

# 5 ALTERNATIVES

## 5.1 INTRODUCTION

CEQA requires the consideration and analysis of alternatives to a proposed project. According to the CEQA Guidelines, the range of alternatives “shall include those that could feasibly accomplish most of the basic purposes of the project and could avoid or substantially lessen one or more of the significant impacts” (CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6[c]; see also CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6[a]).

Section 15126.6(a) of the CEQA Guidelines requires that an EIR describe:

“...a range of reasonable alternatives to 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.”

In defining “feasibility,” 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.

The CEQA Guidelines further require that the alternatives be compared to a proposed project’s environmental impacts and that the “no project” alternative be considered (CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6[e]). The CEQA Guidelines provide guidance on defining and analyzing alternatives. Section 15126.6[b] states:

“... 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.”

## 5.2 SELECTION OF ALTERNATIVES

### 5.2.1 CRITERIA

Alternatives were selected for evaluation in this SEIR based on criteria in the CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6. These criteria include (1) ability of the alternative to attain most of the basic project objectives; (2) feasibility of

the alternative; and (3) ability of the alternative to avoid or substantially reduce one or more significant environmental effects of the proposed Project.

The City has evaluated potential alternatives relative to the objectives of the proposed Project. For the purpose of alternatives analysis under CEQA, project objectives may not be defined so narrowly that the range of alternatives is unduly constrained. Alternatives that would impede to some degree the attainment of the project objectives or would be more costly may also be considered.

### **5.2.1 PROJECT PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES**

The following objectives have been established for the proposed Project:

- ▶ Provide for development consistent with the General Plan Study Area Organizing Principles and the East Study Area Land Use District Program Standards.
- ▶ Create a mix of employment activities in the southwestern portion of the East Study Area that transitions to residential neighborhoods toward the northeast.
- ▶ Focus employment uses within the East Study Area on industrial, office, and regional retail uses.
- ▶ Designate open space as needed to meet resource conservation standards and to provide an adequate floodplain buffer.
- ▶ Facilitate development that would create a better balance between the types of local jobs available and the skills and interests of the local labor force.

### **5.3 ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED IN DETAIL IN THE SEIR**

The proposed Project involves most of the same development in the same locations as assessed in the 2019 SOIA EIR. The approximately 100-acre City-owned parcel in the center of the project site was formerly designated Public Open Space/Recreation and now would be designated for Light Industrial uses. The Project site would have a reduction in the land area of Parks and Open Space, an increase in both Light Industrial and Heavy Industrial uses, a reduction in the amount of mixed General Commercial and Commercial Office uses, and a new use, Regional Commercial, proposed for 20 acres of land. Regional Commercial uses are generally characterized by retail and service uses that serve a regional market area.

Based on the criteria for selection of the alternatives discussed above in Section 5.2, the City has determined that it is appropriate to keep the same alternatives that were evaluated in the 2019 SOIA EIR: Alternative 1: No-Project Alternative and Alternative 2: Reduced Size Alternative.

#### **5.3.1 ALTERNATIVE 1: NO-PROJECT ALTERNATIVE**

CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(e)(2) states that a discussion of the “No Project” alternative must consider “what would be reasonably expected to occur in the foreseeable future if the project were not approved, based on current plans.”

Most of the Project site is designated as Farmland of Statewide Importance (424 acres), with several smaller areas of Farmland of Local Importance (including the City-owned parcel) (129 acres). The Project site is currently used

for agricultural production, consisting of row crops and pasture, with three existing home sites, five rural residences, and multiple barns and sheds associated with agricultural activities. Most of the Project site is zoned for agricultural uses with a small area in the south zoned for industrial use. For purposes of this SEIR, the No-Project Alternative assumes continued agricultural use on 527 acres and intensive industrial development on 41 acres, as shown in Exhibit 5-1.

### **ABILITY OF ALTERNATIVE TO MEET PROJECT OBJECTIVES**

This alternative would not meet the Project objectives since it would not create new jobs in the form of industrial and commercial development opportunities, and there would be no mixed-use development. This alternative would not address the City's jobs-housing balance.

### **5.3.2 ALTERNATIVE 2: REDUCED SIZE ALTERNATIVE**

Under this alternative, development would be limited to the 100-acre City property and the Kendrick and Cypress Avenue properties, approximately 385 acres total, as shown in Exhibit 5-2. The Kendrick and Cypress Avenue properties would be industrial and commercial, although in slightly different amounts as compared to the proposed Project. The front approximately 50 acres of the City property would be employment uses along the frontage with Grant Line Road, with approximately 50 acres of multi-sport park complex in the rear. There would be no stadium or separate land set aside for fairground use (though the fair use could occur on the same land as the sports park complex). The balance of the Project site would not be developed with mixed uses or parks/open space, but instead would continue to be used for agriculture. Development under this alternative would require generally the same off-site drainage improvements as the proposed project.

### **ABILITY OF ALTERNATIVE TO MEET PROJECT OBJECTIVES**

This alternative could generally meet the Project objectives, albeit potentially not to the same degree as the proposed Project since there would be less industrial and mixed-use development to address the City's jobs-housing balance.

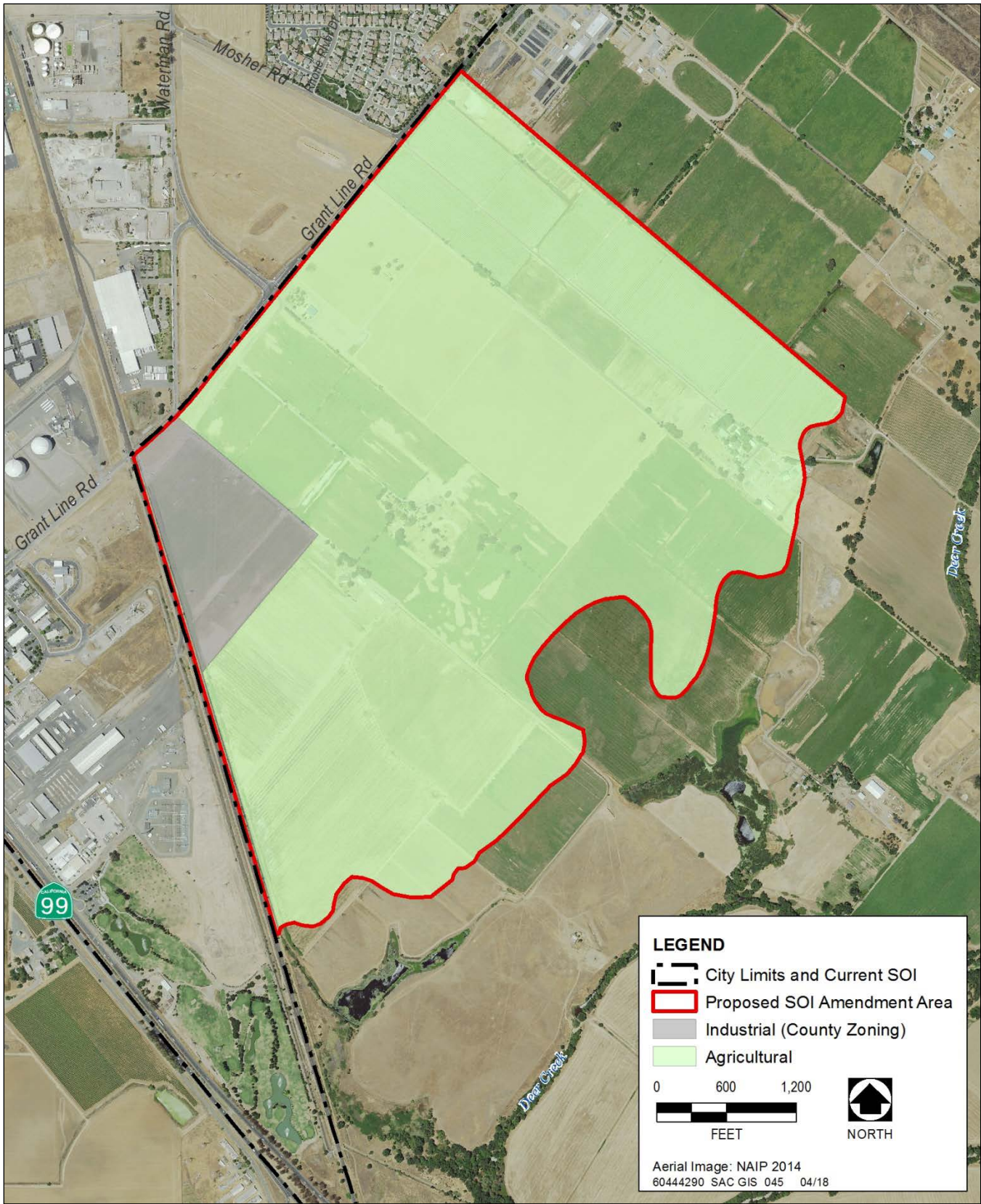
## **5.4 ALTERNATIVES ANALYSIS**

### **5.4.1 AESTHETICS**

#### **ALTERNATIVE 1: NO-PROJECT ALTERNATIVE**

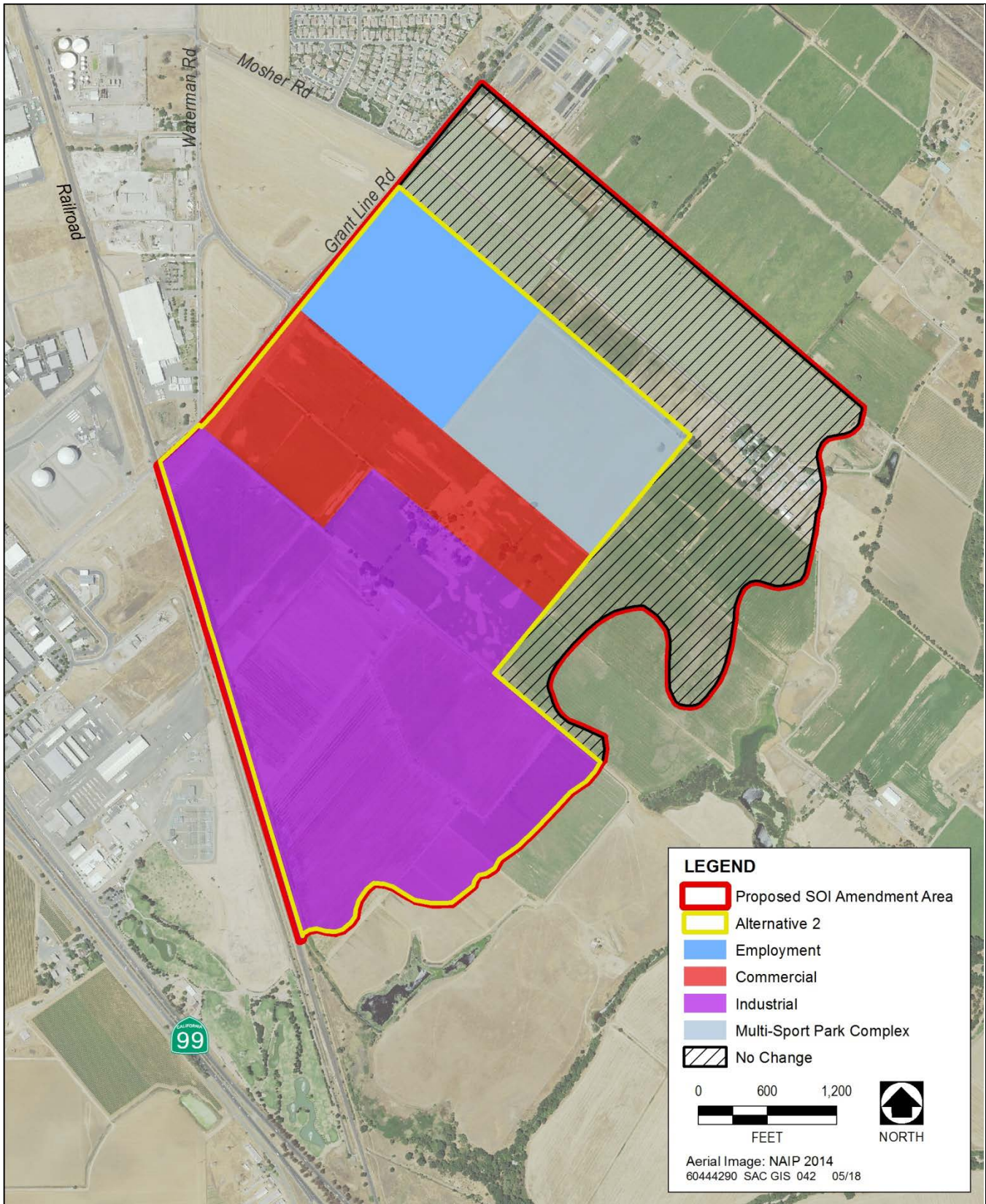
With the continuation of existing agricultural uses, it is likely that no visual change would occur, or that any future activities permitted under the zoning and designation such as the construction of minor outbuildings or farming facilities or changes in agricultural operations would not entail a significant change in the visual character of the project site. No damage to scenic vistas or scenic resources within a state scenic highway would occur. There would be no additional sources of light or glare.

If development were to be approved on the industrial portion, it would likely be similar to the industrial development considered under the proposed Project, although the extent would be much less than the proposed Project. Thus, aesthetics impacts would be reduced compared to the proposed Project.



**Exhibit 5-1. Alternative 1: No Project Alternative**





**Exhibit 5-2. Alternative 2: Reduced Size Alternative**

## **ALTERNATIVE 2: REDUCED SIZE ALTERNATIVE**

Similar to the proposed Project, future development could have impacts on aesthetics, although the extent would be much less than the proposed Project. As described in Section 3.2, “Aesthetics,” because the area has little or no topographical relief and the adjacent areas are private farmland, industrial, or protected floodplain, public views are limited. Portions of the Project site are visible from Grant Line Road and from the intersections of Grant Line Road and Mosher and Waterman Roads, and from pedestrians walking on the new sidewalks installed as part of the UPRR grade separation. Motorists traveling east have views of the Project site after crossing over the elevated portion of Grant Line Road at the UPRR grade separation, for approximately 0.65 mile. The Project site is also visible to motorists traveling west on Grant Line Road as they approach the intersection with Waterman Road and the UPRR grade separation. There are no public views of the off-site drainage improvements. For these public views, Alternative 2 would still introduce structural elements into the landscape that would detract from the visual qualities of the existing agricultural open space, changing the visual character. However, the extent of the development would be reduced compared to the proposed Project – there would be no stadium or separate land set aside for fairground use. Thus, aesthetics impacts would be reduced compared to the proposed Project.

### **5.4.2 AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES**

#### **ALTERNATIVE 1: NO-PROJECT ALTERNATIVE**

There is no Prime Farmland on the Project site. Approximately 424 acres of the Project site are designated as Farmland of Statewide Importance, and 129 acres are designated as Farmland of Local Importance (including the 100-acre City-owned parcel). If development were to be approved on the industrial portion, it would likely be similar to the industrial development considered under the proposed Project. No off-site drainage improvements would be required, but those off-site improvements would not result in the conversion of existing farmland to urban uses. Existing agricultural operations could continue on 527 acres of the Project site. No Williamson Act lands would be developed under this alternative. In addition, no conversion of Farmland of Local Importance would occur and the conversion of Farmland of Statewide Importance would be 38 acres compared to 424 acres under the proposed Project. Therefore, the impacts of Alternative 1 on agricultural resources would be reduced as compared to the proposed Project.

#### **ALTERNATIVE 2: REDUCED SIZE ALTERNATIVE**

Alternative 2 would not convert Prime Farmland. Alternative 2 would result in substantially less conversion of Important Farmland. Alternative 2 would convert approximately 278 acres of Farmland of Statewide Importance, compared to 424 acres under the proposed Project, and approximately 110 acres of Farmland of Local Importance, compared to 129 acres under the proposed Project. Furthermore, Alternative 2 would avoid impacts to on-site Williamson Act contract lands. Off-site drainage improvements would be required, but those off-site improvements would not result in the conversion of existing farmland to urban uses or the cancellation of existing Williamson Act contracts. Existing agricultural operations could continue in the areas not proposed for development. Therefore, the impacts of Alternative 2 on agricultural resources would be reduced as compared to the proposed Project.

### **5.4.3 AIR QUALITY**

#### **ALTERNATIVE 1: NO-PROJECT ALTERNATIVE**

Existing air pollutant emissions associated with agricultural activities would still occur on most of the Project site. Temporary emissions associated with maintenance activities or construction of new agriculture-related structures could also occur on-site. Under Alternative 1, construction would occur on 41 acres of the Project site compared to 571 acres under the proposed Project. There would be reduced exhaust emissions associated with off-road construction equipment and construction worker commutes. Therefore, the amount of construction-related air pollutants that would be generated under Alternative 1 would be substantially reduced as compared to the proposed Project. Operational generation of criteria air pollutants and precursors, as well as toxic air contaminants, would also be reduced compared to the proposed Project. Thus, the air quality impacts would be reduced compared to the proposed Project.

#### **ALTERNATIVE 2: REDUCED SIZE ALTERNATIVE**

Under Alternative 2, construction would occur on 385 acres of the Project site compared to 571 acres under the proposed Project. Construction of generally the same off-site drainage improvements would still be required. Less construction and development would occur under Alternative 2, and there would be reduced exhaust emissions associated with off-road construction equipment and construction worker commutes. Therefore, the amount of construction-related air pollutants that would be generated would be reduced under Alternative 2 as compared to the proposed Project.

Operational generation of criteria air pollutants and precursors, as well as toxic air contaminants, would also be reduced compared to the proposed Project. There would be a reduced amount of industrial and commercial development and no residential development; thereby resulting in less traffic-related exhaust emissions. Thus, the operational air quality impacts under Alternative 2 would be reduced compared to the proposed Project.

### **5.4.4 BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES**

#### **ALTERNATIVE 1: NO-PROJECT ALTERNATIVE**

Under Alternative 1, most of the Project site would continue to function as habitat for special-status wildlife species, and potentially for one special-status plant species. As with the proposed Project, industrial development could adversely affect special-status plants and habitat for special-status species, but only in a small area of cropland in the northwest corner of the Project site. Furthermore, due to the much smaller amount of development, the off-site improvements that would be necessary as part of the proposed Project would not be required under Alternative 1. Therefore, impacts related to the loss and degradation of habitat for special-status wildlife and plant species would be greatly reduced both in type (since no wetlands or associated special-status species would be affected under Alternative 1), and in scope (due to the smaller acreage).

On both agricultural and industrial lands, property owners would still be required to comply with Sections 1602, 3503, 3511, 4700, 5050, and 5515 of the California Fish and Game Code, which prohibit diversion or obstruction of streamflow and streambeds, prohibit “take” of protected species (including raptors), and prohibit destruction of nests or eggs of any bird. Finally, the Federal Endangered Species Act (16 U.S.C. Section 1531 et seq.) prohibits private parties from engaging in any activity that may result in “take” of a species listed as threatened or endangered.

Development could occur on 41 acres of the Project site, and this conversion from agricultural land uses to urban land uses would result in loss of suitable nesting and foraging habitat for Swainson's hawk and other raptors. However, as compared to the impacts of the proposed project, the impacts of Alternative 1 on biological resources would be greatly reduced.

## **ALTERNATIVE 2: REDUCED SIZE ALTERNATIVE**

As with the proposed Project, development of the Project site could adversely affect one special-status plant and habitat for special-status wildlife. Furthermore, Alternative 2 would require the same off-site drainage improvements as the proposed Project. Impacts related to the loss and degradation of habitat for special-status wildlife and plant species would be similar in type, although they would be reduced due to the smaller acreage.

Development could occur on 385 acres of the Project site, and this conversion from agricultural land uses to urban land uses would result in loss of suitable nesting and foraging habitat for Swainson's hawk and other raptors. In addition, the off-site improvements could result in loss of sensitive habitats and or numerous additional species of special-status plants and wildlife. Therefore, as compared to the impacts of the proposed Project, the impacts of Alternative 2 on biological resources would be similar.

## **5.4.5 CULTURAL AND TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES**

### **ALTERNATIVE 1: NO-PROJECT ALTERNATIVE**

Under Alternative 1, urban development could occur on 41 acres of the Project site. If cultural materials are unearthed, they would be subject to same regulations protecting cultural resources as discussed in detail in Section 3.6, "Cultural and Tribal Cultural Resources." Furthermore, the reduced area of development would avoid any potential impacts to Tribal Cultural Resources and would avoid impacts to any of the existing on-site structures which have yet to be evaluated for historical significance. Therefore, the potential for adverse impacts to cultural resources would be reduced compared to the proposed Project. The same potential to uncover and potentially damage or destroy unknown cultural and archaeological materials or human remains would occur under Alternative 1, but would be limited to a 41-acre area under Alternative 1 (as compared to 571 acres under the proposed Project).

Although the same types of impacts could occur, they would occur in a much smaller area as compared to the proposed Project and would occur in an area that is farther from the Deer Creek/Cosumnes River floodplain where prehistoric settlements were more likely to have been located. Furthermore, Alternative 1 would avoid potential impacts to Tribal Cultural Resources and to any structures on the Project site (which may be found to be historic). Therefore, the impacts of Alternative 1 would be reduced as compared to the proposed Project.

### **ALTERNATIVE 2: REDUCED SIZE ALTERNATIVE**

The Mosher and Mahon portions of the Project site (see Section 3.6, "Cultural Resources," of this SEIR) are both outside of the boundary of Alternative 2 and therefore potentially historic facilities on those properties would not be affected. However, Alternative 2 still could have impacts on a farmstead, an Italianate house that dates to the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, and other old farm structures that may be historical resources for CEQA when they are evaluated in the future. The off-site drainage improvements would not affect any known cultural resources but may adversely affect a Tribal Cultural Resource similar to the proposed Project. If cultural materials are unearthed, they would be subject to regulations protecting cultural resources. Therefore, the potential for adverse impacts to



cultural resources would be reduced compared to the proposed Project, but since it is not possible to know whether or not there are subsurface resources that could be affected, it is not possible to determine at this time whether actual impacts would be reduced relative to the proposed Project. Because this alternative would result in similar potential to unearth cultural resources if development were to occur, because development would still occur over a relatively large area, would still have the potential to adversely affect historic resources and potentially a Tribal Culture Resource from the off-site improvements, Alternative 2 would have similar impacts on cultural resources as compared to the proposed Project.

## **5.4.6 GEOLOGY, SOILS, MINERALS, AND PALEONTOLOGICAL RESOURCES**

### **ALTERNATIVE 1: NO-PROJECT ALTERNATIVE**

Under Alternative 1, construction could occur on 41 acres of the Project site compared to 571 acres under the proposed Project. The same regulations related to site preparation and the construction of buildings, including the California Building Standards Code, which provides minimum standards for building design throughout California, would apply. Although similar less-than-significant impacts from seismic, soils, and geologic hazards would occur, they would be reduced as compared to the proposed Project since substantially less land would be developed.

Because the entire Project site is considered paleontologically sensitive, development of the industrial parcel would have the same potential for significant impacts to unique paleontological resources. However, because earthmoving activities would occur on only 41 acres instead of 571 acres, and the off-site drainage improvements would not be necessary, the potential for adverse impacts to unique paleontological resources would be greatly reduced under Alternative 1 as compared to the proposed Project.

### **ALTERNATIVE 2: REDUCED SIZE ALTERNATIVE**

Under Alternative 2, development could occur on 385 acres as compared to 571 acres under the proposed Project. The same regulations related to site preparation and the construction of buildings, including the California Building Standards Code, which provides minimum standards for building design throughout California, would apply. Although similar less-than-significant impacts from seismic, soils, and geologic hazards would occur, they would be reduced as compared to the proposed Project since substantially less land would be developed.

Because all of the Project site and the off-site areas are considered paleontologically sensitive, development under Alternative 2 would have the same potential for significant impacts to unique paleontological resources. Because earthmoving activities would still occur on a large portion of the Project site (i.e., 385 acres) plus the off-site improvements areas, the potential for adverse impacts to unique paleontological resources would be similar under Alternative 2 as compared to the proposed Project.

## **5.4.7 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS**

### **ALTERNATIVE 1: NO-PROJECT ALTERNATIVE**

Small temporary GHG emissions associated with agricultural maintenance activities or construction of new agriculture-related structures on site would continue. In addition, livestock and fertilizer application are sources of GHG emissions.

Under Alternative 1, construction could occur on 41 acres of the Project site compared to 571 acres under the proposed Project. There would be less construction-related GHG emissions generated by exhaust emissions associated with off-road construction equipment, heavy-duty material haul trucks, and construction worker commutes. Therefore, development under Alternative 1 would have reduced short-term construction-related GHG emissions compared to the proposed Project

Operational GHG emission sources, including energy consumption (i.e., electricity and natural gas), transportation, and water and wastewater, would be less compared to the proposed Project since less development would occur.

## **ALTERNATIVE 2: REDUCED SIZE ALTERNATIVE**

Under Alternative 2, construction would occur on 385 acres of the Project site compared to 571 acres under the proposed Project, which would generate GHG emissions. Construction of the same off-site drainage improvements would be required, which would also generate GHG emissions. However, there would be less construction-related GHG emissions generated by exhaust emissions associated with off-road construction equipment, heavy-duty material haul trucks, and construction worker commutes under Alternative 2 as compared to the proposed Project because a smaller area would be developed with the same types of land uses.

There would be a reduction in the acreage and square footage of development under this alternative and an associated reduction in operational GHG emission sources, including energy consumption (i.e., electricity and natural gas), transportation, and water and wastewater. It is not known what land use, transportation, pricing, or design strategies would be incorporated under Alternative 2, and therefore not possible to know the rate of GHG emissions relative to the proposed Project. However, it is reasonable to assume that the total GHG emissions would be reduced under Alternative 2 compared to the proposed Project.

## **5.4.8 HAZARDS, HAZARDOUS MATERIALS, AND WILDFIRE**

### **ALTERNATIVE 1: NO-PROJECT ALTERNATIVE**

The storage, use, disposal, and transport of hazardous materials are extensively regulated by various federal, State, and local agencies, and therefore agricultural companies, construction companies, and businesses (during the operational phase on the industrial parcel) that would handle any hazardous substances would be required by law to implement and comply with these existing hazardous-materials regulations. During the construction phase on the 41-acre industrial parcel, similar to the proposed Project, hazardous materials, such as fuels, oils and lubricants, paints, glues, and cleaning fluids, could be required, although the amount of development would be reduced. Facilities that would use hazardous materials on site after any future development would be required to obtain permits and comply with appropriate regulatory agency standards designed to avoid hazardous waste releases. Construction and operation of industrial development under Alternative 2 would be required to comply with applicable building, health, fire, and safety codes, as described for the proposed Project. Reducing the amount of development (41 acres as compared to 571 acres) would also reduce the likelihood that a potential hazardous materials upset and accident condition would occur. Thus, hazards and hazardous materials impacts under Alternative 1 would be reduced compared to the proposed Project.

## **ALTERNATIVE 2: REDUCED SIZE ALTERNATIVE**

The storage, use, disposal, and transport of hazardous materials are extensively regulated by various federal, State, and local agencies, and therefore agricultural companies, construction companies, and businesses (during the operational phase on the industrial parcel) that would handle any hazardous substances would be required by law to implement and comply with these existing hazardous-materials regulations. During the construction phase both on-site and for the off-site drainage improvements, similar to the proposed Project, hazardous materials such as fuels, oils, and lubricants, would be required, although the area where these materials would be used during construction would be reduced. Facilities that would use hazardous materials on site during the operational phase would be required to obtain permits and comply with appropriate regulatory agency standards designed to avoid hazardous waste releases, similar to the proposed Project. Operation of commercial and industrial development under this alternative would be required to comply with applicable building, health, fire, and safety codes, as described for the proposed Project. Reducing the amount of development (385 acres as compared to 571 acres) would also reduce the likelihood that a potential hazardous materials upset and accident condition would occur. Thus, hazards and hazardous materials impacts under Alternative 2 would be reduced as compared to the proposed Project.

### **5.4.9 HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY**

#### **ALTERNATIVE 1: NO-PROJECT ALTERNATIVE**

Depending on crop types and agricultural practices, continuing water demand could be considerable. In addition, agricultural production—which would allow the use of fertilizers and pesticides—could affect water quality. As with the proposed Project, the 41 acres of industrial development could affect long-term water quality due to increased impervious surfaces and urban stormwater runoff. Construction and grading activities associated with the 41 acres of industrial development have the potential to cause temporary and short-term increased erosion and sedimentation and increase pollutant loads in stormwater runoff. Development on the industrial parcel would involve earth-disturbing activities (e.g., cut and fill, vegetation removal, grading, and trenching) that could expose disturbed areas and stockpiled soils to winter rainfall and stormwater runoff.

However, under Alternative 1, construction would occur on only 41 acres of the Project site as compared to 571 acres under the proposed Project. Furthermore, construction of the off-site improvements would not be required. With the substantial reduction in development, the level of temporary, construction-related impacts would be reduced under Alternative 1 compared to the proposed Project. In addition, Alternative 1 would greatly reduce the amount of new impervious surfaces added on-site compared to the proposed Project and therefore would decrease the peak discharge flow and rate of stormwater runoff generated on the Project site.

Continued agricultural uses would potentially increase the amount of groundwater recharge as compared to the proposed Project. Furthermore, the industrial parcel is not located within either the 100- or 200-year floodplain.

Since the amount of development under Alternative 1 would be substantially reduced as compared to the proposed Project, hydrology and water quality impacts under Alternative 1 would be reduced as compared to the proposed Project.

## **ALTERNATIVE 2: REDUCED SIZE ALTERNATIVE**

As with the proposed Project, development with industrial and commercial uses could affect long-term water quality due to increased impervious surfaces and urban stormwater runoff. Construction and grading activities have the potential to cause temporary and short-term increased erosion and sedimentation and increase pollutant loads in stormwater runoff. Development would involve substantial earth-disturbing activities over 385 acres (e.g., cut and fill, vegetation removal, grading, and trenching), plus the off-site drainage improvement areas, that could expose disturbed areas and stockpiled soils to winter rainfall and stormwater runoff.

Under Alternative 2, construction would occur on 385 acres of the Project site compared to 571 acres under the proposed Project. Construction in the off-site improvements areas would still be required. With the reduction in total development, the level of temporary, construction-related impacts would be reduced under Alternative 2 compared to the proposed Project. In addition, Alternative 2 would reduce the amount of impervious surfaces added on-site compared to the proposed Project and therefore would decrease the peak discharge flow and rate of stormwater runoff generated on the Project site.

Since agricultural activities would continue on 176 acres of the Project site, the potential for on-site groundwater recharge would increase as compared to the proposed Project. None of the development proposed under Alternative 2 would be located within a 100-year floodplain. Some of the industrial development would be within the 200-year floodplain, but this area would be subject to inundation depth that are 1 foot or less and therefore an Urban Level of Flood Protection is not required. With less overall development under Alternative 2, impacts related to hydrology and water quality would be reduced compared to the proposed Project.

### **5.4.10 LAND USE, POPULATION, HOUSING, EMPLOYMENT, ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE, AND UNINCORPORATED DISADVANTAGED COMMUNITIES**

#### **ALTERNATIVE 1: NO-PROJECT ALTERNATIVE**

The continued use of the Project site for agricultural production would not impact land use and planning, population, housing, or employment. Industrial development on the 41-acre parcel and continuation of agricultural uses would be consistent with the Sacramento County General Plan's land use designation and the City's zoning of the project site. Alternative 1 would not displace people or housing, induce substantial population growth, or divide an established community. Alternative 1 land uses are consistent with the land uses identified in the Sacramento County General Plan and the City of Elk Grove General Plan Update (City of Elk Grove 2019). This alternative involves substantially less employment opportunity compared to the proposed Project. Alternative 1 would convert less open space than the proposed Project. Overall, impacts would be reduced compared to the proposed Project.

#### **ALTERNATIVE 2: REDUCED SIZE ALTERNATIVE**

Similar to the proposed Project, the portion of the Project site that is designated for agriculture in the Sacramento County General Plan would be annexed to the City and would be outside of the County's jurisdiction. LAFCo has already approved a Sphere of Influence amendment (with approval of the 2019 SOIA EIR) that placed the Project site in the City's planning area. The City's 2019 General Plan identified the Project site for planning and development. The Project site would be annexed into the City and therefore would be required to comply with the City of Elk Grove General Plan policies. The off-site drainage improvements would be operated by the City under an easement that would be executed with the off-site landowners.



No residential development would be constructed under Alternative 2; therefore, there would be no population growth generated by new housing. Although there would be less development, Alternative 2 would create a substantial number of new employment opportunities that could generate the need for new housing and result in indirect and unplanned population growth. Development associated with Alternative 2 was accounted for in the City's 2019 General Plan, but was not included in the SACOG 2020 MTP/SCS. Development of housing, infrastructure, and facilities and services to serve this growth could have significant environmental impacts through land conversions, commitment of resources, and other mechanisms. Overall, impacts would be reduced compared to the proposed Project.

## **5.4.11 NOISE AND VIBRATION**

### **ALTERNATIVE 1: NO-PROJECT ALTERNATIVE**

Noise associated with the use of agricultural equipment would continue on the Project site and could potentially increase or change in type, depending on any changes in agricultural activities, including a change in crops or farming techniques, or other activities that would be permitted under the current zoning and designations. The same types of construction equipment would be used for development on the 41-acre industrial parcel, but for less time compared to the proposed Project, given the substantially reduced area of development. In addition, operational noise impacts would be reduced since only 41 acres would be developed as compared to 571 acres. Thus, impacts from noise and vibration under Alternative 1 would be reduced as compared to the proposed Project.

### **ALTERNATIVE 2: REDUCED SIZE ALTERNATIVE**

Under Alternative 2, construction could occur on 385 acres of the Project site compared to 571 acres under the proposed Project, as well as in the off-site improvement areas. The same types of construction equipment would be used for development of industrial and commercial land uses and the off-site drainage improvements, but for less time compared to the proposed Project, given the reduced area of development. This would lead to a reduction in potential temporary, short-term exposure of sensitive receptors to construction noise, groundborne noise, and vibration.

In addition, operational noise impacts would be reduced since there would be a smaller amount of development compared with the proposed Project. There would be less industrial commercial/office development, no mixed uses, and no stadium (the proposed Project could accommodate a sports complex and stadium under the City's conditional use permit process). Therefore, Alternative 2 would result in less long-term traffic noise levels at existing noise-sensitive receivers, improved land use compatibility of on-site sensitive receptors with future traffic noise levels, and improved land use compatibility of on-site sensitive receptors and improved generation of non-transportation noise levels in excess of local standards compared to the proposed project. Overall, noise and vibration impacts under Alternative 2 would be reduced compared to the proposed Project.

## **5.4.12 PUBLIC SERVICES AND RECREATION**

### **ALTERNATIVE 1: NO-PROJECT ALTERNATIVE**

Continuation of the existing agricultural land uses on most of the Project site would not result in increased demand on fire protection, emergency medical, or law enforcement services. Project applicant(s) on the 41-acre parcel would pay development impact fees to ensure fire and police protection personnel and equipment, school

facilities, and parks are provided to meet increased demand for these services. Since Alternative 1 would reduce the development potential on-site from 571 acres to 41 acres, the law enforcement, fire protection, public school services, and parks and recreational services needs would be substantially reduced compared with the proposed Project. Thus, impacts would be reduced compared to the proposed Project.

## **ALTERNATIVE 2: REDUCED SIZE ALTERNATIVE**

Since Alternative 2 would reduce the development potential on-site from 571 acres to 385 acres, the law enforcement, fire protection, public school services, and parks and recreational services needs would be proportionally reduced compared with the proposed Project. Project applicants would pay development impact fees to ensure fire and police protection personnel and equipment, school facilities, and parks are provided to meet increased demand for these services. Because of the relatively large area that would still be developed and the likely increase in demand for public services that would still occur under Alternative 2, impacts would be similar compared to the proposed Project.

### **5.4.13 TRANSPORTATION AND TRAFFIC**

#### **ALTERNATIVE 1: NO-PROJECT ALTERNATIVE**

Assuming that agricultural operations would continue consistent with existing operations, no increase in travel demand would occur and no conflicts with transportation-related policies would occur. Under Alternative 1, substantially less development would occur as compared to the proposed Project (41 acres compared to 571 acres). Since travel demand is typically determined based on the size and type of development proposed, the traffic and transportation effects would be substantially reduced under Alternative 1 as compared to the proposed Project.

#### **ALTERNATIVE 2: REDUCED SIZE ALTERNATIVE**

Under Alternative 2, commercial and industrial development would occur on approximately 385 acres. Therefore, Alternative 2 would result in increased generation of traffic and therefore potential conflicts with transportation-related policies could occur. Under Alternative 2, less development would occur (385 acres as compared to 571 acres). Since travel demand is typically determined based on the size and type of development proposed, the traffic and transportation effects would be reduced under Alternative 2 as compared to the proposed Project.

### **5.4.14 UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS**

#### **ALTERNATIVE 1: NO-PROJECT ALTERNATIVE**

For continued agricultural use, there would be no increased demand for utilities and services; agricultural water demands would be similar to existing conditions and septic systems would provide wastewater treatment. Under Alternative 1, development with urban uses would occur on 41 acres of the project site compared to 571 acres under the proposed Project. Development under Alternative 1 would have substantially less water supply demands, generate less wastewater, and generate less solid waste. Thus, impacts under Alternative 1 would be reduced compared to the proposed Project.

## **ALTERNATIVE 2: REDUCED SIZE ALTERNATIVE**

Under Alternative 2, construction would occur on 385 acres of the SOIA Area compared to 571 acres under the proposed Project. Development under Alternative 2 would have less water supply demands, generate less wastewater, and generate less solid waste as compared to the proposed Project. Thus, impacts under Alternative 2 would be reduced compared to the proposed Project.

### **5.4.15 ENERGY**

#### **ALTERNATIVE 1: NO-PROJECT ALTERNATIVE**

Under Alternative 1, construction would occur on 41 acres of the Project site compared to 571 acres under the proposed Project. Since development would be substantially reduced in size compared to the proposed Project, energy demands would also be similarly reduced. This development would be subject to the same State building energy efficiency requirements as would occur under the proposed Project. There would be substantially less construction-related, development-related, and transportation-related energy consumption. There would be substantially less demand for electricity and natural gas. Thus, energy impacts under Alternative 1 would be reduced compared to the proposed Project.

#### **ALTERNATIVE 2: REDUCED SIZE ALTERNATIVE**

Under Alternative 2, construction would occur on 385 acres of the Project site compared to 571 acres under the proposed Project. Construction of the off-site drainage improvements would still be required. Since development would be reduced in size compared to the proposed Project, energy demands would also be similarly reduced. This development would be subject to the same State building energy efficiency requirements as would occur under the proposed Project. There would be less industrial commercial/office development, and no stadium or development of mixed residential uses. There would be less construction-related, development-related, and transportation-related energy consumption. There would be less demand for electricity and natural gas. In addition, similar to the proposed Project, the scale of possible development under Alternative 2 could result in substantial energy consumption even with inclusion of energy conservation measures. Thus, energy impacts under Alternative 2 would be similar as compared to the proposed Project.

## **5.5 ENVIRONMENTALLY SUPERIOR ALTERNATIVE**

Alternative 1 would have the greatest number of reduced impacts as shown in Table 5-1, therefore Alternative 1: No Project Alternative would be the Environmentally Superior Alternative. This alternative provides the greatest reduction in potential environmental effects of the proposed project. Other than the No-Project Alternative, Alternative 2: Reduced Size Alternative would provide the most benefit relative to reducing environmental effects compared to the proposed Project.

**Table 5-1 Comparison of Significant Environmental Effects of the Alternatives to the Proposed Project**

Environmental Issue Area	Alternative 1: No-Project Alternative	Alternative 2: Reduced Size Alternative
Aesthetics	Reduced	Reduced
Agricultural Resources	Reduced	Reduced
Air Quality	Reduced	Reduced
Biological Resources	Reduced	Similar
Cultural and Tribal Cultural Resources	Reduced	Similar
Geology, Soils, Minerals, and Paleontological Resources	Reduced	Similar
Greenhouse Gas Emissions	Reduced	Reduced
Hazards, Hazardous Materials and Wildfire	Reduced	Reduced
Hydrology and Water Quality	Reduced	Reduced
Land Use and Planning and Population, Housing, Employment	Reduced	Reduced
Noise and Vibration	Reduced	Reduced
Public Services and Recreation	Reduced	Similar
Transportation and Traffic	Reduced	Reduced
Utilities and Service Systems	Reduced	Reduced
Energy	Reduced	Similar
<b>Total Reduced Impact Topics</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>10</b>

Note: Some environmental issue areas are split into subsections. In this case, if any of the subsections had reduced or increased impacts, the entire environmental issue is shown as reduced or increased (even if another subsection had similar impacts).