
IV. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

B. AESTHETICS

ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

Bundy Campus

The Bundy Campus is located on the west side of Bundy Drive (also known as Centinela Avenue), south of Airport Avenue and north of Stanwood Place. Approximately 70 percent of the Bundy Campus is currently used for surface parking and internal circulation, including a sloped driveway from Bundy Drive that serves as the main entrance to the Bundy Campus. Additional improvements on the Bundy Campus include two existing buildings, a parking kiosk, some perimeter landscaping, and 10-foot soundwalls along the southern and western boundaries of the site.

The two existing on-site buildings include the four-story West Building of approximately 64,000 square feet (sf) located in the central portion of the Bundy Campus, and the two-story East Building of approximately 33,055 sf located in the eastern portion of the site, set back approximately 80 feet from Bundy Drive. The West Building was constructed in 1981 and underwent renovations in 2004/2005. The East Building was constructed in 1961 and is currently vacant.

The Bundy Campus slopes downward from east to west, from approximately 170 feet above mean sea level (msl) at the northeast corner of the campus along Bundy Drive, to approximately 166 feet above msl at the Bundy driveway, to approximately 161 feet above msl at the East Building, to approximately 135 feet above msl at the West Building, with the lowest elevation at approximately 126 feet above msl at the eastern side of the campus along Stewart Avenue. The slope is concentrated at the eastern end of the Bundy Campus, while the remainder of the site is generally level at approximately 130 feet above msl. There is no native vegetation on the Bundy Campus or on the immediately adjoining properties.

Surrounding Locale

The Santa Monica Airport (Airport) forms the surrounding locale north of the Bundy Campus. One- to two-story commercial/industrial uses and surface parking associated with the Airport front the southern side of Airport Avenue just north of the Bundy Campus. As of the date of issuance of the Notice of Preparation (NOP), an existing surface parking lot on the northern side of Airport Avenue, south of Donald Douglas Loop South, was serving as a park-and-ride shuttle lot to the Main Campus. This 8-acre site has since been vacated and is planned to be developed by the City of Santa Monica with the Airport Park. The Airport runway and additional Airport facilities are located north of Donald Douglas Loop South. Views looking north of the Bundy Campus are largely encompassed by the Airport-related uses described above. Because of the open runway expanse, views of the Airport generally appear less dense than typical views of the built environment. Photographs of the Bundy Campus and surrounding area are provided in Figures III-2 through III-8 in Section III (Environmental Setting). A photograph location map showing the location where each photograph was taken is provided in Figure III-1.

The surrounding locale is also typified by single-family residential uses, which are located east of the Bundy Campus across Bundy Drive, west of the Bundy Campus along Stewart Avenue, and south of the Bundy Campus along Stanwood Place. The single-family homes across Bundy Drive are located on a slope accessible from Stanwood Drive, which rises to the east from Bundy Drive. At an elevation of approximately 190 feet above msl, these easterly adjacent homes are considerably higher than the Bundy Campus (see View 16 in Figure III-7).

The adjacent single-family residential areas south and west of the Bundy Campus are generally at the same elevation as the Bundy Campus. Most of the homes in this neighborhood are single-story. Stewart Avenue, Stanwood Place, and the surrounding streets are lined with abundant and mature streetscape, including American Sweet Gums and Chinese Elms (see View 13 in Figure III-6).

Grand View Boulevard is located parallel to the east of Bundy Drive. A group of parcels roughly bounded by Grand View Boulevard to the east, residential uses along Everglade Street to the south, Bundy Drive to the west, and residential uses along Stanwood Drive to the north is designated as Open Space per the City of Los Angeles Zoning Code. This partially vacant government-owned property is occupied by North Venice Little League fields and Ocean View Farms, a community garden that rents small gardening beds to private individuals. At an elevation of approximately 190 feet above msl, panoramic views of the Pacific Ocean, Santa Monica Mountains, and the Cities of Los Angeles and Santa Monica are available from this property, although views are screened in some places by vegetation and topography (see View 22 in Figure IV.B-1).

Existing Viewsheds

Viewsheds refer to the visual qualities of a geographical area that are defined by the horizon, topography, and other natural features that give an area its visual boundary and context, or by artificial developments that have become prominent visual components of the area. In the area of the Bundy Campus, the existing viewsheds are defined primarily by aviation-related commercial/industrial uses and residential land uses. Viewsheds east and south of the Bundy Campus along Bundy Drive include urban, residential hillsides with vegetated slopes. To the north, the Santa Monica Mountains are visible in the distant horizon.

Views of and Towards the Bundy Campus

The availability of views of the Bundy Campus varies from off-site locations due to the development density in the area (e.g., intervening buildings, trees, and walls), topography, and distance.

West-facing Views from Locations Along Bundy Drive

Public views of the Bundy Campus are available from locations along the strip of Bundy Drive that stretches between approximately 200 feet north of Airport Avenue and Rose Avenue. The eastern portion of the Bundy Campus is approximately 15 feet below the Bundy Drive grade, while the rest of the Bundy Campus is approximately 35 feet below the street grade. West-facing views from Bundy Drive between

the Bundy Campus's northern boundary and Rose Avenue are dominated by the existing two-story East Building, which is set back approximately 80 feet from the roadway and blocks views of the lower-grade four-story West Building behind it. Views of the West Building are available from Bundy Drive north of the two-story East Building to approximately 200 feet north of Airport Avenue. Views of the Bundy Campus are generally not available from Bundy Drive beyond approximately 200 feet north of Airport Avenue due to the topography of the area and intervening structures. The West Building appears approximately 35 feet shorter to a viewer from Bundy Drive due to the Bundy Campus's sloping topography, and the two-story East Building appears approximately 15 feet shorter. Additionally, views of the Bundy Campus from Bundy Drive north of the East Building and south of Airport Avenue are partially obstructed by Oleander bushes that line Bundy Drive adjacent to the Airport property (see View 23 in Figure IV.B-1).

South-facing Views from Locations Along Airport Avenue

Public views of the Bundy Campus are also available from Airport Avenue, which slopes downward heading west from Bundy Drive, similar to the Bundy Campus. A surface parking lot located at the southwestern corner of Airport Avenue and Bundy Drive facilitates unhindered views of the Bundy Campus from the portion of Airport Avenue near the intersection with Bundy Drive (see View 24 in Figure IV.B-1). Further west along Airport Avenue, views of the Bundy Campus are partially screened by the existing one- to two-story Airport-related structures that are located adjacent to the northern boundary of the site. The Bundy Campus is visible from intermittent locations along Airport Avenue west of Donald Douglas Loop South.

West-facing Views from Locations East of Bundy Drive

Public Views

East of Bundy Drive, public views of the Bundy Campus are not available from the streets accessed by Stanwood Drive, including Dewey Street, Navy Street, Marine Street, Clover Avenue, and Grand View Boulevard (north of Stanwood Drive), due to existing residential development (see Views 17 and 18 in Figure III-7). Public views of the Bundy Campus are also not available from Grand View Boulevard south of Stanwood Drive, due to existing little league fields and topography (see View 25 in Figure IV.B-2).

Private Views

Unhindered private views of the Bundy Campus are available from the backyards of some residential properties east of Bundy Drive off Dewey Street, Navy Street, Marine Street, and Clover Avenue, as these backyards are oriented towards Bundy Drive at an elevation of approximately 190 feet above msl (i.e., 25 feet above Bundy Drive). From these vantage points, the existing buildings on the Bundy Campus are visible below the viewer's line-of-sight. Similar views of the Bundy Campus are also available from the government-owned open space parcels occupied by North Venice Little League fields and Ocean View

Farms, south of Grand View Drive. The Bundy Campus is also visible below the viewer's line-of-sight from vantage points atop this slope (see View 22 in Figure IV.B-1).

North- and East-Facing Views from Locations South and West of the Bundy Campus

From the single-family residential uses south and west of the Bundy Campus, and from public vantage points south and west of the Bundy Campus along Stanwood Place, Stewart Avenue, Dewey Street and neighboring streets, views of the Bundy Campus are largely blocked by the 10-foot soundwalls along the campus' southern and western boundaries. Only the upper stories of the existing buildings on the Bundy Campus are visible above the mostly single-story homes in this neighborhood (see Views 26 and 27 in Figure IV.B-2).

Overall, the Bundy Campus is visible from private and public viewing locations. Private views range from narrow view corridors from locations north, west, and south of the site, to scenic vistas of the Pacific Ocean, Santa Monica Mountains, and the Cities of Los Angeles and Santa Monica from locations east of Bundy Drive (at approximately 190 above msl). Public views are available from public right-of-ways in the vicinity, including Bundy Drive, Airport Avenue, Stanwood Drive, and other neighborhood streets.

Light and Glare

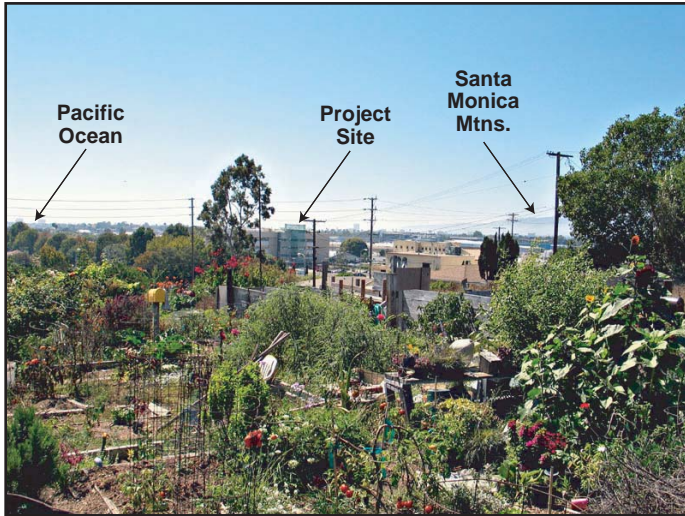
The Bundy Campus and surrounding locale are located in a highly urbanized area with numerous sources of nighttime illumination including street lights, architectural and security lighting, Airport lighting, indoor building illumination (light emanating from the interior of structures which passes through windows), and automobile headlights. In addition, glare is common due primarily to the direct sunlight and the urbanized nature of the area, which result in a concentration of potentially reflective surfaces. Potentially reflective surfaces that affect the Bundy Campus include automobiles traveling and parked on streets, windows in buildings, and surfaces of painted buildings in the project vicinity.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

Thresholds of Significance

In accordance with Appendix G to the State CEQA Guidelines, a proposed project would have a significant impact on the environment if it would:

- (a) Result in a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista; or
- (b) Substantially damages scenic resources, including but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway; or
- (c) Substantially degrades the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings; or



View 22: Looking west towards the Bundy Campus from Ocean View Farms.



View 23: Looking south towards the Bundy Campus from Bundy Drive, just south of Airport Avenue.



View 24: Looking south towards the Bundy Campus from the intersection of Bundy Drive and Airport Avenue.

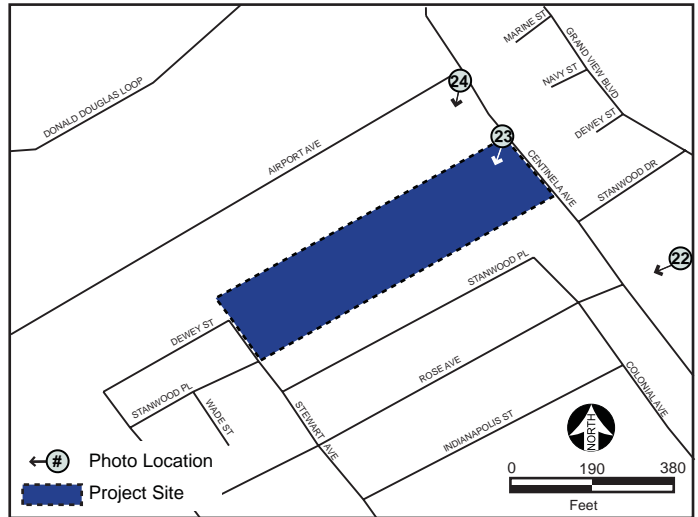


PHOTO LOCATION MAP

Source: Christopher A. Joseph & Associates, August 2005.



CHRISTOPHER A. JOSEPH & ASSOCIATES
Environmental Planning and Research

Figure IV.B-1
Views of the Bundy Campus
from the Surrounding Land Uses



View 25: Looking west towards the Bundy Campus from Grand View Boulevard. As shown, the Bundy Campus is not visible from this location.



View 26: Looking north at the single-family residential uses on Stanwood Place, adjacent to the Bundy Campus. The existing four-story West Building is partially visible.



View 27: Looking east towards the Bundy Campus from Dewey Street and Stewart Avenue.

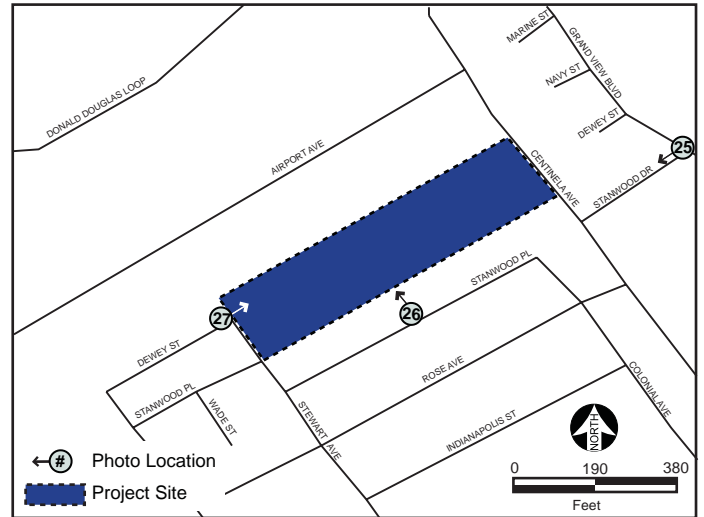


PHOTO LOCATION MAP

Source: Christopher A. Joseph & Associates, August 2005.



CHRISTOPHER A. JOSEPH & ASSOCIATES
Environmental Planning and Research

Figure IV.B-2
Views of the Bundy Campus
from the Surrounding Land Uses

- (d) Creates a new source of substantial light or glare which would affect day or nighttime views in the area.

In addition to the Thresholds from Appendix G to the State CEQA Guidelines, in accordance with SMC's CEQA Initial Study Checklist, a proposed project would have a significant impact on the environment if it would:

- (e) Create a new shadow that would adversely affect a shadow-sensitive use.

The Initial Study prepared for the Master Plan determined that the Master Plan would have no impact with respect to Thresholds (b) and (e) listed above (see Appendix A). As such, no further analysis of these topics is required under CEQA (see also Section IV.A of this Draft EIR).

The District has not yet adopted thresholds of significance for assessing whether potential environmental impacts are significant for purposes of CEQA. Consequently, this EIR primarily uses those thresholds of significance set forth by the City of Los Angeles pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21082. As set forth in the City of Los Angeles' Draft L.A. CEQA Thresholds Guide, the determination of significance shall be made on a case-by-case basis, considering the following factors:

- a) The amount or relative proportion of existing features or elements that substantially contribute to the valued visual character or image of a neighborhood, community, or localized area, which would be removed, altered, or demolished;
- b) The amount of natural open space to be graded or developed;
- c) The degree of contrast between proposed features and existing features that represent the area's valued aesthetic image;
- d) The degree to which the project would contribute to the area's aesthetic value;
- e) Applicable guidelines and regulations (see Section IV.F (Land Use/Zoning));
- f) 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 the mountains or the ocean);
- g) The extent of obstruction (e.g. total blockage, partial interruption, or minor diminishment);
- h) The extent to which the project affects recognized views available from a length of a public roadway, bike path, or trail, as opposed to a single, fixed vantage point;
- i) The extent to which project sources would change ambient illumination levels; and
- j) The extent to which project lighting would spill off the Bundy Campus and affect adjacent light-sensitive areas.

Project Characteristics

Interim Phase

As discussed in Section II (Project Description), the Interim Phase of the Master Plan would involve expanded use of the four-story West Building from 16 to up to 20 classrooms and potential use of the existing two-story East Building for offices, student services, community education, storage or leased for other purposes consistent with current zoning. The Interim Phase would provide a new Northeast Bundy Driveway to accommodate the new traffic signal at the northeast corner of the campus, with a new internal drive that would turn sharply to the south upon entering the Bundy Campus and connect to the existing drive along the south side of the campus. Fourteen onsite parking spaces near Bundy Drive would be eliminated to accommodate the Northeast Bundy Driveway, with 594 parking spaces remaining. Because the Interim Phase would involve the same uses that would ultimately occur under Master Plan buildout, it is assumed that impacts that would occur in the Interim Phase would be less than or equal to those evaluated for Master Plan buildout. As such, the Interim Phase is not discussed in detail in this Section.

Master Plan Buildout

As discussed in Section II (Project Description), buildout of the Master Plan calls for the retention of the existing four-story (approximately 64,000 sf) West Building, and proposes the eventual demolition of the two-story East Building (approximately 33,055 sf) and its replacement with a building of similar size to be located to the immediate east of the West Building. The proposed two-story New Building would be approximately the same height (i.e., a maximum of approximately 35 feet in height) as the existing East Building. The New Building will be located within the center of the Bundy Campus 100 feet east of the existing West Building, creating a pedestrian-friendly campus green space in between the two buildings. The proposed building will be located approximately 535 feet west of Bundy Drive and more than 90 feet north of the residential neighbors to the south. The total developed floor area envisioned for the Bundy Campus would be approximately 100,000 sf. The proposed Site Plan depicting this vision is provided in Figure II-3 in Section II (Project Description).

The Bundy Campus is planted with shade and palm trees which provide a visual screen between the campus and the surrounding residential neighborhood. SMC has planted approximately 250 trees along the south and west edges of the Bundy Campus as well as native shrubs, grass, and groundcover throughout the Bundy Campus. Under the Master Plan, SMC proposes to plant an additional 50 trees within the quad area between the West Building and proposed New Building and along the Bundy Drive parkway. This 60-foot-wide landscaped parkway is intended to provide a softer, community-friendly border to the campus. A retaining wall will be built to the west of the parkway to create a level green space.

Project Impacts

Post-Project Views

West-Facing Views

Along the Bundy Drive frontage, the Master Plan would remove the existing two-story East Building and introduce a 60-foot-wide landscaped parkway along the Bundy Campus's eastern border. The East Building would be replaced by a structure of similar size and massing in the interior portion of the site, which would remain approximately 15 feet below the Bundy Drive grade. While the existing East Building is set back approximately 80 feet from Bundy Drive, the proposed New Building would be set back approximately 535 feet from the roadway, a setback increase of 455 feet. As such, the Master Plan would open and expand views from Bundy Drive by replacing a large, conspicuous structure close to the street with a similarly sized structure farther from the street, at a lower elevation. As a result, viewsheds to the west from Bundy Drive would be less obstructed than under existing conditions.

As discussed above, scenic vistas of the Pacific Ocean, Santa Monica Mountains, and the Cities of Los Angeles and Santa Monica are available from private homes east of Bundy Drive off Dewey Street, Navy Street, Marine Street, and Clover Avenue, as well as from public vantage points on the government-owned open space parcels occupied by North Venice Little League fields and Ocean View Farms, east of Bundy Drive. Due to topography, existing structures on the Bundy Campus are visible below the line-of-sight from these vantage points. The Master Plan would beneficially alter the lower foreground of the identified scenic vistas by removing an existing East Building and constructing a similarly sized building approximately 455 feet west of the removed East Building. The proposed New Building would be below the line-of-sight of viewing areas east of Bundy Drive more so than the existing East Building, and therefore would not block the scenic vistas available from these locations. As such, impacts to west-facing viewsheds, including scenic vistas, would be less than significant.

East-Facing Views

Looking east, the Bundy Campus is visible from Stewart Avenue north of Stanwood Place, and from most of Dewey Street, particularly the eastern portion. From these locations, the Bundy Campus is largely screened by the existing 10-foot soundwall that forms the western boundary of the site. Above the soundwall, the upper stories of the existing four-story West Building are visible. There are no identified scenic vistas or views of particular value within these viewsheds.

The existing four-story West Building blocks views of the existing East Building from viewing locations west of the Bundy Campus. Therefore, the proposed removal of the East Building would not be visually perceptible from these locations. Likewise, the proposed New Building, which would be constructed just east of the existing West Building, would be blocked from view by the four-story West Building when looking east at the Bundy Campus. As such, east-facing views of the Bundy Campus would not be altered, and no impact to this viewshed would occur.

North-Facing Views

Looking north, public views of the Bundy Campus are available from Stanwood Place and Colonial Avenue north of Rose Avenue. Private views are available from the homes along these streets, including those on the north side of Stanwood Place that are adjacent to the Bundy Campus. Northerly views of the Bundy Campus are not available from Rose Avenue due to the existing residential development. From locations along Stanwood Place and Colonial Avenue, the Bundy Campus is largely screened by existing homes, abundant and mature streetscape, and the existing 10-foot soundwall that forms the southern boundary of the site. Above the residential rooftops adjacent to the Bundy Campus, the upper stories of the on-site building are visible. There are no identified scenic vistas or views of particular value within these viewsheds.

The Master Plan would remove the existing two-story East Building and replace it with a similarly sized two-story New Building adjacent to the existing four-story West Building. Northerly views of the Bundy Campus would be slightly altered in the sense that the upper stories of the existing two-story East Building would no longer be visible at the building's existing location near Bundy Drive, while views of the upper stories of the four-story West Building would be augmented by the addition of the adjacent two-story New Building. This would have the effect of opening up views of a portion of the sky in one location, and blocking views of a portion of the sky in another, which is not considered a significant impact. The proposed two-story New Building, like the existing two-story East Building, would not be tall enough to cast a shadow over adjacent land uses from its interior location on the Bundy Campus. In addition, northerly views of the Bundy Campus would continue to be partially and/or fully blocked by existing homes, trees, and the soundwall, which would further minimize the project's visual impact. Overall, the Master Plan would not have a substantial adverse effect on northerly viewsheds, including scenic vistas, and impacts would be less than significant.

South-Facing Views

Public south-facing views of the Bundy Campus are available from Airport Avenue, including the intersection of Airport Avenue and Bundy Drive. As discussed above, views of the site from Airport Avenue are unobstructed at some locations, and partially to fully blocked at other locations. South-facing views are characterized by existing urban development, including the existing uses on the Bundy Campus and adjacent residential uses. There are no scenic vistas within these viewsheds.

The Master Plan would remove the existing two-story East Building along Bundy Drive and would replace it with a similarly sized two-story New Building adjacent to the existing four-story West Building in the central portion of the Bundy Campus. From the intersection of Bundy Drive and Airport Avenue, this would have the effect of opening and expanding views from Bundy Drive by replacing a large, conspicuous structure close to the street with a similarly sized structure much farther from the street, at a lower elevation. From other locations along Airport Avenue, the Master Plan would result in the appearance of further urban infill consistent with existing southerly views of the Bundy Campus. As such, impacts would be less than significant, if not beneficial.

Visual Character

The Master Plan is expected to improve the aesthetic character of the site's frontage along Bundy Drive by replacing views of an outdated building with views of a landscaped parkway and pedestrian path, with buildings visible at a lower elevation in the background. The proposed building placement would reduce visual impacts related to massing and blockage because the proposed two-story New Building would be located adjacent to the existing four-story West Building, (i.e., within a viewshed that is already occupied by an existing structure). This would create a more coherent, centrally located, and pedestrian-friendly building arrangement on the campus, which would enhance the visual and aesthetic appeal of the Bundy Campus. The visual character of the site would also be enhanced by the proposed planting of 50 additional trees within the campus quad area. Furthermore, the proposed building would be designed in a contemporary architectural style, analogous to the existing four-story West Building which underwent renovations in 2004/2005. Thus, the Master Plan would promote architectural consistency on the Bundy Campus and would modernize the site's appearance within the community, consistent with the desired aesthetic image of the West Los Angeles/Santa Monica area. Lastly, there is no evidence, such as historical listing status, to suggest that the existing two-story East Building substantially contributes to the valued visual character or image of the area. Thus, its removal would not adversely affect the aesthetic quality of the community. As such, the Master Plan would positively contribute to the area's aesthetic value, and impacts related to visual and aesthetic qualities would be less than significant.

Lighting

The Master Plan would introduce a greater amount of nighttime lighting to the Bundy Campus since one of the existing buildings is currently vacant and therefore does not emit as much light as an operating facility. Sources of lighting under the Master Plan would include interior lighting, exterior security lighting, and headlights associated with motor vehicles on-site and passing on neighboring streets. Security lighting would be installed to provide a secure environment in and around the Bundy Campus. The Bundy Campus has already implemented a parking lot light-shielding program to reduce light travel from the existing parking areas onto surrounding properties. Furthermore, the SMC-constructed 10-foot soundwall along the southern and western boundaries of the Bundy Campus serves a dual purpose, blocking both noise as well as light from traveling onto neighboring properties to the south and west from vehicles in the parking lots on the Bundy Campus. Continuing these existing efforts, all new outdoor lighting fixtures under the Master Plan would be directed towards the interior of the Bundy Campus and directed away from the neighboring land uses.

Glare

The Master Plan would replace the existing East Building, near Bundy Drive, with a similarly sized New Building closer to the existing West Building in the interior of the Bundy Campus. While the East Building does not contain large windows or other highly reflective surfaces, the removal of this structure adjacent to Bundy Drive would reduce glare impacts on passing motorists. Furthermore, the proposed

New Building would be constructed of glare-reducing materials to minimize glare impacts on motorists and other persons within the Bundy Campus, as well as within neighboring land uses.

Overall, the Master Plan would not cause excessive lighting or glare that is out of character with the land uses surrounding the Bundy Campus, or result in a substantial increase in light or glare that would affect surrounding land uses. In addition, implementation of the mitigation measure below would ensure that impacts related to lighting and glare would be reduced to a less-than-significant level.

CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

There are 113 related projects in the vicinity of the Bundy Campus (see Figure III-9 in Section III (Environmental Setting)). However, most of these projects are visually separated from the Bundy Campus by surrounding development and the topography of the area. The elevation of the Bundy Campus ranges between approximately 170 feet and 126 feet above msl, sloping towards the west. The only related project within the vicinity of the Bundy Campus is Related Project No. 113, the Airport Park Expansion, located across Airport Avenue north of the campus. Nonetheless, this related project which would not be expected to combine with the Master Plan to create a cumulative impact related to views, visual quality, light, or glare. This is due to the fact that the Airport Park Expansion is separated from the Bundy Campus by several one-story structures along the south side of Airport Avenue north of the campus' northern boundary.

Development of the Master Plan in combination with the related projects identified would result in an intensification of existing prevailing land uses in a dense urbanized area of West Los Angeles. Nonetheless, the two-story New Building proposed in the center of the Bundy Campus would be less visually prominent than the existing two-story East Building that fronts Bundy Drive and would not be as tall as the adjacent four-story West Building. Furthermore, the development of the related projects is expected to occur in accordance with adopted plans and regulations. All related projects would be required to submit a landscape plan to the City of Los Angeles Department of City Planning or City of Santa Monica Department of City Planning (as applicable) for review and approval prior to the issuance of grading permits. Therefore, the Master Plan would not be expected to contribute to a cumulatively significant aesthetic impact and cumulative impacts with respect to aesthetics would be less than significant.

MITIGATION MEASURE

The following mitigation measure is recommended to ensure that less-than-significant impacts to visual resources would occur:

- (B-1) A Campus Lighting Plan shall be developed to ensure that lighting provided throughout the Bundy Campus minimizes the extent of spillover onto adjacent properties.
- (B-2) The proposed New Building on the Bundy Campus shall be constructed of glare-reducing materials that minimize glare impacts on motorists and other persons on and offsite.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE AFTER MITIGATION

The Master Plan would result in less-than-significant impacts associated with views and aesthetics.