E. VISUAL QUALITY

1. Introduction

This section describes the existing visual resources as they relate to the BART to Livermore Extension Project, discusses the applicable regulations, and assesses the potential impacts to visual resources from construction and operation of the Proposed Project and Build Alternatives.

Visual quality can be subjective and often depends on the viewer. This section discusses how views from various locations within and surrounding the project corridor would change as a result of the Proposed Project and Build Alternatives. The analysis focuses on views from publicly accessible places, including parks and open space as well as roadways with a scenic designation.

Although the actual distance for views along the project corridor varies depending on topography, vegetation, landscaping, and intervening structures, the study area generally encompasses the area within approximately 0.25-mile radius of the collective footprint—the combined footprints of the Proposed Project, DMU Alternative, and Express Bus/BRT Alternative —and within an approximately 0.5-mile radius of the Dublin/Pleasanton Station and proposed Isabel Station. In addition, the bus routes and bus infrastructure improvements for the Enhanced Bus Alternative, as well as for the feeder buses for the Proposed Project and other Build Alternatives, which are anticipated to extend along existing streets and within the street ROWs, are addressed programmatically in this analysis, as described in Chapter 2, Project Description.

Consistent with the BART policy of coordinating system expansion with local land use planning, this section includes a brief discussion of applicable local policies, plans, and regulations. Under California Government Code Sections 53090 and 53091, transit districts such as BART are exempt from complying with local land use plans, policies, and zoning ordinances. However, BART has elected to consider City of Livermore's scenic vistas and corridors as scenic resources for purposes of impact analysis in this EIR. Any other policies pertaining to visual quality are presented for informational purposes only and are not considered for the purpose of identifying significant impacts under CEQA.

Comments pertaining to visual resources were received in response to the Notice of Preparation for this EIR or during the public scoping meeting held for the EIR. These comments focused on cumulative impacts to scenic views along Interstate Highway (I-) 580 due to multiple development projects in Dublin and Pleasanton, and visual impacts to the Brushy Peak Regional Preserve.

2. Existing Conditions

This subsection describes the concepts and terminology used in the assessment of visual quality and describes the existing visual conditions within the region and study area, including the visual character and quality of the corridor. It also identifies views of the corridor from scenic publicly accessible places, including parks, trails, and open space. Views of drivers from roadways with a scenic designation are also described.

a. Overview of Terminology

The analysis of visual quality in this section uses concepts and terminology drawn from the Federal Highway Administration's Guidelines for the Visual Impact Assessment of Highway Projects.[1] An overview of the terminology used is provided below.

- **Visual Character.** A description of the landscape elements and the relationships between the existing visible natural and built landscape features. Visual character-defining resources and features include landforms, vegetation, land uses, buildings, transportation facilities, overhead utility structures and lighting, and open space. The visual character of the study area is described below in the Visual Character and Visual Quality of the Study Area subsection.
- **Visual Quality.** Visual quality is a value placed on visual resources by viewers and is based on the three concepts of vividness, intactness, and unity, as described below:
    - Vividness is the degree of drama, memorability, or distinctiveness of the landscape components as seen in a particular view.
    - Intactness is a measure of the visual integrity of the natural and human-built landscape and its freedom from encroaching elements. This factor can be present in well-kept urban and rural landscapes as well as in natural settings. High intactness means that the landscape is free of unattractive features, out-of-place features, and elements do not break up the landscape. Low intactness means that visual elements in a view are unattractive or detract from the quality of the view.
    - Unity is the landscape's degree of visual coherence and compositional harmony considered as a whole. High unity frequently attests to the careful design of individual components and their relationship in the landscape or an undisturbed natural landscape.

  The existing visual quality serves as the baseline for determining the degree of visual impacts. The following five categories are used to rate visual quality: (1) low; (2) moderately low; (3) moderate; (4) moderately high; (5) and high. The existing visual

[1] Federal Highway Administration, 2015. Guidelines for the Visual Impact Assessment of Highway Projects. Document No. FHWA-HEP-15-029. January.

quality of the study area is described below in the Visual Character and Visual Quality of the Study Area subsection.

- **Sensitive Viewers.** Sensitive viewers are defined as the population or viewers that are sensitive to changes in the visual setting. Viewers at locations such as parks, pedestrian and bicycle trails, and other publicly accessible open spaces are considered to be sensitive viewers. Drivers are also considered sensitive viewers, if the roadway they are traveling on is a designated scenic highway, scenic route, or has a designated public scenic viewpoint. Otherwise, views from moving vehicles on urban highways are often fleeting as drivers generally concentrate on traffic and the roadway rather than views. Viewers within commercial and industrial areas are not typically considered sensitive viewers. See the Sensitive Viewers subsection below for a list of sensitive viewers in the study area.
- **Visual Compatibility.** For the purposes of this assessment, visual compatibility is defined as the degree to which the project introduces similar or dissimilar elements into the natural and building landscape as well as the degree to which the environment can accommodate the visual changes introduced by a project. These elements are perceived by sensitive viewers as either compatible or incompatible with the existing visual character of the area. The degree to which the project elements are consistent with the existing visual character determines the magnitude of the resulting change in visual quality. The visual compatibility of the Proposed Project and Build Alternatives with the existing visual character of the study area and the resulting effects on visual quality are described in the Environmental Analysis subsection below.

b. Regional Overview

The study area is located in the Tri-Valley Area of the San Francisco Bay Area (Bay Area). The Bay Area as a whole is characterized by an exceedingly diverse topography ranging from the shores of the Pacific Ocean, the coastal mountain ranges of the San Francisco Peninsula, Bay inlets, and hilly wine-growing regions in the north to the low-lying San Joaquin Delta and flat, dry farmlands of the eastern counties.

The Tri-Valley Area is located east of the East Bay Hills within the I-580 and I-680 corridors and consists of the following three valleys: Amador, Livermore, and San Ramon. The city of Livermore is in the Livermore Valley, and the cities of Dublin and Pleasanton are in the Amador Valley; both the Livermore and Amador Valleys are in Alameda County, and the combination of the two is referred to as the Livermore-Amador Valley. The town of Danville and city of San Ramon are in the San Ramon Valley in Contra Costa County.

Dublin, Pleasanton, and Livermore consist primarily of urbanized flat lands surrounded by small mountain ranges with long-range views of two landmark mountain peaks generally

to the north—Mount Diablo and Brushy Peak. These cities are surrounded by rural residential areas, and vineyards.

Development in the Tri-Valley Area is less dense and of a more rural character than other Bay Area cities to the west. Large tracts of suburban homes are arranged primarily in cul-de-sacs and along curvilinear streets. Commercial and industrial development, including business parks, are spread out and oriented near I-580 and along the Union Pacific Railroad rights-of-way. Areas of open grassy hillsides and scattered trees are located toward the eastern edge of the study area. Views of the hillsides and the surrounding ridgelines can be seen from many locations along the project corridor.

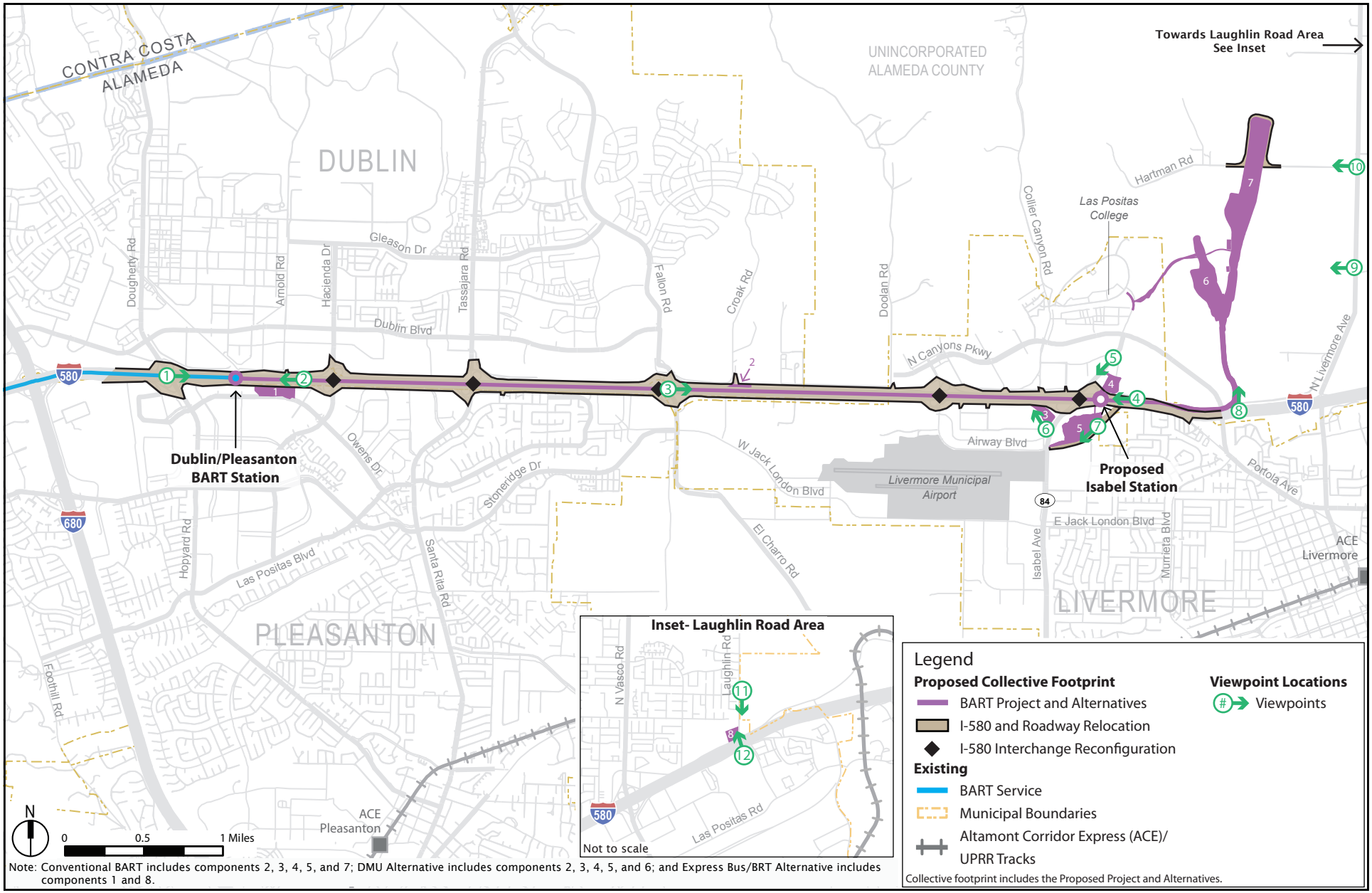
c. Visual Character and Visual Quality of the Study Area

This subsection provides a summary of the existing visual character and visual quality along the project corridor as a whole, followed by a detailed description of the visual character and visual quality for each geographic subarea, from west to east along the project corridor. Elements of the landscape are described based on their proximity to the collective footprint, as follows: foreground (0.25 to 0.5 mile); middle-ground (0.5 to 5 miles away); and background (5 miles to the limit of visibility). Viewpoint locations are shown in Figure 3.E-1 and photos at representative vantage points are shown in Figures 3.E-2 through 3.E-5. See Section 3.C, Land Use and Agricultural Resources, for additional photos of the study area.

(1) Overview of Project Corridor

The I-580 corridor extends east to west within the study area. The project corridor along I-580 is predominantly characterized by elements of the built environment to the north and south of the freeway, and distant views of hills beyond to the east and west.

Near the existing Dublin/Pleasanton Station, the landscape is characterized by BART surface parking lots and a parking garage, multi-story residential buildings, commercial office buildings, and single-story automobile dealerships. Farther east of the Dublin/Pleasanton Station to Tassajara Road/Santa Rita Road, highway-oriented, mostly large, commercial structures are adjacent to I-580, including business parks and surface parking lots. Views beyond the immediate I-580 corridor include middle-ground views of rolling hills and background views of Mount Diablo to the northwest and Brushy Peak to the northeast.



Note: Conventional BART includes components 2, 3, 4, 5, and 7; DMU Alternative includes components 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6; and Express Bus/BRT Alternative includes components 1 and 8.

Source: Arup, 2017.

BART to Livermore Extension Project EIR

Figure 3.E-1
Visual Quality
Viewpoint Locations

In Dublin between Tassajara Road/Santa Rita Road and Fallon Road/El Charro Road, the land north of I-580 is undeveloped and planned for commercial uses. Farther north are multi-story residential units in the middle-ground, with the foothills beyond. South of I-580 in this segment are residential subdivisions in Pleasanton and an automobile dealership center (part of Staples Ranch). See Section 3.C, Land Use and Agricultural Resources, for more information.

Between the El Charro Road interchange and just east of Airway Boulevard, to the north of I-580 is undeveloped land and to the south is the city-owned Las Positas Golf Course in Livermore, as well as the El Charro Specific Plan area (see Section 3.C, Land Use and Agricultural Resources), which is mostly undeveloped except for the San Francisco Premium Outlets. East of the golf course and Airway Boulevard, business parks are adjacent to the I-580 frontage.

Just east of Isabel Avenue, the area north of I-580 primarily consists of undeveloped grassland with middle-ground views of rolling hills, with the Shea Homes – Sage Project under construction. To the south of I-580 is the BART-owned park-and-ride lot on East Airway Boulevard, surrounded by agricultural uses and residential development, with undeveloped land farther to the east (north of East Airway Boulevard). In the Cayetano Creek area northeast of Portola Avenue, the location of the proposed tail tracks and storage and maintenance facility, is agricultural and undeveloped land. Farther to the east along I-580, the area around the proposed Laughlin Road parking lot is characterized by a mix of undeveloped land and detached single-family homes to the north of I-580, and office and industrial buildings to the south of I-580.

Views of the collective footprint and the project corridor can be seen from publicly accessible parks, trails, and open space areas located within and near the study area (including the cities of Dublin, Pleasanton, and Livermore). Areas that feature sensitive views of or through the project corridor are described in the Sensitive Viewers subsection below.

(2) Dublin/Pleasanton Station Area

The Dublin/Pleasanton Station Area extends from west of the Dougherty Road interchange to the Hacienda Drive interchange along I-580 and includes the Dublin/Pleasanton BART Station, located in the I-580 median. Views of the area are shown in Figure 3.E-2. The visual character is defined primarily by the built environment with a range of building massing types and heights associated with the commercial, mixed-use residential, and light industrial uses in the area.

Dublin/Pleasanton Station Area

Viewpoint 1: View from Dougherty Road/Hopyard Road interchange east towards the Dublin/Pleasanton Station.

Viewpoint 2: View from I-580 westbound towards the Dublin/Pleasanton Station.

I-580 Corridor Area

Viewpoint 3: View from Fallon Road/El Charro Road interchange east along I-580.

Viewpoint 4: View from I-580 westbound towards Isabel Avenue.

Source: Urban Advantage, 2017.

BART to Livermore Extension Project EIR

Figure 3.E-2
Visual Quality
Dublin/Pleasanton Station Area and I-580 Corridor Area Photos

I-580 is 12 lanes wide; the eastbound and westbound lanes of the freeway are separated by a fenced median containing the existing BART tracks. The canopy of the elevated BART platform and the end-of-line facility extend up to approximately 27 feet above the freeway and are visually prominent to drivers on I-580.

North of I-580, the landscape is characterized by the multi-story BART parking garage and residential buildings beyond (ranging in height from four to seven stories), single-story automobile dealerships, and surface parking lots. South of I-580, the landscape is characterized by the BART surface parking lots, multi-story commercial offices that range in height up to five stories, residential apartments, and undeveloped parcels.

The visual quality of the Dublin/Pleasanton Station Area ranges from low to moderate. The area is predominantly typified by parking lots and office buildings with few distinguishing characteristics and has low vividness, resulting in low visual quality. Furthermore, there is little visual consistency in the landscape, with the exception of the area north of I-580 near the Dublin/Pleasanton Station, where the BART parking garage and residential buildings present a consistent visual theme. Given the consistent visual theme—the buildings are all approximately four to seven stories high, have similar massing and design elements, and are located near each another—this area has moderate intactness and unity and the visual quality in this area is moderate.

(3) I-580 Corridor Area

The I-580 Corridor Area extends along I-580 from the Hacienda Drive overcrossing to the Portola Avenue overcrossing. Views of the area are shown in Figure 3.E-2. This area is characterized by the absence of natural landforms, as the existing grades have been modified to accommodate the highway and interchange overhead roadways. The visual character of this corridor and the surrounding areas is composed predominantly of highway infrastructure with a mix of highway commercial development and undeveloped land to either side. The shoulders immediately adjacent to the freeway pavement are mostly composed of compacted gravel. The area then transitions to sound walls or chain link fencing and concrete barriers along some portions, and roads or other forms of development. The corridor also includes five highway on- and off-ramps in association with the interchanges along I-580. These areas have been altered by grading and compaction and include limited grassland vegetation. Perennial landscaping with trees and/or shrubs are also present in the interchange areas.

Along the I-580 corridor, motorists have middle-ground views of rolling hills as well as intermittent background views of Mount Diablo to the northwest and Brushy Peak to the northeast.

The visual setting along the I-580 Corridor Area is described below as it varies along the I-580 overcrossings.

(a) Hacienda Drive to Tassajara Road/Santa Rita Road

The portion of the corridor between the Hacienda Drive interchange and the Tassajara Road/Santa Rita Road interchange includes automobile dealerships, parking lots, and commercial areas, including a portion of the Hacienda Business Park. Development both north and south of the highway is typically single-story, and therefore at an elevation similar to the highway/corridor. The buildings along this segment are generally set back a distance from I-580 by large parking lots associated with the buildings. Automobile dealership and shopping center signs are the most prominent structures due to their location immediately adjacent to I-580 and their height compared to the mostly single-story commercial structures along this segment.

The visual quality along this segment is low; the automobile dealerships and commercial areas have limited characteristics of visual interest and are similar to other strip malls in the study area, as well as the broader region, therefore resulting in low vividness. While westbound commuters on I-580 have background views of the east side of the Berkeley Hills, the foreground commercial uses dominate the view.

(b) Tassajara Road/Santa Rita Road to Fallon Road/El Charro Road

The area adjacent to the I-580 corridor between the Tassajara Road/Santa Rita Road and the Fallon Road/El Charro Road interchange exhibits a generally commercial and suburban appearance because of the commercial areas, business parks, and parking lots, as described below.

- **North**. The areas immediately north of the corridor and I-580 comprise a mix of undeveloped land and commercial and residential development from one story to four stories high. A chain-link fence separates I-580 from the frontage roadways that run parallel to it. Immediately north of I-580 in the foreground are two large single-story shopping centers with surface parking areas and undeveloped land. Farther north in the foreground are three- to four-story multi-family residential complexes with the foothills in the middle-ground. In addition, Mount Diablo is mostly visible in the background despite the varying height of the buildings along the northern part of this corridor.
- **South**. The areas immediately south of the corridor and I-580 comprise a mix of older, mostly automobile-oriented commercial development and single-family residential uses from one to two stories high, and some undeveloped land. Most of these homes are protected behind soundwalls and tall trees that obscure views of homes from the freeway. At the eastern end of the corridor are commercial areas with single-story buildings, open parking lots, and tall light poles. At the southeast corner, the Stoneridge Drive Specific Plan Area (see Section 3.C, Land Use and Agricultural

Resources) has been largely built out with the Stoneridge Creek senior living community and an automobile dealership center.

The visual quality along this segment is moderately low. A continuous soundwall precludes any views to the south of I-580 and obscures views for eastbound commuters. The soundwall ends briefly before the Fallon Road/El Charro Road interchange; the views to the south along the remainder of the segment have low vividness, featuring a residential community and an automobile dealership center that have no distinguishing visual characteristics. North of I-580, the lack of development immediately adjacent to the highway allows for background views of rolling hills, which have moderate vividness. However, residential and commercial developments are visible in front of and also directly on the hills, partially obstructing these views. The angular forms of the developments also present a discordant contrast to the smooth, undulating curves of the rolling hills, therefore resulting in low intactness and unity.

(c) Fallon Road/El Charro Road to Airway Boulevard

The areas adjacent to the corridor between Fallon Road/El Charro Road and Airway Boulevard include roadways, undeveloped land, a shopping center, and portions of a golf course and a driving range. Additionally, on the south side of I-580, the corridor includes a portion of Arroyo las Positas creek, which is visible from the highway. Development along most of the highway corridor is at-grade with the highway.

- **North**. The areas immediately north of the corridor and I-580 are composed primarily of undeveloped and rural land, much of which is in unincorporated Alameda County. The undeveloped land consists of mostly flat grasslands in the foreground that transition into rolling hills farther in the background. Along the highway, overhead utility lines and poles line the frontage road. The only developed area is a casino whose green landscape contrasts with the surrounding undeveloped and rural land during the dry summer and fall seasons when the natural vegetation turns brown. Other than utility poles and highway signage, there is little to impede existing views of rolling hills to the north.
- **South**. The areas immediately south of the corridor and I-580 are composed of undeveloped land, a golf course and a driving range, and the San Francisco Premium Outlets shopping center and its associated large surface parking lots. The buildings range in height from one story to three stories and obscure views of nearly everything farther south. Farther east, the corridor transitions into undeveloped land and the Tri-Valley Golf Center, a golf driving range, which has a large safety net surrounding the premises. The Las Positas Golf Course is also south of the corridor. The golf course is lined with tall trees near the highway that restrict nearly all views to the south.

The visual quality along this segment is moderate. While views south of I-580 are low in visual quality and are dominated by commercial areas with no distinguishing characteristics, there are almost uninterrupted views of rolling hills to the north, which have moderate vividness. Similar to the Tassajara Road/Santa Rita Road to Fallon Road/El Charro Road segment, residential subdivisions present a discordant contrast with the rolling hills; however, these developments are fewer and less prominent, as they are located in a small valley between two rows of hills. Therefore, they are partially obscured from view by the hills in front of them and the setting has moderate intactness.

(4) Isabel North Area

The Isabel North Area is north of I-580 in proximity to Isabel Avenue. Views of the area are shown in Figure 3.E-3. The visual character of this area and the surrounding vicinity presents a transition from semi-rural to largely developed, with middle-ground views of low, rolling hills to the north. The site is relatively flat, but slopes up from the highway and provides views of the surrounding hills. The surrounding area is a mix of undeveloped land and new development, including the Shea Homes – Sage Project that is under construction and will be approximately two to three stories high. While there are several residential developments and business parks in the distance, they are sufficiently far from viewers on I-580 to be visually inconspicuous compared to the rolling hills in the background. Therefore, the vividness and intactness of these views is low to moderate. Overall, the visual quality of this area is moderately low despite the views of rolling hills because the visual character is dominated by views of the Isabel Avenue interchange.

(5) Isabel South Area

The Isabel South Area is south of I-580 at Isabel Avenue. Views of the area are shown in Figure 3.E-3. The Isabel South Area comprises highway infrastructure, commercial development, business parks, agriculture, or undeveloped land. Because there are multiple roads from which motorists can view the Isabel South Area, the area is described below in terms of views from each road.

- **I-580**. The view from the Isabel Avenue interchange on I-580 looking south is predominantly obscured by a row of eucalyptus trees and highway infrastructure such as on- and off-ramps. The Isabel Avenue overcrossing provides an entirely different view. While much of the southern view consists of commercial and varying urban development uses, many of the surrounding vistas are clearly visible because of the overcrossing's height above grade.

Isabel North Area

Viewpoint 5: View south from Isabel Avenue toward I-580.

Isabel South Area

Viewpoint 6: View from Isabel Avenue and Kitty Hawk Road northwest to rolling hills.

Viewpoint 7: View southwest along Airway Boulevard.

Source: Urban Advantage, 2017.

Figure 3.E-3
Visual Quality
Isabel North Area and Isabel South Area Photos

- **Kitty Hawk Road**. Visual quality as observed from Kitty Hawk Road is low. To the east, in the southwest corner of Isabel Avenue and I-580—where a construction staging area is proposed—lies undeveloped land with a mixture of grass field and gravel lot. To the south and southwest of Kitty Hawk Road are business parks, generally one story high, that block access to most scenic views.
- **North of East Airway Boulevard**. The area to the north of East Airway Boulevard and to the south of I-580 is proposed to host the Isabel Station parking garage. The western portion of this area (near Isabel Avenue) is currently a BART park-and-ride lot with adjacent BART-owned agricultural land. This portion of East Airway Boulevard provides few scenic views while looking north, as most of the views are blocked by large eucalyptus trees that line Arroyo las Positas Creek between the site and the southern lanes of I-580.
- **South of East Airway Boulevard**. The area to the south of East Airway Boulevard consists of a single-story business park with a modern architectural style and agricultural land (G&M Farms) to the east with paved areas near the street. G&M Farms is also known as the Gandolfo Ranch Historic District and is further described in Section 3.F, Cultural Resources. The business park obstructs scenic vistas to the south.

The area has moderate vividness due to the presence of a few features of visual interest, including an agricultural field on BART property just northeast of the park-and-ride lot, and a prominent cluster of trees that includes eucalyptus and oaks along Las Positas Creek. However, the overall visual quality is moderately low in the area because there is a mix of disparate visual elements and it lacks a consistent visual theme, therefore resulting in low unity.

(6) Cayetano Creek Area

The Cayetano Creek Area is approximately bounded by I-580 on the south, Portola Avenue on the southwest, and North Livermore Avenue on the east. It extends north past Hartman Road. Views of the area can be seen from I-580, North Livermore Avenue, and Hartman Road, as shown in Figure 3.E-4. The area and vicinity primarily consists of open, undeveloped land. The terrain has varying degrees of height and topography that can provide either excellent or highly obstructed views of the surrounding landscapes. Scenic views of the surrounding rolling hills are to the north and Altamont Pass to the east.

Cayetano Creek Area

Viewpoint 8: View north from westbound I-580.

Viewpoint 9: View west from North Livermore Avenue.

Viewpoint 10: View southwest along Hartman Road from North Livermore Avenue.

Source: Urban Advantage, 2017; Urban Planning Partners, 2016, 2017.

Figure 3.E-4
Visual Quality
Cayetano Creek Area Photos

Visual quality in this area is high due to the high intactness of the landscape. As viewed from I-580, the rolling hills are entirely undeveloped and feature no contrasting elements, providing a strong sense of an agricultural, grazing setting with high vividness. As viewed from North Livermore Avenue, the landscape is low-intensity agricultural/rural with a few isolated farm buildings punctuating an otherwise unbroken expanse of gently undulating grassland. Compared to the views from I-580, the terrain viewed from North Livermore Avenue has flatter, less prominent curves and a few man-made visual elements such as farm buildings.

(7) Laughlin Road Area

The Laughlin Road Area is north of I-580, bounded by Northfront Road to the south and Laughlin Road to the east. Views of the area are shown in Figure 3.E-5. Brushy Peak Regional Preserve, an East Bay Regional Park District property, is located just north; the nearest trailhead is approximately 0.65 mile north of the proposed Laughlin Road parking lot location.

The current site consists of a small midget car race track and undeveloped land surrounding it to the north and west, a storage yard directly to the east, and I-580 to the south. The streets near the site are lined with various trees, shrubbery, and electrical poles. Looking north provides views of single-family residential neighborhoods and rolling hills with wind turbines on the ridgeline. Looking south, the primary views are of I-580 and various highway infrastructure elements, with business parks just beyond the freeway; scenic views are largely obscured by these features. Views to the west are primarily of undeveloped land, surrounding vegetation, and rolling hills in the distance. Looking to the east from the corner of Laughlin Road and Northfront Road, there are views of the storage yard and associated building, with I-580 just beyond in the foreground, and the Altamont Pass in the middle-ground.

The visual quality in this area is moderate. While there are no elements of particular visual interest and vividness is therefore low to moderate, the landscape has a high degree of unity and maintains a strong agricultural character. In addition, there is a visually prominent view of Brushy Peak to the north.

d. Sensitive Viewers

The project corridor extends primarily along I-580 through predominantly developed areas. Sensitive viewers that may be affected by the Proposed Project and Build Alternatives include people at the following public parks, trails, and open space areas within the study area and beyond from which views of or through the study area exist:

- Dublin Sports Grounds, which has multiple sports fields at 6700 Dublin Boulevard in Dublin

Laughlin Road Area

Viewpoint 11: View south from Laughlin Road.

Viewpoint 12: View northwest from Northpoint Road.

Source: Urban Advantage, 2017; Urban Planning Partners, 2016, 2017.

Figure 3.E-5
Visual Quality
Laughlin Road Area Photos

- Iron Horse Trail, a multi-use trail between the cities of Concord and Pleasanton that extends under the Dublin/Pleasanton BART Station (Dublin/Pleasanton Station) in Dublin and Pleasanton
- Las Positas Municipal Golf Course, a public golf course immediately south of I-580 near Airway Boulevard in Livermore
- Las Positas College recreational facilities at 3000 Campus Hill Drive in Livermore
- Cayetano Park at 698 Portola Avenue in Livermore (Portola Avenue at Campus Hill Drive
- Vista Meadows Park, a hilly park at 2450 Westminster Way in Livermore
- Brushy Peak Regional Preserve, an East Bay Regional Park District property immediately east of Laughlin Road, whose southern boundary is approximately 0.5 mile north of I-580

Oher parks within the study area or in close proximity to the study area are listed below. There would be no views of the Proposed Project and Build Alternatives from any of the below parks due to the location of the parks as well as intervening land uses, roadways, and vegetation. For the purpose of this EIR, viewers at these parks are not considered sensitive viewers.

Dublin:

- Owens Plaza Park at 5700 Owens Drive
- Emerald Glen Park at 4201 Central Parkway

Pleasanton:

- Fairlands Park at 4100 Churchill Drive
- Meadows Park at 3301 West Las Positas Boulevard
- Stoneridge Creek Park at 3300 Stoneridge Creek Way

Livermore:

- Henry Park at 1525 Mendocino Road
- Livermore Downs Park at 2101 Paseo Laguna Seco
- Lester J Knott Park at 655 North Mines Road
- Ralph T. Wattenburger Park at 1515 Honeysuckle Road
- Springtown Open Space at 1020-1030 Bluebell Drive
- Summit Park at 6329 Tioga Pass Court
- Northfront Park at 6379 Almaden Way

3. Regulatory Framework

This subsection describes the State of California (State) and local environmental laws and policies relevant to visual quality. Additionally, scenic resources and vistas as well as roadways with a scenic designation resulting from State or local regulations are identified.

a. State Regulations

(1) State Scenic Highways

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) designates State scenic highways. To be designated, highways must meet various criteria established in a visual assessment conducted and reviewed during the scenic highway's nomination process. Such a visual assessment includes an evaluation of the corridor's visual quality in terms of vividness, intactness, and unity. The four criteria used to determine whether a highway may be designated as scenic are as follows:

- The State or county highway consists of a scenic corridor composed of a memorable landscape that showcases the natural scenic beauty or agriculture of California.
- Its existing visual intrusions do not significantly impact the scenic corridor.
- It demonstrates strong local support for the proposed scenic highway designation.
- The length of the proposed scenic highway is not less than a mile and is not segmented.

Visual intrusions are evaluated in the following manner:

- The more pristine the natural landscape is and less affected by intrusions, the more likely the nominated highway will qualify as scenic.
- Where intrusions have occurred, the less impact they have on an area's natural beauty, the more likely the nominated highway will qualify as scenic.
- The extent to which intrusions dominate views from the highway will determine the significance of their impact on the scenic corridor.

Once the scenic highway designation is granted, a wide range of protections apply to the designated corridor, including a prohibition on off-premise advertising displays (colloquially known as billboards).[2]

[2] California Department of Transportation, 2008a. Landscape Architecture Program. Scenic Highway Guidelines. October. Available at: http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/LandArch/16_livability/scenic_highways/guidelines/scenic_hwy_guidelines_04-12-2012.pdf.

Within the study area, I-580 is eligible to be designated as a State scenic highway, although it is not officially designated.[3] However, according to California Streets and Highways Code Section 263, highways identified by the statute as eligible for scenic designation are considered to be part of the State Scenic Highway System together with the officially designated scenic highways. Therefore, this analysis conservatively assumes that I-580 is a scenic resource. No other roadways within the study area are considered scenic highways.

(2) Landscaped Freeways

Caltrans also designates landscaped freeways. A classified landscaped freeway is a section of freeway with planted ornamental vegetation (i.e., lawns, trees, shrubs, flowers, or other plantings) designed primarily to improve the aesthetic appearance of the highway. To qualify for classification, a planting must be within Caltrans right-of-way, be continuous with no gaps greater than 200 feet, and at least 1,000 feet long. Landscaping may be planted immediately adjacent to the freeway or behind a sound wall.

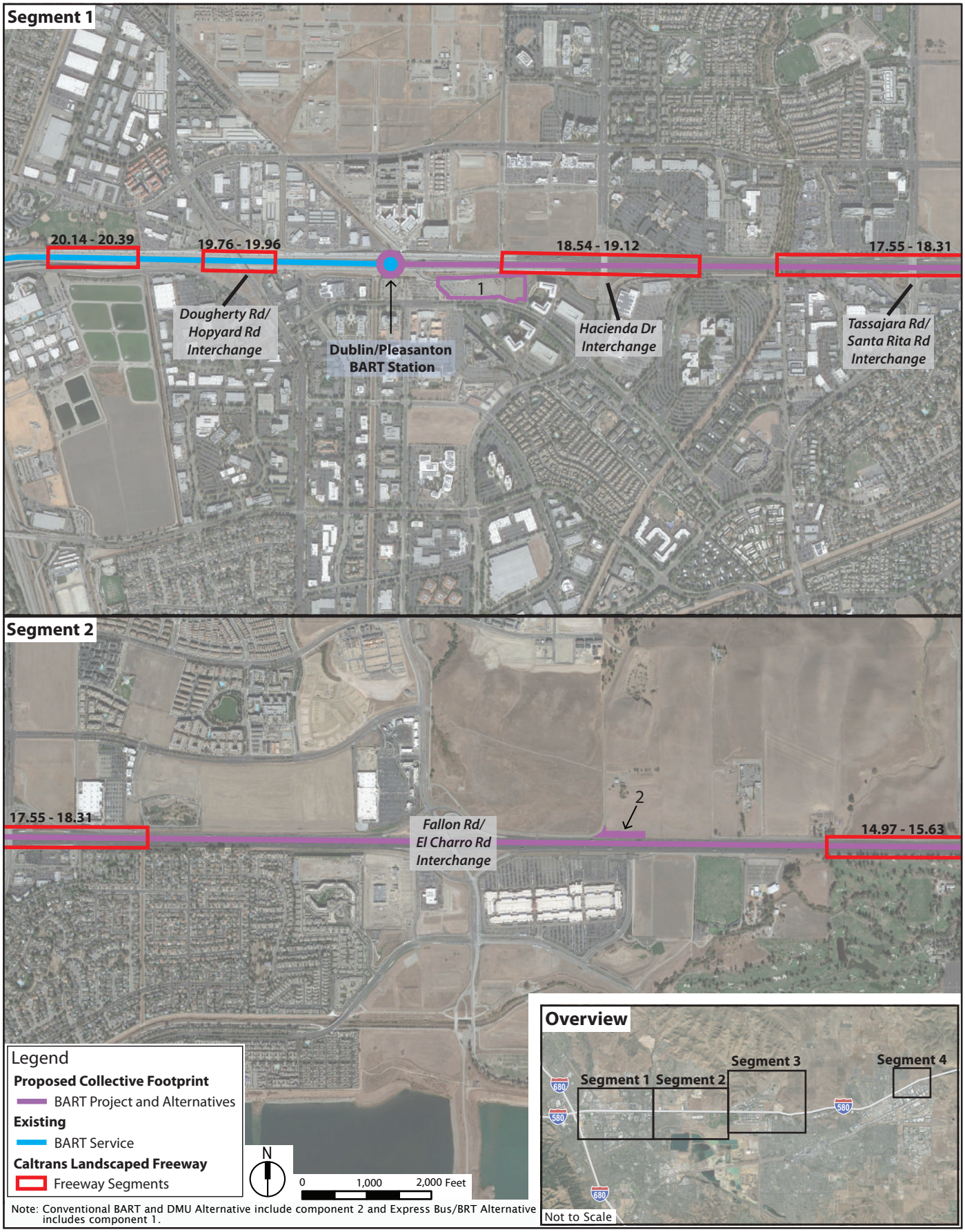
Off-site advertising within 660 feet of the Caltrans right-of-way that can be viewed primarily by persons traveling on the main-traveled way of the freeway is subject to Caltrans regulations through a permit process. Caltrans prohibits advertising displays adjacent to designated landscaped freeways. The removal of ornamental plantings, such as for freeway widening projects, can lead to the loss of a landscaped freeway designation along the portion of a freeway, and thereby allow for off-site advertising displays.[4]

The following portions of I-580 within the project corridor are designated as landscaped freeway segments, as shown in Figures 3.E-6a and 3.E-6b:

- Postmile 20.14 to 20.39 (partially within project corridor): adjacent to Dublin Sports Grounds
- Postmile 19.76 to 19.96: from just west of Dougherty Road/I-580 interchange to Dougherty Road
- Postmile 18.54 to 19.12: from Arnold Road to the eastern edge of the Regal Cinemas Complex (east of Hacienda Drive)
- Postmile 17.55 to 18.31: from the I-580 overcrossing of Tassajara Creek to the eastern edge of Grafton Plaza, east of Tassajara Road/Santa Rita Road

[3] California Department of Transportation, 2017. List of Eligible and Officially Designated State Scenic Highways. Excel Spreadsheet. Accessed February 10. Available at: http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/LandArch/16_livability/scenic_highways/.

[4] California Department of Transportation, 2008b. Landscape Architecture Program. Landscaped Freeways and Outdoor Advertising Displays. Available at: http://www.dot.ca.gov/design/lap/livability/docs/class-ls-fwy-and-outdoor-advertising-displays.pdf.

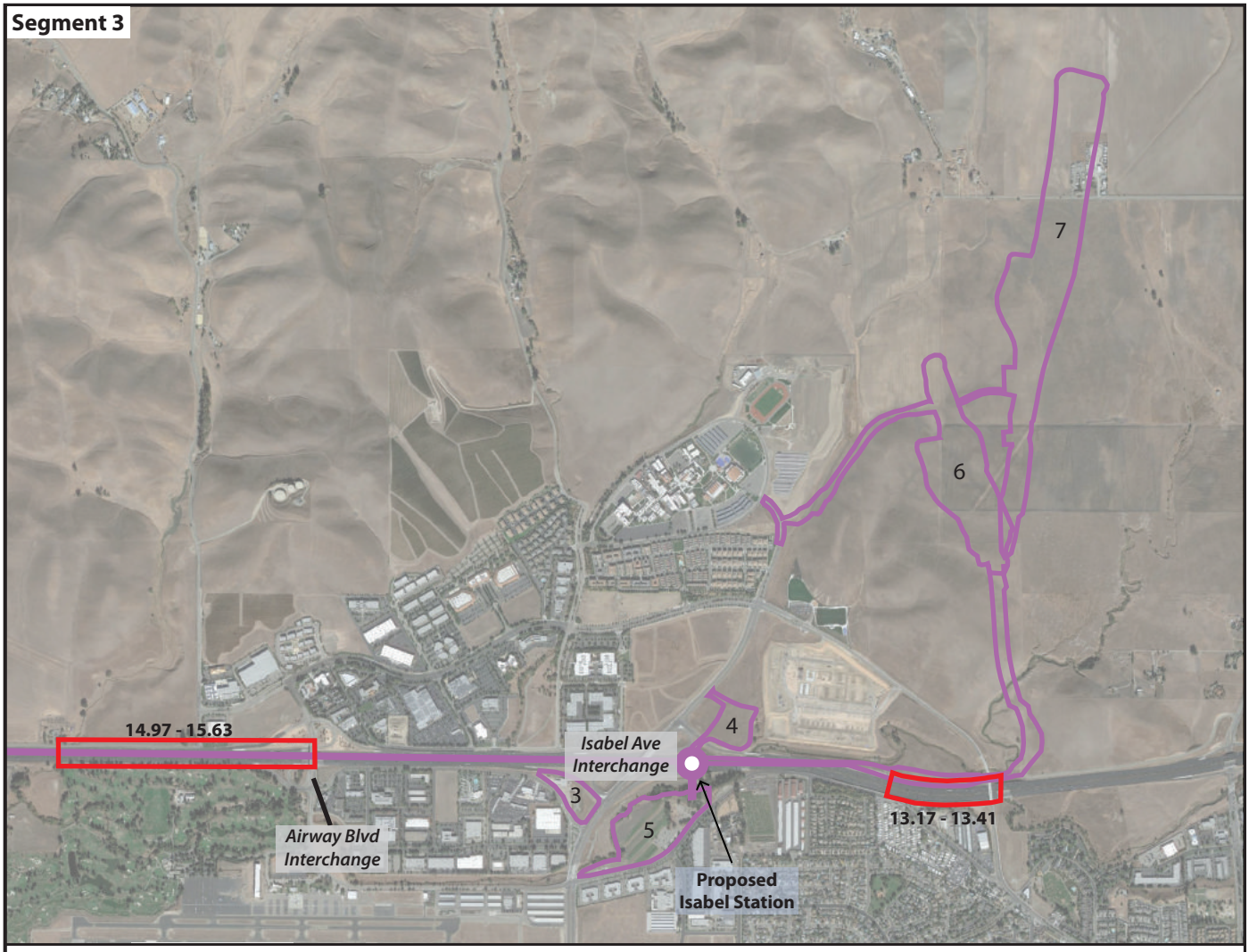


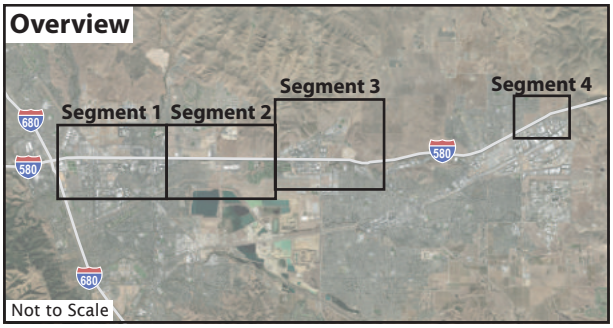
Note: Conventional BART and DMU Alternative include component 2 and Express Bus/BRT Alternative includes component 1.

Source: Arup, 2017; Google Earth, 2016.

BART to Livermore Extension Project EIR

Figure 3.E-6a
Visual Quality
Caltrans Landscaped Freeway Segments





N

0 1,000 2,000 Feet

Note: Conventional BART includes components 3, 4, 5, and 7; DMU Alternative includes component 3, 4, 5, and 6; and Express Bus/BRT Alternative includes component 8.

Legend
Proposed Collective Footprint
BART Project and Alternatives
Caltrans Landscaped Freeway
Freeway Segments

Source: Arup, 2017; Google Earth, 2016.

BART to Livermore Extension Project EIR

Figure 3.E-6b
Visual Quality
Caltrans Landscaped Freeway Segments

- Postmile 14.97 to 15.63: from about the western edge of Las Positas Golf Course to Airway Boulevard
- Postmile 13.17 to 13.41: from west of Portola Avenue overcrossing to Portola Avenue overcrossing

b. Local Regulations

Local policies are described below and identify the significant views and scenic resources in the study area.

(1) Alameda County

The Scenic Route Element of the Alameda County General Plan, adopted in 1966 (as amended in 1994), identifies the entirety of I-580 as a county Scenic Freeway.[5] The County's East County Area Plan includes a goal to preserve and enhance views within scenic corridors through managing development and conservation of the land within East County scenic highway corridors.[6]

(2) City of Dublin

Policies in the City of Dublin's General Plan Land Use and Circulation: Parks and Open Space Element are intended to minimize potential impacts to visual resources, including policies to restrict structures on the hillsides, which are a defining characteristic of Dublin's appearance. Creeks, such as Tassajara Creek, are encouraged to be preserved for their natural resource value. The Land Use and Circulation: Circulation and Scenic Highways Element also includes policies for protecting I-580 and other scenic routes.[7]

(3) City of Pleasanton

Although the Pleasanton General Plan 2005–2025 does not identify any scenic views or routes in the study area, the Conservation and Open Space Element includes Policy 8, which aims to "preserve as permanent open space all areas of outstanding scenic qualities or areas which provide extraordinary views of natural and human-made objects" and Program 8.2, "Retain the scenic attributes of existing (I-680) and proposed scenic highways (I-580 and State Route 84), including views of woodlands, hills and ridges, valleys, and grazing lands."[8]

[5] County of Alameda, 1966. Scenic Route Element of the General Plan. Amended May 5, 1994.
[6] County of Alameda, 1994. East County Area Plan.
[7] City of Dublin, 1985. Dublin General Plan, Land Use and Circulation: Circulation and Scenic Highways Element. February 11. Amended October 6, 2015.
[8] City of Pleasanton, 2009a. Pleasanton General Plan 2005–2025, Open Space and Conservation Element. July.

The General Plan's Community Character Element also has the following policies relevant to aesthetics: "Policy 9: Enhance landscaping along city streets and the freeways," and "Policy 20: Preserve scenic hillside and ridge views, and other natural features in the hills."[9] Finally, the Land Use Element contains Policy 21, intended to preserve scenic hillsides at the edges of the city, as well as to preserve scenic hillside and ridge views, including the Pleasanton ridgeline and Southeast Hills.[10]

(4) City of Livermore

Livermore's local policies related to visual quality are found in the Community Character Element of the City of Livermore General Plan.[11] The Community Character Element sets goals, objectives, policies, and actions for the preservation of the city's scenic corridors, open spaces, and built environment. The policies are intended to protect views of the hills and ridgelines that surround the city, creeks, and arroyos and, in general, the rural character and natural setting that exists in many parts of Livermore. In addition, relevant policies are also found in the Land Use Element of the City of Livermore General Plan.

(a) Community Character Element

Policies

These goals and policies include the following:

- Objective CC-1.3: Minimize obtrusive glare and wasted energy from excessive nighttime lighting and preserve views of the nighttime sky.
    - Policy 1: The importance of views of the nighttime sky unimpaired by inappropriate intensities of light and glare shall be acknowledged as a significant scenic resource in Livermore.
- Goal CC-4: Protect and enhance public views within and from established scenic routes, including views of arroyos.
    - Objective CC-4.1: Protect public views from scenic routes and corridors.
        - Policy 1. Development shall not be allowed to obscure, detract from, or negatively affect the quality of the views from designated scenic routes.
        - Policy 2. The City shall maintain in open space that portion of the hills which is seen from the freeway and which is within the I-580 Scenic Corridor… Any

[9] City of Pleasanton, 2009b. Pleasanton General Plan 2005–2025, Community Character Element. July.
[10] City of Pleasanton, 2009c. Pleasanton General Plan 2005–2025, Land Use Element. July.
[11] City of Livermore, 2004. General Plan Community Character Element. February. Amended 2009.

development within the I-580 Scenic Corridor is subject to the policies set forth under Goal CC-4 and the conditions set forth in Section C, I-580 Scenic Corridor Implementation.

  - Policy 3. The City shall permit no development to wholly obstruct or significantly detract from views of any scenic area as viewed from a scenic route.

- Objective CC-4.6: Use landscaping to increase the scenic qualities of scenic routes.
- Policy 1. Landscaping should be designed and maintained in scenic route corridors to provide added visual interest, to frame scenic views, and to screen unsightly views.
- Objective CC-4.14: Control removal of vegetation in scenic routes.
- Policy 1. Except for agricultural crops, no vegetation should be removed without permission of the local jurisdiction, as a means of preserving scenic quality.

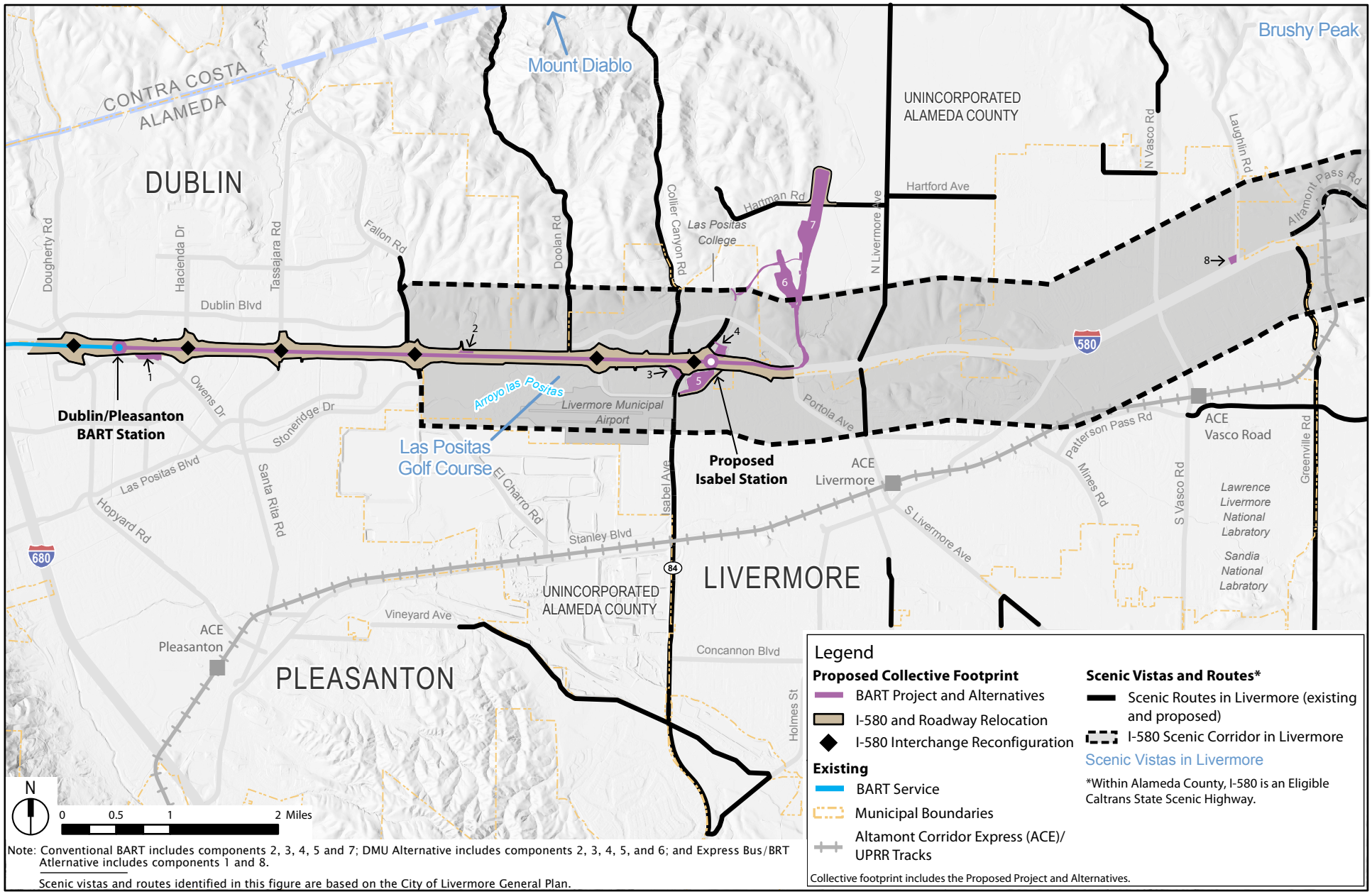
Scenic Routes and Vistas

The Community Character Element of the General Plan identifies several scenic routes and designated scenic vistas, as shown in Figure 3.E-7. It also identifies exemptions to the policies and regulations, noting that "public works projects and facilities of public necessity" may be exempt from regulations contained in the Scenic Route Goals, Objectives, Policies, and Actions of the General Plan.[12]

The following scenic vistas designated by the Livermore General Plan are in the study area:

- Mid-range views of rolling hills from I-580
- The view of Mount Diablo, a regional landmark and visual frame of reference for drivers along the highways in the county, to the northwest of the project corridor
- The view of Brushy Peak, a smaller mountain that can be seen to the northeast of the project corridor
- The view across I-580 facing south across and into Las Positas Golf Course, just west of Doolan Road

[12] Ibid.



Note: Conventional BART includes components 2, 3, 4, 5 and 7; DMU Alternative includes components 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6; and Express Bus/BRT Alternative includes components 1 and 8.

Scenic vistas and routes identified in this figure are based on the City of Livermore General Plan.

Source: Arup, 2017; ESRI/USGS, 2016; City of Livermore, 2004.

Figure 3.E-7
Visual Quality
Scenic Vistas and Routes in Project Vicinity

Scenic routes are identified as important elements that contribute to the overall visual quality in Livermore. The Livermore General Plan identifies a number of roadways that are considered scenic routes, designated as such because they either pass through or provide access to important scenic, recreational, cultural, or historic points. The Livermore General Plan identifies the area within 3,500 feet on each side of the I-580 freeway centerline that is visible from the freeway as a scenic corridor, which features the low rounded knolls separating the city from the rest of the valley.[13] The Community Character Element sets goals, objectives, policies, and actions to protect the I-580 scenic corridor, as described below. Policies and actions in the Community Character Element specifically seek to preserve and protect scenic views within the I-580 scenic corridor through control of grading, landscaping, and building height.

The following scenic routes identified in the Livermore General Plan are within or immediately adjacent to the study area: Fallon Road, Doolan Road, Isabel Avenue, Collier Canyon Road, North Livermore Avenue, Hartman Road, Hartford Avenue, and Altamont Pass Road.

The Livermore General Plan also identifies scenic waterways in the area, primarily arroyos, which are gulches or empty creek beds that seasonally fill with water. The General Plan encourages public views of arroyos to be protected and enhanced. Arroyo las Positas flows roughly parallel to I-580, primarily from east of Portola Avenue to Fallon Road. The General Plan recommends that future development maintain Arroyo las Positas in its natural form with minimum alterations.[14]

View Angles

The Community Character Element divides the I-580 scenic corridor into six subareas and identifies policies and development standards for each subarea that reflect that subarea's unique visual resources. These policies and standards are intended to preserve views from I-580 toward ridgelines and hillsides. The primary standards used for this purpose are view angles, which are established as plane lines at elevations determined appropriate for maintaining views. Maximum building heights of development cannot exceed the boundaries of the view angle envelope created by using the specified view angles. Development is exempt from view angle restrictions on the north side of I-580 within a 1,000-foot radius of the Isabel Avenue/I-580 interchange.[15]

[13] Ibid.
[14] Ibid.
[15] Ibid.

(b) Land Use Element Policies

The City of Livermore's General Plan Land Use Element also contains goals that seek to protect aesthetically sensitive areas, including its residential neighborhoods, vineyards, ranches, natural habitats, and open space. The Land Use Element also seeks to ensure that development in North Livermore will minimize potential visual impacts.[16]

- Goal LU-7: Ensure that alterations to existing topography are minimized.
  - Objective LU-7.1: To allow development that does not create impacts to the existing topography in North Livermore
  - Policy 1. Consistent with the other provisions of LU-6.1.P1 through P4; alteration of topography by grading, excavating, filling or any development activity shall be minimized. Where feasible, access roads shall be located, including by consolidation, where they are least visible from public places.

4. Impacts and Mitigation Measures

This subsection lists the standards of significance used to assess impacts, discusses the methodology used in the analysis, summarizes the impacts, and then provides an in-depth analysis of the impacts with mitigation measures identified as appropriate.

a. Standards of Significance

For the purposes of this EIR, impacts related to visual quality are considered significant if the Proposed Project or one of the Alternatives would result in any of the following:

- Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings
- Have 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
- Create a new source of substantial light or glare that would adversely affect daytime or nighttime views in the area

b. Impact Methodology

The methodology used to evaluate the significance of visual resource impacts is described below, as well as under the respective impact analysis where applicable. The Electrical Multiple Unit (EMU) Option would result in the same impacts as the Diesel Multiple Unit

[16] City of Livermore, 2009. City of Livermore General Plan: 2003-2025, Land Use Element.

(DMU) Alternative; therefore, the analysis and conclusions for the DMU Alternative also apply to the EMU Option, except where specifically noted in the analysis below. In these cases, the impacts associated with the EMU Option are described immediately following the analysis of the DMU Alternative.

The analysis of the Enhanced Bus Alternative, which addresses the potential impacts of construction of the bus infrastructure improvements and operation of the bus routes at a programmatic level, would also apply to the bus improvements and feeder bus service under the Proposed Project and other Build Alternatives. Therefore, the analyses and conclusions for the Enhanced Bus Alternative also apply to the Proposed Project, DMU Alternative, and Express Bus/BRT Alternative, and are not repeated in the analysis of the Proposed Project and other Build Alternatives.

A field investigation was conducted to inventory the existing visual setting within the project corridor. Specific attention was given to key visual resources, including hills, valleys, landmarks, and designated scenic travel routes. Key visual resources for each segment were identified and are described in the Existing Conditions subsection above.

Representative photos were taken at selected vantage points. The vantage points were chosen to show the visual impacts of major project components from the perspective of representative viewer groups. Due to the largely automobile-dominated nature of the project corridor, viewer groups generally consist of drivers along I-580 as well as adjacent roads, such as El Charro Road, Isabel Avenue, Kitty Hawk Road, East Airport Boulevard, and North Livermore Avenue.

Photo-simulations were generated by assembling the photographs in Adobe® Photoshop® software and incorporating 3D models or project designs from AutoCAD for the project elements, including Conventional BART, DMU, and EMU vehicles; wayside facilities; Isabel Station; tail tracks and storage and maintenance facility; and the transfer platforms for the DMU Alternative and Express Bus/Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Alternative at the existing Dublin/Pleasanton Station.[17] To accurately scale the 3D models in the photographs of existing conditions, horizontal dimensions were obtained in Google Earth and vertical dimensions were obtained from engineering drawings as well as by using vertical measuring poles wherever possible. The photo-simulations were used as a means to compare and contrast visual quality under existing conditions and with the implementation of the Proposed Project or any of the Build Alternatives. The standards of significance listed above were then applied to assess potential impacts to visual quality.

[17] The designs shown in the photo-simulations are conceptual and preliminary. The final design of project components would be developed after the completion of the project approvals process.

c. Summary of Impacts

Table 3.E-1 below summarizes the impacts of the Proposed Project and Alternatives described in the analysis below.

TABLE 3.E-1 SUMMARY OF VISUAL QUALITY IMPACTS

	Significance Determinations[a]				
Impacts	**No Project Alternative**	**Conventional BART Project[b]**	**DMU Alternative (with EMU Option)[b]**	**Express Bus/BRT Alternative[b]**	**Enhanced Bus Alternative**
Construction					
Project Analysis					
Impact VQ-1: Substantially degrade the existing visual quality or create a new source of substantial light or glare during construction	NI	LSM	LSM	LSM	LS
Cumulative Analysis					
Impact VQ-2(CU): Substantially degrade the existing visual quality or create a new source of substantial light or glare during construction under Cumulative Conditions	NI	LS	LS	LS	LS
Operational					
Project Analysis					
Impact VQ-3: Substantially degrade the existing visual quality	NI	SU	SU	LS	NI
Impact VQ-4: Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista	NI	SU	SU	LS	NI
Impact VQ-5: Substantially damage scenic resources within State scenic highway	NI	SU	SU	SU	NI
Impact VQ-6: Create a new source of substantial light or glare	NI	SU	SU	LSM	NI

TABLE 3.E-1 SUMMARY OF VISUAL QUALITY IMPACTS

Impacts	Significance Determinations[a]				
	No Project Alternative	Conventional BART Project[b]	DMU Alternative (with EMU Option)[b]	Express Bus/BRT Alternative[b]	Enhanced Bus Alternative
Cumulative Analysis					
Impact VQ-7(CU): Have a substantial visual impact under Cumulative Conditions	NI	SU	SU	SU	NI

Notes: NI=No impact; LS=Less-than-Significant impact, no mitigation required; LSM=Less-than-Significant impact with mitigation; SU=Significant and unavoidable, even with mitigation or no feasible mitigation available.
DMU = diesel multiple unit; EMU = electrical multiple unit; BRT = bus rapid transit.
[a] All significance determinations listed in the table assume incorporation of applicable mitigation measures.
[b] The analysis of the Enhanced Bus Alternative also applies to the feeder bus service and bus improvements under the Proposed Project, DMU Alternative, and Express Bus/BRT Alternative, as described in the Impact Methodology subsection above.

d. Environmental Analysis

Impacts related to project construction are described below, followed by operations-related impacts.

(1) Construction Impacts

Potential impacts related to construction are described below, followed by cumulative construction impacts. Visual character, visual quality, and scenic vistas and highways are referred to collectively as visual resources below.

Construction impacts to visual resources and light or glare described below would be temporary and would cease to occur at the conclusion of construction.

(a) Construction – Project Analysis

Impact VQ-1: Substantially degrade the existing visual resources or create a new source of substantial light or glare that would significantly impact daytime or nighttime views in the area during construction.

(No Project Alternative: NI; Conventional BART Project: LSM; DMU Alternative: LSM; Express Bus/BRT Alternative: LSM; Enhanced Bus Alternative: LS)

No Project Alternative. Under the No Project Alternative, the BART to Livermore Extension Project would not be implemented and there would be no physical changes in the environment associated with construction of the Proposed Project or any of the Build Alternatives. However, planned and programmed transportation improvements for segments of I-580, local roadways and intersections, and core transit service improvements for BART, Altamont Corridor Express, and the Livermore Amador Valley Transit Authority would be constructed. In addition, population and employment increases throughout Alameda County would result in continued land use development, including construction of both residential and commercial uses along the project corridor. The construction effects of the other projects associated with the No Project Alternative have been or will be addressed in environmental documents prepared for those projects before they are implemented. The No Project Alternative would not result in new impacts as a consequence of BART Board of Directors' decision not to adopt a project. Therefore, the No Project Alternative is considered to have no impact to light and glare during construction. **(NI)**

Conventional BART Project, DMU Alternative, and Express Bus/BRT Alternative. Construction of the Proposed Project, DMU Alternative, and Express Bus/BRT Alternative would introduce views of construction equipment and crews, unfinished structures, and construction-related and safety signs along the project corridor. Project construction equipment, activities, and staging areas are described in Chapter 2, Project Description. Staging areas would typically have security lighting and fencing enclosing temporary construction offices, stored materials, and equipment. In addition, some activities associated with relocation of I-580 would typically occur at night (10:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m.) and would likely require illumination.

Because of the changes to current site conditions and new temporary sources of light during construction periods, and the presence of nearby commercial and residential uses, construction activities are considered a potentially significant visual impact. These activities would occur adjacent to I-580, which is an eligible State scenic highway, and could be seen by drivers and passengers along scenic routes designated by the City of Livermore. These scenic routes include Fallon Road, Doolan Road, Isabel Avenue, Collier Canyon Road, North Livermore Avenue, Hartman Road, Hartford Avenue, and Altamont Pass Road.

Construction impacts pertaining to visual resources and creating new sources of light and glare, although significant, would be localized and short-term, lasting intermittently during the actual phased periods of construction at specific locations within the project corridor construction areas. These impacts would be reduced to a less-than-significant level with implementation of **Mitigation Measure VQ-1.A**, which requires visual screening of staging areas, and **Mitigation Measure VQ-1.B**, which requires construction lighting to be directed downward. **(LSM)**

Enhanced Bus Alternative. Construction of the Enhanced Bus Alternative would occur over a short period (2 months) and would be limited to minor infrastructure improvements such as bus shelters and bulb-outs. Therefore, construction-related visual resources and lighting impacts under the Enhanced Bus Alternative would be less than significant, and no mitigation measures are required. **(LS)**

Mitigation Measures. Potentially significant construction-related visual resources and lighting impacts under the Proposed Project, DMU Alternative, and Express Bus/BRT Alternative would be reduced with implementation of the following mitigation measures. **Mitigation Measure VQ-1.A** requires staging areas to be visually screened and **Mitigation Measure VQ-1.B** requires construction lighting to be directed downward. With implementation of these mitigation measures, impacts would be reduced to a less-than-significant level.

As described above, the Enhanced Bus Alternative would not have significant impacts, and no mitigation measures are required for this alternative.

Mitigation Measure VQ-1.A: Visually Screen Staging Areas (Conventional BART Project, DMU Alternative/EMU Option, and Express Bus/BRT Alternative)

Views of stockpiled and stored construction materials and equipment shall be minimized to the extent practicable. Any staging areas located adjacent to residential, recreational, or other sensitive viewers shall be screened using appropriate solid screening materials such as temporary fencing or walls. Any graffiti or visual defacement of temporary fencing and walls shall be painted over or removed within 5 business days.

Mitigation Measure VQ-1.B: Minimize Light Spillover During Construction (Conventional BART Project, DMU Alternative/EMU Option, and Express Bus/BRT Alternative)

Where construction lighting will be required during nighttime construction, the contractor shall be required to shield such lighting and direct it downward in such a manner that the light source is not intrusive off site, and so that the light does not fall outside the boundaries of the project site to avoid light spillage off site.

(b) Construction – Cumulative Analysis

Impact VQ-2(CU): Substantially degrade the existing visual resources or create a new source of substantial light or glare during construction under Cumulative Conditions.

The geographic study area for the cumulative visual quality construction analysis is the same as that identified in the Introduction subsection above.

(No Project Alternative: NI; Conventional BART Project: LS; DMU Alternative: LS; Express Bus/BRT Alternative: LS; Enhanced Bus Alternative: LS)

No Project Alternative. As described in **Impact VQ-1**, the No Project Alternative would have no impacts related to visual resources or creating a new source of substantial light or glare during construction. Therefore, the No Project Alternative would not contribute to cumulative impacts. **(NI)**

Conventional BART Project and Build Alternatives. Cumulative construction impacts related to visual resources could result if construction of future projects located in close proximity to the project corridor occurs at the same time as construction of the Proposed Project and Build Alternatives. Many of the projects that could be under construction at the same time as the Proposed Project and Build Alternatives would not be close enough to have visual impacts that could combine, and intervening topography, trees, buildings and other structures could obscure the combined views.

However, construction or a portion of the construction associated with the following future projects and plans may occur at the same time as the Proposed Project and Build Alternatives and would be in close proximity to the Proposed Project and Build Alternatives. These future projects and plan areas are located in the study area from west to east, as follows: the IKEA Retail Center/Project Clover is located in the Dublin/Pleasanton Station Area; the Kaiser Dublin Medical Center is located along the I-580 Corridor Area between Tassajara Road/Santa Rita Road and Fallon Road/El Charro Road; the Crosswinds Site is located along the I-580 Corridor Area between Fallon Road/El Charro Road and Airway Boulevard; the Hyatt Hotel is located east of Airway Boulevard; the Isabel Neighborhood Plan is located at the Isabel North and South Areas; and the Las Positas College is located at the Cayetano Creek Area. The Isabel Neighborhood Plan is not expected to generate a substantial amount of construction activity until after the conclusion of construction associated with the Proposed Project and Build Alternatives.

Although the duration of the construction of these projects would overlap with construction of the Proposed Project and Build Alternatives, these projects would be at different locations from each other and would be unlikely to be visible concurrently from any single viewpoint. As described in Chapter 2, Project Description, construction of the Proposed Project and Build Alternatives would occur in phases at various locations along the project corridor, which would decrease the duration of construction at any particular segment of the project corridor. For example, relocation of I-580 is anticipated to occur over approximately 24 months and construction of the Isabel Station and associated facilities would occur over approximately 30 months. Within these areas, sensitive viewers would be people at the Iron Horse Trail, Las Positas College recreational facilities, and Cayetano Park. Due to the distance from the sensitive viewers and the limited duration of construction, the combined visual impacts of the probable future projects and the

Proposed Project and Build Alternatives at these locations would not significantly impact the existing visual resources or create a new source of substantial light or glare.

Therefore, the probable future projects combined with the Proposed Project or an Alternative would not result in significant cumulative construction-related visual resource or light and glare impacts and no additional mitigation measures are required. **(LS)**

Mitigation Measures. As described above, the Proposed Project and Build Alternatives, in combination with probable future projects, would not result in significant cumulative construction-related visual impacts, and no mitigation measures are required.

(2) Operational Impacts

Potential impacts related to project operations are described below, followed by cumulative operations impacts.

(a) Operations – Project Analysis

Impact VQ-3: Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings.

(No Project Alternative: NI; Conventional BART Project: SU; DMU Alternative: SU; EMU Option: SU; Express Bus/BRT Alternative: LS; Enhanced Bus Alternative: NI)

The existing character and quality of the landscape is described in the Local Setting subsection above. Generally, the visual character is defined by the built environment with mixed forms/types of urban development along the project corridor, with greater intensity and diversity of form at the western edge of the study area in the Dublin/Pleasanton Station Area. Along this area, distant views of undeveloped hills and ridgelines are visible. Toward the eastern edge of the study area, the Cayetano Creek Area and Laughlin Road Area, the visual character is defined predominantly by the natural environment, with open space and immediate views of undeveloped hills and ridgelines. Visual quality is generally low to moderate at the western end of the study area and moderate to high at the eastern end.

As described in the Sensitive Viewers subsection above, sensitive viewers are viewers from pedestrian and bicycle trails, parks and other publicly accessible open spaces, as well as drivers traveling on a roadway that is a designated scenic highway, scenic route, or has a designated public scenic viewpoint. Parks, trails, and public open space from which there are views of the project site include the Iron Horse Trail, Las Positas Municipal Golf Course, Las Positas College recreational facilities, Cayetano Park, Vista Meadows Park, and Brushy Peak Regional Preserve. Scenic highways or routes include I-580, Fallon Road,

Doolan Road, Isabel Avenue, Collier Canyon Road, North Livermore Avenue, Hartman Road, Hartford Avenue, and Altamont Pass Road.

The Proposed Project and Build Alternatives would result in the construction of new transportation-related facilities and infrastructure. Depending on whether the Proposed Project or one of the Build Alternatives is ultimately selected to be constructed, components could include the following improvements: new station at Isabel Avenue/I-580, pedestrian overcrossings above I-580, and pedestrian touchdown structures; DMU/bus transfer platforms; rail tracks; surface parking lots and parking garage; storage tracks, wayside facilities, and storage and maintenance facility; bus shelters, bulb-outs, and signage; and relocated I-580 lanes and frontage roadways, including freeway overcrossings, retaining walls, bridges and on-/off-ramps.

The types of visual changes that would occur because of a proposed project are determined by factors such as the physical layout of constructed elements with respect to each other and existing structures, the density or intensity of development, scale of relationships between existing and proposed structures, the degree that new structures visually encroach on existing structures and spaces, site landscaping, and other features of development. This determines the amount of visual change, either positively or adversely affecting the perceived visual quality of the landscape.

To analyze visual impacts, the impacts within each geographic subarea were ranked high, moderate, or low according to the alternative's potential to affect existing visual quality. The impact rankings are as follows:

1. A high visual impact occurs if elements of the Proposed Project or Alternative are noticeable and prominent, inconsistent with the existing visual character of the area, and can be viewed by sensitive viewers. Generally, a high impact is equivalent to a significant impact.

2. A moderate visual impact occurs if elements of the Proposed Project or Alternative are noticeable to sensitive viewers and less than consistent with the existing visual character of the area. Generally, a moderate impact is potentially significant; therefore, it is conservatively identified as a significant impact in the below analysis.

3. A low visual impact occurs if elements of the Proposed Project or Alternative are relatively consistent with the line, form, texture, and color of the existing visual character in a subarea and do not stand out. Generally, a low impact is equivalent to a less-than-significant impact.

4. No impact occurs if features of the alignment or station are not visible from any public viewpoint, and thus would have no effect on the existing visual quality.

No Project Alternative. Under the No Project Alternative, the BART to Livermore Extension Project would not be implemented and there would be no physical changes in the environment associated with construction of the Proposed Project or any of the Build Alternatives. The relocation of I-580 would not occur, the rail track would not be extended to a new station at Isabel Avenue, and the storage and maintenance facility would not be constructed. However, construction of the planned and programmed transportation improvements and continued land use development, including construction of residential and commercial uses along the project corridor would occur. While these projects could result in impacts to visual quality, these effects have been or will be addressed in environmental documents prepared for these projects before they are implemented. The No Project Alternative would not result in new impacts as a consequence of the BART Board of Directors' decision not to adopt a project. Therefore, the No Project Alternative is considered to have no impact related to substantially degrading the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings. **(NI)**

Conventional BART Project. The visual changes that would result from implementation of the Proposed Project and the potential impacts to the visual quality of the area are described below. Representative photos and corresponding photosimulations of key points along the Proposed Project alignment are shown in Figures 3.E-8 through 3.E-14.

Existing Conditions

Conventional BART Project

Viewpoint 3: East along I-580 corridor at proposed BART mainline track

Source: Urban Advantage, 2017.

BART to Livermore Extension Project EIR

Figure 3.E-8
Visual Quality
Conventional BART Project
El Charro Road Overpass

Existing Conditions

Conventional BART Project

Viewpoint 4: West at proposed Isabel Station from westbound I-580

Source: Urban Advantage, 2017.

BART to Livermore Extension Project EIR

Figure 3.E-9
Visual Quality
Conventional BART Project
I-580 Between Isabel Avenue and Portola Avenue

Existing Conditions

Conventional BART Project

Viewpoint 5: South at proposed Isabel Station pedestrian touchdown structure and plaza

Source: Urban Advantage, 2017.

BART to Livermore Extension Project EIR

Figure 3.E-10
Visual Quality
Conventional BART Project
Isabel Avenue North of I-580

Existing Conditions

Conventional BART Project

Viewpoint 7: Southwest at proposed Isabel Station parking facility and pedestrian touchdown structure

Source: Urban Advantage, 2017.

BART to Livermore Extension Project EIR

Figure 3.E-11
Visual Quality
Conventional BART Project
East Airway Boulevard

Existing Conditions

Conventional BART Project

Viewpoint 6: Northwest at proposed wayside facility

Source: Urban Advantage, 2017.

BART to Livermore Extension Project EIR

Figure 3.E-12
Visual Quality
Conventional BART Project
Isabel Avenue and Kitty Hawk Road

Existing Conditions

Conventional BART Project

Viewpoint 8: North from westbound I-580 at proposed tail tracks heading toward storage and maintenance facility

Source: Urban Advantage, 2017.

BART to Livermore Extension Project EIR

Figure 3.E-13
Visual Quality
Conventional BART Project
I-580 East of Portola Avenue

Existing Conditions

Conventional BART Project

Viewpoint 10: West along Hartman Road at proposed storage and maintenance facility

Source: Urban Advantage, 2017.

BART to Livermore Extension Project EIR

Figure 3.E-14
Visual Quality
Conventional BART Project
North Livermore Avenue and Hartman Road

- **Dublin/Pleasanton Station Area.** Within the Dublin/Pleasanton Station Area, the visual character is primarily characterized by the forms of the built environment. In this area, the Proposed Project would include conversion of the existing tail tracks to mainline tracks east of the station, within the existing I-580 median and at the same grade as I-580. This project element would result in minor visual changes, would not introduce new elements beyond the I-580 corridor, and would not substantially change the heights or grades of existing facilities. While sensitive viewers would be located along the Iron Horse Trail, which extends through the station area, the proposed changes in the area would not be substantially visible to the sensitive viewers or degrade the perceived visual quality along the trail. In addition, sensitive viewers located at the Dublin Sports Grounds would be 0.6 mile west of the Proposed Project footprint. The perimeter of this park is lined with tall trees that obstruct views out of the park toward the I-580 corridor, and no proposed changes would be substantially visible to viewers. Overall, the impact in the Dublin/Pleasanton Station Area, from Dougherty Road to Hacienda Drive, would be low, and the Proposed Project would not result in substantial visual changes.
- **I-580 Corridor Area.** Project components in this area would include the new mainline and tail tracks, a wayside facility, Isabel Station, and portions of the pedestrian overcrossings (see Isabel North Area and Isabel Station for a discussion of Isabel Station and pedestrian overcrossings). As shown in Figure 3.E-8, the new mainline and tail tracks would be constructed within a new I-580 median and have an approximately 3-foot-high concrete safety barrier topped by fencing along the edges of the median. In addition, a wayside facility would be constructed north of I-580 near Croak Road. This structure would be adjacent to the transportation corridor and relatively low in height—ranging from 12 to 17 feet.

  Sensitive viewers in this area are located at the Las Positas Municipal Golf Course. These viewers would experience limited changes to views as a result of the Proposed Project. The new tracks, barrier, and fencing would be similar to the existing tracks and barrier along the BART facilities west of Dublin/Pleasanton Station. These components would be within the transportation corridor, at a similar grade to the existing I-580, and would therefore be visually compatible with existing visual character along the corridor. The wayside facility would be similar to other commercial structures along I-580, and would be visually compatible with the existing visual character along the corridor.

  As described further in Section 3.J, Noise and Vibration, the Proposed Project would result in significant ambient noise level increases along East Airway Boulevard, necessitating the construction of a sound wall along the south side of an approximately 0.3-mile segment of East Airway Boulevard—from 200 feet west of Montecito Circle to 300 feet east of Via Montalvo—as part of **Mitigation Measure NOI-5**. The sound wall would be approximately 6 to 8 feet high and would obstruct

the southward and southwestward views of drivers along East Airway Boulevard, resulting in secondary visual impacts due to the implementation of this mitigation measure. This sound wall would not be inconsistent with the visual character along East Airway Boulevard, as there is already a sound wall on the north side of I-580 from Sutter Street east to the western border of the Sun Valley Mobile Estates. In addition, the sound wall would be almost entirely contiguous with an existing approximately 0.3-mile long wooden fence that is approximately 6 feet high, which already obscures drivers' and passengers' views to the south and southwest. The sound wall would not be significantly taller than the wooden fence and would cover a similar extent of East Airway Boulevard. Given the existing one-story buildings in the vicinity and the existing I-580 sound wall, there would not be a substantial change to the visual character of East Airway Boulevard. Furthermore, drivers and passengers traveling along East Airway Boulevard are not considered sensitive receptors as East Airway Boulevard is not a locally designated scenic route. Nevertheless, replacing the wooden fence with a solid sound wall would add a conspicuous new feature. Therefore, this impact is conservatively considered to be significant.

Therefore, as described above, relocation of the I-580 lanes and frontage roadways, including freeway overcrossings, retaining walls, bridges, and on-/off-ramps, as well as construction of the sound wall along East Airway Boulevard would not introduce new elements to the landscape, as each of these elements exists under current conditions. In addition, these elements, which would occur within and along the existing transportation corridor and would be generally consistent with existing roadway/facility grades, would not result in substantial changes to the visual quality of the area. Overall, the impact in most of the I-580 Corridor area, from Hacienda Drive to the Portola Avenue overcrossing, would be low. However, there would be a significant impact in a localized area of the I-580 Corridor Area along the 0.3-mile segment of East Airway Boulevard where the sound wall would be installed. This impact would be reduced with the implementation of **Mitigation Measure VQ-3.A**, which would require architectural treatment for the sound wall. Nevertheless, this impact is conservatively assumed to remain significant and unavoidable.

- **Isabel North Area and Isabel Station.** Within the Isabel North Area and adjacent to Isabel Station, the visual character is primarily characterized by forms of the natural environment in the foreground, including open grasslands, with residential and commercial development beyond and distant views of the hills.

  The Proposed Project's components in this area would be adjacent to or within the I-580 corridor and would be visually prominent. As shown in Figure 3.E-9 and Figure 3.E-10, the components in this area include the proposed Isabel Station in the I-580 median, pedestrian overcrossings, which would connect Isabel Station to pedestrian touchdown structures north and south of I-580, the north touchdown structure and loop access road connecting it to Isabel Avenue, and the bus transfer facility north of

I-580. The pedestrian overcrossings would be 20 feet wide and elevated to allow pedestrian access to the station over the freeway. One pedestrian overcrossing would extend approximately 382 feet from the station over I-580 to the north pedestrian touchdown structure and the other overcrossing would extend approximately 485 feet over I-580 to the south touchdown structure. The bus transfer facility and access loop road would include passenger drop-off and pick-up, taxi service, and bus connections.

The Isabel Station would have a similar design to the existing West Dublin/Pleasanton BART Station, with the BART train platform on the lower level at a similar grade as I-580, and an upper concourse level connecting to the pedestrian overcrossings of I-580. The Isabel Station platform would be approximately 700 feet long. The station canopy would be approximately 62 feet above grade and approximately 500 feet long. While the proposed station and pedestrian overcrossings would introduce new visually prominent structures, the structures would be located almost entirely within the transportation corridor and would be similar to existing elements along the corridor. Specifically, the Isabel Station canopy would be similar to that at the Dublin/Pleasanton Station and the station and pedestrian overcrossings would be similar to the West Dublin/Pleasanton BART Station along I-580. The pedestrian overcrossings would also be similar visually to the concrete freeway overpasses along I-580, including the adjacent Isabel Avenue overcrossing.

Sensitive views would exist from the Las Positas Municipal Golf Course between Fallon Road/El Charro Road and Airway Boulevard and at Las Positas College recreational facilities and Cayetano Park, north of I-580 near the proposed Isabel Station area. For viewers at Las Positas Golf Course and Las Positas College, the above project elements would be located in the distance, adjacent to the I-580 corridor, and would not be incompatible with the surrounding landscape, including the transportation corridor beyond.

For sensitive viewers at Cayetano Park, the visual character of the area consists of a mix of open space and new housing development under construction north of I-580 in the immediate project vicinity, with residential and commercial development beyond and distant views of hills. For viewers at these locations, the above project elements would be located in the distance, within the I-580 corridor, and would not be incompatible with the transportation corridor.

To drivers along I-580 and on Isabel Avenue, the forms and massing of the pedestrian overcrossings, north touchdown structure, and proposed Isabel Station would be visually prominent. However, these facilities would be consistent with driver expectations of the I-580 corridor, which features other roadway overcrossings and other station structures to the west of the proposed Isabel Station (Castro Valley BART Station, West Dublin/Pleasanton BART Station, Dublin/Pleasanton Station). Drivers would likely perceive these facilities by visual association as an extension to the east

of the existing BART services and facilities, rather than perceive them as an entirely new visual element within the I-580 right-of-way.

In addition, these structures could be visible from Vista Meadows Park, which has relatively open views to the northwest due to its elevated location south of I-580. Any structures associated with the Isabel Station would be approximately 1.5 mile away from Vista Meadows Park and would not be prominent from this open space. As with drivers along I-580, these structures would be seen by users of Vista Meadows Park as consistent with the transportation-oriented character of the I-580 corridor. Overall, the impact in the Isabel North Area would be low, and components of the Proposed Project would not substantially degrade the visual quality of the area.

- **Isabel South Area.** Within the Isabel South Area, the visual character is characterized by a mix of both natural and built environment forms. In the immediate foreground views include the existing BART park-and-ride lot, agricultural fields, and undeveloped lands. Farther north are views of the I-580 corridor and more distant views of the hills north of I-580. Commercial office, warehouse, and storage buildings are to the south, and are generally one to two stories high and rectangular in form, with few distinguishing architectural characteristics.

  The project components in this area would be visually prominent adjacent to the I-580 corridor. The components in this area along East Airway Boulevard include the following: the pedestrian overcrossing, described above; the south pedestrian touchdown structure; and parking garage and surface parking lots. Along Kitty Hawk Road just west of Isabel Avenue, the project components include the wayside facility.

  The south pedestrian touchdown structure would be approximately 47 feet above grade and located adjacent to the I-580 transportation corridor to provide pedestrian access to the station over I-580. Parking would be provided in a seven-level garage, approximately 87 feet high and 525 feet long, and in two surface parking lots. Figure 3.E-11 shows these structures along East Airway Boulevard.

  The structures within the wayside facility on Kitty Hawk Road at Isabel Avenue would be approximately 90 feet wide by 400 feet long and relatively low in height, ranging from 12 to 17 feet. The facility would be surrounded by an approximately 9-foot-high concrete wall where visible to the public, and chain link fencing along other areas. Furthermore, consistent with City of Livermore guidelines, the wayside facility would have green groundcover, low bushes along the walls, and would be screened by trees at 40-foot intervals, as shown in Figure 3.E-12.

  Similar to the Isabel North Area, sensitive viewers in this area would include viewers at Cayetano Park. In addition, see Section 3.F, Cultural Resources, **Impact CUL-5,** for a discussion of the impacts to the viewshed of the historic Gandolfo Ranch (otherwise known as G&M Farms).

For viewers at Cayetano Park, the proposed south pedestrian overcrossing, pedestrian touchdown structure, parking garage and surface parking lots, bus stops, and wayside facility would be located in the distance, at a lower elevation than the viewers. These components would be largely screened by the intervening topography, as well as the existing trees along Arroyo las Positas creek in Isabel South Area, many of which would remain even with the tree removal associated with the Proposed Project.

Drivers and passengers along I-580 would have intermittent views of the wayside facility, the south end of the pedestrian overcrossing, the south touchdown structure, and parking garage, which would be at a lower elevation than I-580 and would be partially screened by the existing trees and topography.

To drivers on the surface streets—along East Airway Boulevard and Isabel Avenue—the proposed parking facility and touchdown structure would appear visually prominent along the roadway. Only drivers along Isabel Avenue would be considered sensitive viewers as this roadway is designated as a scenic route in Livermore's General Plan. The parking garage would replace an agricultural field, one of the few visual characteristics of interest in this area. However, this area already has moderately low visual quality due to a lack of coherence and unity in its visual character. The proposed parking garage and touchdown structure could be visually incompatible with the adjacent commercial buildings across East Airway Boulevard. While the rectangular form and rectangular architectural elements of the parking garage, as seen in Figure 3.E-11, would be visually consistent with existing office buildings in the business park to the south, the proposed massing and height would be much greater than these one- to two-story buildings. These proposed structures would also be much greater in scale than the agricultural uses (G&M Farms) also located south of East Airway Boulevard and the storage facilities farther to the east.

To drivers on the surface streets—Kitty Hawk Road and Isabel Avenue (a designated scenic route)—the proposed wayside facility would be visually prominent at certain locations. The facility would be visually prominent along Kitty Hawk Road; however, from much of Isabel Avenue, the facility would not be as visually prominent due to the topography. Overall, the form of the proposed facility would be somewhat similar to other commercial types of structures in the immediate vicinity, would be set back from the existing buildings, and would be visually compatible with existing visual character along the transportation corridor. Landscaping measures required by the City of Livermore and described above would further screen the wayside facility from the view of drivers and make it more aesthetically pleasing.

Overall, due to the height and massing of the parking garage, which would be significantly taller than the surrounding commercial buildings, the impact in the Isabel South Area would be moderate, even though the area already has moderately low visual quality. A moderate impact is conservatively identified as significant; therefore, the components of the Proposed Project could substantially degrade the visual quality

of the area. This impact would be reduced to less-than-significant levels with the implementation of **Mitigation Measure VQ-3.B**, which would require design measures to reduce the visual incompatibility and prominence of the parking garage.

- **Cayetano Creek Area.** The project components in this area would be located beyond the I-580 corridor and would include the access roadway from Campus Hill Drive, tail tracks, and storage and maintenance facility.

  The proposed tail tracks would extend approximately 1.9 miles from the Isabel Station to the storage and maintenance facility. The tail tracks would extend from the Isabel Station in the I-580 median, through an underpass to the north side of I-580, cross Arroyo las Positas and Cayetano creeks on bridges, and extend through an approximately 450-foot-long, 20-foot-high hillside tunnel to the storage and maintenance facility. Figure 3.E-13 shows a view from I-580 of the tail tracks extending north toward the storage and maintenance facility. The tail tracks would be generally at-grade and have security fencing along the edges, similar to the existing BART tracks along I-580. In addition, some grading of the existing hill slopes would be required.

  The storage and maintenance facility would be approximately 68 acres and would include nine tracks for the storage of approximately 172 BART cars. The main building would be approximately 44 feet tall; other facility buildings include a 50-foot-high train control tower and buildings similar to the wayside facilities described above. The storage and maintenance facility would be enclosed with security fencing. In addition, a two-lane access road would be constructed from Campus Hill Drive to the storage and maintenance facility. Figure 3.E-14 shows the tail tracks and storage and maintenance facility as seen from the intersection of North Livermore Avenue and Hartman Road.

  Sensitive viewers in this area would include viewers at Las Positas College recreational facilities and Vista Meadows Park, described above. In addition, as described below, project components in the Cayetano Creek Area would also be visible from I-580, North Livermore Avenue, Hartman Road, and Hartford Avenue, all of which are designated as scenic by the City of Livermore. For viewers at Las Positas College, the proposed tail tracks and storage and maintenance facility would be screened by the intervening topography that would preclude views of these facilities.

  The tail tracks and tunnel would be visible to drivers and passengers traveling along I-580. The hillside tunnel would not be visually prominent due to its distance from I-580 (approximately 0.3-mile away), as seen in Figure 3.E-13. The alignment of the tail tracks would have flowing, curving lines that would be compatible with the undulating curves of the rolling hills. The tail tracks would largely not be visible west of the Portola Avenue overcrossing; they would also be blocked from view just east of the Portola Avenue overcrossing due to a highway barrier on the east side of I-580. Therefore, the tail tracks would only be visible to passing drivers and passengers for a

brief period of time just east of the Portola Avenue overcrossing as they travel north into the rolling hills. Furthermore, due to the topography, the tail tracks disappear from view quickly as they go behind a small crest in the hills. Nevertheless, even though these project elements would only be visible to passing drivers and passengers along I-580 for a brief period time, BART trains traversing the tail tracks would be conspicuous as seen from automobiles passing by at the same time. For these reasons, the tail tracks and tunnel are considered to represent a significant man-made intrusion into an otherwise natural landscape. Furthermore, the tail tracks and tunnel could also be visible to users at Vista Meadows Park, which is located on a hill south of I-580. Therefore, this impact is conservatively identified as high.

The storage and maintenance facility would be visible from North Livermore Avenue, Hartman Road, and Hartford Avenue. The Proposed Project would introduce angular forms associated with the storage and maintenance facility, including the linear forms of the access roadway to the facility; the storage tracks; and stored BART cars, as well as rectangular forms of the buildings at the storage and maintenance facility. While this area contains existing built forms, such as the linear forms of the roadway and fences, and rectangular forms of the agricultural and rural residential buildings scattered throughout the natural landscape, these elements are consistent with the rural character of the area. The storage and maintenance facility would introduce transportation-related elements that would contrast with this rural character. Furthermore, although these elements would be viewed at a substantial distance from along North Livermore Avenue, a route designated as scenic by the City of Livermore (approximately 0.5 mile to 0.75 mile, depending on the location of the viewer along North Livermore Avenue), they would also be viewed for an extended duration due to the length of the facility (approximately 1.2 mile long) parallel to North Livermore Avenue.

The storage and maintenance facility would also be visible from Hartman Road and Hartford Avenue, both of which are proposed scenic routes designated by the City of Livermore. The footprint of the storage and maintenance facility would intersect Hartman Road, necessitating the relocation of the road around the facility as shown in Figure 2-2. Therefore, this facility would abut Hartman Road, resulting in a significant alteration to the rural character of the area, which is currently undeveloped except for two rural residences that would be removed due to construction of the Proposed Project. The facility would be approximately 0.6 mile from Hartford Avenue at its nearest point, and the impact to visual quality as seen from this road would be similar to the impact to visual quality as seen from North Livermore Avenue.

Therefore, in the Cayetano Creek Area, the overall impact would be high and the Proposed Project could substantially degrade the visual quality of the area. The impact pertaining to the tail tracks and storage and maintenance facility as seen from North Livermore Avenue, Hartman Road, and Hartford Avenue would be reduced with the

implementation of **Mitigation Measure VQ-3.C**, which would require design measures to screen the storage and maintenance facility. Nevertheless, this impact is conservatively assumed to remain significant and unavoidable because of the large size of the storage and maintenance facility and the extended duration of time it would be visible to drivers along North Livermore Avenue. Furthermore, no mitigation measures are available to reduce the visual impact of the tail tracks and tunnel as seen from I-580.

- **Conclusion.** As described above, the Proposed Project would result in a significant secondary visual impact in the I-580 Corridor Area due to the sound wall on East Airway Boulevard, which would be incorporated as part of **Mitigation Measure NOI-5**. This impact would remain conservatively significant and unavoidable, even with the implementation of **Mitigation Measure VQ-3.A**. Furthermore, there would be a moderate and thus potentially significant visual impact in the Isabel South Area due to the impact of the proposed parking garage; however, this impact would be reduced to a less-than-significant level with the implementation of **Mitigation Measure VQ-3.B**. The Proposed Project would also result in a high, and thus significant, impact in the Cayetano Creek Area due to the visibility of the tunnel and tail tracks to drivers and passengers along I-580, and the visibility of the storage and maintenance facility to drivers and passengers along North Livermore Avenue, Hartman Road, and Hartford Avenue. This impact would remain significant even with the implementation of **Mitigation Measure VQ-3.C**. Overall, the Proposed Project would conservatively have a significant and unavoidable impact to visual character and quality, even with the implementation of the above mitigation measures. **(SU)**

DMU Alternative. The visual changes under the DMU Alternative would generally be similar to those described above for the Proposed Project along much of the project corridor; however, this alternative would result in some additional visual changes. The analysis for the Proposed Project would apply to this alternative, except where visual changes would differ, as described below for each study subarea. Representative photos and corresponding photosimulations of key points along the DMU Alternative alignment are shown in Figures 3.E-15 through 3.E-18.

Existing Conditions

DMU Alternative

Viewpoint 1: East at Dublin/Pleasanton Station and proposed DMU transfer platform (left of existing BART platform)

Source: Urban Advantage, 2017.

BART to Livermore Extension Project EIR

Figure 3.E-15
Visual Quality
DMU Alternative
Dougherty Road Overpass

Existing Conditions

DMU Alternative

Viewpoint 2: West at proposed Dublin/Pleasanton Station DMU transfer platform from westbound I-580

Source: Urban Advantage, 2017.

Figure 3.E-16
Visual Quality
DMU Alternative
I-580 East of Dublin/Pleasanton Station

Existing Conditions

DMU Alternative

Viewpoint 3: East along I-580 corridor at proposed DMU mainline track

Source: Urban Advantage, 2017.

BART to Livermore Extension Project EIR

Figure 3.E-17
Visual Quality
DMU Alternative
El Charro Road Overpass

Existing Conditions

DMU Alternative

Viewpoint 9: West at proposed storage and maintenance facility

Source: Urban Advantage, 2017.

BART to Livermore Extension Project EIR

Figure 3.E-18
Visual Quality
DMU Alternative
North Livermore Avenue

- **Dublin/Pleasanton Station Area.** As described above, the visual character of the area is primarily characterized by the forms of the built environment. The DMU Alternative would result in greater visual changes at the Dublin/Pleasanton Station Area than the Proposed Project due to the construction of the DMU transfer platform, extended tail tracks, and new DMU tracks. However, the components would be constructed within the I-580 corridor and would be consistent with the existing heights at the Dublin/Pleasanton Station.

  As shown in Figures 3.E-15 and 3.E-16, the proposed DMU transfer platform and canopy would be constructed north of the existing station, within the I-580 median.

  The concourse level (lower level) of the station would be widened by approximately 29 feet for a length of approximately 300 feet. The new DMU platform would range from 16 to 30 feet wide and would extend for the length of the existing platform (700 feet). The proposed DMU transfer platform and canopy above would be at a similar height (approximately 27 feet) and have a similar appearance to the existing BART platform and canopy.

  A new BART tail track would be provided within the I-580 median west of Dublin/Pleasanton Station to accommodate the increased BART car storage required at the station, and new DMU tracks would be extended to the east of Dublin/Pleasanton Station. The construction of the additional BART tail track and new DMU tracks would occur within the I-580 median at a similar grade to the existing I-580 grade.

  While sensitive viewers would be located along the Iron Horse Trail, which extends through the station area, the proposed changes in the area would not be substantially visible to the viewers or degrade the perceived visual quality along the trail. In addition, sensitive viewers located at the Dublin Sports Grounds would be 0.6 mile west of the Proposed Project footprint. The perimeter of this park is lined with tall trees that obstruct views out of the park toward the I-580 corridor, and no proposed changes would be substantially visible to viewers. To drivers and passengers along I-580, the forms and massing of the new DMU platform and canopy would be visually prominent; however, they would appear consistent with the existing BART station and canopy. Therefore, the visual impact of the DMU Alternative would be low in the Dublin/Pleasanton Station Area from Dougherty Road to Hacienda Drive, and no substantial visual changes would result.

- **I-580 Corridor Area.** The DMU Alternative would result in similar visual changes along the I-580 Corridor Area as the Proposed Project, as it would include similar components and would also be located within the I-580 corridor, as shown in Figure 3.E-17. Similar to the Proposed Project, a sound wall would be installed along a 0.3-mile segment of East Airway Boulevard as part of **Mitigation Measure NOI-5**.

  Therefore, as described above for the Proposed Project, in most of the I-580 Corridor Area from the Hacienda Drive overcrossing to the Portola Avenue overcrossing, the

DMU Alternative would have a low visual impact. However, there would be a significant visual impact in a localized area of the I-580 Corridor Area along the 0.3-mile segment of East Airway Boulevard where the sound wall would be installed. This impact would be reduced with the implementation of **Mitigation Measure VQ-3.A**, which would require architectural treatment for the sound wall. Nevertheless, this impact is conservatively assumed to remain significant and unavoidable.

- **Isabel North Area and Isabel Station.** The DMU Alternative would result in similar visual changes in the Isabel North Area as the Proposed Project as it would include similar components, including the Isabel Station, and would be similarly located adjacent to the I-580 corridor. Therefore, as described above for the Proposed Project, in the Isabel North Area, the DMU Alternative would have a low impact and would not substantially degrade the visual quality or character of the area
- **Isabel South Area.** The DMU Alternative would result in similar visual changes in the Isabel South Area as the Proposed Project because it would include similar components and would be similarly located adjacent to the I-580 corridor. However, the parking garage would be six levels rather than seven as under the Proposed Project, and no surface parking would be provided. Similar to the Proposed Project, due to the height of the parking garage, which would be significantly taller than the surrounding commercial buildings, the impact in the Isabel South Area would be moderate, even though the area already has moderately low visual quality. A moderate impact is conservatively identified as significant; therefore, the components of the DMU Alternative could substantially degrade the visual quality of the area. This visual impact would be reduced to less-than-significant levels with the implementation of **Mitigation Measure VQ-3.B**, which would require design measures to reduce the visual incompatibility and prominence of the parking garage.
- **Cayetano Creek Area.** As described above, the visual character in the Cayetano Creek Area is characterized by the forms of the natural environment, including immediate views of open grasslands and rolling hills and distant views of hills and ridgelines, with several unobtrusive rural elements such as fences and scattered farm buildings.

  Similar to the Proposed Project, the components of the DMU Alternative within the Cayetano Creek Area would include the tail tracks and tunnel, as visible by drivers and passengers along I-580 as well as users at Vista Meadows Park; an access roadway from Campus Hill Drive, as visible by viewers at Las Positas College; and the storage and maintenance facility, as visible by drivers and passengers along North Livermore Avenue, Hartman Road, and Hartford Avenue, which are proposed or designated as scenic routes by the City of Livermore. However, the storage and maintenance facility would be substantially smaller than under the Proposed Project (36 acres instead of 81 acres).

  The tail tracks heading north toward the storage and maintenance facility would be similar to the Proposed Project, as depicted in Figure 3.E-13. Therefore, similar to the

Proposed Project, the tail tracks and tunnel represent a significant man-made intrusion into an otherwise natural landscape. Even though these project elements would only be visible for a brief period of time, DMU trains traversing the tail tracks would be conspicuous as seen from automobiles passing by at the same time. For these reasons, this impact is conservatively identified as high.

Figure 3.E-18 shows the tail tracks and storage and maintenance facility as seen from North Livermore Avenue. The proposed approximately 36-acre storage and maintenance facility would include eight tracks for storage of approximately 12 DMU vehicles. An approximately 51,255-square-foot maintenance building, approximately 44 feet high, would be constructed, as well as a surface parking lot. Other support buildings would include a 44-foot-high train control tower, a vehicle cleaning platform, and a blowdown building. The storage and maintenance facility and connecting tail tracks would be enclosed with security fencing and security lighting would be installed.

For sensitive viewers at Las Positas College recreational facilities and Cayetano Park, the proposed tail tracks and storage and maintenance facility would be located where intervening topography would preclude views of these facilities.

Similar to the Proposed Project, components of the storage and maintenance facility could be seen from North Livermore Avenue, Hartman Road, and Hartford Avenue. These include the linear forms of the access road to the storage and maintenance facility, storage tracks, and stored DMU cars, as well as rectangular forms of the maintenance facility building. Drivers along North Livermore Avenue would view the storage and maintenance facility for a shorter period of time than under the Proposed Project; the storage and maintenance facility under the DMU Alternative is approximately 0.5 mile long and parallel to North Livermore Avenue, while approximately 1.2 mile long under the Proposed Project. Furthermore, under the DMU Alternative, it would be slightly farther to the west from North Livermore Avenue (approximately 0.8 mile or more) than under the Proposed Project. The storage and maintenance facility would also be visible from Hartman Road, where it would be approximately 0.4 mile away at its nearest point.

The storage and maintenance facility would be over a mile from Hartford Avenue and would largely be indistinguishable from the surrounding landscape at that distance. This impact is conservatively identified as moderate, and thus potentially significant, because the storage and maintenance facility would represent a man-made intrusion into a landscape otherwise devoid of prominent man-made visual elements as viewed from North Livermore Avenue and Hartman Road.

Therefore, in the Cayetano Creek Area, the overall impact would be high and the DMU Alternative could substantially degrade the visual quality of the area. The impact pertaining to the tail tracks and storage and maintenance facility as seen from North Livermore Avenue and Hartman Road would be reduced with the implementation of

Mitigation Measure VQ-3.C, which would require design measures to screen the storage and maintenance facility. Nevertheless, this impact is conservatively assumed to remain significant and unavoidable because the storage and maintenance facility would remain visible from those scenic routes. Furthermore, no mitigation measures are available to reduce the impact of the tail tracks and tunnel as seen from I-580.

- **Conclusion.** As described above, the DMU Alternative would result in a significant secondary visual impact in the I-580 Corridor Area due to the sound wall on East Airway Boulevard, which would be incorporated as part of **Mitigation Measure NOI-5**. This impact would remain conservatively significant and unavoidable, even with the implementation of **Mitigation Measure VQ-3.A**. Furthermore, there would be a moderate and thus potentially significant impact in the Isabel South Area due to the visual impact of the proposed parking garage; however, this impact would be reduced to less-than-significant levels with the implementation of **Mitigation Measure VQ-3.B**. The DMU Alternative would also result in a high, and thus significant, impact in the Cayetano Creek Area due to the visibility of the tunnel and tail tracks from I-580, and the visibility of the storage and maintenance facility from North Livermore Avenue and Hartman Road. This impact would remain significant even with the implementation of **Mitigation Measure VQ-3.C**. Overall, the DMU Alternative would conservatively have a significant and unavoidable impact to visual quality, even with the implementation of the above mitigation measures. **(SU)**

EMU Option. As shown in Figure 3.E-19, the EMU Option would generally be similar to the DMU Alternative, but would include an overhead catenary system to provide power. The catenary system would be installed between the tracks; it would include support masts, which are typically approximately 20 feet high, and the support system and electrical contact wires that would extend over the center of the train. The catenary system would appear similar to existing electrical or telephone lines and would not be prominent as it would be located in the center of the 46-foot-wide BART median. The catenary system would be consistent with the character of the I-580 corridor, which features elements of similar height and scale such as overhead electrical lines and utility poles.

Similar to the DMU Alternative, the EMU Option would result in a significant secondary visual impact in the I-580 Corridor Area due to the sound wall on East Airway Boulevard, which would be incorporated as part of **Mitigation Measure NOI-5**. This impact would remain conservatively significant and unavoidable, even with the implementation of **Mitigation Measure VQ-3.A**. Furthermore, there would be a moderate and thus potentially significant impact in the Isabel South Area due to the visual impact of the proposed parking garage; however, this impact would be reduced to less-than-significant levels with the implementation of **Mitigation Measure VQ-3.B**. The EMU Option would also result in a high, and thus significant, impact in the Cayetano Creek Area due to the visibility of the tunnel and tail tracks from I-580, and the visibility of the storage and

Existing Conditions

EMU Option

Viewpoint 3: East along I-580 corridor at proposed EMU mainline track

Source: Urban Advantage, 2017.

BART to Livermore Extension Project EIR

Figure 3.E-19
Visual Quality
EMU Option
El Charro Road Overpass

maintenance facility from North Livermore Avenue and Hartman Road. This impact would remain significant even with the implementation of **Mitigation Measure VQ-3.C**. Overall, the EMU Option would conservatively have a significant and unavoidable impact to visual quality, even with the implementation of the above mitigation measures. **(SU)**

Express Bus/BRT Alternative. The changes to visual character and quality under the Express Bus/BRT Alternative would generally be less than those described above for the Proposed Project. Visual changes would be limited to the Dublin/Pleasanton Station Area and the Laughlin Road Area, as well as minor, visually unobtrusive widening of I-580 in the I-580 Corridor Area between Hacienda Drive and Tassajara Road/Santa Rita Road.

- **Dublin/Pleasanton Station Area**. Within the Dublin/Pleasanton Station Area—from just west of Dougherty Road to Hacienda Drive—new bus transfer platforms would be constructed on either side of the existing BART platforms and a new parking lot or parking garage would be constructed south of I-580 in Pleasanton. As shown in Figures 3.E-20 and 3.E-21, the new bus transfer platforms would be integrated into the station along the north and south of I-580. New bus-only ramps would be constructed from I-580 to the bus platforms. The platforms would be protected from the freeway by safety barriers and a windscreen would be constructed over the platforms.

  Either a new surface parking lot or a three-level parking garage, up to approximately 41 feet high would be constructed to replace existing parking spaces removed by the Express Bus/BRT Alternative. The surface parking lot would be constructed on existing undeveloped land east of and adjacent to the existing BART parking lot in Pleasanton (south of I-580). The parking garage would be constructed on a portion of the existing BART parking lot.

  Furthermore, I-580 would be relocated within this subarea—including west of Dougherty Road—encroaching slightly into the footprint of the Dublin Sports Grounds, a public sports facility with sensitive viewers. However, the perimeter of this park is lined with tall trees that obstruct views out of the park toward the I-580 corridor, and no proposed changes would be substantially visible to viewers.

  In conclusion, while these components would result in visual changes in the area, they would be located within or adjacent to the I-580 corridor and would be visually compatible with the transportation corridor. Therefore, the Express Bus/BRT Alternative would result in a low impact in the Dublin/Pleasanton Station Area, and no substantial adverse visual changes would occur.

- **Laughlin Road Area.** Under the Express Bus/BRT Alternative, a new surface parking lot would be constructed in this area. The parking lot would include a bus stop shelter, landscaping, and lighting.

Existing Conditions

Express Bus/BRT Alternative

Viewpoint 1: East at Dublin/Pleasanton Station and proposed bus transfer platforms (left and right of station)

Source: Urban Advantage, 2017.

BART to Livermore Extension Project EIR

Figure 3.E-20
Visual Quality
Express Bus/BRT Alternative
Dougherty Road Overpass

Existing Conditions

Express Bus/BRT Alternative

Viewpoint 2: West at proposed Dublin/Pleasanton Station bus transfer platform from westbound I-580

Source: Urban Advantage, 2017.

Figure 3.E-21
Visual Quality
Express Bus/BRT Alternative
I-580 East of Dublin/Pleasanton Station

Within the Laughlin Road Area, the visual character is characterized by a mix of both natural and built environment forms. In the immediate foreground, views include the existing midget car race track, commercial storage yard and undeveloped lands, and the I-580 corridor to the south. Farther views include the residential developments to the north and west and distant views of the hills beyond.

Drivers and passengers along I-580 and on the surface streets would have views of the parking lot. Furthermore, hikers at the Brushy Peak Regional Preserve could have views of the Laughlin Road parking lot from the higher elevation vantage points along the trails. However, the parking lot would not substantially change the visual quality of the area, which includes a mix of built and natural forms, and would generally be visually compatible with the existing development. Overall, the impact in the I-580 Corridor area would be low.

- **Conclusion.** As described above, the Express Bus/BRT Alternative would not substantially degrade the existing visual quality of the site and its surroundings. Therefore, the Express Bus/BRT Alternative would have less-than-significant impacts to visual quality, and no mitigation measures are required. **(LS)**

Enhanced Bus Alternative. Under the Enhanced Bus Alternative, constructed improvements would include bus shelters, bus bulbs, and signage. These elements would be constructed within existing street rights-of-way and would not be anticipated to introduce visually incompatible elements. Therefore, the Enhanced Bus Alternative would have no impacts to visual quality, and no mitigation measures are required. **(NI)**

Mitigation Measures. As described above, the Proposed Project, DMU Alternative, and EMU Option would result in significant impacts related to substantially degrading existing visual character and quality. These impacts would be reduced with the implementation of **Mitigation Measure VQ-3.A**, which would require architectural treatment for the sound wall that is proposed as part of **Mitigation Measure NOI-5**; **Mitigation Measure VQ-3.B**, which would require design measures to reduce the visual incompatibility and prominence of the parking garage; and **Mitigation Measure VQ-3.C**, which would require design measures to screen the storage and maintenance facility. However, this impact would remain conservatively significant and unavoidable because the sound wall along East Airway Boulevard would be a conspicuous new feature and the storage and maintenance facility would remain visible from scenic routes. Furthermore, no mitigation measures are available to reduce the impact of the tail tracks and tunnel as seen from I-580.

As described above, the Express Bus/BRT Alternative and Enhanced Bus Alternative would not have significant impacts; therefore, no mitigation measures are required for these Alternatives.

Mitigation Measure VQ-3.A: Include Architectural Treatments on Sound Wall Required by Mitigation Measure NOI-5 (Conventional BART Project and DMU Alternative/EMU Option)

BART shall include architectural treatments in the design of the sound wall that is required by Mitigation Measure NOI-5. Surface design enhancements appropriate to the visual context of the area shall be installed with the sound wall and may include, but are not limited to, stamped patterns, surface articulation, and decorative texture treatment. Non-reflective materials and neutral colors shall be used. BART will consult with the City of Livermore regarding the architectural treatments for the sound wall.

Mitigation Measure VQ-3.B: Design Parking Garage with Architectural Treatments (Conventional BART Project and DMU Alternative/EMU Option)

BART shall adhere to the following guidelines when designing the parking garage:

- Design the parking structure to have variation in the horizontal and vertical planes to create visual interest and reduce the perceived mass.
- Incorporate well-proportioned openings within the wall of the structure, rather than providing continuous openings.
- Design circulation towers as identity elements.
- Use architectural elements that reflect the light industrial character of the immediate vicinity, as well as the natural beauty of the surrounding area. Use natural tones as the primary color to promote compatibility with the scenic qualities of the station area. Use darker, bolder accent colors.
- Incorporate ornamental building detailing, such as decorative screens, trellises, arches or canopies, to create interest at the human scale.
- Screen rooftop parking from view from the public right-of-way with architectural elements, decorative screens, or trellises.
- Integrate public art into the parking garage.

Mitigation Measure VQ-3.C: Screen Storage and Maintenance Facility (Conventional BART Project and DMU Alternative/ EMU Option)

BART shall design the storage and maintenance facility to blend with the natural context of the surrounding area, to the extent feasible. Buildings shall be designed with natural toned colors. Furthermore, BART shall use fences and berms to provide visual screening of the facility from prominent views, where feasible.

Impact VQ-4: Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista.

(No Project Alternative: NI; Conventional BART Project: SU; DMU Alternative: SU; Express Bus/BRT Alternative: LS; Enhanced Bus Alternative: NI)

As described in the Introduction subsection above, it should be noted that California Government Code Sections 53090 and 53091 exempt rapid transit districts such as BART from the requirement to comply with local plans, policies, and zoning ordinances. However, BART acknowledges that the City of Livermore has identified scenic vistas and routes in its General Plan; therefore, BART has elected to treat scenic vistas, routes, and corridors as defined by the City of Livermore as scenic vistas for the purpose of impact analysis in this EIR. No applicable scenic vistas are identified in the City of Dublin or City of Pleasanton General Plans.

The City of Livermore General Plan identifies the following scenic vistas in the study area: mid-range views of rolling hills from I-580, long-range views of Mount Diablo and Brushy Peak, and the view of Las Positas Golf Course from north of I-580. Livermore-designated scenic corridors in the study area include Fallon Road, Doolan Road, Isabel Avenue, Collier Canyon Road, North Livermore Avenue, and Altamont Pass Road. Hartman Road and Hartford Avenue, which run west and east, respectively, from North Livermore Avenue approximately 1.5 miles north of I-580, are proposed scenic routes. Furthermore, the Livermore General Plan designates 3,500 feet on each side of the I-580 freeway centerline as a scenic corridor, and establishes view angle envelopes along the corridor, past which development is not permitted to extend. However, development may take place outside of the view angle envelope where it is located within a 1,000-foot radius of the Isabel Avenue/I-580 interchange, north of I-580. I-580 is also eligible for designation as a State scenic highway (see **Impact VQ-5** below).

Obstruction or partial obstruction of the above scenic views due to project components such as new tracks, stations, parking facilities, or storage and maintenance facilities would result in an adverse effect on scenic vistas.

No Project Alternative. Under the No Project Alternative, the BART to Livermore Extension Project would not be implemented; i.e., the relocation of I-580 would not occur, the rail track would not be extended to a new station at Isabel Avenue, and the storage and maintenance facility would not be constructed. However, construction of the planned and programmed transportation improvements and continued land use development, including construction of residential and commercial uses, would occur. While these projects could obstruct views designated as scenic by the City of Livermore, and therefore have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista, these effects have been or will be addressed in environmental documents prepared for these projects before they are implemented. The No Project Alternative would not result in new impacts as a

consequence of the BART Board of Directors' decision not to adopt a project. Therefore, the No Project Alternative is considered to have no impacts related to substantial adverse effects on scenic vistas. **(NI)**

Conventional BART Project. The potential for obstruction of scenic vistas is described below for project components with heights consistent with existing grades, followed by project components with heights that would exceed existing grades.

The project components that would be at-grade with the I-580 would not block long-range views to Mount Diablo or Brushy Peak from viewers along the I-580 corridor or south of the corridor. Within the I-580 median, the vertical profile of the Proposed Project would not be sufficiently high to interfere with these distant views.

Locally designated scenic routes in these areas (where the Proposed Project would be at-grade) include Fallon Road and Doolan Road, which provide intermittent views of the I-580 corridor. The construction of the Proposed Project within the I-580 median would not substantially change the scenic nature of these routes as the Proposed Project would be located within the transportation corridor and would not obstruct views along these routes.

Project components that are elevated above existing grades include the Isabel Station (up to 62 feet high), pedestrian overcrossings and touchdown structures, parking garage (seven levels, or approximately 87 feet high), and wayside facilities as well as facilities at the storage and maintenance facility (up to approximately 50 feet high).

Within the vicinity of the proposed Isabel Station, scenic routes include Isabel Avenue, Collier Canyon Road, and I-580. Due to the topography and location of the wayside facility on Kitty Hawk Road, it would not be anticipated to block views along Isabel Avenue and would largely not be visible from the other two roads.

Isabel Station and its associated components would not be visible from Collier Canyon Road due to their location to the east, as views to the east are blocked by sidewalk trees as well as office buildings along the east side of Collier Canyon Road. When viewed along Isabel Avenue north of I-580, the proposed Isabel Station, pedestrian overcrossings and touchdown structures would be seen in front of a row of tall eucalyptus trees. No views would be obstructed except for those of the eucalyptus trees. Along Isabel Avenue south of I-580, the parking garage could block intermittent views of the mid-range rolling hills to the east due to the heights of the structures and the topography. Furthermore, the parking garage would be located outside the 1,000-foot radius of the Isabel Avenue/I-580 interchange (north of I-580) that is exempt from view angle regulations. Thus, the 87-foot high parking garage would be significantly taller than permitted by the view angle regulations and could obstruct views.

Along I-580, views of rolling hills to the north would be partially blocked by the pedestrian overcrossing and touch down structures on the north side of I-580; however, the obstruction of views would be intermittent and minimal because of the speed of passing motorists along I-580.

The tail tracks extending north to the storage and maintenance facility would be generally at-grade and would not obstruct views along I-580. The storage and maintenance facility would not be visible from I-580 due to the intervening hills. North Livermore Avenue, Hartman Road, and Hartford Avenue are designated or proposed scenic routes in the vicinity of the storage and maintenance facility. Views of rolling hills from North Livermore Avenue would not be significantly obstructed due to the distance of the storage and maintenance facility from the road (approximately 0.5 mile to 0.75 mile, depending on the location of the viewer along North Livermore Avenue). Furthermore, while heights of several buildings at the storage and maintenance facility would be significant (approximately 44 feet for the main building and approximately 50 feet for the train control tower), most of the facility consists of elements that are at-grade or near-grade, such as a parking lot and train tracks. These elements would not obstruct views from North Livermore Avenue. Similarly, the storage and maintenance facility would be over 0.5 mile from Hartford Avenue and would not substantially obstruct views from this scenic route at that distance.

However, the footprint of the storage and maintenance facility would intersect Hartman Road, necessitating the relocation of the road around the facility as shown in Figure 2-2. Therefore, this facility would abut Hartman Road; views from this scenic route would be significantly obstructed due to the immediate proximity of buildings, BART trains, and other elements in the storage and maintenance facility.

In summary, the parking garage would likely be taller than permitted by the view angle envelope established for the area by the City of Livermore, thus potentially obstructing scenic vistas, and the storage and maintenance facility would relocate and directly abut Hartman Road, substantially obstructing views from Hartman Road (a scenic route). In order to reduce these impacts to less-than-significant levels, substantial changes that are infeasible, would be required for the project design, such as significantly reducing the parking garage height and selecting an alternative location for the storage and maintenance facility. Reducing the parking garage height would be infeasible due to adverse secondary impacts. As described in Section 3.B, Transportation, the garage is sized to provide sufficient parking to meet the projected parking demand. Reducing the amount of parking below demand would result in indirect impacts such as traffic congestion and vehicle emissions of air pollutants and greenhouse gases, as drivers, who are unable to park in the smaller garage, would search for street parking in the vicinity of the station. In addition, the storage and maintenance facility location was selected from among several potential locations. The other locations were rejected due to substantially

increased costs, conflicts with zoning, or operational inefficiencies, as described in the Alternatives Considered but Withdrawn subsection of Chapter 2, Project Description. For these reasons, the Proposed Project would have significant impacts pertaining to substantial adverse effects on a scenic vista, and no mitigation measures are available. **(SU)**

DMU Alternative. Under the DMU Alternative, the general mass, height, scale, and location of project components would be similar to the Proposed Project, except that a DMU transfer platform would be constructed at the Dublin/Pleasanton Station and the storage and maintenance facility would be considerably smaller (36 acres instead of 81 acres as under the Proposed Project) and would not be adjacent to Hartman Road. Therefore, the analysis above for the Proposed Project would apply to this alternative, except where noted below.

At the Dublin/Pleasanton Station, the DMU transfer platform would be adjacent to the existing BART platform and have a canopy of similar height, and thus would cause minimal obstruction of views for drivers along I-580. Similar to the Proposed Project, the proposed parking garage in the Isabel South Area would be beyond the 1,000-foot radius of the Isabel Avenue/I-580 interchange (north of I-580) that is exempt from view angle regulations. Thus, although the parking garage would be somewhat shorter than under the Proposed Project (six levels rather than seven), it would be taller than permitted by the view angle envelope, potentially obstructing scenic vistas.

The storage and maintenance facility would be approximately 0.5 mile north of I-580 and would not be visible from I-580 due to the intervening hills. However, it would be visible from North Livermore Avenue, Hartman Road, and Hartford Avenue, locally designated scenic routes. While heights of several buildings at the storage and maintenance facility would be significant (approximately 44 feet for the main building and approximately 44 feet for the train control tower), most of the facility consists of elements that are at-grade or near-grade, such as a parking lot and train tracks. Due to the distance of the facility from North Livermore Avenue, Hartman Road, and Hartford Avenue (approximately 0.7 mile, 0.4 mile, and 1 mile, respectively) and the expanse of intervening open grasslands in the foreground, the DMU Alternative would not obscure the views of the rolling hills along these scenic routes.

As described above, the parking garage would likely be taller than permitted by the view angle envelope established for the area by the City of Livermore, potentially obstructing views and resulting in a significant impact. Reducing this impact to less-than-significant levels would require reducing the parking garage height, which would be infeasible due to adverse secondary impacts. A smaller garage would not meet the projected parking demand, as discussed above for the Proposed Project; see Section 3.B, Transportation. For these reasons, the DMU Alternative would have significant impacts pertaining to

substantial adverse effects on a scenic vista, and no mitigation measures are available. **(SU)**

Express Bus/BRT Alternative. Under the Express Bus/BRT Alternative, new structures that could affect scenic vistas consist of the bus transfer platforms at the Dublin/Pleasanton Station and a surface parking lot or garage at the Dublin/Pleasanton Station south of I-580. In addition, under this alternative, a remote parking lot would be constructed at Laughlin Road and Northfront Road. This surface parking lot would be consistent with the existing site grades and any structures, such as a bus stop, would be of limited height; therefore, views through the area would not be obstructed.

The bus transfer platforms at the Dublin/Pleasanton Station would be adjacent to the existing BART platform within the I-580 median and would be at-grade with the existing I-580 grade. From the perspective of drivers along I-580, the platforms would cause minimal view obstruction.

A new surface parking lot at Dublin/Pleasanton Station would not obstruct scenic vistas. While a three-level garage may be visible to drivers on I-580, it would be located at the site of an existing parking lot where no scenic views are available, and therefore would not block scenic vistas. Furthermore, there are no locally designated scenic routes in the immediate project vicinity.

For these reasons, the Express Bus/BRT Alternative would have less-than-significant impacts pertaining to substantial adverse effects on a scenic vista, and no mitigation measures are required. **(LS)**

Enhanced Bus Alternative. Under the Enhanced Bus Alternative, no scenic vistas would be affected as improvements under this alternative would be constructed in existing street rights-of-way and would not have substantial height or massing. Therefore, there would be no impacts under the Enhanced Bus Alternative and no mitigation measures are required. **(NI)**

Mitigation Measures. As described above, the Proposed Project and DMU Alternative would have significant impacts related to substantial adverse effects on a scenic vista. There are no mitigation measures available to reduce these impacts. Therefore, these impacts would remain significant and unavoidable.

As described above, the Express Bus/BRT Alternative and Enhanced Bus Alternative would not have significant impacts related to substantial adverse effects on a scenic vista, and no mitigation measures are required for these alternatives.

Impact VQ-5: Substantially damage scenic resources, including but not limited to trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a State scenic highway.

(No Project Alternative: NI; Conventional BART Project: SU; DMU Alternative: SU; Express Bus/BRT Alternative: SU; Enhanced Bus Alternative: NI)

As described in the Regulatory Framework subsection above, I-580 is not officially designated as a State scenic highway. However, I-580 is identified as eligible by the State Streets and Highways Code, which provides that highways identified by statute as eligible are considered to be part of the State Scenic Highway System. Therefore, this analysis conservatively assumes I-580 is a scenic highway and addresses potential changes to scenic resources and views along I-580 resulting from the Proposed Project. Scenic resources within a State Scenic Highway could be affected by visual intrusions that impact the vividness, intactness and/or unity of a scenic corridor, and the presence of outdoor advertising. Impacts to vividness, intactness, and/or unity along I-580 are analyzed under **Impact VQ-3** and **Impact VQ-4** above. This analysis conservatively assumes that any visual impacts identified as significant in the above analyses would represent visual intrusions that could potentially significantly impact the scenic highway.

No Project Alternative. Under the No Project Alternative, the BART to Livermore Extension Project would not be implemented; i.e., the relocation of I-580 would not occur, the rail track would not be extended to a new station at Isabel Avenue, and the storage and maintenance facility would not be constructed. However, construction of the planned and programmed transportation improvements and continued land use development, including construction of residential and commercial uses, would occur. Land use development could also occur adjacent to or within close proximity of I-580. Any visual impacts related to development that could affect scenic resources as seen from I-580 have been or will be addressed in environmental documents prepared for these projects before they are implemented. The No Project Alternative would not result in new impacts as a consequence of the BART Board of Directors' decision not to adopt a project. Therefore, the No Project Alternative is considered to have no impact related to substantially damaging scenic resources within a State scenic highway. **(NI)**

Conventional BART Project. As described in further detail above under **Impact VQ-3**, the proposed tail tracks and tunnel in the Cayetano Creek Area—as seen from I-580 just east of the Portola Avenue overcrossing—would represent a man-made intrusion into an otherwise natural landscape. In addition, as described under **Impact VQ-4**, the proposed parking garage in the Isabel South Area would be taller than permitted by the view angle envelope established by the City of Livermore for the protection of scenic views from I-580. Both of these are conservatively considered to be significant visual intrusions.

Furthermore, as described in the Regulatory Framework subsection above, portions of I-580 are classified as landscaped freeway segments due to planted ornamental vegetation. The Proposed Project would entail the relocation of approximately 5.6 miles of I-580, and would therefore require removal of vegetation, including in segments where I-580 is classified as a landscaped freeway. Such removal could result in the loss of landscaped freeway classification, thus allowing for off-site advertising displays (also referred to as billboards). While the Cities of Dublin and Livermore prohibit off-site advertising displays, the City of Pleasanton does not.[18, 19, 20] Thus, Pleasanton could permit such displays along I-580 in the landscaped freeway segments from postmile 18.54 to 19.12 and postmile 17.55 to 18.31, if these segments were declassified due to loss of ornamental vegetation. The presence of off-site advertising displays would be considered a significant impact to scenic resources within I-580.

This impact would be reduced with the implementation of **Mitigation Measure VQ-5,** which would require BART to replace landscaping along I-580 in areas where would be removed for the Proposed Project. However, due to the limited amount of available right-of-way, some segments of I-580 may not be revegetated. Furthermore, as described in **Impact VQ-3** and **Impact VQ-4**, there are no feasible mitigation measures to reduce the impacts related to the tail tracks and tunnel and the height of the parking garage. Therefore, even with implementation of **Mitigation Measure VQ-5,** this impact is conservatively assumed to remain significant and unavoidable. (**SU)**

DMU Alternative. As described in further detail above under **Impact VQ-3**, the proposed tail tracks and tunnel in the Cayetano Creek Area—as seen from I-580 just east of the Portola Avenue overcrossing—would represent a man-made intrusion into an otherwise natural landscape. As described under **Impact VQ-4**, the proposed parking garage in the Isabel South Area would be taller than permitted by the view angle envelope established by the City of Livermore for the protection of scenic views from I-580.

Furthermore, as described in the Regulatory Framework subsection above, portions of I-580 are classified as Landscaped Freeway segments. The DMU Alternative would entail the relocation of approximately 7.1 miles of I-580, and would therefore require removal of vegetation. While the cities of Dublin and Livermore prohibit off-site advertising displays, the City of Pleasanton does not.[21, 22, 23] Thus, Pleasanton could permit such displays along I-580 in the landscaped freeway segments from postmile 20.14 to 20.39, postmile 19.76 to 19.96, postmile 18.54 to 19.12, and postmile 17.55 to 18.31, if these segments were

[18] City of Dublin Municipal Code, Section 8.84.150
[19] City of Livermore Development Code, Section 4.06.040
[20] City of Pleasanton Municipal Code, Chapter 18.96.
[21] City of Dublin Municipal Code, Section 8.84.150
[22] City of Livermore Development Code, Section 4.06.040
[23] City of Pleasanton Municipal Code, Chapter 18.96.

declassified due to loss of ornamental vegetation. Similar to the Proposed Project, this would be considered a significant impact to scenic resources within I-580. This impact would be reduced with the implementation of **Mitigation Measure VQ-5,** which would require BART to revegetate areas of removed landscaping. However, due to spatial constraints, it is possible some relocated portions of I-580 could not be revegetated. Furthermore, as described in **Impact VQ-3** and **Impact VQ-4**, there are no feasible mitigation measures to reduce the impacts related to the tail tracks and tunnel and the height of the parking garage. Therefore, even with implementation of **Mitigation Measure VQ-5,** this impact is conservatively assumed to remain significant and unavoidable. (**SU)**

Express Bus/BRT Alternative. Under the Express Bus/BRT Alternative, approximately 2.2 miles of I-580 would be relocated, substantially less relocation (3.4 miles less relocation) than under the Proposed Project). The following two landscaped freeway segments would be affected: from postmile 19.76 to 19.96 at the Dougherty Road/Hopyard Road interchange, and from postmile 18.54 to 19.12 at the Hacienda Drive interchange. The segment from postmile 17.55 to 18.31 would also be affected; however, along this segment, relocation would only take place on the Dublin (north) side of I-580. As described above, Dublin prohibits the installation of off-site advertising displays, while the City of Pleasanton does not.

Similar to the Proposed Project and DMU Alternative, removal of vegetation for I-580 relocation under the Express Bus/BRT Alternative would be considered a significant impact to scenic resources within I-580. This impact would be reduced with the implementation of **Mitigation Measure VQ-5,** which would require BART to revegetate areas where landscaping has been removed. However, due to spatial constraints, it is possible that some relocated portions of I-580 may not be revegetated. Therefore, even with implementation of **Mitigation Measure VQ-5,** this impact is conservatively assumed to remain significant and unavoidable. (**SU)**

Enhanced Bus Alternative. Under the Enhanced Bus Alternative, no scenic resources would be damaged as infrastructure improvements would be constructed within the existing street right-of-way. Therefore, there would be no impacts under the Enhanced Bus Alternative, and no mitigation measures are required. **(NI)**

Mitigation Measures. As described above, the Proposed Project, DMU Alternative, and Express Bus/BRT Alternative would result in significant impacts related to substantially damaging scenic resources within a State scenic highway. This impact would be reduced with the implementation of **Mitigation Measure VQ-5,** which would require BART to revegetate areas where landscaping is removed. However, due to spatial constraints, it is possible some segments of I-580 may not be revegetated. Furthermore, there are no feasible mitigation measures to reduce the impacts under the Proposed Project and DMU Alternative related to the tail tracks and tunnel and the height of the parking garage.

Therefore, even with implementation of **Mitigation Measure VQ-5,** this impact is conservatively assumed to remain significant and unavoidable.

As described above, the Enhanced Bus Alternative would not have impacts; therefore, no mitigation measures are required for this alternative.

Mitigation Measure VQ-5: Revegetate Areas of Removed Landscaping (Conventional BART Project, DMU Alternative/EMU Option, and Express Bus/BRT Alternative)

BART shall revegetate areas where landscaping has been removed in-kind to the greatest extent feasible. BART shall ensure that all landscaping plans are consistent with the existing vegetation of the area while serving sustainability goals. A qualified landscape architect retained by BART's contractors will approve all landscaping plans for the area.

Impact VQ-6: Create a new source of substantial light or glare that would adversely affect daytime or nighttime views in the area.

(No Project Alternative: NI; Conventional BART Project: SU; DMU Alternative: SU; Express Bus/BRT Alternative: LSM; Enhanced Bus Alternative: NI)

The Proposed Project and Build Alternatives would introduce new sources of light and glare that could affect daytime or nighttime views. The magnitude of the impact of a new light source is partially based on the existing lighting environment in an area. Existing environments that are dimly lit would experience a comparatively greater impact from new lighting than would more brightly illuminated environments. Urban areas tend to have greater lighting than rural areas. Along the project corridor, the existing lighting is generally greater in the Dublin/Pleasanton area and decreases toward the eastern, less urbanized areas near Isabel Avenue. In addition, residential areas tend to be more sensitive to new sources of lighting.

No Project Alternative. Under the No Project Alternative, the BART to Livermore Extension Project would not be implemented; i.e., the relocation of I-580 would not occur, the rail track would not be extended to a new station at Isabel Avenue, and the storage and maintenance facility would not be constructed. However, construction of the planned and programmed transportation improvements and continued land use development, including construction of residential and commercial uses, would occur. Any lighting impacts associated with the above projects have been or will be addressed in environmental documents prepared for these projects before they are implemented. The No Project Alternative would not result in new impacts as a consequence of BART Board of Directors' decision not to adopt a project. Therefore, the No Project Alternative is

considered to have no impact related to creating a new source of substantial light or glare that would adversely affect daytime or nighttime views in the area. **(NI)**

Conventional BART Project. Under the Proposed Project, lighting would be added primarily at the Isabel Station, north station area, south station area, and storage and maintenance facility. Lighting along the BART mainline track and tail tracks would be minimal and would not contribute to a significant or potentially significant impact from new sources of light and glare.

Due to the types of facilities and need for safety lighting, there is potential for the Isabel Station, including its associated facilities, to create a substantial source of light or glare. Lighting at Isabel Station is conservatively assumed to operate 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Lighting would also be installed at the storage and maintenance facility, which would be located in an open grassland area with few other proximate sources of light. While the existing BART stations and storage yards are examples of possible design and construction of lighting at the proposed Isabel Station and storage and maintenance facility, there is still a potential for creating a new source of substantial light or glare in the area.

This impact would be reduced with implementation of **Mitigation Measure VQ-6**, which requires the Isabel Station and its associated facilities and the storage and maintenance facility to have lighting fixtures designed to minimize spillover into adjacent areas. While **Mitigation Measure VQ-6** would reduce impacts related to the Isabel Station facilities to less than significant, this impact is conservatively assumed to remain significant and unavoidable for the storage and maintenance facility, as it would be located in a rural area with few existing sources of illumination where any new lighting would be substantially noticeable. **(SU)**

DMU Alternative. Similar to the Proposed Project, lighting would primarily be added at the Isabel Station area and storage and maintenance facility. Light and glare generated by these project components could be significant. This impact would be reduced with implementation of **Mitigation Measure VQ-6**, which requires Isabel Station and its associated facilities and the storage and maintenance facility to have lighting fixtures designed to minimize spillover into adjacent areas. While **Mitigation Measure VQ-6** would reduce impacts related to the Isabel Station facilities to less than significant, this impact is conservatively assumed to remain significant and unavoidable for the storage and maintenance facility, as it would be located in a rural area with few sources of illumination where any new lighting could be substantially noticeable. **(SU)**

Express Bus/BRT Alternative. Under the Express Bus/BRT Alternative, new facilities that could emit new light and glare are limited to the bus transfer platforms at Dublin/Pleasanton Station, replacement parking at Dublin/Pleasanton Station, and the

Laughlin Road parking lot. The replacement parking would consist of a new surface lot or garage south of I-580, adjacent to the existing BART parking lot.

While new lighting would be required for the bus transfer platforms, it generally would not be noticeable due to the existing lighting at the Dublin/Pleasanton Station. Similarly, the light cast by the replacement parking would generally not be noticeable due to the existing lighting at the Dublin/Pleasanton Station parking lot. Therefore, these new sources would not emit substantial light or glare.

The Laughlin Road parking lot would be a substantial new source of light, with light fixtures operating primarily during the nighttime hours. Existing sources of light in the area include streetlights and a large residential subdivision approximately 500 feet to the north. Potential affected viewers are limited to the residents of the subdivision and recreational users of the nearby Brushy Peak Regional Preserve. Brushy Peak Regional Preserve is closed to the public after dark (closing hours range from 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. depending on the time of year).[24] Therefore, any light emanating from the Laughlin Road parking lot would occur after closing hours of the Brushy Peak Regional Preserve and would not be substantially noticeable to recreational users of the preserve. However, the new lighting at the Laughlin Road parking lot could be noticeable to residents of the subdivision to the north. This would represent a potentially significant impact. This impact would be reduced to a less-than-significant level with implementation of **Mitigation Measure VQ-6,** which would require the Laughlin Road parking lot to have lighting fixtures designed to minimize spillover into adjacent areas. **(LSM)**

Enhanced Bus Alternative. Under the Enhanced Bus Alternative, improvements would be constructed within the existing street rights-of-way. Additional lighting associated with bus shelters and signage would be limited and would be similar to existing bus facilities. Therefore, no new lighting would be needed, and there would be no impact related to light and glare under the Enhanced Bus Alternative. **(NI)**

Mitigation Measures. Potentially significant impacts due to new sources of light and glare described above under the Proposed Project and the DMU Alternative would be reduced with implementation of **Mitigation Measure VQ-6,** which would require the Isabel Station facilities and the storage and maintenance facility to have lighting fixtures designed to minimize spillover into adjacent areas. However, the storage and maintenance facility would be located in a rural area with few existing sources of illumination and thus any new lighting could be substantially noticeable. Therefore, this impact would conservatively remain significant and unavoidable.

[24] East Bay Regional Park District, 2017. Brushy Peak Regional Preserve. Available at: http://www.ebparks.org/parks/brushy_peak, accessed June 14, 2017.

Potentially significant impacts due to new sources of light and glare described above under the Express Bus/BRT Alternative would be reduced with implementation of **Mitigation Measure VQ-6,** which would require the Laughlin Road parking lot to have lighting fixtures designed to minimize spillover into adjacent areas. With implementation of this mitigation measure, impacts would be reduced to a less-than-significant level. **(LSM)**

As described above, the Enhanced Bus Alternative would not have significant impacts; therefore, no mitigation measures are required for this alternative.

Mitigation Measure VQ-6: Design and Install Lighting Fixtures to Reduce Spillover (Conventional BART Project, DMU Alternative/EMU Option, Express Bus/BRT Alternative)

BART shall develop design specifications and lighting plans for facilities that require new lighting. In particular, under the Proposed Project and DMU Alternative, lighting plans shall be developed for the following facilities: Isabel Station, Isabel Station bus transfer facility, Isabel Station parking facilities, and the storage and maintenance facility. Under the Express Bus/BRT Alternative, a lighting plan shall be developed for the Laughlin Road parking lot.

Light sources shall be screened and shielded to reduce spillover light outside of BART property. Any night lighting shall be focused downward, shielded, and recessed within fixtures so as not to introduce new light or glare. During development of the lighting plans, a lighting design specialist shall be consulted to determine the location, intensity, and type of light sources used. Lighting installed for the project shall comply with these specifications, which shall be included in the contract documents.

(b) Operations – Cumulative Analysis

Impact VQ-7(CU): Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings; have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista; substantially damage scenic resources within a State scenic highway; or create a new source of substantial light or glare that would adversely affect daytime or nighttime views in the area under Cumulative Conditions.

(No Project Alternative: NI; Conventional BART Project: SU; DMU Alternative: SU; Express Bus/BRT Alternative: SU; Enhanced Bus Alternative: NI)

The geographic context for the cumulative visual quality analysis is the same as that identified in the Introduction subsection above.

No Project Alternative. As described in **Impact VQ-3** through **Impact VQ-6**, the No Project Alternative would have no impacts related to degrading the existing visual

character or quality of the site and its surroundings; having a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista; substantially damaging scenic resources within a State scenic highway; or creating a new source of substantial light or glare that would adversely affect daytime or nighttime views in the area. Therefore, the No Project Alternative would not contribute to cumulative impacts. **(NI)**

Conventional BART Project, DMU Alternative, and Express Bus/BRT Alternative. Cumulative projects include the Isabel Neighborhood Plan (INP), Dublin/Pleasanton BART Station Garage, Kaiser Dublin Medical Center, Grafton Plaza Mixed Use Development, IKEA Retail Center/Project Clover, Fallon Gateway, and Crosswinds Site, listed in Section 3.A, Introduction to Environmental Analysis, as well as in Appendix E. These projects would result in infill development on a large number of the currently undeveloped parcels along the project corridor, particularly around the existing Dublin/Pleasanton Station, between Tassajara Road and Las Positas Golf Course, and in the INP area. The character of the project corridor would become more urban and commercial. The greatest change is anticipated to occur in the INP area around the proposed Isabel Station; this area currently has a mix of low-density, single-story office and commercial buildings approximately 16 to 25 feet high, as well as undeveloped land along Isabel Avenue to the north of I-580. Under the INP, the area north of the proposed Isabel Station would be developed into a compact core with a mix of residential and commercial uses, with greater building heights adjacent to the proposed Isabel Station that would step down in height to the edges of the INP area.[25]

Each of these projects is subject to environmental review and permitting. During this process, each project would be evaluated for visual impacts and consistency with protected scenic vistas and view corridors. Cumulative development would be required to be consistent with applicable plans and zoning requirements, and would be expected to support plan policies to protect hillsides and scenic resources and to promote visually complementary development.

For example, a detailed analysis of existing views was performed under the INP to identify the best views and strategies for preserving them. It was determined that the Isabel Avenue interchange currently substantially blocks views along this stretch of I-580; therefore, the tallest and densest development is planned around the interchange. The views with the highest visual quality when travelling westbound were identified as the stretch west of the Shea Homes – Sage Project and west of Collier Canyon Road; therefore, the INP plans for land uses with lower building heights at those locations. At other locations, exemptions from the City of Livermore's Scenic Corridor policy are planned.

[25] City of Livermore, 2016. Staff Report, Preferred Plan for the INP. July 5.

The INP would also entail amending and expanding the current area around the Isabel Avenue/I-580 interchange that is exempt from view angle regulations.[26]

Development consistent with growth in planning documents would maintain protected view corridors, viewsheds, and sensitive viewer locations because planning documents inherently protect views through their scenic policies. Lastly, it is expected that either local jurisdictions would substantially reduce lighting spillage and glare through project permitting processes or local ordinances that would apply to cumulative development.

As described above, planning documents for the study area would ensure that all development would comply with the applicable visual quality policies and each proposed development would undergo its own environmental review. Nevertheless, the amount of visual change in the study area resulting from the probable future projects would be substantial. Furthermore, the Proposed Project, DMU Alternative, and Express Bus/BRT Alternative would result in significant impacts to visual quality, as described under **Impact VQ-3** through **Impact VQ-6**. The probable future projects combined with the Proposed Project, DMU Alternative, and Express Bus/BRT Alternative would change the visual character of the study area, introducing more man-made elements and buildings into an area that is currently developed but also features pockets of undeveloped land and vistas of rolling hills. Therefore, it is conservatively assumed that the probable future projects combined with the Proposed Project, DMU Alternative, and Express Bus/BRT Alternative could degrade the existing visual quality of the area, have substantial adverse effects on scenic vistas, substantially damage scenic resources or create new substantial light and glare. The Proposed Project, DMU Alternative, and Express Bus/BRT Alternative would have a considerable contribution to this impact, even after project-level mitigation. Therefore, impacts would remain significant and unavoidable. **(SU)**

Enhanced Bus Alternative. The Enhanced Bus Alternative would have no project impacts related to visual quality, as described under **Impact VQ-3** through **Impact VQ-6**. Therefore, it would not contribute to cumulative impacts. **(NI)**

Mitigation Measures. As described above, even after the implementation of project-level mitigation measures, the Proposed Project, DMU Alternative, and Express Bus/BRT Alternative would contribute to a potentially significant cumulative impact to visual quality. No additional feasible mitigation measures are available, and the Proposed Project, DMU Alternative, and Express Bus/BRT Alternative would have a cumulatively considerable contribution (significant and unavoidable).

As described above, the Enhanced Bus Alternative would not contribute to cumulative impacts, and no mitigation measures are required for this alternative.

[26] Ibid.