

## 4.13 AESTHETICS

### 4.13.1 ALTERNATIVE A – PREFERRED CASINO-RESORT PROJECT

#### *VISUAL IMPACTS*

Development of Alternative A would encompass the majority of the La Center Interchange Site. The casino would consist of a two-story (approximately 65 feet in height) structure. The building would be a combination of glass and metal, with a mixture of natural materials including wood and stone. Two porte-cocheres located on the east and south sides of the casino would serve as the main entrances. The hotel would be eight stories (approximately 110 feet in height) with a façade similar in design to that of the casino. Appropriately scaled landscaping, including rock and water features, would enhance the aesthetically pleasing design of the buildings. NW 319<sup>th</sup> Street would be rerouted to a more southerly location across the site. An architectural rendering of the casino and hotel with a view from the south is shown in **Figure 2-2**. An architectural rendering of the east-facing entrance and porte-cochere is shown in **Figure 2-3**. Proposed elevations are shown in **Figure 2-4** and **Figure 2-5**. The commercial aspects of the site (the casino-resort and ancillary components) would be located in the north and central portions of the site. The Tribal elder housing, Tribal cultural center, and wastewater treatment plant would be located in the south and southeastern portion of the site. The recreational vehicle (RV) Park would be located in the southwestern portion of the site. A site plan for this alternative appears as **Figure 2-1**.

Although local land use and zoning ordinances would not apply to the parcels once they are acquired in trust, the Tribe has agreed to develop all projects on its trust lands in a manner that is consistent with certain specified Clark County ordinances and codes, as provided in the Tribe's Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Clark County and Environment, Public Health and Safety (EPHS) Ordinance. Accordingly, the design of Alternative A would follow the design and building codes agreed to in Section 10 and Exhibit C of the MOU (DEIS Vol. I, **Appendix C**) and Section 3(G) of the EPHS Ordinance (**Appendix U** of the FEIS), specifically: Chapter 13.20, Informational Signs, Chapter 40.320, Landscaping and Screening, and Chapter 40.430, Geologic Hazard Areas (relating to design standards). Views of the wastewater treatment plant would be screened by an 8-foot-high earthen berm, which is shown on the wastewater treatment site plan (DEIS Vol. II, **Appendix G**).

#### *Effects on Viewsheds Surrounding the Project*

In **Section 3.13**, Aesthetics, the viewsheds surrounding the La Center Interchange Site are described and analyzed according to analytical criteria expressing the strength of the viewing experience. Impacts to these viewsheds resulting from the build-out of Alternative A are identified below.

#### *Viewshed A*

Distant and medium-range commuter views from Interstate 5 (I-5) are obscured by trees for both northbound and southbound travelers. The components of Alternative A would be more apparent when travelers viewed them from directly east of the site; however, these views are relatively short and not within the forward line of sight for drivers. These views would be of the east side of the casino-resort complex and would include the porte-cochere and main sign. Trees along I-5 would provide some screening of the site. Impacts to this viewshed would be less than significant.

#### *Viewshed B*

Viewshed B is characterized by mid- to high-end rural residential houses on large lots set on an elevation approximate to the highest point of the La Center Interchange Site. There are approximately a dozen houses to the west and northwest along NW 41<sup>st</sup> Avenue and NW 328<sup>th</sup> Street bordering the site that would experience views of the proposed development under Alternative A. The riparian area associated with the unnamed stream that runs along the northwestern portion of the property includes black cottonwood and red alder trees, which would provide partial screening of the site from these residences. However, the riparian area is located at the lowest elevation of the site; the proposed development, particularly the two-story casino and adjacent eight-story hotel, would be visible through the trees and above the highest point of their reach. The view from the residences would change from one of an open rural and semi-wooded area, to one of commercial development consisting of the casino-resort complex set amidst a planned landscape; concrete parking structures; and the paved RV park. As discussed in **Section 4.9**, Land Use, the visual change is inconsistent with the Agricultural zoning of the area; however, the Clark County Comprehensive Growth Management Plan (GMP) anticipates that the site will eventually be developed for urban industrial land uses. Thus, the commercial nature of the Proposed Project is not inconsistent with long-range plans for the site. Additionally, the Tribe has agreed to develop the Proposed Project consistent with certain specified Clark County zoning ordinances also described in more detail in **Section 4.9**, Land Use. However, this change is still considered significant for nearby residents as it represents a major alteration to their viewshed in the short term. Mitigation is provided in **Section 5.2.11** to reduce this impact to a less than significant level.

#### *Shadow, Light and Glare*

A significant effect from shadow would result if the proposed development were to cast a shadow on private residences or public areas for substantial portions of the day. There are no public recreation areas in the immediate vicinity. The nearest buildings off site are residences to the west and northwest as described above. An open-space buffer of at least 350 feet between the proposed development and the nearest residences has been included as part of the site layout to reduce impacts from shadows to neighboring residences. For the La Center Interchange Site the direction of the sunrise will vary from southeast to northeast throughout the year; the direction of shadow from the

hotel will vary from northwest to southwest, accordingly. In the early morning, the hotel tower (approximately 110 feet in height) may briefly cast a shadow over some of these residences during certain times of the year. The impacts of shadow from the development would be less than significant.

The development of Alternative A would introduce new sources of light into an agricultural/rural residential setting. In order to reduce the impacts from increased light sources, the following would be incorporated into the design of Alternative A: downcast lighting and low-pressure sodium bulbs would be used in the landscaped and parking areas to minimize off-site scatter; lighting fixtures would be an integral part of the overall design and strategically positioned to minimize any direct site lines or glare to the public; and exterior landscape and architectural lighting would be used to enhance the architecture of the buildings, accentuate their design, and provide for public safety. Exterior signage would be considered as part of the exterior architectural design and would enhance the buildings' architecture and the natural characteristics of the site by incorporating native materials in combination with architectural trim. Illuminated signs would be designed to blend with the light levels of the building and landscape lighting in both illumination levels and color characteristics. Through the use of downcast and directed lighting, low-pressure sodium bulbs, and strategically positioned lighting fixtures the impacts of lighting off-site would be minimized and less than significant.

The use of glass panels and reflective ornamental detailing in the project design could increase the glare to travelers on I-5 and residences to the west. This impact is considered significant and unavoidable as also discussed in **Section 4.16.12**.

#### ***COMMUNITY CHARACTER***

Four cardrooms currently operate in La Center and serve as major employers and sources of income for the City of La Center. Gaming businesses are an established part of the community character of the small town and surrounding area.

General plan documents for the area govern development and give an indication of the future goals for the area with regard to sense of place, quality of life, and general design. The Clark County Comprehensive GMP is the document governing development of the La Center Interchange Site. The area is zoned for Agriculture, but is anticipated to be developed with urban industrial land uses pursuant to the Industrial Urban Reserve overlay designation.

Some community change can be expected independent of whether Alternative A is developed. For example, La Center has proposed an expansion of its Urban Growth Area (UGA) that would increase UGA population from 2,120 in 2005 to 10,300 in 2025. Ridgefield has also proposed UGA

expansion. If UGA expansions are approved by Clark County, growth and the associated change in the rural character of the area would result (E.D. Hovee, 2006e) (**Appendix K** of the FEIS).

Aesthetic goals listed in the Clark County Comprehensive GMP and discussed in **Section 3.13, Aesthetics** are to preserve natural elements and blend development with the surrounding environment to the extent feasible. Riparian areas and trees that provide partial screening on the north, west, and east sides of the property would remain and would provide a blending between the proposed development and the surrounding area. The MOU with Clark County and EPHS Ordinance ensures that development would occur according to certain County standards and expectations. With other anticipated developments and the existence of nearby gaming facilities, the impact to community character would be less than significant.

#### **4.13.2 ALTERNATIVE B – PREFERRED PROJECT WITHOUT REROUTING NW 319<sup>TH</sup> STREET**

##### *VISUAL IMPACTS*

The main visual features under Alternative B would remain the same as those under Alternative A. Refer to Alternative A for a more detailed discussion. Under this alternative, NW 319<sup>th</sup> Street would not be rerouted, resulting in the casino-resort complex being located slightly northward when compared with the layout for Alternative A. The Tribal elder housing, Tribal cultural center, and wastewater treatment plant would remain located in the southeast corner and the RV park would remain in the southwest corner as under Alternative A. A site plan for this alternative appears as **Figure 2-6**. The design of Alternative B would follow the design and building codes agreed to in Section 10 and Exhibit C of the MOU with Clark County (DEIS Vol. I, **Appendix C**) and Section 3(G) of the EPHS Ordinance (**Appendix U** of the FEIS). Views of the wastewater treatment plant would be screened by an 8-foot-high earthen berm, which is shown on the wastewater treatment site plan (DEIS Vol. II, **Appendix G**).

##### *Effects on Viewsheds Surrounding the Project*

###### *Viewshed A*

Effects on viewsheds surrounding the La Center Interchange Site would be similar to those discussed under Alternative A, as the main visual elements would be the same. Views in Viewshed A that are experienced on I-5 are relatively short and not within the forward line of sight for drivers; therefore, the impact to Viewshed A would be less than significant.

###### *Viewshed B*

As described under Alternative A, the view from the residences located to the west and north would change from one of an open rural and semi-wooded area, to one of commercial development consisting of the casino-resort complex set amidst a planned landscape; concrete parking structures;

and the paved RV park. As discussed in **Section 4.9**, Land Use, the Clark County Comprehensive GMP anticipates that the site will eventually be developed for urban industrial land uses. Thus, the commercial nature of the Proposed Project is not inconsistent with long-range plans for the site. Additionally, the Tribe has agreed to develop the Proposed Project consistent with relevant Clark County zoning ordinances also described in more detail in **Section 4.9**, Land Use. However, this change is still considered significant for nearby residents as it represents a major change to their viewshed in the short term. Mitigation is provided in **Section 5.2.11** to reduce this impact to a less than significant level.

### ***Shadow, Light and Glare***

Under Alternative B, the impacts of shadow on nearby residences from the approximately 110-foot-high hotel tower are the same as those described under Alternative A. The impacts of shadow from Alternative B would be less than significant.

The development of Alternative B would introduce new sources of light and glare as described under Alternative A. Through the use of downcast and directed lighting, low-pressure sodium bulbs, and strategically positioned lighting fixtures, the impacts of lighting off site would be minimized and less than significant. The use of glass panels and reflective ornamental detailing in the project design could increase the glare to travelers on I-5 and residences to the west. This impact is considered significant and unavoidable as also discussed in **Section 4.16.12**.

### ***COMMUNITY CHARACTER***

Effects to community character would be similar to those experienced under Alternative A. The impacts to community character would be less than significant.

## **4.13.3 ALTERNATIVE C – REDUCED INTENSITY**

### ***VISUAL IMPACTS***

The main visual features under Alternative C would be similar to those of Alternatives A and B. While the overall footprint of the casino-resort complex would be smaller under Alternative C, the casino (two stories/65 feet) and the hotel tower (eight stories/110 feet) would be the same as under Alternative A. NW 319<sup>th</sup> Street would not be rerouted. The RV park, Tribal elder housing, Tribal cultural center, and wastewater treatment plant would remain located in the same areas as for Alternatives A and B. A site plan for this alternative appears as **Figure 2-7**. The design of Alternative C would follow the design and building codes agreed to in Section 10 and Exhibit C of the MOU with Clark County (DEIS Vol. I, **Appendix C**) and Section 3(G) of the EPHS Ordinance (**Appendix U** of the FEIS). Views of the wastewater treatment plant would be screened by an 8-foot-high earthen berm, which is shown on the wastewater treatment site plan (DEIS Vol. II, **Appendix G**).

### ***Effects on Viewsheds Surrounding the Project***

#### *Viewshed A*

Effects on viewsheds surrounding the project would be substantially similar to those discussed under Alternatives A and B, as the main visual elements would be the same. Views in Viewshed A that are experienced on I-5 are relatively short and not within the line of sight for drivers; therefore impacts to this viewshed would be less than significant.

#### *Viewshed B*

Views from residences in Viewshed B would change from one of an open rural and semi-wooded area, to one of commercial development consisting of the casino-resort complex set amidst a planned landscape; concrete parking structures; and the paved RV park. As discussed in **Section 4.9, Land Use**, the Clark County Comprehensive GMP anticipates that the site will eventually be developed for urban industrial land uses. Thus, the commercial nature of the Proposed Project is not inconsistent with long-range plans for the site. Additionally, the Tribe has agreed to develop the Proposed Project consistent with certain specified Clark County zoning ordinances also described in more detail in **Section 4.9, Land Use**. However, this change is still considered significant for nearby residents as it represents a major change to their viewshed in the short term. Mitigation is provided in **Section 5.2.11** to reduce this impact to a less than significant level.

#### ***Shadow, Light and Glare***

As described above, although the casino-hotel complex is smaller in square footage under Alternative C, the overall height of the structures remains the same. Therefore, the impacts of shadow on nearby residences from the approximately 110-foot-high hotel tower are the same as those described under Alternative A and would be less than significant.

The development of Alternative C would introduce the same new sources of light and glare as described under Alternative A. The 1/3 reduction in size of the casino-resort complex would reduce the building lighting by an equal amount; however, the landscape, parking, and non-gaming components of this alternative would be similar in amount, location, and type to those described for Alternative A. Through the use of downcast and directed lighting, low-pressure sodium bulbs, and strategically positioned lighting fixtures, the impacts of lighting off site would be minimized and less than significant. The use of glass panels and reflective ornamental detailing in the project design could increase the glare to travelers on I-5 and residences to the west. This impact is considered significant and unavoidable as also discussed in **Section 4.16.12**.

### *COMMUNITY CHARACTER*

Effects to community character would be similar to those experienced under Alternatives A and B. These impacts are considered less than significant.

### **4.13.4 ALTERNATIVE D – BUSINESS PARK**

#### *VISUAL IMPACTS*

Development of the business park under Alternative D would encompass the entire La Center Interchange Site. Buildings under this alternative would include a three-story (approximately 40 feet high) office building and several single-story (approximately 32 feet high) office/warehouse buildings. A site plan for this alternative appears as **Figure 2-8**. The design of Alternative D would follow the design and building codes agreed to in Section 10 and Exhibit C of the MOU with Clark County (DEIS Vol. I, **Appendix C**) and Section 3(G) of the EPHS Ordinance (**Appendix U** of the FEIS) and would have an aesthetically pleasing architectural design.

#### *Effects on Viewsheds Surrounding the Project*

##### *Viewshed A*

Distant and medium-range commuter views from I-5 are obscured by trees for both northbound and southbound travelers. The features of Alternative D would be more apparent when travelers viewed them from directly east of the site; however, these views are relatively short and not within the forward line of sight for drivers. Existing trees and additional landscaping would help to diminish visibility. Effects to this viewshed would be less than significant.

##### *Viewshed B*

As described for Alternative A, Viewshed B is characterized by mid- to high-end rural residential houses on large lots set on an elevation approximate to the highest point of the La Center Interchange Site. There are approximately a dozen houses to the west and northwest along NW 41<sup>st</sup> Avenue and NW 328<sup>th</sup> Street bordering the site that would experience views of the proposed development. Riparian areas along the north and west side of the site would provide partial but not complete screening from the residential areas. The view from the residences would change from one of an open rural and semi-wooded area, to one of urban-industrial development consisting of office buildings, concrete block warehousing structures, and paved parking areas. As discussed in **Section 4.9, Land Use**, the Clark County Comprehensive GMP anticipates that the site will eventually be developed for urban industrial land uses. Thus, the commercial nature of the Proposed Project is not inconsistent with long-range plans for the site. Additionally, the Tribe has agreed to develop the Proposed Project consistent with relevant Clark County zoning ordinances also described in more detail in **Section 4.9, Land Use**. However, this change is still considered significant for nearby residents as it represents a major change to their viewshed in the short term. Mitigation is provided in **Section 5.2.11** to reduce this impact to a less than significant level.

### *Shadow, Light and Glare*

A significant effect from shadow would result if the proposed development casts a shadow on private residences or public areas for substantial portions of the day. There are no public recreation areas in the immediate vicinity. The nearest buildings off site are residences to the west and northwest as described under Alternative A. An open-space buffer of at least 350 feet between the proposed development and the nearest residences has been included as part of the site layout to reduce impacts from shadows to neighboring residences. As described above, the direction of sunrise at the La Center Interchange Site will vary from southeast to northeast throughout the year; the direction of shadow from the three story office building will vary from northwest to southwest, accordingly. In the early morning hours, the office building (approximately 40 feet in height) may briefly cast a shadow over some of these residences during certain times of the year. The impacts of shadow from the development would be less than significant.

The development of Alternative D would introduce new sources of light into an agricultural/rural residential setting. In order to reduce the impacts from increased light sources, the following would be incorporated into the design of Alternative D: downcast lighting and low-pressure sodium bulbs would be used in the landscaped and parking areas to minimize off-site scatter; lighting fixtures would be an integral part of the overall design and strategically positioned to minimize any direct site lines or glare to the public; and exterior landscape and architectural lighting would be used to enhance the architecture of the buildings, accentuate their design, and provide for public safety. Additionally, exterior signage would be considered as part of the exterior architectural design and would enhance the building's architecture and the natural characteristics of the site by incorporating native materials in combination with architectural trim. Illuminated signs would be designed to blend with the light levels of the building and landscape lighting in both illumination levels and color characteristics. Through the use of downcast and directed lighting, low-pressure sodium bulbs, and strategically positioned lighting fixtures, the impacts of lighting off site would be minimized and less than significant. The use of glass panels and reflective ornamental detailing in the project design could increase the glare to travelers on I-5 and residences to the west. This impact is considered significant and unavoidable as also discussed in **Section 4.16.12**.

### *COMMUNITY CHARACTER*

Alternative D would introduce industrial and commercial elements to the La Center Interchange Site. The area is zoned as agricultural; however, it is anticipated to be developed with urban industrial land uses pursuant to the Industrial Urban Reserve overlay designation. Aesthetic goals listed in the Clark County Comprehensive GMP and discussed in **Section 3.13**, Aesthetics are to preserve natural elements and blend development with the surrounding environment to the extent feasible. Riparian areas and trees that provide partial screening on the north, west, and east sides of the property would remain and would provide a blending between the proposed development and the surrounding area.

The MOU with Clark County (DEIS Vol. I, **Appendix C**) and Section 3(G) of the EPHS Ordinance (**Appendix U** of the FEIS) ensures that development would occur according to certain specified County standards. The impact to community character would be less than significant.

#### **4.13.5 ALTERNATIVE E – RIDGEFIELD INTERCHANGE SITE**

##### *VISUAL IMPACTS*

Development of the casino, hotel, Tribal elder housing, Tribal cultural center, RV park, and parking facilities would encompass the majority of the Ridgefield Interchange Site. The casino would consist of a two-story (approximately 65 feet in height) structure. The building would be a combination of glass and metal, with a mixture of natural materials including wood and stone. Two porte-cochères located on the west and south sides of the casino would serve as the main entrances. The hotel would consist of eight stories (approximately 110 feet in height) and have a façade similar to that of the casino. Appropriately scaled landscaping, including rock and water features, would enhance the aesthetically pleasing design of the buildings. The commercial aspects of the site, including the casino, hotel, and parking facilities, would be located in the northwestern portion of the site. The Tribal elder housing would be located in the far eastern portion of the site and the RV park would be located directly west of the Tribal elder housing. A site plan for this alternative appears as **Figure 2-9**. There is currently commercial and light industrial development to the west and south of the site, which would lessen the visual impact of Alternative E.

##### *Effects on Viewsheds Surrounding the Project*

In **Section 3.13**, Aesthetics, the viewsheds surrounding the Ridgefield Interchange Site are described and analyzed according to analytical criteria expressing the strength of the viewing experience. Impacts to these viewsheds resulting from the build-out of Alternative E are identified below.

##### *Viewshed C*

Distant and medium-range views from NE 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue are screened by natural features and residences for both northbound and southbound travelers. Travelers directly east of the site would experience views of the development, although these views would be short and not within the forward line of sight for drivers. There are a few residences to the north, east, and south that would experience views of the development. These views, which are now primarily of agricultural and open space areas, would change to views of commercial development. Vegetation screens some views for residents to the south. While there are some commercial developments to the west and south of the site, the area east of the interchange is primarily characterized by open space and agricultural areas. The impacts to this viewshed are considered significant and mitigation is provided in **Section 5.0**, which would reduce this impact to a less than significant level.

*Viewshed D*

Views of the site from I-5 are obscured by commercial businesses and vegetation. Impacts to this viewshed would be less than significant.

*Shadow, Light and Glare*

A significant effect from shadow would result if Alternative E components cast a shadow on private residences or public areas for substantial portions of the day. There are no public recreation areas in the immediate vicinity. The nearest residences off site, which may be affected by shadow, are located to the north, east and south. An open-space buffer of at least 300 feet between the proposed development and the nearest residences has been included as part of the site layout to reduce impacts to neighboring residences. For the Ridgefield Interchange Site, the direction of the sunrise will vary from southeast to northeast throughout the year, casting shadow to the northwest and southwest, respectively. As the primary structures in this direction are I-5 and commercial businesses, this would not be a significant impact. However, in the late afternoon the sunset will vary from southwest to northwest, casting shadow to the northeast and southeast, respectively. Therefore, in the late afternoon, the casino-resort complex (approximately 110 feet at the roofline of the hotel) may briefly cast a shadow over some of the nearby residences during certain times of the year. The impacts of shadow from the development would be less than significant.

The development of Alternative E would introduce new sources of light into an agricultural/rural residential setting. In order to reduce the impacts from increased light sources, the following would be incorporated into the design of Alternative E: downcast lighting and low-pressure sodium bulbs would be used in the landscaped and parking areas to minimize off site scatter; lighting fixtures would be an integral part of the overall design and strategically positioned to minimize any direct site lines or glare to the public; and exterior landscape and architectural lighting would be used to enhance the architecture of the buildings, accentuate their design, and provide for public safety. Additionally, exterior signage would be considered as part of the exterior architectural design and would enhance the building's architecture and the natural characteristics of the site by incorporating native materials in combination with architectural trim. Illuminated signs would be designed to blend with the light levels of the building and landscape lighting in both illumination levels and color characteristics. Through the use of downcast and directed lighting, low-pressure sodium bulbs, and strategically positioned lighting fixtures, the impacts of lighting off-site would be minimized and less than significant. The use of glass panels and reflective ornamental detailing in the project design could increase the glare to travelers on I-5 and residences to the west. This impact is considered significant and unavoidable as also discussed in **Section 4.16.12**.

**COMMUNITY CHARACTER**

As with Alternative A, the Clark County Comprehensive GMP is the planning document governing development in this area. The Ridgefield Interchange Site is zoned as Urban Holding-40 and Business Park. The area is anticipated for urbanization, as it is part of the Ridgefield Urban Growth Area. Goals listed in the Clark County Comprehensive GMP related to aesthetics, and discussed in **Section 3.13**, Aesthetics are to preserve natural elements and blend development with the surrounding environment to the extent feasible. Landscaping incorporated into the project would help add natural elements. With anticipated development in the area, the impact to community character would be less than significant.

**4.13.6 ALTERNATIVE F – NO ACTION**

Under Alternative F, existing residential and agricultural uses would continue to dominate the La Center Interchange Site and the Ridgefield Interchange Site in the near term.

In the future, the alternative sites could be developed consistent with their County zoning and the Clark County Comprehensive GMP. For the La Center Interchange Site there could be agricultural or industrial development, and for the Ridgefield Interchange Site, a business park. These developments would have significant impacts on surrounding residences that currently have open space and agricultural views of the alternative project sites. However, as this potential future development is planned in the Clark County Comprehensive GMP, any significant impacts would be addressed and/or mitigated through compliance with County ordinances and requirements of the Clark County Comprehensive GMP. Therefore, the No Action Alternative would have less than significant effects.