

DOCKETED	
Docket Number:	26-OPT-01
Project Title:	Vaca Dixon Power Center Project
TN #:	268169-3
Document Title:	Appendix P Simulated Views_VDPC
Description:	Appendix P provides pre- and post-Project condition photos and visual simulations. Appendix P.A provides Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Visual Impact Assessment Worksheets. Appendix P.B. includes correspondence with CEC to confirm key observation point (KOP) selections. P.A FHWA Rating Forms; P.B KOP Correspondence with CEC
Filer:	Grace Myers
Organization:	Rincon Consultants, Inc.
Submitter Role:	Applicant Consultant
Submission Date:	1/6/2026 2:32:55 PM
Docketed Date:	1/6/2026

Appendix P

Simulated Views

VACA DIXON

POWER CENTER PROJECT

- 1 Viewpoint Location
- 2 Vaca Arges BESS Site
- 3 Vaca Dixon Gen-Tie
- 4 Arges Gen-Tie

Visualization is for discussion purposes only.
Final design is subject to change pending
engineering and regulatory review.

Vaca Dixon BESS LLC
Arges BESS LLC



VACA DIXON

POWER CENTER PROJECT



VIEWPOINT 1

1/22/2025 · 2:47 pm · Looking East

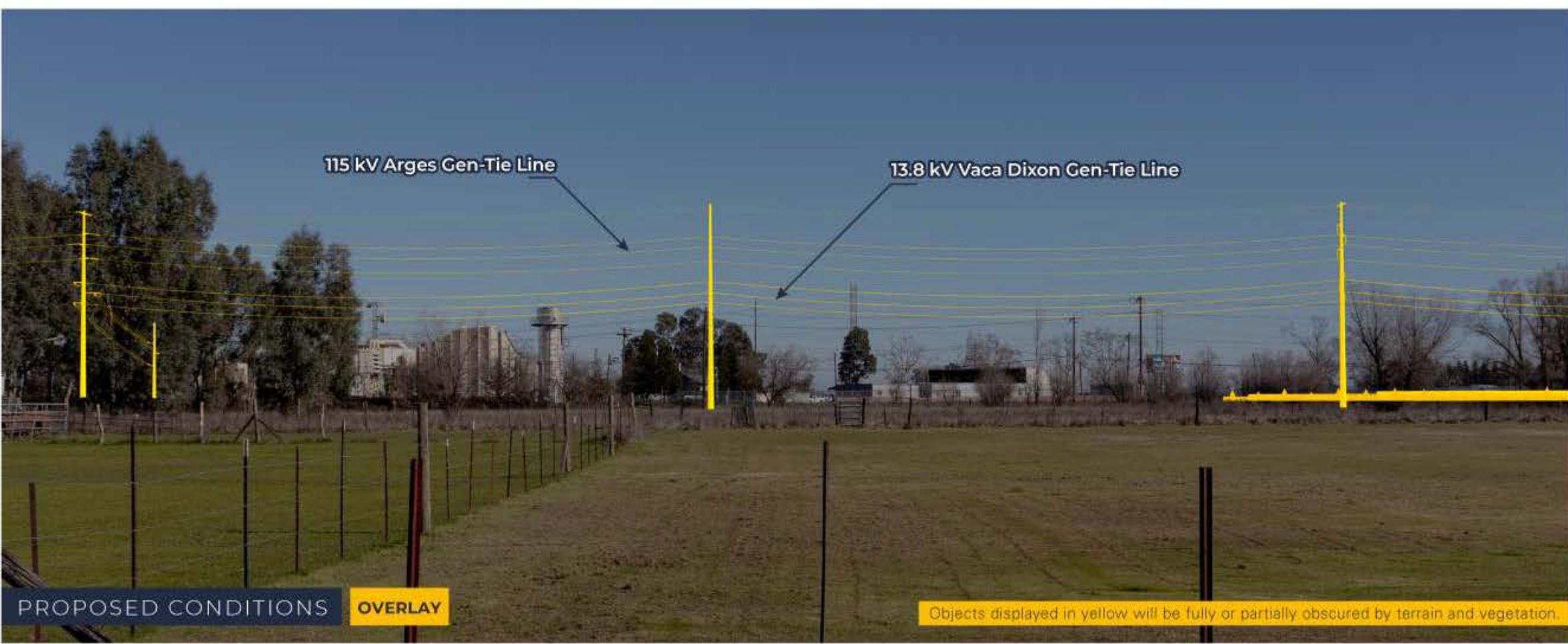
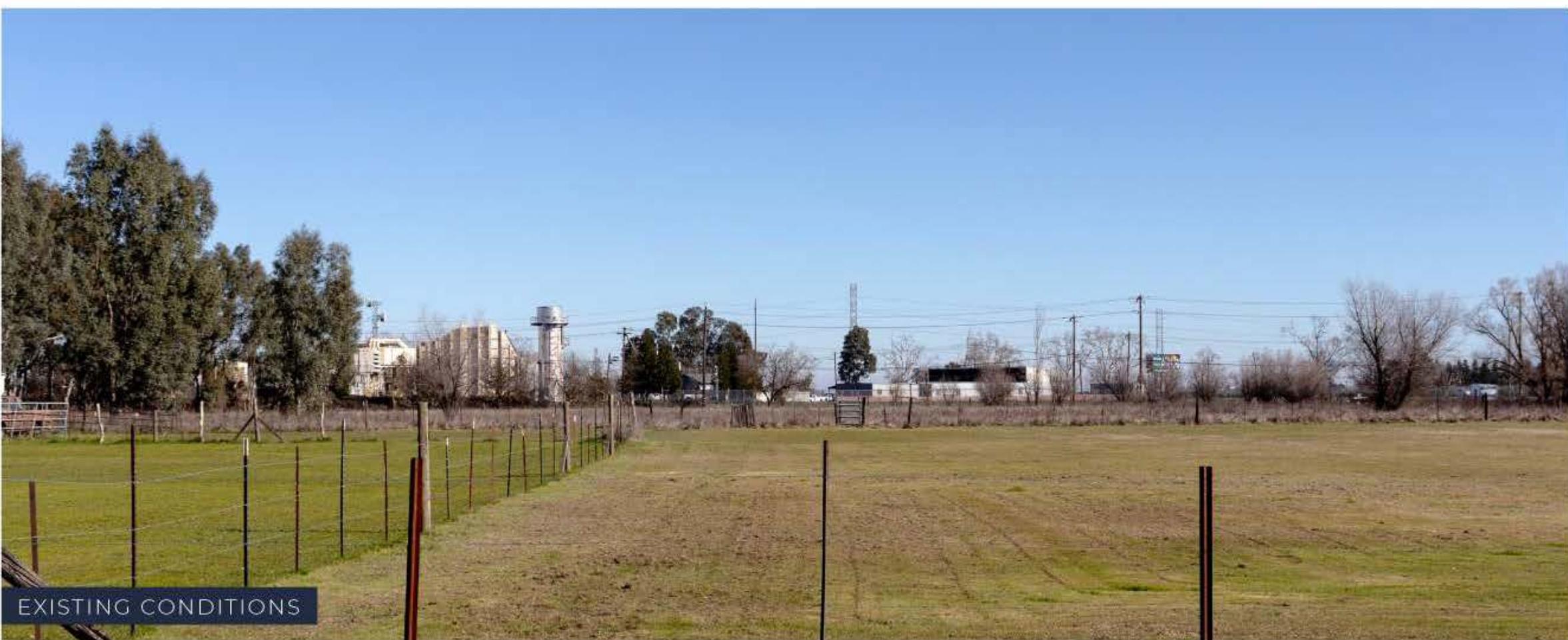


Photo simulations are for discussion purposes only.
Final design is subject to change pending public,
engineering, and regulatory review.

Vaca Dixon BESS LLC
Arges BESS LLC

VACA DIXON

POWER CENTER PROJECT



VIEWPOINT 1

1/22/2025 · 2:47 pm · Looking East



Photo simulations are for discussion purposes only.
Final design is subject to change pending public,
engineering, and regulatory review.

Vaca Dixon BESS LLC
Arges BESS LLC





VACA DIXON

POWER CENTER PROJECT

VIEWPOINT 2

8/14/2025 · 9:18 am · Looking South



② Viewpoint Location
Vaca Arges BESS Site
Vaca Dixon Gen-Tie
Arges Gen-Tie

Photo simulations are for discussion purposes only.
Final design is subject to change pending public,
engineering, and regulatory review.

Vaca Dixon BESS LLC
Arges BESS LLC



AD SPACE
916-698-7526



AD SPACE
916-698-7526

VACA DIXON

POWER CENTER PROJECT

VIEWPOINT 3

8/14/2025 · 9:29 am · Looking Northeast



Photo simulations are for discussion purposes only.
Final design is subject to change pending public,
engineering, and regulatory review.

Vaca Dixon BESS LLC
Arges BESS LLC





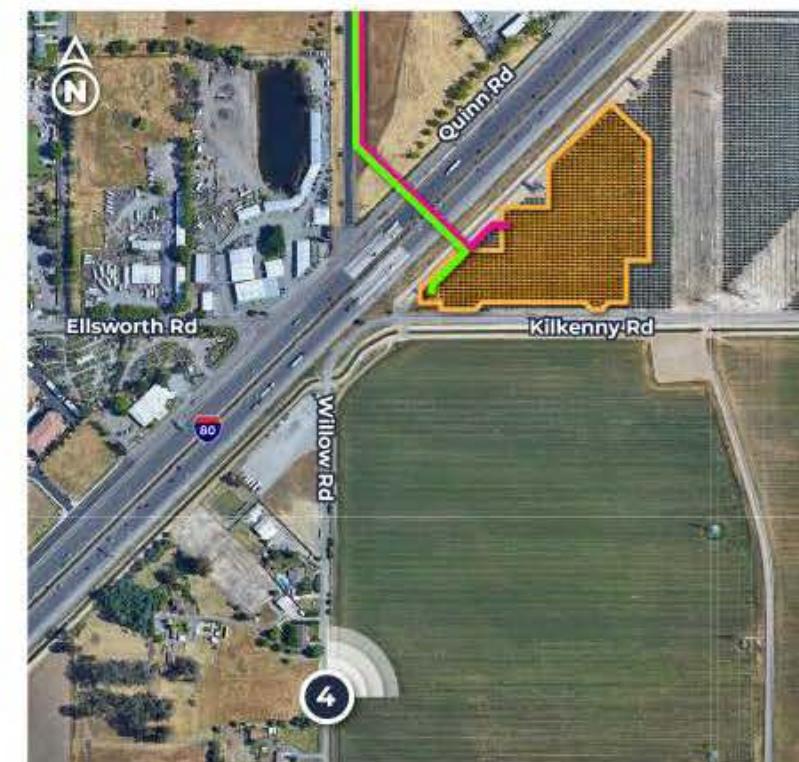


VACA DIXON

POWER CENTER PROJECT

VIEWPOINT 4

8/14/2025 · 9:44 am · Looking Northeast



- ④ Viewpoint Location
- Yellow: Vaca Arges BESS Site
- Green: Vaca Dixon Gen-Tie
- Magenta: Arges Gen-Tie

Photo simulations are for discussion purposes only.
Final design is subject to change pending public,
engineering, and regulatory review.

Vaca Dixon BESS LLC
Arges BESS LLC





Appendix A

FHWA Rating Forms

Visual Resource Survey:				Visual Resource Survey:											
Viewpoint: KOP #1		Key View:													
Date: 1/22/25		Existing Conditions													
Description: Representative view of residences on Mills Lane				Description: Representative view of residences on Mills Lane											
Photo Orientation: Northeast				Photo Orientation: Northeast											
Viewer Position: <input type="checkbox"/> Inferior <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X <input type="checkbox"/> Level <input type="checkbox"/> Superior				Viewer Position: <input type="checkbox"/> Inferior <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X <input type="checkbox"/> Level <input type="checkbox"/> Superior											
View	Notes (describe existing conditions)														
Foreground (0 - 1/2 mile)	The foreground includes light green turf grass bounded by brown and black fence posts with grey barbed wire strung between. Beyond the green fields there is a field of light grey-brown dry grasses and brush and more grey barbed wire fencing strung between wooden fence posts. Beyond the dry brush there are utility lines strung between a series of brown wooden utility poles and tall grey metal lattice steel towers with lines overhead, all of which interrupt and clutter the skyline. The foreground beyond the utility lines includes views of large white and cream colored industrial buildings with metallic														
Middleground (1/2 - 4 miles)	The middleground is not visible from this point due to intervening features in the foreground, such as large trees in the foreground and industrial structures.														
Background (> 4 miles)	The background is not visible from this point due to intervening features in the foreground, such as large trees and industrial structures.														
Vividness															
Feature	Score*	Notes (describe existing conditions)													
Landform	1	There are no prominent landforms visible from KOP #1. The topography is flat.													
Vegetation	4	There are mature trees and various grasses and shrubs visible throughout the frame. The leafless deciduous trees and shrubs do not contrast highly with the surrounding landscape, while the evergreen trees provide solid, soft masses of deep green which are contrasted against the sky. The overall landscape is not distinct or unique from others in the vicinity.													
Water Feature		There are no water features visible from KOP #1.													
Human-Made	4	Manmade features including fences, utility poles and lattice steel towers, overhead utility infrastructure (i.e. gen-tie and distribution lines), and industrial buildings (VDP) are skylined and prominent within the frame, and highly visible beyond the existing vegetation in the foreground.													
Overall	3.0														
Intactness															
Overall	3	The human-made features visible from this location clutter the view and do not enhance its existing character. The view is not intact due to human-made features present throughout the view which are incompatible with the natural features of the landscape.													
Unity															
Overall	3	The view from KOP 1 is not visually coherent, and natural and built elements compete for dominance within the view. The foreground view up to the horizon line is rural in nature with visually consistent swaths of turf. The dry brush and scattered trees provide a transition from the open, rural landscape into the developed buildings and infrastructure beyond the vegetated areas. The existing utility infrastructure and the VDPP													
Overall Visual Quality Score	3.0														
*Score Key:				*Score Key:											
1 - Very Low; 2 - Low; 3 - Moderately Low; 4 - Average; 5 - Moderately High; 6 - High; 7 - Very High				1 - Very Low; 2 - Low; 3 - Moderately Low; 4 - Average; 5 - Moderately High; 6 - High; 7 - Very High											

*Score Key:

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

*Score Key:

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

Visual Resource Survey:				Visual Resource Survey:											
Viewpoint: KOP #2		Key View:		Viewpoint: KOP #2		Key View:									
Date: 8/14/25		Existing Conditions		Date: 8/14/25		With Project									
Description: Representative view of westbound motorist on I-80.				Description: Representative view of westbound motorist on I-80.											
Photo Orientation: South				Photo Orientation:											
Viewer Position: <input type="checkbox"/> Inferior <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X <input type="checkbox"/> Level <input type="checkbox"/> Superior				Viewer Position: <input type="checkbox"/> Inferior <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X <input type="checkbox"/> Level <input type="checkbox"/> Superior											
View	Notes (describe existing conditions)														
Foreground (0 - 1/2 mile)	The foreground of the view is dominated by linear human-made elements, including a three-lane highway with black asphalt painted with yellow and white road markings and a metallic steel guardrail. Tufts of green shrub vegetation growing up around the guardrail separate, and largely obscure, the roadway and traffic coming the opposite direction. Beyond the roadway on the left side of the image there are rows of orchards characterized by midsized, uniform green trees. A tall rectangular billboard is prominent near the center of the image with red, white, and black writing highly contrasted against														
Middleground (1/2 - 4 miles)	The middleground is made up of tall, skylined evergreen trees visible across the center and on the left side of the frame. Green street signs and metal street sign support structures are faintly visible on the right side of the frame.														
Background (> 4 miles)	Hazy hillsides dotted with dark patches of vegetation are visible in the distant background along the right side of the image; a short peek of the hills is also present below the billboard.														
Vividness															
Feature	Score*	Notes (describe existing conditions)													
Landform	2.5	Views of distant hillsides in the background are mostly obscured by man-made features and vegetation. The middle and foreground have flat topography.													
Vegetation	3	Vegetation in the foreground is broken up by linear human-made features. The orchards on the left side of the image present as a solid green line, and are typical of the area. Large trees in the middleground are nondescript. The vegetation forms diffuse dotting which moderately contrasts with the distant hillsides and skyline.													
Water Feature		There are no water features visible from KOP #2.													
Human-Made	4	The view is cluttered with several human-made features, including asphalt roads, various colored signs, and existing utility infrastructure. These features are not distinct or dramatic.													
Overall	3.2														
Intactness															
Overall	2	The human-made features visible from this location clutter the view and do not enhance its existing character. The view is not intact due to human-made features present throughout the view which are incompatible with the natural features of the landscape.													
Unity															
Overall	2	The view from KOP 2 is not visually coherent, and numerous human-made features clutter and compete for dominance within the view.													
Overall Visual Quality Score	2.4														
*Score Key:				*Score Key:											
1 - Very Low; 2 - Low; 3 - Moderately Low; 4 - Average; 5 - Moderately High; 6 - High; 7 - Very High				1 - Very Low; 2 - Low; 3 - Moderately Low; 4 - Average; 5 - Moderately High; 6 - High; 7 - Very High											
Copy of FHWA_KOP_Ratings_Forms_Vaca Dixon-hb-MK 12															

*Score Key:
1 - Very Low; 2 - Low; 3 - Moderately Low; 4 - Average; 5 - Moderately High; 6 - High; 7 - Very High

*Score Key:
1 - Very Low; 2 - Low; 3 - Moderately Low; 4 - Average; 5 - Moderately High; 6 - High; 7 - Very High

Visual Resource Survey:				Visual Resource Survey:											
Viewpoint: KOP #3		Key View:													
Date: 8/14/25		Existing Conditions													
Description: Representative view of eastbound motorists on I-80				Description:											
Photo Orientation: Northeast				Photo Orientation:											
Viewer Position: <input type="checkbox"/> Inferior <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X <input type="checkbox"/> Level <input type="checkbox"/> Superior				Viewer Position: <input type="checkbox"/> Inferior <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X <input type="checkbox"/> Level <input type="checkbox"/> Superior											
View	Notes (describe existing conditions)														
Foreground (0 - 1/2 mile)	The immediate foreground is made of up black asphalt painted with white roadway lines. A small see-through fence separating I-80 from Kilkenny Road can faintly be seen inbetween swaths of tall yellow grass with intermittent clumps of large green shrubs lining the roadway. Large, grey lattice steel towers and wooden utility poles strung with utility lines are skylined across the center of the view. Orchard trees form a solid green line across the horizon. Four large billboards parallel the right side of the roadway above the orchard canopy.														
Middleground (1/2 - 4 miles)	Near the center of the image, a concrete overpass forms a short horizontal line. Due to intervening vegetation and features, no other features are visible in the middleground from KOP #3.														
Background (> 4 miles)	The background is not visible from this location due to the flat topography of the area, intervening features, and low clouds hazing the surroundings.														
Vividness															
Feature	Score*	Notes (describe existing conditions)													
Landform	1	There are no prominent landforms visible from KOP #3. The topography is flat.													
Vegetation	3	Majority of the foreground is made up of roadway and manmade features. There is some prominent vegetation along the right side of the roadway (the grasses, shrubs, and orchard).													
Water Feature		There are no water features visible from KOP #3.													
Human-Made	4	The view is cluttered with human-made features, including asphalt roads, various colored billboards, and existing overhead utility infrastructure. These features are not distinct or dramatic, and compete for visual dominance.													
Overall	2.7														
Intactness															
Overall	2	The human-made features visible from this location clutter the view and do not enhance its existing character. The view is not intact due to human-made features present throughout the view which are incompatible with the natural features of the landscape.													
Unity															
Overall	2	The view from KOP 3 is not visually coherent, and numerous human-made features clutter and compete for dominance within the view.													
Overall Visual Quality Score	2.2														
*Score Key: 1 - Very Low; 2 - Low; 3 - Moderately Low; 4 - Average; 5 - Moderately High; 6 - High; 7 - Very High				*Score Key: 1 - Very Low; 2 - Low; 3 - Moderately Low; 4 - Average; 5 - Moderately High; 6 - High; 7 - Very High											
Copy of FHWA_KOP_Ratings_Forms_Vaca Dixon-hb-MK \ 3															

*Score Key:
1 - Very Low; 2 - Low; 3 - Moderately Low; 4 - Average; 5 - Moderately High; 6 - High; 7 - Very High

*Score Key:
1 - Very Low; 2 - Low; 3 - Moderately Low; 4 - Average; 5 - Moderately High; 6 - High; 7 - Very High

Visual Resource Survey:				Visual Resource Survey:											
Viewpoint: KOP #4		Key View:													
Date: 8/14/25		Existing Conditions													
Description: Representative view from residences on Willow Road				Description: Representative view from residences on Willow Road											
Photo Orientation: Northeast				Photo Orientation:											
Viewer Position: <input type="checkbox"/> Inferior <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X <input type="checkbox"/> Level <input type="checkbox"/> Superior				Viewer Position: <input type="checkbox"/> Inferior <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X <input type="checkbox"/> Level <input type="checkbox"/> Superior											
View	Notes (describe existing conditions)														
Foreground (0 - 1/2 mile)	There is a row of light yellow and brown shrubs in the immediate foreground followed by a strip of brown dirt and a large, solid field of green grass is the most consistent features in the view. Across the field a large orchard characterized by evenly-spaced medium sized trees forms a dotted green line across the center of the frame. Traffic from I-80 is visible on the left side of the frame. Four billboards are elevated above the treeline in the middleground. Large lattice steel towers strung with utility lines are skylined and span across the frame.														
Middleground (1/2 - 4 miles)	Dispersed views of utility lines strung across large, grey lattice steel towers are present in the middleground, intermittently obscured by intermittent bunches of large green trees. Features in the middleground are irregular and cluttered.														
Background (> 4 miles)	Faint silhouettes of distant utility towers are present along the horizon on the right side of the image. The background is generally not visible from this location due to the flat topography of the area, intervening features, and low clouds hazing the surroundings.														
Vividness															
Feature	Score*	Notes (describe existing conditions)													
Landform	1	There are no prominent landforms visible from KOP #4. The topography is flat.													
Vegetation	5	The row of golden grasses and solid green, large grassy field contrasts with the tones of surrounding features and is prominent in the foreground. The even line of orchard trees beyond the field provides a dark edge at the top of the field, but does not contrast highly with surrounding features above the horizon. The skylined trees in the middleground are irregular in form but typical of the area.													
Water Feature		There are no water features visible from KOP #4.													
Human-Made	4	The centerline of the view is cluttered with human-made features which contrast to varying degrees against the sky, including various colored billboards, and existing overhead utility structures and lines. These features are not distinct or dramatic, and compete for visual dominance.													
Overall	3.3														
Intactness															
Overall	4	The human-made features visible from this location clutter the view and distract from natural features within the view. The view is not intact due to human-made features present throughout the view which are incompatible with the natural features of the landscape.													
Unity															
Overall	3	The view from KOP 4 is not visually coherent, and visual dominance is split between features below and above the horizon line. Below the horizon, the view is dominated by the consistent textures and colors of the green field, banded by the dark green line of orchard trees along the center of the view. Above the horizon, a mix of large trees and human-made features (utility infrastructure, billboards) compete for dominance and													
Overall Visual Quality Score	3.4														
*Score Key:				*Score Key:											
1 - Very Low; 2 - Low; 3 - Moderately Low; 4 - Average; 5 - Moderately High; 6 - High; 7 - Very High				1 - Very Low; 2 - Low; 3 - Moderately Low; 4 - Average; 5 - Moderately High; 6 - High; 7 - Very High											

Appendix B

KOP Correspondence with CEC



Re: [EXT] Re: Vaca Dixon Power Center - New Site KOP Review Request

From Hamblin, Mark@Energy <Mark.Hamblin@energy.ca.gov>

Date Mon 8/11/2025 5:10 PM

To Adam Morrison <amorrison@rinconconsultants.com>; Megan Knight <mknight@rinconconsultants.com>

Cc Katherine Green <kgreen@rinconconsultants.com>; Brenda Eells <beells@rinconconsultants.com>; Hannah Bireschi <hbireschi@rinconconsultants.com>; Robert Ray <rray@patchservices.com>

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of Rincon Consultants. Be cautious before clicking on any links, or opening any attachments, until you are confident that the content is safe .

Adam,

In my earlier email I wanted to flag you that the project is in an "urbanized area" [\[1\]](#) as defined by CEQA. Because of being in an urbanized area, the applicable portion of CEQA Guidelines Appendix G, Section I, Aesthetics, subsection (c) asks "*If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality?*"

In my cursory review of the new project site, the city of Vacaville General Plan and zoning show the site designated "Business Park" and zoned "Business Park" (BP). The scenic quality requirements and regulation of the Business Park general plan designation and zoning are applicable to the project. A CEQA related adverse effect would exist if the project in an urbanized area conflicts with zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality. Building/structure elevations, site and development plans, plot plan, renderings address the matter. No "objects of aesthetic significance" are within the surrounding area of the project site.

The proposed KOPs shown are fine, but not required per Cal. Code Regs., tit. 20, div. 2, chap. 5, Appendix B Information Requirements (6)(C) in an urbanized area. Suggested yes.

[\[1\]](#) *For the purposes of CEQA, an "urbanized area" means either "(a) An incorporated city that meets either of the following criteria: (1) Has a population of at least 100,000 persons. (2) Has a population of less than 100,000 persons if the population of that city and not more than two contiguous incorporated cities combined equals at least 100,000 persons." (Pub. Res. Code § 21071[a]) An urbanized area also includes unincorporated area that satisfies criteria in Pub. Res. Code § 21071(b).*

Mark R. Hamblin, MPA
Environmental Protection Branch
Siting, Transmission and Environmental Protection Division
California Energy Commission
715 P Street, MS 40
Sacramento, CA 95814-5504
email: mark.hamblin@energy.ca.gov
website: energy.ca.gov

From: Adam Morrison <amorrison@rinconconsultants.com>
Sent: Thursday, August 7, 2025 2:44 PM
To: Hamblin, Mark@Energy <Mark.Hamblin@energy.ca.gov>; Megan Knight <mknight@rinconconsultants.com>
Cc: Katherine Green <kgreen@rinconconsultants.com>; Brenda Eells <beells@rinconconsultants.com>; Hannah Bireschi <hbireschi@rinconconsultants.com>; Robert Ray <rray@patchservices.com>
Subject: Re: [EXT] Re: Vaca Dixon Power Center - New Site KOP Review Request

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Good afternoon, Mark,

Thank you for your feedback. To clarify, the BESS facilities are proposed to be installed in the City of Vacaville, but the Project will also include a gen-tie line that crosses I-80 and connects to the existing VacaDixon Peaker Plant to the north. The gen-tie line would extend outside of the City of Vacaville boundaries.

We have attached revised KOP locations for further consideration and feedback, including the preliminary gen-tie design. We have included the two views from I-80, which you expressed support for in your initial response, as well as two additional views from publicly accessible areas that provide a view of the Project components outside of the "urbanized area" (i.e., the gen-tie line that extends outside the limits of the City of Vacaville). Please let us know if you have any additional feedback based on this information.

Thank you,
Adam



Adam Morrison
Senior Environmental Planner
amorrison@rinconconsultants.com
760-517-9127 Direct
San Diego, California

From: Hamblin, Mark@Energy <Mark.Hamblin@energy.ca.gov>
Sent: Thursday, July 31, 2025 1:25 PM
To: Megan Knight <mknight@rinconconsultants.com>
Cc: Kerr, Steven@Energy <Steven.Kerr@energy.ca.gov>; Katherine Green <kgreen@rinconconsultants.com>; Adam Morrison <amorrison@rinconconsultants.com>; Brenda Eells <beells@rinconconsultants.com>; Hannah Bireschi <hbireschi@rinconconsultants.com>; Robert Ray <rray@patchservices.com>
Subject: [EXT] Re: Vaca Dixon Power Center - New Site KOP Review Request

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of Rincon Consultants. Be cautious before clicking on any links, or opening any attachments, until you are confident that the content is safe .

Megan,

I've included a few comments and observations regarding the new project location and the suggested KOPs. Please note that Steve Kerr is no longer with the Californian Energy Commission. He accepted a position in another state agency a couple weeks ago. His former CEC position is currently vacant. In the interim, Eric Knight, Branch Manager of the Environmental Protection Branch, is serving as the acting unit supervisor.

Mark R. Hamblin, MPA
Environmental Protection Branch
Siting, Transmission and Environmental Protection Division
California Energy Commission
715 P Street, MS 40
Sacramento, CA 95814-5504
email: mark.hamblin@energy.ca.gov
website: energy.ca.gov

From: Megan Knight <mknight@rinconconsultants.com>
Sent: Wednesday, July 30, 2025 4:37 AM
To: Hamblin, Mark@Energy <Mark.Hamblin@energy.ca.gov>
Cc: Kerr, Steven@Energy <Steven.Kerr@energy.ca.gov>; Katherine Green <kgreen@rinconconsultants.com>; Adam Morrison <amorrison@rinconconsultants.com>; Brenda Eells <beells@rinconconsultants.com>; Hannah Bireschi <hbireschi@rinconconsultants.com>; Robert Ray <rray@patchservices.com>
Subject: Vaca Dixon Power Center - New Site KOP Review Request

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Good morning Mark,

I hope this message finds you well! Due to constraints at the previous Vaca Dixon Power Center site, the project has been relocated immediately south of the old site (south of I-80). The project is now located within the incorporated boundaries of the City of Vacaville.

We are currently preparing to go out for a site visit to take KOP photos for our visual simulations and other character photos of the project vicinity, and are reaching out for your feedback on the locations we have selected as potential viewpoints for the project. I have attached a KMZ of the draft photo locations. Each KOP also includes details of the viewer group that particular KOP represents (i.e. motorists, residents, etc.). If you could please review, and let us know your thoughts, we would greatly appreciate it. We are also happy to setup a call to go over the locations if that is better suited for you.

Thanks so much for your time and talk to you soon!

Sincerely,



Megan Knight
Environmental Planner/Biologist
mknight@rinconconsultants.com
805-644-4455 Main | 805-329-5118 Direct
San Luis Obispo, California

July 31, 2025

Proposed Project: Vaca Arges

Assessor parcel number (APN): 0133-060-060

The project site is shown in agricultural production; orchard (see Google Maps aerial view and street view dated April 2025).

The subject property is within the boundary of the city of Vacaville. The city General Plan shows the property designated as "Business Park," and being in the "Business Park" (BP) zone district.

The property is within the "Northeast Growth Area Overlay District" of the city.

The Solano County General Plan shows I-80 as a county scenic roadway.

Key Observation Point(s) and Suggestions

A *key observation point* (KOP) is a fixed position in a publicly accessible location where a public view of the project is analyzed and evaluated in the landscape.

The project site is within an "urbanized area"¹ as defined by CEQA, the preparation of a photo-realistic simulation of the project in the existing landscape is not required by Environmental Protection Branch staff (see California Code of Regulations [CCR], Title 20, Division 2, Chapter 5, Appendix B Information Requirements (6)(B)). A KOP(s) is recommended.

Looking at your KOP suggestions shown on the KMZ, I would support your use of the KMZ location number 2a, (I-80 east bound) and 2b (I-80 west bound). I-80 is shown as a Scenic Roadway on the Solano County General Plan, Figure RS-5 Scenic Roadways. A suggestion, assign all KOPs numbers: KOP 1, KOP 2, et seq. instead of 2a, 2b.

The potential physical change by the proposed project to an existing object of aesthetic significance and the existing physical environment in the area is what is analyzed. In my cursory review, using Google Earth and Google Maps, I am not seeing any "objects of aesthetics significance" on the site or in the vicinity.

The proposed project site is near or in the 64,000-acre Dixon Ridge agricultural region as shown in the Solano County General Plan (see Chapter 3-Agriculture) and/or a Vacaville-Dixon greenbelt of land between the cities of Vacaville and Dixon.

¹ For the purposes of CEQA, an "urbanized area" means either "(a) An incorporated city that meets either of the following criteria: (1) Has a population of at least 100,000 persons. (2) Has a population of less than 100,000 persons if the population of that city and not more than two contiguous incorporated cities combined equals at least 100,000 persons." (Pub. Res. Code § 21071[a]) An urbanized area also includes unincorporated area that satisfies criteria in Pub. Res. Code § 21071(b).

Agricultural land between the cities of Vacaville and Dixon experiences high development pressure. In order to maintain the physical separation between the cities, to acknowledge the development pressure in this area, and to promote the viability of agricultural operations, the County of Solano and the cities have devised things like agricultural regions, agricultural reserve overlays, and greenbelts.

CEQA, and CEQA Guidelines Environmental Factor — Aesthetics

California Energy Commission must assess "... the physical environmental conditions in the vicinity of the project. This environmental setting will normally constitute the baseline physical conditions by which a lead agency ^[2] determines whether an impact is significant." (14 CCR § 15125[a])

CEQA states "'Environment' means the physical conditions which exist within the area which will be affected by a proposed project, including land, air, water, minerals, flora, fauna, noise, objects of historic or aesthetic significance [emphasis added]" (Pub. Res. Code § 21060.5)

The CEQA Guidelines also state a "Significant effect on the environment" means a substantial, or potentially substantial, adverse change in any of the physical conditions within the area affected by the project including land, air, water, minerals, flora, fauna, ambient noise, and objects of historic or aesthetic significance ^[3] [emphasis added]." (14 CCR § 15382)

The CEQA Guidelines state "Effects analyzed under CEQA must be related to a physical change." (14 CCR § 15358[b])

The *CEQA Guidelines Appendix G Environmental Checklist Form, I. Aesthetics*, as amended December 28, 2018, provides questions (criteria) for evaluating whether a proposed project may have a "significant effect on the environment" involving the environmental factor "Aesthetics."

The applicable part of *CEQA Guidelines Appendix G Environmental Checklist Form, I. Aesthetics, c*, asks "If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality?" If the proposed project is in nonconformance with zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality, it would be an adverse effect for the purposes of CEQA and the CEQA Guidelines (a "significant effect on the environment").

Completing the evaluation typically entails examining aerial and street view imagery, reviewing Geographic Information System (GIS) information, assessing elevations,

² "Lead agency" means the public agency which has the principal responsibility for carrying out or approving a project." (14 CCR § 15367)

³ An "object of historic significance" is a broad term that typically encompasses cultural or historical artifacts and relics over 50 years old (e.g., archaeological finds, structures, tools, weapons).

architectural and site development plans, drawings, and renderings, reviewing applicable federal, state, and local government codes and regulations, maps and plans, consulting tour book guides and road atlases, and a visit to the project site and the surrounding area.