
SECTION 5 ALTERNATIVES TO THE PROPOSED PROJECT

5.1 PURPOSE

In accordance with Section 15126.6 of the State CEQA Guidelines, EIRs are required to evaluate a "...range of reasonable alternatives to the project, or to the location of the project, which could feasibly attain the basic objectives of the project." The discussion of alternatives should focus on "...alternatives capable of eliminating any significant adverse impacts or reducing them to below a level of significance, even if these alternatives could impede to some degree the attainment of the project objectives or would be more costly." CEQA further directs that "...the significant effects of an alternative shall be discussed, but in less detail than the significant effects of the project as proposed." The factors that may be taken into account when addressing the feasibility of alternatives include site suitability, economic viability, availability of infrastructure, general plan consistency, other plans or regulatory limitations, jurisdictional boundaries, and whether the proponent can reasonably acquire, control or otherwise have access to the alternative site.

The decision to select alternative locations needs to be based on whether off-site locations would avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects of the project. The lead agency must also determine if no feasible alternative locations exist and disclose the reasons for this assessment. The inclusion of an alternative in an EIR does not constitute definitive evidence that the alternative is in fact "feasible." The final decision regarding the feasibility of alternatives lies with the decision-maker for a given project who must make the necessary findings addressing the potential feasibility of reducing the severity of significant environmental effects (Pub. Resources Code, §21081; see also CEQA Guidelines, §15091).

CEQA Guidelines define "feasible" to mean "capable of being accomplished in a successful manner within a reasonable period of time, taking into account economic, environmental, legal, social, and technological factors." When making the decision as to whether an alternative is feasible or infeasible, the decision-making body may consider the stated project objectives in an EIR in light of any relevant economic, environmental, social, and technological factors.

Two alternatives to the proposed project are described below. These include (1) the Reduced Project Alternative and (2) the No Project Alternative.

5.1.1 Alternative 1 Reduced Project (Environmentally Superior Alternative)

The Reduced Project Alternative involves reducing the number of dwelling units from ~~153~~approximately 148 single-family units to 100 single-family units. As a result, some of the cumulative impacts associated with the traffic component of the proposed project would be reduced to a less than significant level.

No other features of the proposed project would be changed under this alternative. The proposed retention basin and parkland would remain the same as under the proposed project, and under grounding of the Alder Canal would still be implemented.

Agriculture

The proposed project creates no significant direct or cumulative impacts to agricultural lands. Measures adopted by the City, however, are required to minimize impacts due to the loss of farmland. Under the Reduced Project Alternative impacts would also remain less than significant and the same measures would be implemented to minimize impacts due to loss of farmland.

Air Quality

The Reduced Project Alternative would reduce the number of dwelling units and would therefore result in reduced construction related direct impacts to air quality compared to the proposed project. However, direct and cumulative impacts to air quality under this alternative would not be reduced to a level below significance.

Biology

The presence of a burrowing owl on the project site during the Biological Resources survey implies the proposed project has the potential to create a direct impact to burrowing owls. The Reduced Project Alternative could also create a direct impact to burrowing owls, and impacts would be equivalent to the proposed project. Because impacts to sensitive species are addressed at the project level and an abundance of suitable habitat exists for this species, the cumulative impact would be below a level of significance for both the Proposed Project and Reduced Project Alternative.

Cultural Resources

The proposed project creates no significant direct or cumulative impacts to cultural resources. Therefore, under the Reduced Project Alternative impacts would also remain less than significant.

Public Safety/Hazards

The Reduced Project Alternative would not reduce the potential hazardous impact to the proposed project associated with the exposed Alder Canal. Therefore, under the Reduced Project Alternative, impacts would remain significant and the Alder Canal would require under grounding. The proposed project would not significantly contribute to any identifiable cumulative public safety concerns, and therefore, the Reduced Project Alternative would remain less than significant.

Public Services

The Reduced Project Alternative would reduce impacts to public services, but would still contribute to direct impacts and cumulatively significant impacts to these services. Although impact fees are still required, demand on water, sewer, solid waste, police, fire, park, and school services would be less than under the proposed project.

Traffic

There were no direct impacts as a result of the proposed project. Under the Reduced Project Alternative, however, the trips generated would be less than the proposed project and therefore reduce the area cumulative impacts. The reduction of traffic under this alternative would negate the cumulative impact to the Dogwood Avenue/ Ross Avenue intersection as well as the cumulative impact to the Ross Avenue: ~~East of Industry Way segment~~ Dogwood Road to project site. The I-8 / Dogwood interchange currently

exits at LOS F without the project, so a change in dwelling units will not improve the operations at these two intersections to an acceptable level, but impacts would not be as severe as the proposed project. Therefore, the Reduced Project Alternative would result in reduced traffic impacts.

5.1.2 Alternative 2 No Project Alternative

Under the No Project Alternative, the site would not be developed with the proposed Rosswood Subdivision development. The parcel would remain fallow agricultural land. The No Project Alternative would eliminate all potential environmental impacts associated with the implementation of the Proposed Project and the Reduced Project Alternative.

Although the No Project Alternative would avoid the identified significant environmental impacts associated with the Proposed Project and the Reduced Project Alternative for the proposed Rosswood Subdivision development, this alternative would not meet any of the project objectives, as described in Section 2.2, Project Purpose and Objectives.

5.2 Alternatives Considered and Rejected

No Alternatives were considered but rejected.

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