows, as is typical of urban environments.

The types of land uses that are typically sensitive to excess light and glare includes residential, hospitals, senior housing, and other types of uses where excessive light and glare may disrupt sleep. In addition, light and glare may interfere with the vision of drivers. Light-sensitive uses in the project area include residents located immediately to the east and to the northeast of the project site. No light-sensitive uses are currently located on the project site.

Shade and Shadow

Existing one and two-story development on the proposed project site currently creates limited shade and shadow patterns. Shadows created by existing buildings on the project site do not extend beyond the project site, and adjacent roadways, sidewalks and alley.

Light-sensitive uses are those that depend upon light for their operation (e.g., solar panels) or for which solar access is essential for their function (e.g., swimming pools). Light-sensitive uses also include public parks and routinely useable outdoor spaces associated with residences and schools (e.g., yards and playgrounds). The nearest light-sensitive uses are the residential uses located immediately to the east and to the northeast of the project site. No light-sensitive uses are currently located on the project site.

4.1.2 Regulatory Framework

Refer to Section 4.1.2 (Regulatory Framework) of the BECSP Program EIR, for applicable federal, state, and local regulations applicable to the proposed project. No new regulations have been implemented since certification of the Program EIR.

The BECSP Development Code, which includes development standards, development regulations, and guidelines, governs all development actions with the BECSP area, including the proposed project site. The proposed project would be subject to development standards specific to the proposed project site's BECSP designation of Town Center Neighborhood, included as BECSP Section 2.1.4 (Town Center Neighborhood).

■ Consistency Analysis

The proposed project would be designed in accordance with the BECSP Development Code, which contains development standards specific to the project site's designation as Town Center Neighborhood. Conformance with applicable BECSP development standards would ensure that development occurring on the project site would provide high quality design and would be compatible and complimentary with surrounding development. Inconsistencies between the design of the proposed project and the BECSP Development Code would be addressed during the site plan review process. BECSP Section 2.5 includes street regulations that establish the design of specific streetscape improvements based on segments of the BECSP. The proposed project would comply with the BECSP Development Code, including the provisions of Section 2.5 which call for a Palm Tree Boulevard configuration along Beach Boulevard in front of the proposed project site, and therefore would be consistent with General Plan Policy UD 1.3.1 and Policy CE 7.1.4, which call for consistent and established landscape and urban streetscape design themes.

4.1.3 Project Impacts and Mitigation

■ Analytic Method

A qualitative assessment of visual impacts was prepared by evaluating the existing visual character and setting and comparing it to visual conditions anticipated to occur with the proposed project. It is important to note that an assessment of visual impacts is not a quantitative analysis, but rather qualitative

and can be largely subjective. The project site and surrounding uses were observed, and photographs were taken to determine the short- and long-term visual effects of the proposed project. Policies from the City’s General Plan and provisions of the BECSP Development Code were identified to determine if the project design was consistent with these adopted plans.

■ Thresholds of Significance

The following thresholds of significance are based on Appendix G of the 2011 CEQA Guidelines. For purposes of this EIR, implementation of the proposed project may have a significant adverse impact on aesthetics if it would do any of the following:

- 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
- Create a new source of substantial light or glare that would adversely affect day- or nighttime views in the area

■ Effects Not Found to Be Significant

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

The California Department of Transportation designates scenic highway corridors. The project site is not located within a state scenic highway; nor is the project site visible from any (officially designated or eligible) scenic highway. The nearest eligible scenic highway is Pacific Coast Highway, located approximately 2.4 miles southwest of the site. However, Pacific Coast Highway is not designated in this area at this time. In addition, as the project site is currently developed, the site does not contain rock outcroppings or historic buildings. *No impact* would occur.

■ Impacts and Mitigation Measures

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

Impact 4.1-1 Implementation of the proposed project would not have an adverse effect on a scenic vista. This impact is considered *less than significant*.

Scenic vistas are considered publicly available views of scenic resources. For the purposes of this analysis, “scenic resources” can include natural open spaces, topographic formations, and landscapes. Many people associate natural landforms and landscapes with scenic resources, such as oak woodlands, lakes, rivers, streams, and some historical areas. However, scenic resources can also include urban open spaces and the built environment, such as parks, trails, pathways, nature centers, archaeological, historical resources, and architectural features. Furthermore, the City’s General Plan Urban Design Element identifies visual assets in the City that are considered recognized scenic resources for the purpose of this analysis. No scenic resources are located on the project site or are visible from vantage points on or in

the immediate vicinity of the project site. The proposed project site is not located within the viewshed of a scenic vista.

Based on the visual assets inventoried in the City’s General Plan Urban Design Element, views of the Pacific Ocean, the Bolsa Chica Ecological Reserve, landscaping in the Downtown area and Central Park, Huntington Harbour, and City parks are considered scenic vistas within the City. Due to the largely flat terrain and built-out nature of the City of Huntington Beach, scenic vistas in the City are primarily located along the coast and adjacent to the identified open space areas, where views of these scenic resources are available. Changes to a scenic vista would be considered substantial if the project results in obstruction of a view of a scenic resource from a public vantage point, or results in the degradation of a scenic vista through the removal, alteration, or demolition of a scenic resource, which constitutes the scenic vista as viewed from a public vantage point.

The project site is currently developed with the Town and Country Plaza, a restaurant and a gas station in a highly urbanized portion of the City. No scenic resources are located on the project site. As such, development of the proposed project would not result in the removal, alteration, or demolition of a scenic resource that contributes to the quality of a scenic vista. Due to the flat topography and built-out nature of the project site and surrounding area, and the distance of the project site from the coast (2.4 miles), there are no scenic vistas visible from the project site or from public vantage points in the vicinity of the project site. As such, development of the proposed project would not obstruct views of a scenic resource and would therefore not result in changes to a scenic vista. Therefore, implementation of the proposed project would not have an adverse effect on a scenic vista. This impact is considered ***less than significant***.

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

Impact 4.1-2 Implementation of the proposed project would not degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings. This impact is considered *less than significant*.

For the purpose of this analysis, a substantial degradation of the existing visual character or quality of the site would occur if the project introduces a new visible element that would be inconsistent with the overall quality, scale, and character of the surrounding development. This analysis considers the degree of contrast between existing and anticipated features that represent the area’s aesthetic image, in addition to the degree to which the project would contribute to or degrade the area’s aesthetic value.

The proposed project site is located on the southeast corner of the Beach Boulevard and Ellis Avenue intersection within the BECSP area, and is currently developed with low-scale, auto-oriented commercial uses, including the Town and Country Plaza, a restaurant and a gas station, oriented around an L-shaped parking lot. Vegetation is limited to perimeter and parking lot landscaping. There are few features that create visual interest on the project site. One of the BECSP objectives is to ensure that new buildings and landscaping contribute to the emergence of an increasingly visible and memorable visual identity appropriate to the unique history and character of the City. This objective is achieved through the application of the BECSP Development Code, which provides development standards required for all new development within the Specific Plan area, as well as development regulations in the form of

municipal policies and design guidelines pertaining specifically to issues of visual character and aesthetics. To ensure that all new development within the BECSP complies with the Development Code, including applicable Town Center Neighborhood development standards, all development, including the proposed project, is subject to site plan review. Inconsistencies between the design of the proposed project and the BECSP Development Code would be resolved during the site plan review process, and may require revisions to the design of the proposed project or submittal of a request for a variance or minor deviation from the development standards.

The project proposes the development of a maximum six-story mixed-use building that would include market and retail uses on the ground floor fronting Ellis Avenue and Beach Boulevard, respectively, and residential uses on the upper levels. Refer to Figure 3-3 (Proposed Project Site Plan) for an illustration of the proposed project's building configuration. Implementation of the proposed project would change the visual character of the site from a low-scale, auto-oriented commercial development to a contemporary, highly-designed, mixed use development consistent with the BECSP vision for the Town Center Neighborhood.

Development standards of the BECSP that relate to the visual quality and character of proposed development include regulations for building scale; frontage and building placement; streets; open space; architecture; and signage. Compliance with these development standards would ensure that implementation of the proposed project would not degrade the existing visual character and quality of the project site and surrounding area, and serve to actualize the BECSP vision for the Town Center Boulevard segment.

BECSP Section 2.3.1 (Building Height) permits buildings to be a minimum of two stories and a maximum of six stories in height on the project site. Further, BECSP Section 2.3.2 (Special Building Height Limits) establishes special building height limits for development along Beach Boulevard or located adjacent to, or across from, housing such as the project site. In this instance for the proposed project site, along Beach Boulevard building heights are required to be limited to a maximum of four stories for a horizontal distance of 65 feet from the back of the sidewalk and along Ellis Avenue, across from housing on the north side of the street, building heights are required to be limited to a maximum of two stories above the height of the residential uses for a horizontal distance of 65 feet from the back of sidewalk. The adjacent SRO project is classified as a quasi-residential use. As such the City would also apply the BECSP requirement for special building height limits to the project's easterly boundary, which would limit the height to a maximum of four stories immediately adjacent to the building but allow for an increase above that setback from the façade. Figure 3-4 (Project Elevations) illustrates the proposed building heights and facades.

As shown in Figure 3-4, the proposed building would be six stories in height, with the building height stepping up from one story along the Beach Boulevard and Ellis Avenue sidewalks to six stories at the center/back of the site. Although the height of proposed buildings would be limited immediately adjacent to these roadways, the horizontal distance from the back of the sidewalk for which the building would be a reduced height is less than 65 feet and therefore, does not satisfy the Special Building Height Limits. As such, as designed, the proposed project is not consistent with building height BECSP development standards that directly relate to the visual quality of the site. The proposed project would however be consistent with the special building height limits for development adjacent to housing.

The proposed building would be built out to the sidewalk. Because of the project's location at a corner, frontage treatments would extend along the entire length of both street frontages, as required by BECSP Section 2.4.2(2)(b) and would be designed in compliance with BECSP Section 2.4.2 (Private Frontage Types). BECSP Section 2.4.2(3) includes specifications for private building frontages, including allowable façade and entrance treatment for various types of entrances. The proposed project would include a tower element and a small plaza area at the corner of Beach Boulevard and Ellis Avenue, consistent with the specification for the forecourt frontage type.

The proposed open space area located at the corner of Beach Boulevard and Ellis Avenue would be designed in accordance with BECSP Section 2.6.4 (Public Open Space Types). Both public and private open space on the project site would incorporate landscaping consistent with BECSP Section 2.6.8 (Open Space Landscaping), which includes guidelines for public spaces, paved areas, planted areas, walls and fences, lighting, and other site furnishings. Setback areas along the perimeter of the site would be landscaped in accordance with regulations included in BECSP Section 2.6.9 (Setback Area Landscaping). As such, compliance with BECSP Section 2.6 would ensure that publicly accessible open spaces are built with quality and enhance the livability of the project site and BECSP area, as a whole.

The proposed development would be required to comply with Architecture Regulations included as BECSP Section 2.8 (Architecture Regulations). These regulations are intended to ensure that proposed development within the BECSP area embodies the architectural characteristics that maintain the desired human scale, rhythm, and character appropriate for Beach Boulevard. BECSP Section 2.8.2 (Architectural Elements Regulations) would ensure that proposed development maintains the quality and character of Huntington Beach through the imposition of requirements and guidelines for facades, roofs, and sustainable practices. Furthermore, BECSP Section 2.8.3 (Architectural Character) would ensure that proposed development considers the existing character and identity of the City, and incorporates these characteristics into building design. Incorporation of these development regulations into the project design would ensure that the visual character and quality of the proposed development would be consistent with the desired Town Center Neighborhood character and high visual quality.

As required by BECSP Section 2.5.1(1)(c) (Public Frontage Improvements), improvements to adjacent streets would occur with implementation of the proposed project. The BECSP requires Palm Tree Boulevard improvements to occur along Beach Boulevard and Neighborhood Street improvements to occur along Ellis Avenue. Improvements to Beach Boulevard would include alteration of the existing center median to include street lighting, clusters of tall palm trees, and native/water efficient ground cover. The sidewalk along Beach Boulevard would be a minimum of 6 feet wide and separated from the back of the curb by a 4-foot-wide continuous planter strip. The sidewalk would feature streetscape elements as specified by BECSP Section 2.5.4(a). Along Ellis Avenue, improvements would include coordinated streetscape as specified by BECSP Section 2.5.7. Compliance with street regulations included as BECSP Section 2.5 would ensure that streets improved as part of the proposed project are built to enhance the connectivity of the area and create a safe and attractive streetscape environment.

The proposed mostly six-story structure would be located adjacent to an SRO building and across Ellis Avenue from several multi-family homes. This could present a potentially significant impact if the proposed structure would create shade/shadow impacts on identified light-sensitive uses. As defined in BECSP MM4.1-1, shadowing impacts are considered significant when shadows would be cast upon

potentially light sensitive uses during a substantial portion (greater than 50 percent) of the main daylight hours (9:00 AM to 3:00 PM during the fall, winter, and spring seasons, and 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM [daylight savings time] during the summer season). Light-sensitive uses are those that depend upon light for their operation (e.g., solar panels) or for which solar access is essential for their function (e.g., swimming pools). Light-sensitive uses also include public parks and routinely useable outdoor spaces associated with residences and schools (e.g., yards and playgrounds). As required by mitigation measure BECSP MM4.1-1, a shade/shadow analysis was prepared for the proposed project to determine if the proposed project would result in significant shade/shadow impacts based on the established criteria.

Pursuant to the requirement of mitigation measure BECSP MM4.1-1, Figure 4.1-2 (Summer Solstice) and Figure 4.1-3 (Winter Solstice) illustrate shadows under the summer and winter solstices, respectively. Throughout the day of the summer solstice, as shown on Figure 4.1-2, shadows would be limited and would fall mostly within the project site, except at 3 PM when shadows would extend onto the surface parking area of the adjacent development. However, shadows would not be cast on useable outdoor spaces associated with the development.

Figure 4.1-3 illustrates shadows during the winter solstice when the days are shortest and the angle of the sun in the sky has the potential to cast the longest shadows. Adjacent uses to the south, and west would not be affected by project shadows during the winter solstice. However, shadows would be cast on uses located immediately east of the project site, and across Ellis Avenue to the northeast of the project site. Shadows created from the proposed project would fall on a small portion of a single-family home across Ellis Avenue at 12:00 PM and would extend onto additional single-family homes across Ellis Avenue and uses to the east of the project site at 3:00 PM. As shadows would not be cast on light-sensitive uses for greater than 50 percent of main daylight hours during the summer and winter solstices, significant shadows impacts would not occur as a result of the proposed project. Additionally, shadows created by the proposed project would not fall on open space areas, parks, or swimming pools. Therefore, the proposed project would result in a less than significant impact relating to shade and shadow, as defined by mitigation measure BECSP MM4.1-1.

The proposed project's design is largely compliant with the BECSP Development Code, including the specific development standards and guidelines referenced above. Inconsistencies between the design of the proposed project and the BECSP Development Code would be addressed during the site plan review process, and revisions to the design of the proposed project may be made in an effort to achieve consistency with the BECSP guidelines. As such, approval of the proposed project's site plan review would ensure that implementation of the proposed project would not degrade the existing visual character and quality of the project site and the surrounding area. Rather, implementation of the proposed project would help to achieve the transformation of the underutilized character of the site to a vibrant, aesthetically pleasing mixed use project, consistent with the BECSP vision for the Town Center Neighborhood. Therefore, the proposed project would not substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings and this impact would be *less than significant*.

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

Impact 4.1-4 **Implementation of the proposed project would introduce new sources of light and glare into the project vicinity. However, these sources would not adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area. This impact is considered *less than significant*.**

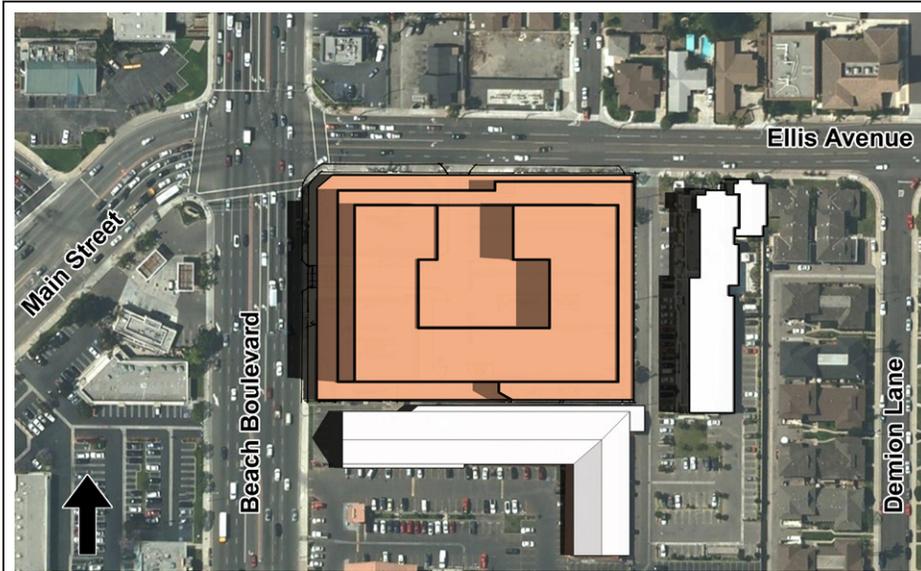
For the purposes of this analysis, light or glare effects are evaluated by the change in illumination levels as a result of project sources and the extent to which project lighting would spill off the project site and affect adjacent light sensitive areas.

Light

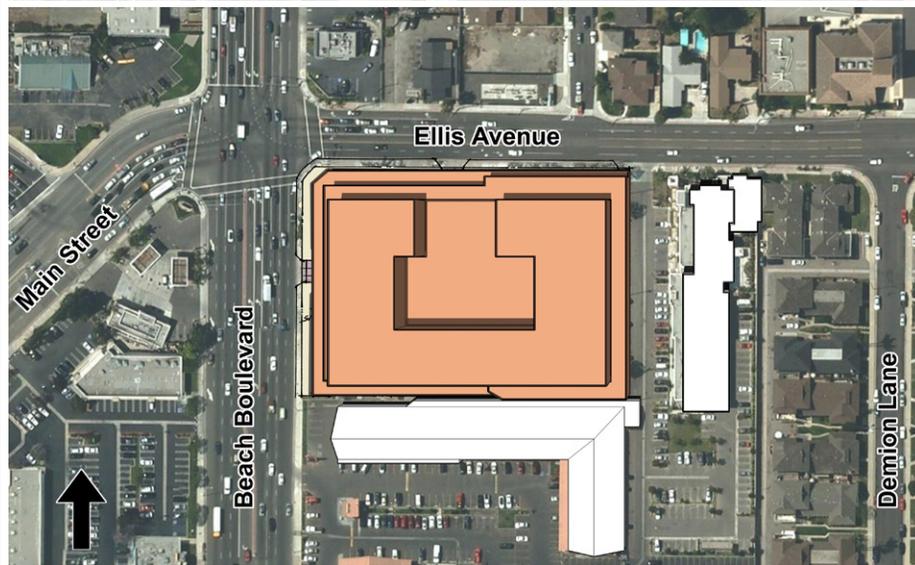
Proposed development would increase overall nighttime lighting in the project area with the introduction of additional exterior lighting (safety and way-finding) and vehicle headlights. The closest sensitive receptors that could be affected by nighttime lighting include uses located immediately adjacent to the project site to the east, and across Ellis Avenue to the northeast.

Nighttime illumination can affect people in several ways. For example, where intense lighting is viewed against a dark background, the contrast attracts the attention of the viewer and could be considered annoying. Under low-light conditions, the human eye adjusts to the brightest light within the field of view. If the range of light intensity to which the eye is exposed is large, the eye will be relatively insensitive to the more dimly lighted areas within the field of view. In addition, increased illumination can affect the suitability of sleeping areas, use of outdoor areas at natural light levels, and privacy. The degree of impact is related to the degree of change from the illumination levels to which people have become accustomed.

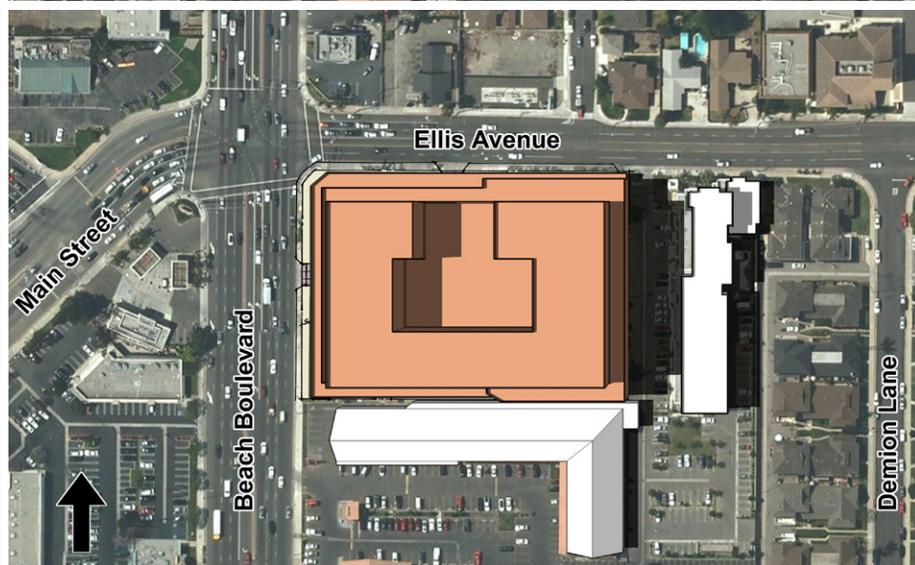
Due to the urbanized nature of the surrounding area, a significant amount of ambient nighttime light currently exists, reducing the views of stars and affecting views of the nighttime sky. Streetlights and headlights along adjacent roadways, including Beach Boulevard and Ellis Avenue, provide a significant amount of existing ambient light surrounding the project site. Nearby commercial uses on Beach Boulevard also provide substantial amounts of exterior lighting for security and way finding. The proposed project would introduce additional nighttime lighting sources directly onto the project site and the immediately surrounding area including exterior building lighting for security and way finding, vehicle headlights entering and exiting the project site, and interior building illumination. Consequently, surrounding uses could be exposed to exterior lighting associated with the proposed buildings, streets, and open space. However, BECSP Section 2.6.8(5)(a) requires that lighting fixtures are directed downward from the horizontal plane of the light source to preserve a dark sky and prevent unnecessary light pollution, and requires that lighting and planting plans for public and private frontage areas be visually and aesthetically coordinated. Furthermore, BECSP Section 2.6.8(5)(d) requires specific luminaire types that would prevent light spill-over, and provide for an efficient distribution of lighting. Conformance with the BECSP would ensure that nighttime light produced by required exterior lighting would be consistent with nighttime lighting conditions of the project area and would not result in impacts to adjacent light-sensitive receptors. Therefore, light impacts would be *less than significant*.



June 21ST 9 AM



June 21ST 12 PM

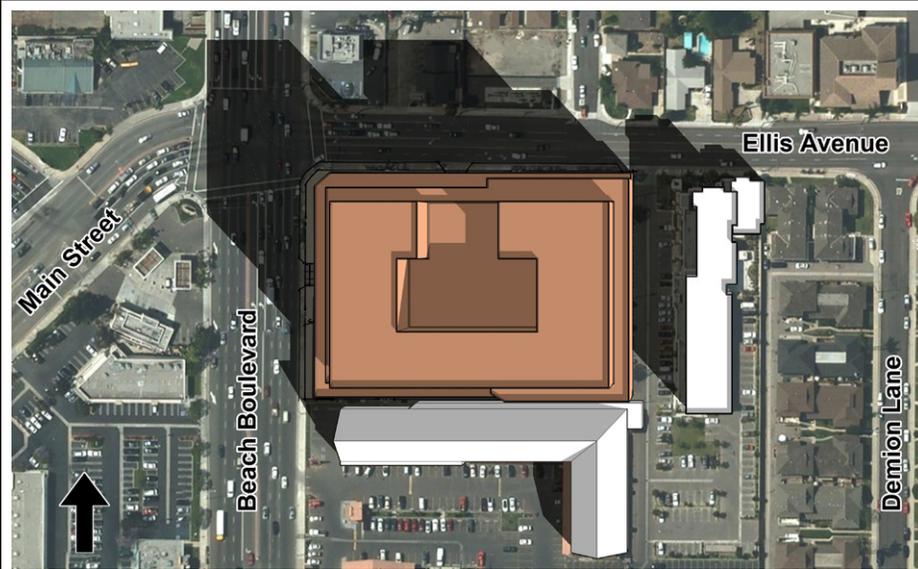


June 21ST 3 PM

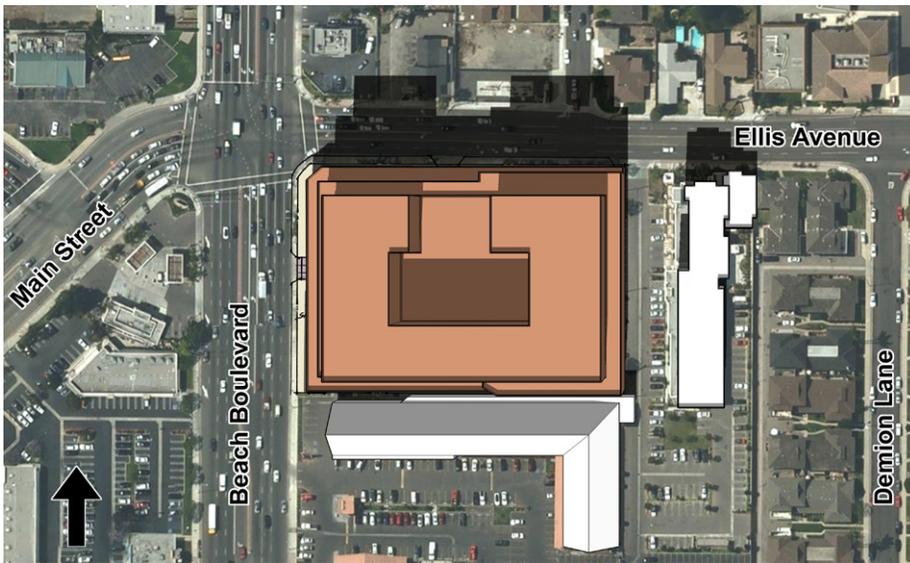
Source: Atkins, 2010.



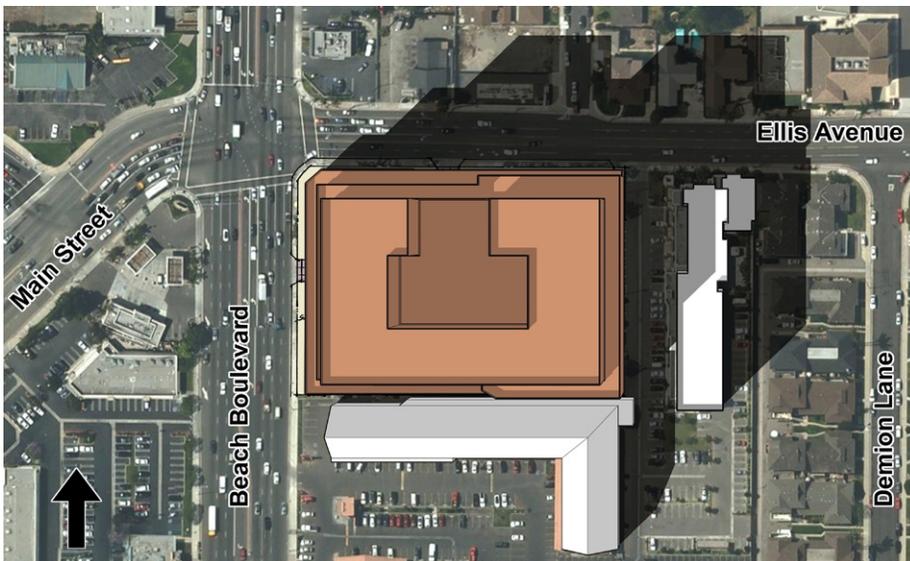
Figure 4.1-2
Summer Solstice



December 21ST 9 AM



December 21ST 12 PM



December 21ST 3 PM



100000407 | Beach and Ellis Mixed-Use Project

Source: Atkins, 2010.

Figure 4.1-3
Winter Solstice

Glare

The proposed building would be a maximum of six stories. Generally, buildings three or more stories in height have the potential to include large building faces with reflective surfaces (e.g., brightly colored building façades, reflective glass) that could create daytime glare. However, mitigation measure BECSP MM4.1-2 requires that new structures are designed to maximize the use of non-reflective facade treatments, and BECSP Section 2.8.2(2)(c) requires that buildings utilize light colored roofs to reduce glare. As such, compliance with mitigation measure BECSP MM4.1-2 would ensure that impacts related to daytime glare would be reduced by managing the reflective properties of the building materials employed, such as glass, metal, or finished concrete. Impacts from glare would be ***less than significant***.

BECSP MM4.1-2 Proposed new structures shall be designed to maximize the use of non-reflective façade treatments, such as matte paint or glass coatings. Prior to issuance of building permits for the proposed project, the Applicant shall indicate provision of these materials on the building plans.

4.1.4 Cumulative Impacts

The geographic context for the analysis of cumulative aesthetic impacts includes areas with views of the proposed project site.

Development of the proposed project site and areas located to the north and south of the proposed project site on Beach Boulevard are subject to the BECSP Development Code, which includes standards, requirements, and guidelines that guide development in the BECSP area. Moreover, the contribution of the proposed project to such cumulative impacts would not be cumulatively considerable, because as described above, the proposed project would not have a substantial adverse effect on the visual character or quality of the project area. Therefore, the proposed project's contribution would not be cumulatively considerable, and the cumulative impact of the proposed project would be ***less than significant***.

Huntington Beach is an urbanized City and contains numerous existing sources of nighttime lighting. Cumulative development would constitute intensification of an already urban and nearly built-out area and would generally occur through redevelopment or infill development. Although new development or redevelopment could include direct illumination of project structures, features, and/or walkways, the cumulative increase in ambient nighttime lighting levels in these areas would only rise minimally because a significant amount of ambient lighting currently exists due to the urbanized nature of the City as a whole. Thus, increases in nighttime lighting that would occur with cumulative development would not significantly affect nighttime views of the sky because such views are already limited. Cumulative development, in combination with the proposed project, is not anticipated to result in the creation of new sources of light that could negatively affect nighttime views. Therefore, cumulative impacts associated with ambient nighttime lighting would be considered ***less than significant***.

The cumulative context for spillover light would be other development that could add to the spillover light effects of the project on properties in the adjacent residential neighborhoods. Spillover light is a site-specific effect that is affected only by projects in the immediate vicinity of the affected property. Implementation of the proposed project in combination with adjacent projects would add lighting typical of mixed-use residential and commercial developments. This includes directed lighting for architectural accents, signage, landscape elements, security and lighting from vehicles. Lighting impacts would be

addressed through compliance with the BECSP which includes lighting requirements that would reduce the potential for spill lighting to occur from future development in the plan area. Therefore, a ***less than significant*** cumulative impact would result from spillover lighting.

Cumulative development could result in an increase in glare, as specific building materials and configurations are uncertain. However, these potential increases are likely to be minor and consistent with the existing built environment due to limited development potential and existing City regulations. Further, future projects would be subject to mitigation measure BECSP MM4.1-2, which would reduce the impacts to a less than significant level. Implementation of the proposed project would not result in a significant daytime glare impact and would not result in a cumulatively considerable contribution to this impact. Consequently, cumulative glare within the surrounding area would be less than significant. Therefore, cumulative impacts associated with glare would be ***less than significant***.

4.1.5 References

Huntington Beach, City of. *Beach and Edinger Corridors Specific Plan Environmental Impact Report*, November 2009.

———. *Beach and Edinger Corridors Specific Plan*, adopted March 2010.

———. *City of Huntington Beach General Plan*, May 13, 1996.