Section 3.1
Aesthetics and Visual Resources

SECTION SUMMARY

This section characterizes the existing aesthetic conditions in the proposed ALBS Project area and assesses how the construction and operation of the proposed Project would alter the existing visual conditions. The aesthetics and visual resources impact analysis evaluates and identifies potential impacts associated with implementation of the proposed Project on locally-designated scenic highways, scenic resources, and light and glare of the Project area. The primary features of the proposed Project that could affect aesthetic resources include 600- and 100-ton boat hoists, two-story office building, fill/land (CDFs), pier structures, additional moored vessels, and on-site lighting. An analysis of potential impacts on aesthetics and visual resources associated with the alternatives is detailed in Chapter 6, Analysis of Alternatives.

Section 3.1, Aesthetics and Visual Resources, provides the following:

- A description of existing visual characteristics, key observation points from which the proposed Project would be visible, and existing night lighting conditions;
- A description of applicable local, state, and federal regulations and policies regarding visual resources and scenic highway designations in the proposed Project area;
- A discussion on the methodology used to determine whether the proposed Project would result in an impact to aesthetic and visual resources;
- An impact analysis of the proposed Project; and,
- A description of proposed mitigation measures intended to reduce potential impacts, if applicable.

Key Points of Section 3.1:

The proposed Project would continue the operation of the site as a boat shop facility, and its operations would be consistent with other industrial uses in the proposed Project area. The proposed Project would not result in a significant impact to aesthetic resources. Specifically:

- The proposed Project would not substantially change or degrade the views of the Project area from representative key observation points.
- The proposed Project would not adversely impact views from the locally designated scenic highways in the Project area.
- The proposed Project would not result in blockages of views of visual resources or cause substantial degradation of the visual character of the Project area or surrounding areas.
- The proposed Project would not cause a substantial increase in light and glare sources compared to existing ambient lighting conditions.

3.1.1 Introduction

This section describes the existing aesthetic conditions in the proposed Project area, including applicable regulations and plans. This section also assesses how the construction and operation of the proposed Project would alter the existing visual environment. This visual evaluation employs assessment methods based, in part, on the *L.A. CEQA Thresholds Guide* (City of Los Angeles, 2006). The analysis addresses the aesthetic topics that the City of Los Angeles defines as aesthetics, views, shading, and night-time illumination. In general, aesthetic resources are the natural and man-made features of the landscape that can be seen and contribute to appreciative enjoyment of the environment. The analysis includes a systematic documentation of the visual setting and an evaluation of visual changes associated with the proposed Project.

3.1.1.1 Terminology for Visual Analysis

The definitions of terms used in this section to describe and evaluate the visual resources of the Project site are listed below.

- A viewshed is the surface area visible from a particular location or sequence of locations (e.g., roadway or trail).
- Focal views provide focused visual access to a particular object, scene, setting, or feature of visual interest.
- Panoramic views provide unfocused visual access to a large geographic area for which the field of view can be quite wide and extend into the distance. Panoramic views are usually associated with vantage points located on high ground and can provide views of valued resources such as mountains, valleys, cityscapes, or the ocean.
- Focal points are areas that draw the attention of the viewer, such as prominent structural features and water features.
- Views can be discussed in terms of foreground, middle ground, and background views. Foreground views are those immediately presented to the viewer and include objects at close range that could tend to dominate the view. The foreground generally includes the area extending 0.25 to 0.5 mile from the viewer. Middle ground views occupy the center of the viewshed and tend to include objects that are the center of attention if they are sufficiently large or visually different from adjacent visual features. The middle ground zone generally consists of the area that lies 0.5 to 3.0 miles from the viewer. Background views include distant objects and other objects that make up the horizon. Objects in the background fade to obscurity with increasing distance. In the context of the background, the skyline can be an important location because highlighted objects above this point are against the background of the sky or ocean. The background zone generally consists of the portion of the view that lies 3 miles and farther from the viewer.
- Scenic views or vistas are the panoramic public views that provide visual access to natural features, including views of the ocean, striking or unusual natural terrain, or unique urban or historic features (City of Los Angeles, 2006; City of Los Angeles, 2001).

- Key Observation Point (KOP) is an important viewing area selected through a process of evaluating an area's scenic quality, visual sensitivity, and viewer response. Project visualizations are often created from these points.

L.A. CEQA Thresholds Guide outlines four aesthetic topics for consideration on a case-by-case basis to establish whether a project would have a potentially significant impact on visual resources. The following additional definitions pertain to these topics used in the visual analysis.

- Aesthetics – "…the identification of visual resources and the quality of what can be seen or the overall perception of the environment"
- Views – "…visual access and obstruction or whether it is possible to see a focal point or panoramic view from an area"
- Shading – "…effects of shadows cast by existing or proposed structures on adjacent land uses"
- Nighttime illumination – "…the effects of a proposed project's exterior lighting upon adjoining uses"

3.1.2 Environmental Setting

3.1.2.1 Existing Visual Characteristics

Viewscape Context

The proposed Project site is located at Berth 258 of Fish Harbor on Terminal Island, a highly industrialized area within the Port (see Figure 3.1-1). Terminal Island is located within the Port of Los Angeles Plan area in the City of Los Angeles. It is adjacent to the community of San Pedro to the west, the community of Wilmington to the north, and the City of Long Beach to the east, and is approximately 20 miles south of downtown Los Angeles. The topography of Terminal Island is flat, with views of the hills of San Pedro to the west across the Main Channel of the Port and the Vincent Thomas Bridge and the Turning Basin to the north, which connects Terminal Island to San Pedro, and Reservation Point to the south. The most visually prominent development on Terminal Island from surrounding higher elevation areas are the ExxonMobil facilities, Evergreen Container Terminal, American Lines President (APL) Container Terminal, and Pier 400 Container Terminal.

San Pedro is situated on a seaside bluff known as the Palos Verdes Peninsula. Within San Pedro are beaches and sport fishing areas, cruise line terminals, small-scale retail shops, hotels, restaurants, and tourist-oriented facilities such as museum/aquarium facilities and Ports O'Call Village. Many of these facilities are concentrated in the area to the south of the Vincent Thomas Bridge, along the western shoreline of the Main Channel and the Outer Harbor. The predominant land use in San Pedro, however, is residential. Multiple-family and single-family residences extend along Beacon Street at the eastern edge of the seaside bluff and southwest along Crescent Avenue. The character of the residential areas is also defined by views of cars parked along streets as well as overhead power lines. The seaside bluff rises to elevations of approximately 300 feet above sea level, offering residents expansive views of the Port, including Terminal Island, and the open sea beyond. San Pedro includes a mix of single-family homes and multi-family residential complexes, commercial uses, public facilities, open

space/recreational resources, and public beaches and recreational fishing areas. The largest and potentially most sensitive viewing group consists of residents residing in San Pedro.

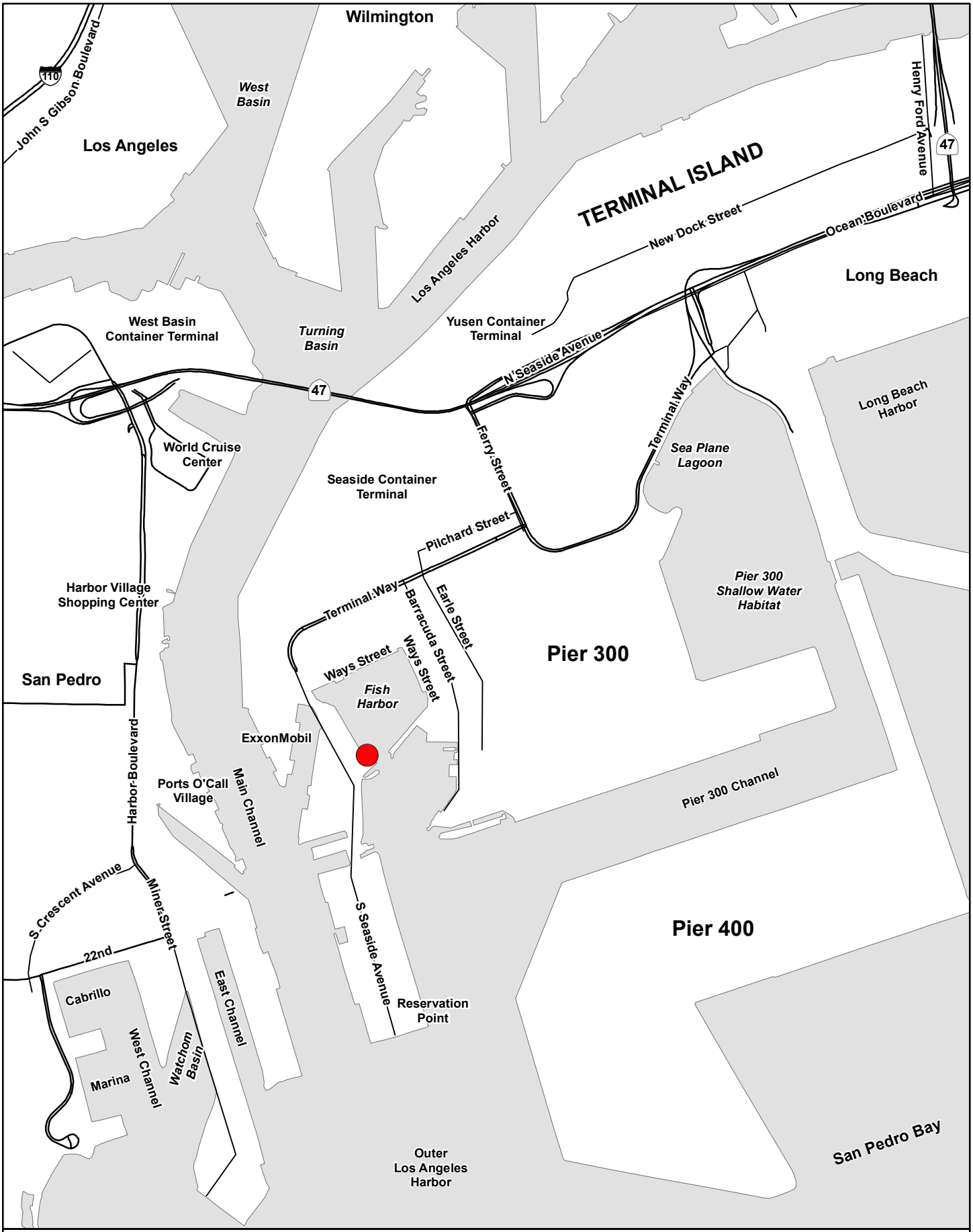
The Port landscape is highly engineered, reflecting more than a century of construction of breakwaters, dredging of channels, filling for creation of berths and terminals, and infrastructure required to support Port operations. As a result, the Port is now a large and distinct region of its own. The general appearance of Port operations is characterized by exposed infrastructure, open storage, industrial buildings and structures, and the use of safety-conscious, high-visibility colors such as orange, red or green for mobile equipment (i.e., cranes, containers, and railcars). Industrial facilities are not typically considered a valued visual resource. Major features visible in the landscape of the Port region include berths, warehouses, container yards, tank farms, processing plants, buildings, parking lots, and other equipment, as well as infrastructure such as bridges, intermodal facilities, rail lines and spurs, oil derricks, pipelines, and gantry cranes.

A large number and variety of watercrafts utilize Port facilities, ranging from small recreational and commercial fishing boats to large vessels, including container, crude oil, and cruise ships. In recent years, the development trend throughout the Port has been toward fewer and more consolidated berths and terminal backlands accommodating larger container ships and increased cargo throughput. As a result, longer berths and cranes with longer booms have been required. These changes have altered the visual character of the Port, as well as the views experienced by surrounding uses, by increasing the scale of the facilities visible in the landscape.

Scenic Highways

The nearest officially designated state scenic highway is approximately 33 miles north of the Project site (State Highway 2, from approximately three miles north of Interstate 210 in La Cañada to the San Bernardino County Line). The nearest eligible state scenic highway is approximately nine miles northeast of the Project (State Highway 1, from State Highway 19 near Long Beach to Interstate 5 south of San Juan Capistrano). In addition to Caltrans' officially-designed and eligible state scenic highways, the City of Los Angeles has City-designated scenic highways that are for local planning and development decisions and considerations. John S. Gibson Boulevard, Pacific Avenue, Front Street and Harbor Boulevard are City-designated scenic highways located in the vicinity of the Port. They are designated as such because they afford views of the Port and the Vincent Thomas Bridge. The features of these views from the local scenic highways in the Project area that are most prominent are the tall cranes, container-laden ships at the TraPac and Yang Ming Terminals, as well as the Pier 300 and Pier 400 Terminals (in particular, from the southern portions of Harbor Boulevard), and the partial, oblique-view glimpses of the towers and suspension cables of the Vincent Thomas Bridge. The levels of visual intactness and unity of these views are low to moderate.

The views from Harbor Boulevard are of a higher visual quality than those on the portions of the scenic route north of the Vincent Thomas Bridge because the less-obstructed foreground contains landscaped visitor facilities. These facilities provide the



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Al Larson Boat Shop

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Port of Los Angeles
Al Larson Boat Shop Improvement Project
Project Site and Vicinity

Figure 3.1-1

foreground for panoramic views toward the bridge with Port facilities in the more distant view. The levels of vividness, intactness, and unity in these views are moderately high.

The City has not adopted formal guidelines governing the scenic corridors (i.e., foreground viewsheds) associated with designated scenic highways, but has established interim guidelines as part of the Transportation Element addressing roadway alignment, earthwork, signage, landscaping, and utilities (City of Los Angeles, 1999).

Project Site Features

The Project site is a flat 7.70 acre area bounded by Seaside Avenue immediately to the west with a vacant parcel and the Main Channel further to the west, Fish Harbor to the east, the ExxonMobil/General Petroleum fueling facility to the north, and the Al Larson Marina and Reservation Point to the south. The Project site is located is an area of intensive shipping and industrial activity. Fish Harbor includes tenants such as Tri-Union Fish Company and Star-Kist Foods, Inc. The northwestern boundary of the Project site is adjacent to the ExxonMobil Southwest Terminal One (a marine oil liquid bulk terminal) and Southern California Ship Services along Seaside Avenue.

ALBS relocated to its present location at the entrance of Fish Harbor in the San Pedro Bay in 1924. It is a full service boatyard which incorporates four marine railways, a floating drydock and dockside work areas all separated by wood docks and piers. The boatyard is comprised of aging infrastructure, such as the existing boat docks and obsolete facilities, that are generally dilapidated and in need of improvement. Figure 3.1-2 provides an aerial view of the proposed Project site.

The four marine railways range from 100 tons to 1,250 tons with the ability to haul-out barges up to 60 feet wide and 250 feet long. The floating dry dock is 200 feet long and 45 feet wide with the ability to haul vessels up to 1,000 tons. Existing equipment includes a crane, portable forklifts, welders and sand blasting equipment. The redevelopment area of the Project site includes eight utilitarian structures:

- The Machine Shop Complex is a utilitarian wood-frame maritime industrial property, roughly L-shaped configuration in plan and comprised by two buildings of a long, narrow 1-story structure used as the machine and electrical shops (Building C1), connected to with a 2-story structure used as the welding shop and storage (Building C2), both constructed on concrete foundations. Both buildings are potentially historic and elgible for listing on the California Register of Historic Resources (CRHR) and may qualify for designation as City of Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monuments (HCM).
- Building No. 4 (Building D) is a two story, 3-bay wide utilitarian building with a concrete foundation featuring modest elements of the Moderne style on the front elevation. Rectangular in plan, its façade walls are clad in stucco and the remaining elevations are clad in corrugated sheet metal. This building is used as an industrial building. It does not qualify for listing as a historic resource. The Office and Workshop Complex is a two-story wood-frame consisting of three adjoining structures used as a tool room (Building A1), offices, carpenter shop, inche houses and bathrooms storage (Building A2) and storage (Building A3). These are the oldest and most prominent buildings on the ALBS site. The Office and Workshop Complex is roughly an F-shape in plan. Buildings A1 and A3 are separated from one

* Not part of the project.

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Port of Los Angeles
Al Larson Boat Shop Improvement Project
Existing Conditions
Figure 3.1-2

another except for a connecting breezeway. Building A2 is the southernmost building of the three. It is a rectangular, free-standing building that abuts Building A3. The second floor is limited mostly to the front of the building while the majority of the interior consists of one-story high-cube spaces. All three have no foundations, resting on bare ground and pilings driven into the soil. The interior of Building A2 is a large open space with three walls anchored in the soil and the roof supported by timber resting upon soil. All three buildings within the complex are potentially historic and eligible for listing on the CRHR and may qualify for designation as City of Los Angeles HCM.

- Two wooden storage structures located on wharves (structures H1 and H2, which do not qualify for listing as a historic resource).

The boat shop includes various types of lighting including fixed light poles in the yard facility, light standards in the employee parking lot, and utility poles and attached light fixtures along Seaside Avenue. The site contains none of the features of potential aesthetic concern defined in the *L.A. CEQA Thresholds Guide*, such as a scenic vista or trees, rock outcroppings, or historic buildings within a state scenic highway (City of Los Angeles, 2006).

3.1.2.2 Viewer Groups and Viewer Sensitivity

Viewer sensitivity, or viewer concern about views that the public may experience is assessed in terms of the character and quality of the Project area, the exposure to a scenic resource, the proximity of viewers to the resource, the relative elevation of viewers to the resource, the frequency and duration of views, number of viewers, and types and expectations of the viewer. Generally, visual sensitivity increases as the total number of viewers, frequency, and duration of viewing activities increase. The degree of visual sensitivity is treated as occurring at one of the following four levels:

- **High Sensitivity.** High sensitivity suggests that at least some part of the public is likely to react strongly to a threat to visual quality. Concern is great because the affected views are rare, unique or in other ways special to the region or locale. A highly concerned public is more aware of a given level of adverse change and less tolerant than a public that has little concern. A small modification of the existing landscape may be visually distracting to a highly sensitive public and represent a substantial reduction in visual quality.
- **Moderate Sensitivity.** Moderate sensitivity suggests that the public would probably voice some concern over visual impacts of moderate to high intensity. Often the affected views are secondary in importance or are similar to others commonly available to the public. Noticeably adverse changes would probably be tolerated if the essential character of the views remains dominant.
- **Low Sensitivity.** Low sensitivity prevails where the public has little concern about changes in the landscape. Only a visual impact of the greatest intensity would be perceived as substantial (significant).
- **No Sensitivity.** There is no sensitivity where the potentially affected views are not "public" (not accessible to the general public) or because there are no indications that the affected views are valued by the public.

The Project site is located on Terminal Island which consists predominantly of industrial facilities where sensitive viewers are not present, including oil depots and fish processing and canning facilities, as well as shipping container storage facilities (i.e., Yusen, Evergreen, former Southwest Marine Shipping, APL Container Terminals, which is the overwhelmingly dominant use. The Department of Justice Federal Correctional Instituate (at Reservation Point), Department of Justice and Naturalization (immigration services), former Southwest Marine Shipyard, and U.S. Coast Guard border the Main Channel and, along with the container storage facilities, populate the viewshed. Viewers from this area include industrial workers and commuting motorists. Due to the presence of federal facilities and shipping container operations security, visitation by recreationists and other sensitive viewers is limited.

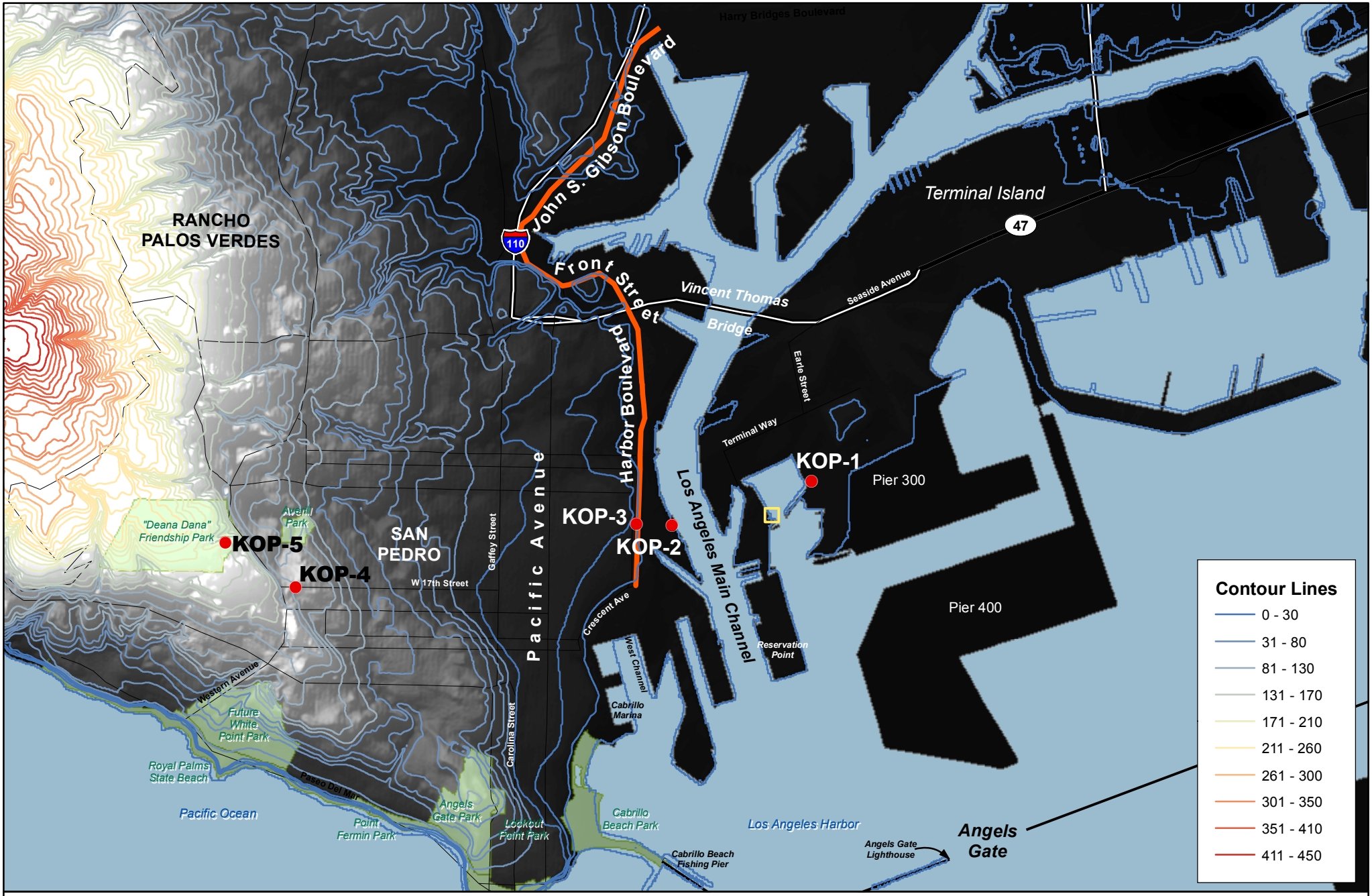
Based on frequency of viewing and duration of views, the principal viewer groups for the Port may include recreationists in the Harbor, vessel users and liveaboards at the Al Larson Marina, and the workers on Terminal Island. The nearest sensitive viewing position to the south is at the Al Larson Marina, approximately 280 feet south of the Project area, which includes two residents who live on vessels docked at the marina (liveaboards). Boaters are also considered a key viewer group for the marina's recreational public use. Commuters and workers are considered to have lower viewer sensitivity because their attention is focused on driving or work activities. As a consequence, they are exposed to fleeting views during travel and only occasional views from the work place.

The residential community of San Pedro, located across the Main Channel from proposed Project area, would be exposed to views towards the Project site for a prolonged period of time and typically have higher expectations that their visual surroundings be maintained. However, views of the site from San Pedro (i.e., residents and tourists) are largely obscured by intervening development and infrastructure such as warehouses, cranes, buildings, storage containers, and other Port facilities that typify the highly industrial character of the visual environment. These Port facilities collectively intervene substantially, such that is difficult to distinguish the Project site from surrounding facilities. Therefore, the visual sensitivity of the residents is low.

3.1.2.3 Key Observation Points

An analysis of existing views toward the proposed Project site was conducted to identify KOPs most visible to sensitive viewer groups. The analysis includes an overall description of the visual character and quality prevailing in the views. The Port's visual setting is varied due to the diverging intensity of development, features such as exposed infrastructure, open storage, industrial buildings and structures, and gantry cranes, and the quality of views of the harbor and open water. KOPs are identified on Figure 3.1-3.

Therefore, consideration was given to how viewers within each setting would experience the proposed Project due to varying degrees of visibility/exposure and distance/proximity from the Project. The inventory of these existing viewing areas was developed based on field observations and review of maps and photographs of the affected area.



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- Viewpoint
- Al Larson Boat Shop
- Locally Designated Scenic Routes
- Parks

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Port of Los Angeles
Al Larson Boat Shop Improvement Project
Location of KOPs and Scenic Routes
Figure 3.1-3

Following is a description of the KOAs identified on Figure 3.1-3:

- KOP-1 – Fish Harbor. Existing views of the Project site within Fish Harbor include boat repair facilities and distant views of the Vincent Thomas Bridge and the San Pedro bluffs in the background. Sensitive viewers at this location would be recreational boaters and live-aboards using the adjacent Al Larson Marina and workers at the Port.
- KOP-2 – Ports O'Call Village. The area is located on the opposite shore of the Main Channel. Existing views include Port facilities across the Main Channel. Tourists and workers would be considered sensitive viewers at this location because of their exposure to changes in visual context.
- KOP-3 – Harbor Boulevard (Harbor Scenic Route). Harbor Boulevard in the San Pedro Community affords views of Port activities to the east. Area residents, working commuters, and recreationists/tourists are sensitive viewers at this location because of their exposure to changes in visual context.
- KOP-4 – San Pedro Residential Community. This residential community is familiar with views of the Port's industrial facilities and thus would be more apt to notice incremental changes that may transform the Port's visual environment over time.
- KOP-5 – Friendship Park from San Pedro Bluffs. Views from residences and public parks are from an elevation up to 300 feet above the water's surface and consist of a panorama of the Port's facilities and industrial visual character. Sensitive viewers at this location are primarily residents, sightseeing tourists and recreationists.

KOP-1 Al Larson Boat Shop within Fish Harbor

The Project site is located in the southwestern part of Fish Harbor. The span of marine vessels and buildings/structures at the Project site are visible primarily from nearby vantage points. The Project site is most visible to drivers and workers along Seaside Avenue, Ways Street, and Wharf Street, and boaters from the Al Larson Marina. As shown in Figure 3.1-4, direct views of the large buildings, piers and berths, and adjacent marina are visible from Ways Street as part of the middle ground and background and constitute a relatively small portion of the viewshed. The visual quality of the views from the Fish Harbor area is moderate. The visual integrity of the Office/Workshop and Machine Shop, potentially eligible for listing as historic resources, as a whole is generally good; however, the visual integrity of the other buildings and structures on-site varies. The presence of the water and boats in the immediate foreground adds an element of visual interest. Although views from Ways Street and Wharf Street within the Fish Harbor toward the Project site are still generally open, they are framed and filtered to some degree by areas in the foreground that are typically densely packed with boats. The visual character of the Project site is similar to, and large blends in with that the surrounding facilities. Therefore, in general, viewer sensitivity to visual changes that result from the propsoed Project would be low.

Figure 3.1-4: Looking west from Ways Street within Fish Harbor towards the Al Larson Boat Shop

KOP-2 Ports O'Call Village

The Ports O'Call Village commercial and recreational complex, approximately less than 0.5 mile west of the Project site, includes 15 acres of shops, restaurants, and recreational attractions. The Ports O'Call Village incorporates nautical details including a weathered blue and gray color scheme, pilings, and wooden post and rope enclosures along pedestrian areas and is intended to be reminiscent of a traditional New England-style waterfront. Views from the Ports O'Call Village area include the Main Channel waterfront and marinas, the APL Terminal cranes, and other Port facilities. Views of the Project site from the Ports O'Call Village are generally representative of views from the channel and from the visitor-oriented facilities on the western shoreline of the channel such as the Los Angeles Maritime Museum. The viewers from these vantage points are generally tourists, recreationalists, students, and Village staff. These groups would potentially be sensitive to substantial visual changes at the Project site.

The view from the southern portion of Ports O'Call Village presented in Figure 3.1-5 is looking east towards the former Southwest Marine Shipyard, with the Project site on the left foreground. The view from the San Pedro Fish Market presented in Figure 3.1-6 affords direct views of the front façade of ALBS buildings to the east, but the views are in the distance and generally obscured by the large cylindrical oil containers and stories-tall steel cranes, and generally indistinguishable from other surrounding Port facilities. Views from the Los Angeles Maritime Museum, John S. Gibson Park, and the northern portions of the Ports O'Call Village, presented in Figure 3.1-7, are obstructed by the large cylindrical oil containers to the northwest of the Project site, and the site is largely indistinguishable from other Port facilities in the viewshed. These views are representative of a working port environment.

Figure 3.1-5: Looking east from the southern portion of Ports O'Call Village towards Project site

Figure 3.1-6: Looking east from the mid-portion of Ports O'Call Village towards Project site

Figure 3.1-7: Looking southeast from south side of Los Angeles Maritime Museum towards the Project site

KOP-3 Harbor Boulevard (Harbor Scenic Route)

Harbor Boulevard is a City-designated scenic route from Front Street just south of the Vincent Thomas Bridge for approximately 1.2 miles south to its terminus at Crescent Avenue. This scenic route provides access to the numerous visitor-oriented facilities along the western shoreline of the Main Channel, across from the Project site. Harbor Boulevard is a low-rise commercial corridor that is heavily landscaped in the vicinity of the Port to encourage pedestrian use. Analyses were conducted to identify areas where the site of the proposed Project would be within the primary cone of vision of drivers on this route. As shown in Figure 3.1-8, the ALBS site is either partially of fully obscured depending on the viewing angle. Where the site is partially visible, it is not distinguishable from the other surrounding facilities given the array of Port facilities and activities occurring within the viewscape.

From the northern section of Harbor Boulevard, south of Vincent Thomas Bridge, the Project site cannot be seen due to intervening Port facilities. In much of the area along Harbor Boulevard, the areas between the Main Channel and Harbor Boulevard are either open or occupied by relatively low-rise structures. Therefore, many open views across the Main Channel toward more distant Port operations are available. However, individual facilities, such as ALBS, are indistinguishable among the various Port facilities within the viewscape.

Figure 3.1-8: Looking east on Harbor Blvd at the 11th/Beacon St Stairway towards Project site

KOP-4 San Pedro Residential Community

The Project site is slightly visible to varying degrees as an individual indistinguishable element of the working port panorama from San Pedro residential neighborhoods, which are approximately 0.7 mile west of the Project. The charactr of the residential areas is defined by views of other residences at lower elevations, cars parked along streets, overhead power lines, trees, Port facilities and operations, and the Pacific Ocean.

Views from the residential areas of San Pedro are at elevations ranging between 190 and 370 feet above sea level. Figure 3.1-9 depicts typical views towards the Project site from hillside areas. The Project site is a small part of a broad panorama of the Port Complex. Further, trees, Port structures, and terminal cranes dominate the panoramic view and interfere with views of the Project site. Views of the Main Channel, Pier 300, Pier 400, and Reservation Point also exist from San Pedro.

Figure 3.1-9: Looking east from West 17th Street near Averill Avenue

KOP-5 Friendship Park from San Pedro Bluffs

Friendship Park is located atop of the San Pedro bluffs approximately 3 miles west of the Project site. Friendship Park encompasses approximately 100 acres of open fields, hills, and canyons located on the San Pedro/Rancho Palos Verdes boundary. It also has a picnic area with barbecues, a children's play area, and large turf areas, as well as a nature center, natural history museum, live animal displays, gift shop, and a classroom. The San Pedro bluffs rise to an elevation of approximately 50 feet above sea level immediately along the coastline and continue to rise steeply to the west. Because the Project site is at sea level, different portions of the Project site and surrounding area are more visually accessible from off-site locations than others, including Friendship Park, however, from considerable distance and the Project site is one small element in a visually "busy" landscape. Most of the park is located on south- and east-facing slopes; so many views are oriented toward the Port.

The viewpoint presented in Figure 3.1-10 provides panoramic views of the Port Complex from Friendship Park. Given the viewing distance and the panorama available from this viewing position, the Project site represents a small part of the background in the range of views available throughout the park. The Project site is partially visible from Friendship Park but largely obstructed by intervening development and indistinguishable from the distant array of Port facilities visible from this location. The appearance of many Port facilities continues to be utilitarian in nature from these viewpoints. Vistas comprise both natural features (including the open water and channels of Long Beach and Los Angeles Harbors) and dense urban development (including industrial, commercial, shipping,

recreational, and tourist-oriented facilities). These include a diverse range of Port uses: boat repair yard; warehouses; liquid and dry bulk storage facilities for oil and coal; railroad spurs; shipping container storage; and commercial shipping terminals, which are dominated by views of cranes used for loading and unloading cargo.

Figure 3.1-10: Looking east from Friendship Park from the San Pedro bluffs toward Project site

3.1.2.4 Light and Glare

The nighttime lighting environment within the proposed Project vicinity consists mainly of ambient light produced by the Port operations at cargo and bulk terminals, although there are also scattered lights from streetlights, vehicle headlights, and interior and exterior building (residential, office, commercial) lighting. The major sources of illumination near the Project site are the high-intensity boom lights attached on top of shipping cranes along the edge of the many channels that feed into the Los Angeles Harbor, as well as the street and roadway lighting. When ships are loaded or unloaded at night, the floodlights attached to the bottom of the crane boom and to he sides of the cranes are turned on, illuminating them and creating a bright area around them. In addition, street and roadway lighting such as on the Vincent Thomas Bridge, north of the Project site, has streetlights and blue-colored lights along the outside of the bridge structure. The Project site does have on-site lighting and operates during nighttime hours however, the illumination level is lower when compared to the brightly illuminated Port landscape as illustrated by Figures 3.1-11 and 3.1-12, below.

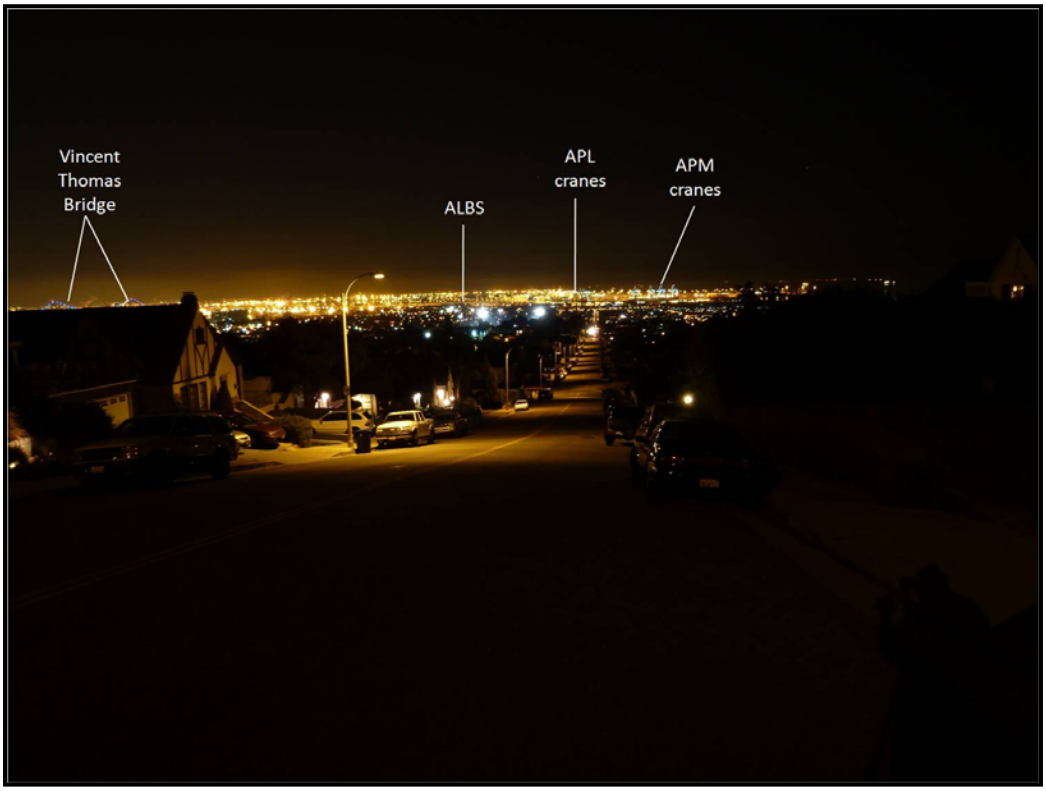

Figure 3.1-11: Looking east from West 17th Street near Averill Avenue during nighttime hours (same location as Figure 3.1-9)

Figure 3.1-12: Looking east from the southern portion of Ports O'Call Village towards Project site

3.1.3 Applicable Regulations

Local plans were reviewed to identify planning policies related to the aesthetic resources and design objectives of the Project area.

3.1.3.1 City of Los Angeles General Plan

The City of Los Angeles General Plan is an advisory document comprising 11 City-wide Elements (Framework, Transportation, Infrastructure Systems, Housing, Noise, Air Quality, Conservation, Open Space, Historic Preservation and Cultural Resources, Safety, and Public Facilities and Services) plus the Land Use Element (City of Los Angeles, 2010). The Land Use Element, in turn, comprises 35 local area plans, known as Community Plans, as well as counterpart plans for the Port of Los Angeles and Los Angeles International Airport Plans.

3.1.3.2 Transportation Element (Scenic Highway Guidelines)

Appendix E of the Transportation Element provides an inventory of locally designated scenic highways within the proposed Project area that includes John S. Gibson Boulevard, Pacific Avenue, Front Street, and Harbor Boulevard with specific acknowledgment of the views of harbor activities and the Vincent Thomas Bridge available to northbound and southbound motorists (City of Los Angeles, 1999). These scenic corridors are located approximately 1.3 miles west of the ALBS site. Front Street is also designated as a scenic route for its views toward the west of historic San Pedro. Harbor Boulevard, south of the Vincent Thomas Bridge, is designated as a scenic route because of Port views (City of Los Angeles, 1999). The City provides recommended guidelines for scenic highways lacking adopted Corridor Plans, addressing roadway

design, earthwork and grading, signage, landscaping, signs/outdoor advertising, and utilities (City of Los Angeles, 1999). Although there are no state scenic highways or officially designated scenic lookouts, the recommendations of the Transportation Element are applicable.

3.1.3.3 Port of Los Angeles Master Plan and Port of Los Angeles Plan

The PMP (plus amendments) provides for the short- and long-term development, expansion, and alteration of the Port (POLA, 1979). The California Coastal Commission has certified the PMP and it is part of the Local Coastal Program (LCP) of the City of Los Angeles. The Port Master Plan is an overall planning document, but does not contain any element specific to visual resources. However, general provisions contained within Section V of the PMP, "Regulations & Guidelines for Development Projects," establish the need to address visual resources issues for new projects:

> *When a facility project involving a change in either land or water use is proposed for those areas in the Port that are adjacent or contiguous to either residential, commercial, or industrial areas in the surrounding communities, an analysis of its location, design effect, and operation will be made to ensure the feasible compatibility of the proposed port facility with either existing uses of such community areas or the uses which may be proposed for such community areas in the general plan or the LCP for the City of Los Angeles.*

The PMP is consistent with the Port of Los Angeles Plan, part of the General Plan Land Use Element. It was adopted in 1982 and designed to provide a 20-year official guide to the continued development and operation of the Port (City of Los Angeles, 1982). The Port Plan addresses aesthetics and visual quality issues within the Port, and for areas outside in nearby communities.

Objective 4 of the plan is dedicated to prioritizing development within the Port, while addressing the visual impacts to neighboring communities. The Plan states:

> *To assure priority for water and coastal dependent development within the Port while maintaining and, where feasible, enhancing the coastal zone environment and public views of, and access to coastal resources.*

3.1.4 Impacts and Mitigation Measures

This section discusses the potential aesthetics and visual impacts associated with the development of the proposed Project elements. The impact analysis is based on the requirements of CEQA and the *L.A. CEQA Thresholds Guide*, and mitigation measures are provided, where feasible for impacts found to be significant.

3.1.4.1 Methodology

Distinguishing aesthetics of these environmental conditions can be highly subjective and vary from person to person; therefore, the evaluation of aesthetic resources requires the application of a process that objectively identifies the visual features of the area, their importance, and the sensitivity of receptors that view them. The analytical framework to determine project-related impacts to aesthetic resources in the vicinity of the proposed

Project (or alternatives as discussed in Chapter 6, Analysis of Alternatives) includes the following:

- Identification of key visual elements in the proposed project area and characterization of overall visual quality;
- Identification of user groups with sensitive views into the proposed project area and photographic documentation of representative views (i.e., KOPs);
- Qualitative analysis of changes to views as a result of implementation of the proposed Project or alternative; and
- Evaluation of the significance of the impacts based upon the requirements of CEQA, and formulation of mitigation measures that would lessen the degree of significance, as needed.

3.1.4.2 Thresholds of Significance

Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines (Environmental Checklist) identifies four thresholds to determine the effect that a project or its alternatives would have on visual resources. According to these thresholds, the proposed Project would have an impact on visual resources if it would:

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

The City's *L.A. CEQA Thresholds Guide* (City of Los Angeles, 2006) was developed as a supplement to the CEQA Appendix G checklist. The guide divides visual resources into four elements in the visual environment: aesthetics (character and quality of the visual landscape), obstruction of views (visual access to focal points and panoramas), shading (the effect of shadows on adjacent land uses), and nighttime illumination (the effect of nighttime lighting on adjacent land uses). The guide suggests that each CEQA threshold be evaluated within the context of a visual element and that some thresholds address multiple elements. The thresholds guide suggests that each CEQA threshold be evaluated within the context of a visual element, and that some thresholds address multiple elements. The CEQA threshold criteria listed in the bullets above are presented as they relate to the elements from the *L.A. CEQA Thresholds Guide* in Table 3.1-1 below. For example, the CEQA criterion related to adverse effects on scenic vistas addresses the visual elements listed in the guide pertaining to aesthetics and the obstruction of views.

Table 3.1-1: Relationship Between CEQA Appendix G Threshold Criteria and L.A. CEQA Thresholds Guide Visual Elements

CEQA Checklist G Threshold Criteria	L.A. CEQA Thresholds Guide Visual Elements			
	Aesthetics	Obstruction of Views	Shading	Nighttime Illumination
Would the project result in a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?	X	X		
Would the project substantially damage scenic resources (including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings) within a state scenic highway?	X			
Would the project substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site or its surroundings?	X		X	
Would the project create a new source of substantial light or glare that would adversely affect day or nighttime views of the area?				X

3.1.4.2.1 Factors for Determining Significance

To assist in the evaluation of what constitutes a substantial effect on visual resources, the *L.A. CEQA Thresholds Guide* provides 14 factors to guide the assessment of what constitutes a significant adverse impact. The factors encourage a more detailed analysis of project components and their effects on visual resources than suggested by the CEQA Guidelines Appendix G threshold criteria alone. The 14 factors are listed below by visual element.

Aesthetics

1. Would the removal, alteration, or demolition of existing features or elements that substantially contribute to the valued visual character or image of the project area be relatively noticeable?

2. Would the amount of natural open space to be graded or developed adversely affect the visual character of the area?

3. Would proposed structures in natural open space areas be effectively integrated into the aesthetics of the site through appropriate design?

4. Would there be a high degree of contrast between proposed features and existing features that represent the valued aesthetic image of an area? Contrast could be represented as a beneficial or adverse image and would need to result in an adverse change to the image of the area to be considered a significant impact.

5. Would buildings detract from the existing style or image of the area due to density, height, bulk, setbacks, signage, or other physical elements?

6. Would project elements contribute negatively to the aesthetic value of an area by changing visual character through the introduction of obtrusive or inharmonious elements?

7. Would the project be inconsistent with applicable guidelines and regulations related to aesthetics and views?

Obstruction of Views

8. Would there be a substantial negative effect on the nature and quality of recognized or valued views such as natural topography, settings, man-made or natural features of visual interest, and resources such as mountains or the ocean?

9. Would there be a substantial negative effect on views from a designated scenic highway, corridor, or parkway?

10. Would there be substantial obstruction (total blockage, substantial interruption, or substantial diminishment) of recognized or valued views?

11. Would recognized views available from a length of public roadway, bike path, or trail (as opposed to a single, fixed vantage point) be adversely affected?

Shading

12. Would there be substantial shading of shadow-sensitive uses for more than three hours between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. Pacific Standard Time (between late October and early April), or for more than four hours between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Pacific Daylight Time (between early April and late October)?

Nighttime Illumination

13. Would there be a substantial adverse change in ambient illumination levels as a result of project sources?

14. Would light spill-off the project site and adversely affect adjacent light-sensitive areas?

3.1.4.2.2 Thresholds of Significance

The guidance provided by the CEQA Appendix G environmental checklist and *L.A.CEQA Thresholds Guide* was evaluated for application to the proposed Project. Based upon proposed project elements and the visual landscape of the Port, the following thresholds are used for determining significance of the proposed project's impacts on visual resources. These impacts encompass the CEQA Appendix G thresholds as well as the visual elements included in the *L.A. CEQA Thresholds Guide* as discussed above and indicated in Table 3.1-1.

The proposed Project would have a significant impact with respect to aesthetics and visual resources if:

AES-1: It would result in an adverse effect on a scenic vista from a designated scenic resource due to obstruction of views.

AES-2: It would substantially damage scenic resources (including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings) along a state scenic highway.

AES-3: It would substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site or its surroundings.

AES-4: It would result in an adverse effect due to shading on the existing visual character or quality of the site or its surroundings.

AES-5: It would create a new source of substantial light or glare that would adversely affect day or nighttime views of the area.

3.1.4.3 Impact Determination

Impact AES-1: The proposed Project would not result in an adverse effect on a scenic vista from a designated scenic resource due to obstruction of views.

Construction activities and heavy construction equipment, including installation of the 600-ton and 100-ton boat hoists, building demolition and construction of the new two-story office building, and dredging would be partially visible from KOP-1 Fish Harbor, KOP-2 Port O'Call Village, and KOP-3 Harbor Boulevard. However, as described previously, the views are typically obstructed by intervening development and, in the case of KOP-1, vessels within the Fish Harbor. Further, the construction activities, would be relatively small in scale, present for relatively short periods of time, and not out of character when viewed in the context of a working port. The Project elements would not block nor detract from the views of the Port from KOP-3 Harbor Boulevard.

Scenic vistas of the Port are available from KOP-4 hillside residential areas of San Pedro, and KOP-5 Friendship Park because these locations are at a higher elevation in San Pedro. While the Project site is within the panoramic viewscape at these locations, it is indistinguishable from other working Port facilities, and thus the construction activities would blend in the background and not detract from the scenic views. Therefore, the construction phase would not result in an adverse effect on a scenic vista from a designated scenic resource due to obstruction of views.

In the operational stage, there would be fewer existing buildings/structures, fewer finger piers (two new piers will be constructed by the four existing marine railways would be replaed with land created by a CDF), one new two-story building, and new infrastructure on-site, including the new boat hoists. There would also be an increase in the number of vessels moored at ALBS as well as an increase in the number of vessels in dry dock. The two new boat hoists (600- and 100-ton hoists) would be the most visable features at the improved site. The 600-ton boat hoist is the largest and would be approximately 54 feet high and thus would be visably taller than the existing and proposed buildings, however, it would not exceed heights of surrounding equipment, including gantry cranes at the container terminal and oil storage tanks at ExxonMobile/General Petroleum. The tallest existing building on site, Building C1, at approximately 45 feet would be removed. The new building would be smaller and shorter, at approximately 35 feet. The 100-ton boat hoist would be approximately 31 feet in height and from most views of the site would be obscured by buildings, including Building I (which is just west of the Project buildings,

but in the foreground of views from KOP-2 and KOP-3), which is approximately 30 feet in height. The CDF units would create a new visual feature within Fish Harbor (from KOP-1). Thus, the proposed Project would result in visual changes to the site; however, the visual changes would not change the existing character of the site and the new facilities and operations would remain consistent with the working port environment.

The new facilities and increase in vessel mooring would not adversely affect scenic vistas from KOP-1 because they would be consistent with the existing features located on the Project site and the Port landscape and surrounding area as a whole. Views of the Port from KOP-2 Ports O'Call Village are limited to the main channel and waterfront and would not be impeded by the new boat hoists and other new facilities. KOP-3 Harbor Boulevard (Harbor Scenic Route) would provide the closest panoramic views of the Project; however, because of the route's distance from and height above the Project site, the Project site is largely obscured by intervening development and Port views would not be obstructed by the proposed Project. Although the Project's features would occur within lines of sight of KOP-4 and KOP-5, the Project site blends into the background of the working port as a whole, and thus the proposed Project would not affect public access to views of the Port Complex due to distance and elevation. Therefore, implementation of the Project would result in less than significant impacts related to obstruction of scenic views of the Port.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is required.

Residual Impacts

Impacts would be less than significant.

Impact AES-2: The proposed Project would not substantially damage scenic resources including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings along a scenic highway.

The Project site is not visible from any designated or eligible state scenic highways. KOP-3 Harbor Boulevard is a City-designated scenic highway that has partial views of the Project site. As discussed in Section 3.1.2.1, Harbor Boulevard is designated as local scenic highway because it provides views of the Port and Vincent Thomas Bridge.

As discussed under Impact AES-1 above, the proposed Project would be consistent in character with the existing operations occurring at the Project site and with the surrounding Port activities as a whole. Further, because of the distance and variation in elevation between Harbor Boulevard and Project site, the proposed Project would not obstruct nor detract from views from Harbor Boulevard. Therefore, there are no anticipated significant impacts to a scenic highway because no substantive changes to views from local scenic highways would occur. Furthermore, views of the Vincent Thomas Bridge from more southern portions of the Harbor Scenic Corridor and from the residential hillside areas of San Pedro would not be affected by the new 600- or 100-ton boat hoists, new CDFs or other new facilities because they would not be located within the line of sight of the Bridge. Therefore, the proposed Project would not have the potential to affect scenic resources along any state or city scenic highways, and impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is required.

Residual Impacts

Impacts would be less than significant.

Impact AES-3: The proposed Project would not substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings.

As described under impact AES-1 above, visual changes to the site would occur, however the existing character of the site as a utilitarian working boat repair would be retained. Specifically, the Project would also demolish six buildings/structures totaling approximately 14,752 sf and construct a new 2,400 sf two-story building. Buildings A1 (4,221 sf) and C2 (8,190 sf), as well as the ALBS buildings located outside of the redevelopment area boundaries would remain. The six buildings/structures to be demolished were constructed at various times and have varying degree of integrity and thus lack visual continuity. The buildings/structures also show signs of deterioration due to age. As discussed further in Section 3.4, Cultural Resources, three of the buildings to be demolished (Buildings A2, A3, and C1) and two buildings to remain (Buildings A1 and C2) are eligible for listing on the on the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR). The buildings have a utilitarian-style architecture and their eligibility for listing in the CRHR is due to their contribution to influencing patterns significant in our past (i.e., their association with the development of the Los Angeles shipbuilding and fishing industries between 1924 and 1959) and through providing examples of local maritime industrial buildings they were not found to possesses high artistic values. Further, given the lack of visual cohesion and the signs of dilapidation, the removal of the buildings would not represent a degradation of the visual quality of the site from an aesthetics standpoint.

Project implementation would involve the installation of a 600- and 100-ton boat hoists with heights of approximately 54 feet and 31 feet respectively, which would provide the ability to service larger number of vessels by placing them in the backlands of the ALBS site. The boat hoists and increased number of vessels present at the site, on land and water, would be consistent with the character of the site as a boat repair shop as well as the surrounding working port facilities.

The new CDFs would create new land within Fish Harbor but this would be consistent with the existing visual character and would not constitute removal of significant visual features or elements. The CDFs may be visible from the Al Larson Marina; however, Project implementation would not deter or detract from the recreation use or visual character of the marina, which would remain oriented toward the Outer Harbor. Substantial degradation of the visual character of the Project area would not occur because the proposed Project improvements are industrial in nature and therefore consistent with the existing industrial uses and facilities throughout the Port Complex. The Project site already has the character of a heavily developed Port environment, and the modification of the site would have little overall effect on the existing character and visual quality of this setting.

The existing dock and boat repair facilities on the site are deteriorating and in need of upgrades and improvements. Therefore, demolition of these facilities, replacement with CDFs and concrete piers would not result in a significant visual impact.

The proposed Project would cause no unfavorable or additional contrast with features associated with the valued aesthetic image of the area. The proposed Project would be compatible with the existing visual character of the area. Because both construction and operation of the proposed Project would not substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site or its surroundings, impacts to the visual quality and character of the proposed Project area would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is required.

Residual Impacts

Impacts would be less than significant.

Impact AES-4: Construction and operation of the proposed Project would not result in an adverse effect due to shading on the existing visual character or quality of the site or its surroundings.

Shadow-sensitive land uses would not be shaded by structures or equipment under the proposed Project. The new facilities and boat hoists would not be in excess of 60 feet in height, and such shading produced by these structures would be limited to within the Project site, immediately adjacent waters, and industrial uses. The shadows would be primarily cast upon the piers and CDFs proximate to the dock. The Al Larson Marina is approximately 280 feet south of the Project site; however, the proposed Project would not create substantial negative shadow effects on the nearby recreational uses. As a result, no shade and shadow impacts would occur as a result of the proposed Project.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is required.

Residual Impacts

There would be no impact.

Impact AES-5: The proposed Project would not create a new source of substantial light or glare that would adversely affect daytime or nighttime views in the area.

ALBS is not one of the more visible areas of the Port at night as it has much lower levels of lighting as compared to container terminals which typically have much higher lighting levels associated with illuminated backlands, dockyards, and shoreside cranes. However, under the proposed Project would include lighting improvements which would increase the amount of on-site lighting. Lighting improvements would consist of new 40-foot perimeter lightpoles that would emit five footcandles of light. The fixtures would be directed toward the interior to accommodate nighttime operations (two 8-hour shifts from 7:45 a.m. to 4:15 p.m., and 3:30 p.m. to 11:00 p.m.). Additional security lighting would be provided in the employee parking area and property perimeter as necessary.

The visibility of this new lighting and its contribution to ambient lighting conditions in areas around the Project site would be attenuated by directing lights downward in a manner that would only illuminate the intended areas and prevent spillover in compliance with Port guidelines. In addition, the Project site is located in an area with high ambient lighting, consisting mainly of light produced by operations at the Port Complex. The proposed lighting design would represent a minimal increase in light and glare sources compared to existing conditions. Further, since the existing levels of ambient lighting in the area are already high, the incremental increase in ambient lighting conditions that would occur from adding new light sources would not create a noticeable change in existing levels of ambient light at distant sensitive areas. Therefore, the proposed Project would not result in any significant impacts from spillover light or from an increase in ambient lighting or glare.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is required.

Residual Impacts

Impacts would be less than significant.

3.1.4.4 Summary of Impact Determinations

The following Table 3.1-2 summarizes the impact determinations of the proposed Project related to aesthetics and visual resources, as described in the detailed discussion in Section 3.1.4.3. Identified potential impacts are based on federal, state, and City of Los Angeles significance criteria, Port criteria, and the scientific judgment of the report preparers, as applicable.

Table 3.1-2: Summary Matrix of Potential Impacts and Mitigation Measures for Aesthetic and Visual Resources Associated with the Proposed Project

Environmental Impacts	Impact Determination	Mitigation Measures	Impacts after Mitigation
AES-1: The proposed Project would not result in an adverse effect on a scenic vista from a designated scenic resource due to obstruction of views.	Less than significant	No mitigation is required	Less than significant
AES-2: The proposed Project would not substantially damage scenic resources including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings along a scenic highway.	Less than significant	No mitigation is required	Less than significant
AES-3: The proposed Project would not substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings.	Less than significant	No mitigation is required	Less than significant
AES-4: Construction and operation of the proposed Project would not result in an adverse effect due to shading on the existing visual character or quality of the site or its surroundings.	No impact	No mitigation is required	No impact
AES-5: The proposed Project would not create a new source of substantial light or glare that would adversely affect daytime or nighttime views in the area.	Less than significant	No mitigation is required	Less than significant

3.1.4.5 Mitigation Monitoring

In the absence of significant impacts, mitigation measures are not required.

3.1.5 Significant Unavoidable Impacts

No significant unavoidable impacts to Aesthetic and Visual Resources would occur as a result of the proposed Project.

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