

Visual Resource Survey:		
Viewpoint:	KOP X	Key View:
Date:	9/13/23	Existing Conditions
Description:	Claymine Road south of Hillcrest Avenue, Looking North	
Photo Orientation:	North	
Viewer Position:	_____ Inferior <u> X </u> Level _____ Superior	
View	Notes (describe existing conditions)	
Foreground (0 - 1/2 mile)	The foreground view is dominated by Claymine Road, which is paved with asphalt and painted with typical street markings. The landscape is generally flat with a few sandy berms slope upwards from the roadway. The ground and berms are speckled with small patches of grey-green and rust-brown-colored groundcover foliage. Dry tan and grey-green shrubs are scattered across foreground landscape and exposed, tan earth is visible throughout. A nearby residence is generally obscured from the roadway by a tan block wall. The red-toned roof and tan finish on the residence reflect similar colors in the surrounding landscape. A green street sign contrasts with the otherwise neutral surroundings on the street corner of Claymine Road and Hillcrest Avenue. One distribution line strung across wooden poles parallels Claymine Road, and another runs parallel to Suckow Road across the view.	
Middleground (1/2 - 4 miles)	The middleground is partially obscured by the residence on the east side of Claymine Road. On the west side of Claymine Road, red-toned hills in the middleground of the view are faintly speckled with grey-green and tan plant materials and provide variation in topography.	
Background (> 4 miles)	In the background, silhouettes of distant hills and the Rand Mountains (approximately 18 miles distant) are faintly visible, and weakly contrast against the sky.	
Vividness		
Feature	Score*	Notes (describe existing conditions)
Landform	3	Relatively flat to the east. To the north and west, a series of red-toned hills provides variation in topography, but are otherwise unremarkable from similar sites in the vicinity. The desert floor gradually slopes upward toward the hill in the distance. The faint silhouette of the Rand Mountains, which are approximately 18 miles distant, is visible through the desert haze.
Vegetation	3	Minimal scrub vegetation; tan, silvery-green, and rust-colored. No trees or distinct vegetation specimens besides ornamental landscape plants associated with nearby residence.
Water Feature		No water features in the view.
Human-Made	3	Claymine Road is the primary focus of this view, as the solid, dark pavement contrasts with the neutral and tan-toned surroundings. The finish of the nearby residence and solid block wall are neutral earth tones which are generally consistent with surrounding natural elements.
Overall	3.0	
Intactness		
Overall	4	The view is not intact due to the numerous encroaching human-made elements in the landscape.
Unity		
Overall	4	The view from KOP X is not visually coherent, and numerous human-made features are inconsistent with the forms of the natural surroundings.
Overall Visual Quality Score	3.7	

*Score Key:

1 - Very Low; 2 - Low; 3 - Moderately Low; 4 - Average; 5 - Moderately High; 6 - High; 7 - Very High

Visual Resource Survey:		
Viewpoint:	KOP X	Key View:
Date:	9/13/23	With Project
Description:	Claymine Road south of Hillcrest Avenue, Looking North	
Photo Orientation:	North	
Viewer Position:	_____ Inferior <u> X </u> Level _____ Superior	
View	Notes (change from existing conditions)	
Foreground (0 - 1/2 mile)	The landscape is generally flat with a few sandy berms slope upwards from the roadway. The ground and berms are speckled with small patches of grey-green and rust-brown-colored groundcover foliage. Dry tan and grey-green shrubs are scattered across foreground landscape and exposed, tan earth is visible throughout. A nearby residence is generally obscured from the roadway by a tan block wall. The red-toned roof and tan finish on the residence reflect similar colors in the surrounding landscape. A green street sign contrasts with the otherwise neutral surroundings on the street corner of Claymine Road and Hillcrest Avenue. Looking north from KOP X, the new Cal City-Edwards-Holgate 115 kV Subtransmission Line and the road surface of Claymine Road compete for visual dominance in the foreground. The poles and associated lines create an emphasized visual clutter of horizontal and vertical components against the sky.	
Middleground (1/2 - 4 miles)	The middleground is partially obscured by the residence on the east side of Claymine Road. On the west side of Claymine Road, red-toned hills in the middleground of the view are faintly speckled with grey-green and tan plant materials and provide variation in topography.	
Background (> 4 miles)	In the background, silhouettes of distant hills and the Rand Mountains (approximately 18 miles distant) are faintly visible, and weakly contrast against the sky.	
Vividness		
Feature	Score*	Notes (change from existing conditions)
Landform	3	The Proposed Project does not change the existing landform nor block views of the near and distant landscape.
Vegetation	3	Minimal scrub vegetation; tan, silvery-green, and rust-colored. No trees or distinct vegetation specimens besides ornamental landscape plants associated with nearby residence.
Water Feature		No water features in the view.
Human-Made	2.5	The Proposed Project adds additional human-made features to the view. Distinct from the surrounding natural landscape and the neutral finishes associated with the nearby residence, the new 115 kV subtransmission lines presents as a striking row of tall, solid, galvanized subtransmission poles with a series of horizontal linear features where the line is strung across the poles.
Overall	2.8	
Intactness		
Overall	3.5	The steel subtransmission poles and lines associated with the Proposed Project are highly visible and reduce the intactness of the view.
Unity		
Overall	3	The new subtransmission line in the view is not consistent with the form, color, or texture of the surrounding landscape. The steel subtransmission poles set against the backdrop of the sky and the distant hills reduces visual unity.
Overall Visual Quality Score	3.1	

*Score Key:

1 - Very Low; 2 - Low; 3 - Moderately Low; 4 - Average; 5 - Moderately High; 6 - High; 7 - Very High

The following table describes the date, time, and height of the Viewpoint X photograph.

Viewpoint	Date	Time	Height (above ground surface) in feet
X	March 3, 2022	1:37 PM	5

The following table provides camera details. These details apply to all images collected and described above.

Camera Type	Model	Shutter Speed	ISO	EXP	Flash/ No Flash
Canon	EOS Rebel T8i 31 mm f/9	1/400 sec	100	0	No flash

The information that follows accompanies the requested visual simulation (“Viewpoint X”) to provide analysis consistent with that included in Section 5.1, Aesthetics, of the Proponent’s Environmental Assessment (PEA). Section/subheading numbering in this response is consistent with the contents and organization of Section 5.1, Aesthetics, of the PEA.

5.1.1 Environmental Setting

Figure 5.1-2X shows a representative photograph of the existing condition at ~~Proposed Project~~ Viewpoint X.

Figure 5.1-2X Existing Condition from Proposed Project Viewpoints



Viewpoint X: Claymine Road south of Hillcrest Avenue, Looking North

5.1.1.6 Visual Setting and Representative Views

Landscape Unit 1¹

Viewpoint X: Claymine Road south of Hillcrest Avenue, Looking North

Viewpoint X shows the existing view near the intersection of Claymine Road and Hillcrest Avenue looking north toward the Proposed Project. This location is representative of views of the Proposed Project from residential areas and motorists on Clay Mine Road in the North Edwards community. The landscape is characterized by dusty tan, silvery-green, and rust-colored shrubs and exposed, tan earth. From this view, a single-family residence with ornamental landscaping is visible to the east, and a distribution line strung across approximately 45-foot-tall wooden poles parallels the roadway on the east side of Claymine Road in the foreground. Another distribution line following Suckow Road crosses Claymine Road approximately 0.13 mile (700 feet) away. A series of red-toned hills are visible in the middle ground, while the silhouettes of distant hills and the Rand Mountains are faintly visible in the background. Looking north from this location, the proposed Cal City-Edwards-Holgate 115 kV Subtransmission Line would cross the view on approximately 80-foot-tall galvanized light weight steel (LWS) poles from left to right approximately 0.1 mile (500 feet) away, following Suckow Road.

5.1.4 Impact Analysis

5.1.4.2 Visual Simulations and Visual Change

This section provides a description of the Proposed Project-related change and evaluation of potential visual effects on key public views as represented by the visual simulation of the Proposed Project at KOP X. Table 5.1-2 presents an overview including proposed viewpoint location with corresponding visual sensitivity factor(s); approximate viewing distance; and summary of visible change that would occur at KOP X. For the Visual Contrast Rating Worksheet, refer to Attachment A. 23-03-005 ED-SCE-002 Q. 19_Cal City KOP X Visual Contrast Rating Worksheets.

Table 5.1-12 Summary of Visual Change at KOPs

Proposed Photograph Number and Location	Visual Sensitivity Factor	Distance from KOP to Closest Project Component	Summary of Visual Change
Landscape Unit 1			
KOP X Viewpoint X	Proximity to residences Local motorists	0.1 mile (500 feet)	The proposed Cal City-Edwards-Holgate 115 kV Subtransmission Line appears as a larger and more visually prominent linear feature crossing the foreground of the view than existing overhead SCE distribution facilities consisting of several wooden poles.

¹ Landscape Unit 1 includes the portion of the proposed Kramer-Cal City 115 kV Subtransmission Line through the undeveloped center of the City of California City between U.S. Route 395 and the Cal City Substation; the Cal City Substation; and the proposed Cal City-Edwards-Holgate 115 kV Subtransmission Line. Views of and within Landscape Unit 1 are primarily desert and open-space focused, even when the Proposed Project components are nearby to developed areas such as neighborhoods in the City of California City, North Edwards, or Boron. Landscape Unit 1 includes the portion of the proposed Cal City-Edwards-Holgate Subtransmission Line that roughly parallels State Route 58 (SR-58) between the Edwards and Holgate substations, including the crossing of SR-58 by the proposed Cal City-Edwards-Holgate 115 kV Subtransmission Line.

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5.1.4.2.1 Landscape Unit 1

KOP X

Primary viewers of the Proposed Project at KOP X include local motorists and nearby residents. Motorist views of the proposed new Cal City-Edwards-Holgate 115 kV Subtransmission Line would be of limited duration while approaching and crossing under the new overhead line on Clay Mine Road. Therefore, the sensitivity of this viewer group is considered low. The nearest residence to the proposed new Cal City-Edwards-Holgate 115 kV Subtransmission Line is located approximately 0.06 mile (325 feet) south of the alignment. Viewer awareness and exposure would be high because of the residents' proximity to the Proposed Project. Therefore, the sensitivity of this viewer group is considered high.

As shown in Figure 5.1-2X, the street-level view of an existing residence, located approximately 250 feet northeast of KOP X, is largely hidden behind a tan-brown masonry block wall in the foreground, as seen on the right of the image. The neutral and earth-tone finishes of the residence are consistent with the surrounding desert color scheme. Sandy mounds and exposed, tan earth are scattered with grey-green and rust-brown-colored shrubs and groundcover vegetation. Multiple existing distribution lines mounted on wooden poles are present in the view, providing the most significant vertical elements and somewhat distracting the viewer from views of the roadway. These wooden distribution poles continue north through the middle ground, before disappearing completely. Due to the nearby residence, the middle ground elements to the east of KOP X are largely obscured. On the west side of Claymine Road, and at the center of the view, red-toned hills provide variation in the otherwise flat topography. In the background, silhouettes of distant hills and the Rand Mountains (approximately 18 miles distant) are faintly visible, and weakly contrast against the sky. The road surface of Claymine Road is the primary focus of this view. The aesthetic quality of the built elements is low to moderate, and the view is not intact due to encroaching built elements. The industrial nature of the distribution poles and overhead utility infrastructure and solid residential structures are not unified with the natural desert surroundings. The existing view from KOP X has a moderately low to average overall visual quality.

As described in the Project Description, Section 3.3.1, and shown in Figure 5.1-10b, the Proposed Project would include the installation of galvanized LWS poles, approximately 80 feet high, regularly spaced approximately 350 feet apart, to support the new subtransmission line for the portion of the Proposed Project that is visible in KOP X. The proposed LWS poles and subtransmission line present as a series of repeating vertical features across the view with a distinct set of three horizontal lines strung between them and would compete for dominance in the foreground view. The row of tall, solid, galvanized subtransmission LWS poles would be distinct from the surrounding natural landscape and would be somewhat inconsistent with the surrounding existing wooden infrastructure. The LWS poles and associated lines create a visual clutter of horizontal and vertical components against the sky. Given the visibility of the galvanized LWS poles associated with the Proposed Project, intactness of the view would be diminished. The new subtransmission line is not consistent with the color or texture of the surrounding landscape, and overall unity of the view would be reduced. Implementation of the Proposed Project at KOP X would reduce overall visual quality from moderately low/average to moderately low.

5.2.1.1 5.1.4.3 Aesthetics Impact Analysis

The following section provides an impact analysis for the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Environmental Checklist significance criteria described in Section 5.1.4.3.3 of the PEA based on the addition of a visual simulation at KOP X. The additional visual simulation prepared for KOP X does not affect the analysis or conclusions contained in Sections 5.1.4.3.1, 5.1.4.3.2, and 5.1.4.3.4 of the PEA.

5.1.4.3.3 Would the project, in nonurbanized areas, substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings? (Public views are those that are experienced from publicly accessible vantage point) If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality?

Operation

KOP X. Less than Significant with Mitigation. As described in Section 5.1.4.2.1, the existing condition for KOP X as shown in Figure 5.1-10a is visually dominated by manmade elements, such as the asphalt roadway and wooden distribution poles. Residential views tend to be long in duration and frequent; therefore, viewer sensitivity is high.

As shown in Figure 5.1-10b, the Proposed Project would not be unified with the natural surroundings, as it intersects the view from KOP X and creates an increase in visual clutter and somewhat reduces intactness of the view. As a result, the visual quality of the view from KOP X would decrease from moderately low/average to moderately low. However, the subtransmission LWS poles and conductor, while visible, do not block expansive views of the landscape, including landform and vegetation. Scenic views remain, although slightly fractured by the existing distribution poles and new subtransmission LWS poles in the view. SCE would implement Applicant Proposed Measure (APM) AES-1, which would reduce glare and contrast of the subtransmission infrastructure. With implementation of APM AES-1, impacts of the Proposed Project at KOP X would be less than significant.

Applicant Proposed Measures

The following APMs would be implemented to reduce aesthetics impacts associated with the Proposed Project:

AES-1: Glare and Color Contrast Reduction for Subtransmission Structures and Conductors. To reduce potential significant impacts associated with glare and color contrast for components of the Proposed Project, the finish on all new subtransmission structures will be non-reflective, such as steel that has been galvanized and treated to create a dulled finish or color treated or other functionally equivalent product/process. These ~~types of~~ finishes are designed to reduce light reflection and color contrast and help blend the structures into the landscape setting. All new subtransmission conductors shall be non-specular and non-reflective and the insulators shall be non-reflective and non-refractive to help reduce glare and minimize contrast with the surrounding environment.

Figure 5.1-10a KOP X Existing View



Existing view looking north along Claymine Road.

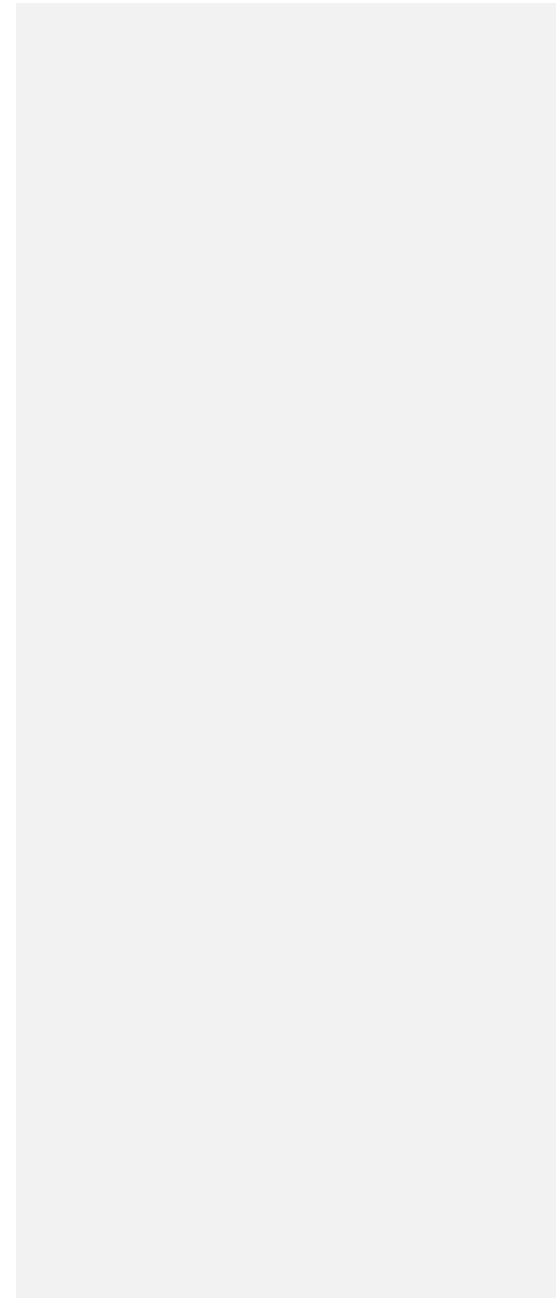


Figure 5.1-10b KOP X Simulated View with Proposed Project



Simulated view of the proposed Cal City-Edwards-Holgate 115 kV Subtransmission Line crossing Claymine Road, looking north.