

**DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT
GRAYSON REPOWERING PROJECT**

Appendix C Aesthetics Technical Report
September 15, 2017

Appendix C AESTHETICS TECHNICAL REPORT

To:	City of Glendale 633 E. Broadway #103 Glendale, California	From:	Stantec Consulting Services Inc. 290 Conejo Ridge Avenue Thousand Oaks, California
File:	Grayson Repowering Project	Date:	May 16, 2017

Reference: Aesthetics Technical Memorandum

Introduction

This aesthetics technical memorandum has been developed to document the assessment of the 10-additional candidate key observation points (cKOP) that were evaluated to support the aesthetics resource analysis, and presents the justification for why these cKOP locations were removed from further consideration under the Grayson Repowering Plant Project (Project) Environmental Impact Report (EIR).

Aesthetics Impact Analysis

As discussed in Section 3.1, Aesthetics, of the Grayson Repowering Plant Project EIR, the aesthetic resource analysis was conducted through a review of applicable planning documents, site reconnaissance and photography, and application of the Visual Impact Assessment for Highway Projects methodology established by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). This method emphasizes the systematic establishment of a visual quality rating for existing environments, against which the effects of proposed projects may be objectively evaluated. It also accounts for visual sensitivities of specific viewer types, including those with views toward projects from roadways. It is frequently used in visual impact analyses for power generation projects under the jurisdiction of the California Energy Commission, and is applicable in urban environments. As such, the FHWA method was used for this analysis. This methodology includes the following steps to inform the assessment of the existing visual conditions of the Project and the degree of visual change that would be introduced as a result of the Project:

1. Establish the visual environment for the area that the proposed Project is located in.
2. Assess the visual resources of the Project area by describing the visual character of the area and assessing the visual quality.
3. Describe and assess the affected viewers in terms of viewer exposure to the components of the proposed Project and the levels of visual sensitivity.
4. Develop simulations to determine the potential visual impact of the proposed Project. Visual impact is a function of the projected visual change of the Project area and the anticipated viewer response.

In accordance with the FHWA methodology, 15 cKOPs were originally identified to assess the existing visual conditions from sensitive locations in the Project area, and to estimate the level of contrast that would be introduced with implementation of the Project. The 15 cKOP locations were

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field verified by Stantec Visual Resource Specialists during a site reconnaissance conducted on March 16 and March 17, 2017. Representative photographs were taken from each of the 15 cKOP locations using a >10-megapixel digital lens reflex camera equipped with a 50-millimeter fixed focal length lens. This configuration is the de facto standard that approximates the proportion seen by the human eye. The camera positioning was determined with a sub-meter differentially corrected GPS. The camera was tripod-leveled at eye-level for each photograph. The context photographs included for each KOP represent a horizontal view angle of 90 degrees (180 degrees panoramic) to assist in establishing the visual context of the simulated image. Following the site reconnaissance, the cKOP photographs and locations were presented to the City of Glendale Planning Department for review.

Development and refinement of the KOP locations was based on further discussions between Stantec Visual Resource Specialists and the City of Glendale Planning Department, review of aerial imagery and 3D terrain/building models (as available through Google Earth), sensitive receptor mapping (See Figure A-11), and review of applicable planning documents. The selection for 5 of the 15 cKOP locations, identified as KOP-1 through KOP-5 in the EIR, were determined to represent the greatest visual change in existing conditions with implementation of the Project. The justification for why the 10 cKOP locations, identified as cKOP-6 through cKOP-10, were removed from further analysis in the EIR are summarized in the following paragraphs, and presented on Figures A-1 through A-10. The location of the 15 cKOP locations are presented on Figure A-11.

cKOP-6: Intersection of Fairmont Avenue and Flower Street

cKOP-6 shows views toward the Project site from along Flower Street, where eastbound traffic would be likely to first see the Project site with little obstruction. This cKOP was a candidate because it represents an unobstructed eye level view of the Project site from drivers travelling on Fairmont Avenue. A similar representative photograph of this view was selected to represent potential visual impacts from this location, and is further analyzed in the EIR. Therefore, this viewpoint was removed from further consideration.

cKOP-7: Intersection of San Fernando Road and Flower Street

cKOP-7 shows views of the Project site by viewers coming from the nearby residential neighborhood and entering the intersection of San Fernando Road and Flower Street. This cKOP was a candidate because it approximates views of the Project site from nearby residences. However, this cKOP was removed from further consideration since the existing facilities at the Project site are not distinguishing features visible in this view. The industrial features are primarily obstructed by the existing 12-foot masonry wall, and by a disarray of utilities, traffic signals, and street lights. The new industrial facilities would appear similar, if not the same as existing conditions and consistent with the existing visual quality and character of the view.

cKOP-8: Intersection of San Fernando Road and Grange Street

cKOP-8 shows views toward the Project site by viewers coming from the nearby residential neighborhood and entering the intersection of San Fernando Road and Grange Street, approximately 210 feet east of the Project site. This cKOP was a candidate because it approximates views of the Project site from nearby residences. However, this cKOP was removed from analysis due to the minimal visibility and low prominence of the existing industrial features within this view.

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Furthermore, compared to the other cKOP locations there are fewer number of sensitive viewer groups that would have views of the Project site from this viewpoint. For example, the commercial businesses along San Fernando Road are oriented to face away from the Project site, and residential viewer groups have limited views of the Project site since views are generally obstructed by the commercial development. In order to represent views of residential viewer groups in the Project area, KOP-4: Intersection of San Fernando Road and Highland Avenue, was selected for further analysis in the EIR, which presents a similar view of the Project site.

KOP-9: John Ferraro Athletic Fields

cKOP-9 shows views toward the Project site from recreationists using the John Ferraro Athletic Fields, just southwest of the Project site. This cKOP was a candidate since it is a nearby recreational facility and representative of recreationist views toward the Project site. However, given the intervening vegetation along the northeast side of the park, views toward the Project are limited. Views of the Project site would be similar, if not the same with implementation of the Project, and was removed from consideration. The view from KOP-2, presented in the EIR, provides a similar view from Ferraro Park, and was selected since it provides an unobstructed view of the Project site from a nearby recreation facility.

cKOP-10: Beacon Hill

cKOP-10 shows views by recreationists hiking in Griffith Park at the top of Beacon Hill in the City of Los Angeles. This cKOP is approximately 1.8 miles south of the Project site, and was a candidate because Griffith Park is part of the Santa Monica Mountains, and identified as a scenic resource in the City of Los Angeles General Plan. The Project site is adjacent to the boundary of the City of Los Angeles, and present within this view. However, this cKOP was removed from further consideration due to the distance between the Project site and the viewpoint. The existing industrial features at the Project site are not discernible amongst the highly developed, urbanized landscape, and visual changes at the Project site would not be significantly noticeable to recreationists with implementation of the Project.

cKOP-11: Dante's View

cKOP-11 shows views by recreationists hiking in Griffith Park at Dante's View in the City of Los Angeles, approximately 2.05 miles southwest of the Project site. This cKOP was a candidate because Griffith Park is part of the Santa Monica Mountains, which are identified as a scenic resource in the City of Los Angeles General Plan. The Project site is adjacent to the boundary of the City of Los Angeles, and present within this view. However, this cKOP was removed from further consideration due to the distance between the Project site and the viewpoint. The existing industrial features at the Project site are not discernible amongst the highly developed, urbanized landscape, and therefore visual changes at the Project site would not be significantly noticeable to recreationists with implementation of the Project.

cKOP-12: Verdugo Mountains- Overlook

cKOP-12 shows views by recreationists from an overlook in the Verdugo Mountains, approximately 1.97 miles north of the Project site. This cKOP was a candidate because the Verdugo Mountains are identified as scenic resources in the City of Glendale General Plan. The Project site is present within

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this view. However, due to the distance between the Project site and viewpoint, this cKOP was removed from further consideration. The existing industrial features at the Project site are not discernible amongst the highly developed, urbanized landscape in this view, and therefore visual changes would not be significantly noticeable to recreationists with implementation of the Project.

cKOP-13: Verdugo Mountains- Concrete Foundation

cKOP-13 shows views by recreationists from a concrete foundation overlook in the Verdugo Mountains, approximately 2.55 miles north of the Project site. This cKOP was a candidate because the Verdugo Mountains are identified as scenic resources in the City of Glendale General Plan. The Project site is present within this view. However, due to the distance between the Project site and viewpoint, this cKOP was removed from further consideration. The existing industrial features at the Project site are not discernible amongst the highly developed, urbanized landscape in this view, and therefore visual changes would not be significantly noticeable to recreationists with implementation of the Project.

cKOP-14: Verdugo Mountains- Roadway

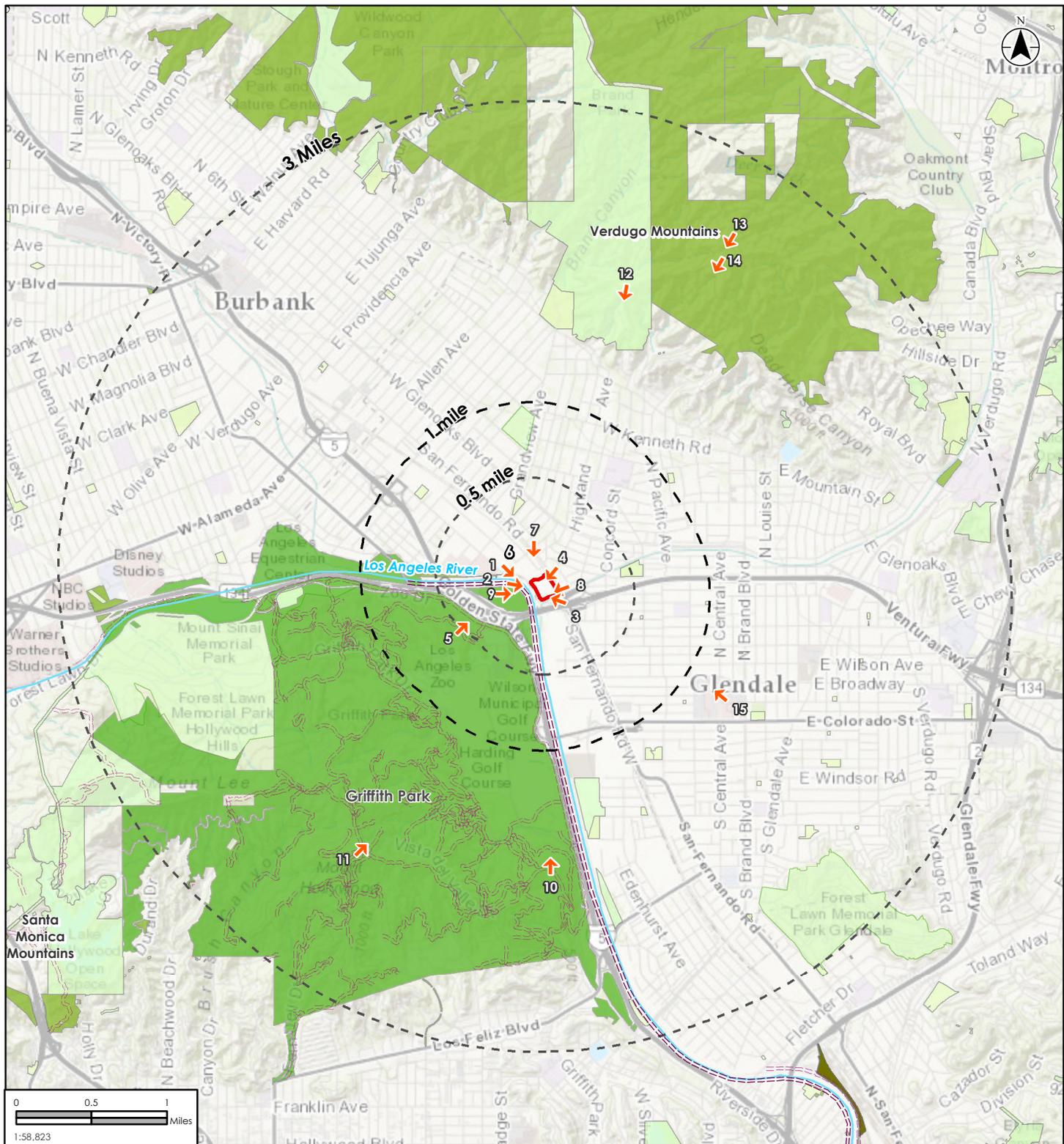
cKOP-14 shows views from drivers travelling on a main access roadway in the Verdugo Mountains, approximately 2.36 miles north of the Project site. This cKOP was a candidate because it is representative of drivers travelling in the Verdugo Mountains, which are identified as scenic resources in the City of Glendale General Plan. The Project site is present within this view. However, due to the distance between the Project site and the viewpoint, this viewpoint was removed from further consideration. The existing industrial components at the Project site are not discernible features amongst the highly-developed landscape, and therefore visual changes associated with the Project would not be significantly noticeable to drivers.

cKOP-15: Downtown Glendale- The Americana

cKOP-15 shows views from the rooftop of the Americana shopping center in downtown Glendale, approximately 1.33 miles southeast of the Project site. This cKOP is representative of commercial businesses viewers in the city's downtown. This cKOP was a candidate because it represents elevated views of the Project site from the surrounding high rise buildings downtown. However, the existing view of the Project site is not visible and obstructed by the surrounding urban development and ornamental landscaping. cKOP-15 was removed from further consideration since visual changes from this viewpoint would not be significantly noticeable to commercial business viewers with implementation of the Project.

Conclusion

The five KOPs selected for use in the EIR analysis adequately represent the variety of viewer concerns in the vicinity of the Project site and serve as a reasonable basis on which to make a determination of the Project's potential impacts to aesthetics and visual resources. The viewpoint locations described in this memorandum were removed from further consideration based on an assessment of Project visibility/discernibility (due to intervening objects or the distance from the Project site), consultation with the City of Glendale, and confirmation that viewer concerns would be adequately addressed by the KOPs selected for use in the EIR.



Legend cKOP Stream Trails Project Site Reference Distance Buffer Park Local Park Natural Areas Regional Open Space Regional Recreation Park		cKOP Locations cKOP-1 – View from Intersection of Fairmont Avenue and Flower Street cKOP-2 – View from Los Angeles River Bike Path cKOP-3 – View from Fairmont Avenue cKOP-4 – View from Intersection of San Fernando Road and Highland Avenue cKOP-5 – View from Skyline Trail cKOP-6 – View from Intersection of Fairmont Avenue and Flower Street cKOP-7 – View from Intersection of San Fernando Road and Flower Street cKOP-8 – View from Intersection of San Fernando Road and Grange Street cKOP-9 – View from John Ferraro Athletic Fields cKOP-10 – View from Beacon Hill cKOP-11 – View from Dante's View cKOP-12 – View from Verdugo Mountain-Overlook cKOP-13 – View from Verdugo Mountains – Concrete Foundation cKOP-14 – View from Verdugo Mountains- Roadway cKOP-15 – View from Downtown Glendale – The Americana
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