

5.0 ALTERNATIVES TO THE PROJECT

5.1 ALTERNATIVES ANALYSIS

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requires that an EIR analyze a range of reasonable alternatives to a project (in this case, adoption and implementation of the West Broadway Avenue Urban Village Specific Plan) that could feasibly attain most of the basic objectives of the project while avoiding or substantially lessening any significant impacts. The analysis evaluates the comparative merits of the alternatives (CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6). Alternatives that avoid or substantially reduce significant impacts are considered, even if these alternatives would impede to some degree the attainment of project objectives or would be more costly (CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(b)).

The project has been described and analyzed in the previous chapters with an emphasis on potentially significant impacts and recommended mitigation measures to avoid these impacts. The alternatives analysis is intended to inform the public and decision-makers of alternatives to the project and to provide meaningful evaluation, analysis and comparison of these alternatives with the proposed project. An EIR need not consider every conceivable alternative to a project. Rather, it must consider a reasonable range of potentially feasible alternatives that will foster informed decision-making and public participation (CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(a)). As required by CEQA, this chapter also includes an analysis of the No Project Alternative.

The project would result in significant impacts (before mitigation) in the areas of aesthetics, biological resources, cultural resources, geology and soils, hazards and hazardous materials, hydrology and water quality, noise, population and housing, public services, recreation, transportation, and utilities. Some of these impacts could either be reduced or avoided by the three alternatives presented in this chapter, as described below. No significant impacts were identified for the topics of land use and planning, agricultural resources, and mineral resources. Therefore, the analysis of alternatives does not include consideration of these topic areas.

Alternative 1: *Reduced Density*. This alternative would reduce the amount of allowable development in the project area to a figure equivalent to 80 percent of development proposed as part of the project, as identified in **Table 5.1**. The transportation improvements and parkland designations included in the project would remain as described for the project. The allowable levels of new residential, commercial, and institutional development would be reduced by approximately 20 percent from the anticipated project buildout.

Table 5.1. Development Program, Project and Alternative 1

Land Use Type	Project	Alternative 1
Residential	494 units	395 units
Commercial/Retail	296,800 square feet	237,440 square feet
Office	28,700 square feet	22,960 square feet
Hotel	Approximately 250 rooms	Approximately 200 rooms
Other	20,000 square feet of public library 540 off-street parking spaces 53,000 square feet of outdoor public space	16,000 square feet of public library 432 off-street parking spaces 42,400 square feet of outdoor public space

Source: DC&E, 2008

Alternative 2: Retain West Broadway Avenue Configuration. This alternative would have the same development program as the project, but would remove the West Broadway Avenue Reconfiguration proposed by the project. The street would remain in its present four lane configuration; the proposed reconfiguration of the street to include wider sidewalks, medians, and a pedestrian paseo (as shown in **Figure 4.11-2** in this EIR and on page 69 of the Specific Plan) would not be made. Although this EIR concluded that the project’s proposed reconfiguration of West Broadway Avenue would not result in significant environmental effects related to emergency access through the project area, this alternative was formulated to help address concerns identified regarding this element of the project.

Alternative 3: No Project Alternative. This alternative assumes that existing zoning classifications consistent with the existing Seaside General Plan would remain in effect for the entire project area. Current regulations permit mixed use and residential uses in the project area but do not provide detailed guidance as to specific design guidelines or development standards as are included in the project. The catalyst developments and transportation improvements proposed for the project area would not be constructed, but transportation improvements consistent with the adopted General Plan Circulation Element would be constructed in the future. Within the project area, these improvements include the narrowing of West Broadway Avenue from four lanes to a two-lane minor arterial and the inclusion of pedestrian enhancements. Allowable levels of development would be consistent with the existing zoning classifications, as identified in **Table 5.2** below.

Table 5.2. Development Program, Project and Alternative 3

Land Use Type	Project	Alternative 3
Residential	494 units	369 units
Commercial/Retail/Institutional ^A	395,500 square feet ^B	1,669,961 – 2,036,372 square feet

A Commercial/retail/institutional land use types include offices, retail, and the public library.
B The Specific Plan permits up to 395,500 square feet of commercial, retail and civic development throughout the project area.
Source: City of Seaside, 2008

In the subsections which follow, the three alternatives to the project are compared to the project for each of the environmental topics evaluated in this EIR which indicated potentially significant impacts associated with the project. Per section 15126.6(a) of the CEQA Guidelines, project alternatives are formulated in an effort to reduce potential project impacts while attaining the project's objectives. As such, this alternatives comparison does not address impacts to land use and planning, as the project would not result in any potentially significant impacts related to that topic, there is no apparently controversy associated with that topic, and the alternatives would have no bearing on reducing the less than significant land use impacts.

In accordance with CEQA Guidelines section 15126.6(d), the comparison of the impacts of the identified alternatives is less detailed than the discussion of the project

5.2 ALTERNATIVE 1 – REDUCED DENSITY ALTERNATIVE

Implementing Alternative 1 would reduce the potential buildout of the project area by 20 percent, which would directly result in a reduction in the anticipated amount of population and commercial development growth. This reduction would create fewer demands for public services, recreational facilities, and utilities than the project scenario. Similarly, the reduced development under Alternative 1 would create less traffic in the project area, which would lead to a decrease in vehicle emissions and traffic-related noise.

Implementing Alternative 1 would still potentially allow the creation of a distinct “urban village” character for the project area, but to a slightly lesser degree than the project. In most cases, the proposed buildout for a Specific Plan is never fully realized. By reducing the allowable development for the project area, Alternative 1 may create a situation where actual buildout of the project area is less than 80 percent of the projected project buildout. This reduction of development would likely slow, limit, or lessen the extent of the implementation of the project and achievement of desired project objectives, including creating a hub of economic and civic activity in the project area, creating a balance of community and visitor-serving mix of uses, supporting and encouraging the development of vacant and underutilized lots. The exact amount by which Alternative 1 would limit or lessen project objectives is not known insofar as the level and rate of development of the project area is also subject to numerous external factors, including local, regional, and national economic trends. However, given the lack of investment and private sector improvements in the project area over the past two decades, it is reasonable to conclude that the more permissive development environment (as represented by the project) would better achieve these project objectives relative to Alternative 1. In all, Alternative 1 would meet most project objectives¹ but not as robustly or fully as the project scenario.

¹ See Chapter 3, Project Description.

5.2.1 COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS FOR ALTERNATIVE 1

Aesthetics

Reducing allowable density of development in the project area would not necessarily lead to a reduction in building heights. Future developments with building heights ranging of up to eight stories would create new shadow patterns in the project area. Although the level of overall development would be 20 percent less than the project in Alternative 1, the potential shadowing effects to the project area would generally be the same as the project scenario, as building heights would not necessarily decrease with the reduction in density. Adherence to the design guidelines and development standards would still result in an ultimate visual character at buildout consistent with the “urban village” identity of the project. Aesthetic impacts under Alternative 1 would therefore be similar to impacts under the project.

Air Quality

The reduced development under Alternative 1 would generate less traffic and fewer emissions than the project. However, neither Alternative 1 nor the project would conflict with the air quality management plan. Under Alternative 1, Criteria pollutants for which the air district is in nonattainment would be emitted, but at slightly lower concentrations than with the project, resulting in fewer emissions than under the project.

During construction, sensitive receptors in the vicinity of the project area would be exposed to pollutant concentrations, particularly dust, under both Alternative 1 and project scenarios. The expected reduction in construction-related air pollution associated with a 20 percent decrease in density would be marginal. When combined with the reduced criteria emissions, the overall impact to air quality under Alternative 1 would be less than under the project.

Biological Resources

Biological impacts resulting from construction activities in the project area would occur under both the Alternative 1 and project scenarios. Although Alternative 1 would reduce the amount of allowable development in the project area, it would not restrict the development to already improved sites. As such, construction activities could still occur in the limited areas of undeveloped property where special-status plant species, avian, and/or bat roosting habitat may exist. Similarly, the reduced development would not necessarily equate to a reduction of potential impacts to protected trees, as the reduced development could occur where the majority of the limited number of protected trees exist in the project area. Biological impacts under Alternative 1 would therefore be similar to those under the project.

Cultural Resources

Both Alternative 1 and the project would have the potential to expose and/or damage undiscovered archaeological resources (including human remains) during project construction. Although fewer units would be developed under Alternative 1, the potential impacts to unknown cultural resources would still be possible at any of the future development sites. Impacts to cultural resources under Alternative 1 would therefore be similar to those under the project.

Geology and Soils

Alternative 1 would have the same potential erosion effects as the project due to the removal of vegetation and land clearance activities. Although Alternative 1 would involve less construction activity, the magnitude of the potential erosion and stormwater runoff would be related to the control practices and prevention plans implemented at the development sites, and not just the size of the area under construction.

The reduced development of Alternative 1 would expose fewer people and structures to potential adverse effects related to strong seismic shaking. Because fewer people would be exposed to the safety hazards associated with earthquakes, the overall impact from Alternative 1 related to geology and soils would be less than under the project.

Hazards

Development of Alternative 1 would include the risk of adverse health effects to construction workers and/or the public due to the presence of on-site contaminated soils and groundwater. Similarly, the demolition or renovation of structures containing lead based paint and/or asbestos containing building materials may release harmful airborne particles of hazardous materials. Although fewer units would be developed under Alternative 1, the exposure to hazardous materials would still be possible for anyone on the contaminated development sites. The impacts associated with hazards under Alternative 1 would therefore be similar to those under the project.

Hydrology and Water Quality

Development of both Alternative 1 and the project scenarios would result in stormwater runoff which could carry litter and hazardous substances into receiving waters, thus degrading water quality. Under both scenarios, construction could also result in erosion, sedimentation, and further degradation of water quality in the vicinity of the project area. Although fewer units would be developed under Alternative 1, potential erosion and stormwater runoff would be related to the control practices and prevention plans implemented at the development sites, and not just the size of the area under construction. The impacts associated with hydrology and water quality under Alternative 1 would be similar to those under the project.

Noise

In comparison to the project, there would be less development under Alternative 1, and therefore less traffic and less traffic-generated noise. Although 20 percent less development would occur under Alternative 1, residential units would continue to be allowed to be constructed in areas of the City where noise levels currently exceed the acceptable standards. Potential noise impacts to these units under Alternative 1 would be similar to those under the project.

Population and Housing

The reduced development under Alternative 1 would result in a smaller increase in population than the project. This lower population growth would result in greater consistency with regional growth projections, and would have less of an impact on the existing limited supply of water resources for the City. Furthermore, the reduced development of Alternative 1 would result in fewer displacements of existing residents in the project area. The impacts to population and housing under Alternative 1 would be less than under the project.

Public Services

The reconfiguration of West Broadway Avenue would occur under both Alternative 1 and the project. As discussed in **Section 4.11, Public Services**, the proposed center medians and sidewalks on West Broadway Avenue could be designed to allow continued emergency access routes through the project area. Alternative 1 would have similar impacts to emergency routes as would the project.

Implementation of Alternative 1 would result in a smaller population growth and reduced commercial/retail development as compared to the project scenario, reducing the incremental demand for fire and police services. The impacts to the provision of public services under Alternative 1 would be less than under the project.

Recreation

The development of the project area would directly result in population growth and increased demands for park and recreation facilities that currently do not meet the City's needs. Because Alternative 1 would result in a slightly smaller population growth, the increased demands for the City's recreational facilities would be less than under project conditions. Impacts related to demands for recreational facilities under Alternative 1 would be at lower levels than under the project. However, Alternative 1 would retain the development of new park space, resulting in similar construction impacts as the project.

Transportation

The development of the project area would lead to an increase in traffic and the degradation of transportation facilities in and near the project area. Although traffic volumes would be slightly reduced under Alternative 1, impacts to study intersections and roadways may be equally significant under both scenarios. The traffic impacts under Alternative 1 would be similar to those under the project.

Utilities

The development of the project area would directly result in population growth and an increased demand for public utilities. However, because Alternative 1 would result in a slightly smaller population growth, the demand for utilities would be less than under the project.

5.3 ALTERNATIVE 2 – RETENTION OF WEST BROADWAY AVENUE CONFIGURATION

Implementing Alternative 2 would propose a similar buildout of the project area when compared to the project, but would not include the reconfiguration and narrowing of West Broadway Avenue. As such, Alternative 2 could result in the same rate of population growth as the project, equally increasing the demands for public services, recreational facilities, and utilities. However, as discussed further below, the retention of West Broadway Avenue’s present configuration would remove a key element of the overall project, potentially imperiling other development goals for the project area as a whole.

A central element of the project (consistent with the adopted General Plan) is the reconfiguration of West Broadway Avenue. The reduction in lanes and introduction of pedestrian features are central to achieving the desired “urban village” identity. Improvements to this roadway would serve as a catalyst for the development community by telegraphing the City’s intent of creating a more inviting pedestrian atmosphere that would become an inviting local and regional destination. The retention of the current West Broadway Avenue configuration would establish significant physical and visual disconnections between any new commercial and residential development in the project area, which would likely make the area less attractive for new development and thus result in a reduced rate of development along this corridor. This reduction in the rate of development could imperil the long-term implementation of the project and interfere with the ability to meet other project objectives, including developing a more pedestrian-friendly streetscape and revitalizing the project area as a whole.

5.3.1 COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS FOR ALTERNATIVE 2

Aesthetics

Future developments with building heights ranging of up to eight stories would create new shadow patterns in the project area. The potential shadow effects of Alternative 2 would be the same as the project scenario.

The retention of the current West Broadway Avenue configuration would establish significant physical and visual disconnections between any new commercial and residential development in the project area, as the majority of the pedestrian amenities (i.e. walkways, paseos, plazas, and courtyards) would not exist. The resulting character at buildout of Alternative 2 would be inconsistent with the “urban village” identity the City would like to create, and new visual impacts could occur as a result of this lack of uniformity. These aesthetic impacts under Alternative 2 would therefore be greater than under the project.

Air Quality

During construction, sensitive receptors in the vicinity of the project area would be exposed to relatively equal amounts of pollutant concentrations, notably dust, under both Alternative 2 and the project as Alternative 2 would propose a similar buildout of the project area. Neither the project nor Alternative 2 would result in a conflict with the Air Quality Management Plan.

However, the retention of the West Broadway Avenue configuration would lead to higher traffic volumes and higher emissions within the project area, as the pedestrian amenities, such as a center median and paseo, would not be developed. Since such pedestrian amenities would be limited on West Broadway Avenue under this alternative, individuals who would otherwise walk or bike around the project area would use their car on West Broadway Avenue. Thus, criteria pollutants for which the air district is in nonattainment would be emitted at slightly higher concentrations than with the project. The air quality impacts under Alternative 2 would therefore be greater than under the project.

Biological Resources

Biological impacts resulting from construction activities in the project area would occur under both the Alternative 2 and project scenarios. Disturbance areas where there is a potential for sensitive biological resources to exist would not change under Alternative 2, and any development in the project area would affect biological resources in the same manner that the project would. The impacts to biological resources under Alternative 2 would be similar to those under the project.

Cultural Resources

Both Alternative 2 and the project would have the potential to damage and/or expose archaeological resources, including human remains, during project construction. The potential impacts to unknown cultural resources would be possible at any development site within the project area. The impacts to cultural resources under Alternative 2 would be similar to those under the project.

Geology and Soils

Alternative 2 would have the same potential erosion effects as the project due to the removal of vegetation and land clearance activities. The magnitude of the potential erosion and stormwater runoff would be related to the control practices and prevention plans implemented at the development sites.

Alternative 2 would expose the same number of people or structures to potential adverse effects related to strong seismic shaking. The impacts associated with geology and soils under Alternative 2 would be similar to those under the project.

Hazards

Development of Alternative 2 would include the risk of adverse health effects to construction workers and/or the public due to the presence of on-site contaminated soils and groundwater. Similarly, the demolition or renovation of structures containing lead based paint and/or asbestos containing building materials may release harmful airborne particles of hazardous materials. The exposure to hazardous materials would be possible for anyone on the contaminated development sites. The impacts associated with hazards under Alternative 2 would be similar to those under the project.

Hydrology and Water Quality

Development of both Alternative 2 and the project would result in stormwater runoff which could carry litter and hazardous substances into receiving waters, thus degrading water quality. Under both scenarios, construction could also result in erosion, sedimentation, and further degradation of water quality in the vicinity of the project area. Potential erosion and stormwater runoff would be related to the control practices and prevention plans implemented at the development sites, and not just the size of the area under construction. Impacts to hydrology and water quality under Alternative 2 would be similar to the project.

Noise

The retention of the West Broadway Avenue configuration would lead to higher traffic volumes and higher traffic-generated noise along that corridor. Under both Alternative 2 and the project, residential units would be constructed in areas of the City where noise levels currently exceed acceptable standards. Potential noise impacts to these units would be greater under Alternative 2 as the lane reductions would not occur along this corridor and traffic levels would be greater than the project scenario. Noise impacts under Alternative 2 would therefore be greater than under the project.

Population and Housing

The development of Alternative 2 would allow the same rate of population growth and number of displacements as the project. Impacts to population and housing under Alternative 2 would therefore be similar to those under the project.

Public Services

The development of Alternative 2 would allow for the same rate of population growth as the project and create a similar increased demand for fire and police services. However, the retention of the West Broadway Avenue configuration would likely result in a marginally smaller impact to the street's use as an emergency access route. However, under both the project scenario and Alternative 2, impacts to emergency access would be less than significant. Thus, impacts to public services would be similar to those under the project, with the exception of a lesser impact under Alternative 2 in regards to emergency access routes.

Recreation

The development of Alternative 2 would result in the same rate of population growth as the project and create an increased demand for park and recreation facilities that currently do not meet the City's needs. Impacts to recreation services under Alternative 2 would be similar to those under the project.

Transportation

The retention of the West Broadway Avenue configuration would lead to higher traffic volumes and the degradation of transportation facilities in and near the project area. Furthermore, the adopted General Plan Circulation Element calls for the provision of a pedestrian-friendly

atmosphere through the narrowing of West Broadway Avenue (Policy C-1.5). By retaining the current configuration of West Broadway Avenue, Alternative 2 would be inconsistent with the goals and policies of the Circulation Element. Transportation impacts under Alternative 2 would therefore be greater than those associated with the project.

Utilities

The development of Alternative 2 would result in the same rate of population growth as the project and create an increased demand for public utilities. The demand for utilities under Alternative 2 would be similar to the project.

5.4 ALTERNATIVE 3 – NO PROJECT ALTERNATIVE

Implementing Alternative 3 would allow more commercial/retail uses and fewer new residential uses than the project scenario. As such, Alternative 3 would result in less population growth than the project. This reduction in population would create fewer demands for public services and recreational facilities. However, the substantially greater development of commercial/retail uses would have a similar or greater impact on traffic levels and utility deficiencies relative to the project.

Under Alternative 3, the catalyst developments and transportation improvements proposed for the project area would not be constructed, but transportation improvements consistent with the adopted General Plan Circulation Element would be constructed in the future. Within the project area, this includes the narrowing of West Broadway Avenue from four lanes to two lanes; this narrowing would be included as part of Alternative 3 considerations.

The same significant impacts to biological resources and/or cultural resources would occur under any urban density proposed for the project area. Any new development in the project area could lead to the exposure of construction workers and/or the public to hazardous materials and strong seismic ground shaking.

Implementing Alternative 3 would be significantly inconsistent with the project objectives, as no policies, design guidelines or development standards would be developed for the project area. With regard to the specific project objectives, Alternative 3 would not create a distinct identity for West Broadway Avenue, would not establish the West Broadway Urban Village as an attractive local and regional destination, would not encourage a hub of economic and civic activity, would not create a balance of community- and visitor-serving uses, would not develop an inviting pedestrian-friendly streetscape on West Broadway Avenue, would not support a range of affordable housing types, would not support and encourage the development of vacant and underutilized lots, and would not integrate multi-modal transit into the project area. Under this alternative, the detailed design guidelines and development standards set forth in the Specific Plan would not be implemented. The resulting visual and physical character under Alternative 3 would be inconsistent with the “urban village” identity of the project. Development in the project area would proceed as it has in the past, without benefit of a more unifying, holistic approach.

5.4.1 COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF ALTERNATIVE 3

Aesthetics

Under the project, future developments with building heights ranging of up to eight stories in the western most portion of the project area and five stories in most other locations, could create new shadow patterns. Under current regulations (ie the No Project Alternative) the maximum building height in the majority of the project area is 4 to 6 stories, but exceptions exist. Seaside Municipal Code Section 17.42.070.G.2 allows the Planning Commission to approve building heights of up to 15 stories within the Regional Commercial District; this designation currently applies to parcels in the western and north of the project area. However, the project area is also within the planning area of influence of the 1987 Comprehensive Land Use Plan area for the Monterey Peninsula Airport. According to the plan, the project area is within an area which limits building heights to 150 feet, or 12 to 13 stories in height. The adopted General Plan requires review by the Board of Architectural Review (BAR) for any additions to existing development that would increase building height. In its review, the BAR determines if a building's height or location would obstruct private views but does not necessarily examine shadowing effects.

In all, Alternative 3 has a stronger likelihood to result in shadowing effects relative to the project, insofar as the project includes extensive design guidelines and development standards that would call for more careful and context-sensitive site planning than is set forth under current regulations.

The resulting visual character under Alternative 3 would be inconsistent with the desired "urban village" identity of the project, as there would be no unifying design principles guiding the future development of the project area. Although the adopted General Plan Urban Design Element calls for the enhancement of the City's image and identity (Policy UD-1.1), there would be no design guidelines or development standards (i.e., architecture, landscaping, paint colors, etc.) tailored to the project area and intended to foster improvements in the area's visual character. New visual impacts could occur as a result and degrade the existing visual character of the project area. Furthermore, the increase in commercial development under Alternative 3 could lead to an increase in light and glare effects associated with lighted signs and brighter facade lighting. Aesthetic impacts under Alternative 3 would be greater than those under the project.

Air Quality

Buildout of the project area under Alternative 3 would allow for a significantly greater amount of commercial development and fewer residential units than the project. Although the ratio of commercial to residential land use would be different under Alternative 3, the amount of construction activity within the project area would be similar. Construction activities would lead to sensitive receptors in the vicinity of the project area being exposed to similar amounts of pollutant concentrations, particularly dust, as under the project scenario.

The substantial increase in commercial uses under Alternative 3 would generate higher traffic volumes and higher vehicle emissions within the project area. Criteria pollutants for which the

air district is in nonattainment would be emitted at slightly higher concentrations than with the project. The air quality impacts under Alternative 3 would therefore be greater than under the project. The increased amount of commercial development in Alternative 3 relative to the project could lead to a conflict with the Air Quality Management Plan, but the determination of any such conflict is the prerogative of AMBAG and the MBUAPCD.

Biological Resources

Biological impacts resulting from construction activities in the project area would occur under both the Alternative 3 and the project. Disturbance areas where there is a potential for sensitive biological resources to exist would not change under Alternative 3, and any development in the project area would affect biological resources in the same manner that the project would. Impacts to biological resources under Alternative 3 would be similar to those under the project.

Cultural Resources

Both Alternative 3 and the project would have the potential to expose and/or damage archaeological resources and expose unknown archeological resources, including human remains, during project construction. The potential impacts to unknown cultural resources would be possible at any of the future development sites. Impacts to cultural resources under Alternative 3 would be similar to those under the project.

Geology and Soils

Alternative 3 would have similar potential erosion effects as the project due to the removal of vegetation and land clearance activities. The magnitude of the potential erosion and stormwater runoff would be related to the control practices and prevention plans implemented at the development sites.

Alternative 3 would expose a similar number of people or structures to potential adverse effects related to strong seismic shaking. Impacts associated with geology and soils under Alternative 3 would be similar to those under the project.

Hazards

Development of Alternative 3 would include the risk of adverse health effects to construction workers and/or the public due to the presence of on-site contaminated soils and groundwater. Similarly, the demolition or renovation of structures containing lead based paint and/or asbestos containing building materials may release harmful airborne particles of hazardous materials. Exposure to hazardous materials would be possible for anyone on the contaminated development sites. Impacts associated with hazards under Alternative 3 would be similar to those under the project.

Hydrology and Water Quality

Development of both Alternative 3 and the project would result in stormwater runoff that could carry litter and hazardous substances into receiving waters, thus degrading water quality. Under both scenarios, construction could also result in erosion, sedimentation, and further

degradation of water quality in the vicinity of the project area. Potential erosion and stormwater runoff would be related to the control practices and prevention plans implemented at the development sites, and not just the size of the area under construction. Impacts associated with hydrology and water quality under Alternative 3 would be similar to those under the project

Noise

The substantial increase in commercial uses under Alternative 3 would generate higher traffic volumes and higher traffic-generated noise along that corridor. Under both Alternative 3 and the project, residential units would be constructed in areas of the City where noise levels currently exceed acceptable standards. Although Alternative 3 would reduce the number of residential units within the project area, potential noise impacts to these units would be greater under Alternative 3 as the traffic levels would be greater than the project scenario. Noise impacts under Alternative 3 would therefore be greater than under the project.

Population and Housing

The reduced residential development under Alternative 3 would result in a smaller population than projected under the project. This reduction in population growth would be more consistent with regional growth projections, and would have less of an impact on the existing limited supply of water resources for the City. The greater amount of commercial development, however, could lead to Alternative 3 having higher indirect effects on housing demand than the project.

The development of commercial/retail property under Alternative 3 would not extend into the existing residentially zoned sections of the project area, and would therefore result in less displacement of the existing residents. Impacts to population and housing under Alternative 3 would be less than under the project.

Public Services

The population growth from developing of the project area would result in population growth and an increased demand for fire and police services. Although the implementation of Alternative 3 would result in a lesser amount of new population, the overall larger growth in commercial development would have a similar or greater demand on public services as the project.

The reconfiguration of West Broadway Avenue would occur under both Alternative 3 and project scenarios. As discussed in **Section 4.11, Public Services**, the proposed reconfiguration would not result in any significant environmental effects in terms of hindering emergency access. In all, Alternative 3 would result in similar impacts to public services as the project.

Recreation

In contrast with the project, Alternative 3 would not provide any additional parkland and/or open spaces. The reduction in population growth associated with Alternative 3 would somewhat reduce demand for recreational facilities, but this reduction would be offset by the absence of

any parkland or open space in the development. Impacts to recreation under Alternative 3 would be similar to those under the project.

Transportation

The substantial increase in commercial uses under Alternative 3 would generate greater traffic volumes than under the project. These increased volumes could further exacerbate the deficiencies in the transportation facilities throughout the project area. Many mitigations identified as part of the project would not be implemented under Alternative 3. Traffic impacts under Alternative 3 would be greater than those associated with the project.

Utilities

The increased population generated by Alternative 3 would increase demand for public utilities. Because Alternative 3 would result in a marginally smaller amount of population growth, the demand for some utilities would be less than project conditions. However, the overall larger allowable growth in commercial development would offset any reductions in utilities/services demands associated with less residential population. Impact related to the demand for utilities under Alternative 3 would be similar to the project.

5.5 SUMMARY OF COMPARATIVE IMPACTS

This section summarizes the comparative impacts of each of the alternatives when compared to the project. **Table 5.3** below lists the level of significance of the impacts of the project to each environmental area analyzed in Chapter 4 and shows whether the impacts anticipated under each alternative would be equal, lesser or greater than those of the project.

5.6 ENVIRONMENTALLY SUPERIOR ALTERNATIVE

CEQA requires the identification of an Environmentally Superior Alternative among the alternatives to the project. The Environmentally Superior Alternative must be an alternative to the project that reduces some of the environmental impacts of the project, regardless of the financial costs associated with this alternative. Identification of the Environmentally Superior Alternative is an informational procedure and the alternative selected may not be that which best meets the goals or needs of the City. The project under consideration cannot be identified as the Environmentally Superior Alternative. Additionally, if the No Project Alternative (Alternative 3) is determined to reduce the most impacts, CEQA requires that the EIR identify an Environmentally Superior Alternative among the other alternatives (CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(e)).

The identification of the Environmentally Superior Alternative results from a comparison of the impacts associated with each alternative, as summarized in **Table 5.3**.

Based on this analysis, Alternative 1 would be the Environmentally Superior Alternative because it would have reduced impacts related to air quality, water supply and utilities, transportation, noise, and public services.

5.7 ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED BUT ELIMINATED

CEQA does not set forth a required number of alternatives to be considered in an EIR but instead stipulates that alternatives should be governed by a “rule of reason.” Per CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(c), alternatives that do not meet most of the basic project objectives, are infeasible, or would be unable to avoid significant environmental impacts need not be considered as part of the alternatives evaluation.

The City considered but rejected from consideration alternative-site alternatives. Several of the project’s objectives are uniquely focused on the West Broadway area within the City, which the City determined has the greatest potential to become an urban core or urban village within the City. The Specific Plan was crafted to target identified concerns associated with vacant and underutilized sites in the West Broadway Avenue area. As there is no other location in the City that has the combination of 1) vacant and underutilized parcels in an urban street grid and 2) the potential to be redeveloped as an urban core, no alternative site alternative is considered in this EIR.

Table 5.3 Summary of Comparative Impacts

Environmental Impact		Level of Significance with Project	Relative Impact Under Different Alternatives		
			Alternative 1 Reduced	Alternative 2 Retain Roadway Configuration	Alternative 3 No Project
Aesthetics					
Impact 4.1-1	Affect a scenic vista	LTS	Similar	Similar	Similar
Impact 4.1-2	Degrade visual character of the area	LTS	Similar	Greater	Greater
Impact 4.1-3	Create new shadow patterns	LTS/m	Similar	Similar	Greater
Impact 4.1-4	Create new light and glare sources	LTS	Similar	Similar	Greater
Air Quality					
Impact 4.2-1	Conflict with the Air Quality Management Plan	LTS/m	Similar	Similar	Similar
Impact 4.2-2 and 4.2-5	Increase emissions of criteria air pollutants	LTS	Lesser	Greater	Greater
Impacts 4.2-3 and 4.2-4	Emit construction-related air pollutants	LTS/m	Lesser	Similar	Greater
Impact 4.2-6	Expose existing sensitive receptors to new sources of air pollution	LTS	Lesser	Greater	Similar
Biological Resources					
Impact 4.3-1	Impact special-status plant species	LTS/m	Similar	Similar	Similar
Impact 4.3-2	Impact avian species	LTS/m	Similar	Similar	Similar
Impact 4.3-3	Impact special-status bat species	LTS/m	Similar	Similar	Similar
Impact 4.3-4	Conflict with tree preservation policy or ordinance	LTS	Similar	Similar	Similar
Cultural Resources					
Impact 4.4-1	Damage unknown archaeological resources	LTS/m	Similar	Similar	Similar
Impact 4.4-2	Damage unknown paleontological resources	LTS/m	Similar	Similar	Similar
Impact 4.4-3	Uncover human remains	LTS/m	Similar	Similar	Similar

Environmental Impact		Level of Significance with Project	Relative Impact Under Different Alternatives		
			Alternative 1 Reduced	Alternative 2 Retain Roadway Configuration	Alternative 3 No Project
Geology and Soils					
Impact 4.5-1	Risks from strong seismic ground shaking	LTS/m	Lesser	Similar	Similar
Impact 4.5-2	Construction induced soils erosion and top soil loss	LTS/m	Lesser	Similar	Similar
Impact 4.5-3	Seismic ground failure; liquefaction and spreading	LTS/m	Lesser	Similar	Similar
Hazards / Hazardous Materials					
Impact 4.6-1	Exposure of workers and/or public to contaminated soils and groundwater	LTS/m	Similar	Similar	Similar
Impact 4.6-2	Exposure of construction workers to asbestos and/or lead-based paints	LTS/m	Similar	Similar	Similar
Impact 4.6-3	Improper transport of hazardous materials during construction	LTS/m	Similar	Similar	Similar
Hydrology and Water Quality					
Impact 4.7-1	Depletion of municipal groundwater supplies	LTS/m	Lesser	Similar	Similar
Impact 4.7-2	Interfere with groundwater recharge	LTS	Similar	Similar	Similar
Impact 4.7-3	Construction-related degradation of water quality	LTS/m	Similar	Similar	Similar
Noise					
Impact 4.9-1 and 4.9-3	Resident exposure to outdoor noise	LTS/m	Lesser	Greater	Greater
Impact 4.9-2	Indoor noise impact to sensitive receptors	LTS/m	Similar	Similar	Greater
Impact 4.9-4	Groundborne vibration from future rapid transit line	LTS/m	Similar	Similar	Greater
Impact 4.9-5	Construction noise – temporary noise increase	LTS/m	Lesser	Similar	Greater

Environmental Impact		Level of Significance with Project	Relative Impact Under Different Alternatives		
			Alternative 1 Reduced	Alternative 2 Retain Roadway Configuration	Alternative 3 No Project
Population and Housing					
Impact 4.10-1	Generate population and housing growth	LTS/m	Lesser	Similar	Lesser
Impact 4.10-2	Increase jobs, indirectly increasing population	LTS	Lesser	Similar	Greater
Impact 4.10-3	Displacement of existing residencies and businesses	LTS/m	Lesser	Similar	Lesser
Public Services					
Impact 4.11-1 and 4.11-4	Increase demand for fire and police services	LTS/m	Lesser	Similar	Similar
Impact 4.11-2	Interfere with an emergency access route	LTS/m	Similar	Lesser	Similar
Impact 4.11-4	Increase demand for school services	LTS	Lesser	Similar	Lesser
Recreation					
Impact 4.12-1	Increase demand for park and recreational facilities	LTS/m	Lesser	Similar	Lesser
Impact 4.12-2	Construction of park resulting in physical impacts	LTS/m	Similar	Similar	Lesser
Transportation					
Impact 4.13-1	Insufficient vehicle capacity at signalized intersections	LTS/m	Similar	Greater	Greater
Impact 4.13-2	Insufficient vehicle capacity at unsignalized intersections	LTS/m	Similar	Greater	Greater
Impact 4.13-3	Insufficient vehicle capacity at freeway segments	LTS/m	Similar	Greater	Greater
Impact 4.13-4	Insufficient parking capacity	LTS	Similar	Greater	Greater
Utilities					
Impact 4.14-1	Generate wastewater, increasing service demand	LTS/m	Lesser	Similar	Lesser
Impact 4.14-2	Require additional stormwater capacity	LTS/m	Similar	Similar	Similar

Environmental Impact		Level of Significance with Project	Relative Impact Under Different Alternatives		
			Alternative 1 Reduced	Alternative 2 Retain Roadway Configuration	Alternative 3 No Project
Impact 4.14-3	Increase demand for water supply	LTS/m	Lesser	Similar	Lesser
Impact 4.14-4	Generate wastewater, exceeding treatment plant capacity	LTS	Lesser	Similar	Lesser
Impact 4.14-5	Increase demand for solid waste disposal	LTS	Lesser	Similar	Similar
<p>Key S Significant Unavoidable Impact LTS Less-than-significant impact LTS/m Less-than-significant impact with mitigation</p>					

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