

6.0 Project Alternatives



6.0 PROJECT ALTERNATIVES

1. INTRODUCTION

CEQA requires an EIR to describe a reasonable range of alternatives to a project or to the location of a project that feasibly attains most of the project's basic objectives but avoids or substantially lessens any of the project's significant environmental impacts.¹ CEQA also requires an EIR to evaluate the comparative merits of the alternatives. This section of the Draft EIR describes potentially feasible alternatives to the Entrada South Project and compares the potential impacts of each alternative to the Project's identified environmental impacts.

The CEQA Guidelines emphasize that the selection of project alternatives should be based primarily on the ability of an alternative to reduce significant impacts associated with the proposed project, "even if these alternatives would impede to some degree the attainment of the project objectives, or would be more costly."² An EIR need not consider every conceivable alternative to a project, but rather the range of alternatives should be guided by a "rule of reason," such that only those alternatives necessary to permit a reasoned choice are analyzed.³

In selecting alternatives for analysis, the alternatives considered should be potentially feasible. CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(f)(1) states:

Among the factors that may be taken into account when addressing the feasibility of alternatives are 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 or the site is already owned, controlled, or could reasonably be acquired by the proponent....

¹ CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(a).

² CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(b).

³ CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(f).

The CEQA Guidelines require the EIR to analyze a “No Project” Alternative and consider an alternative location(s) for the project, if feasible. Of the alternatives analyzed in an EIR, an environmentally superior alternative is to be designated. If the environmentally superior alternative is the No Project Alternative, then the EIR shall identify an environmentally superior alternative among the other alternatives.⁴

As required under CEQA, the intent of this alternatives analysis is to consider options that could reduce the Project’s significant impacts. As presented in prior sections of this Draft EIR, the Project would result in significant and unavoidable impacts with respect to: aesthetics/visual quality during construction and operation, cumulative aesthetics/visual quality, construction-related and operational air quality, cumulative construction-related and operational air quality, Project-specific and cumulative construction-related noise, and cumulative off-site traffic noise. These impacts are summarized as follows:

- **Aesthetics, Views, and Light and Glare:** Both short-term construction and operational impacts related to aesthetics/visual quality would be significant and unavoidable due to changes in the Project Site’s visual character. Similarly, cumulative impacts related to aesthetics/visual quality would be significant and unavoidable due to the overall change in visual character associated with the Project together with the related projects.
- **Air Quality:** Construction activities would result in significant and unavoidable impacts related to the exceedance of regional emissions thresholds for nitrogen oxides (NO_x) and volatile organic compounds (VOCs) during the most intense construction period. Regional operational emissions associated with Project buildout also would exceed daily emissions thresholds for VOCs, NO_x, carbon monoxide (CO), respirable particulate matter (i.e., less than 10 micrometers in diameter) (PM₁₀), and fine particulate matter (i.e., less than 2.5 micrometers in diameter) (PM_{2.5}) after implementation of regulatory compliance measures, PDFs, and feasible mitigation measures, resulting in a significant and unavoidable impact. Cumulative construction and operational air quality impacts would be significant and unavoidable for the same respective regional emissions as the Project.
- **Noise:** Construction activities within 1,000 feet of single-family residences on- or off-site, as well as within 500 feet of multi-family residences located on- or off-site, would result in significant and unavoidable Project and cumulative impacts due to exceedance of the County’s Noise Ordinance standards. In

⁴ CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(e)(2).

addition, cumulative off-site operational traffic noise would result in significant and unavoidable impacts for sensitive uses along Westridge Parkway (north of Valencia Boulevard).

Based on these significant environmental impacts and the objectives established for the Project (listed in **Section 3.0**, Project Description, of this Draft EIR), as well as consideration of the local plans and zoning designations that guide development of the Project Site, the following alternatives to the Project have been selected for analysis:

1. Alternative 1—No Project/No Build
2. Alternative 2—No Project/Development in Accordance with Existing Plans
3. Alternative 3—Reduced Density (Option A: 27-percent reduction; Option B: 53-percent reduction)
4. Alternative 4—Reduced Development Footprint

Table 6-1, Summary of Land Uses Proposed Under the Project and Each Alternative, on page 6.0-4 provides a comparison of the land uses associated with the Project and each alternative, each of which is described and evaluated in the sections that follow. In addition, CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(c) requires an EIR to identify any alternatives considered for analysis but rejected as infeasible. These potential alternatives are described below.

**Table 6-1
Summary of Land Uses Proposed Under the Project and Each Alternative**

Land Use Type	Entrada South Project	Alternative 1: No Project/ No Build	Alternative 2: No Project/ Development in Accordance with Existing Plans ^a	Alternative 3: Reduced Density ^b	Alternative 4: Reduced Development Footprint
Residential					
Single-Family	339 du	0 du	unknown	Option A: 247 du Option B: 159 du	115 du
Multi-Family	1,235 du	0 du	unknown	Option A: 902 du Option B: 580 du	1,459 du
<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>1,574 du</i>	<i>0 du</i>	<i>1,911 du</i>	Option A: 1,149 du Option B: 739 du	<i>1,574 du</i>
Commercial	730,000 sf	0 sf	1,500,000 sf	Option A: 532,900 sf Option B: 343,100 sf	730,000 sf
<p><i>du = dwelling units</i> <i>sf = square feet</i> ^a Allowable uses in the Area Plan's H5 (Residential 5) land use designation include single-family homes and other residential uses at a maximum density of five dwelling units per acre. While a maximum density of 5 units per acre has been assumed to determine the total number of allowable units, the exact mix of single-family vs. multi-family units could vary based on a specific development proposal. ^b Option A = 27-percent reduction from Project; Option B = 53-percent reduction from Project Source: Alliance Land Planning & Engineering, September 2013; and Eyestone Environmental, 2014.</p>					

2. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED BUT ELIMINATED FROM FURTHER CONSIDERATION

In accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(c), an EIR should identify alternatives considered for analysis but rejected as infeasible and briefly explain the reasons for their rejection. According to the CEQA Guidelines, the following factors may be used to eliminate alternatives from detailed consideration: the alternative's failure to meet most of the basic project objectives, the alternative's infeasibility, or the alternative's inability to avoid significant environmental impacts. In the context of these factors, alternatives that were considered and rejected as infeasible include:

- **Alternative Use/Active Adult Community.** A variety of alternative land uses were initially considered for inclusion in this analysis. However, given the amount and range of development already proposed, planned, and/or approved within the immediate Project area, the feasibility of a number of land use types is considered limited, both economically and in terms of physical compatibility with

surrounding development. In particular, an active adult community was evaluated as a potential alternative consisting of age-qualified housing and appropriate recreational amenities. However, an active adult community with 459 age-qualified units plus a continued care retirement community with 351 units allowing for independent and assisted living have already been approved within Mission Village, immediately west of the Project Site. Additionally, the proposed Legacy Village, also just west of the Project Site, is expected to include an active adult community component. Thus, the economic viability of a third active adult community is questionable. Furthermore, an alternative adult community would not avoid or substantially lessen any of the Project's significant and unavoidable impact, thus this alternative was rejected.

- **Any alternative that does not involve the extension of Westridge Parkway.** A development scenario that does not include the extension of Westridge Parkway was considered as an alternative that would reduce grading and landform alteration. However, it was determined that such an alternative would not avoid or substantially lessen any of the Project's significant and unavoidable impacts. Additionally, as secondary access to the Project Site (i.e., other than Magic Mountain Parkway) is needed for emergency purposes, Westridge Parkway is the most logical roadway to connect to the on-site circulation network. Moreover, extension of Westridge Parkway is planned as part of the approved Mission Village project, thus impacts related to its construction and use would occur regardless of development within the Project Site. As such, this alternative was eliminated from further consideration.
- **Any alternative that involves the relocation or removal of the water quality basin near the Santa Clara River.** Consideration was given to an alternative that does not include the water quality basin adjacent to the Santa Clara River in order to avoid or substantially lessen the Project's significant impact on Prime Farmland. However, this impact would be fully mitigated by the mitigation set forth in the Newhall Ranch Resource Management and Development Plan and Spineflower Conservation Plan (RMDP/SCP) EIS/EIR (specifically, MM ES 5.2-1/RMDP/SCP AG-2, detailed in **Section 5.2**, Agricultural and Forest Resources, of this Draft EIR), to which the Project is subject. In addition, the same water quality basin is planned as part of the approved Mission Village project, thus impacts related to its construction would occur regardless of development within the Project Site. As such, this alternative was eliminated from further consideration.
- **Any alternative that avoids or fully mitigates the Project's significant aesthetic impact.** In accordance with CEQA Guidelines, development scenarios that would avoid or fully mitigate the Project's significant operational aesthetic impact were considered. As discussed in **Section 5.1**, Aesthetics, Views, and Light and Glare, of this Draft EIR, Project development would result in an undeniable change in the Project Site's visual quality/character related to landform modification and the introduction of new development and

infrastructure. However, it was determined that no feasible mitigation exists to reduce the Project's significant impact to a less-than-significant level. Furthermore, elimination of the impact would necessitate a major limitation on the extent of the Project Site developed, which would either involve a severe reduction in the amount of development and/or a dramatic increase in building density within a much smaller development footprint. (See Alternative 4, Reduced Development Footprint, below for related discussion.) Nearly any development of a meaningful (and financially feasible) size would involve the development of a substantial portion of the Project Site, thus requiring substantial landform alteration given the site's varying topography. Thus, essentially any feasible alternative would result in a significant and unavoidable impact on aesthetics/visual character, similar to the Project. As such, this alternative was rejected.

- **Any alternative that avoids or fully mitigates the Project's significant air quality impacts.** Consideration was given to development scenarios that would avoid or fully mitigate the Project's significant air quality impacts related to regional emissions during construction and operation. As discussed in **Section 5.3**, Air Quality, of this Draft EIR, all feasible mitigation would be implemented to reduce Project air quality impacts to the extent possible. Nonetheless, impacts would remain significant and unavoidable. Construction impacts are evaluated based on a conservative scenario that assumes all construction activities would be completed within the minimum timeframe anticipated for construction, which provides for the maximum overlap of construction components within the overall development period. This scenario yields the maximum construction emissions that could possibly (if ever) occur. However, short of extending the construction period substantially, construction of a reduced amount of development would still involve a certain daily intensity of construction activities, which, when evaluated based on conservative assumptions, would also result in significant impacts. Furthermore, as discussed below as part of Alternative 3, Reduced Density Alternative, elimination of the Project's significant regional operational air quality impacts would necessitate an approximately 80-percent reduction in Project development, rendering the alternative economically infeasible. As such, this alternative was eliminated from further study.
- **Any alternative that avoids or fully mitigates the Project's significant noise impacts.** Development scenarios that would avoid or fully mitigate the Project's significant construction and cumulative operational noise impacts were considered. As discussed in **Section 5.13**, Noise, of this Draft EIR, the proposed mitigation measures would reduce construction-related noise impacts to the extent feasible. As with construction-related air quality impacts, short of extending the construction period substantially so as to limit the number and types of construction equipment operating at any given time, construction of a reduced amount of development would still involve a certain daily intensity of construction activities, which, due to the location of on- and off-site sensitive uses, would result in significant impacts.

Likewise, the cumulative operational impact involves off-site traffic volumes that would significantly affect existing sensitive receptors along certain roadway segments in the Project vicinity. While an alternative with a reduced amount of development would likely reduce the Project's contribution to such impacts, the cumulative impact would nonetheless occur as a result of other development planned or underway in the surrounding area. Moreover, there are no feasible mitigation measures to reduce the significant cumulative impacts along the identified roadway segments since vehicular access to and from the adjacent sensitive uses and construction of a noise barrier wall at these locations would interfere with property access. Therefore, this alternative was rejected.

- **An alternative that reduces impacts to biological resources.** Alternatives that would reduce the Project's impacts to biological resources were considered. As addressed in **Section 5.4**, Biological Resources, of this Draft EIR, the Project would impact a number of biological resources and sensitive habitats, including special-status plants, special-status wildlife, vegetation communities, critical habitat, and jurisdictional waters, including wetlands. However, all such impacts would be less than significant or reduced to a less-than-significant level following mitigation. As the CEQA Guidelines emphasize that the selection of project alternatives should be based primarily on the ability of an alternative to reduce significant impacts associated with the proposed project, this alternative was rejected from further consideration.
- **Alternative Site.** A search was conducted to find an alternative site on which the Project could be built while meeting the Project's underlying purpose of creating a mixed-use community that implements infill development interconnected with the surrounding communities, conserves on-site sensitive natural resources, and integrates land use, housing, and transportation considerations in furtherance of Senate Bill 375 (SB 375), the Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act of 2008. Based on this underlying purpose, only infill properties that are surrounded by or near existing development and/or infrastructure were considered. Additionally, the search focused on large sites that could accommodate the entire Project, rather than a series of smaller sites spread out over a broad geographic area, since the latter would not achieve many of the Project's objectives (e.g., development of a regional, coordinated destination; avoidance of leapfrog or "patchwork" development; and implementing the vision of the Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan: One Valley One Vision 2012 (Area Plan)) and would expand the area within which impacts would occur, potentially resulting in significant impacts at multiple locations.

The *Citizens of Goleta Valley v. Board of Supervisors* decision (52 Cal.3d 553 (1990)) affirms that an EIR must consider a reasonable range of alternatives to the location of a project, which: (1) offer substantial environmental advantages over the project site; and (2) may be feasibly accomplished in a successful manner, considering economic, environmental, social and technological factors.

The decision also notes that alternative locations which are not feasible need not be extensively considered. In assessing the feasibility of an alternative location, an EIR may properly consider criteria such as whether the site: (1) has land use designations inconsistent with the proposed development; (2) is not owned by the project proponent; and/or (3) is outside the Lead Agency's planning jurisdiction. In short, the nature and scope of alternative locations to be analyzed in an EIR is determined by the facts of each case, guided by the "rule of reason" and with reference to CEQA's statutory purpose.

Notwithstanding this guidance, an exhaustive search for possible alternative sites was conducted. Most obviously, the Project could be developed within the approximately 12,000-acre Newhall Ranch Specific Plan area, located immediately west of the Project Site, which is owned by the Project Applicant. However, that area has been approved for the development of five distinct communities along with substantial dedicated open space, including Special Management Areas/Significant Ecological Areas. The addition of Project development to the development already planned within the Specific Plan area would greatly increase the building density, building heights, and/or landform alteration. In addition, adding more development within the Specific Plan area would require substantial revision of the Specific Plan and associated environmental review. Furthermore, this scenario would simply relocate the Project's impacts and would not avoid or substantially lessen any of the Project's significant and unavoidable impacts. Consideration of other nearby property owned by the Project Applicant, such as the area southwest of the Project Site where Legacy Village is proposed, yielded the same results. Such alternative sites were therefore rejected.

The Project Applicant also has substantial landholdings within Ventura County to the west. This land is generally undeveloped (some is used for agricultural purposes) and thus lacks the necessary infrastructure to support Project development. Much of this land also has been slated for conservation as part of the mitigation packages defined for the Specific Plan and the Newhall Ranch RMDP/SCP projects. In addition, the Project's significant and unavoidable construction-related impacts and aesthetic impact would not be avoided; rather, impacts would simply be transferred to a different location. As such, alternative sites within the Applicant's landholdings in Ventura County were rejected.

A number of properties east of Interstate 5 (I-5) were considered, including the 1,330-acre Northlake site and the 989-acre Whittaker Berrite site. However, specific plans have been approved for the development of each of these properties (Northlake Specific Plan and Porta Bella Specific Plan, respectively). As such, development of the Project within these alternative sites is not considered feasible.

The search for an alternative site also relied upon the analysis previously conducted in conjunction with the Newhall Ranch Specific Plan EIR. As part of

the alternatives discussion provided therein, 23 alternative sites throughout northern and central Los Angeles, Ventura, and southern Kern Counties were identified. Many of the sites were rejected from further consideration as they were already entitled for urban development and/or under construction, located outside of the Project Applicant's competitive market area, not of sufficient size, and other geographic factors. Similarly, the RMDP/SCP EIS/EIR evaluated a number of alternative locations, as discussed further below.

More generally speaking, development of the Project within an alternative site would not avoid most, if not all, of the Project's significant and unavoidable impacts. Specifically, the construction-related air quality impacts associated with regional emissions would likely occur with the development of any site since such impacts are not based on geography. In addition, it is expected that if there were a suitable alternative site available, depending on the availability of off-site utility infrastructure, the nature and extent of other future development expected in the surrounding vicinity, and the presence of nearby noise-sensitive uses such as residences, the Project's impacts associated with noise merely would be moved to another location. Further, development of the Project at an alternative site could potentially produce other environmental impacts that otherwise would not occur at the Project Site. Specifically, development at an alternative site may have greater environmental impacts (e.g., traffic, cultural resources, land use compatibility, views, etc.) than the Project Site. Thus, to the extent that another alternative site is available, Project impacts would likely shift to the alternative site and could be greater.

Based on the above, an alternative site is not considered feasible as it is not expected that the Applicant can reasonably acquire, control, or have access to an alternative site that would provide for the proposed synergy of uses and square footage proposed under the Project. In addition, an alternative site likely would not avoid the significant impacts of the Project (but, rather, would transfer those impacts to another location), nor would such an alternative meet the basic objectives of the Project. Thus, in accordance with Section 15126.6(f) of the CEQA Guidelines, alternative sites were rejected from further consideration.

In addition, a number of alternatives to collective development activities within the Project Site and other surrounding properties, including the Newhall Ranch Specific Plan (Specific Plan) area, were previously evaluated as part of the EIS/EIR for the Newhall Ranch RMDP/SCP.⁵ These alternatives have not been re-evaluated in this Draft EIR, as

⁵ *The proposed RMDP would provide habitat conservation and management as well as infrastructure improvements to facilitate development of the previously approved Newhall Ranch Specific Plan (Specific Plan). The proposed SCP would implement a conservation and management plan for the Applicant's land holdings in Los Angeles County that contain known spineflower populations and facilitate development in the Specific Plan areas, Valencia Commerce Center, and a portion of the Entrada North/South planning area. With respect to Entrada South, the RMDP/SCP project assumed the* (Footnote continued on next page)

their impacts were fully analyzed in the Newhall Ranch RMDP/SCP EIS/EIR. Furthermore, RMDP/SCP Alternatives 3 through 7 below were ultimately rejected as none was found to be the least environmentally damaging practicable alternative (LEDPA), the identification of which was required for issuance of certain federal permits required to implement the Newhall Ranch RMDP/SCP project. A LEDPA alternative is also described below.

- **RMDP/SCP Alternative 3—Elimination of Planned Potrero Bridge and Additional Spineflower Preserves.** With respect to Entrada South, RMDP/SCP Alternative 3 assumed the development of 1,125 residential units and 450,000 square feet of commercial uses. Other minor reductions in residential and commercial uses in other RMDP/SCP areas as compared to the RMDP/SCP project were also assumed. This alternative involved construction of two of three proposed bridges across the Santa Clara River plus the associated bank stabilization, regrading and realignment of various major tributary drainages, preservation of a marsh in lower Potrero Canyon, and 72.94 acres of spineflower preserve within Entrada South plus additional acreage in the Airport Mesa area. This alternative would provide a total of 221.8 acres of spineflower preserves and protect 77.1 percent of the cumulative area occupied by spineflower in the RMDP/SCP project area. Thus, the RMDP and SCP would be modified, and the requested federal and state permits and authorizations would be granted consistent with those modifications.
- **RMDP/SCP Alternative 4—Elimination of Planned Potrero Bridge and Addition of VCC Spineflower Preserve.**⁶ With respect to Entrada South, RMDP/SCP Alternative 4 assumed the development of 1,125 residential units and 450,000 square feet of commercial uses. Other minor reductions in residential and commercial uses in the Specific Plan area and no development within Valencia Commerce Center were also assumed. The alternative involved construction of only two of three proposed bridges across the Santa Clara River plus the associated bank stabilization, regrading and realignment of various major tributary drainages, and preservation of a marsh in lower Potrero Canyon. Additional spineflower preserve acreage would be established in the Specific Plan's Airport Mesa, Potrero Canyon, and Grapevine Mesa areas, as well as 72.94 acres within Entrada South. Additionally, a preserve would be established within the VCC planning area, resulting in a total of 259.9 acres of spineflower preserves and protecting 82.6 percent of the cumulative area occupied by spineflower in the Project area. Thus, the RMDP and SCP would be modified, and the requested federal and state permits and authorizations would be granted consistent with those modifications.

development of 1,725 residential units and 450,000 square feet of commercial uses. Refer to the RMDP/SCP EIS/EIR for complete descriptions and evaluations of the alternatives listed below.

⁶ VCC refers to Valencia Commerce Center.

- **RMDP/SCP Alternative 5—Widen Tributary Drainages and Addition of VCC Spineflower Preserve.** With respect to Entrada South, RMDP/SCP Alternative 5 assumed the development of 959 residential units and 450,000 square feet of commercial uses. Other reductions in residential and commercial uses in the Specific Plan area and no development within Valencia Commerce Center were also assumed. The alternative involved construction of all three proposed bridges across the Santa Clara River plus the associated bank stabilization and regrading and realignment of various major tributary drainages, resulting in reduced impacts in three canyons. Additional spineflower preserve acreage would be established in the Specific Plan's Airport Mesa, Potrero Canyon, and Grapevine Mesa areas, the VCC planning area, plus 115.76 acres within Entrada South, resulting in a total of 338.6 acres of spineflower preserves and the protection of 84.3 percent of the cumulative area occupied by spineflower in the Project area. Thus, the RMDP and SCP would be modified, and the requested federal and state permits and authorizations would be granted consistent with those modifications.
- **RMDP/SCP Alternative 6—Elimination of Planned Commerce Center Drive Bridge and Maximum Spineflower Expansion/Connectivity.** With respect to Entrada South, RMDP/SCP Alternative 6 assumed the development of 425 residential units and 450,000 square feet of commercial uses. Other reductions in residential and commercial uses in the Specific Plan area and no development within Valencia Commerce Center were also assumed. Two of the three proposed bridges across the Santa Clara River and the associated bank stabilization would be constructed, and major tributary drainages would be regraded and realigned. This alternative would designate four spineflower preserves within the Specific Plan area, one preserve within the VCC planning area, and a 150.51-acre preserve within Entrada South. Accordingly, Alternative 6 would significantly increase preserve acreage, providing a total of 891.2 acres of spineflower preserves and protecting 88.5 percent of the cumulative area occupied by spineflower in the Project area. Thus, the RMDP and SCP would be modified, and the requested federal and state permits and authorizations would be granted consistent with those modifications.
- **RMDP/SCP Alternative 7—Avoidance of 100-Year Floodplain, Elimination of Two Planned Bridges, and Avoidance of Spineflower.** With respect to Entrada South, RMDP/SCP Alternative 7 assumed the development of 852 residential units and 50,000 square feet of commercial uses. Other substantial reductions in residential and commercial uses in the Specific Plan area and no development within Valencia Commerce Center were also assumed. Alternative 7 was designed to maximize avoidance of spineflower within the Project area. This alternative would designate spineflower preserves with 300 feet of expansion area surrounding the cumulative area occupied spineflower locations and provide a total of 660.6 acres of spineflower habitat preserves, including 65.99 acres within Entrada South, thus protecting 98.2 percent of the cumulative area occupied by spineflower in the Project area. Only

one bridge across the Santa Clara River would be constructed, and bank stabilization would be constructed outside the 100-year floodplain. In addition, the Middle Canyon and Magic Mountain Canyon drainages (a portion of which is located within the Entrada South Project Site) would be preserved. Thus, the RMDP and SCP would be modified, and the requested federal and state permits and authorizations would be granted consistent with those modifications.

- **Draft LEDPA—Elimination Of Planned Potrero Bridge, Additional Spineflower Preserve Acreage, And Larger Riparian Areas In Tributary Drainages.**⁷ The Draft LEDPA is a modified version of RMDP/SCP Alternative 3 that includes additional avoidance of jurisdictional waters along the Santa Clara River and tributaries, increased spineflower preserve acreage in the Potrero, San Martinez Grande, Grapevine Mesa, and Airport Mesa areas, and larger riparian corridors within five major tributaries. With respect to Entrada South, the Draft LEDPA assumed the development of 1,725 residential units and 450,000 square feet of commercial uses. The Draft LEDPA also would involve spineflower preserve acreage of 247 acres, including 27.02 acres within Entrada South, thereby protecting 70.4 percent of the cumulative area occupied by spineflower in the Project area. In addition, two of the three bridges crossing the Santa Clara River and the associated bank stabilization would be constructed, the majority of two existing drainages would be filled and modified so there would be no loss of U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) jurisdiction, limited channel grading would occur in three other major tributary drainages in order to expand the drainages and adjacent riparian areas and realign their banks.

The Newhall Ranch RMDP/SCP EIS/EIR also briefly evaluated three off-site alternatives (often referred to as alternative sites), which were selected from an initial list of 23 potential alternative locations, as well as a “total avoidance” alternative that assumed the requested Clean Water Act (CWA) Section 404 permit would not be issued and therefore involved only the development within the Specific Plan area located outside of the jurisdictional area of the Corps. Each of these alternatives were rejected from further analysis for a variety of reasons, including insufficient land size, conflicts with other approved development entitlements, other locational concerns, increased environmental impacts compared to the Newhall Ranch RMDP/SCP project, and/or inability to meet the objectives/purpose and need of the Newhall Ranch RMDP/SCP project.

3. ANALYSIS FORMAT

Per CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(d), each alternative must be evaluated in sufficient detail to determine whether the overall environmental impacts would be less than,

⁷ LEDPA refers to the least environmentally damaging practicable alternative.

similar to, or greater than the corresponding impacts of the Project. Furthermore, each alternative must be evaluated to determine whether the Project objectives, identified in **Section 3.0**, Project Description, of this Draft would be substantially attained by the alternative.⁸ The evaluation of each alternative follows the process described below:

- The net environmental impacts of the alternative after implementation of reasonable mitigation measures are determined for each environmental issue analyzed in the EIR.
- Post-mitigation significant and non-significant environmental impacts of the alternative and the Project are compared for each environmental issue. Where the net impact of the alternative would be less adverse or more beneficial than that of the Project, the comparative impact is said to be “less.” Where the alternative’s net impact would be more adverse or less beneficial than that of the Project, the comparative impact is said to be “greater.” Where the impacts of the alternative and Project would be roughly equivalent, the comparative impact is “similar.”
- Each comparative impact analysis is followed by a general discussion of whether the Project’s underlying purpose and basic objectives would be feasibly and substantially attained by the alternative.

Table 6-2, Comparison of Impacts Associated with the Project and Impacts of the Alternatives, on page 6.0-14 provides a matrix comparing the impacts of the Project with those of each of the alternatives analyzed herein for each environmental issue addressed in this Draft EIR.

⁸ CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(c).

Table 6-2
Comparison of Impacts Associated with the Project and Impacts of the Alternatives

Environmental Issue	Project Impact	Alternative 1: No Project/No Build	Alternative 2: No Project/Development in Accordance with Existing Plans	Alternative 3: Reduced Density	Alternative 4: Reduced Development Footprint
1. AESTHETICS, VIEWS, AND LIGHT AND GLARE					
<i>Construction</i>					
Views	Less Than Significant	Less (No Impact)	Greater (Less Than Significant)	Less (Less Than Significant)	Similar (Less Than Significant)
Visual Character	Significant and Unavoidable	Less (No Impact)	Greater (Significant and Unavoidable)	Less (Significant and Unavoidable)	Similar (Significant and Unavoidable)
Light and Glare	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less (No Impact)	Similar (Less Than Significant with Mitigation)	Similar (Less Than Significant with Mitigation)	Similar (Less Than Significant with Mitigation)
<i>Operation</i>					
Views	Less Than Significant	Less (No Impact)	Greater (Less Than Significant)	Less (Less Than Significant)	Greater (Less Than Significant)
Visual Character	Significant and Unavoidable	Less (No Impact)	Greater (Significant and Unavoidable)	Less (Significant and Unavoidable)	Greater (Significant and Unavoidable)
Light and Glare	Less Than Significant	Less (No Impact)	Similar (Less Than Significant)	Less (Less Than Significant)	Similar (Less Than Significant)
2. AGRICULTURAL AND FOREST RESOURCES					
Prime Farmland	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less (No Impact)	Similar (Less Than Significant with Mitigation)	Similar (Less Than Significant with Mitigation)	Similar (Less Than Significant with Mitigation)
Agricultural Lands	Less Than Significant	Less (No Impact)	Similar (Less Than Significant)	Similar (Less Than Significant)	Less (Less Than Significant)
Forest Land Resources	Less Than Significant	Less (No Impact)	Similar (Less Than Significant)	Similar (Less Than Significant)	Less (Less Than Significant)

Table 6-2 (Continued)
Comparison of Impacts Associated with the Project and Impacts of the Alternatives

Environmental Issue	Project Impact	Alternative 1: No Project/No Build	Alternative 2: No Project/Development in Accordance with Existing Plans	Alternative 3: Reduced Density	Alternative 4: Reduced Development Footprint
3. AIR QUALITY					
<i>Construction</i>					
Regional Impacts	Significant and Unavoidable	Less (No Impact)	Greater (Significant and Unavoidable)	Less (Significant and Unavoidable)	Similar (Significant and Unavoidable)
Localized Impacts	Less Than Significant	Less (No Impact)	Similar (Less Than Significant)	Less (Less Than Significant)	Similar (Less Than Significant)
Toxic Air Contaminants	Less Than Significant	Less (No Impact)	Similar (Less Than Significant)	Similar (Less Than Significant)	Similar (Less Than Significant)
Odors	Less Than Significant	Less (No Impact)	Similar (Less Than Significant)	Similar (Less Than Significant)	Similar (Less Than Significant)
<i>Operation</i>					
Regional Impacts	Significant and Unavoidable	Less (No Impact)	Greater (Significant and Unavoidable)	Less (Significant and Unavoidable) <i>Alternative 3A: no exceedance of PM_{2.5} significance threshold</i> <i>Alternative 3B: no exceedance of CO, PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5} significance thresholds</i>	Similar (Significant and Unavoidable)
Localized Impacts	Less Than Significant	Less (No Impact)	Greater (Less Than Significant)	Less (Less Than Significant)	Similar (Less Than Significant)
Toxic Air Contaminants	Less Than Significant	Less (No Impact)	Similar (Less Than Significant)	Similar (Less Than Significant)	Similar (Less Than Significant)
Odors	Less Than Significant	Less (No Impact)	Similar (Less Than Significant)	Similar (Less Than Significant)	Similar (Less Than Significant)

Table 6-2 (Continued)
Comparison of Impacts Associated with the Project and Impacts of the Alternatives

Environmental Issue	Project Impact	Alternative 1: No Project/No Build	Alternative 2: No Project/Development in Accordance with Existing Plans	Alternative 3: Reduced Density	Alternative 4: Reduced Development Footprint
<i>Cumulative</i>					
Construction – Regional Impacts	Significant and Unavoidable	Less (No Impact)	Greater (Significant and Unavoidable)	Less (Significant and Unavoidable)	Similar (Significant and Unavoidable)
Construction – Localized Impacts & TACs/Odors	Less Than Significant	Less (No Impact)	Similar (Less Than Significant)	Similar (Less Than Significant)	Similar (Less Than Significant)
Operation – Regional Impacts	Significant and Unavoidable	Less (No Impact)	Greater (Significant and Unavoidable)	Less (Significant and Unavoidable)	Similar (Significant and Unavoidable)
Operation – Localized & Impacts & TACs/Odors	Less Than Significant	Less (No Impact)	Greater (Less Than Significant)	Similar (Less Than Significant)	Similar (Less Than Significant)
4. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES					
Biological Resources	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less (No Impact)	Similar (Less Than Significant with Mitigation)	Similar (Less Than Significant with Mitigation)	Less (Less Than Significant with Mitigation)
5. CULTURAL AND PALEONTOLOGICAL RESOURCES					
Archaeological Resources	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less (No Impact)	Similar (Less Than Significant with Mitigation)	Similar (Less Than Significant with Mitigation)	Less (Less Than Significant with Mitigation)
Paleontological Resources	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less (No Impact)	Similar (Less Than Significant with Mitigation)	Similar (Less Than Significant with Mitigation)	Less (Less Than Significant with Mitigation)
Human Remains	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less (No Impact)	Similar (Less Than Significant with Mitigation)	Similar (Less Than Significant with Mitigation)	Less (Less Than Significant with Mitigation)

Table 6-2 (Continued)
Comparison of Impacts Associated with the Project and Impacts of the Alternatives

Environmental Issue	Project Impact	Alternative 1: No Project/No Build	Alternative 2: No Project/Development in Accordance with Existing Plans	Alternative 3: Reduced Density	Alternative 4: Reduced Development Footprint
6. GEOLOGY AND SOILS					
Geology and Soils	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less (No Impact)	Similar (Less Than Significant with Mitigation)	Similar (Less Than Significant with Mitigation)	Similar (Less Than Significant with Mitigation) <i>Hillside Grading:</i> Less (Less Than Significant)
7. GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS					
Greenhouse Gas Emissions	Less Than Significant	Less (No Impact)	Greater (Less Than Significant)	Less (Less Than Significant)	Similar (Less Than Significant)
8. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS					
Construction	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less (No Impact)	Similar (Less Than Significant with Mitigation)	Similar (Less Than Significant with Mitigation)	Similar (Less Than Significant with Mitigation)
Operation	Less Than Significant	Less (No Impact)	Similar (Less Than Significant)	Similar (Less Than Significant)	Similar (Less Than Significant)
Transport on I-5	Less Than Significant	Less (No Impact)	Greater (Less Than Significant)	Less (Less Than Significant)	Similar (Less Than Significant)
9. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY—HYDROLOGY					
Hydrology	Less Than Significant	Less (No Impact)	Similar (Less Than Significant)	Similar (Less Than Significant)	<i>Construction:</i> Less (Less Than Significant) <i>Operation:</i> Similar (Less Than Significant)

Table 6-2 (Continued)
Comparison of Impacts Associated with the Project and Impacts of the Alternatives

Environmental Issue	Project Impact	Alternative 1: No Project/No Build	Alternative 2: No Project/Development in Accordance with Existing Plans	Alternative 3: Reduced Density	Alternative 4: Reduced Development Footprint
10. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY—WATER QUALITY					
Surface Water Quality	Less Than Significant	Less (No Impact)	Similar (Less Than Significant)	Similar (Less Than Significant)	Less (Less Than Significant)
Groundwater Quality	Less Than Significant	Less (No Impact)	Similar (Less Than Significant)	Similar (Less Than Significant)	Similar (Less Than Significant)
Hydromodification	Less Than Significant	Less (No Impact)	Similar (Less Than Significant)	Similar (Less Than Significant)	Similar (Less Than Significant)
11. LAND USE AND PLANNING					
Land Use Consistency	Less Than Significant	Less (No Impact)	Less (Less Than Significant)	Similar (Less Than Significant)	Similar (Less Than Significant)
Land Use Compatibility	Less Than Significant	Less (No Impact)	Similar (Less Than Significant)	Similar (Less Than Significant)	Similar (Less Than Significant)
12. MINERAL RESOURCES					
Mineral Resources	Less Than Significant	Less (No Impact)	Similar (Less Than Significant)	Similar (Less Than Significant)	Similar (Less Than Significant)
13. NOISE					
Project and Cumulative Construction	Significant and Unavoidable	Less (No Impact)	Greater (Significant and Unavoidable)	Less (Significant and Unavoidable)	Less (Significant and Unavoidable)
Operation	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less (No Impact)	Greater (Less Than Significant with Mitigation)	Less (Less Than Significant with Mitigation)	Similar (Less Than Significant with Mitigation)
Cumulative Off-Site Operational Traffic Noise	Significant and Unavoidable	Less (No Impact)	Greater (Significant and Unavoidable)	Less (Significant and Unavoidable)	Similar (Significant and Unavoidable)

Table 6-2 (Continued)
Comparison of Impacts Associated with the Project and Impacts of the Alternatives

Environmental Issue	Project Impact	Alternative 1: No Project/No Build	Alternative 2: No Project/Development in Accordance with Existing Plans	Alternative 3: Reduced Density	Alternative 4: Reduced Development Footprint
14. POPULATION, HOUSING, AND EMPLOYMENT					
Population	Less Than Significant	Less (No Impact)	Greater (Less Than Significant)	Less (Less Than Significant)	Similar (Less Than Significant)
Housing	Less Than Significant	Less (No Impact)	Greater (Less Than Significant)	Less (Less Than Significant)	Similar (Less Than Significant)
Employment	Less Than Significant	Less (No Impact)	Similar (Less Than Significant)	Less (Less Than Significant)	Similar (Less Than Significant)
15. PUBLIC SERVICES—FIRE PROTECTION					
Fire Protection	Less Than Significant	Less (No Impact)	Greater (Less Than Significant)	Less (Less Than Significant)	Similar (Less Than Significant)
16. PUBLIC SERVICES—SHERIFF PROTECTION					
Sheriff Protection	Less Than Significant	Less (No Impact)	Greater (Less Than Significant)	Less (Less Than Significant)	Similar (Less Than Significant)
17. PUBLIC SERVICES—SCHOOLS					
Schools	Less Than Significant	Less (No Impact)	Greater (Less Than Significant)	Less (Less Than Significant)	Similar (Less Than Significant)
18. PUBLIC SERVICES—PARKS AND RECREATION					
Parks and Recreation	Less Than Significant	Less (No Impact)	Greater (Less Than Significant)	Less (Less Than Significant)	Similar (Less Than Significant)
19. PUBLIC SERVICES—LIBRARIES					
Libraries	Less Than Significant	Less (No Impact)	Greater (Less Than Significant)	Less (Less Than Significant)	Similar (Less Than Significant)

Table 6-2 (Continued)
Comparison of Impacts Associated with the Project and Impacts of the Alternatives

Environmental Issue	Project Impact	Alternative 1: No Project/No Build	Alternative 2: No Project/Development in Accordance with Existing Plans	Alternative 3: Reduced Density	Alternative 4: Reduced Development Footprint
20. TRANSPORTATION/TRAFFIC					
<i>Construction</i>					
Transportation and Traffic	Less Than Significant	Less (No Impact)	Greater (Less Than Significant)	Less (Less Than Significant)	Similar (Less Than Significant)
<i>Operation</i>					
Intersection Impacts	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less (No Impact)	Greater (Less Than Significant with Mitigation) <i>Cumulative:</i> Greater (Significant and Unavoidable)	Less (Less Than Significant with Mitigation)	Similar (Less Than Significant with Mitigation)
Transit Impacts	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less (No Impact)	Greater (Less Than Significant with Mitigation)	Less (Less Than Significant with Mitigation)	Similar (Less Than Significant with Mitigation)
Parking Impacts	Less Than Significant	Less (No Impact)	Similar (Less Than Significant)	Similar (Less Than Significant)	Similar (Less Than Significant)
21. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS—WATER SUPPLY AND SERVICE					
Water Supply and Service	Less Than Significant	Less (No Impact)	Greater (Less Than Significant)	Less (Less Than Significant)	Similar (Less Than Significant)
22. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS—WASTEWATER DISPOSAL					
Wastewater Disposal	Less Than Significant	Less (No Impact)	Greater (Less Than Significant)	Less (Less Than Significant)	Similar (Less Than Significant)
23. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS—ENERGY					
Electricity	Less Than Significant	Less (No Impact)	Greater (Less Than Significant)	Less (Less Than Significant)	Similar (Less Than Significant)

Table 6-2 (Continued)
Comparison of Impacts Associated with the Project and Impacts of the Alternatives

Environmental Issue	Project Impact	Alternative 1: No Project/No Build	Alternative 2: No Project/Development in Accordance with Existing Plans	Alternative 3: Reduced Density	Alternative 4: Reduced Development Footprint
Natural Gas	Less Than Significant	Less (No Impact)	Greater (Less Than Significant)	Less (Less Than Significant)	Similar (Less Than Significant)
24. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS—SOLID WASTE					
Construction	Less Than Significant	Less (No Impact)	Greater (Less Than Significant)	Less (Less Than Significant)	Similar (Less Than Significant)
<hr/> <i>Source: Eystone Environmental, 2015.</i>					

6. PROJECT ALTERNATIVES

1. ALTERNATIVE 1: NO PROJECT/NO BUILD

1. DESCRIPTION OF THE ALTERNATIVE

Under the CEQA Guidelines, the No Project Alternative for a development project on an identifiable property consists of circumstances under which the project does not proceed. CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(e)(3)(B) states: “in certain instances, the No Project Alternative means ‘no build’ wherein the existing environmental setting is maintained.” Accordingly, for purposes of this analysis, Alternative 1, the No Project/No Build Alternative, assumes the Project would not be approved and no new development would occur within the Project Site with the exception of the on-site infrastructure improvements that previously were identified and analyzed as part of the approved Mission Village project to the immediate west. Thus, the physical conditions of much of the Project Site would remain as they are today, equivalent to the existing conditions described in **Section 4.1**, Environmental and Regulatory Setting, of this Draft EIR. However, the following improvements would still occur within the Project Site boundaries pursuant to the Mission Village approval:⁹

- Extension of Magic Mountain Parkway west through the Project Site;
- Extension of Westridge Parkway north to B Drive;
- Bike lanes and a community trail along the extension of Magic Mountain Parkway, and a community trail along the extension of Westridge Parkway to B Drive;
- Drainage improvements associated with the extension of Magic Mountain Parkway and Westridge Parkway, to be located in Magic Mountain Canyon as well as Unnamed Canyons 1 and 2;
- Grading, drainage, and water quality improvements north of proposed Vesting Tentative Tract Map No. 53295 (VTTM 53295) and west of Six Flags Magic Mountain theme park (Six Flags Magic Mountain); and

⁹ Although not developed as part of Alternative 1, the impacts associated with development of the improvements listed below are disclosed herein as they would occur within the Project Site. These impacts were previously addressed within the Mission Village EIR (SCH No. 2005051143), May 2011.

- Grading for Commerce Center Drive at the northwest edge of VTTM 53295.

In addition, a 27.2-acre Spineflower Preserve would be implemented on-site, independent of Alternative 1, pursuant to the Spineflower Conservation Plan component of the Newhall Ranch RMDP/SCP project. The SCP has been funded and is currently being implemented, and the associated permits were issued contingent upon irrevocable conservation of spineflower habitat. In short, the Project Applicant would still be required to comply with and carry out the resource conservation, management, and permitting responsibilities associated with the Newhall Ranch RMDP/SCP project, including those within the Project Site.

Aside from the improvements listed above, which would occur independently of Alternative 1, the remainder of the Project Site would continue to be comprised of predominantly vacant land, some agricultural uses, a small plant nursery used by Six Flags Magic Mountain, and abandoned oil wells and associated unpaved access roads. The Project Applicant could use the land for agricultural or open space purposes in accordance with the current land use and zoning designations for the Project Site.¹⁰

2. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

a. Aesthetics, Views, and Light and Glare

With no construction activities or new development occurring as part of Alternative 1, no impacts with respect to aesthetics, views, light, and glare would occur.¹¹ The Project Site would remain largely unchanged from existing conditions (with the exception of the unrelated Mission Village infrastructure improvements), with substantial vacant land, with limited agricultural uses in the northernmost portion, a small plant nursery used by Six Flags Magic Mountain, and abandoned oil wells and associated unpaved access roads scattered throughout the site. Therefore, Alternative 1 would avoid the significant and unavoidable short-term aesthetic impact of the Project, the less-than-significant impacts related to views and glare, and the Project's construction lighting impacts, which would be less than significant with implementation of mitigation measures.

¹⁰ *At the time of the Notice of Preparation for the Project in June 2010, the northernmost portion of the Project Site included an irrigated agricultural field encompassing 7.45 acres. Subsequently, this area was used as non-irrigated pasture land. As of late 2014, the area is no longer used for any agricultural purposes.*

¹¹ *The on-site grading associated with the approved Mission Village infrastructure improvements could temporarily impact the visual character of portions of the Project Site, independent of Alternative 1.*

Similarly, as Alternative 1 itself would not alter the existing uses on the Project Site, introduce any new buildings, or change the appearance of the Project Site, no operational impacts would occur.¹² Therefore, Alternative 1 would avoid the Project's significant and unavoidable impacts related to aesthetics/visual quality, as well as the Project's less-than-significant impacts related to views, light, and glare.

b. Agricultural and Forest Resources

As existing conditions generally would be maintained under Alternative 1, the approximately 7.45 acres of pasture, including the 6.2 acres of designated Prime Farmland, would not be removed and converted to non-agricultural uses.¹³ Similarly, the 365.3 acres of designated Grazing Land on-site would continue as under existing conditions. As such, these areas could be used for agricultural and/or grazing purposes in the future. In addition, the portions of the Project Site classified as rangeland, urban and barren/other, and hardwood woodland would continue as under existing conditions and no impacts would occur. Therefore, Alternative 1 would avoid the Project's impacts to agricultural and forest resources, which would be less than significant with implementation of mitigation measures.

c. Air Quality

(1) Construction

Alternative 1 does not involve any construction and thus would not generate construction-related air quality emissions.¹⁴ As such, the significant and unavoidable air quality impacts of the Project would be avoided under Alternative 1. In addition, this Alternative would not generate odors or diesel particulate emissions that could generate toxic air contaminants (TACs) in conjunction with construction activities. Therefore, no impacts associated with the release of TACs and objectionable odors during construction would occur under Alternative 1, and impacts would be reduced compared to the Project's less-than-significant impacts. Cumulative construction impacts also would be avoided.

¹² Impacts would occur in conjunction with operation of the approved Mission Village infrastructure improvements within the Project Site boundaries.

¹³ These same 6.2 acres of Prime Farmland would be converted to non-agricultural uses in conjunction with the approved Mission Village infrastructure improvements, independent of Alternative 1.

¹⁴ Air emissions and related impacts associated with construction of the approved Mission Village infrastructure improvements would occur within the Project Site, independent of Alternative 1.

(2) Operation

Alternative 1 would not result in any operational emissions related to vehicular traffic or the consumption of electricity and natural gas.¹⁵ Therefore, Alternative 1 would not result in impacts to regional or localized air quality during operation; impacts would be reduced as compared to the Project's significant and unavoidable regional impacts and less-than-significant localized impacts.

Alternative 1 also would not release toxic contaminants, and there would be no impact on human health. Therefore, impacts would be reduced compared to the Project's less-than-significant impacts. In addition, as Alternative 1 would not include new sources of odors, odor impacts would be reduced compared to the Project's less-than-significant impacts.

Cumulative operational impacts also would be avoided.

d. Biological Resources

Under Alternative 1, no construction would occur and no new land uses would be introduced in areas where biological resources and/or sensitive habitats exist. More specifically, none of the special-status plants, special-status wildlife, vegetation communities, critical habitat, waters (including wetlands) regulated by the Corps, jurisdictional streams regulated by California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), or waters of the State regulated by the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board (LA Regional Water Board) that exist within the Project Site would be affected under Alternative 1.¹⁶ Therefore, although Project impacts would be less than significant with implementation of the proposed mitigation measures, such impacts would be avoided under Alternative 1.

e. Cultural and Paleontological Resources

Only one historic resource is located within the Project Site (Site No. 19-000961, which is the original Newhall Ranch headquarters), and no subsurface remains associated with this resource or any other archaeological remains have been found on-site. In addition, no known paleontological resources are located within the Project Site. As no new development or associated grading would occur under Alternative 1, no impacts to

¹⁵ *Air emissions and related impacts would occur in association with approved Mission Village vehicular trips passing through the Project Site.*

¹⁶ *Development of the approved Mission Village infrastructure improvements would affect biological resources within the Project Site, independent of Alternative 1.*

historic, archaeological, or paleontological resources would occur.¹⁷ Although Project impacts would be less than significant with implementation of proposed mitigation, such impacts would be avoided under Alternative 1

f. Geology and Soils

As Alternative 1 would not involve construction activities or introduce new land uses on-site, the existing uses would remain, including predominantly vacant land, some agricultural uses, a small plant nursery used by Six Flags Magic Mountain, and abandoned oil wells and associated unpaved access roads. As such, no construction- or development-related impacts associated with slope instability, sedimentation, erosion, or landform alteration would occur.¹⁸ Furthermore, Alternative 1 would not expose additional people and/or structures to potential adverse effects associated with geologic and seismic hazards, such as fault rupture, seismic groundshaking, liquefaction, lateral spreading, subsidence, landslides or expansive soils. Therefore, although Project impacts related to geology and soils would be less than significant with mitigation, such impacts would be avoided under Alternative 1. It also is noted, however, that some of the beneficial impacts of the Project, such as the removal or partial removal of existing landslide areas, would not occur as part of this Alternative.

g. Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Alternative 1 would not result in new development or land uses and thus would not generate additional greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.¹⁹ As such, no GHG impacts would occur, and the Project's less-than-significant impacts related to GHG emissions would be avoided.

h. Hazards and Hazardous Materials

Under Alternative 1, grading activities and building construction would not occur, and no new uses or activities would be introduced. Thus, the Alternative would not result in potential construction-related impacts associated with the use of hazardous materials; the uncovering of any subsurface soil contamination; the removal of materials potentially containing asbestos, lead-based paint or polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs); removal of

¹⁷ *Construction of the approved Mission Village infrastructure improvements could potentially affect cultural resources within the Project Site, independent of Alternative 1.*

¹⁸ *Development of the approved Mission Village infrastructure improvements could pose geologic and geotechnical impacts within the Project Site, independent of Alternative 1.*

¹⁹ *Development of the approved Mission Village infrastructure improvements would generate GHG emissions within the Project Site, independent of Alternative 1.*

above-ground storage tanks (ASTs); or development in proximity to abandoned oil wells.²⁰ Similarly, operational impacts would not occur in conjunction with the use, storage, or transport of hazardous materials; the generation of hazardous waste; or interference with any emergency response plan. Thus, no impacts would occur under Alternative 1, and the Project's impacts, which would be less than significant with mitigation, would be avoided.

However, as Alternative 1 would not alter the existing uses on-site, any existing hazardous or potential risk of upset conditions would continue to exist on-site. In particular, the use of hazardous materials such as pesticides and herbicides would continue at the existing nursery used by Six Flags Magic Mountain; existing ASTs and steel drums located on-site would remain in place as would any potential septic tank systems; and the scattered pyrotechnic debris from firework displays by Six Flags Magic Mountain would remain. Further, the Remedial Action Plan prepared for the Project would not be implemented, and thus, the Project's benefits related to complete remediation of the Project Site would not be achieved. Specifically, the following would not occur: clean-up activities necessary to obtain concurrence of no further action for areas previously remediated; clean up of any potential areas of concern that may not have been included under previous remediation programs; and implementation of a Soil Management Plan to address unknown areas of petroleum hydrocarbon impacted soil. Only those remediation activities required by law would be undertaken. As such, certain existing hazardous conditions and associated health risks would persist on-site.

As it relates to development within a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone, no new construction would occur under Alternative 1, and thus no new structures or associated population would be exposed to potential fire hazards. No impacts would occur, and the Project's less-than-significant impacts would be avoided.

i. Hydrology and Water Quality

(1) Hydrology

Alternative 1 would not result in the development of new land uses, impervious surfaces, landscaped areas, or drainage improvements, and existing uses would remain. Thus, Alternative 1 would not alter the amount of pervious surfaces on the Project Site, and no changes to existing drainage patterns or runoff volumes would occur.²¹ Since no new construction activities or development would occur under Alternative 1, the Project's

²⁰ *Development of the approved Mission Village infrastructure improvements could result in construction-related and operational impacts associated with such activities on-site, independent of Alternative 1.*

²¹ *Development of the approved Mission Village infrastructure improvements, including drainage improvements, would affect hydrology conditions within the Project Site, independent of Alternative 1.*

less-than-significant construction and operational impacts associated with flood hazards and hydrology would be avoided. Although the Project's impacts would be less than significant, this Alternative's impacts would be less than those of the Project.

(2) Water Quality

As Alternative 1 would not result in new development or land uses and existing uses would remain, new pollutants would not be introduced in stormwater runoff.²² No impacts to water quality would occur under Alternative 1, and impacts would be reduced in comparison to the Project's less-than-significant impacts related to surface and groundwater quality as well as stream channel hydromodification. However, Alternative 1 would not achieve the benefits resulting from implementation of the Project's Best Management Practices (BMPs), including erosion and sediment control, stormwater treatment, and hydromodification control BMPs.²³

j. Land Use and Planning

(1) Land Use Consistency

Under Alternative 1, the existing physical conditions of the Project Site would remain unchanged, with predominantly vacant land, some agricultural uses, a small plant nursery used by Six Flags Magic Mountain, and abandoned oil wells and associated unpaved access roads.²⁴ The Project Applicant could use the land for agricultural and/or grazing purposes in accordance with the current land use and zoning designations for the Project Site. The Project's requested discretionary actions, including a tract map approval, zone change, conditional use permit, oak tree permit, and parking permit, would not be required. Alternative 1 would be consistent with the regulatory framework regarding land use, including the County's adopted General Plan, Area Plan, Planning and Zoning Code, Hillside Management Area Ordinance, and Green Building Standards Code; the Southern California Association of Governments' (SCAG) 2012–2035 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (2012–2035 RTP/SCS), Growth Vision Report, and Regional Comprehensive Plan (RCP); and the South Coast Air Quality Management District's (SCAQMD) Air Quality Management Plan (AQMP). Impacts associated with consistency with land use regulations and plans would not occur. Therefore, although

²² *Development of the approved Mission Village infrastructure improvements could affect water quality within the Project Site, independent of Alternative 1.*

²³ *As the approved Mission Village infrastructure improvements include water quality treatment facilities, some of the Project's improvements would occur, independent of Alternative 1.*

²⁴ *Some of the existing uses on-site may be affected by development of the approved Mission Village infrastructure improvements, although such improvements would be consistent with applicable land use regulations and plans.*

Project impacts would be less than significant, such impacts would be avoided under Alternative 1. It is noted, however, that despite not having a physical impact related to land use plan consistency, Alternative 1 would not implement the policy direction set forth by the Area Plan nor introduce development capable of accommodating the growth projected by SCAG for the area. Additionally, Alternative 1 would not provide the Project's beneficial design features, such as mutually supportive land uses within an infill site, or bike lanes and multi-use trails that provide connectivity to nearby existing and planned trail systems.

(2) Land Use Compatibility

With regard to land use compatibility, Alternative 1 would not introduce new uses or development within the Project Site and thus would not affect existing on- or off-site land uses or land use relationships within the Project area.²⁵ No impacts relative to land use compatibility would occur. Therefore, although Project impacts would be less than significant, such impacts would be avoided under Alternative 1.

k. Mineral Resources

As existing conditions would be maintained under Alternative 1, the portion of the Project Site that is underlain by an oil and natural gas field would not be developed. The former oil and gas wells within the Project Site have been previously closed and would remain in place. As under the Project, ongoing oil and gas extraction activities within the surrounding area and potential future extraction from beneath the site would not be hindered.²⁶ Therefore, although Project impacts related to mineral resources would be less than significant, such impacts would be avoided under Alternative 1.

l. Noise

Alternative 1 would not result in new development or land uses; thus, no noise impacts associated with short-term construction would occur.²⁷ As such, the Project's significant and unavoidable construction noise impacts would be avoided under Alternative 1. Additionally, as no increase in traffic would occur and no new noise sources would be introduced, noise levels would remain at existing levels, and no new or increased sources of noise within the Project vicinity would occur as a result of Alternative 1. No operational

²⁵ *The approved Mission Village infrastructure improvements could affect existing land use relationships within the Project Site, independent of Alternative 1.*

²⁶ *Likewise, such impacts are not expected to occur as a result of the approved Mission Village infrastructure improvements planned within the Project Site.*

²⁷ *Construction-related as well as operational noise impacts would, however, occur in conjunction with the approved Mission Village infrastructure improvements within the Project Site, independent of Alternative 1.*

noise would be generated under Alternative 1, and the Alternative would avoid the Project's operational noise impacts, which would be less than significant with mitigation. Additionally, as Alternative 1 would not contribute additional traffic noise to future conditions, no cumulatively considerable off-site traffic noise increase would occur, and the Project's significant and unavoidable impact would be avoided.

m. Population, Housing, and Employment

(1) Population

As Alternative 1 would not result in new development or land uses, there would be no potential for direct or indirect population growth, and no impacts would occur.²⁸ Accordingly, Alternative 1 would avoid the Project's less-than-significant impacts.

(2) Housing

Alternative 1 would not result in new development or land uses; thus, no new housing units would be introduced within the Project Site.²⁹ As such, this Alternative would not cause household growth that exceeds projected/planned levels in the area, and no impact would occur. Furthermore, Alternative 1 would avoid the Project's less-than-significant impact related to housing. However, this Alternative would not help meet the SCAG Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) allocation of residential units for the County's unincorporated areas.

(3) Employment

Alternative 1 would not result in new development or land uses, so no new employment opportunities would be generated.³⁰ As such, this Alternative would not cause employment growth that exceeds projected/planned levels, and no impacts would occur. As such, Alternative 1 would avoid the Project's less-than-significant impacts. However, to the extent the Project would assist the County in meeting its policy goals for job creation, this Alternative would not achieve the Project's beneficial employment impacts.

²⁸ *Likewise, given the nature of the improvements within the Project Site, no population growth would occur on-site in conjunction with the approved Mission Village infrastructure improvements.*

²⁹ *Likewise, no housing would be developed within the Project Site in conjunction with the approved Mission Village infrastructure improvements.*

³⁰ *Similarly, aside from temporary construction jobs, no permanent jobs would be generated within the Project Site in conjunction with the approved Mission Village infrastructure improvements.*

n. Public Services

(1) Fire Protection

Alternative 1 would not increase the daytime population or generate an associated increase in calls for fire protection and emergency medical services by the County of Los Angeles Fire Department (Fire Department). As such, the demand for fire protection and emergency medical services in the area would remain unchanged from existing conditions.³¹ Therefore, although Project impacts related to fire protection would be less than significant, such impacts would be avoided under Alternative 1. However, Alternative 1 would not provide the Project's beneficial design features, such as improved circulation in the Project area and the four million gallon reservoir tank proposed in the southwest corner of the Project Site adjacent to Westridge Parkway.

Although the Project Site has been designated as a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone, no new structures or associated population would be exposed to potential fire hazards under Alternative 1. Thus, no impacts related to potential fire hazards would occur, and the Project's less-than-significant impacts would be avoided.

(2) Sheriff Protection

Alternative 1 would not increase the daytime population or generate an associated increase in calls for law enforcement services by the County Sheriff's Department or the California Highway Patrol (CHP). As such, the demand for law enforcement services in the area would remain generally unchanged from existing conditions, and no impacts would occur.³² Therefore, Alternative 1 would avoid the Project's impacts related to sheriff protection, which would be less than significant with mitigation. However, Alternative 1 would not provide the Project's beneficial design features, such as improved circulation in the Project area.

³¹ Similarly, the approved Mission Village infrastructure improvements within the Project Site would not likely affect fire protection services, as no habitable structures would be developed. Further, access and circulation would be improved in the Project area due to the extension of Magic Mountain Parkway and Westridge Parkway as part of Mission Village.

³² Similarly, the approved Mission Village infrastructure improvements within the Project Site would not likely affect sheriff protection services, as no habitable structures would be developed. Further, access and circulation would be improved in the Project area due to the extension of Magic Mountain Parkway and Westridge Parkway as part of Mission Village.

(3) Schools

Alternative 1 would not increase the number of school-aged children in the school districts that serve the Project Site.³³ Therefore, although Project impacts related to schools would be less than significant, such impacts would be avoided under Alternative 1. However, Alternative 1 would not provide the Project's beneficial design features, such as a 9.4-acre elementary school to serve the local population.

(4) Parks and Recreation

Alternative 1 would not generate additional demand for parks and recreational facilities in the Project vicinity.³⁴ Although Project impacts related to parks and recreation would be less than significant, such impacts would be avoided under Alternative 1. However, Alternative 1 would not provide the Project's beneficial design features, such as a 5.6-acre public neighborhood park and two private recreational centers.

(5) Libraries

Alternative 1 would not generate additional demand for libraries in the Project vicinity.³⁵ Although Project impacts related to libraries would be less than significant, such impacts would be avoided under Alternative 1.

o. Transportation/Traffic

No increase in construction traffic would result from Alternative 1 on the local or regional street system.³⁶ Although construction-related traffic impacts under the Project would be less than significant with implementation of a Construction Traffic Management Plan, Alternative 1 would avoid such impacts.

Likewise, Alternative 1 would not result in an increase in operational traffic. As such, no impacts to local intersections or freeway segments, including Los Angeles County Congestion Management Program (CMP) intersections and freeways, would occur, nor

³³ Similarly, the approved Mission Village infrastructure improvements within the Project Site would not affect the demand for schools, as no habitable structures would be developed.

³⁴ Similarly, the approved Mission Village infrastructure improvements within the Project Site would not affect the demand for parks, as no habitable structures would be developed.

³⁵ Similarly, the approved Mission Village infrastructure improvements within the Project Site would not affect the demand for libraries, as no habitable structures would be developed.

³⁶ Construction trips to/from the Project Site would occur in conjunction with the approved Mission Village infrastructure improvements, independent of Alternative 1.

would impacts related to transit or parking. Although Project impacts after mitigation would be less than significant, such impacts would be avoided under Alternative 1. However, this Alternative would not involve fair share contributions to improvements identified in the Westside Bridge and Thoroughfare (B&T) District and thus would not achieve the Project's benefits in this regard.

p. Utilities and Service Systems

(1) Water Supply and Service

Under Alternative 1, new demand for domestic water would not be generated, and water supply and distribution improvements would not be constructed.³⁷ Therefore, no impacts would occur, and Alternative 1 would avoid the Project's less-than-significant impacts related to water supply and service. However, Alternative 1 would not provide the Project's beneficial design features, such as the four million gallon reservoir tank to be constructed in the southwest corner of the site adjacent to Westridge Parkway.

(2) Wastewater Disposal

Under Alternative 1, new wastewater flows would not be generated, and new wastewater improvements would not be constructed.³⁸ Therefore, although Project impacts related to wastewater disposal would be less than significant, such impacts would be avoided under Alternative 1.

(3) Energy

Under Alternative 1, new demand for electricity and natural gas would not be generated, and associated infrastructure improvements would not be constructed.³⁹ Within the Project Site, the existing electrical and natural gas infrastructure would remain in place, including the electrical transformers and high-pressure natural gas transmission main. Therefore, although the Project's impacts related to energy would be less than significant, such impacts would be avoided under Alternative 1.

³⁷ Similarly, the approved Mission Village infrastructure improvements within the Project Site would not affect the demand for water or introduce water infrastructure, as no habitable structures would be developed.

³⁸ Similarly, the approved Mission Village infrastructure improvements within the Project Site would not generate wastewater or introduce sewer infrastructure, as no habitable structures would be developed.

³⁹ Similarly, the approved Mission Village infrastructure improvements within the Project Site would not affect the demand for energy or introduce electricity or natural gas infrastructure, as no habitable structures would be developed.

(4) Solid Waste

Under Alternative 1, no construction and demolition debris or waste would be generated for disposal at the County's unclassified landfill, and no construction waste impacts would occur.⁴⁰ Therefore, although the Project's construction impacts related to solid waste would be less than significant with implementation of mitigation measures, such impacts would be avoided under Alternative 1.

Similarly, no operational solid waste would be generated under Alternative 1.⁴¹ Therefore, no impacts on landfill capacity would occur under Alternative 1, and the Project's less-than-significant impacts with respect to solid waste would be avoided.

3. RELATIONSHIP OF THE ALTERNATIVE TO PROJECT OBJECTIVES

As Alternative 1 would not introduce any new development within the Project Site, Alternative 1 would not meet the Project's underlying purpose to create a mixed-use community through infill development that is interconnected with the surrounding communities, respects the natural resources and features found on-site, and integrates land use, housing, and transportation considerations in furtherance of SB 375, the Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act of 2008, which represents state policy in these areas. Furthermore, this Alternative would not meet any of the specific objectives that support the Project's underlying purpose, as summarized in **Table 6-3**, Summary of the Ability of the Alternatives to Achieve the Project Objectives, on page 6.0-35 and discussed below.

Specifically, Alternative 1 would not meet the Project objective to create a complete mixed-use community, nor would it integrate new development and infrastructure with the surrounding communities. Alternative 1 also would not meet the objective to accommodate regional growth projected by SCAG, nor would it implement the vision of the Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan. Furthermore, Alternative 1 would not provide housing and employment opportunities, an elementary school, a public neighborhood park, or a diverse system of pedestrian and bicycle trails. Consequently, the Alternative would not support and expand the Valley's economic base.

⁴⁰ Construction waste would be generated on-site in conjunction with the approved Mission Village infrastructure improvements, independent of Alternative 1.

⁴¹ Similarly, the approved Mission Village infrastructure improvements within the Project Site would not generate operational solid waste, as no habitable structures would be developed

**Table 6-3
Summary of the Ability of the Alternatives to Achieve the Project Objectives**

Project Objective	Project	Alternative 1: No Project/No Build	Alternative 2: No Project/ Development in Accordance with Existing Plans	Alternative 3: Reduced Density	Alternative 4: Reduced Development Footprint
Underlying Purpose: To create a mixed-use community that implements infill development interconnected with the surrounding communities, conserves on-site sensitive natural resources, and integrates land use, housing, and transportation considerations in furtherance of Senate Bill 375 (SB 375), the Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act of 2008, which represents the State's policy in these areas.	Fully Met	Not Met	Fully Met	Partially Met (does not allow for as wide a range of uses)	Fully Met
Create a complete mixed-use community comprised of mutually supportive land uses that offer housing, employment, shopping, recreational, and other community-serving activities and opportunities of a quality consistent with the Valencia community's design.	Fully Met	Not Met	Fully Met	Partially Met (does not allow for a complete mix of residential housing types or resident-serving uses)	Fully Met
Integrate Project development and infrastructure with existing, approved, and planned communities immediately surrounding the Project Site to create a regional, coordinated destination and promote physical compatibility through residential planned development and single-family residential clustering with transitional land use patterns that buffer residential areas from high-intensity commercial uses.	Fully Met	Not Met	Fully Met	Fully Met	Partially Met (limited integration with adjacent communities)

Table 6-3 (Continued)
Summary of the Ability of the Alternatives to Achieve the Project Objectives

Project Objective	Project	Alternative 1: No Project/No Build	Alternative 2: No Project/ Development in Accordance with Existing Plans	Alternative 3: Reduced Density	Alternative 4: Reduced Development Footprint
Accommodate regional growth projected by SCAG in the Santa Clarita Valley Planning Area (i.e., 16,398 new jobs in the Valley between 2014 and 2035) within an infill site adjacent to existing, approved, or planned infrastructure, urban services, transportation corridors, transit facilities, and major employment centers in furtherance of SB 375 policies. Related to this effort, implement sustainable development principles, including an appropriate mix of land uses, job generation, and design elements that would: reduce vehicle miles traveled and commuting distances; increase access to transit; provide open space, recreational amenities, and trail connectivity; conserve sensitive natural resources, water, and energy; and incorporate of green building techniques.	Fully Met	Not Met	Fully Met	Partially Met (accommodates less of SCAG's projected growth, thereby creating the potential for growth in other areas unplanned for growth)	Fully Met
Avoid leapfrog development, unnecessary infrastructure, extension, and "patchwork" development which utilizes undue open space and natural resources by locating and concentrating development within and adjacent to existing, approved, and planned urbanized areas and regional transportation and transit facilities.	Fully Met	Not Met	Fully Met	Partially Met (accommodates less of SCAG's projected growth, thereby creating the potential for growth in other areas unplanned for growth)	Fully Met

Table 6-3 (Continued)
Summary of the Ability of the Alternatives to Achieve the Project Objectives

Project Objective	Project	Alternative 1: No Project/No Build	Alternative 2: No Project/ Development in Accordance with Existing Plans	Alternative 3: Reduced Density	Alternative 4: Reduced Development Footprint
Implement the vision of the Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan: One Valley One Vision 2012 by incorporating land use and environmental development, consistent with the Area Plan goals and promoting development concurrent with the provision of adequate infrastructure, economic vitality, and improved quality of life within the Santa Clarita Valley.	Fully Met	Not Met	Fully Met	Fully Met	Fully Met
Design a Project that strikes a balance between the development density permitted by the Area Plan and demand for low and mid-density housing, thus offering a transition to higher density, urban development in a highly visible gateway location.	Fully Met	Not Met	Partially Met (increased housing would limit provision of low-density housing types; commercial density would be over twice that of the Project)	Partially Met (reduced housing would reduce residential density and limit provision of mid-density housing types)	Partially Met (increased residential density would limit provision of low-density housing types)
Design a Project that carries out the resource conservation, management, and permitting responsibilities associated with the Newhall Ranch Resource Management and Development Plan and Spineflower Conservation Plan, including establishment of a Spineflower Conservation Area, and that is sensitive to the development standards set forth in the Newhall Ranch Specific Plan.	Fully Met	Fully Met	Fully Met	Fully Met	Fully Met

Table 6-3 (Continued)
Summary of the Ability of the Alternatives to Achieve the Project Objectives

Project Objective	Project	Alternative 1: No Project/No Build	Alternative 2: No Project/ Development in Accordance with Existing Plans	Alternative 3: Reduced Density	Alternative 4: Reduced Development Footprint
Allow for a range of residential housing types, sizes, and styles to serve the needs of a growing and increasingly diverse population within the County and the Santa Clarita Valley.	Fully Met	Not Met	Partially Met (increased housing would limit provision of low-density housing types)	Partially Met (reduced housing would limit provision of mid-density housing types)	Partially Met (increased residential density would limit provision of low-density housing types)
Provide housing and employment opportunities to accommodate the projected increase of more than 22,000 households in the Santa Clarita Valley between 2014 and 2035 in an infill location that is close to existing, approved, and planned communities and infrastructure (e.g., roadways, transit, water and sewer lines, drainage facilities, etc.).	Fully Met	Not Met	Fully Met	Partially Met (fewer residential units and less commercial square footage)	Fully Met
Provide for commercial development that serves the needs of the local population, generates employment opportunities, and is located so as to provide a buffer between Six Flags Magic Mountain and proposed residential uses.	Fully Met	Not Met	Fully Met	Partially Met (less commercial square footage)	Fully Met
Develop an elementary school to serve the local population, with adequate parking and drop-off areas and connectivity to the surrounding residential areas, and provide a public neighborhood park and private neighborhood recreation centers of adequate size and with appropriate amenities to serve the needs of Project residents and the local community.	Fully Met	Not Met	Fully Met	Fully Met	Fully Met

Table 6-3 (Continued)
Summary of the Ability of the Alternatives to Achieve the Project Objectives

Project Objective	Project	Alternative 1: No Project/No Build	Alternative 2: No Project/ Development in Accordance with Existing Plans	Alternative 3: Reduced Density	Alternative 4: Reduced Development Footprint
Establish a diverse system of pedestrian and bicycle trails, segregated from vehicular traffic, to promote interconnectivity between the various areas of the Project Site, provide access to the on-site amenities, link to the Newhall Ranch Specific Plan trail system to the west and the Westridge community to the south, and serve as an alternative to automobile use.	Fully Met	Not Met	Fully Met	Fully Met	Fully Met
Establish a circulation network that would provide adequate access throughout the Project Site and enhance connectivity to the adjacent communities and the regional transportation system, while emphasizing safety, meeting County roadway standards, and supporting alternative modes of transportation.	Fully Met	Not Met	Fully Met	Fully Met	Fully Met
Support and expand the economic base of the Santa Clarita Valley by generating employment opportunities and revenues from commercial and retail development, located close to existing, approved, and planned urban areas, regional transportation, and transit opportunities.	Fully Met	Not Met	Fully Met	Partially Met (less commercial square footage)	Fully Met
<hr/> <p><i>Source: Eyestone Environmental, 2015.</i></p>					

Alternative 1 would, however, meet the Project objective regarding implementation of the Newhall Ranch RMDP/SCP, as the Project Applicant would be required to comply with and carry out the resource conservation, management, and permitting responsibilities associated with the Newhall Ranch RMDP/SCP project, including those within the Project Site.

Overall, Alternative 1 would not meet the Project's underlying purpose or the majority of Project objectives.

6. PROJECT ALTERNATIVES

2. ALTERNATIVE 2: NO PROJECT/DEVELOPMENT IN ACCORDANCE WITH EXISTING PLANS

1. DESCRIPTION OF THE ALTERNATIVE

Under CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(e)(3)(B), the No Project Alternative may discuss “predictable actions by others, such as the proposal of some other project” if disapproval of the project under consideration were to occur. CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(e)(3)(C) further states that the No Project Alternative should reflect “what would reasonably be expected to occur in the foreseeable future if the project were not approved, based on current plans and consistent with available infrastructure and community services.” Based on this guidance, Alternative 2, Development in Accordance with Existing Plans, is analyzed and assumes the Project Site would be developed with uses consistent with the site’s existing land use and zoning designations.

The land use designations for the Project Site set forth in the recently updated Area Plan are H2—Residential 2; H5—Residential 5; CM—Major Commercial; OS-PR—Parks and Recreation; and SP—Newhall Ranch Specific Plan. In addition, the Project Site is currently zoned R-1—Single-Family Residence; RPD-8500-5.1U—Residential Planned Development (5.1 dwelling units per acre); C-3—Unlimited Commercial; C-3-DP—Unlimited Commercial/Development Program; C-R—Commercial Recreation; and SP—Newhall Ranch Specific Plan. Under these land use and zoning parameters, the Project Site could be built out with a mix of residential, commercial, open space/recreational, and institutional uses, with appropriate supportive amenities, consistent with development of other properties in the Project vicinity. Assuming this scenario, Alternative 2 would include 1,911 dwelling units and 1.5 million square feet of commercial floor area.^{42,43} Thus,

⁴² *In accordance with recommendations from the County Department of Regional Planning, the H5—Residential 5 designation was applied to the entire 382.3 acres within VTTM 53295 to calculate residential density rather than only the portion of the Project Site designated as H5. In addition, based on the same land uses and floor area ratio (FAR) permitted under the Project, up to approximately 4.5 million square feet of commercial floor area would be allowed. However, this magnitude of commercial floor area is unlikely to be constructed in light of other existing commercial space and approved, planned, and proposed projects in the surrounding vicinity and given concerns regarding economic viability. Therefore, although more floor area could be built by-right, this Alternative assumes development of 1.5 million square feet of commercial square footage.*

Alternative 2 would provide more new residential units and commercial floor area as compared to the Project. As such, the density and height of new development under Alternative 2 would be different. Specifically, Alternative 2 would include greater residential and commercial densities and taller building heights within development footprints similar to those of the Project. In addition, similar to the Project, Alternative 2 would include appropriate amenities to support the residential and commercial uses, including an elementary school, public neighborhood park, recreational facilities, and open space.

Primary access to the Project Site would be via Magic Mountain Parkway and Westridge Parkway, which would be extended as part of Alternative 2. On-site infrastructure improvements also would include an internal network of roadways and trails, drainage and water quality improvements, dry utilities systems, a potable water system, a recycled water system, and a sanitary sewer system, similar to the Project. However, like the Project, many of the infrastructure improvements proposed within the External Map Improvements area as part of this Alternative previously were approved as part of the adjacent Mission Village project. Should one project be built before the other, the first project would have the obligation to construct the shared improvements, similar to the Project.⁴⁴

In addition, a 27.2-acre Spineflower Preserve would be implemented on-site pursuant to the Spineflower Conservation Plan component of the Newhall Ranch RMDP/SCP project. The SCP has been funded and is currently being implemented, and the associated permits were issued contingent upon irrevocable conservation of spineflower habitat. In short, the Project Applicant is required to comply with and carry out the resource conservation, management, and permitting responsibilities associated with the Newhall Ranch RMDP/SCP project, including those within the Project Site.

Prior to building construction, the existing uses on-site would be removed, and substantial grading would be required to create level development pads, stabilize any slopes in areas of adverse geologic structure, and modify the tributary drainage courses to support proposed development and infrastructure, similar to the Project. Grading for

⁴³ For purposes of calculating employment and vehicular trips, Alternative 2 assumes the same non-residential land use mix as the Project: 59.6 percent office, 40.4 percent commercial retail, plus school and park uses.

⁴⁴ As discussed in **Section 3.0, Project Description**, of this Draft EIR, these shared improvements are common to both projects and are evaluated in both this Draft EIR as well as the EIR for Mission Village. However, once the improvements are constructed as part of one project, they will not need to be constructed as part of the other project. Regardless of the order, in no case will the development of one project result in added obligations or mitigations for the other, nor will any additional environmental review be necessary. Rather, the impacts associated with construction of the latter project would be reduced accordingly.

Alternative 2 is estimated to require the removal and recompaction of approximately 7.8 million cubic yards of earth material in a balanced cut and fill operation plus remedial grading of approximately 2.0 million cubic yards of material depending upon site-specific soils and future geotechnical investigations, similar to the Project. However, given the relative increase in building floor area, the intensity and duration of construction may be greater under this Alternative than under the Project.

2. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

a. Aesthetics, Views, and Light and Glare

(1) Views

Alternative 2 would include taller building heights and more new floor area compared to the Project, which would alter views of the Project Site. From certain off-site vantage points, such as the current terminus of Westridge Parkway and/or SR-126, panoramic views of the mountains to the distant north and south may be interrupted by new buildings, although such views are anticipated to remain available. Given the varied topography of the Project Site which prevents views of much of the site interior, the distance of the majority of Alternative 2 development from off-site locations, and the eastern hillsides that would remain undeveloped as part of the Spineflower Preserve, impacts to views would be somewhat limited. In addition, although the Project Site interior would be visually altered, none of the existing visual features to be removed are considered unique. View impacts would be less than significant but would be greater than those of the Project, primarily due to the increased level of construction and increased building heights and floor area.

(2) Visual Character

(a) Construction

During construction of Alternative 2, the visual appearance of the Project Site would be altered due to grading, the removal of existing vegetation, the staging of construction equipment and materials, and the construction of foundations, new buildings, and parking lots. Some of these construction activities, particularly in locations near the site perimeter, would be visible to pedestrians and motorists on adjacent streets and may be visible from more distant vantage points. As construction activities would affect the visual character on-site, a significant short-term aesthetic impact would result, similar to the Project. However, given the relative increase in building floor area, the duration of construction may be longer under this Alternative than under the Project. Thus, despite mitigation, short-term aesthetics impacts would remain significant and unavoidable and would be greater than the Project's due to the longer construction period.

(b) Operation

On a long-term basis, implementation of Alternative 2 would permanently alter the Project Site through landform modification and the introduction of new development and infrastructure. Similar to the Project, proposed development would be consistent in terms of land use and general design with surrounding development, although the scale of development (e.g., building heights) may be greater than existing uses in the area and thus present a degree of visual contrast. Nonetheless, Alternative 2 would feature high quality building materials, pedestrian-scaled amenities designed to activate the public realm, varied architecture to create visual interest, public and private open spaces that offer respite from urban development, and street frontage improvements including substantial landscaping. In addition, the layout of development under Alternative 2 would create a logical transition in land use type and intensity. Similar to the Project, Alternative 2 is designed to respect many of the natural resources and features on-site, with grading that generally follows the natural topographic trends on-site, natural-looking improvements such as debris and water quality basins that incorporate vegetation or water features, and a major canyon (Unnamed Canyon 2) that would be restored as an open, vegetated drainage channel traversing VTTM 53295, thus providing visual relief within the residentially developed portions of the Project Site. Also under Alternative 2, an estimated 26 regulation-size oak trees would be preserved, and up to 158 new oak trees of 15-gallon size would be planted per the County's Oak Tree Ordinance and current County practices, similar to the Project. Nonetheless, given the change in the Project Site's visual quality/character, impacts would be significant and unavoidable, and such impacts would be greater than the Project's due to the Alternative's increased building heights and total floor area.

(3) Light***(a) Construction***

Substantial lighting is not anticipated during construction within the Project Site, as most construction activities would occur during daylight hours. However, security lighting would be provided during non-construction hours. Construction impacts related to lighting would be less than significant with mitigation, similar to the Project.

(b) Operation

Nighttime sources of illumination would include post lights and building mounted fixtures in commercial and residential areas, lighted signs for wayfinding and building identification purposes, parking lot lighting, vehicle headlights, landscape lighting, and lighting for outdoor recreational activities at the school and park/recreational centers. Although lighting would be designed to ensure visibility and safety while minimizing light spillover and skyglow, given that the Project Site presently produces little or no light, the

light levels generated by Alternative 2 would represent a noticeable change from existing conditions. While the increased total floor area under Alternative 2 may involve more fixtures than under the Project, the addition of post lights and other lighting under Alternative 2 would result in less-than-significant impacts that would be generally similar to those of the Project.

(4) Glare

(a) Construction

During construction, any glare would be highly transitory and short-term given the movement of construction equipment and materials and the temporary nature of specific construction activities. Potential short-term glare impacts during construction of Alternative 2 would therefore be less than significant, similar to the Project's impacts.

(b) Operation

Building materials would likely include stucco, stone, wood, brick, terra cotta tiles, and glass, most of which would be non- or low-reflective. Overall, Alternative 2 would not cause glare that would interfere with the performance of an off-site activity or sensitive uses or adversely affect day or nighttime views. Potential glare impacts during operation of Alternative 2 would therefore be less than significant, similar to the Project's impacts.

b. Agricultural and Forest Resources

Under Alternative 2, the existing 7.45 acres of pasture, including the 6.2 acres of designated Prime Farmland, would be removed and converted to non-agricultural uses, similar to the Project. In addition, implementation of Alternative 2 would involve development within the majority of the 365.3 acres of Grazing Land on-site, resulting in its conversion to other uses. As no oak trees are actually located within mapped forest land on-site, Alternative 2 would not result in the removal or conversion of any designated forest land to non-forest uses. As with the Project, impacts related to agricultural lands and forest land resources would be less than significant, and the impacted Prime Farmland would be mitigated either in a stand-alone 6.2-acre conservation easement or as part of a greater 138-acre conservation easement. Therefore, impacts on Prime Farmland would be less than significant with mitigation, similar to the Project's impacts.

c. Air Quality

(1) Construction

Under Alternative 2, construction activities may be more intense than under the Project due to the relative increase in floor area, and the duration of construction may be

longer. As with the Project, construction of Alternative 2 would generate pollutant emissions through the use of heavy-duty construction equipment and through vehicle trips generated from construction workers traveling to and from the Project Site. The total construction emissions generated by Alternative 2 would be greater than those of the Project over the construction period, which is expected to be longer than that of the Project. However, based on the increased duration of construction, Alternative 2's peak daily impacts are not expected to change. As with the Project, implementation of regulatory compliance measures, PDFs, and mitigation measures would reduce construction emissions for all pollutants. Nonetheless, even with incorporation of all feasible mitigation, Alternative 2 would exceed the SCAQMD regional significance threshold for VOC and NO_x, and impacts would be greater than the Project's impacts.

The intensity and duration of site grading would be similar under Alternative 2 as compared to the Project, and, since the localized construction ambient air quality concentrations are closely correlated to the site preparation and grading phases, the localized air quality concentrations are not expected to be different for Alternative 2 as compared to the Project. While the building construction phase may be longer in duration, the maximum localized air quality concentrations are not expected to change since they are on the basis of one year or less. As with the Project, localized impacts attributable to construction would be less than significant under Alternative 2.

Like the Project, no notable impacts related to TAC emissions during construction are anticipated to occur for Alternative 2. While the overall construction duration may be longer and result in additional TAC emissions, the increase of such emissions is not expected to increase the potential health risk from construction emissions above the significance threshold. The Alternative also is not anticipated to generate substantial odor emissions. As such, impacts related to TAC emissions and objectionable odors would be less than significant, similar to the Project.

According to SCAQMD, individual construction projects that exceed SCAQMD's recommended daily thresholds for project-specific impacts would cause a cumulatively considerable increase in emissions for those pollutants for which the Air Basin is in non-attainment. Consequently, Alternative 2 would have a significant cumulative impact due to construction-related regional emissions, and such impacts would be greater than under the Project. Other cumulative air quality impacts would be less than significant and generally similar to the Project's impacts.

(2) Operation

The number of daily trips generated under Alternative 2 would be greater in comparison to the Project due to the increase in floor area. As vehicular emissions are

dependent upon the number of trips, vehicular sources would generate greater pollutant emissions compared to the Project. With the increase in overall square footage, both area sources and stationary sources would generate a corresponding increase in on-site operational pollutant emissions. As such, regional operational emissions under this Alternative would be greater than the Project's emissions. Impacts would be significant and unavoidable for regional operational air quality impacts and greater as compared to the Project.

Alternative 2 also is forecasted to generate greater operational trips (inbound + outbound) during the A.M. and P.M. peak hours than the Project. At buildout of the Project, the highest average daily trips at an intersection would be approximately 102,600 at the Bouquet & Newhall Ranch intersection, which is well below the daily traffic volumes (400,000 vehicles) expected to generate CO exceedances as evaluated in the 2003 AQMP. There is no reason unique to Air Basin meteorology to conclude that the CO concentrations at the Bouquet & Newhall Ranch intersection would exceed the 1-hour CO standard if modeled in detail, based on the studies undertaken for the 2003 AQMP. Although Alternative 2 would generate more A.M. and P.M. peak-hour trips in comparison to the Project and the resultant change in local CO pollutant concentrations would increase, daily traffic volumes would remain well below the daily traffic volumes evaluated in the 2003 AQMP. The localized CO hotspot analysis for the Project did not result in any significant impacts, and Alternative 2 would likewise not have any significant localized impacts, although estimated CO concentrations would be greater than those estimated for the Project.

With respect to potential air toxics, like the Project, Alternative 2 would not release substantial amounts of toxic contaminants, and impacts on human health would be less than significant. Alternative 2 does not include any uses identified by the SCAQMD as being associated with odors; thus, as with the Project, odor impacts are not anticipated in conjunction with Alternative 2. Impacts would be less than significant and similar to the Project.

According to SCAQMD, if an individual project results in air emissions of criteria pollutants that exceed SCAQMD's recommended daily thresholds for project-specific impacts, then the project would also result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of these criteria pollutants. Therefore, Alternative 2's regional operational emissions would be significant on a cumulative basis, and such impacts would be greater than under the Project. Other cumulative air quality impacts would be less than significant although greater than the Project's impacts.

d. Biological Resources

Development under Alternative 2 would occur within a footprint similar to the Project. As such, Alternative 2 would affect similar areas where biological resources and sensitive habitats exist. Alternative 2 would include a comprehensive system of drainage, flood control, and water quality improvements, similar to the Project. In addition, Alternative 2 would include substantial open space, of which 27.2 acres would be established as a Spineflower Preserve. Six special-status plants have been documented on the Project Site during studies conducted between 2002 and 2013. As with the Project, impacts to special-status plants, including oak trees and oak woodland, would be less than significant with implementation of mitigation measures under Alternative 2.

Also similar to the Project, Alternative 2 would result in the permanent loss of approximately 419 acres (83 percent) and temporary direct impacts to approximately 22 acres (4 percent) of the vegetation communities and other land covers on the Project Site, resulting in total impacts to approximately 441 acres, or 88 percent of the site. An estimated 43 percent (179.4 acres) of the total direct permanent impacts and 58 percent (12.9 acres) of the total direct temporary impacts overlap with the approved Mission Village project site.⁴⁵ As with the Project, impacts would be less than significant with mitigation under Alternative 2.

In addition, temporary impacts to 0.0005 acre of disturbed land within arroyo toad critical habitat and direct impacts to 6.1 acres of least Bell's vireo critical habitat would occur under Alternative 2. Nonetheless, impacts would be less than significant, similar to the Project.

Finally, under Alternative 2, permanent direct impacts to 14.22 acres and temporary direct impacts to 0.46 acre of CDFW's jurisdictional streambeds (out of 15.41 acres) would occur, of which 7.89 acres of permanent direct impacts and 0.12 acre of temporary direct impacts are waters of the United States and waters of the State (out of 8.26 acres). As with the Project, these impacts would be less than significant with mitigation under Alternative 2.

e. Cultural and Paleontological Resources

Only one historic resource is located within the Project Site (i.e., Site No. 19-000961, which is the original Newhall Ranch headquarters), and no subsurface remains associated

⁴⁵ Thus, as under the Project, if the approved Mission Village should be constructed first, such impacts would occur under that project and would not occur as a result of this Alternative.

with this resource or any other archaeological remains have been found on-site. In addition, no known paleontological resources are located within the Project Site, although several of the rock units underlying the site include formations with moderate to high paleontological sensitivity. Under Alternative 2, the existing uses on-site would be removed, and substantial grading would occur, similar to the Project. Thus, like the Project, grading and excavation under this Alternative could potentially affect archaeological resources, paleontological resources, and/or human remains. However, impacts to cultural and paleontological resources would be less than significant with mitigation under Alternative 2, similar to the Project.

f. Geology and Soils

The Project Site does not contain any known active faults and is not within an Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone. No evidence of active faulting or ground rupture has been identified on-site. As such, similar to the Project, the probability of ground rupture due to active faulting on-site during the design life of Alternative 2 is considered to be very low to non-existent. As with the Project, fault rupture impacts would be less than significant and similar to those of the Project.

Under Alternative 2, new development would occur within a footprint similar to the Project's footprint. Therefore, development under Alternative 2 would be subject to the same degree of seismic hazard risks and geological considerations as the Project. As with any new development in the State of California, building design and construction would be required to conform to the current seismic design provisions of the California Building Code. In addition, construction of Alternative 2 would adhere to the requirements contained in the County Building Codes, as well as all engineering recommendations set forth in appropriate Geotechnical Reports, including grading plan specifications. Therefore, as with the Project, impacts related to the rupture of a known earthquake fault, strong seismic ground shaking, soil erosion, expansive soil, hillside requirements, and grading under Alternative 2 would be less than significant. In addition, similar to the Project, impacts relative to seismic-related ground failure, landslides, slope stability, hydrocompaction, and location of a sensitive use in close proximity to a significant geotechnical hazard under Alternative 2 would be reduced to a less-than-significant level with mitigation.

g. Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Similar to the Project, Alternative 2 is premised upon sustainability principles, including an appropriate mix of land uses, job generation, design principles to reduce vehicle miles traveled and commuting distances, access to transit, the provision of open space and recreational amenities, trail connectivity, the preservation of natural areas, water and energy conservation, efficient interior climate control, and the incorporation of green

building techniques, thereby contributing to the reduction of GHG emissions. Alternative 2 would be expected to incorporate transportation-related GHG reduction strategies and numerous design features to reduce GHG emissions.

GHG emissions are determined mainly by daily trips generated and energy consumption from proposed land uses. Given the increase in floor area, this Alternative would generate more vehicle trips and consume more energy compared to the Project, which would lead to increased GHG emissions. Like the Project, Alternative 2 would incorporate PDFs and other attributes and regulatory initiatives that would represent a break from “business-as-usual” and support efforts to return the State to its 1990 emissions level in accordance with AB 32. Thus, Alternative 2 is expected to be consistent with AB 32 when evaluated based on a comparison to a “business-as-usual” condition. Therefore, while Alternative 2 may have increased GHG emissions relative to the Project, GHG emissions under Alternative 2 would be less than significant based on a comparison to the “business-as-usual” condition.

h. Hazards and Hazardous Materials

(1) Construction

Similar to the Project, despite compliance with manufacturers’ instructions and applicable standards and regulations, the use, handling, storage, transport, and disposal of potentially hazardous materials during construction of Alternative 2 could increase the potential for accidental releases and, subsequently, the exposure of people and the environment to hazardous materials. Also like the Project, all existing ASTs located within the grading footprint of Alternative 2 would be properly abandoned and removed in accordance with applicable laws and regulations. However, soil under the existing ASTs may be contaminated with petroleum hydrocarbons or other constituents. Such conditions represent potentially significant impacts, and appropriate mitigation would reduce such impacts to a less-than-significant level.

Portions of the Project Site were formerly used for oil production, and 19 possible former oil well sites exist on-site. In addition, several former sumps, two oil field production tank batteries, and one area of possible land filling exist on the Project Site. As with the Project, any former oil wells and unknown (“wildcat”) wells located in an area of the Project Site to be disturbed or developed would be investigated and re-abandoned, as necessary, according to applicable state and local regulations, including requirements set forth by the California Division of Oil, Gas and Geothermal Resources (DOGGR). Additionally, visibly impacted soils would be treated and/or removed and disposed of in accordance with federal, state, regional, and local regulations under Alternative 2. As mitigation, a Soil Management Plan would be implemented on-site, as well as a Remedial Action Plan to address any previously unidentified features or materials that could present a threat to

human health or the environment. Therefore, similar to the Project, impacts related to upset or accident conditions or other potential health risks would be less than significant with mitigation.

Asbestos-containing materials and lead-based paint may be present within the existing structures on-site. In addition, PCBs may be present within electrical transformers on-site. If present and disturbed during the demolition phase of construction, these materials would pose a threat to human health which would be a significant impact. As well, if previously undiscovered septic tank systems are encountered during Project grading, an accidental release could occur. Mitigation would reduce such impacts to a less-than-significant level, similar to the Project. Further, proposed structures would incorporate new, commercially sold building materials that do not include asbestos-containing materials or lead-based paint, as well as modern electrical facilities and fixtures that longer contain PCBs. Thus, impacts related to new development would be less than significant, similar to the Project. As any existing occurrences of mold would be removed during construction, like the Project, impacts would be less than significant.

Pyrotechnic debris was observed within a fireworks storage area used by Six Flags Magic Mountain located on-site and represents a potential health risk which would be a significant impact. Additionally, soils contaminated with pesticides and herbicides, if present, could be encountered during construction. Implementation of mitigation would reduce these impacts, as well as any residual soil contamination from other past uses, to a less-than-significant level.

Potential health risks also may be associated with other existing facilities on-site, including Southern California Edison's high voltage electric transmission lines and towers, Southern California Gas Company's (SoCalGas's) high pressure gas transmission pipeline and other gas lines, and groundwater monitoring wells or other water wells. As with the Project, Alternative 2 would not include any structures within the Edison or SoCalGas easements along the southern boundary of the Project Site, and the proposed school would comply with state siting requirements related to high voltage transmission lines. As such, similar to the Project, impacts associated with other potential health risks would be less than significant.

With respect to an emergency response plan, Alternative 2 would include a construction traffic management plan to ensure adequate emergency access to all nearby residences and businesses and traffic interference and construction vehicle travel on congested streets, similar to the Project. Therefore, as with the Project, impacts would be less than significant.

In general, each of the impacts discussed above would be roughly equivalent to those of the Project given the similar development footprint, grading volumes, and types of uses to be introduced as part of Alternative 2 as compared to the Project. All such impacts would be less than significant with mitigation.

(2) Operation

Similar to the Project, Alternative 2 would involve the limited use of potentially hazardous materials typical of those used in residential and commercial developments, schools, and parks. However, all hazardous materials within the Project Site would be acquired, handled, used, stored, transported, and disposed of in accordance with manufacturers' instructions and in compliance with all applicable federal, state, regional, and local requirements. Similarly, any minor hazardous wastes would be conveyed to licensed treatment, disposal, and resource recovery facilities, as required, and/or would be collected and handled as part of the County's household hazardous waste management program. Additionally, neither hazardous emissions nor dangerous fire hazards are anticipated in conjunction with operations. Further, the Alternative would include an emergency response plan per regulatory requirements, as approved by the Fire Department, which would facilitate emergency response and evacuation of the Project Site in the event of a hazardous materials release. Thus, similar to the Project, impacts during operation would not create a significant hazard, and impacts would be less than significant. Such impacts would be similar to those of the Project.

With regard to I-5, which is a designated route for the transport of explosive and inhalation materials, increased traffic generated by Alternative 2 could increase the potential for an accident involving the transport of these substances. Impacts related to the release of hazardous materials or waste into the environment from the transport of hazardous materials along I-5 would be less than significant but greater than the Project's due to the comparative increase in traffic.

i. Hydrology and Water Quality

(1) Hydrology

(a) Construction

The primary hydrological concern during construction of Alternative 2 would be potential erosion and sedimentation impacts during site clearing and grading, the extent of which would be similar to the Project given the similar development footprint and grading volumes. Increases in sedimentation and debris production would be temporary and limited through implementation of construction BMPs. Furthermore, site grading would occur in compliance with County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works' (Public

Works) standards, and all slopes would be graded, compacted, and stabilized such that they would not be subject to mudflow hazard. Similar to the Project, construction impacts would be less than significant with compliance with applicable regulatory requirements and implementation of appropriate BMPs.

(b) Operation

Under Alternative 2, new development would occur within a footprint similar to the Project's footprint, and the impervious surface area on-site would increase due to new roads, buildings, paved parking areas, and other relatively impermeable or impervious features. The introduction of impervious surfaces would increase the amount of clear flow runoff from and through the site due to the associated reduction in infiltration, while burned/bulked runoff and debris flow rates would be reduced since the developed portions of the site would be covered with impervious surfaces and non-erodible vegetation and due to the introduction of debris basins. Like the Project, the on-site drainage system would be designed to contain and convey flows associated with the County's 50-year capital storm event in accordance with Public Works requirements. As with the Project, Alternative 2 would not substantially alter the overall existing drainage patterns within and surrounding the Project Site, substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner that would result in flooding on- or off-site, create or contribute runoff that exceeds the capacity of existing or planned drainage systems, or create drainage system capacity problems. Therefore, similar to the Project, impacts would be less than significant with compliance with applicable regulatory requirements and implementation of appropriate BMPs.

(2) Water Quality

(a) Construction

Construction-related water quality impacts are primarily associated with sediment and certain non-sediment pollutants. Under Alternative 2, vegetation removal, grading, and trenching for infrastructure improvements could result in sediment releases. However, like the Project, construction impacts would be minimized through compliance with the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Construction General Permit and the waste discharge requirements in the General Dewatering Permit. In particular, erosion and sediment transport, as well as the transport of other potential pollutants from the Project Site during construction, would be reduced or prevented through implementation of appropriate BMPs specified in a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP). Additionally, if construction dewatering is required, BMPs would be implemented to protect receiving waters from dewatering and construction-related non-stormwater discharges, similar to the Project. As such, similar to the Project, construction-related water quality impacts would be less than significant with regulatory compliance.

(b) Operation

Mean annual runoff volumes are expected to increase as a result of Alternative 2 due to the increase in impervious surface area associated with development of the site, as well as the decrease in the infiltration capacity of existing site soils associated with compaction during construction. Implementation of low impact development (LID) BMPs would provide substantial runoff volume reduction via infiltration and evapotranspiration and, therefore, would provide hydromodification source control, as well as stormwater treatment. On this basis, similar to the Project, water quality impacts related to stormwater runoff volumes would be less than significant.

As it relates to specific pollutants, most water quality impacts associated with this Alternative would be similar to those of the Project due to the similar types of uses to be introduced, the similar development footprint, and compliance with regulatory requirements. Specifically, like the Project, implementation of appropriate BMPs and source and treatment controls would reduce sediment loads, pathogens (e.g., pet wastes), trash and debris, and toxicity levels in stormwater runoff, and such impacts would be less than significant. Additionally, like the Project, stormwater discharges from the Project Site under Alternative 2 are not expected to increase the in-stream concentration of nutrients, metals, chloride, or pesticides, and related impacts would be less than significant. Petroleum hydrocarbon concentrations would likely be greater under Alternative 2 compared to the Project given increased vehicular emissions associated with increased vehicle trips. However, source control BMPs incorporated in compliance with the Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) Permit and Standard Urban Stormwater Mitigation Plan (SUSMP) requirements would minimize the presence of hydrocarbons in runoff, and, like the Project, water quality impacts related to petroleum hydrocarbons would be less than significant.

With respect to groundwater quality, treated effluent from the Valencia Water Reclamation Plant (WRP) would be used to supply recycled water to the Project Site for landscape irrigation and other approved uses. As the effluent limitations specified in the Valencia WRP's NPDES Permit are below relevant groundwater quality objectives, under Alternative 2 impacts on groundwater quality would be less than significant, similar to the Project. Additionally, dry weather discharge to the Santa Clara River is not expected to occur under Alternative 2, and, like the Project, impacts would be less than significant.

Finally, relative to hydromodification, the County MS4 Permit exempts from hydromodification control requirements projects that discharge directly or via a storm drain into the River. Nevertheless, like the Project, this Alternative's site design and LID BMPs would minimize increases in runoff volume from the developed area, which is the preferred method for controlling hydromodification impacts from new development. Therefore, similar to the Project, hydromodification impacts on the River would be less than significant.

j. Land Use and Planning

(1) Land Use Consistency

Similar to the Project, development under Alternative 2 would include uses consistent with the site's existing land use designations established by the Area Plan. The Alternative also would require the same discretionary approvals as the Project, including a vesting tentative tract map, zone change, conditional use permit (CUP), oak tree permit, and parking permit, along with a number of approvals by and/or permits from various local, regional, state, and federal agencies. In general, given the similarity of Alternative 2 with the Project, like the Project, the Alternative would be consistent with the overall regulatory framework regarding land use, including the County's adopted General Plan, Area Plan, Planning and Zoning Code, Hillside Management Area Ordinance, and Green Building Standards Code, as well as SCAG's 2012–2035 RTP/SCS, Growth Vision Report, and RCP; SCAQMD's AQMP; and Metro's 2010 CMP for Los Angeles County. As such, impacts relative to consistency with land use plans, policies, and regulations would be less than significant. Such impacts would be generally equivalent to those of the Project.

(2) Land Use Compatibility

As Alternative 2 would develop the same types of uses as the Project with a similar design and layout, the Alternative would be generally compatible with the surrounding uses and would not interfere with activities on adjacent properties. The greater density and building heights of development under Alternative 2, however, may present some contrast with existing and planned uses in the surrounding area. Moreover, implementation of Alternative 2 would not physically divide an established community since the Project Site is currently vacant and the adjacent communities (e.g., Westridge and Mission Village) are distinct and largely self-contained. Therefore, Alternative 2 would not substantially or adversely change the relationships between the land uses or properties in surrounding neighborhoods or communities, nor would it have the long-term effect of adversely altering a neighborhood or community through ongoing disruption, division, or isolation. Impacts regarding compatibility with surrounding uses would therefore be less than significant and similar to those of the Project.

k. Mineral Resources

The Project Site does not include any active mineral extraction operations, and all of the former oil and gas wells on-site have been abandoned. Moreover, as with the Project, ongoing oil and gas extraction activities within the surrounding area would not be hindered by development of Alternative 2. Therefore, implementation would not result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource of value, nor would it result in the loss of availability of a locally-important mineral resource recovery site. Similar to the Project, impacts with respect to mineral resources would be less than significant.

I. Noise

(1) Construction

Under Alternative 2, the overall amount of new construction would be greater than under the Project. The estimated construction noise levels for various construction stages at the off-site noise sensitive receptors, which represent a worst-case scenario in which all construction equipment is assumed to operate simultaneously at the construction area nearest to the affected receptors, is used to measure significance and would be greater under Alternative 2 since the equipment size and quantity would be increased. As with the Project, construction activities under Alternative 2 could exceed the County Noise Ordinance standards for an extended period of time at on- and off-site residential uses during Project construction. Therefore, noise impacts associated with Alternative 2 construction affecting on- and off-site sensitive uses would be significant and unavoidable and may be somewhat greater than under the Project. Additionally, cumulative construction noise impacts would be significant and unavoidable and may be somewhat greater than under the Project.

(2) Operation

Alternative 2 would result in an increase in vehicle trips during operation when compared to the Project. In addition, Alternative 2 would provide more new residential units and commercial floor area as compared to the Project. Therefore, operational noise impacts under Alternative 2 would be greater when compared to the Project. Nonetheless, as with the Project, the impacts would be less than significant with mitigation. In addition, similar to the Project, the cumulative operational off-site noise impact associated with mobile sources (i.e., along Westridge Parkway north of Valencia Boulevard) would be significant and unavoidable under Alternative 2. This impact would occur since construction of a noise barrier wall along the adjacent sensitive uses would be infeasible as it would interfere with property access. This impact would be greater than the Project's due to the increased trip generation associated with Alternative 2.

m. Population, Housing, and Employment

(1) Population

Based on the average household size within the community of Stevenson Ranch located south of the Project Site, Alternative 2 would generate an on-site residential population of an estimated 6,421 persons, compared to 5,288 persons under the Project.⁴⁶

⁴⁶ The average household size for owner- and renter-occupied units for Census Tract 9203.38 is 3.36 persons (source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010). This rate was applied to the Project, as the types and (Footnote continued on next page)

In addition, due to the increase in commercial floor area compared to the Project, Alternative 2 would result in greater indirect population growth as a result of the employment positions created on-site. Accordingly, buildout of Alternative 2 would represent a greater percentage of SCAG's population forecasts for 2024 and population growth forecasts between 2014 and 2024 compared to the Project. Specifically, as detailed in **Table 6-4**, Alternative 2 Growth Relative to SCAG Forecasts (2014–2024), on page 6.0-58, with respect to the SCAG region projections, Alternative 2 would represent approximately 0.03 percent of the total forecasted population in 2024 and approximately 0.42 percent of population growth between 2014 and 2024. In the unincorporated County, Alternative 2 would represent approximately 0.52 percent of the total forecasted population in 2024 and approximately 5.48 percent of population growth between 2014 and 2024. Alternative 2 also would make up 1.92 percent of the total residential population in the Valley in 2024, or 11.92 percent of projected growth from 2014 to 2024. As such, similar to the Project, the population associated with Alternative 2 would fall within the forecasts for the various studied geographies, and the Alternative would not cause growth (i.e., new population) that exceeds projected/planned levels for the buildout year. Impacts relative to consistency with adopted population projections would be less than significant. However, as this Alternative would generate more growth than the Project, it would result in a greater impact with respect to population.

sizes of homes proposed within the Project would be similar to those within Stevenson Ranch. The same is assumed for Alternative 2.

**Table 6-4
Alternative 2 Growth Relative to SCAG Forecasts (2014–2024)**

Forecast	Population	Households	Employment
SCAG Region-Wide Forecast			
Year 2024 ^a	20,310,467	6,689,200	8,687,867
2014–2024 Growth ^{a,b}	1,531,467	553,200	611,867
Alternative 2 ^c	6,421	1,911	5,401
Alternative 2 % of Area Forecast	0.03	0.03	0.06
Alternative 2 % of Area Growth	0.42	0.35	0.88
Unincorporated County of L.A. Forecast			
Year 2024 ^a	1,223,207	354,614	279,967
2014–2024 Growth ^{a,b}	117,257	37,509	28,417
Alternative 2 ^c	6,421	1,911	5,401
Alternative 2 % of Area Forecast	0.52	0.54	1.93
Alternative 2 % of Area Growth	5.48	5.09	19.01
Santa Clarita Valley Forecast			
Year 2024 ^d	335,152	113,539	144,797
2014–2024 Growth ^{d,e}	53,878	22,170	16,398
Alternative 2 ^c	6,421	1,911	5,401
Alternative 2 % of Area Forecast	1.92	1.68	3.73
Alternative 2 % of Area Growth	11.92	8.62	32.94
<p>^a Year 2024 forecast based on a straight-line interpolation from 2020 to 2035 forecast values in the SCAG regional growth forecast adopted for the 2012–2035 RTP/SCS; see Table 5.14-1, SCAG Forecast for the SCAG Region and Unincorporated County (2008–2035) Alternative 2 Growth Relative to SCAG Forecasts (2014–2024), provided in Section 5.14, Population, Housing, and Employment, of this Draft EIR.</p> <p>^b Year 2014 forecast based on a straight-line interpolation from 2008 to 2020 values in the SCAG regional growth forecast adopted for the 2012–2035 RTP/SCS; see Table 5.14-1, SCAG Forecast for the SCAG Region and Unincorporated County (2008–2035) Alternative 2 Growth Relative to SCAG Forecasts (2014–2024), provided in Section 5.14, Population, Housing, and Employment, of this Draft EIR.</p> <p>^c Alternative 2 population assumes average household size of 3.36 persons per unit, based on average household size for owner- and renter-occupied units within Census Tract 9203.38 (Stevenson Ranch) per 2010 U.S. Census data. Alternative 2 employment assumes same non-residential land use mix as Project (i.e., 59.6 percent office, 40.4 percent commercial retail, plus school and park uses) and same employment generation factors.</p> <p>^d Year 2024 forecast based on a straight-line interpolation from 2020 to 2035 values in the SCAG regional growth forecasts for the Traffic Analysis Zones (TAZs) located within the Valley. For those TAZs located partially within and partially outside the Valley, an area-weighted approach was used to approximate growth within the Valley boundaries. See Table 5.14-1, SCAG Forecast for the SCAG Region and Unincorporated County (2008–2035) Alternative 2 Growth Relative to SCAG Forecasts (2014–2024), provided in Section 5.14, Population, Housing, and Employment, of this Draft EIR.</p> <p>^e Year 2014 forecast based on a straight-line interpolation from 2008 to 2020 values in the SCAG regional growth forecasts for TAZs; see Table 5.14-1, SCAG Forecast for the SCAG Region and Unincorporated County (2008–2035) Alternative 2 Growth Relative to SCAG Forecasts (2014–2024), provided in Section 5.14, Population, Housing, and Employment, of this Draft EIR.</p> <p>Source: SCAG 2012–2035 RTP/SCS (http://scag.ca.gov/documents/2012adoptedgrowthforecastpdf.pdf) and Eyestone Environmental, 2014.</p>			

(2) Housing

Alternative 2 would yield more housing units on the Project Site than the Project. Consequently, in comparison, buildout of Alternative 2 would represent an incremental increase in the percentage of SCAG's household forecasts for 2024 and household growth forecasts between 2014 and 2024. Specifically, as detailed in **Table 6-4**, Alternative 2 Growth Relative to SCAG Forecasts (2014–2024), for the SCAG region, Alternative 2 would represent approximately 0.03 percent of the total household forecast in 2024 and approximately 0.35 percent of household growth between 2014 and 2024. In the unincorporated County, Alternative 2 would represent approximately 0.54 percent of the household forecast and approximately 5.09 percent of household growth between 2014 and 2024. Relative to the Valley, Alternative 2 housing would make up 1.68 percent of total households and 8.62 percent of projected household growth from 2014 to 2024. As such, Alternative 2 housing would fall within the forecasts for the various studied geographies, and the Alternative would not cause growth (i.e., new households) that exceeds projected/planned levels for the buildout year. Impacts relative to consistency with adopted housing projections would be less than significant. However, as this Alternative would generate more growth than the Project, it would result in a greater housing impact. On the other hand, Alternative 2 would help meet the County's RHNA allocation to a greater extent than the Project, thus resulting in a beneficial effect.

(3) Employment

(a) Construction

Similar to the Project, Alternative 2 would provide a public benefit by providing new direct and indirect employment opportunities during the construction period, but to a greater extent than the Project due to the increase in commercial floor area as compared to the Project. Employment impacts would be less than significant and greater than the Project's impacts.

(b) Operation

With respect to permanent employment, Alternative 2 would generate more job opportunities than the Project due to the greater amount of commercial floor area. Thus, compared to the Project, buildout of Alternative 2 would represent an incremental increase in the percentage of employment forecasts for 2024 and employment growth forecasts between 2014 and 2024. Specifically, as detailed in **Table 6-4**, Alternative 2 Growth Relative to SCAG Forecasts (2014–2024), for the SCAG region, Alternative 2 would represent approximately 0.06 percent of the total employment forecast in 2024 and approximately 0.88 percent of employment growth between 2014 and 2024. In the unincorporated County, Alternative 2 would represent approximately 1.93 percent of the employment forecast and approximately 19.01 percent of employment growth between

2014 and 2024. With respect to the Valley, Alternative 2 employees would make up 3.73 percent of total employment and 32.94 percent of projected employment growth from 2014 to 2024. As such, Alternative 2 employment would fall within the forecasts for the various studied geographies and would not cause growth (i.e., new employment) that exceeds projected/planned levels for the buildout year. Further, the jobs/housing ratio under Alternative 2 would be 2.83, well above the Project's ratio of 1.70 as well as the Area Plan goal of at least 1.5 jobs per household. Therefore, impacts with respect to employment would be less than significant. While increased growth typically yields a greater level of impact, given the positive nature of job generation, employment impacts associated with Alternative 2 would be roughly similar to the Project with respect to consistency with local and regional projections. This Alternative, however, would yield a greater benefit than the Project insofar as additional jobs would be created.

n. Public Services

(1) Fire Protection

(a) Construction

The demand for fire protection and emergency medical services may be increased during construction, as construction activities could potentially expose combustible materials to sources of ignition. However, like the Project, Alternative 2's electrical, plumbing, communications, and ventilation systems would be properly installed in each structure. With compliance with relevant building, safety, and fire codes, impacts would be less than significant, but greater than the Project's due to the increased amount of construction activities under Alternative 2.

In addition, construction activities would result in increased traffic on nearby roadways during working hours in association with commuting construction workers, delivery trucks, and other large construction vehicles. Construction-related traffic could reduce optimal traffic flows and potentially delay emergency vehicles traveling through the area. In addition, temporary lane closures associated with utility line construction or roadway improvements could slow or impede emergency access. Like the Project, Alternative 2 would include a construction traffic management plan to ensure adequate emergency access to all nearby residences and businesses and would minimize traffic interference and construction vehicle travel on congested streets. Therefore, impacts to emergency access would be less than significant, but greater than the Project's due to the increase in construction-related traffic.

(b) Operation

Alternative 2 would increase the demand for fire protection and emergency medical services due to the increase in the on-site daytime population. As with the Project, under Alternative 2, the Project Applicant would comply with applicable regulatory requirements, including fire flow requirements, implement appropriate PDFs, and pay the Fire Facility Fee to help fund fire station improvements, as needed. Traffic generated by Alternative 2 could potentially affect emergency response, and traffic levels would be greater than under the Project; however, this Alternative would not be expected to substantially impact response times or emergency vehicle access, particularly given that significant traffic impacts would not occur. As such, impacts would be less than significant but greater than the Project's impacts.

Given that the Project Site has been designated as a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone, Alternative 2 would comply with all applicable County Fire Code requirements as well as other relevant fire safety regulations set forth by the County, including implementation of a Fuel Modification Plan, which would minimize wildfire hazards and associated impacts, similar to the Project. Routine landscape maintenance would be conducted in accordance with the Fire Department's Fuel Modification Plan Guidelines. Therefore, similar to the Project, impacts with respect to development within a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone would be less than significant.

(2) Sheriff Protection***(a) Construction***

Construction-related traffic could reduce optimal traffic flows and potentially delay emergency vehicles traveling through the area. In addition, temporary lane closures associated with utility line construction or roadway improvements could slow or impede emergency access. Like the Project, Alternative 2 would include a construction traffic management plan to ensure adequate emergency access to all nearby residences and businesses and would minimize traffic interference and construction vehicle travel on congested streets. Therefore, impacts to emergency access would be less than significant, but greater than the Project's due to the increase in construction-related traffic.

(b) Operation

Alternative 2 would increase the demand for law enforcement services due to the introduction of a new residential population. However, this Alternative would be expected to incorporate security features similar to those proposed under the Project. Moreover, like the Project, this Alternative would be expected to implement comparable PDFs and comply with regulatory requirements, including payment of the applicable Law Enforcement

Facilities Fee, which is intended to provide sufficient revenues to pay for land acquisition, engineering, construction, installation, purchasing, and other costs for the provision of capital law enforcement facilities and equipment. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant although greater than the Project's impacts due to the relatively greater demand for service generated by the greater population.

(3) Schools

Alternative 2 would increase the number of students attending the schools that serve the Project Site due to the increase in residential population. Similar to the Project, Alternative 2 includes the construction of a new 9.4-acre elementary school within the Project Site that would provide additional capacity within the Saugus Union School District (Saugus District). In addition, as with the Project, compliance with the School Facilities Funding Agreements (Agreements) with the Saugus District, Newhall School District (Newhall District), and William S. Hart Union High School District (Hart District) would offset potential impacts to existing educational facilities. Therefore, impacts to schools would be less than significant, although greater than the Project due to the relatively greater number of students generated.

(4) Parks and Recreation

Alternative 2 would increase the demand for parks and recreational facilities in the Project area due to the increase in residential population and employees. Similar to the Project, Alternative 2 includes a 5.6-acre public neighborhood park, two private recreational centers on 2.9 acres, and smaller recreation areas. In addition, under Alternative 2, the Project Applicant would comply with the County's Parkland Dedication Ordinance via the provision of public park space with amenities equal to or greater in value than the established in-lieu park fee, or, should the amenities not meet the in-lieu fee requirement, payment of the appropriate fee. As such, impacts to parks and recreation would be less than significant, but greater than under the Project due to the relatively greater demand generated.

(5) Libraries

Alternative 2 would increase the demand for library services at the Castaic Library and potentially other nearby libraries due to the increase in residential population. As with the Project, with implementation of the Alternative, the Castaic Library would not meet the County Library's service level guidelines with respect to facility size. However, under Alternative 2, the Project Applicant would pay the applicable Library Facilities Mitigation Fee, the purpose of which is "to mitigate any significant adverse impacts of increased residential development upon public library facilities as required by" CEQA. Therefore,

impacts to libraries would be less than significant, although greater than the Project impacts due to the relatively greater demand generated.

o. Transportation/Traffic

(a) Construction

Construction activities associated with Alternative 2 would generate traffic related to construction worker trips and truck trips for the delivery of construction materials. Given the increase in floor area compared to the Project, construction trips likely would be greater than those necessary for the Project. As such, although construction traffic impacts would be less than significant, impacts would be greater as compared to the Project.

(b) Operation

As shown in **Table 6-5**, Daily Trip Generation Comparison for Alternative 2, on page 6.0-64, buildout of Alternative 2 would result in increased trips compared to the Project. Specifically, Alternative 2 would result in a 39 percent increase in total daily trips, an 85-percent increase in internal (on-site) trips, and a 33-percent increase in external trips on area roadways. Accordingly, this Alternative would result in more traffic impacts, likely including both an increased level of impact at Project-impacted locations as well as newly impacted locations, with respect to local intersections and freeway segments, including CMP intersections and freeway segments. While it is assumed that appropriate mitigation would be implemented to reduce such impacts to a less-than-significant level to the extent feasible, it is likely that significant, unmitigated cumulative impacts would remain.⁴⁷ Parking impacts, however, would be similar to the Project's impacts, as sufficient parking would be provided on-site in accordance with regulatory requirements. Parking impacts would be less than significant.

⁴⁷ *Stantec Consulting Services Inc., February 2015; see Appendix 6 of this Draft EIR.*

**Table 6-5
Daily Trip Generation Comparison for Alternative 2**

Development Scenario	Total Daily Tripends	External Trips^a	Internal Trips^b	Total Daily Trips
Project	35,547	27,468	4,040	31,508
Alternative 2	51,382	36,439	7,471	43,910
% Difference	+45%	+33%	+85%	+39%

^a One tripend on-site.
^b Two tripends on-site.

Source: Stantec Consulting Services Inc., February 2015. See **Appendix 6** of this Draft EIR for detailed trip generation calculations.

p. Utilities and Service Systems

(1) Water Supply and Service

(a) Construction

Short-term demand for water would be generated by construction of Alternative 2, primarily in association with dust control, concrete mixing, cleaning of equipment, and other related construction activities. Given the increased level of construction compared to the Project, such demand would be greater than that of the Project. Nonetheless, impacts would be less than significant due to their limited and temporary nature.

(b) Operation

Operation of Alternative 2 would increase the demand for potable and recycled water. Like the Project, Alternative 2 would involve the construction of a potable water system and a recycled water system. Given the increase in residential units, commercial floor area, and associated population and employment compared to the Project, the demand for water would be greater than that of the Project. Nonetheless, as the Entrada South property has been planned for development for some time and is designated for urban land uses, it is assumed that Valencia Water Company (VWC) would issue a Water Supply Assessment indicating they could meet the demand. In addition, the on-site potable water system would be designed to provide sufficient capacity, pressure, and other design specifications to meet this Alternative's fire flows required by the Fire Department. In addition, Alternative 2's water-related infrastructure improvements would be designed in accordance with the County Code, including the Fire Code, and would be constructed under the oversight of Public Works, VWC, and the Fire Department. Therefore, impacts associated with water supply and fire flow would be less than significant although greater than those of the Project due to the increase in development.

(2) Wastewater Disposal

(a) Construction

Alternative 2 would result in a temporary increase in wastewater generation during construction. Given the increased level of construction under Alternative 2, wastewater impacts would be greater than under the Project. Nonetheless, impacts would be less than significant due to their limited and temporary nature.

(b) Operation

Operation of Alternative 2 is anticipated to increase the amount of wastewater contributed to the local wastewater stream. As with the Project, under Alternative 2, the Project Applicant would be required to obtain verification from the County Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County (County Sanitation Districts) that sufficient treatment capacity is available. Additionally, payment of the applicable fees for wastewater connections and services would serve to provide future conveyance, treatment, and disposal facilities (capital facilities), as needed, to adequately accommodate future development. Given the increase in floor area and population compared to the Project, this generation would be more than that of the Project. However, since both the off-site trunk line serving the Project Site and Valencia WRP have substantial capacity available, impacts would be less than significant.

(3) Energy

(a) Construction

Construction activities under Alternative 2 would require electricity for construction trailers, power tools, tool sheds, work and storage areas, and other facilities associated with development activities. Given the increased level of construction compared to the Project, impacts to electricity would be greater than those of the Project. However, such impacts would be less than significant based on their limited and temporary nature.

(b) Operation

Operation of Alternative 2 would increase the demand for electricity and natural gas. Similar to the Project, Alternative 2 would incorporate compliance measures to address applicable energy requirements. Specifically, the proposed buildings would comply with Title 24 standards, and the Applicant would implement green building design and construction practices in compliance with the County's Green Building Ordinance. The Applicant also would be expected to implement comparable PDFs as under the Project. Given the increase in residential units and commercial floor area compared to the Project, this electricity and natural gas demand would be substantially more than that of the Project.

However, as the land uses under Alternative 2 are consistent with the land use and zoning designations for the Project Site (as discussed above under the “Land Use” heading) and given the low percentage of total electricity and natural gas demand the Project represents, SCE’s and SoCalGas’s demand forecasts likely account for development of the Project Site on par with Alternative 2. Thus, energy impacts would be less than significant.

(4) Solid Waste

(a) Construction

Construction activities under Alternative 2 would generate construction wastes that would be recycled or collected by private waste haulers contracted by the Applicant and taken for disposal at the County’s inert landfills. Given the increased level of construction compared to the Project, solid waste impacts would be greater than those of the Project. However, given the Project’s extremely small percentage of the County’s unclassified landfill’s total permitted daily capacity, construction waste generated by Alternative 2 is likewise assumed to represent a limited percentage of available capacity. Additionally, hazardous wastes would be conveyed to licensed treatment, disposal, and resource recovery facilities, as required, and plans are underway for the expansion of hazardous waste capacity in order to continue to meet statewide demand. Therefore, construction impacts with respect to landfill capacity and the disposal of hazardous waste would be less than significant.

(b) Operation

Operation of Alternative 2 would generate solid waste requiring disposal. Similar to the Project, the Project Applicant would incorporate compliance measures to address applicable solid waste regulations and diversion requirements under Alternative 2. Given the increase in floor area compared to the Project, this solid waste generation would be substantially more than that of the Project. However, given the Project’s extremely small percentage of the estimated remaining capacity and total amount of solid waste disposal at available facilities, solid waste generated by Alternative 2 is likewise assumed to represent a limited percentage of available capacity and total disposal. Additionally, substantial amounts of hazardous waste are not anticipated to be generated with any regularity under Alternative 2. Moreover, the existing permitted Class I and II landfills in operation within southern and central California can accommodate household hazardous waste such as may be generated by this Alternative, and plans are underway for the expansion of hazardous waste capacity in order to continue to meet statewide demand. As such, solid waste impacts with respect to landfill capacity and the disposal of hazardous waste would be less than significant.

3. RELATIONSHIP OF THE ALTERNATIVE TO PROJECT OBJECTIVES

Alternative 2 (Development in Accordance with Existing Plans) assumes the Project Site would be developed with uses consistent with the existing Area Plan land use and zoning designations. As such, Alternative 2 would meet the Project's underlying purpose to create a mixed-use community through infill development that is interconnected with the surrounding communities, respects the natural resources and features found on-site, and integrates land use, housing, and transportation considerations in furtherance of SB 375, the Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act of 2008. Additionally, this Alternative would meet many of the specific objectives that support the Project's underlying purpose to the same extent as the Project, as summarized in **Table 6-5**, Daily Trip Generation Comparison for Alternative 2, and discussed below.

In particular, Alternative 2 would meet the Project objectives to create a complete mixed-use community, integrate Project development and infrastructure with the surrounding communities, and avoid leapfrog development. Alternative 2 also would meet the objectives to accommodate regional growth projected by SCAG and implement the vision of the Area Plan. Alternative 2 would likewise meet the Project objective regarding implementation of the Newhall Ranch RMDP/SCP, as the Project Applicant would be required to comply with and carry out the resource conservation, management, and permitting responsibilities associated with the Newhall Ranch RMDP/SCP project, including those within the Project Site. Furthermore, Alternative 2 would meet the objectives to provide housing and employment opportunities to accommodate projected growth, expand the economic base, establish a circulation network and a system of pedestrian and bicycle trails, as well as objectives regarding the provision of an elementary school, public neighborhood park, and private neighborhood recreation centers.

However, two Project objectives would not be fully realized by this Alternative. Specifically, by increasing the amount of development on-site as compared to the Project, both residential and commercial densities would be higher, and the provision of low-density housing types (e.g., single-family) would be limited. In particular, most housing would consist of attached units in order to accommodate the requisite number of units. In addition, the commercial density would be over double that of the Project. As such, Alternative 2 would not strike a balance between the density permitted by the Area Plan and demand for low and mid-density housing to the same extent as the Project and thus would not offer a transition to higher density, urban development in the surrounding area. Similarly, this Alternative would not offer as wide a range of residential housing types, sizes, and styles due to the limited amount of low-density housing that could be accommodated.

Overall, Alternative 2 would meet most of the Project objectives and the Project's underlying purpose. However, given its increase in residential units and commercial floor

area compared to the Project, Alternative 2 would result in greater environmental impacts than the Project. Specifically, impacts with respect to views, aesthetics, construction-related and operational air quality, GHGs, hazardous materials (specifically related to the transport along I-5), construction-related and operational noise, cumulative operational off-site traffic noise, population, housing, employment, fire protection, law enforcement, schools, parks, libraries, traffic, water, wastewater, energy, and solid waste would be greater under Alternative 2. With respect to traffic in particular, cumulative impacts associated with this Alternative are anticipated to be significant and unavoidable, whereas the Project's cumulative impacts would be fully mitigated. As the CEQA Guidelines emphasize that the selection of project alternatives should be based primarily on the ability of an alternative to reduce significant impacts associated with the proposed project, Alternative 2 would not meet such criteria. In essence, development of the Project Site consistent with the site's existing land use and zoning designations would generate greater impacts than the Project. Based on the Alternative's inability to avoid the significant environmental impacts of the Project, Alternative 2 can be rejected.

6. PROJECT ALTERNATIVES

3. ALTERNATIVE 3: REDUCED DENSITY

1. DESCRIPTION OF THE ALTERNATIVE

The Reduced Density Alternative, Alternative 3, involves the Project's proposed uses but reduces the amount of development that would occur. To define this Alternative, an analysis of the Project's significant and unavoidable impacts was conducted to determine which, if any, could be reduced to a less-than-significant level by reducing the amount of development. As evaluated in the environmental impact analysis sections throughout this Draft EIR and summarized above, the Project would result in significant and unavoidable impacts with respect to aesthetics, construction-related and operational air quality, cumulative construction-related and operational air quality, construction-related noise, and cumulative off-site traffic noise. Of these, the most likely impacts to be reduced to a less-than-significant level by a straight reduction in development are the regional operational air quality impacts. **Table 6-6**, Reduced Density Alternative Scenarios Compared to Project—Regional Operational Emissions, on page 6.0-70 shows the various levels of development, expressed as a percentage reduction in residential and commercial floor area compared to the Project, at which the emissions of one or more air pollutants do not exceed SCAQMD significance thresholds. As shown, five different scenarios were defined: 27-percent reduction, 43-percent reduction, 53-percent reduction, 71-percent reduction, and 80-percent reduction. Progressing from the greatest amount of development (i.e., 27-percent reduction compared to the Project) to the least (i.e., 80-percent reduction compared to the Project), each scenario avoids an additional significant air emissions impact of the Project, with no significant regional operational air impacts occurring under the 80-percent reduction scenario.

The results of this analysis were evaluated to determine which of the development reduction scenarios represent viable alternatives. It was concluded that the 71 percent and 80-percent reduction scenarios would not be economically viable given the dramatic reductions in total development. As such, these scenarios were eliminated from further analysis. Ultimately, two scenarios were chosen for further study: the 27-percent reduction, referred to herein as Alternative 3A; and the 53-percent reduction, referred to herein as Alternative 3B, which inherently includes the benefits (i.e., the air emissions impact reduction) of both the 27-percent and 43-percent reduction scenarios. Where appropriate, a tiered analysis is provided herein to evaluate the comparative merits of these variations on the Reduced Density Alternative; where impacts of the two variations are essentially the same, a single analysis for Alternative 3 is provided.

Table 6-6
Reduced Density Alternative Scenarios Compared to Project—Regional Operational Emissions^a

Development Scenarios	VOC ^c	NO _x	CO	SO ₂	PM ₁₀	PM _{2.5}
Project^b						
Exceed SCAQMD Significance Threshold?	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
27-Percent Reduction in Project Development						
Exceed SCAQMD Significance Threshold?	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No
43-Percent Reduction in Project Development						
Exceed SCAQMD Significance Threshold?	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
53-Percent Reduction in Project Development						
Exceed SCAQMD Significance Threshold?	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No
71-Percent Reduction in Project Development						
Exceed SCAQMD Significance Threshold?	No	Yes	No	No	No	No
80-Percent Reduction in Project Development						
Exceed SCAQMD Significance Threshold?	No	No	No	No	No	No
<p>^a This impact comparison indicates the level of reduction in development, as compared to the Project, necessary to avoid each of the Project's significant regional operational air emissions impacts. Bold text indicates significant impacts.</p> <p>^b Area, energy, and mobile emissions were calculated for the Project using the CalEEMod emissions model.</p> <p>^c The SCAQMD significance threshold is expressed in terms of VOC, while CalEEMod calculates ROG emissions. For purposes of this analysis, VOC and ROG are used interchangeably since ROG represents approximately 99.9 percent of VOC emissions.</p> <p>Source: Environ, 2014.</p>						

Assuming a 27-percent reduction in development compared to the Project, Alternative 3A would include approximately 1,149 dwelling units and 532,900 square feet of commercial floor area.⁴⁸ Assuming a 53-percent reduction compared to the Project, Alternative 3B would include approximately 739 dwelling units and 343,100 square feet of commercial floor area.⁴⁹ Additionally, similar to the Project, Alternative 3 includes a 9.4-acre elementary school, a 5.6-acre public neighborhood park, two private recreational

⁴⁸ For purposes of calculating employment, Alternative 3A assumes the same non-residential land use mix as the Project: 59.6 percent office, 40.4 percent commercial retail, plus school and park uses.

⁴⁹ For purposes of calculating employment, Alternative 3B assumes the same non-residential land use mix as the Project: 59.6 percent office, 40.4 percent commercial retail, plus school and park uses.

centers totaling 2.9 acres, a 27.2-acre Spineflower Preserve, and 101.7 acres of open space areas.⁵⁰ Under either of the reduction scenarios, Alternative 3 would involve a reduced amount of development compared to the Project, with similarly reduced building heights and density, as well as a reduced residential population and employment.

Site access and circulation under Alternative 3 would be similar to that of the Project. Accordingly, Magic Mountain Parkway and Westridge Parkway would be extended to provide regional access to and from the Project Site, with other circulation improvements as shown in **Figure 3-15**, Project Circulation Plan, in **Section 3.0**, Project Description, of this Draft EIR. Other on-site infrastructure improvements would include an internal network of trails and bike lanes, drainage and water quality improvements, dry utilities systems, a potable water system, a recycled water system, and a sanitary sewer system, similar to the Project. Refer to **Figure 3-14**, Project Trails Plan; **Figure 3-16**, Project Drainage and Water Quality Plan; **Figure 3-17**, Project Potable Water System; **Figure 3-18**, Project Recycled Water System; and **Figure 3-19**, Project Wastewater System, in **Section 3.0**, Project Description, for a depiction of the general infrastructure systems to be implemented.⁵¹

The 27.2-acre Spineflower Preserve would be implemented on-site pursuant to the Spineflower Conservation Plan component of the Newhall Ranch RMDP/SCP project. The SCP has been funded and is currently being implemented, and the associated permits were issued contingent upon irrevocable conservation of spineflower habitat. In short, the Project Applicant is required to comply with and carry out the resource conservation, management, and permitting responsibilities associated with the Newhall Ranch RMDP/SCP project, including those within the Project Site.

For purposes of impact comparison with the Project, it was assumed that both Reduced Density Alternative scenarios would involve a similar development footprint as the Project.⁵² Thus, Alternative 3 would require the same amount of grading as the Project in a balanced cut and fill operation. However, due to the reduced amount of residential and commercial floor area, the overall duration of construction would be reduced compared to the Project.

⁵⁰ Open space acreage refers to lots within the tract map designated as open space. Additional open space areas, such as natural drainage courses, roadway medians, and landscaped parkways adjacent to on-site roadways, in addition to the proposed park, recreation centers, and Spineflower Preserve, bring the total open space area to approximately 153 acres.

⁵¹ Note, however, that certain infrastructure system characteristics, such as pipeline sizes, would vary from the Project's due to the reduced level of development under Alternative 3.

⁵² A Reduced Development Footprint Alternative is evaluated herein as Alternative 4.

2. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

a. Aesthetics, Views, and Light and Glare

(1) Views

(a) Alternative 3A

While views of the Project Site would change with implementation of Alternative 3A, development would not be expected to block views of visual resources within or near the Project Site given the reduced amount of floor area and associated reduced building heights and massing in comparison to the Project. Furthermore, given the varied topography of the Project Site which prevents views of much of the site interior, the distance of the majority of Alternative 3A development from off-site locations, and the eastern hillsides that would remain undeveloped as part of the Spineflower Preserve, impacts to views would be limited. In addition, although the Project Site interior would be visually altered, none of the existing visual features to be removed are considered unique. Therefore, view impacts under Alternative 3A would be less than significant and less than those of the Project, primarily due to the reduced building heights and floor area.

(b) Alternative 3B

Alternative 3B would involve further reductions in floor area and associated building heights and massing within a similar development footprint as Alternative 3A and the Project. Accordingly, view impacts would be further reduced in comparison to the Project. Such impacts would be less than significant.

(2) Visual Character

(a) Construction

During construction of Alternative 3, the visual appearance of the Project Site would be altered due to grading, the removal of existing vegetation, the staging of construction equipment and materials, and the construction of foundations, new buildings, and parking lots. Some of these construction activities, particularly in locations near the site perimeter, would be visible to pedestrians and motorists on adjacent streets and may be visible from more distant vantage points. As construction activities would substantially affect the visual character on-site, a significant short-term aesthetic impact would result, similar to the Project. However, given the relative decrease in building floor area, the duration of construction would be shorter under this Alternative than under the Project, and thus the impact would be reduced compared to the Project.

(b) Operation

On a long-term basis, implementation of Alternative 3 would permanently alter the Project Site through landform modification and the introduction of new development and infrastructure. Similar to the Project, proposed development would be consistent in terms of land use and general design with surrounding development, although the scale of development (e.g., building heights) may be less than that of existing uses in the area. Alternative 3 would feature high quality building materials, pedestrian-scaled buildings designed to activate the public realm, varied architecture to create visual interest, public and private open spaces that offer respite from urban development, and street frontage improvements including substantial landscaping. In addition, the layout of development under Alternative 3 would create a logical transition in land use type and intensity. Similar to the Project, Alternative 3 is designed to respect many of the natural resources and features on-site, with grading that generally follows the natural topographic trends on-site, natural-looking improvements such as debris and water quality basins that incorporate vegetation or water features, and a major canyon (Unnamed Canyon 2) that would be restored as an open, vegetated drainage channel traversing VTTM 53295, thus providing visual relief within the residentially developed portions of the Project Site. Also under Alternative 3, an estimated 26 regulation-size oak trees would be preserved, and up to 158 new oak trees of 15-gallon size would be planted per the County's Oak Tree Ordinance and current County practices, similar to the Project. Nonetheless, given the change in the Project Site's visual quality/character, impacts would be significant and unavoidable, although such impacts would be less than the Project's impacts due to the Alternative's reduced building heights and total floor area.

(3) Light***(a) Alternative 3A******(i) Construction***

Substantial lighting is not anticipated during construction within the Project Site, as most construction activities would occur during daylight hours. However, security lighting would be provided during non-construction hours. Therefore, construction impacts related to lighting would be less than significant with mitigation, similar to the Project.

(ii) Operation

Nighttime sources of illumination would include post lights and building mounted fixtures in commercial and residential areas, lighted signs for wayfinding and building identification purposes, parking lot lighting, vehicle headlights, landscape lighting, and lighting for outdoor recreational activities at the school and park/recreational centers. Although lighting would be designed to ensure visibility and safety while minimizing light

spillover and skyglow, given that the Project Site presently produces little or no light, the light levels generated by Alternative 3A would represent a noticeable change from existing conditions. As the decreased total floor area under Alternative 3A is anticipated to involve fewer fixtures than under the Project, the addition of post lights and other lighting under Alternative 3A would result in less-than-significant impacts that would be reduced compared to the Project.

(b) Alternative 3B

Due to the further reduction in floor area under Alternative 3B, fewer light fixtures would be installed on-site. As such, light impacts would be less than those of Alternative 3A and thus less than significant and less than the Project's lighting impacts.

(4) Glare

(a) Alternative 3A

(i) Construction

During construction, any glare would be highly transitory and short-term, given the movement of construction equipment and materials and the temporary nature of specific construction activities. Potential short-term glare impacts during construction of Alternative 3A would therefore be less than significant, similar to the Project's glare impacts.

(ii) Operation

Building materials would likely include stucco, stone, wood, brick, terra cotta tiles, and glass, most of which would be non- or low-reflective. Overall, Alternative 3A would not cause glare that would substantially interfere with the performance of an off-site activity or sensitive uses or adversely affect day or nighttime views. Therefore, glare impacts during operation of Alternative 3A would be less than significant. As fewer automobiles would be present on-site and fewer light fixtures would be installed, the potential for glare would be reduced, thus impacts would be less than those of the Project.

(b) Alternative 3B

The short-term glare impacts associated with construction of Alternative 3B would be the same as those of Alternative 3A, discussed above, and thus similar to the Project's glare impacts. Due to the further reduction in floor area under Alternative 3B, fewer automobiles would be present on-site and fewer light fixtures would be installed. As such, operational glare impacts would be less than those of Alternative 3A and thus less than significant and less than the Project's glare impacts.

b. Agricultural and Forest Resources

Under Alternative 3, the existing 7.45 acres of pasture, including the 6.2 acres of designated Prime Farmland, would be removed and converted to non-agricultural uses, similar to the Project. In addition, implementation of Alternative 3 would involve development within the majority of the 365.3 acres of Grazing Land on-site, resulting in its conversion to other uses. As no oak trees are actually located within mapped forest land on-site, Alternative 3 would not result in the removal or conversion of any designated forest land to non-forest uses. As with the Project, impacts related to agricultural lands and forest land resources would be less than significant, and the impacted Prime Farmland would be mitigated either in a stand-alone 6.2-acre conservation easement or as part of a greater 138-acre conservation easement. Therefore, impacts on Prime Farmland would be less than significant with mitigation, similar to the Project's impacts.

c. Air Quality

(1) Construction

(a) *Alternative 3A*

Under Alternative 3A, construction activities would be reduced in scale compared to the Project due to the relative decrease in floor area, and the duration of construction would be shorter. As with the Project, construction of Alternative 3A would generate pollutant emissions through the use of heavy-duty construction equipment and through vehicle trips generated from construction workers traveling to and from the Project Site. The total construction emissions generated by Alternative 3A would be less than those of the Project over the construction period. While grading impacts would be similar to the Project's due to the similar earthwork involved, peak daily impacts associated with building construction would be reduced as compared to the Project. As with the Project, implementation of regulatory compliance measures, PDFs, and mitigation measures would reduce construction emissions for all pollutants. Nonetheless, even with incorporation of all feasible mitigation measures, Alternative 3A would be expected to exceed the SCAQMD regional significance threshold for VOC and NO_x, albeit to a lesser extent compared the Project.

The intensity and duration of site grading under Alternative 3A would be similar to the Project. However, localized pollutant construction impacts would be decreased compared to the Project due to the decrease in construction intensity. Thus, localized impacts attributable to construction would be less than significant under Alternative 3A and reduced compared to the Project.

As with the Project, no notable impacts related to TAC emissions during construction are anticipated to occur under Alternative 3A, and the Alternative is not anticipated to generate a substantial amount of objectionable odor emissions during construction. As such, impacts related to TAC emissions and objectionable odors would be less than significant, similar to the Project's impacts.

According to SCAQMD, individual construction projects that exceed SCAQMD's recommended daily thresholds for project-specific impacts would cause a cumulatively considerable increase in emissions for those pollutants for which the Air Basin is in non-attainment. Consequently, Alternative 3A would have a significant cumulative impact due to construction-related regional emissions, and such impacts would be reduced compared to the Project. Other cumulative air quality impacts would be less than significant and generally similar to the Project's impacts.

(b) Alternative 3B

Due to the further reduction in floor area under Alternative 3B, construction-related air quality impacts would be less than those of Alternative 3A and thus less than significant and less than the Project's impacts.

(2) Operation

(a) Alternative 3A

The number of daily trips generated under Alternative 3A would be reduced in comparison to the Project due to the decrease in residential units and commercial floor area. As vehicular emissions depend on the number of trips, vehicular sources would generate fewer pollutant emissions compared to the Project. With the decrease in overall square footage, both area sources and stationary sources would yield a corresponding decrease in on-site operational pollutant emissions. As shown in **Table 6-6**, Reduced Density Alternative Scenarios Compared to Project—Regional Operational Emissions, Alternative 3A would avoid the Project's significant impact with respect to PM_{2.5}. Additionally, like the Project, the regional operational impact with respect to SO₂ would be less than significant. Emissions of VOC, NO_x, CO, and PM₁₀ would remain significant and unavoidable. However, overall, impacts would be reduced in comparison to the Project.

Alternative 3A is forecasted to generate fewer operational trips (inbound + outbound) during the A.M. and P.M. peak hours than the Project. At buildout of the Project, the highest average daily trips at an intersection would be approximately 102,600 at the Bouquet & Newhall Ranch intersection, which is below the daily traffic volumes expected to generate CO exceedances as evaluated in the 2003 AQMP. There is no reason unique to Air Basin meteorology to conclude that the CO concentrations at the Bouquet & Newhall Ranch

intersection would exceed the 1-hour CO standard if modeled in detail, based on the studies undertaken for the 2003 AQMP. As Alternative 3A would generate fewer A.M. and P.M. peak-hour trips in comparison to the Project, the resultant change in local CO pollutant concentrations would decrease. As the localized CO hotspot analysis for the Project did not result in any significant impacts, Alternative 3A likewise would not have any localized impacts; such impacts would be reduced compared to the Project's impacts.

With respect to potential air toxic impacts, Alternative 3A would be similar to the Project as it would not release substantial amounts of toxic contaminants, and impacts on human health would be less than significant. Alternative 3A does not include any uses identified by the SCAQMD as being associated with odors; thus, as with the Project, odor impacts are not anticipated in conjunction with Alternative 3A. Impacts would be less than significant and similar to the Project.

According to SCAQMD, if an individual project results in air emissions of criteria pollutants that exceed SCAQMD's recommended daily thresholds for project-specific impacts, then the project would also result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of these criteria pollutants. Therefore, Alternative 3A's regional operational emissions would be significant on a cumulative basis, and such impacts would be reduced compared to the Project. Other cumulative air quality impacts would be less than significant and generally similar to the Project's impacts.

(b) Alternative 3B

Due to the further reduction in floor area under Alternative 3B, operational air quality impacts would be less than those of Alternative 3A and thus less than the Project's impacts. As shown in **Table 6-6**, Reduced Density Alternative Scenarios Compared to Project—Regional Operational Emissions, Alternative 3B would avoid the Project's significant impacts with respect to PM_{2.5}, PM₁₀, and CO. Additionally, like the Project, the regional operational impact with respect to SO₂ would be less than significant. Emissions of VOC and NO_x would remain significant and unavoidable. Overall, impacts would be reduced in comparison to the Project.

d. Biological Resources

Development under Alternative 3 would occur within a footprint similar to the Project. As such, Alternative 3 would affect similar areas where biological resources and sensitive habitats exist. Alternative 3 would include a comprehensive system of drainage, flood control, and water quality improvements, similar to the Project. In addition, Alternative 3 would include substantial open space, of which 27.2 acres would be established as a Spineflower Preserve. Six special-status plants have been documented on the Project Site during studies conducted between 2002 and 2013. As with the Project, impacts to

special-status plants, including oak trees and oak woodland, would be less than significant with implementation of mitigation measures under Alternative 3.

Also similar to the Project, Alternative 3 would result in the permanent loss of approximately 419 acres (83 percent) and temporary direct impacts to approximately 22 acres (4 percent) of the vegetation communities and other land covers on the Project Site, resulting in total impacts to approximately 441 acres, or 88 percent of the site. An estimated 43 percent (179.4 acres) of the total direct permanent impacts and 58 percent (12.9 acres) of the total direct temporary impacts overlap with the Mission Village project site.⁵³ As with the Project, impacts would be less than significant with mitigation under Alternative 3.

In addition, temporary impacts to 0.0005 acre of disturbed land within arroyo toad critical habitat and direct impacts to 6.1 acres of federally designated critical habitat for least Bell's vireo would occur under Alternative 3. Nonetheless, impacts would be less than significant, similar to the Project.

Finally, under Alternative 3, permanent direct impacts to 14.22 acres and temporary direct impacts to 0.46 acre of CDFW-jurisdictional streambeds (out of 15.41 acres) would occur, of which 7.89 acres of permanent direct impacts and 0.12 acre of temporary direct impacts are waters of the United States and waters of the State (out of 8.26 acres). As with the Project, these impacts would be less than significant with mitigation under Alternative 3.

e. Cultural and Paleontological Resources

Only one historic resource is located within the Project Site (i.e., Site No. 19-000961, which is the original Newhall Ranch headquarters), and no subsurface remains associated with this resource or any other archaeological remains have been found on-site. In addition, no known paleontological resources are located within the Project Site, although several of the rock units underlying the site include formations with moderate to high paleontological sensitivity. Under Alternative 3, the existing uses on-site would be removed, and substantial grading would be required, similar to the Project. Thus, like the Project, grading and excavation under this Alternative could potentially affect archaeological resources, paleontological resources, and/or human remains. However, impacts to cultural and paleontological resources would be less than significant with mitigation under Alternative 3, similar to the Project.

⁵³ Thus, as under the Project, if Mission Village should be constructed first, such impacts would occur under that project and would not occur as a result of this Alternative.

f. Geology and Soils

The Project Site does not contain any known active faults and is not within an Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone. No evidence of active faulting or ground rupture has been identified within the Project Site. As such, similar to the Project, the probability of ground rupture due to active faulting on-site during the design life of Alternative 3 is considered to be very low to non-existent. As with the Project, fault rupture impacts would be less than significant and similar to those of the Project.

Under Alternative 3, new development would occur within a footprint similar to the Project's. Therefore, development under Alternative 3 would be subject to the same degree of seismic hazard risks and geological considerations as the Project. As with any new development in the State of California, building design and construction would be required to conform to the current seismic design provisions of the California Building Code. In addition, construction of Alternative 3 would adhere to the requirements contained in the County Building Codes, as well as all engineering recommendations set forth in appropriate Geotechnical Reports, including grading plan specifications. Therefore, as with the Project, impacts related to the rupture of a known earthquake fault, strong seismic ground shaking, soil erosion, expansive soil, hillside requirements and grading under Alternative 3 would be less than significant. In addition, similar to the Project, impacts relative to seismic-related ground failure, landslides, slope stability, hydrocompaction, and location of a sensitive use in close proximity to a significant geotechnical hazard under Alternative 3 would be reduced to a less-than-significant level with mitigation.

g. Greenhouse Gas Emissions

(a) Alternative 3A

Similar to the Project, Alternative 3 is premised upon sustainability principles, including an appropriate mix of land uses, job generation, design principles to reduce vehicle miles traveled and commuting distances, access to transit, the provision of open space and recreational amenities, trail connectivity, the preservation of natural areas, water and energy conservation, efficient interior climate control, and the incorporation of green building techniques, thereby contributing to the reduction of GHG emissions. Alternative 3 would incorporate several transportation-related GHG reduction strategies and numerous design features to reduce GHG emissions.

GHG emissions are determined mainly by daily trips generated and energy consumption from proposed land uses. Given the decrease in floor area, this Alternative would generate fewer vehicle trips compared to the Project, which would lead to comparatively reduced GHG emissions. Like the Project, Alternative 3 would incorporate

PDFs as well as other attributes and regulatory initiatives that would represent a break from “business-as-usual” and support efforts to return the State to its 1990 emissions level in accordance with AB 32. Thus, like the Project, GHG impacts under Alternative 3A would be less than significant, and such impacts would be less than those of the Project due to the decrease in vehicle trips and the reduced floor area compared to the Project.

(b) Alternative 3B

Due to the further reduction in floor area and the associated further reduced vehicle trip generation under Alternative 3B, GHG emissions and associated impacts would be less than those of Alternative 3A and thus less than significant and less than the Project’s impacts.

h. Hazards and Hazardous Materials

(1) Construction

Similar to the Project, despite compliance with manufacturers’ instructions and applicable standards and regulations, the use, handling, storage, transport, and disposal of potentially hazardous materials during construction of Alternative 3 could increase the potential for accidental releases and, subsequently, the exposure of people and the environment to hazardous materials. Also like the Project, all existing ASTs located within the grading footprint of Alternative 3 would be properly abandoned and removed in accordance with applicable laws and regulations. However, soil under the existing ASTs may be contaminated with petroleum hydrocarbons or other constituents. Such conditions represent potentially significant impacts, and appropriate mitigation would reduce such impacts to a less-than-significant level.

Portions of the Project Site were formerly used for oil production, and 19 possible former oil well sites exist on-site. In addition, several former sumps, two oil field production tank batteries, and one area of possible land filling exist on the Project Site. As with the Project, any former oil wells and unknown (“wildcat”) wells located in an area of the Project Site to be disturbed or developed would be investigated and re-abandoned, as necessary, according to applicable state and local regulations, including requirements set forth by the California Division of Oil, Gas and Geothermal Resources (DOGGR). Additionally, visibly impacted soils would be treated and/or removed and disposed of in accordance with federal, state, regional, and local regulations under Alternative 3. As mitigation, a Soil Management Plan would be implemented on-site, as well as a Remedial Action Plan to address any previously unidentified features or materials that could present a threat to human health or the environment. Therefore, similar to the Project, impacts related to upset or accident conditions or other potential health risks would be less than significant with mitigation.

Asbestos-containing materials and lead-based paint may be present within the existing structures on-site. In addition, PCBs may be present within electrical transformers on-site. If present and disturbed during the demolition phase of construction, these materials would pose a threat to human health which would be a significant impact. As well, if previously undiscovered septic tank systems are encountered during Project grading, an accidental release could occur. Mitigation would reduce such impacts to a less-than-significant level, similar to the Project. Further, proposed structures would incorporate new, commercially sold building materials that do not include asbestos-containing materials or lead-based paint, as well as modern electrical facilities and fixtures that longer contain PCBs. Thus, impacts related to new development would be less than significant, similar to the Project. As any existing occurrences of mold would be removed during construction, like the Project, impacts would be less than significant.

Pyrotechnic debris was observed within a fireworks storage area used by Six Flags Magic Mountain located on-site and represents a potential health risk which would be a significant impact. Additionally, soils contaminated with pesticides and herbicides, if present, could be encountered during construction. Implementation of mitigation would reduce these impacts, as well as any residual soil contamination from other past uses, to a less-than-significant level.

Potential health risks also may be associated with other existing facilities on-site, including Southern California Edison's high voltage electric transmission lines and towers, SoCalGas's high pressure gas transmission pipeline and other gas lines, and groundwater monitoring wells or other water wells. As with the Project, Alternative 3 would not include any structures within the Edison or SoCalGas easements along the southern boundary of the Project Site, and the proposed school would comply with state siting requirements related to high voltage transmission lines. As such, similar to the Project, impacts associated with other potential health risks would be less than significant.

With respect to an emergency response plan, Alternative 3 would include a construction traffic management plan to ensure adequate emergency access to all nearby residences and businesses and minimize traffic interference and construction vehicle travel on congested streets, similar to the Project. Therefore, as with the Project, impacts would be less than significant.

In general, each of the impacts discussed above would be roughly equivalent to those of the Project given the similar development footprint, grading volumes, and types of uses to be introduced as part of Alternative 3 as compared to the Project. All such impacts would be less than significant with mitigation.

(2) Operation

Similar to the Project, Alternative 3 would involve the limited use of potentially hazardous materials typical of those used in residential and commercial developments, schools, and parks. However, all hazardous materials within the Project Site would be acquired, handled, used, stored, transported, and disposed of in accordance with manufacturers' instructions and in compliance with all applicable federal, state, regional, and local requirements. Similarly, any minor hazardous wastes would be conveyed to licensed treatment, disposal, and resource recovery facilities, as required, and/or would be collected and handled as part of the County's household hazardous waste management program. Additionally, neither hazardous emissions nor dangerous fire hazards are anticipated in conjunction with operations. Further, the Alternative would include an emergency response plan per regulatory requirements, as approved by the Fire Department, which would facilitate emergency response and evacuation of the Project Site in the event of a hazardous materials release. Thus, similar to the Project, impacts during operation would not create a significant hazard, and impacts would be less than significant. Such impacts would be similar to those of the Project.

With regard to I-5, which is a designated route for the transport of explosive and inhalation materials, traffic generated by Alternative 3 could result in the potential for an accident involving the transport of these substances. Impacts related to the release of hazardous materials or waste into the environment from the transport of hazardous materials along I-5 would be less than significant and less than the Project's due to the comparative decrease in traffic.

i. Hydrology and Water Quality

(1) Hydrology

(a) Construction

The primary hydrological concern during Alternative 3 construction would be potential erosion and sedimentation impacts during site clearing and grading, the extent of which would be similar to the Project given the similar development footprint and grading volumes. Increases in sedimentation and debris production on the site during construction of Alternative 3 would be temporary and limited through implementation of construction BMPs. Furthermore, site grading would occur in compliance with Public Works standards, and all slopes would be graded, compacted, and stabilized such that they would not be subject to mudflow hazard. Similar to the Project, construction impacts would be less than significant based on compliance with applicable regulatory requirements and implementation of appropriate BMPs.

(b) Operation

Under Alternative 3, new development would occur within a footprint similar to the Project's, and the impervious surface area on-site would increase due to new roads, buildings, paved parking areas, and other relatively impermeable or impervious features. The introduction of impervious surfaces would increase the amount of clear flow runoff from and through the site due to the associated reduction in infiltration, while burned/bulked runoff and debris flow rates would be reduced since the developed portions of the site would be covered with impervious surfaces and non-erodible vegetation and due to the introduction of debris basins. Like the Project, the on-site drainage system would be designed to contain and convey flows associated with the County's 50-year capital storm event in accordance with Public Works requirements. Also like the Project, Alternative 3 would not substantially alter the overall existing drainage patterns within and surrounding the Project Site, substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner that would result in flooding on- or off-site, create or contribute runoff that exceeds the capacity of existing or planned drainage systems, or create drainage system capacity problems. Therefore, similar to the Project, impacts would be less than significant with compliance with applicable regulatory requirements and implementation of appropriate BMPs.

(2) Water Quality***(a) Construction***

Alternative 3 would require vegetation removal, grading, and trenching for infrastructure improvements, which could result in sediment releases. However, like the Project, the construction impacts of Alternative 3 would be minimized through compliance with the NPDES Construction General Permit. In particular, erosion and sediment transport, as well as the transport of other potential pollutants from the Project Site during construction, would be reduced or prevented through implementation of appropriate BMPs specified in a SWPPP. In addition, if construction dewatering is required, BMPs would be implemented to protect receiving waters from dewatering and construction-related non-stormwater discharges, similar to the Project. Therefore, similar to the Project, construction-related water quality impacts would be less than significant with regulatory compliance.

(b) Operation***(i) Alternative 3A***

Mean annual runoff volumes are expected to increase as a result of Alternative 3A due to the increase in impervious area associated with development of the site, as well as the decrease in the infiltration capacity of existing site soils associated with compaction during construction. Implementation of LID BMPs would provide substantial runoff volume

reduction via infiltration and evapotranspiration and, therefore, would provide hydromodification source control, as well as stormwater treatment. On this basis, similar to the Project, water quality impacts related to stormwater runoff volumes would be less than significant.

As it relates to specific pollutants, most water quality impacts associated with this Alternative would be similar to those of the Project due to the similar types of uses to be introduced, the similar development footprint, and compliance with regulatory requirements. Specifically, like the Project, implementation of appropriate BMPs and source and treatment controls would reduce sediment loads, pathogens (e.g., pet wastes), trash and debris, and toxicity levels in stormwater runoff, and such impacts would be less than significant. Additionally, like the Project, stormwater discharges from the Project Site under Alternative 3A are not expected to increase the in-stream concentration of nutrients, metals, chloride, or pesticides, and related impacts would be less than significant. Petroleum hydrocarbon concentrations would be comparatively reduced under Alternative 3A given reduced vehicular emissions associated with fewer vehicle trips compared to the Project. However, source control BMPs incorporated in compliance with the MS4 Permit and SUSMP requirements would minimize the presence of hydrocarbons in runoff, and, like the Project, water quality impacts related to petroleum hydrocarbons would be less than significant. It is noted, however, that the volume or level of certain land use based pollutants would be reduced compared to the Project due to the reduced floor area and associated reduction in vehicles on-site.

With respect to groundwater quality, treated effluent from the Valencia WRP would be used to supply recycled water to the Project Site for landscape irrigation and other approved uses. As the effluent limitations specified in the Valencia WRP's NPDES Permit are below relevant groundwater quality objectives, under Alternative 3A impacts on groundwater quality would be less than significant, similar to the Project. Additionally, dry weather discharge to the Santa Clara River is not expected to occur under Alternative 3A, and, like the Project, impacts would be less than significant.

Finally, relative to hydromodification, the County MS4 Permit exempts from hydromodification control requirements projects that discharge directly or via a storm drain into the River. Nevertheless, like the Project, this Alternative's site design and LID BMPs would minimize increases in runoff volume from the developed area, which is the preferred method for controlling hydromodification impacts from new development. Therefore, similar to the Project, hydromodification impacts on the River would be less than significant.

(ii) Alternative 3B

While most operational water quality impacts would be the same under Alternative 3B as under Alternative 3A and the Project, due to the further reduction in floor area under Alternative 3B and associated reduction in vehicles on-site, the volume or level of certain land use based pollutants would be reduced compared to Alternative 3A and the Project. With regulatory compliance, impacts would be less than significant.

j. Land Use and Planning

(1) Land Use Consistency

(a) Alternative 3A

As previously described, Alternative 3A would include the same land uses as the Project but represents a 27-percent reduction in Project development. Like the Project, the proposed uses would be consistent with the site's existing land use designations established by the Area Plan. This Alternative would require the same discretionary approvals as the Project, including a vesting tentative tract map, zone change, conditional use permit (CUP), oak tree permit, and parking permit, along with a number of approvals by and/or permits from various local, regional, state, and federal agencies. In general, given the similarity of Alternative 3A with the Project, like the Project, the Alternative would be consistent with the overall regulatory framework regarding land use, including the County's adopted General Plan, Area Plan, Planning and Zoning Code, Hillside Management Area Ordinance, and Green Building Standards Code, as well as SCAG's 2012–2035 RTP/SCS, Growth Vision Report, and RCP; SCAQMD's AQMP; and Metro's 2010 CMP for Los Angeles County. However, Alternative 3A would achieve various local and regional goals and objectives, particularly those related to the provision of housing and employment opportunities, to the lesser extent than the Project given the reduced amount of development. Nonetheless, given the similarities in the development proposals, overall land use consistency impacts under Alternative 3A would be less than significant and similar to those of the Project.

(b) Alternative 3B

Alternative 3B would include the same land uses as the Project but represents a 53-percent reduction in Project floor area. Land use consistency impacts would be similar to those of Alternative 3A, and thus similar to the Project's impacts, except that certain local and regional goals and objectives, particularly those related to the provision of housing and employment opportunities, would be achieved to the lesser extent given the reduced amount of development. As such, impacts would be similar to those of Alternative 3A and thus less than significant and similar to the Project's impacts.

(2) Land Use Compatibility

(a) Alternative 3A

As Alternative 3A would develop the same types of uses as the Project with a similar design and layout, the Alternative would be generally compatible with the surrounding uses and would not interfere with activities on adjacent properties. As with the Project, implementation of Alternative 3A would not physically divide an established community since the site is currently vacant. Furthermore, the adjacent communities (e.g., Westridge and Mission Village) are distinct and generally self-contained communities that would not be physically divided by development of Alternative 3A. Therefore, Alternative 3A would not substantially or adversely change the relationships between the land uses or properties in surrounding neighborhoods or communities, nor would it have the long-term effect of adversely altering a neighborhood or community through ongoing disruption, division, or isolation. Impacts regarding compatibility with surrounding uses would therefore be less than significant and similar to those of the Project.

(b) Alternative 3B

Alternative 3B would involve further reductions in floor area and associated building heights and massing within a similar development footprint as Alternative 3A and the Project. As development would involve the same types of uses as the Project with a similar design and layout, the Alternative would be generally compatible with the surrounding uses. Land use compatibility impacts would be similar to those of Alternative 3A and thus less than significant and similar to the Project.

k. Mineral Resources

The Project Site does not include any active mineral extraction operations, and all of the former oil and gas wells on-site have been abandoned. Moreover, as with the Project, ongoing oil and gas extraction activities within the surrounding area would not be hindered by development of Alternative 3. Therefore, implementation would not result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource of value, nor would it result in the loss of availability of a locally-important mineral resource recovery site. Similar to the Project, impacts with respect to mineral resources would be less than significant.

I. Noise

(1) Construction

(a) Alternative 3A

Under Alternative 3A, the overall amount of new construction would be less than that of the Project, although the amount of earthwork would be similar. The duration of construction would also be shorter. The estimated construction noise levels for various construction stages at the off-site noise sensitive receptors, which represent a worst-case scenario in which all construction equipment is assumed to operate simultaneously at the construction area nearest to the affected receptors, is used for measure significance and would be reduced under Alternative 3A as the equipment size and quantity would be decreased. However, as with the Project, construction activities under Alternative 3A could exceed the County Noise Ordinance standards for an extended period of time at on- and off-site residential uses during construction. Therefore, construction noise impacts associated with Alternative 3A and affecting on- and off-site sensitive uses would be significant and unavoidable but reduced compared to the Project due to the decrease in the amount of new construction. Similarly, cumulative construction noise impacts would be significant and unavoidable, although reduced compared to the Project.

(b) Alternative 3B

Although earthwork would be similar to that of Alternative 3A and the Project, due to the further reduction in floor area under Alternative 3B, construction would involve a reduction in equipment size and quantity. The duration of construction would also be shorter. Nonetheless, construction activities under Alternative 3B could exceed the County Noise Ordinance standards at on- and off-site residential uses during construction. Noise impacts would be significant and unavoidable but reduced compared to Alternative 3A and the Project due to the decrease in the amount of new construction. Similarly, cumulative construction noise impacts would be significant and unavoidable, although reduced compared to Alternative 3A and the Project.

(2) Operation

(a) Alternative 3A

Given the reduction in floor area, Alternative 3A would result in fewer vehicle trips during operation than the Project. Therefore, operational noise impacts under Alternative 3 would be reduced compared to the Project and less than significant with mitigation. In addition, similar to the Project, the cumulative operational off-site noise impact associated with mobile sources (i.e., along Westridge Parkway north of Valencia Boulevard) would be significant and unavoidable under Alternative 3A. This impact would occur since

construction of a noise barrier wall along the adjacent sensitive uses would be infeasible as it would interfere with property access.

(b) Alternative 3B

Due to the further reduction in floor area and associated operational trips, operational noise impacts under Alternative 3B would be reduced compared to Alternative 3A and the Project and thus less than significant with mitigation. Cumulative operational off-site traffic noise impacts would be similarly reduced but, like the Project, significant and unavoidable.

m. Population, Housing, and Employment

(1) Population

(a) Alternative 3A

Assuming a 27-percent reduction in development, Alternative 3A would include approximately 1,149 dwelling units compared to the Project's 1,574 units. Based on the average household size within the community of Stevenson Ranch located south of the Project Site, Alternative 3A would generate an on-site residential population of an estimated 3,861 persons, compared to 5,288 persons under the Project.⁵⁴ In addition, due to the decrease in commercial floor area compared to the Project, Alternative 3A would result in less indirect population growth as a result of the employment positions created on-site. Accordingly, buildout of Alternative 3A would represent a smaller percentage of SCAG's population forecasts for 2024 and population growth forecasts between 2014 and 2024 compared to the Project. Specifically, as detailed in **Table 6-7**, Alternative 3 Growth Relative to SCAG Forecasts (2014–2024), on page 6.0-89, with respect to the SCAG region projections, Alternative 3A would represent approximately 0.02 percent of the total forecasted population in 2024 and approximately 0.25 percent of population growth between 2014 and 2024. In the unincorporated County, Alternative 3A would represent approximately 0.32 percent of the total forecasted population in 2024 and approximately 3.29 percent of population growth between 2014 and 2024. Alternative 3A also would make up 1.15 percent of the total residential population in the Valley in 2024, or 7.17 percent of projected growth from 2014 to 2024. As such, similar to the Project, the population associated with Alternative 3A would fall within the forecasts for the various studied geographies, and the Alternative would not cause growth (i.e., new population) that

⁵⁴ *The average household size for owner- and renter-occupied units for Census Tract 9203.38 is 3.36 persons (source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010). This rate was applied to the Project, as the types and sizes of homes proposed within the Project would be similar to those within Stevenson Ranch. The same is assumed for Alternative 3.*

**Table 6-7
Alternative 3 Growth Relative to SCAG Forecasts (2014–2024)**

Forecast	Population	Households	Employment
SCAG Region-Wide Forecast			
Year 2024 ^a	20,310,467	6,689,200	8,687,867
2014–2024 Growth ^{a,b}	1,531,467	553,200	611,867
Alternative 3A ^c	3,861	1,149	1,982
Alternative 3A % of Area Forecast	0.02	0.02	0.02
Alternative 3A % of Area Growth	0.25	0.21	0.32
Alternative 3B ^c	2,483	739	1,311
Alternative 3B % of Area Forecast	0.01	0.01	0.02
Alternative 3B % of Area Growth	0.16	0.13	0.21
Unincorporated County of L.A. Forecast			
Year 2024 ^a	1,223,207	354,614	279,967
2014–2024 Growth ^{a,b}	117,257	37,509	28,417
Alternative 3A ^c	3,861	1,149	1,982
Alternative 3A % of Area Forecast	0.32	0.32	0.71
Alternative 3A % of Area Growth	3.29	3.06	6.97
Alternative 3B ^c	2,483	739	1,311
Alternative 3B % of Area Forecast	0.20	0.21	0.47
Alternative 3B % of Area Growth	2.12	1.97	4.61
Santa Clarita Valley Forecast			
Year 2024 ^d	335,152	113,539	144,797
2014–2024 Growth ^{d,e}	53,878	22,170	16,398
Alternative 3A ^c	3,861	1,149	1,982
Alternative 3A % of Area Forecast	1.15	1.01	1.37
Alternative 3A % of Area Growth	7.17	5.18	12.09
Alternative 3B ^c	2,483	739	1,311
Alternative 3B % of Area Forecast	0.74	0.65	0.91
Alternative 3B % of Area Growth	4.61	3.33	7.99

^a Year 2024 forecast based on a straight-line interpolation from 2020 to 2035 forecast values in the SCAG regional growth forecast adopted for the 2012–2035 RTP/SCS; see **Table 5.14-1**, SCAG Forecast for the SCAG Region and Unincorporated County (2008–2035) Alternative 2 Growth Relative to SCAG Forecasts (2014–2024), provided in **Section 5.14**, Population, Housing, and Employment, of this Draft EIR.

^b Year 2014 forecast based on a straight-line interpolation from 2008 to 2020 values in the SCAG regional growth forecast adopted for the 2012–2035 RTP/SCS; see **Table 5.14-1**, SCAG Forecast for the SCAG Region and Unincorporated County (2008–2035) Alternative 2 Growth Relative to SCAG Forecasts (2014–2024), provided in **Section 5.14**, Population, Housing, and Employment, of this Draft EIR.

^c Alternative 3A and 3B population assumes average household size of 3.36 persons per unit, based on average household size for owner- and renter-occupied units within Census Tract 9203.38 (Stevenson

Table 6-7 (Continued)
Alternative 3 Growth Relative to SCAG Forecasts (2014–2024)

Forecast	Population	Households	Employment
<p>Ranch) per 2010 U.S. Census data. Alternative 3A and 3B employment assumes same non-residential land use mix as Project (i.e., 59.6 percent office, 40.4 percent commercial retail, plus school and park uses) and same employment generation factors.</p> <p>^d Year 2024 forecast based on a straight-line interpolation from 2020 to 2035 values in the SCAG regional growth forecasts for the Traffic Analysis Zones (TAZs) located within the Valley. For those TAZs located partially within and partially outside the Valley, an area-weighted approach was used to approximate growth within the Valley boundaries. See Table 5.14-1, SCAG Forecast for the SCAG Region and Unincorporated County (2008–2035) Alternative 2 Growth Relative to SCAG Forecasts (2014–2024), provided in Section 5.14, Population, Housing, and Employment, of this Draft EIR.</p> <p>^e Year 2014 forecast based on a straight-line interpolation from 2008 to 2020 values in the SCAG regional growth forecasts for TAZs; see Table 5.14-1, SCAG Forecast for the SCAG Region and Unincorporated County (2008–2035) Alternative 2 Growth Relative to SCAG Forecasts (2014–2024), provided in Section 5.14, Population, Housing, and Employment, of this Draft EIR.</p> <p>Source: SCAG 2012–2035 RTP/SCS (http://scag.ca.gov/documents/2012adoptedgrowthforecastpdf.pdf) and Eyestone Environmental, 2015.</p>			

exceeds projected/planned levels for the buildout year. Impacts relative to consistency with adopted population projections would be less than significant. As this Alternative would result in less growth than the Project, population impacts would be reduced in comparison.

(b) Alternative 3B

Assuming a 53-percent reduction compared to the Project, Alternative 3B would include approximately 739 dwelling units. Based on the same average household size assumed for the Project, Alternative 3B would generate an on-site residential population of an estimated 2,483 persons.⁵⁵ In addition, due to the decrease in commercial floor area compared to Alternative 3A and the Project, Alternative 3B would result in less indirect population growth as a result of the employment positions created on-site. Accordingly, buildout of Alternative 3B would represent a smaller percentage of SCAG's population forecasts for 2024 and population growth forecasts between 2014 and 2024 compared to Alternative 3A and the Project. Specifically, as detailed in **Table 6-7**, Alternative 3 Growth Relative to SCAG Forecasts (2014–2024), with respect to the SCAG region projections, Alternative 3B would represent approximately 0.01 percent of the total forecasted population in 2024 and approximately 0.16 percent of population growth between 2014 and 2024. In the unincorporated County, Alternative 3B would represent approximately

⁵⁵ The average household size for owner- and renter-occupied units for Census Tract 9203.38 is 3.36 persons (source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010). This rate was applied to the Project, as the types and sizes of homes proposed within the Project would be similar to those within Stevenson Ranch. The same is assumed for Alternative 3.

0.20 percent of the total forecasted population in 2024 and approximately 2.12 percent of population growth between 2014 and 2024. Alternative 3B also would make up 0.74 percent of the total residential population in the Valley in 2024, or 4.61 percent of projected growth from 2014 to 2024. Similar to the Project, the population associated with Alternative 3A would fall within the forecasts for the various studied geographies, and the Alternative would not cause growth (i.e., new population) that exceeds projected/planned levels for the buildout year. As such, population impacts would be less than significant but less than those of Alternative 3A and the Project.

(2) Housing

(a) Alternative 3A

Assuming a 27-percent reduction in development, Alternative 3A would include approximately 1,149 dwelling units compared to the Project's 1,574 units. Accordingly, the number of households associated with Alternative 3A would be less than that of the Project. Thus, buildout of Alternative 3A would represent a smaller percentage of SCAG's household forecasts for 2024 and household growth forecasts between 2014 and 2024. Specifically, as detailed in **Table 6-7**, Alternative 3 Growth Relative to SCAG Forecasts (2014–2024), for the SCAG region, Alternative 3A would represent approximately 0.02 percent of the total household forecast in 2024 and approximately 0.21 percent of household growth between 2014 and 2024. In the unincorporated County, Alternative 3A would represent approximately 0.32 percent of the household forecast and approximately 3.06 percent of household growth between 2014 and 2024. Relative to the Valley, Alternative 3A housing would make up 1.01 percent of total households and 5.18 percent of projected household growth from 2014 to 2024. Therefore, similar to the Project, the number of households associated with Alternative 3A would fall within the forecasts for the various studied geographies, and the Alternative would not cause growth (i.e., new households) that exceeds projected/planned levels for the buildout year. As this Alternative would result in less growth than the Project, housing impacts would be less than significant and less than those of the Project. However, Alternative 3A would not help meet the County's RHNA allocation to the same extent as the Project.

(b) Alternative 3B

Assuming a 53-percent reduction compared to the Project, Alternative 3B would include approximately 739 dwelling units. Accordingly, buildout of Alternative 3B would represent a smaller percentage of SCAG's household forecasts for 2024 and household growth forecasts between 2014 and 2024. Specifically, as detailed in **Table 6-7**, Alternative 3 Growth Relative to SCAG Forecasts (2014–2024), for the SCAG region, Alternative 3B would represent approximately 0.01 percent of the total household forecast in 2024 and approximately 0.13 percent of household growth between 2014 and 2024. In

the unincorporated County, Alternative 3B would represent approximately 0.21 percent of the household forecast and approximately 1.97 percent of household growth between 2014 and 2024. Relative to the Valley, Alternative 3B housing would make up 0.65 percent of total households and 3.33 percent of projected household growth from 2014 to 2024. As such, housing associated with Alternative 3B would fall within the forecasts for the various studied geographies, and the Alternative would not cause growth (i.e., new households) that exceeds projected/planned levels for the buildout year. Housing impacts would be less than significant and reduced compared to those of Alternative 3A and the Project. However, Alternative 3B would not help meet the County's RHNA allocation to the same extent as Alternative 3A or the Project.

(3) Employment

(a) Construction

(i) Alternative 3A

Similar to the Project, Alternative 3A would provide a public benefit by providing new direct and indirect employment opportunities during the construction period, but to a lesser extent than the Project due to the decrease in floor area compared to the Project. Employment impacts would be less than significant and reduced compared to the Project.

(ii) Alternative 3B

Due to the further reduction in development, fewer construction jobs would result under Alternative 3B than under Alternative 3A or the Project. Employment impacts would be less than significant and less than those of Alternative 3A and the Project due to the reduced level of employment.

(b) Operation

(i) Alternative 3A

Assuming a 27-percent reduction in development, Alternative 3A would include 532,900 square feet of commercial floor area, compared to the Project's 730,000 square feet. Thus, with respect to permanent employment, Alternative 3A would generate fewer job opportunities than the Project and represent an incremental decrease in the percentage of SCAG's employment forecasts for 2024 and employment growth forecasts between 2014 and 2024. Specifically, as detailed in **Table 6-7**, Alternative 3 Growth Relative to SCAG Forecasts (2014–2024), for the SCAG region, Alternative 3A would represent approximately 0.02 percent of the total employment forecast in 2024 and approximately 0.32 percent of employment growth between 2014 and 2024. In the unincorporated County, Alternative 3A would represent approximately 0.71 percent of the employment

forecast and approximately 6.97 percent of employment growth between 2014 and 2024. With respect to the Valley, Alternative 3A employees would make up 1.37 percent of total employment and 12.09 percent of projected employment growth from 2014 to 2024. As such, Alternative 3A employment would fall within the forecasts for the various studied geographies and would not cause growth (i.e., new employment) that exceeds projected/planned levels for the buildout year. The jobs/housing ratio under Alternative 3A would be 1.73, which is comparable to the Project's ratio and above the Area Plan goal of at least 1.5 jobs per household. Impacts with respect to employment would be less than significant and less than the Project's impacts due to the reduced level of employment.

(ii) Alternative 3B

Assuming a 53-percent reduction compared to the Project, Alternative 3B would include approximately 343,100 square feet of commercial floor area. Accordingly, fewer employment opportunities would be generated under Alternative 3B compared to Alternative 3A and the Project, and buildout would represent an incremental decrease in the percentage of SCAG's employment forecasts for 2024 and employment growth forecasts between 2014 and 2024. Specifically, as detailed in **Table 6-7**, Alternative 3 Growth Relative to SCAG Forecasts (2014–2024), for the SCAG region, Alternative 3B would represent approximately 0.02 percent of the total employment forecast in 2024 and approximately 0.21 percent of employment growth between 2014 and 2024. In the unincorporated County, Alternative 3B would represent approximately 0.47 percent of the employment forecast and approximately 4.61 percent of employment growth between 2014 and 2024. With respect to the Valley, Alternative 3B employees would make up 0.91 percent of total employment and 7.99 percent of projected employment growth from 2014 to 2024. As such, Alternative 3B employment would fall within the forecasts for the various studied geographies and would not cause growth (i.e., new employment) that exceeds projected/planned levels for the buildout year. The jobs/housing ratio under Alternative 3B would be 1.77, which is comparable to the Project's ratio and above the Area Plan goal of at least 1.5 jobs per household. As such, impacts would be less than significant and less than those of Alternative 3A and the Project.

n. Public Services

(1) Fire Protection

(a) Construction

(i) Alternative 3A

The demand for fire protection and emergency medical services may be increased during construction, as construction activities could potentially expose combustible materials to sources of ignition. However, like the Project, Alternative 3A's electrical,

plumbing, communications, and ventilation systems would be properly installed in each structure. With compliance with relevant building, safety, and fire codes, impacts would be less than significant and less than the Project's due to the reduced level of construction activities under Alternative 3A.

In addition, construction activities would result in increased traffic on nearby roadways during working hours in association with commuting construction workers, delivery trucks, and other large construction vehicles. Construction-related traffic could reduce optimal traffic flows and potentially delay emergency vehicles traveling through the area. Further, temporary lane closures associated with utility line construction or roadway improvements could slow or impede emergency access. Like the Project, Alternative 3A would include a construction traffic management plan to ensure adequate emergency access to all nearby residences and businesses and minimize traffic interference and construction vehicle travel on congested streets. Therefore, impacts to emergency access would be less than significant and less than the Project's impacts due to the decrease in construction-related traffic.

(ii) Alternative 3B

Due to the further reduction in floor area under Alternative 3B, construction-related impacts on the demand for fire protection and emergency medical services, traffic conditions, and emergency response would be less than those of Alternative 3A and thus less than significant and less than the Project's impacts.

(b) Operation

(i) Alternative 3A

Alternative 3A would generate new demand for fire protection and emergency medical services due to the introduction of an on-site daytime population, although this demand would be less than that of the Project due to the smaller population. As with the Project, under Alternative 3A, the Project Applicant would comply with applicable regulatory requirements, including fire flow requirements, implement appropriate PDFs, and pay the Fire Facility Fee to help fund future improvements, as needed. While traffic generated by Alternative 3A could potentially affect emergency response, traffic levels would be less than under the Project; thus, this Alternative would not be expected to substantially impact response times or emergency vehicle access, particularly given that significant traffic impacts would not occur. Therefore, operational impacts would be less than significant and reduced compared to the Project's impacts.

Given that the Project Site has been designated as a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone, Alternative 3A would comply with all applicable County Fire Code requirements as

well as other relevant fire safety regulations set forth by the County, including implementation of a Fuel Modification Plan, which would minimize wildfire hazards and associated impacts, similar to the Project. Routine landscape maintenance would be conducted in accordance with the Fire Department's Fuel Modification Plan Guidelines. Therefore, similar to the Project, impacts with respect to development within a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone would be less than significant.

(ii) Alternative 3B

Due to the further reduction in floor area and associated daytime population under Alternative 3B, a reduced demand of fire protection and emergency medical services would be generated in comparison to Alternative 3A and the Project. Therefore, impacts to fire protection services would be less than those of Alternative 3A and the Project and less than significant. Impacts relating to development within a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone would be less than significant and similar to the Project's impacts.

(2) Sheriff Protection

(a) Construction

(i) Alternative 3A

Construction-related traffic could reduce optimal traffic flows and potentially delay emergency vehicles traveling through the area. In addition, temporary lane closures associated with utility line construction or roadway improvements could slow or impede emergency access. Like the Project, Alternative 3A would include a construction traffic management plan to ensure adequate emergency access to all nearby residences and businesses and minimize traffic interference and construction vehicle travel on congested streets. Therefore, impacts to emergency access would be less than significant and less than the Project's impacts due to the comparative reduction in construction-related traffic.

(ii) Alternative 3B

Due to the further reduction in floor area under Alternative 3B, construction-related impacts on traffic conditions and emergency response would be less than those of Alternative 3A and thus less than significant and less than the Project's impacts.

(b) Operation

(i) Alternative 3A

Alternative 3A would generate new demand for law enforcement services due to the introduction of a residential population, although less demand would be generated than

under the Project due to the reduction in population. This Alternative would be expected to incorporate security features similar to the Project's. Moreover, like the Project, this Alternative would be expected to implement comparable PDFs and comply with regulatory requirements, including payment of the applicable Law Enforcement Facilities Fee, which is intended to provide sufficient revenues to pay for land acquisition, engineering, construction, installation, purchasing, and other costs for the provision of capital law enforcement facilities and equipment. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant but reduced compared to the Project due to the relatively reduced demand for service generated by the smaller population.

(ii) Alternative 3B

Due to the further reduction in floor area and associated population under Alternative 3B, a reduced demand of law enforcement services would be generated in comparison to Alternative 3A and the Project. Therefore, impacts to law enforcement services would be less than those of Alternative 3A and the Project and less than significant.

(3) Schools

(a) Alternative 3A

Alternative 3A would generate new students to attend the schools that serve the Project Site, although fewer students would be generated than under the Project due to the reduction in residential population. Similar to the Project, Alternative 3A includes the construction of a new 9.4-acre elementary school within the Project Site that would provide additional capacity within the Saugus District. In addition, as with the Project, compliance with the Agreements with the Saugus District, Newhall District, and Hart District would offset potential impacts to existing educational facilities. Therefore, impacts to schools would be less than significant and less than those of the Project due to the relatively reduced number of students generated.

(b) Alternative 3B

Due to the further reduction in floor area and associated population under Alternative 3B, fewer students would be generated under Alternative 3B as compared to Alternative 3A and the Project. Therefore, impacts to schools would be less than significant and less than those of Alternative 3A and the Project.

(4) Parks and Recreation

(a) Alternative 3A

Alternative 3A would generate new demand for parks and recreational facilities in the Project area, although this demand would be less than that of the Project due to the smaller population. Similar to the Project, Alternative 3A includes a 5.6-acre public neighborhood park, two private recreational centers on 2.9 acres, and additional smaller recreation areas. In addition, under Alternative 3A, the Project Applicant would comply with the County's Parkland Dedication Ordinance via the provision of public park space with amenities equal to or greater in value than the established in-lieu park fee, or, should the amenities not meet the in-lieu fee requirement, payment of the appropriate fee. Therefore, impacts to parks and recreation would be less than significant and less than those of the Project due to the relatively reduced demand generated.

(b) Alternative 3B

Due to the further reduction in floor area and associated population under Alternative 3B, a reduced demand for parks and recreational facilities would be generated under Alternative 3B as compared to Alternative 3A and the Project. Therefore, impacts to parks and recreational facilities would be less than significant and less than those of Alternative 3A and the Project.

(5) Libraries

(a) Alternative 3A

Alternative 3A would generate demand for library services at the Castaic Library and potentially other nearby libraries due to the introduction of a new residential population. As with the Project, with implementation of the Alternative, the Castaic Library would not meet the County Library's service level guidelines with respect to facility size. However, under Alternative 3A, the Project Applicant would pay the applicable Library Facilities Mitigation Fee, the purpose of which is "to mitigate any significant adverse impacts of increased residential development upon public library facilities as required by" CEQA. Therefore, impacts to libraries would be less than significant and less than the Project's impacts due to the relatively reduced demand generated.

(b) Alternative 3B

Due to the further reduction in floor area and associated population under Alternative 3B, a reduced demand for libraries would be generated under Alternative 3B as compared to Alternative 3A and the Project. Therefore, impacts to libraries would be less than significant and less than those of Alternative 3A and the Project.

o. Transportation/Traffic**(a) Construction****(i) Alternative 3A**

Construction activities associated with Alternative 3A would generate traffic related to construction worker trips and truck trips for the delivery of construction materials. Although the amount of earthwork would be similar, the overall amount of new construction under Alternative 3A would be less than that of the Project, resulting in fewer construction trips. As such, construction traffic impacts would be less than significant and reduced compared to the Project's impacts.

(ii) Alternative 3B

Due to the further reduction in the level of construction required for Alternative 3B, fewer construction trips would be generated than under Alternative 3A and the Project. construction traffic impacts would be less than those of Alternative 3A and thus less than significant and less than the Project's impacts.

(b) Operation**(i) Alternative 3A**

Buildout of Alternative 3A would result in fewer trips compared to the Project due to the reduced floor area. As such, this Alternative would be expected to result in fewer traffic impacts with respect to local intersections and freeway segments, including CMP intersections and freeway segments, as compared to the Project. Like the Project, these impacts would be less than significant with mitigation. Impacts relative to parking would be similar to the Project, as sufficient parking would be provided in accordance with regulatory requirements. Parking impacts would be less than significant.

(ii) Alternative 3B

Due to the further reduction in floor area and associated number of trips under Alternative 3B, operational traffic impacts would be less than significant and less than those of Alternative 3A and the Project.

p. Utilities and Service Systems

(1) Water Supply and Service

(a) Construction

(i) Alternative 3A

Short-term demand for water would be generated during construction of Alternative 3A, primarily in association with dust control, concrete mixing, cleaning of equipment, and other related construction activities. Given the decreased level of construction compared to the Project, such demand would be less than that of the Project and impacts would be less than significant.

(ii) Alternative 3B

Due to the further reduction in floor area and associated level of construction, a reduced demand for water would be generated under Alternative 3B as compared to Alternative 3A and the Project. Therefore, construction impacts would be less than significant and less than those of Alternative 3A and the Project.

(b) Operation

(i) Alternative 3A

Operation of Alternative 3A would generate demand for potable and recycled water, although this demand would be less than that of the Project due to the relative decrease in floor area and associated population. Like the Project, Alternative 3A would involve the construction of a potable water system and a recycled water system. Alternative 3A's water-related infrastructure improvements would be designed in accordance with the County Code, including the Fire Code, and would be constructed under the oversight of Public Works, VWC, and the Fire Department. Therefore, impacts related to water supply and fire flow would be less than significant and less than the Project's impacts due to the reduced water demand.

(ii) Alternative 3B

Due to the further reduction in floor area and associated population, a reduced demand for water would be generated under Alternative 3B as compared to Alternative 3A and the Project. Therefore, operational impacts would be less than significant and less than those of Alternative 3A and the Project.

(2) Wastewater Disposal

(a) Construction

(i) Alternative 3A

Alternative 3A would temporarily generate wastewater during construction as a result of construction workers on-site. However, given the reduced level of construction under Alternative 3A, wastewater impacts would be less than significant and less than those of the Project.

(ii) Alternative 3B

Due to the further reduction in floor area and associated level of construction, reduced wastewater flows would be generated under Alternative 3B as compared to Alternative 3A and the Project. Therefore, construction impacts would be less than significant and less than those of Alternative 3A and the Project.

(b) Operation

(i) Alternative 3A

Operation of Alternative 3A is anticipated to generate wastewater, although flows would be less than those of the Project due to the relative decrease in floor area and associated population. As with the Project, under Alternative 3A, the Project Applicant would be required to obtain verification from the County Sanitation Districts that sufficient treatment capacity is available. Additionally, payment of the applicable fees for wastewater connections and services would serve to provide future conveyance, treatment, and disposal facilities (capital facilities), as needed, to adequately accommodate future development. Given the decrease in floor area and population compared to the Project, wastewater generation under Alternative 3A would be less than that of the Project, and impacts would be less than significant.

(ii) Alternative 3B

Due to the further reduction in floor area and associated population, a reduced level of wastewater generation would occur under Alternative 3B as compared to Alternative 3A and the Project. Therefore, operational impacts would be less than significant and less than those of Alternative 3A and the Project.

(3) Energy**(a) Construction****(i) Alternative 3A**

Construction activities under Alternative 3A would require electricity to serve construction trailers, power tools, tool sheds, work and storage areas, and other facilities associated with development activities. Given the decreased level of construction compared to the Project, impacts to electricity would be less than significant, and less than those of the Project.

(ii) Alternative 3B

Due to the further reduction in floor area and associated level of construction, a reduced demand for energy would be generated under Alternative 3B as compared to Alternative 3A and the Project. Therefore, construction impacts would be less than significant and less than those of Alternative 3A and the Project.

(b) Operation**(i) Alternative 3A**

Operation of Alternative 3A would increase demand for electricity and natural gas. Similar to the Project, Alternative 3A would incorporate compliance measures to address applicable energy requirements. Specifically, the proposed buildings would comply with Title 24 standards, and the Applicant would implement green building design and construction practices in compliance with the County's Green Building Ordinance. The Applicant also would be expected to implement comparable PDFs as under the Project. Given the decrease in floor area compared to the Project, this electricity and natural gas demand would be less than that of the Project, and energy impacts would be less than significant.

(ii) Alternative 3B

Due to the further reduction in floor area and associated population, a reduced demand for energy would occur under Alternative 3B as compared to Alternative 3A and the Project. Therefore, operational impacts would be less than significant and less than those of Alternative 3A and the Project.

(4) Solid Waste**(a) Construction****(i) Alternative 3A**

Construction activities under Alternative 3A would generate construction wastes that would be recycled or collected by private waste haulers contracted by the Applicant and taken for disposal at the County's inert landfills. Given the decreased level of construction compared to the Project, solid waste impacts would be less than those of the Project. Additionally, hazardous wastes would be conveyed to licensed treatment, disposal, and resource recovery facilities, as required, and plans are underway for the expansion of hazardous waste capacity in order to continue to meet statewide demand. Therefore, construction impacts with respect to landfill capacity and the disposal of hazardous waste would be less than significant.

(ii) Alternative 3B

Due to the further reduction in floor area and associated level of construction, reduced solid waste generation would occur under Alternative 3B as compared to Alternative 3A and the Project. Therefore, construction impacts would be less than significant and less than those of Alternative 3A and the Project.

(b) Operation**(i) Alternative 3A**

Operation of Alternative 3A would generate solid waste requiring disposal. Similar to the Project, the Project Applicant would incorporate compliance measures to address applicable solid waste regulations and diversion requirements under Alternative 3A. Given the decrease in floor area compared to the Project, this solid waste generation would be less than that of the Project. Additionally, substantial amounts of hazardous waste are not anticipated to be generated with any regularity under Alternative 3A. Moreover, the existing permitted Class I and II landfills in operation within southern and central California can accommodate household hazardous waste such as may be generated by this Alternative, and plans are underway for the expansion of hazardous waste capacity in order to continue to meet statewide demand. As such, solid waste impacts with respect to landfill capacity and the disposal of hazardous waste would be less than significant.

(ii) Alternative 3B

Due to the further reduction in floor area and associated population, a reduced level of solid waste generation would occur under Alternative 3B as compared to Alternative 3A

and the Project. Therefore, operational impacts would be less than significant and less than those of Alternative 3A and the Project.

3. RELATIONSHIP OF THE ALTERNATIVE TO PROJECT OBJECTIVES

Designed specifically to avoid or substantially lessen one or more of the Project's significant and unavoidable impacts, Alternative 3, the Reduced Density Alternative, includes the same land uses as the Project with a similar layout and design but reduces the total amount of development that would occur. However, this reduction in the amount of development would not allow for as wide a range of land uses as the Project, and, thus, Alternative 3 would not adequately meet the Project's underlying purpose to create a mixed-use community through infill development that is interconnected with the surrounding communities, respects the natural resources and features found on-site, and integrates land use, housing, and transportation considerations in furtherance of SB 375, the Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act of 2008. Additionally, this Alternative would not meet some of the specific objectives that support the Project's underlying purpose to the same extent as the Project, as summarized in **Table 6-7**, Alternative 3 Growth Relative to SCAG Forecasts (2014–2024), and discussed below.

In particular, Alternative 3 would not create as complete a mixed-use community as the Project since it would not allow for as broad a mix of residential housing types and resident-serving uses. Accordingly, Alternative 3 would not provide the same level of housing and employment opportunities to accommodate projected household growth in the Valley. Furthermore, with a reduction in development, Alternative 3 may not involve as wide a range of housing types, sizes, and styles to serve the needs of a growing and increasingly diverse population within the County and the Valley, nor would it provide as much commercial development to serve the needs of the local population and generate employment opportunities. The resulting low-density development would likely have a limited amount of mid-density housing types and may not allow for businesses with larger commercial space needs. . As such, Alternative 3 would not strike a balance between the density permitted by the Area Plan and demand for low and mid-density housing to the same extent as the Project. Similarly, Alternative 3 would not support and expand the Valley's economic base through employment opportunities and revenues from commercial and retail developments to the same degree as the Project. It also would not as effectively meet the Project objective to accommodate SCAG's projected regional growth for the Santa Clarita Valley Planning Area, which could create the potential for development in other areas unplanned for growth. This in turn could lead to leapfrog development, unnecessary infrastructure, and/or the undue use of open space and natural resources in other areas unplanned for such growth. As these specific Project objectives are largely dependent upon the amount of development constructed, any alternative with a reduced level of development would achieve them to a lesser degree than the Project. As such,

Alternative 3B would achieve these objectives to an even lesser extent than Alternative 3A and could ultimately be considered financially infeasible.

On the other hand, Alternative 3 would adequately meet certain other Project objectives. For example, the Alternative would integrate development and infrastructure with surrounding communities and help implement the vision of the Area Plan by developing uses consistent with the existing land use designations for the Project Site. In addition, Alternative 3 would comply with and carry out the resource conservation, management, and permitting responsibilities associated with the Newhall Ranch RMDP/SCP project. Furthermore, this Alternative would meet the Project objectives to provide an elementary school, public neighborhood park and private neighborhood recreation centers, a system of pedestrian and bicycle trails, and a circulation network with adequate access and connectivity.

Overall, Alternative 3 would fully meet several of the Project objectives but would not as adequately meet the majority of objectives or the Project's underlying purpose to the same extent as the Project. With its reduced amount of development, Alternative 3 also would result in a reduced level of impact with respect to many of the impact categories evaluated herein. Specifically, Alternative 3A would result in fewer or reduced impacts relative to views, aesthetics, light, glare, construction-related and operational air quality, GHG, hazardous materials (specifically related to transport along I-5), operational water quality, construction-related and operational noise, cumulative operational off-site traffic noise, population, housing, employment, fire protection, law enforcement, schools, parks, libraries, traffic, water, wastewater, energy, and solid waste. With regard to operational air quality, as shown above in **Table 6-7**, Alternative 3 Growth Relative to SCAG Forecasts (2014–2024), Alternative 3A would avoid the Project's significant impact with respect to $PM_{2.5}$. Similarly, due to the further reduction in development and associated building heights, density, and population, Alternative 3B would result in further reduced impacts with respect to each of these same impact categories. In addition, Alternative 3B would avoid the Project's significant impacts with respect to $PM_{2.5}$, PM_{10} , and CO.

It is noted, however, that given the reduction in growth compared to the Project, Alternative 3 would not reap the benefits of new housing and employment to the same degree as the Project. Furthermore, Alternative 3 would not meet the County's RHNA allocation to as great an extent as the Project.

6. PROJECT ALTERNATIVES

4. ALTERNATIVE 4: REDUCED DEVELOPMENT FOOTPRINT

1. DESCRIPTION OF THE ALTERNATIVE

In selecting a reasonable range of alternatives, consideration was given to potential development scenarios that would reduce the Project's development footprint in order to avoid environmentally sensitive areas, reduce impacts associated with grading and landform alteration, and/or reduce visual character impacts. While substantial avoidance of jurisdictional waters within the on-site tributary drainages was initially studied, such scenarios resulted in isolated pockets of development scattered throughout the Project Site that presented difficulties with respect to emergency access. Furthermore, several avoidance alternatives were previously evaluated as part of the Newhall Ranch RMDP/SCP EIS/EIR, as discussed above. Nonetheless, the defined Reduced Development Footprint Alternative would avoid certain areas where jurisdictional waters and/or special-status plants occur.

Accordingly, Alternative 4, the Reduced Development Footprint Alternative, would eliminate Project development south of B Drive, while maintaining a comparable number of residences and commercial floor area as the Project by redistributing the proposed uses across a reduced footprint within the Project Site, as shown in **Figure 6-1**, Alternative 4 Planning Areas and Proposed Uses, on page 6.0-106. Based on Planning Areas and infrastructure improvements similar to those of the Project, Alternative 4 would include 115 single-family residences, 1,459 multi-family residences, and 730,000 square feet of commercial uses. Although the amount of development under Alternative 4 would be similar to that of the Project, the overall density and height of new development under Alternative 4 would be different. Specifically, Alternative 4 would eliminate single-family Planning Areas 5 and 7 and provide a greater building density and taller building heights within multi-family Planning Areas 4 and 9 through 13 in order to maintain the same overall number of units as the Project. Building heights and density within the commercial areas of the site would be similar to those of the Project. In addition, similar to the Project, Alternative 4 includes a 9.4-acre elementary school, a 5.6-acre public neighborhood park, two private recreational centers totaling 2.9 acres, a 27.2-acre Spineflower Preserve, and 101.7 acres of open space areas.⁵⁶

⁵⁶ *Open space acreage refers to lots within the tract map designated as open space. Additional open space areas, such as natural drainage courses, roadway medians, and landscaped parkways adjacent to on-site roadways, in addition to the proposed park, recreation centers, and Spineflower Preserve, bring the total open space area to approximately 153 acres.*

Legend

- Single-Family Residences - 19.5 Acres
- Multi-Family Residences - 77.0 Acres
- Commercial - 47.2 Acres
- Drainage - 6.7 Acres
- Debris Basin - 0.6 Acres
- Water Quality Basin - 7.5 Acres
- Open Space - 170.6 Acres
- Recreation Center - 2.1 Acres
- Park - 5.6 Acres
- School Site - 9.4 Acres
- Public Road - 19.5 Acres
- Private Road - 16.6 Acres
- VTTM 53295

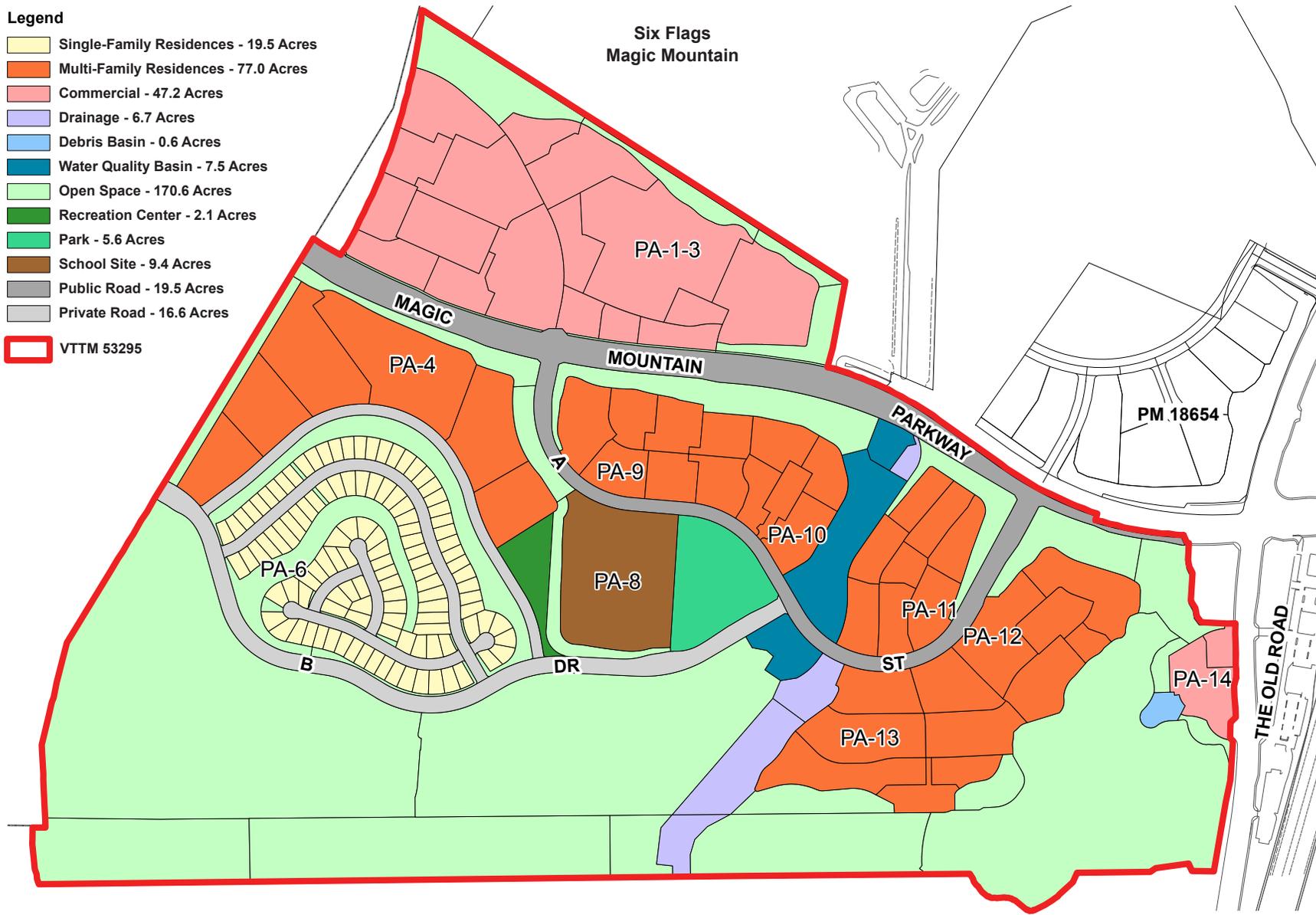


Figure 6-1
Alternative 4 Planning Areas and Proposed Land Uses

Source: Alliance Land Planning and Engineering and Hunsaker & Associates, Inc., 2014.

Site access and circulation under Alternative 4 would be largely similar to that of the Project. Magic Mountain Parkway and Westridge Parkway would be extended to provide regional access to and from the Project Site, with other circulation improvements, as shown in **Figure 3-15**, Project Circulation Plan, in **Section 3.0**, Project Description, of this Draft EIR, except for the private collector streets south of B Drive. Other on-site infrastructure improvements would include an internal network of trails and bike lanes, drainage and water quality improvements, dry utilities systems, a potable water system, a recycled water system, and a sanitary sewer system, similar to the Project. Refer to **Figure 3-14**, Project Trails Plan; **Figure 3-16**, Project Drainage and Water Quality Plan; **Figure 3-17**, Project Potable Water System; **Figure 3-18**, Project Recycled Water System; and **Figure 3-19**, Project Wastewater System, in **Section 3.0**, Project Description, for a depiction of the general infrastructure systems to be implemented.⁵⁷

The 27.2-acre Spineflower Preserve would be implemented on-site pursuant to the Spineflower Conservation Plan component of the Newhall Ranch RMDP/SCP project. The SCP has been funded and is currently being implemented, and the associated permits were issued contingent upon irrevocable conservation of spineflower habitat. In short, the Project Applicant is required to comply with and carry out the resource conservation, management, and permitting responsibilities associated with the Newhall Ranch RMDP/SCP project, including those within the Project Site.

As part of Alternative 4, substantial grading would be required to create level development pads, stabilize any slopes in areas of adverse geologic structure, and modify the tributary drainage courses to support proposed development and infrastructure, similar to the Project. However, due to the reduced development footprint and clustering of multi-family residential uses north of B Drive, the amount of grading required would be less than that of the Project. It is assumed that earthwork would result in a balanced cut and fill operation, similar to the Project. In addition, due to the similar amount of floor area, the overall duration of construction would be similar to the Project.

⁵⁷ *Note, however, that certain infrastructure system characteristics, such as pipeline sizes, would vary from the Project's due to the greater density of single-family development under Alternative 4. Additionally, no utility lines or trails would be developed south of B Drive (i.e., within Project Planning Areas 5 and 7).*

2. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

a. Aesthetics, Views, and Light and Glare

(1) Views

Alternative 4 would include taller residential building heights within a smaller footprint compared to the Project, which would change views of the Project Site. From certain off-site vantage points, such as the current terminus of Westridge Parkway and/or SR-126, panoramic views of the mountains to the distant north and south may be interrupted by new buildings, although such views are anticipated to remain available. Given the varied topography of the Project Site which prevents views of much of the site interior, the distance of the majority of Alternative 4 development from off-site locations, and the eastern hillsides that would remain undeveloped as part of the Spineflower Preserve, impacts to views would nonetheless be somewhat limited. In addition, although the Project Site interior would be visually altered, none of the existing visual features to be removed are considered unique. View impacts would be less than significant, and while impacts during construction would be generally similar, long-term impacts would be greater than those of the Project, primarily due to the increased residential building heights.

(2) Visual Character

(a) Construction

During construction of Alternative 4, the visual appearance of the Project Site would be altered due to grading, the removal of existing vegetation, the staging of construction equipment and materials, and the construction of foundations, new buildings, and parking lots. Some of these construction activities, particularly in locations near the site perimeter, would be visible to pedestrians and motorists on adjacent streets and may be visible from more distant vantage points. As construction activities would substantially affect the visual character on-site, a significant and unavoidable short-term aesthetic impact would result, similar to the Project.

(b) Operation

Implementation of Alternative 4 would permanently alter the Project Site through landform modification and the introduction of new development and infrastructure. However, similar to the Project, proposed development would be consistent in terms of land use and general design with surrounding development, although the scale of development (e.g., building heights) may be greater than existing uses in the area and thus present a degree of visual contrast. Nonetheless, Alternative 4 would feature high quality building materials, pedestrian-scaled buildings designed to activate the public realm, varied architecture to create visual interest, public and private open spaces that offer respite from

urban development, and street frontage improvements including substantial landscaping. In addition, the layout of development under Alternative 4 would create a logical transition in land use type and intensity. Similar to the Project, Alternative 4 is designed to respect many of the natural resources and features on-site, with grading that generally follows the natural topographic trends on-site, natural-looking improvements such as debris and water quality basins that incorporate vegetation or water features, and a major canyon (Unnamed Canyon 2) that would be restored as an open, vegetated drainage channel traversing VTTM 53295, thus providing visual relief within the residentially developed portions of the Project Site. Also under Alternative 4, at least two regulation-size oak trees scheduled for removal under the Project would be preserved, and a up to 154 new oak trees of 15-gallon size would be planted per the County's Oak Tree Ordinance and current County practices. Regardless, given the change in the Project Site's visual quality/character, impacts would be significant and unavoidable, and such impacts would be greater than the Project's due to the Alternative's increased building heights and density.

(3) Light

(a) Construction

Substantial lighting is not anticipated during construction within the Project Site, as most construction activities would occur during daylight hours. However, security lighting would be provided during non-construction hours. Therefore, construction impacts related to lighting would be less than significant with mitigation, similar to the Project's impacts.

(b) Operation

Nighttime sources of illumination would include post lights and building mounted fixtures in commercial and residential areas, lighted signs for wayfinding and building identification purposes, parking lot lighting, vehicle headlights, landscape lighting, and lighting for outdoor recreational activities at the school and park/recreational centers. Although lighting would be designed to ensure visibility and safety while minimizing light spillover and skyglow, given that the Project Site presently produces little or no light, the light levels generated by Alternative 4 would represent a noticeable change from existing conditions. Given the similar amount of development, Alternative 4 would involve a comparable number light fixtures as under the Project. Thus, lighting under Alternative 4 would result in impacts generally similar to those of the Project, which would be less than significant.

(4) Glare

(a) Construction

Any glare would be highly transitory and short-term, given the movement of construction equipment and materials within the construction area and the temporary nature of specific construction activities. Potential short-term glare impacts during construction of Alternative 4 would therefore be less than significant, similar to the Project.

(b) Operation

Building materials would likely include stucco, stone, wood, brick, terra cotta tiles, and glass, most of which would be non- or low-reflective. Overall, Alternative 4 would not cause glare that would substantially interfere with the performance of an off-site activity or sensitive uses or adversely affect day or nighttime views. Potential glare impacts during operation of Alternative 4 would therefore be less than significant, similar to the Project's impacts.

b. Agricultural and Forest Resources

Under Alternative 4, the existing 7.45 acres of pasture, including the 6.2 acres of Prime Farmland, would be removed and converted to non-agricultural uses, similar to the Project. In addition, implementation of Alternative 4 would involve development within much of the 365.3 acres of Grazing Land on-site, resulting in its conversion to other uses, although such areas would be impacted to a lesser extent than under the Project due to the smaller development footprint of Alternative 4. As no oak trees are actually located within mapped forest land on-site, Alternative 4 would not result in the removal or conversion of any designated forest land to non-forest uses. Impacts related to agricultural lands and forest land resources would be less than significant and reduced compared to the Project due to the smaller building footprint. As with the Project, the impacted Prime Farmland would be mitigated either in a stand-alone 6.2-acre conservation easement or as part of a greater 138-acre conservation easement. Therefore, similar to the Project, impacts on Prime Farmland would be less than significant with mitigation.

c. Air Quality

(1) Construction

Under Alternative 4, construction activities associated with development would be similar in scale to the Project due to the similar amount of floor area proposed. However, less earthwork would be involved, thus reducing emissions during grading. As with the Project, construction of Alternative 4 would generate pollutant emissions through the use of heavy-duty construction equipment and through vehicle trips generated from construction

workers traveling to and from the Project Site. The total construction emissions generated by Alternative 4 would be less than those of the Project due to the reduced earthwork (primarily fugitive dust emissions associated with grading activities would be reduced). However, peak daily impacts, which are used to measure significance, would be similar to the Project. As with the Project, implementation of regulatory compliance measures, PDFs, and mitigation measures would reduce construction emissions for all pollutants. Nonetheless, even with incorporation of all feasible mitigation measures, Alternative 4 would exceed the SCAQMD regional significance threshold for VOC and NO_x to a similar extent as the Project.

The intensity and duration of site grading would be similar under Alternative 4 compared to the Project. Despite the reduced earthwork required, maximum on-site daily emissions would be similar to the Project due to the similar equipment size and quantity. Therefore, localized construction-related impacts would be similar to the Project and therefore less than significant.

As with the Project, no notable impacts related to TAC emissions during construction are anticipated to occur for Alternative 4, and Alternative 4 is not anticipated to generate a substantial amount of objectionable odor emissions. As such, impacts related to TAC emissions and objectionable odors would be less than significant, similar to the Project's impacts.

According to SCAQMD, individual construction projects that exceed SCAQMD's recommended daily thresholds for project-specific impacts would cause a cumulatively considerable increase in emissions for those pollutants for which the Air Basin is in non-attainment. Consequently, Alternative 4 would have a significant cumulative impact due to construction-related regional emissions, and such impacts would be similar to the Project. Other cumulative air quality impacts would be less than significant and similar to the Project's impacts.

(2) Operation

The number of daily trips generated by Alternative 4 would be similar in comparison to the Project due to the similar amount of development (however, the trip generation would not be identical to that identified for the Project due to Alternative 4's unique allocation of single- and multi-family units). As vehicular emissions depend on the number of trips, vehicular sources would generate similar pollutant emissions as under the Project. Also with the similar square footage, both area sources and stationary sources would generate similar on-site operational pollutant emissions as the Project. Regional operational emissions under this Alternative therefore would be similar to the Project's, and regional operational air quality impacts would be significant and unavoidable.

Alternative 4 is forecasted to generate a similar number of operational trips (inbound + outbound) during the A.M. and P.M. peak hours as the Project. At buildout of the Project, the highest average daily trips at an intersection would be approximately 102,600 at the Bouquet & Newhall Ranch intersection, which is below the daily traffic volumes expected to generate CO exceedances, as evaluated in the 2003 AQMP. There is no reason unique to Air Basin meteorology to conclude that the CO concentrations at the Bouquet & Newhall Ranch intersection would exceed the 1-hour CO standard if modeled in detail, based on the studies undertaken for the 2003 AQMP. As Alternative 4 would generate a similar number of A.M. and P.M. peak-hour trips in comparison to the Project, the resultant change in local CO pollutant concentrations would be similar. As the localized CO hotspot analysis for the Project did not result in any significant impacts, Alternative 4 likewise would not have any localized impacts.

With respect to potential air toxics, Alternative 4 would be similar to the Project as it would not release substantial amounts of toxic contaminants, and impacts on human health would be less than significant. Alternative 4 would not include any uses identified by the SCAQMD as being associated with odors; thus, like the Project, odor impacts are not anticipated in conjunction with Alternative 4. Impacts would be less than significant and similar to the Project's.

According to SCAQMD, if an individual project results in air emissions of criteria pollutants that exceed SCAQMD's recommended daily thresholds for project-specific impacts, then the project would also result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of these criteria pollutants. Therefore, Alternative 4's regional operational emissions would be significant on a cumulative basis, and such impacts would be similar to the Project. Other cumulative air quality impacts would be less than significant and similar to the Project's impacts.

d. Biological Resources

Development under Alternative 4 would occur within a smaller footprint than the Project. As such, Alternative 4 would affect fewer areas where biological resources and sensitive habitats exist. Specifically, jurisdictional waters, special-status plants such as the slender mariposa lily, and oak trees occurring south of B Drive would be preserved. Six special-status plants have been documented on the Project Site during studies conducted between 2002 and 2013. Like the Project, Alternative 4 would include substantial open space, of which 27.2 acres would be established as a Spineflower Preserve. Also like the Project, appropriate mitigation would be required to address impacts on jurisdictional waters and special-status plants, and impacts would be less than significant with mitigation.

Alternative 4 would result in the loss of fewer acres of the vegetation communities and other land covers on the Project Site. While related impacts would be reduced, like the Project, impacts would be less than significant with mitigation.

Relative to critical habitat, Alternative 4 would result in temporary impacts to 0.0005 acre of disturbed land within arroyo toad critical habitat and direct impacts to 6.1 acres of federally designated critical habitat for least Bell's vireo, as these habitats are located in the northern portion of the Project Site. However, impacts would be less than significant, similar to the Project.

e. Cultural and Paleontological Resources

Only one historic resource is located within the Project Site (i.e., Site No. 19-000961, which is the original Newhall Ranch headquarters). However, no subsurface remains associated with Site No. 19-000961 or any other existing archaeological remains were found within the Project Site. In addition, no known paleontological resources are located within the Project Site, although several of the rock units underlying the site include formations with moderate to high paleontological sensitivity. Under Alternative 4, the existing uses on-site would be removed, and substantial grading would occur, albeit to a lesser extent than under the Project. Nonetheless, like the Project, grading and excavation under this Alternative could potentially affect archaeological resources, paleontological resources, and/or human remains. While impacts would be reduced due to the reduction in disturbed area, impacts to cultural and paleontological resources would be less than significant with mitigation under Alternative 4, similar to the Project.

f. Geology and Soils

The Project Site does not contain any known active faults and is not within an Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone. No evidence of active faulting or ground rupture has been identified within the Project Site. As such, similar to the Project, the probability of ground rupture due to active faulting on-site during the design life of Alternative 4 is considered to be very low to non-existent. Thus, fault rupture impacts would be less than significant and similar to those of the Project.

Despite the smaller footprint under Alternative 4, development would be subject to a similar degree of seismic hazard risks and geological considerations as the Project. As with any new development in the State of California, building design and construction would be required to conform to the current seismic design provisions of the California Building Code. In addition, construction of Alternative 4 would adhere to the requirements contained in the County Building Codes, as well as all engineering recommendations set forth in appropriate Geotechnical Reports, including grading plan specifications. Therefore, as with the Project, impacts related to the rupture of a known earthquake fault, strong

seismic ground shaking, soil erosion, expansive soil, hillside requirements, and grading under Alternative 4 would be less than significant. In addition, similar to the Project, impacts related to seismic related ground failure, landslides, slope stability, hydrocompaction, and location of a sensitive use in close proximity to a significant geotechnical hazard under Alternative 4 would be reduced to a less-than-significant level with mitigation.

With respect to hillside grading, the Project Site contains distinct and prominent topographic features, including four canyons. Some of the earthwork activity under the Project, which would occur within hillside areas of the Project Site, would be avoided under Alternative 4. As with the Project, areas with natural slopes are anticipated to remain, particularly throughout the southern portion of the Project Site. All earthwork activities would occur in accordance with County requirements, as specified in the County Building Code and through the grading plan review and approval process. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant and reduced compared to the Project.

g. Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Similar to the Project, Alternative 4 is premised upon sustainability principles, including an appropriate mix of land uses, job generation, design principles to reduce vehicle miles traveled and commuting distances, access to transit, the provision of open space and recreational amenities, trail connectivity, the preservation of natural areas, water and energy conservation, efficient interior climate control, and the incorporation of green building techniques, thereby contributing to the reduction of GHG emissions. Alternative 4 would be expected to incorporate several transportation-related GHG reduction strategies and numerous project design features to reduce GHG emissions.

GHG emissions are determined mainly by daily trips generated and energy consumption from proposed land uses. As this Alternative would involve a similar amount of floor area and generate a similar number of vehicle trips as the Project, GHG emissions also would be similar. Like the Project, Alternative 4 would incorporate PDFs as well as other attributes and regulatory initiatives that would represent a break from “business-as-usual” and support efforts to return the State to its 1990 emissions level in accordance with AB 32. Thus, GHG impacts under Alternative 4 would be similar to the Project and less than significant.

h. Hazards and Hazardous Materials

(1) Construction

Similar to the Project, despite compliance with manufacturers’ instructions and applicable standards and regulations, the use, handling, storage, transport, and disposal of

potentially hazardous materials during construction of Alternative 4 could increase the potential for accidental releases and, subsequently, the exposure of people and the environment to hazardous materials. Also like the Project, all existing ASTs located within the grading footprint of Alternative 4 would be properly abandoned and removed in accordance with applicable laws and regulations. However, soil under the existing ASTs may be contaminated with petroleum hydrocarbons or other constituents. Such conditions represent potentially significant impacts, and appropriate mitigation would reduce such impacts to a less-than-significant level.

Portions of the Project Site were formerly used for oil production, and 19 possible former oil well sites exist on-site. In addition, several former sumps, two oil field production tank batteries, and one area of possible land filling exist on the Project Site. As with the Project, any former oil wells and unknown ("wildcat") wells located in an area of the Project Site to be disturbed or developed would be investigated and re-abandoned, as necessary, according to applicable state and local regulations, including DOGGR requirements. Additionally, visibly impacted soils would be treated and/or removed and disposed of in accordance with federal, state, regional, and local regulations under Alternative 4. As mitigation, a Soil Management Plan would be implemented on-site, as well as a Remedial Action Plan to address any previously unidentified features or materials that could present a threat to human health or the environment. Therefore, similar to the Project, impacts related to upset or accident conditions or other potential health risks would be less than significant with mitigation.

Asbestos-containing materials and lead-based paint may be present within the existing structures on-site. In addition, PCBs may be present within electrical transformers on-site. If present and disturbed during the demolition phase of construction, these materials would pose a threat to human health which would be a significant impact. As well, if previously undiscovered septic tank systems are encountered during Project grading, an accidental release could occur. Mitigation would reduce such impacts to a less-than-significant level, similar to the Project. Further, proposed structures would incorporate new, commercially sold building materials that do not include asbestos-containing materials or lead-based paint, as well as modern electrical facilities and fixtures that longer contain PCBs. Thus, impacts related to new development would be less than significant, similar to the Project. As any existing occurrences of mold would be removed during construction, like the Project, impacts would be less than significant.

Pyrotechnic debris was observed within a fireworks storage area used by Six Flags Magic Mountain located on-site and represents a potential health risk which would be a significant impact. Additionally, soils contaminated with pesticides and herbicides, if present, could be encountered during construction. Implementation of mitigation would

reduce these impacts, as well as any residual soil contamination from other past uses, to a less-than-significant level.

Potential health risks also may be associated with other existing facilities on-site, including Southern California Edison's high voltage electric transmission lines and towers, SoCalGas's high pressure gas transmission pipeline and other gas lines, and groundwater monitoring wells or other water wells. As with the Project, Alternative 4 would not include any structures within the Edison or SoCalGas easements along the southern boundary of the Project Site, and the proposed school would comply with state siting requirements related to high voltage transmission lines. As such, similar to the Project, impacts associated with other potential health risks would be less than significant.

With respect to an emergency response plan, Alternative 4 would include a construction traffic management plan to ensure adequate emergency access to all nearby residences and businesses and minimize traffic interference and construction vehicle travel on congested streets, similar to the Project. Therefore, as with the Project, impacts would be less than significant.

Despite a reduced development footprint and associated grading volumes, each of the impacts discussed above would be roughly equivalent to those of the Project. All such impacts would be less than significant with mitigation.

(2) Operation

Similar to the Project, Alternative 4 would involve the limited use of potentially hazardous materials typical of those used in residential and commercial developments, schools, and parks. However, all hazardous materials within the Project Site would be acquired, handled, used, stored, transported, and disposed of in accordance with manufacturers' instructions and in compliance with all applicable federal, state, regional, and local requirements. Similarly, any minor hazardous wastes would be conveyed to licensed treatment, disposal, and resource recovery facilities, as required, and/or would be collected and handled as part of the County's household hazardous waste management program. Additionally, neither hazardous emissions nor dangerous fire hazards are anticipated in conjunction with operations. All roadways and associated improvements within the Project Site would be constructed in substantial conformance with the County's requirements, including Fire Code requirements. Further, the Alternative would include an emergency response plan per regulatory requirements, as approved by the Fire Department, which would facilitate emergency response and evacuation of the Project Site in the event of a hazardous materials release. Thus, similar to the Project, impacts during operation would not create a significant hazard, and impacts would be less than significant. Such impacts would be similar to those of the Project. In addition, based on similar traffic

volumes as the Project, impacts related to the release of hazardous materials or waste into the environment from the transport of hazardous materials along I-5 would be less than significant and similar to the Project's.

i. Hydrology and Water Quality

(1) Hydrology

(a) Construction

The primary hydrological concern during construction of Alternative 4 would be potential erosion and sedimentation impacts during site clearing and grading, the extent of which would be somewhat less than that of the Project due to the reduced development footprint and grading volumes. Increases in sedimentation and debris production would be temporary and limited through implementation of construction BMPs. Furthermore, site grading would occur in compliance with Public Works standards, and all slopes would be graded, compacted, and stabilized such that they would not be subject to mudflow hazard. Similar to the Project, construction impacts would be less than significant with compliance with applicable regulatory requirements and implementation of appropriate BMPs. Such impacts would be reduced compared to the Project.

(b) Operation

Implementation of Alternative 4 would increase the impervious surface area within the Project Site due to new roads, buildings, paved parking areas, and other relatively impermeable or impervious features. The introduction of impervious surfaces would increase the amount of clear flow runoff from and through the site due to the associated reduction in infiltration, while burned/bulked runoff and debris flow rates would be reduced since the developed portions of the site would be covered with impervious surfaces and non-erodible vegetation and due to the introduction of debris basins. Like the Project, the on-site drainage system would be designed to contain and convey flows associated with the County's 50-year capital storm event in accordance with Public Works requirements. As new development under Alternative 4 would occur within a footprint smaller than the Project's, additional areas would remain in their natural condition and may require additional basins to capture debris flows. As with the Project, Alternative 4 would not substantially alter the overall existing drainage patterns within and surrounding the Project Site, substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner that would result in flooding on- or off-site, create or contribute runoff that exceeds the capacity of existing or planned drainage systems, or create drainage system capacity problems. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant with compliance with applicable regulatory requirements and implementation of appropriate BMPs. Such impacts would be generally similar to those of the Project.

(2) Water Quality

(a) Construction

Construction activities under Alternative 4 would include vegetation removal, grading, and trenching for infrastructure improvements, which can release sediment and expose previously stabilized soils to mobilization by rainfall/runoff and wind. However, like the Project, construction impacts would be minimized through compliance with the NPDES Construction General Permit and the waste discharge requirements in the General Dewatering Permit. In particular, erosion and sediment transport, as well as the transport of other potential pollutants from the Project Site during construction, would be reduced or prevented through implementation of appropriate BMPs specified in a SWPPP. Additionally, if construction dewatering is required, BMPs would be implemented to protect receiving waters from dewatering and construction-related non-stormwater discharges, similar to the Project. As such, construction-related water quality impacts would be less than significant with regulatory compliance. Impacts would be less than those of the Project due to the reduced development footprint and grading volumes.

(b) Operation

Mean annual runoff volumes are expected to increase as a result of Alternative 4 due to the increase in impervious area associated with development of the site, as well as the decrease in the infiltration capacity of existing site soils associated with compaction during construction. However, runoff volumes would be reduced compared to the Project due to the smaller development footprint, resulting in a reduced impervious surface area. In any case, as with the Project, implementation of LID BMPs would provide substantial runoff volume reduction via infiltration and evapotranspiration and would provide hydromodification source control, as well as stormwater treatment. On this basis, water quality impacts related to stormwater runoff volumes associated with Project implementation would be less than significant and reduced compared to the Project due to the smaller footprint.

As it relates to specific pollutants, most water quality impacts associated with this Alternative would be similar to those of the Project due to the similar types of uses to be introduced, the similar amount of development, and compliance with regulatory requirements. Specifically, like the Project, implementation of appropriate BMPs and source and treatment controls would reduce sediment loads, pathogens (e.g., pet wastes), trash and debris, and toxicity levels in stormwater runoff, and such impacts would be less than significant. Additionally, like the Project, stormwater discharges from the Project Site under Alternative 4 are not expected to increase the in-stream concentration of nutrients, metals, chloride, or pesticides, and related impacts would be less than significant. Petroleum hydrocarbon concentrations would likely be greater under Alternative 4

compared to the Project given increased vehicular emissions associated with increased vehicle trips. However, source control BMPs incorporated in compliance with the MS4 Permit and SUSMP requirements would minimize the presence of hydrocarbons in runoff, and, like the Project, water quality impacts related to petroleum hydrocarbons would be less than significant.

With respect to groundwater quality, treated effluent from the Valencia WRP would be used to supply recycled water to the Project Site for landscape irrigation and other approved uses. As the effluent limitations specified in the Valencia WRP's NPDES Permit are below relevant groundwater quality objectives, under Alternative 4 impacts on groundwater quality would be less than significant, similar to the Project. Additionally, dry weather discharge to the Santa Clara River is not expected to occur under Alternative 4, and, like the Project, impacts would be less than significant.

Finally, relative to hydromodification, the County MS4 Permit exempts from hydromodification control requirements projects that discharge directly or via a storm drain into the River. Nevertheless, like the Project, this Alternative's site design and LID BMPs would minimize increases in runoff volume from the developed area, which is the preferred method for controlling hydromodification impacts from new development. Therefore, similar to the Project, hydromodification impacts on the River would be less than significant.

j. Land Use and Planning

(1) Land Use Consistency

Similar to the Project, Alternative 4 would involve land uses consistent with the site's existing land use designations established by the Area Plan, with a similar amount of development. The Alternative also would require the same discretionary approvals as the Project, including a vesting tentative tract map, zone change, CUP, oak tree permit, and parking permit, along with a number of approvals by and/or permits from various local, regional, state, and federal agencies. In general, given its similarity, like the Project, Alternative 4 would be consistent with the overall regulatory framework regarding land use, including the County's adopted General Plan, Area Plan, Planning and Zoning Code, Hillside Management Area Ordinance, and Green Building Standards Code, as well as SCAG's 2012–2035 RTP/SCS, Growth Vision Report, and RCP; SCAQMD's AQMP; and Metro's 2010 CMP for Los Angeles County. As such, impacts relative to consistency with land use plans, policies, and regulations would be less than significant. Such impacts would be generally equivalent to those of the Project.

(2) Land Use Compatibility

As Alternative 4 would develop the same types of uses as the Project with a similar design and layout (with the exception of the area south of B Drive, which would remain undeveloped), the Alternative would be generally compatible with the surrounding uses and would not interfere with activities on adjacent properties. The greater density and building heights of development under Alternative 4, however, may present some contrast with existing and planned uses in the surrounding area. Implementation of Alternative 4 would not physically divide an established community since the Project Site is currently vacant and the adjacent communities (e.g., Westridge and Mission Village) are distinct and largely self-contained. Therefore, Alternative 4 would not substantially or adversely change the relationships between the land uses or properties in surrounding neighborhoods or communities, nor would it have the long-term effect of adversely altering a neighborhood or community through ongoing disruption, division, or isolation. Impacts regarding compatibility with surrounding uses would therefore be less than significant and similar to those of the Project.

k. Mineral Resources

The Project Site does not include any active mineral extraction operations, and all of the former oil and gas wells on-site have been abandoned. Moreover, as with the Project, ongoing oil and gas extraction activities within the surrounding area would not be hindered by development of Alternative 4. Therefore, Project implementation would not result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource of value, nor would it result in the loss of availability of a locally-important mineral resource recovery site. Similar to the Project, impacts with respect to mineral resources would be less than significant.

l. Noise

(1) Construction

Under Alternative 4, the overall amount of new construction would be similar to that of the Project although the amount of earthwork would be reduced. The estimated construction noise levels for various construction stages at the off-site noise sensitive receptors, which represent a worst-case scenario in which all construction equipment is assumed to operate simultaneously at the construction area nearest to the affected receptors, is used to measure significance and would be similar to the Project under Alternative 4 as the equipment size and quantity would be similar. As with the Project, construction activities under Alternative 4 could exceed the County Noise Ordinance standards for an extended period of time at on- and off-site residential uses during Project construction. However, Alternative 4 would not involve development south of B Drive and thus would cluster development further away from existing receptor R3. As such, construction activities under Alternative 4 would result in reduced impacts at existing

receptor R3 as compared to the Project. Nonetheless, noise impacts associated with Alternative 4 construction activities affecting on- and off-site sensitive uses would be significant and unavoidable, although reduced compared to the Project. Similarly, cumulative construction noise impacts would be significant and unavoidable, although reduced compared to the Project.

(2) Operation

Alternative 4 involves a similar land use mix and floor area as the Project, which would result in a similar number of vehicle trips during operations. Therefore, operational noise impacts under Alternative 4 would be similar to those of the Project and thus less than significant with mitigation. In addition, similar to the Project, the cumulative operational off-site noise impact associated with mobile sources (i.e., along Westridge Parkway north of Valencia Boulevard) would be significant and unavoidable under Alternative 4. This impact would occur since construction of a noise barrier wall along the adjacent sensitive uses would interfere with property access.

m. Population, Housing, and Employment

(1) Population

Given the similar land use mix and amount of development as the Project, Alternative 4 would result in a similar residential population on the Project Site. In addition, due to the similar amount of commercial floor area, Alternative 4 would result in the same indirect population growth as a result of the employment positions created on-site. As such, buildout of Alternative 4 would represent a similar percentage of SCAG's population forecasts for 2024 and population growth forecasts between 2014 and 2024 as the Project. Specifically, as detailed in **Table 6-8**, Alternative 4 Growth Relative to SCAG Forecasts (2014–2024), on page 6.0-122, with respect to the SCAG region projections, buildout of Alternative 4 would represent approximately 0.03 percent of the total forecasted population in 2024 and approximately 0.35 percent of population growth between 2014 and 2024. In the unincorporated County, Alternative 4 would represent approximately 0.43 percent of the total forecasted population in 2024 and approximately 4.51 percent of population growth between 2014 and 2024. Alternative 4 would also make up 1.58 percent of the total residential population in the Valley in 2024, or 9.81 percent of projected growth from 2014 to 2024. Thus, like the Project, Alternative 4's population would fall within the forecasts for the various studied geographies, and Alternative 4 would not cause growth (i.e., new population) that exceeds projected/planned levels for the Project buildout year. Impacts with respect to population would be less than significant and similar to the Project.

**Table 6-8
Alternative 4 Growth Relative to SCAG Forecasts (2014–2024)**

Forecast	Population	Households	Employment
SCAG Region-Wide Forecast			
Year 2024 ^a	20,310,467	6,689,200	8,687,867
2014–2024 Growth ^{a,b}	1,531,467	553,200	611,867
Alternative 4 ^c	5,288	1,574	2,679
Alternative 4 % of Area Forecast	0.03	0.02	0.03
Alternative 4 % of Area Growth	0.35	0.28	0.44
Unincorporated County of L.A. Forecast			
Year 2024 ^a	1,223,207	354,614	279,967
2014–2024 Growth ^{a,b}	117,257	37,509	28,417
Alternative 4 ^c	5,288	1,574	2,679
Alternative 4 % of Area Forecast	0.43	0.44	0.96
Alternative 4 % of Area Growth	4.51	4.20	9.43
Santa Clarita Valley Forecast			
Year 2024 ^d	335,152	113,539	144,797
2014–2024 Growth ^{d,e}	53,878	22,170	16,398
Alternative 4 ^c	5,288	1,574	2,679
Alternative 4 % of Area Forecast	1.58	1.39	1.85
Alternative 4 % of Area Growth	9.81	7.10	16.34
<p>^a Year 2024 forecast based on a straight-line interpolation from 2020 to 2035 forecast values in the SCAG regional growth forecast adopted for the 2012–2035 RTP/SCS; see Table 5.14-1, SCAG Forecast for the SCAG Region and Unincorporated County (2008–2035) Alternative 2 Growth Relative to SCAG Forecasts (2014–2024), provided in Section 5.14, Population, Housing, and Employment, of this Draft EIR.</p> <p>^b Year 2014 forecast based on a straight-line interpolation from 2008 to 2020 values in the SCAG regional growth forecast adopted for the 2012–2035 RTP/SCS; see Table 5.14-1, SCAG Forecast for the SCAG Region and Unincorporated County (2008–2035) Alternative 2 Growth Relative to SCAG Forecasts (2014–2024), provided in Section 5.14, Population, Housing, and Employment, of this Draft EIR.</p> <p>^c Alternative 4 population assumes average household size of 3.36 persons per unit, based on average household size for owner- and renter-occupied units within Census Tract 9203.38 (Stevenson Ranch) per 2010 U.S. Census data. Alternative 4 employment assumes same non-residential land use mix as Project (i.e., 59.6 percent office, 40.4 percent commercial retail, plus school and park uses) and same employment generation factors.</p> <p>^d Year 2024 forecast based on a straight-line interpolation from 2020 to 2035 values in the SCAG regional growth forecasts for the Traffic Analysis Zones (TAZs) located within the Valley. For those TAZs located partially within and partially outside the Valley, an area-weighted approach was used to approximate growth within the Valley boundaries. See Table 5.14-1, SCAG Forecast for the SCAG Region and Unincorporated County (2008–2035) Alternative 2 Growth Relative to SCAG Forecasts (2014–2024), provided in Section 5.14, Population, Housing, and Employment, of this Draft EIR.</p> <p>^e Year 2014 forecast based on a straight-line interpolation from 2008 to 2020 values in the SCAG regional growth forecasts for TAZs; see Table 5.14-1, SCAG Forecast for the SCAG Region and Unincorporated County (2008–2035) Alternative 2 Growth Relative to SCAG Forecasts (2014–2024), provided in Section 5.14, Population, Housing, and Employment, of this Draft EIR.</p> <p>Source: SCAG 2012–2035 RTP/SCS (http://scag.ca.gov/documents/2012adoptedgrowthforecastpdf.pdf) and Eyestone Environmental, 2014.</p>			

(2) Housing

Alternative 4 would result in the same number of housing units on the Project Site as the Project. As such, buildout of Alternative 4 would represent a similar percentage of SCAG's household forecasts for 2024 and household growth forecasts between 2014 and 2024. Specifically, as detailed in **Table 6-8**, Alternative 4 Growth Relative to SCAG Forecasts (2014–2024), for the SCAG region, Alternative 4 would represent approximately 0.02 percent of the total household forecast in 2024 and approximately 0.28 percent of household growth between 2014 and 2024. In the unincorporated County, Alternative 4 would represent approximately 0.44 percent of the household forecast and approximately 4.20 percent of household growth between 2014 and 2024. Relative to the Valley, Alternative 4's housing would make up 1.39 percent of total households and 7.10 percent of projected household growth from 2014 to 2024. Similar to the Project, Alternative 4's housing would fall within the forecasts for the various studied geographies, and the Alternative would not cause growth (i.e., new households) that exceeds projected/planned levels for the Project buildout year. Furthermore, Alternative 4 would help meet the County's RHNA allocation to the same degree as the Project. Therefore, impacts with respect to housing would be less than significant and similar to the Project.

(3) Employment

(a) Construction

Alternative 4 would provide a public benefit by providing new direct and indirect employment opportunities during the construction period. Short-term employment impacts would be the same as under the Project and less than significant.

(b) Operation

Given the same commercial floor area, Alternative 4 would result in the same number of on-site jobs as the Project. As such, buildout of Alternative 4 would represent the same the percentage of SCAG's employment forecasts for 2024 and employment growth forecasts between 2014 and 2024. Specifically, as detailed in **Table 6-8**, Alternative 4 Growth Relative to SCAG Forecasts (2014–2024), for the SCAG region, buildout of Alternative 4 would represent approximately 0.03 percent of the total employment forecast in 2024 and approximately 0.44 percent of employment growth between 2014 and 2024. In the unincorporated County, Alternative 4 would represent approximately 0.96 percent of the employment forecast and approximately 9.43 percent of employment growth between 2014 and 2024. With respect to the Valley, Alternative 4's employees would make up 1.85 percent of total employment and 16.34 percent of projected employment growth from 2014 to 2024. Thus, similar to the Project, employment under Alternative 4 would fall within the forecasts for the various studied geographies, and Alternative 4 would not cause growth (i.e., new employment) that exceeds projected/

planned levels for the buildout year. The jobs/housing ratio under Alternative 4 would be 1.70, which is the same as the Project and above the Area Plan goal of at least 1.5 jobs per household. Therefore, impacts with respect to employment would be less than significant and similar to the Project.

n. Public Services

(1) Fire Protection

(a) Construction

The demand for fire protection and emergency medical services may be increased during construction, as construction activities could potentially expose combustible materials to sources of ignition. However, like the Project, Alternative 4's electrical, plumbing, communications, and ventilation systems would be properly installed in each structure. With compliance with relevant building, safety, and fire codes, impacts would be less than significant and similar to the Project due to the similar amount of construction activities under Alternative 4.

In addition, construction activities would result in increased traffic on nearby roadways during working hours in association with commuting construction workers, delivery trucks, and other large construction vehicles. Construction-related traffic could reduce optimal traffic flows and potentially delay emergency vehicles traveling through the area. Further, temporary lane closures associated with utility line construction or roadway improvements could slow or impede emergency access. Like the Project, Alternative 4 would include a construction traffic management plan to ensure adequate emergency access to all nearby residences and businesses and minimize traffic interference and construction vehicle travel on congested streets. Therefore, impacts to emergency access would be less than significant and similar to the Project due to the similar amount of construction-related traffic.

(b) Operation

Alternative 4 would increase the demand for fire protection and emergency medical services to a similar extent as the Project due to the similar amount of floor area and associated population. As with the Project, under Alternative 4, the Project Applicant would comply with applicable regulatory requirements, including fire flow requirements, implement appropriate PDFs, and pay the Fire Facility Fee to help fund fire station improvements, as needed. Traffic generated by Alternative 4, which would be comparable to the Project, could potentially affect emergency response; however, this Alternative would not substantially impact response times or emergency vehicle access, particularly given that

significant traffic impacts would not occur. As such, impacts would be less than significant and similar to the Project's impacts.

Given that the Project Site has been designated as a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone, Alternative 4 would comply with all applicable County Fire Code requirements as well as other relevant fire safety regulations set forth by the County, including implementation of a Fuel Modification Plan, which would minimize wildfire hazards and associated impacts, similar to the Project. Routine landscape maintenance would be conducted in accordance with the Fire Department's Fuel Modification Plan Guidelines. Therefore, similar to the Project, impacts with respect to development within a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone would be less than significant.

(2) Sheriff Protection

(a) Construction

Construction-related traffic could reduce optimal traffic flows and potentially delay emergency vehicles traveling through the area. In addition, temporary lane closures associated with utility line construction or roadway improvements could slow or impede emergency access. Like the Project, Alternative 4 would include a construction traffic management plan to ensure adequate emergency access to all nearby residences and businesses and minimize traffic interference and construction vehicle travel on congested streets. Therefore, impacts to emergency access would be less than significant and similar to the Project due to the similar amount of construction-related traffic.

(b) Operation

Alternative 4 would increase the demand for law enforcement services to the same extent as the Project due to the similar amount of floor area and associated population. However, this Alternative would be expected to incorporate security features similar to the Project's. Moreover, like the Project, this Alternative would be expected to implement comparable PDFs and comply with regulatory requirements, including payment of the applicable Law Enforcement Facilities Fee, which is intended to provide sufficient revenues to pay for land acquisition, engineering, construction, installation, purchasing, and other costs for the provision of capital law enforcement facilities and equipment. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant and similar to the Project.

(3) Schools

Alternative 4 would increase the number of students attending the schools that serve the Project Site to the same extent as the Project due to the similar amount of floor area and associated population. Similar to the Project, Alternative 4 includes the construction of

a new 9.4-acre elementary school within the Project Site that would provide additional capacity within the Saugus District. In addition, as with the Project, compliance with the Agreements with the Saugus District Newhall District, and Hart District would offset potential impacts to existing educational facilities. Therefore, impacts to schools would be less than significant and similar to those of the Project.

(4) Parks and Recreation

Alternative 4 would increase the demand for parks and recreational facilities in the Project area to the same extent as the Project due to the similar amount of floor area and associated population. Like the Project, Alternative 4 includes a 5.6-acre public neighborhood park, two private recreational centers on 2.9 acres, and smaller recreation areas. In addition, under Alternative 4, the Project Applicant would comply with the County's Parkland Dedication Ordinance via the provision of public park space with amenities equal to or greater in value than the established in-lieu park fee, or, should the amenities not meet the in-lieu fee requirement, payment of the appropriate fee. As such, impacts to parks and recreation would be less than significant, similar to the Project.

(5) Libraries

Alternative 4 would increase the demand for library services at the Castaic Library and potentially other nearby libraries to the same extent as the Project due to the similar amount of floor area and associated population. As with the Project, with implementation of the Alternative, the Castaic Library would not meet the County Library's service level guidelines with respect to facility size. However, under Alternative 4, the Project Applicant would pay the applicable Library Facilities Mitigation Fee, the purpose of which is "to mitigate any significant adverse impacts of increased residential development upon public library facilities as required by" CEQA. Therefore, impacts to libraries would be less than significant, similar to the Project's impacts.

o. Transportation/Traffic

(a) Construction

Construction activities associated with Alternative 4 would generate traffic related to construction worker trips and truck trips for the delivery of construction materials. Given the similar amount of floor area under Alternative 4, such trips would be similar to those associated with the Project. As such, construction traffic impacts would be less than significant and similar to those of the Project.

(b) Operation

Given the similar land use mix and amount of development, buildout of Alternative 4 would result in a similar number of trips as the Project. (The trip generation would not be identical to that identified for the Project due to Alternative 4's unique allocation of single- and multi-family units.) As such, this Alternative would result in similar traffic impacts to local intersections and freeway segments, including CMP intersections and freeway segments, as compared to the Project. Accordingly, these impacts would be less than significant with mitigation. In addition, impacts relative to parking would be similar to the Project, as sufficient parking would be provided in accordance with regulatory requirements. Parking impacts would be less than significant.

p. Utilities and Service Systems**(1) Water Supply and Service*****(a) Construction***

A short-term demand for water would occur during construction of Alternative 4, primarily in association with dust control, concrete mixing, cleaning of equipment, and other related construction activities. Given the similar level of construction compared to the Project, such demand would be similar to that of the Project and impacts would be less than significant.

(b) Operation

Operation of Alternative 4 would result the demand for potable and recycled water. Like the Project, Alternative 4 would involve the construction of a potable water system and a recycled water system. Given the similar amount of floor area and associated population, this demand would be similar to that of the Project and impacts would be less than significant. In addition, the on-site potable water system would be designed to provide sufficient capacity, pressure, and other design specifications to meet this Alternative's fire flows required by the Fire Department. Furthermore, Alternative 4's off-site infrastructure water-related improvements would be designed in accordance with the County Code, including the Fire Code, and would be constructed under the oversight of Public Works, VWC, and the Fire Department. Therefore, similar to the Project, impacts associated with water supply and fire flow would be less than significant.

(2) Wastewater Disposal

(a) Construction

Construction activities under Alternative 4 would result in a temporary increase in wastewater generation as a result of construction workers on-site. Given the similar level of construction under Alternative 4 compared to the Project, impacts to wastewater generation would be less than significant and similar to those of the Project.

(b) Operation

Operation of Alternative 4 is anticipated to increase the amount of wastewater contributed to the local wastewater stream. As with the Project, the Project Applicant would be required to obtain verification from the County Sanitation Districts that sufficient treatment capacity is available for development under Alternative 4. Additionally, payment of the applicable fees for wastewater connections and services would serve to provide future conveyance, treatment, and disposal facilities (capital facilities), as needed, to adequately accommodate future development. Given the similar amount of floor area and associated population compared to the Project, wastewater generation would likewise be similar, and impacts would be less than significant.

(3) Energy

(a) Construction

Construction activities under Alternative 4 would require electricity to serve construction trailers, power tools, tool sheds, work and storage areas, and other facilities associated with development activities. Given the similar level of construction compared to the Project, impacts to electricity would be less than significant and similar to those of the Project.

(b) Operation

Operation of Alternative 4 would increase demand for electricity and natural gas. Similar to the Project, Alternative 4 would incorporate compliance measures to address applicable energy requirements. Specifically, the proposed buildings would comply with Title 24 standards, and the Applicant would implement green building design and construction practices in compliance with the County's Green Building Ordinance. The Applicant also would be expected to implement comparable PDFs as under the Project. Given the similar amount of floor area as the Project, electricity and natural gas demand under this Alternative would be similar to that of the Project, and impacts would be less than significant.

(4) Solid Waste

(a) Construction

Construction activities under Alternative 4 would generate construction wastes that would be recycled or collected by private waste haulers contracted by the Applicant and taken for disposal at the County's inert landfills. Given the similar level of construction compared to the Project, solid waste generation would be similar to that of the Project. Additionally, hazardous wastes would be conveyed to licensed treatment, disposal, and resource recovery facilities, as required, and plans are underway for the expansion of hazardous waste capacity in order to continue to meet statewide demand. Therefore, construction impacts with respect to landfill capacity and the disposal of hazardous waste would be less than significant and similar to the Project's impacts.

(b) Operation

Operation of Alternative 4 would generate solid waste requiring disposal. Similar to the Project, the Project Applicant would incorporate compliance measures to address applicable solid waste regulations and diversion requirements under Alternative 4. Given the similar amount of floor area as the Project, solid waste generation would be similar to that of the Project. Additionally, substantial amounts of hazardous waste are not anticipated to be generated with any regularity under Alternative 4. Moreover, the existing permitted Class I and II landfills in operation within southern and central California can accommodate household hazardous waste such as may be generated by this Alternative, and plans are underway for the expansion of hazardous waste capacity in order to continue to meet statewide demand. As such, solid waste impacts with respect to landfill capacity and the disposal of hazardous waste would be less than significant, similar to the Project's impacts.

3. RELATIONSHIP OF THE ALTERNATIVE TO PROJECT OBJECTIVES

Designed to reduce the Project's development footprint in order to avoid environmentally sensitive areas, reduce impacts associated with grading and landform alteration, and/or reduce visual character impacts, Alternative 4 would eliminate Project development south of B Drive while maintaining a comparable number of residences and commercial floor area as the Project by redistributing the development across a smaller footprint within the Project Site. As such, Alternative 4 would meet the Project's underlying purpose to create a mixed-use community through infill development that is interconnected with the surrounding communities, respects the natural resources and features found on-site, and integrates land use, housing, and transportation considerations in furtherance of SB 375, the Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act of 2008. Additionally, this Alternative would meet many of the specific objectives that support the Project's

underlying purpose to the same extent as the Project, as summarized in **Table 6-8**, Alternative 4 Growth Relative to SCAG Forecasts (2014–2024), and discussed below.

For example, with the same general land use mix, amount of development, and associated population, Alternative 4 would meet the objective to accommodate SCAG's projected regional growth for the Santa Clarita Valley Planning Area to the same extent as the Project. In addition, Alternative 4 would provide the same level of housing and employment opportunities to accommodate projected household growth in the Valley. Furthermore, Alternative 4 would provide a similar amount of commercial development to serve the needs of the local population and generate employment opportunities. Likewise, Alternative 4 would support and expand the Valley's economic base through employment opportunities and revenues from commercial and retail developments to the same degree as the Project.

Additionally, Alternative 4 would adequately meet several of the other Project objectives. For example, the Alternative would create a complete mixed-use community and avoid leapfrog development and unnecessary infrastructure. Alternative 4 also would help implement the vision of the Area Plan by developing uses consistent with the existing land use designations for the Project Site. In addition, Alternative 4 would comply with and carry out the resource conservation, management, and permitting responsibilities associated with the Newhall Ranch RMDP/SCP project. Furthermore, this Alternative would meet the Project objectives to provide an elementary school, public neighborhood park and private neighborhood recreation centers, a system of pedestrian and bicycle trails, and a circulation network with adequate access and connectivity.

However, with the reduction in the number of single-family units and the increased density of multi-family housing necessary to accommodate the same total number of units, Alternative 4 would not provide the same range of housing types, sizes, and styles as the Project. Specifically, the Project's townhomes and multi-family detached units would be eliminated, and most if not all of the multi-family units under Alternative 4 would consist of condominiums and apartments in order to accommodate the requisite number of units. Thus, this Alternative would not meet the housing needs of a growing and increasingly diverse population within the County and the Valley to the same extent as the Project. Furthermore, this Alternative would not be as effectively integrated with the adjacent communities due to the elimination of development south of B Drive.

Overall, Alternative 4 would meet the Project objectives as well as the Project's underlying purpose, although many would not be met to the same extent as the Project. While impacts with respect to construction-related air quality, biological resources, geology (specifically relating to hillside grading), construction-related hydrology and water quality, and construction noise would be somewhat reduced in comparison to the Project, the

significance of such impacts would be the same as under the Project, and none of the Project's significant and unavoidable impacts would be avoided. Furthermore, impacts with respect to aesthetics and views would be greater than those of the Project, primarily due to the increased residential building heights. All other impacts would be the same as under the Project.

6.0 PROJECT ALTERNATIVES

5. ENVIRONMENTALLY SUPERIOR ALTERNATIVE

Under CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(e)(2), an analysis of alternatives to a project must identify an Environmentally Superior Alternative among the alternatives evaluated in an EIR. The CEQA Guidelines also state that should it be determined that the No Project Alternative is the Environmentally Superior Alternative, the EIR shall identify another Environmentally Superior Alternative among the remaining alternatives. With respect to identifying an Environmentally Superior Alternative among those analyzed in this Draft EIR, the range of viable alternatives includes the No Project/No Build Alternative (Alternative 1), the No Project/Development in Accordance with Existing Plans Alternative (Alternative 2), the Reduced Density Alternative (Alternative 3), and the Reduced Development Footprint Alternative (Alternative 4).

Table 6-2, Comparison of Impacts Associated with the Project and Impacts of the Alternatives, provides a matrix comparing the impacts of the Project with those of each of the Alternatives for each environmental issue addressed in this Draft EIR. A detailed discussion of the potential impacts associated with each alternative is provided above, with comparisons to the impacts of the Project. Pursuant to Section 15126.6(c) of the CEQA Guidelines, the discussion below addresses the ability of the Alternatives to “avoid or substantially lessen one or more of the significant effects” of the Project.

Of the alternatives analyzed in this Draft EIR, Alternative 1, the No Project/No Build Alternative is considered the Environmentally Superior Alternative as it would reduce the impacts associated with the Project. In addition, all of the significant and unavoidable impacts under the Project would be avoided under the No Project/No Build Alternative. However, as indicated above, this Alternative would not meet all but one of the objectives established for the Project.

In accordance with the CEQA Guidelines requirement to identify an Environmentally Superior Alternative other than the No Project Alternative, a comparative evaluation of the remaining alternatives indicates that Alternative 3, the Reduced Density Alternative, would be the Environmentally Superior Alternative. As summarized in **Table 6-2**, Comparison of Impacts Associated with the Project and Impacts of the Alternatives, this Alternative would reduce more of the Project impacts compared to the other remaining alternatives. In particular, Alternative 3B, which represents a 53-percent reduction in Project development, would result in the least level of impact. However, as shown in the table, Alternative 3 would not completely avoid any of the Project’s significant impacts. Specifically, significant

and unavoidable impacts with respect to aesthetics, construction-related and operational air quality, cumulative construction-related and operational air quality, construction-related noise, and cumulative off-site traffic noise would still occur. With respect to operational air quality impacts, as shown in **Table 6-6**, Reduced Density Alternative Scenarios Compared to Project—Regional Operational Emissions, Alternative 3A would avoid the Project's significant impact with respect to $PM_{2.5}$, but emissions of VOC, NO_x , CO, and PM_{10} would remain significant and unavoidable. Similarly, Alternative 3B would avoid the Project's significant impacts with respect to $PM_{2.5}$, PM_{10} , and CO, but emissions of VOC and NO_x would remain significant and unavoidable.

In addition, the Reduced Density Alternative would not fulfill several of the Project objectives to the same extent as the Project. In particular, the Project's underlying purpose and those objectives relating to creating a complete mixed-use community, the provision of housing and employment, meeting related growth forecasts, and expanding the economic base within the Santa Clarita Valley would not be met as well as under the Project. Moreover, with further reductions in development (e.g., Alternative 3B), these objectives would be met to an even lesser extent, and the Alternative ultimately would become financially infeasible.