

Navy OTC Revitalization Draft EIS

Definition

Visual resources encompass the natural and built features of the landscape that are visible from public vantage points and that contribute to an area's visual quality. Public perception of visual resources is an important component of environmental quality that can be affected by project-related changes to the environment.

The area of visual effect (AVE) for the Proposed Action is defined as all the areas within the viewshed of the Navy Old Town Campus (OTC), which is approximately a 3-mile radius surrounding OTC. Additionally, the Navy selected 10 key observation points or viewing scenes to help identify the likely visual effects from each project alternative. These 10 viewing scenes are often in areas beyond the three-mile limits of the AVE.

How were Visual Resources Studied?

The Navy prepared three-dimensional simulations of the proposed development on OTC for each of the five action alternatives. While the actual development plan for the site is not known at this time, the Draft EIS presents assumptions on the size of the development and the type, size, and height of the buildings. The Navy selected 10 key observation points from locations in the vicinity of OTC to help identify and demonstrate the likely visual effects from each project alternative. Photos were taken from the key observation points looking towards OTC to demonstrate the existing conditions of the visual setting. The simulations were then superimposed on the photos to show the potential change.

It's important to note that the simulations do not demonstrate any potential architectural design or management practices to lessen visual impacts. Detailed site planning and layout will come later in the development process and will depend on the alternative selected for implementation.

Potential Impacts

Alternative 1

For Alternative 1, some of the existing buildings would be modernized, but the building density and heights would remain the same as they are currently. The visual quality of OTC would be improved compared to existing conditions, and view quality from locations in the vicinity of OTC would not be impacted. This is because the overall profile of the Navy facilities would not change, except to demolish the southernmost warehouse building. No new sources of shade and shadow or light and glare would be introduced. Alternative 1 would result in less than significant impacts to visual resources.



Development simulations are an estimate of what the site could look like. Final development design is not known at this time.

Alternatives 2 and 3

Under Alternatives 2 and 3, the OTC would be redeveloped with new Navy facilities and mixed-use public-private development at an increased density over existing conditions, with building heights up to 240 feet tall (approximately 21 floors).

Alternatives 2 and 3 would result in significant impacts to visual resources, primarily related to the obstruction of view corridors and the contrast of the height, bulk, and scale on OTC with the existing surrounding development. The visual quality of the proposed development would be more modern and visually appealing than the existing structures, and although the buildings would be up to 240 feet tall, there would be no shade and shadow impacts to sensitive land uses (e.g., residential uses, parks). In general, impacts for Alternative 3 would be similar to, though slightly less than, Alternative 2 due to the lower density of the proposed public-private development.

Alternatives 4 and 5

Under Alternatives 4 and 5, the site would be redeveloped with new Navy facilities and mixed-use public-private development including a transit center at an increased density over existing conditions, with building heights up to 350 feet tall (approximately 32 floors).

Alternatives 4 and 5 would result in significant impacts to visual resources, primarily related to the obstruction of view corridors and the contrast of the height, bulk, and scale on OTC with the existing surrounding development. Alternative 4 is the alternative with the highest density of development and would therefore have the highest degree of visual impacts. The visual quality of the proposed development would be more

modern and visually appealing than the existing structures, and although the buildings would be up to 350 feet tall, there would be no shade and shadow impacts to sensitive land uses (e.g., residential uses, parks). In general, impacts for Alternative 5 would be similar to, though slightly less than, Alternative 4 due to the lower density of the proposed public-private development.

How Would Impacts be Minimized?

To lessen potential impacts to visual resources, proposed management practices, such as those listed below could be applied during detailed site planning and layout:

- Keeping view corridors open (e.g., creating gaps between taller buildings)
- Designing the shape and size to minimize the number of buildings
- Varying the heights of buildings across the site to better match adjacent areas
- Integrating exterior lighting with the architectural character of the structures and incorporating design measures to avoid direct glare and reflection

The full list of potential management practices to reduce visual quality impacts is presented in Section 3.3.4.8 of the Draft EIS. Even with these proposed management practices applied, visual impacts would remain significant from certain vantage points.

Public Comment Period – Your Input Matters

The Navy welcomes your comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement. Comments can be submitted in three ways:

- 1. Via the website: www.NAVWAR-revitalization.com**
- 2. By U.S. mail:**
Navy OTC Revitalization EIS Project Manager
Attention: Ron Bochenek
750 Pacific Highway, Floor 12
San Diego, CA 92132-0058
- 3. Provide verbal comments during a virtual public meeting:** June 8 and June 23, 2021

Pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, the Navy has prepared a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to evaluate the potential environmental effects associated with modernization of the Navy Old Town Campus to support NAVWAR's current and future operational readiness. The 60-day public comment period begins May 14, 2021 and ends July 13, 2021. The Navy also encourages comments on historic properties consultation as a part of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. The Navy welcomes your input.

Public comments must be submitted by July 13, 2021 to be considered in the development of the Final EIS.