CHAPTER 8.0 ALTERNATIVES

8.1 INTRODUCTION

CEQA Authority For Consideration Of Alternatives

Section 15126.6(a) of the State CEQA Guidelines requires EIRs to describe "…a range of reasonable alternatives to the project, or to the location of the project, which would feasibly attain most of the basic objectives of the project but would avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects of the project, and evaluate the comparative merits of the alternatives. An EIR need not consider every conceivable alternative to a project. Rather it must consider a reasonable range of potentially feasible alternatives that will foster informed decision making and public participation. An EIR is not required to consider alternatives which are infeasible. The lead agency is responsible for selecting a range of project alternatives for examination and must publicly disclose its reasoning for selecting those alternatives. There is no ironclad rule governing the nature or scope of the alternatives to be discussed other than the rule of reason." This section of CEQA also provides guidance regarding what the alternatives analysis should consider. Subsection (b) further states the purpose of the alternatives analysis, as follows:

> Because an EIR must identify ways to mitigate or avoid the significant effects that a project may have on the environment (Public Resources Code Section 21002.1), the discussion of alternatives shall focus on alternatives to the project or its location which are capable of avoiding or substantially lessening any significant effects of the project, even if these alternatives would impede to some degree the attainment of the project objectives, or would be more costly.

The State CEQA Guidelines further require that the alternatives be compared to the proposed project's environmental impacts and that the "no project" alternative be considered (CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6[d][e]). In defining "feasibility" (e.g.," …feasibly attain most of the basic objectives of the project…"), State CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(f)(1) states, in part:

> 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 (projects with a regionally significant impact should consider the regional context), and whether the proponent can reasonably acquire, control, or otherwise have access to the alternative site (or the site is already owned by the proponent). No one of these factors establishes a fixed limit on the scope of reasonable alternatives.

In determining what alternatives should be considered in the EIR, it is important to acknowledge the objectives of the project, the project's significant effects, and unique project considerations. These

factors are crucial to the development of alternatives that meet the criteria specified in Section 15126.6(a). Although, as noted above, EIRs must contain a discussion of "potentially feasible" alternatives, the ultimate determination as to whether an alternative is feasible or infeasible is made by the lead agency's decision-making body, in this case the Rocklin City Council. (See Pub. Resources Code, ∫21081[a][3].) At the time of action on the project, the City Council may consider evidence beyond that found in this EIR in addressing such determinations. The Council, for example, may conclude that particular alternative is infeasible (i.e., undesirable) from a policy standpoint, and may reject an alternative on that ground provided that the Council adopts a finding, supported by substantial evidence, to that effect, and provided that such a finding reflects a "reasonable balancing of the relevant economic, environmental, social, and technological factors." (*City of Del Mar v. City of San Diego* (1982) 133 Cal.App.3d 401, 417; see also *Sequoyah Hills Homeowners Assn. v. City of Oakland* (1993) 23 Cal. App.4th 704, 714-716 [court upholds findings rejecting alternatives for not fully satisfying project objectives]).

Factors Considered In Identifying Project Alternatives

The proposed project is unique due to its large size and in its need to be located near a major transportation corridor. This is due to the type of uses and tenant mix anticipated and the need to avoid being sited in an area (such as the Highway 65 corridor) in which the existence of numerous competing large retailers would adversely affect its chances of success. In identifying potentially feasible alternatives to the proposed project, the following project objectives were considered:

- To develop regional shopping facilities on commercially-designated land within the City consistent with City of Rocklin General Plan policy and the property's current zoning;
- To create a high-quality commercial development near a major transportation corridor within the City of Rocklin serving western Placer County;
- To develop facilities with architectural and landscaping features designed to create a pleasant, attractive appearance that integrate with the surrounding area;
- To provide commercial retail facilities that serve the City of Rocklin and the surrounding areas in order to meet the growing regional demand for such services;
- To enhance the City's position to better serve the regional and community retail needs of the western Placer County community;
- To provide a shopping facility that maximizes visibility from Interstate 80 for all buildings and tenants;
- To construct a facility near a major freeway interchange in order to minimize traffic generation on local streets;
- To develop a property of sufficient size to accommodate two major anchor tenants and sufficient to support smaller tenants to create a regional shopping destination;
- To provide regional commercial retail activities that will complement existing local retail activities located in the region;

- To construct a facility with access to adequate existing or anticipated utility infrastructure to support planned operations;
- To create a new net public fiscal benefit for the City of Rocklin;
- To generate sales tax and property tax revenues to accrue to the various agencies within the project area;
- To maximize the economic benefit to the City of Rocklin by attracting patronage from both within and outside of the City; and
- To provide new employment opportunities to the residents of the City of Rocklin and the surrounding areas.

Under CEQA Guidelines section 15126.6, as noted earlier, the alternatives to be discussed in detail in an EIR should be able to "feasibly attain most of the basic objectives of the project[.]" For this reason, the objectives described above provided the framework for defining possible offsite alternative project locations. Based on these objectives, the City examined potentially feasible offsite locations that were limited to undeveloped sites located within the City of Rocklin and of sufficient size to accommodate the proposed project (i.e., a minimum of approximately 40 developable acres). These sites needed to be sufficiently close to Interstate 80 in order to minimize traffic generation on local streets and provide easy access. The sites should also be visible from Interstate 80 in order to attract customers. Although sites with a Retail Commercial (RC) land use designation were identified as preferable, the selection process did not preclude sites with other land use designations. Properties along State Route 65 were not considered feasible alternatives due to the presence of existing large commercial uses along this corridor. After considering all of the above criteria, only one offsite alternative was determined reasonable and feasible for carrying forward with environmental review.

8.2 PROJECT ALTERNATIVES EVALUATED IN THIS EIR

Description of Alternatives

Based on the requirements of State CEQA Guidelines §15126.6 and the project's objectives, the following alternatives to the proposed project were identified by the City as reasonable and potentially feasible:

- No Project Alternative
- Reduced Size Alternative (50% reduction in development intensity and land utilization)
- Reduced Size Alternative (25% reduction in development intensity and land utilization)
- Offsite Alternative #1

Alternatives along Highway 65 were not included because of the existing large number of competing major retailers already located within that corridor. The City also determined not to include a Building Realignment Alternative as there are no potential environmental benefits that could be provided by realignment of the buildings on site and it would pose likely negative impacts to traffic.

8.2.1 No Project Alternative

State CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(e)(1) requires that the no project alternative be described and analyzed "to allow decision makers to compare the impacts of approving the proposed project with the impacts of not approving the proposed project." The no project analysis is required to discuss "the existing conditions at the time the notice of preparation is published…as well as what would be reasonably 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" (Section 15126.6[e][2]). "If the project is…a development project on identifiable property, the 'no project' alternative is the circumstance under which the project does not proceed. Here the discussion would compare the environmental effects of the property remaining in its existing state against environmental effects which would occur if the project is approved. If disapproval of the project under consideration would result in predictable actions by others, such as the proposal of some other project, this 'no project' consequence should be discussed. In certain instances, the no project alternative means 'no build' wherein the existing environmental setting is maintained. However, where failure to proceed with the project will not result in preservation of existing environmental conditions, the analysis should identify the practical result of the project's non-approval and not create and analyze a set of artificial assumptions that would be required to preserve the existing physical environment." (Section 15126.[e][3][B].)

Description

The project site is currently undeveloped. However, based on the demand for commercial/retail uses and sites with direct freeway access in western Placer County and the availability of adequate infrastructure at the site to support commercial development, the No Project Alternative assumes that development of the site consistent with its existing land use and zoning designations would reasonably be expected to occur in the near term.

Impacts of the No Project Alternative

With the implementation of the No Project Alternative, the adverse environmental impacts anticipated with the proposed project would continue to occur, as it can be reasonably expected that other commercial development would occur on the project site. Therefore, the implementation of this alternative would represent no change in the proposed land uses on the site and would not be expected to reduce any significant environmental impacts of the proposed project to less-than-significant levels.

Conclusion

The No Project Alternative would have impacts that are comparable to the proposed project. Therefore, it would not be considered the environmentally superior alternative. Because the No Project Alternative is substantially equivalent to the proposed project, it would be consistent with the project objectives.

8.2.2 Reduced Size Alternative (50% reduction in development intensity and land utilization)

Description

This alternative includes a 50% reduction in the project's proposed square footage and the elimination of one of the two primary tenant spaces. The total building square footage with this alternative would be approximately 207,500 square feet, spread among the single primary tenant and secondary tenants. The total developed area would be reduced to approximately 20 acres. A 50% reduction in the square footage was assumed in order to reduce the project's significant air quality and biological resource impacts by substantially reducing the project's trip generation and allowing sensitive resource areas (i.e., oak trees, wetlands) to be preserved.

Impacts of the Reduced Size Alternative (50%)

Air Quality

The air quality impacts associated with construction and operational activities would be reduced when compared to the proposed project due to a reduction in total area graded and the smaller total building square footage (reduced trips and vehicle miles traveled).

Daily construction-generated emissions would generate substantially lower daily emissions of approximately 92 lb/day of ROG, 43 lb/day of NO_X, 34 lb/day of PM_{10}, and 34 lb/day of CO. Daily unmitigated construction-generated emissions would not exceed PCAPCD's significance thresholds of 82 lb/day for NO_X or PM_{10} or 550 lb/day for CO. However, unmitigated construction-generated emissions of ROG would still exceed PCAPCD's significance threshold of 82 lb/day. Thus, ROG emissions could violate an air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation, especially considering Placer County's nonattainment status. As a result, this impact is still considered significant.

Based on the air quality modeling conducted with URBEMIS 2007, project operations would result in worst-case maximum unmitigated daily emissions of approximately 64.58 lb/day of ROG, 84.91 lb/day of NO_X, 84.87 lb/day of PM_{10}, and 607.30 lb/day of CO. While these emissions are lower than the proposed project, daily unmitigated operational emissions would still exceed PCAPCD's significance thresholds of 82 lb/day for NO_X, and PM_{10}, and 550 lb/day for CO. Therefore, this impact would continue to be significant. While not quantified, due to the small percentage of emissions above the threshold (approximately 3 percent for NO_X and PM_{10}), it is likely that mitigation measures could reduce the level of emissions to less than significant. In light of the reduced air quality impacts, this alternative would have reduced impacts compared to the proposed project.

Biological Resources

Implementation of this alternative would eliminate significant biological resource impacts anticipated with the implementation of the proposed project. The proposed project would result in potential significant impacts related to the loss of wetlands and significant and unavoidable short-term loss of mature oak woodlands. The implementation of this alternative would avoid the loss of some mature oak trees on the site and reduce impacts to wetlands. Nonetheless, it would be expected that a portion of the site's mature oak trees would be impacted. Therefore the significant and unavoidable impacts

for the short-term loss of oak trees would not be reduced to a less than significant level. Impacts to raptors would be slightly reduced but still significant, the same as the project. As a result of the reduced impact, this alternative would have reduced impacts compared to the proposed project.

The proposed project would contribute cumulatively to the loss of biological resources in the region. This cumulative impact would be considered significant and unavoidable. Although this alternative would disturb less total area than the proposed project, it would also contribute to the cumulative loss of biological resources in the region. Therefore, this impact would not be reduced to a less-than-significant level.

Global Climate Change

This alternative would include fewer commercial uses than the proposed project. Long-term operation of the proposed project would generate associated greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from area- and mobile-sources, and indirectly from stationary sources associated with energy consumption. Development of the 50 percent reduced-size alternative would generate lower levels of overall GHG emissions (approximately 11,000 metric tons of CO_2e) with lower energy and vehicle-related GHG emissions than the proposed project. The decreased amount of commercial development would also generate lower demand for energy usage and associated GHG emissions. Therefore, its potential to generate GHG emissions would be reduced when compared to the proposed project, but would remain less than significant. This alternative would have reduced impacts compared to the proposed project.

Hydrology and Water Quality

The project's proposed storm water collection includes a detention basis that has been sized to accommodate the projected peak storm water generated from the proposed development. By capturing peak storm water on the site, the proposed project would not contribute to downstream flooding. Therefore, the storm water impacts of the proposed project are identified as less than significant. Implementation of this alternative would reduce the total amount of new impervious surfaces by approximately 50% when compared to the proposed project. This would decrease the peak storm water volumes generated at the site and would reduce the necessary size of the detention basin. However, the storm water impacts of the proposed project are not considered significant; therefore, this alternative would not reduce a significant storm water impact.

The reduction in the development footprint associated with this alternative would decrease the area of disturbance during construction activities and would decrease the urban pollutant source areas during site operations. This alternative does not decrease the level of significance in comparison to the proposed project (because it is already LTS). However, impacts are reduced compared to the proposed project.

Energy

The reduction in total building square footage associated with this project would directly reduce the anticipated energy usage at the site by approximately 50%. However, neither the proposed project nor this alternative would be expected to result in significant energy impacts.

Noise

Similar to the proposed project, development of this alternative would generate construction noise associated with the use of heavy equipment for site grading and excavation, installation of utilities, paving, and building fabrication. However, because less area would be disturbed with this alternative and fewer buildings would be constructed, the duration of the construction-related noise impacts would be reduced.

Traffic

The project as currently proposed is anticipated to generate significant and unavoidable traffic impacts at the Rocklin Road/Granite Drive, Sierra College Boulevard/Brace Road, Sierra College Boulevard/Granite Drive, Sierra College Boulevard/Rocklin Road, Sierra College Boulevard/Taylor Road, Horseshoe Bar Road/Taylor Road, Barton Road/Rocklin Road, and Sierra College Boulevard/English Colony Way intersections. The reduction in total square footage associated with this alternative would correspondingly reduce the anticipated daily vehicle trips generated by the project site as well as the a.m. and p.m. peak hour trips. With the implementation of this alternative, the significant traffic impacts would be reduced to a less-than-significant level because the projected increase in vehicles trips at these intersections would not exceed five percent of the total traffic traveling through these intersections.

However, the vehicle trips generated by this alternative would still contribute to cumulative traffic impacts at these intersections and for one roadway segment. With the reduction in traffic impacts and improved intersection level of service, this alternative would have reduced impacts compared to the proposed project.

Utilities

The implementation of this reduced size alternative would generate reduced demands on utility services such as electricity, natural gas, telecommunications, water, and wastewater services as the proposed project. The development of this site would at a minimum require the same water conveyance facilities as the proposed project and would result in the same environmental impacts associated with the construction of these facilities as would occur with the proposed project.

Conclusion

The 50% Reduced Size Alternative would reduce the severity of impacts anticipated with the proposed project for the following resource areas: air quality, biological resources, hydrology, water quality, utilities, noise, energy, traffic, and global climate change. It does not increase impacts to any environmental resources. For these reasons, this alternative would be considered environmentally superior to the proposed project. However, by eliminating one of the major tenants and substantially reducing the total proposed building square footage; this alternative would be creating a much smaller shopping center and less of a regional shopping destination. This would directly conflict with the objectives of developing a property of sufficient size to accommodate two major anchor tenants and sufficient supporting smaller tenants to create a regional shopping destination, and maximizing the economic benefit to the City of Rocklin as a result of the project by attracting patronage from outside the City.

8.2.3 Reduced Size Alternative (25% reduction in development intensity and land utilization)

Description

This alternative includes a 25% reduction in the project's proposed square footage and the elimination of one of the two primary tenants. The total building square footage with this alternative would be approximately 311,250 square feet, spread among the single primary tenant and secondary tenants. The total developed area would be reduced to approximately 30 acres. A 25% reduction in the square footage was assumed in order to reduce the project's significant air quality and biological resource impacts by substantially reducing the project's trip generation and allowing sensitive resource areas (i.e., oak trees and wetlands) to be preserved.

Impacts of the Reduced Size Alternative (25%)

Air Quality

The air quality impacts associated with construction and operational activities would be reduced when compared to the proposed project due to a reduction in total area graded and the smaller total building square footage (reduced trips and vehicle miles traveled). Daily construction-generated emissions would generate lower daily emissions of approximately 138 lb/day of ROG, 48 lb/day of NO_X, 49 lb/day of PM_{10}, and 50 lb/day of CO. Daily unmitigated construction-generated emissions would exceed PCAPCD's significance thresholds of 82 lb/day for ROG. Thus, ROG emissions could violate an air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation, especially considering Placer County's nonattainment status. As a result, this impact is still considered significant.

Based on the air quality modeling conducted with URBEMIS 2007, project operations would result in worst-case maximum unmitigated daily emissions of approximately 84.33 lb/day of ROG, 110.90 lb/day of NO_X, 110.46 lb/day of PM_{10}, and 790.76 lb/day of CO. Daily unmitigated operational emissions would exceed PCAPCD's significance thresholds of 82 lb/day for ROG, NO_X, and PM_{10}, and 550 lb/day for CO. Therefore, this impact would continue to be significant and unavoidable. However, in light of the reduced air quality impacts, this alternative would have reduced impacts compared to the proposed project.

Biological Resources

Implementation of this alternative would eliminate significant biological resource impacts anticipated with the implementation of the proposed project. The proposed project would result in potential significant impacts related to the loss of wetlands and significant and unavoidable short-term loss of mature oak trees. The implementation of this alternative would avoid the loss of some mature oak trees on the site and reduce impacts to wetlands. Nonetheless, it would be expected that a portion of the site's mature oak trees would be impacted. Therefore the significant and unavoidable impacts for the short-term loss of mature oak trees would not be reduced to a less than significant level. Impacts to raptors would still be significant, the same as the project. As a result of the reduced impact, this alternative would have reduced impacts compared to the proposed project.

The proposed project would contribute cumulatively to the loss of biological resources in the region. This cumulative impact would be considered significant and unavoidable. Although this alternative would disturb less total area than the proposed project, it would also contribute to the cumulative loss of biological resources in the region. Therefore, this impact would not be reduced to a less-than-significant level.

Global Climate Change

This alternative would include fewer commercial uses than the proposed project. Long-term operation of the proposed project would generate associated greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from area- and mobile-sources, and indirectly from stationary sources associated with energy consumption. Development of the 25 percent reduced-size alternative would generate lower levels of overall GHG emissions (approximately 15,000 metric tons of CO_2e) with lower energy and vehicle-related GHG emissions than the proposed project. The decreased amount of commercial development would also generate lower demand for energy usage and associated GHG emissions. Therefore, its potential to generate GHG emissions would be reduced when compared to the proposed project.

Hydrology and Water Quality

The project's proposed storm water collection includes a detention basis that has been sized to accommodate the projected peak storm water generated from the proposed development. By capturing peak storm water on the site, the proposed project would not contribute to downstream flooding. Therefore, the storm water impacts of the proposed project are identified as less than significant. Implementation of this alternative would reduce the total amount of new impervious surfaces by approximately 25% when compared to the proposed project. This would decrease the peak storm water volumes generated at the site and would reduce the necessary size of the detention basin. However, the storm water impacts of the proposed project are not considered significant; therefore, this alternative would not reduce a significant storm water impact.

The proposed project would contribute pollutant loads to storm water runoff from construction and operational activities. This alternative does not decrease the level of significance in comparison to the proposed project (because it is already LTS). However, impacts are reduced compared to the proposed project.

Energy

The reduction in total building square footage associated with this project would directly reduce the anticipated energy usage at the site by approximately 25%. However, neither the proposed project nor this alternative would be expected to result in significant energy impacts.

Noise

Similar to the proposed project, development of this alternative would generate construction noise associated with the use of heavy equipment for site grading and excavation, installation of utilities, paving, and building fabrication. However, because less area would be disturbed with this alternative and fewer buildings would be constructed, the duration of the construction-related noise impacts would be reduced.

Traffic

The project as currently proposed is anticipated to generate significant and unavoidable traffic impacts at the Rocklin Road/Granite Drive, Sierra College Boulevard/Brace Road, Sierra College Boulevard/Granite Drive, Sierra College Boulevard/Rocklin Road, Sierra College Boulevard/Taylor Road, Horseshoe Bar Road/Taylor Road, Barton Road/Rocklin Road, and Sierra College Boulevard/English Colony Way intersections. The reduction in total square footage associated with this alternative would reduce traffic and would likely correspondingly reduce the anticipated daily vehicle trips generated by the project site as well as the a.m. and p.m. peak hour trips. With the implementation of this alternative, the significant traffic impacts would be reduced, but not necessarily to a less-than-significant level. However, the vehicle trips generated by this alternative would still contribute to cumulative traffic impacts at these intersections and for one roadway segment. With the reduction in traffic impacts and improved intersection level of service, this alternative would have reduced impacts compared to the proposed project.

Utilities

The implementation of this reduced size alternative would generate reduced demands on utility services such as electricity, natural gas, telecommunications, water, and wastewater services as the proposed project. The development of this site would at a minimum require the same water conveyance facilities as the proposed project and would result in the same environmental impacts associated with the construction of these facilities as would occur with the proposed project.

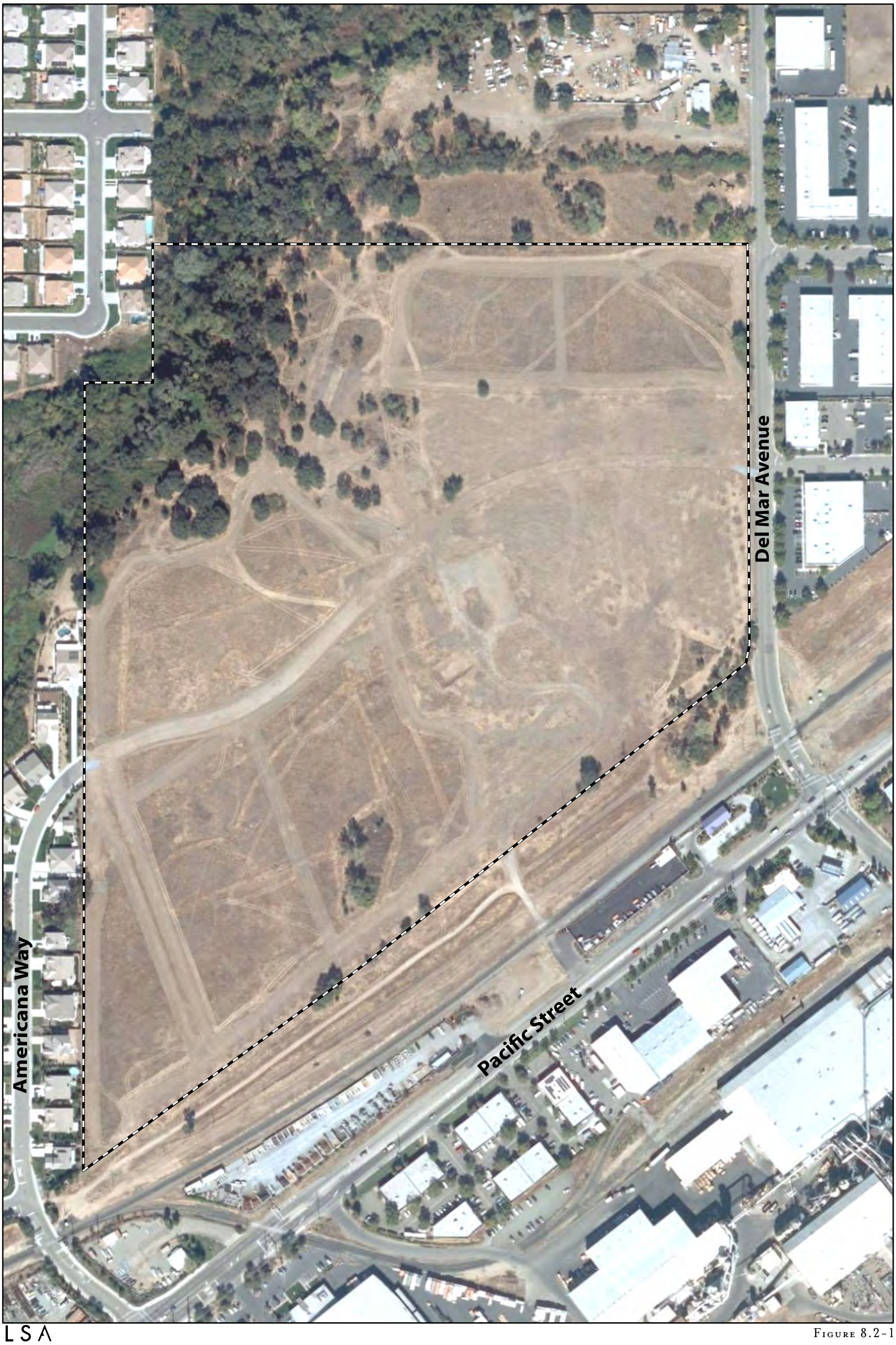
Conclusion

The 25% Reduced Size Alternative would reduce the severity of impacts anticipated with the proposed project for the following resource areas: air quality, biological resources, hydrology, water quality, energy, noise, utilities, traffic, and global climate change. It does not increase impacts to any environmental resources. However, by eliminating one of the major tenants and substantially reducing the total proposed building square footage; this alternative would be creating a much smaller shopping center and less of a regional shopping destination. This would directly conflict with the objectives of developing a property of sufficient size to accommodate two major anchor tenants and sufficient supporting smaller tenants to create a regional shopping destination, and maximizing the economic benefit to the City of Rocklin as a result of the project by attracting patronage from outside the City.

8.2.4 Impacts Of Offsite Alternative #1

Description

The Offsite Alternative #1 is located on approximately 65 acres west of the project site (Figure 8.2-1). The concept for this alternative site assumes to include commercial square footage roughly equivalent to the proposed project. This site is bordered on the east by Del Mar Avenue, on the south by Pacific Street, on the west by Americana Way and Lakebreeze Drive, and on the north by rural land within the Town of Loomis. The land use designation of the site is Light Industrial (LI) and access to Interstate 80 would be provided from Sierra College Boulevard by way of Pacific Street. The



LSA

FIGURE 8.2-1

Legend

Alternative Site

0 200

SCALE IN FEET

Rocklin Commons

Off Site Alternative #1

SOURCE: BASEMAP - DIGITALGLOBE (9/2008); MAPPING - LSA ASSOCIATES, INC. (2009)

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topography of the site is gently rolling with elevations ranging from approximately 290 to 325 feet mean seal level (msl). The site includes a mix of grasslands, dense oaks woodlands, ponds, wetlands, remnants of an old orchard, and a well-established riparian corridor along Antelope Creek, which flows southwest through the center of the site. The project applicant does not own this property.

Air Quality

The air quality impacts associated with construction activities would be similar to those anticipated with the proposed project because the same approximate acreage would be graded to accommodate site development. Both the proposed project and this alternative would be expected to generate approximately 62 lb/day of ROG, 36 lb/day of NO_X, 206 lb/day of PM_{10}, and 48 lb/day of CO during project construction. Daily construction generated emissions would not exceed PCAPCD's significance thresholds of 82/lb day for ROG or NO_X or 550 lb/day of CO. However, emissions of PM_{10} would exceed PCAPCD's significance threshold of 82 lb/day. The four-year construction period assumed for the proposed project would also be required for this alternative site. Therefore, the same types and volumes of construction emissions would be generated.

Also, because the site would include the same type of operational activities, the same general operational air quality impacts would be anticipated. Based on the modeling conducted, operations for this alternative would result in worst-case maximum daily emissions of 91 lb/day of ROG, 121 lb/day of NO_X, 133 lb/day of PM_{10}, and 849 lb/day of CO. These daily operational emissions would exceed PCAPCD's significance thresholds of 82 lb/day for ROG, NO_X, and PM_{10}, or 550 lb/day for CO during both the winter and summer periods. Similar to the proposed project, these operational emissions would also contribute cumulatively to significant and unavoidable regional emissions.

Biological Resources

The following analysis is based on aerial photo interpretation of the site's biological resources using a September 2008 high resolution aerial photo.

Alternative Site 1 is highly degraded biologically – over 80 percent of the site (40 acres) is classified as disturbed. Other habitats mapped on the site include about 5 acres of oak woodland and 3 acres of oak riparian forest associated with Antelope Creek, which crosses through the northwest corner of the site. About 1.7 acres of seasonal wetlands are also present on the site.

For the purposes of this alternatives analysis, it is assumed that project development at this site would avoid the riparian corridor along Antelope Creek. The sensitivity of Antelope Creek may also necessitate a buffer and development setbacks. This is assumed to be feasible due to larger size of this site compared to the proposed project site. Based on this assumption, impacts to most biological resources would be substantially reduced with this alternative compared with the proposed project. Oak woodland impacts would be limited to about 5 acres containing about 50 trees. Impacts to wildlife species, including special status species, associated with woodlands would be similarly reduced. The site does not support annual grassland habitat, so this impact would also be reduced over the proposed project. Impacts to seasonal wetlands, however, would be greater with this alternative, which would impact up to 1.7 acres of wetland habitat.

Global Climate Change

Long-term operation of the proposed project would generate associated greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from area- and mobile-sources, and indirectly from stationary sources associated with energy consumption. This alternative would include the same commercial square footage as the proposed project. Therefore, its generation of GHG emissions would be equivalent to the proposed project and its cumulative climate change impacts would be the same.

Hydrology and Water Quality

This alternative would be expected to generally have the same total new impervious surface area as the proposed project and would likely require an onsite detention facility. Therefore, the effects of this alternative on peak storm water discharge would be similar to the proposed project. Pollutant sources would, likewise, be similar to the proposed project, since the surface coverage and use characteristics are equivalent. Antelope Creek crosses the northwest corner of this site. It is assumed that project development at this site would avoid the riparian corridor along Antelope Creek, and the sensitivity of the creek may also necessitate a buffer and development setbacks. Nevertheless, the proximity of the creek to the development site increases the potential for water quality impacts compared with the project site.

Energy

This alternative site would include total building square footage equivalent to the proposed project. Therefore, the energy impacts associated with this alternative would be similar to the proposed project. Neither the proposed project nor this alternative would be expected to cause significant energy impacts.

Land Use

The land use designation for this site is Light Industrial (LI). In order to develop this site with commercial uses, the general plan land use designation for the site would need to be amended to Retail Commercial (RC). However, similar to the proposed project, this alternative would result in less-than-significant land use impacts.

Utilities

The implementation of this alternative would generate similar demands on utility services such as electricity, natural gas, telecommunications, water, and wastewater services as the proposed project. However, it is difficult to determine whether anticipated impacts associated with necessary water and sewer line extensions would be similar to, greater than, or less than the proposed project. The development of this site would at a minimum require the same water conveyance facilities as the proposed project and would result in the same environmental impacts associated with the construction of these facilities as would occur with the proposed project. Therefore, this alternative is assumed to have generally similar impacts to the proposed project on utilities.

Noise

Similar to the proposed project, development of this alternative would generate construction noise associated with the use of heavy equipment for site grading and excavation, installation of utilities, paving, and building fabrication. However, unlike the proposed project, there are existing nearby residences. These noise sensitive land uses could be exposed to noise levels of up to 90 dBA Lmax when heavy construction equipment operates near the property boundary during the site preparation phase of construction, the noisiest phase of construction. It should be noted that there are existing sound walls along these residential properties that would reduce such noise impacts by at least 8 dBA, thus reducing maximum noise levels from construction activities to less than 82 dBA Lmax during the noisiest phases of construction. These significant noise impacts would be greater than those of the proposed project.

Traffic

For this alternative, vehicles would be required to travel from Interstate 80 north on Sierra College Boulevard and west on Taylor Road to access the site. Traffic impacts would be slightly shifted with this alternative; however, since the offsite alternative and project are only ½ mile apart, the traffic from the alternative would still likely cause a significant impact at the same intersections and roadway segments.

Conclusion

The impacts for Offsite Alternative #1 would be similar to those anticipated with the proposed project for the following resource areas:, air quality, biological resources, land use, hydrology and water quality, and utilities, traffic, and global climate change. For noise this alternative would cause impacts to be more severe than anticipated with the proposed project. The impacts of this alternative would be more adverse than anticipated with the proposed project. Also, this alternative would conflict with the objectives of developing regional shopping facilities on commercially-designated land within the City and construction of a facility near a major freeway interchange in order to minimize traffic generation on local streets. The project applicant does not own this site and has no ability to affect its development, which is a factor the City Council can consider in ultimately determining whether this alternative is feasible. (See CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6[f][1]).

8.3 SUMMARY OF COMPARATIVE EFFECTS OF THE ALTERNATIVES

Table 8.3-1 summarizes the environmental analysis provided above for the project alternatives. The environmental impacts of the proposed project are addressed in detail throughout Section 4 of this Draft EIR.

Table 8.3-1: Comparison of Environmental Impacts of Alternatives in Relation to the Proposed Project

Environmental Topic	Proposed Project	No Project Alternative	Reduced Size Alternative 50%	Reduced Size Alternative 25%	Offsite Alternative #1
Air Quality – Construction Emissions	S	S-Equivalent	S-Reduced	S-Reduced	S-Equivalent
Air Quality – Operational Emissions	S/U	S/U-Equivalent	S/U-Reduced	S/U-Reduced	S/U-Equivalent
Air Quality – Cumulative	S/U	S/U-Equivalent	S/U-Reduced	S/U-Reduced	S/U-Equivalent
Biological Resources – Wetlands	LTS	LTS-Equivalent	LTS-Reduced	LTS-Reduced	LTS-Increased
Biological Resources – Raptors	LTS	LTS-Equivalent	LTS-Reduced	LTS-Reduced	LTS-Reduced
Biological Resources – Tree Loss	S/U	S/U-Equivalent	S/U-Reduced	S/U-Reduced	S/U-Reduced
Biological Resources – Cumulative	SU	SU-Equivalent	SU-Reduced	SU-Reduced	SU-Reduced
Hydrology and Water Quality – Runoff	LTS	LTS-Equivalent	LTS-Reduced	LTS-Reduced	LTS-Equivalent
Hydrology and Water Quality – Water Quality	LTS	LTS-Equivalent	LTS-Reduced	LTS-Reduced	LTS-Increased
Utilities – Water Conveyance	LTS	LTS-Equivalent	LTS-Reduced	LTS-Reduced	LTS-Equivalent
Noise - Construction	LTS	LTS-Equivalent	LTS-Reduced	LTS-Reduced	LTS-Increased
Noise – Operations	LTS	LTS-Equivalent	LTS-Reduced	LTS-Reduced	LTS-Increased
Traffic - Operations	S	S-Equivalent	S-Reduced	S-Reduced	S-Equivalent
Traffic - Cumulative	S/U	S/U-Equivalent	S/U-Reduced	S/U-Reduced	S/U-Equivalent
Cumulative Climate Change	LTS	LTS-Equivalent	LTS-Reduced	LTS-Reduced	LTS-Equivalent
Energy	LTS	LTS-Equivalent	LTS-Reduced	LTS-Reduced	LTS-Equivalent

Impact Status:
S/U = Significant and unavoidable impact
S = Significant impact
LTS = Less-than-significant impact
Reduced = Impact reduced when compared to the proposed project
Equivalent = Impact equivalent to the proposed project
Increased = Impact increased when compared to the proposed project

8.4 ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED BUT REJECTED AS INFEASIBLE

In addition to the alternatives described above, an additional offsite alternative was considered for the proposed project. In order to meet the basic project objectives, the potential offsite alternative locations were limited to relatively undeveloped properties with sufficient site area to accommodate the proposed project that were located near or along Interstate 80. Properties along State Route 65 were not considered as feasible alternatives due to the presence of existing large commercial uses along this corridor that already share similarities with the proposed project.

Offsite Alternative #2

An additional offsite property within the City was considered as a project alternative, but was eliminated from further analysis because its development would not have been feasible and it would not have attained most of the basic objectives of the proposed project. This offsite alternative is described as follows:

This Offsite Alternative is located on approximately 20 acres between China Garden Road and Hidden Glen Drive directly south of the Rocklin Road/Interstate 80 interchange. The land use designation of the site is Retail Commercial and access to this property from Interstate 80 is provided from Rocklin Road to Aguilar Road to China Garden Road. Due to its relatively small size, this site would not have sufficient space to accommodate all of the project's proposed uses. To access the site, vehicles coming from Interstate 80 would be required to travel through four separate intersections. These intersections are not expected to have adequate capacity to accommodate the proposed project's anticipated vehicle trips. Also, the property is located directly adjacent to an existing residential subdivision and includes several dense clusters of oak woodlands. Furthermore, the project applicant does not own this property and has no ability to control its development. For these reasons, the site was considered infeasible as an alternative to the proposed project and was eliminated from further considerations.