

## 6.0 ALTERNATIVES

As required by Section 15126(d) of the *State CEQA Guidelines*, this EIR examines a range of alternatives to the proposed Specific Plan that could feasibly achieve similar objectives. The discussion focuses on alternatives that may be able to reduce many of the adverse impacts associated with the proposed Specific Plan. Included in this analysis is an alternative that involves implementation of a plan with land uses that comply with the current General Plan and zoning designations, an alternative that adheres to the proposed August 2004 Specific Plan, and the CEQA-required “no project” alternative. These are summarized below, and subsequently discussed in greater detail within the impact analysis for each alternative:

- *Alternative 1: Existing Zoning*
- *Alternative 2: Proposed August 2004 Specific Plan Land Use Scenario*
- *Alternative 3: No Project, No Development Alternative*

The California Supreme Court, in *Citizens of Goleta Valley v. Board of Supervisors* (1990), indicated that a discussion of alternative sites is needed if the project “may be feasibly accomplished in a successful manner considering the economic, environmental, social, and technological factors involved” at another site.

As suggested in *Goleta*, several criteria form the basis of whether alternative sites need to be considered in detail. These criteria take the form of the following questions:

1. *Could the size and other characteristics of another site physically accommodate the project?*
2. *Is another site reasonably available for acquisition?*
3. *Is the timing of carrying out development on an alternative site reasonable for the applicant?*
4. *Is the project economically feasible on another site?*
5. *What are the land use designation(s) of alternative sites?*
6. *Does the lead agency have jurisdiction over alternative sites? and*
7. *Are there any social, technological, or other factors which may make the consideration of alternative sites infeasible?*

Based on discussions with City staff, an alternative project site is not evaluated in this EIR because there are no other available sites in the City that could reasonably accomplish the Specific Plan objectives, particularly those related to housing, the extension of key roadways to implement the Circulation Element, and open space provisions.

Each alternative is described in detail in the following discussion. For reference, Table 6-1 compares the development characteristics of the three alternatives considered in this evaluation to the proposed Specific Plan described in Section 2.0 of this document.



**Table 6-1. Buildout Comparison of Project Alternatives**

<b>Parameter</b>	<b>Proposed Project</b>	<b>Alt. 1 (Existing Zoning Alternative)</b>	<b>Alt. 2 (Proposed August 2004 Specific Plan)</b>	<b>Alt. 3 (No Project)</b>
Number of Residential Units	1,439 Units	599 Units	1,439 Units	0 Units
Square Feet of Commercial / Industrial Space	280,500 sq. ft.	721,000 sq. ft.	455,000 sq. ft.	0 sq. ft.
Implementation of Hillside Ordinance in Entire Plan Area	No	Yes	No	No
School Site	School site designation in Subarea 10	No school site designation	School (S) Overlay Designation in Subarea 13	No school site designation
Open Space and Trail System	Incorporates 303.2 acres of open space (37% of the site) with a connecting trail system	No designated open space or trail system	Incorporates 280 acres of open space (33% of the site) with a connecting trail system	No designated open space or trail system
Infrastructure Requirements	Added sewer and drainage infrastructure	More sewer and drainage infrastructure than proposed project	More sewer and drainage infrastructure than proposed project	None
Location of Airport Road extension	Road extension would occur along eastern edge of site	Road extension would occur through low-lying interior of site	Road extension would occur along eastern edge of site	No extension would occur

## 6.1 ALTERNATIVE DESCRIPTIONS

It should be noted that the areal extent of the alternatives is very similar to, but not precisely the same as, the proposed project. The alternatives involving development (alternatives 1 and 2) are each 837.2 acres, about 9.5 acres larger than the proposed project. As noted in Section 2.0, Project Description, the difference can be accounted for the fact that the proposed project does not include some of the peripheral road rights-of-way that were included in the acreage totals for the alternatives, which include scenarios studied previously in the original August 2004 Draft EIR. However, the general geographic extent and location of the alternatives relative to the proposed project boundaries are substantially the same, and valid for comparative purposes.

### 6.1.1 Alternative 1: Existing Zoning

This Alternative assumes that the Specific Plan is not undertaken, and that the site would be developed in accordance with the existing City of Paso Robles zoning designations. A specific plan is required, but the General Plan does not show areas where development would be restricted. The development pattern of this Alternative is shown in Figure 6-1. All 85.1 acres of the Chandler Sand & Gravel property would retain its Business Park designation. Neighborhood Commercial development could occur in two general locations on the site, one in the northern end near Union Road, and one in the southern end near Sherwood Road. About 33 acres of Commercial Service land would be included. Residential densities would range from 0.33 du/acre to 9 du/acre with the majority of the Plan Area having the Residential



Suburban designation with 0.33 du/acre density. This Alternative does not include a school site. Airport Road would follow the low-lying drainage through the center of the site, and the Sherwood Road/Fontana Road/Linne Road connection would retain its existing configuration. This Alternative would implement the City’s Hillside grading ordinance, resulting in custom lot development on the site. Table 6-2 summarizes the land uses and potential development associated with this Alternative.

**Table 6-2. Summary of Alternative 1 Buildout Potential**

Area	Acres	Maximum Dwellings	Maximum Floor Area (Sq. Feet)
<b>Residential</b>			
RS (Residential Suburban)	575.3	191	-
RSF-2	89.6	179	-
RSF-6	13.2	90	
RMF-9	15.4	139	
<b>Total</b>	<b>693.5</b>	<b>599</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Non-Residential</b>			
Commercial Service	33.0	-	162,000
Business Park	82.1	-	402,000
Neighborhood Commercial	19.2	-	157,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>134.3</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>721,000</b>
<b>Summary and Total</b>			
<b>Residential</b>	693.5	599	-
<b>Commercial</b>	134.3	-	721,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>837.2</b>	<b>599</b>	<b>721,000</b>

*Calculations assume 100% buildout potential for RS, and RSF-2. RSF-6 and RMF-9 buildout totals reflect those anticipated under the existing 2003 General Plan and zoning. Non-residential development assumes 75% of potential buildout. This assumption accounts for the likelihood that detailed site planning, oaks and topography may substantially reduce the amount of potential square footage of developed non-residential area.*

### 6.1.2 Alternative 2: Proposed August 2004 Specific Plan Land Use Scenario

This Alternative assumes that the previously proposed August 2004 Specific Plan is undertaken and that the site would be developed in accordance with the goals, policies, and development standards set forth in that version of the Specific Plan. The same number of dwellings as the Specific Plan would be allowed in this scenario as for the proposed project, but there would be substantially more commercial development (see Table 6-1). The development pattern of this Alternative is shown in Figure 6-2. Table 6-3 summarizes the land uses and potential development associated with this Alternative.



**Table 6-3. Summary of Alternative 2 Buildout Potential**

Area	Acres	Maximum Dwellings	Maximum Floor Area (Sq. Feet)
<b>Residential</b>			
<i>RSF-1</i>	60.6	68	-
<i>RSF-2</i>	118.1	216	-
<i>RSF-3</i>	141.2	324	-
<i>RSF-4</i>	22.6	74	-
<i>RSF-6</i>	107.9	568	-
<i>RMF-9</i>	14.2	139	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>464.6</b>	<b>1,439</b>	-
<b>Non-Residential</b>			
<i>Business</i>	21.2	-	155,000
<i>Commercial</i>	2.6	-	19,000
<i>Commercial/Business</i>	10.3	-	69,000
<i>Commercial/Business/Tourist</i>	14.3	-	98,000
<i>Commercial/Recreational</i>	32.7	-	114,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>81.1</b>	-	<b>455,000</b>
<b>Open Space</b>			
<i>Open Space</i>	<b>280</b>	-	-
<b>Summary and Total</b>			
<b>Residential</b>	464.6	1,439	-
<b>Commercial</b>	81.1	-	455,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>837.2</b>	<b>1,439</b>	<b>455,000</b>

*Calculations assume 100% buildout potential for all residential land uses. Non-residential development assumes 75% of potential buildout. This assumption accounts for the likelihood that detailed site planning, oaks and topography may substantially reduce the amount of potential square footage of developed non-residential area.*

**Similarities to the Proposed Project.** In many ways, the features included in this scenario are similar to those included in the proposed project. The Alternative calls for open space, residential, and mixed/commercial uses as well as associated roads and pedestrian/bike paths. A potential site for a school is also identified. Residential concentrations would range in density, typically increasing in intensity from north to south. This density pattern would avoid conflicts with operations of the Paso Robles Airport and of Barney Schwartz Park. No residential development would thus occur north of the existing alignment of Gilead Lane. As with the proposed project, Airport Road would generally follow the eastern boundary of the site. Linne Road would be realigned to more directly connect with Sherwood Road and Gilead Lane would be extended as the primary east-west collector street through the site. This Alternative would employ a variety of grading standards, intended to address the varied topographic nature of the site. The standards include a combination of mass grading techniques and custom lot grading, depending on the development area. Although there are differences in location and detail, the grading concepts would be similar to what is anticipated under the proposed project.



*Differences from the Proposed Project.* The pattern and density of commercial uses would be the most significant difference from the proposed project. Under this alternative, the northern end of the site would have substantially more intensive commercial development than the proposed project. Most commercial uses under the proposed project would generally be limited to the areas north of Union Road, with the exception of limited recreational-serving commercial uses adjacent to Barney Schwartz Park. Under this alternative, commercial uses could also occur in areas 4, 5 and 10, which surround Barney Schwartz Park south of Union Road. Under this scenario, about 436,000 square feet of commercial uses would be anticipated in the northern portion of the site, within areas 4, 5, 10, and 19. This compares to about 247,500 square feet of commercial uses under the proposed project in these areas, all of which would be north of Union Road. This is a 76% increase in potential commercial area as compared to the proposed project. This alternative would also include limited Neighborhood Commercial uses in the southern portion of the site, similar to, but in a slightly different location than, the proposed project. This alternative would allow up to 19,000 square feet in the southwesternmost corner of the site, while the proposed project would allow slightly more – 33,000 square feet – distributed in two locations near the future intersection of Sherwood Road and Airport Road.

The pattern and extent of land development under this scenario is also somewhat different than the proposed project. Although superficially similar in pattern, a close comparison of Figure 6-2 and Figure 2-2 in Section 2.0, *Project Description*, shows that many of the development areas included in the proposed project are reduced, refined, or somewhat reconfigured when compared to this alternative. As an example, subarea 6 is much larger under this alternative, and would include extensive area that would remain in open space under the proposed project. Many of the other areas are less refined in presentation under this alternative, including subareas 1, 2, 3, 7, 8 and 9. The proposed project includes greater refinement in part because of a greater understanding of physical and environmental constraints that were learned as a result of the original August 2004 Draft EIR.

It should also be noted that certain development areas have been renamed. Subarea 19 under Alternative 2 has now been divided into subareas 18 and 19 under the proposed project. Subarea 18 under Alternative 2 has now been subsumed into subarea 13 under the proposed project. These changes are primarily administrative in nature, and are discussed here for clarification, as the reader compares Figure 2-2 and 6-2.

The location of the proposed school site is another substantial difference between this alternative and the proposed project. This alternative locates the school in the southern portion of the site, near Linne Road, while the proposed project includes this site adjacent to and southwest of Barney Schwartz Park. The primary reasons why the school site has been moved under the proposed project include 1) the refinement of the Airport Land Use Plan indicates that a school site would be acceptable in the location shown in the proposed project, which was a question at the time of the August 2004 Draft EIR; and 2) it is the preference of the school district.

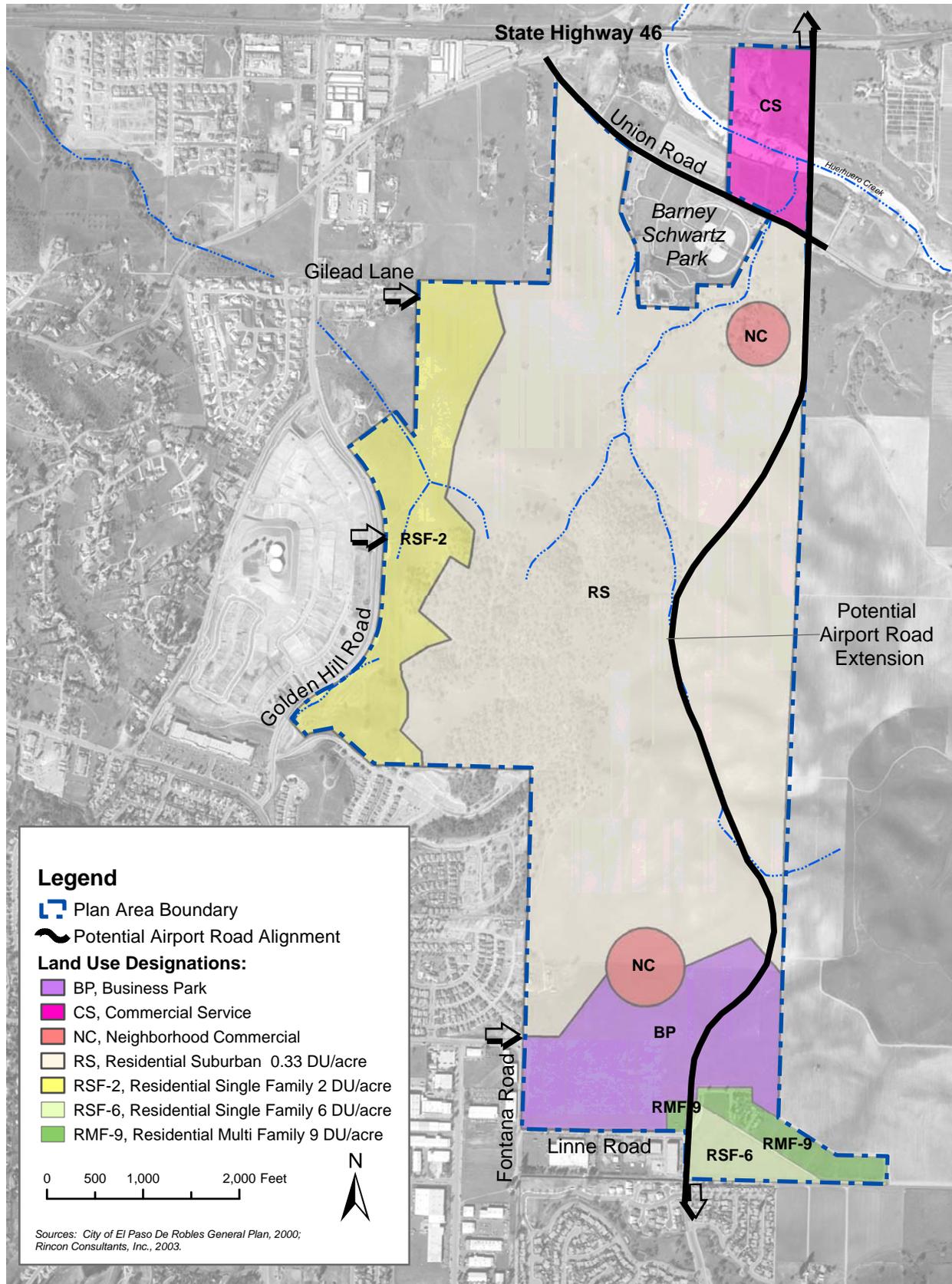
### **6.1.3 Alternative 3: No Project, No Development**

This Alternative assumes that the Specific Plan is not implemented, and that no new development would occur on the site. The land would continue to support existing land uses.



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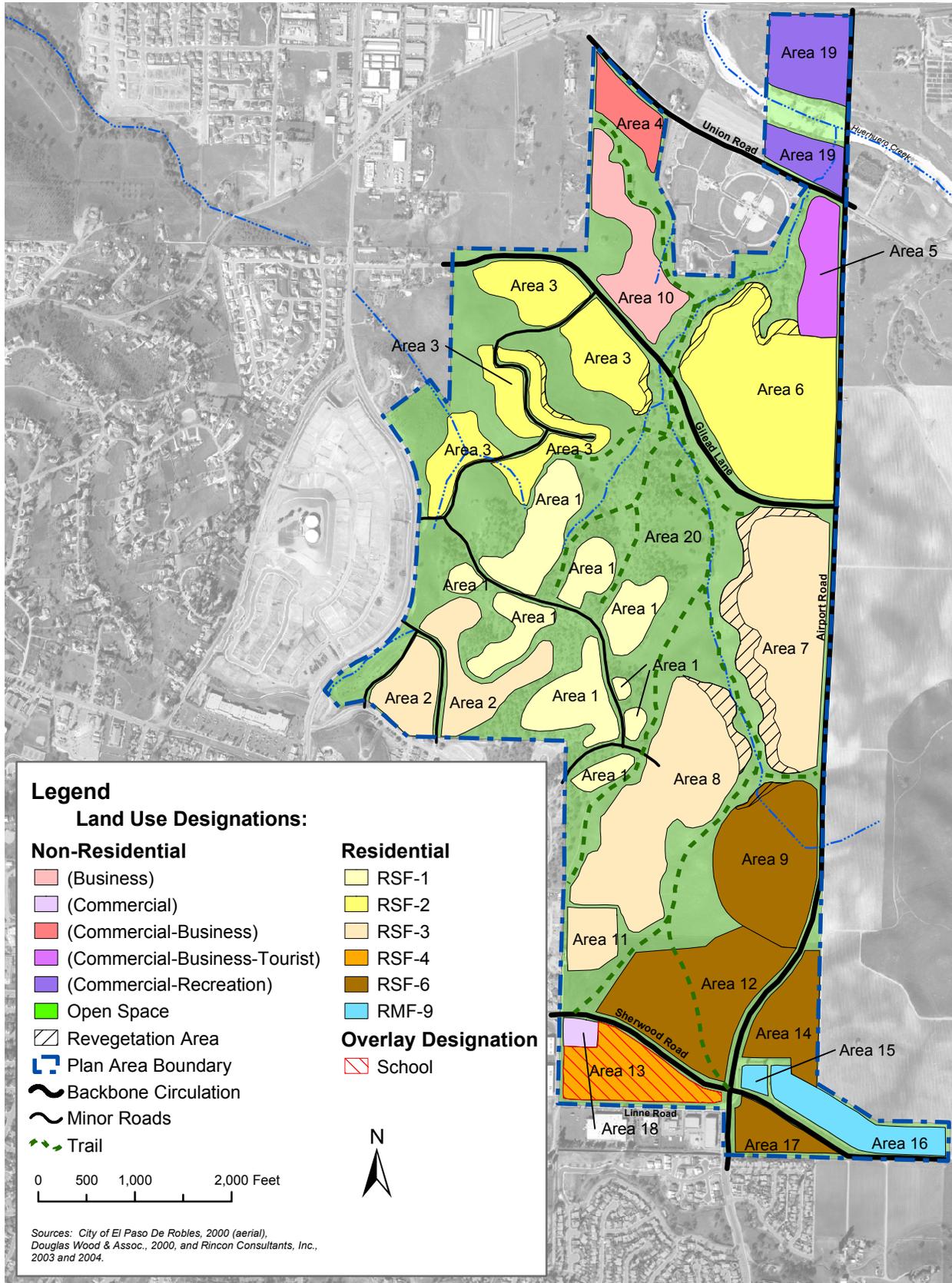


Alternative 1 - Existing Zoning

Figure 6-1



6.0 Alternatives



Alternative 2 -  
Originally Proposed Project (August 2004)

Figure 6-2



## 6.2 ALTERNATIVE IMPACT ANALYSIS

### 6.2.1 Land Use and Agriculture

*Alternative 1: Existing Zoning.* This Alternative would allow residential and commercial development consistent with existing zoning designations, permitting up to 599 dwellings, or about 58% fewer homes than under the Specific Plan. While the overall residential density would be reduced, there would be no central open space area under this scenario. Thus, homes would be built throughout the site, and more land area could be altered. In addition, more residential area would occur in the northern portion of the Specific Plan area in this Alternative. These residences are more likely to be impacted by airport operations than the commercial uses designated in the Specific Plan.

This Alternative would allow an estimated 721,000 square feet of commercial development, or about 157% more than would occur under the proposed Specific Plan. Much of this difference would occur in the southern portion of the site, where business park development would be permitted.

This Alternative is similar to the proposed Specific Plan in that it would convert agriculture land, some areas of which contain soils of Statewide Importance, to urban use. Under this Alternative, residential development would occur near the eastern edge of the site, and there would be no buffer between this development and adjacent agricultural uses, because Airport Road would be aligned through the center (not the eastern edge) of the site. This could result in greater land use incompatibilities with respect to agricultural operations.

The northern section of this Alternative, encompassing the portion north of Gilead Lane and west of Barney Schwartz Park (including the northernmost edge of subarea 4 and nearly all of subareas 18 and 19 in the Specific Plan area), is located within the Paso Robles Municipal Airport Planning Safety Zone 4, which is the outer approach/departure zone. Development in these areas is subject to the restrictions of the Paso Robles Airport Land Use Plan (ALUP). Unlike the proposed Specific Plan which places commercial uses in this area, this alternative incorporates residential development in this area. This alternative also includes potential residential development adjacent to Barney Schwartz Park where activities may be incompatible with residences.

Because there would be less open space preserved, potentially greater conflicts with Barney Schwartz Park activities and airport and agricultural operations, this alternative would result in *greater* overall land use and agricultural impacts than would be expected under the proposed Specific Plan.

*Alternative 2: Proposed August 2004 Specific Plan Land Use Scenario.* This Alternative would allow residential and commercial development consistent with the Proposed August 2004 Specific Plan, permitting the same number of dwellings at a similar density to the proposed Specific Plan. However, the Alternative would allow up to 455,000 square feet of commercial development, or about 62% more than the proposed Specific Plan. Much of this additional development would occur in the northern portion of the site, where open space is planned. Open space in this alternative would be nearly 8% less than the in proposed Specific Plan.



This Alternative is similar to the proposed Specific Plan in that it would convert agricultural land to urban use. Resulting land use conflicts between agricultural and residential uses would likewise be similar. However, agricultural buffer zones and other policies in the alternative plan would mitigate these conflicts.

The northern section of this alternative, encompassing the portion north of Gilead Lane and west of Barney Schwartz Park (including the northernmost edge of subarea 4 and nearly all of subareas 18 and 19 in the Specific Plan area), is located within the Paso Robles Municipal Airport Planning Safety Zone 4, which is the outer approach/ departure zone. Development in these areas would be subject to the restrictions of the Paso Robles Airport Land Use Plan (ALUP). Like the proposed Specific Plan, however, this Alternative places commercial uses in this portion of the site, which are compatible with airport operations.

Because there would be somewhat less open space preserved and substantially more commercial development allowed in proximity to potential residential development, this scenario would result in *greater* overall land use impacts than would be expected under the proposed Specific Plan. However, because the same number of housing units would be allowed at a similar density, and measures would be taken to mitigate conflicts between agricultural and residential uses, agricultural impacts would be *similar* to the proposed Specific Plan.

**Alternative 3: No Project, No Development.** With the implementation of this Alternative, the site would retain its current land uses. No additional development would occur, so no potential incompatibilities would be introduced. Therefore, this alternative has *less* overall land use and agricultural impacts than the proposed Specific Plan.

**Conclusion:** *Alternative 3 is superior overall because there would be no incompatible land uses introduced. Alternative 2 has a development pattern similar to the Specific Plan and would result in similar impacts with respect to off-site incompatibilities. However, increased commercial development in Alternative 2 may result in greater internal land use incompatibilities than under the proposed Specific Plan. Alternative 1 would result in greater overall land use conflicts than the proposed project.*

## 6.2.2 Transportation and Circulation

**Alternative 1: Existing Zoning.** This alternative would accommodate 840 fewer residential units when compared to the Specific Plan; however, it would allow for 440,500 square feet more commercial development than would be accommodated under the proposed Specific Plan. At the same time, there would be less specificity regarding the types of commercial development that could be accommodated under the existing zoning. Commercial development would be distributed throughout the site, with over half of the projected total of 721,000 square feet to be located in the southern end. Residential development would be generally lower density than expected under the proposed project. Based on the rates used in the traffic analysis for the proposed project (Table 6-4), this would result in 5,802 more gross non-residential trips (assuming no passby factor), but 7,717 fewer residential trips. The net result would be 1,915 fewer daily trips (9% less) generated upon Specific Plan buildout as



compared to the proposed project. As a result, traffic impacts on local roadway and highway segments and intersections would be less when compared to the proposed Specific Plan.

**Table 6-4. Trip Generation Comparison of Alternative 1 to Proposed Project**

Alternative 1				Proposed Project
Land Use	Buildout Development	Trip Generation Rate	Total Daily Trips (gross) <sup>1</sup>	Total Daily Trips (gross) <sup>1</sup>
<i>Non-Residential</i>				
Commercial	319,000 SF	42.94/KSF	13,698	
Business Park	402,000 SF	6.69/KSF	2,689	
All Non-Residential Trips			16,387	10,585
<i>Residential</i>				
Single Family	460 dwelling units	9.57/DU	4,402	
Multi-Family	139 dwelling units	6.72/DU	934	
All Residential Trips			5,336	13,053
<b>TOTAL (all trips)</b>			<b>21,724</b>	<b>23,638</b>

<sup>1</sup> Does not assume Pass-By Reduction, shown in Table 4.2-8B.

Although the general circulation pattern included in this scenario would be similar to the proposed Specific Plan, the alignment of Airport Road would be substantially different, following the lower-lying center of the site. In addition, Sherwood Road would not be realigned, and the existing “stairstep” configuration of Sherwood Road, Fontana Road, and Linne Road would be retained. Operationally, the Airport Road alignment would not likely be different than under the Specific Plan. But the Sherwood/Fontana/Linne Road alignment would make operational movements difficult, particularly when cumulative impacts are considered, primarily those related to potential future development under the Olsen Ranch and Beechwood Area Specific Plans.

In addition, the reduced amount of residential development and greater area designated for commercial uses (for which it appears there is a more limited market, and buildout would take longer to achieve) would make it more difficult to generate the revenue needed to construct some of the needed facilities that may be needed as a result of future development. Thus, while less traffic would be generated under this scenario, the internal circulation pattern would be less conducive to traffic flow within the area. In addition, this scenario would not include a mechanism for providing funding for needed roadway improvements, which would occur under the proposed Specific Plan. Consequently, overall, traffic impacts are both *lesser* and *greater* than under the proposed Specific Plan.

**Alternative 2: Proposed August 2004 Specific Plan Land Use Scenario.** The general circulation pattern included in this scenario would be similar to the proposed Specific Plan. This alternative would accommodate the same number of residential units as compared to the proposed Specific Plan; however, it would allow for 174,500 square feet more commercial development than would be accommodated under the proposed Specific Plan. In general, the development pattern would be similar, but the non-residential portion would be more



intensive, particularly in the area north of Gilead Lane. Thus, generally impacts to the State Route 46 East corridor and nearby City arterials including Union Road and Golden Hill Road would be greater under this alternative. Table 6-5 summarizes the trip generation characteristics of this scenario compared to the proposed project. This scenario would generate a similar amount of residential trips, but about 4,275 more non-residential trips than would be expected under the proposed project. Overall, about 18% more trips would be generated under this alternative as compared to the proposed project. Consequently, overall traffic impacts would be greater than expected under the proposed project.

**Table 6-5. Trip Generation Comparison of Alternative 2 to Proposed Project**

Alternative 2				Proposed Project
Land Use	Buildout Development	Trip Generation Rate <sup>2</sup>	Total Daily Trips (gross) <sup>1</sup>	Total Daily Trips (gross) <sup>1</sup>
<i>Non-Residential</i>				
Commercial	300,000 SF	42.94/KSF	12,882	10,585
Office	155,000 SF	12.76/KSF	1,978	
All Non-Residential Trips			14,860	
<i>Residential</i>				
Single Family	1,210 dwelling units	9.57/DU	11,580	13,053
Multi-Family	229 dwelling units	6.72/DU	1,539	
All Residential Trips			13,119	
<b>TOTAL (all trips)</b>			<b>27,978</b>	<b>23,638</b>

<sup>1</sup> Does not assume Pass-By Reduction, shown in Table 4.2-8B.

<sup>2</sup> Rates are as reported in original August 2004 Chandler Ranch Area Specific Plan Draft EIR

**Alternative 3: No Project, No Development.** Land uses in the Specific Plan area would remain as they currently are, therefore, no additional trips would be added to existing traffic under this Alternative. However, without any development, it would not be possible to fund the construction of the Airport Road extension, which is an improvement identified in the City’s Circulation Element. Nevertheless, this alternative would result in *less* traffic impacts compared to the proposed Specific Plan.

**Conclusion:** *Alternative 3 would be environmentally superior because it adds no additional trips and would create no additional congestion. Both Alternative 2 would result in greater traffic and circulation impacts than the proposed Specific Plan, while Alternative 1 would have both greater and lesser impacts..*

### 6.2.3 Air Quality

**Alternative 1: Existing Zoning.** This Alternative would generate 9% fewer average daily vehicle trips generated from the site, when compared to the Specific Plan (see Section 6.2.2). Therefore, air contaminant emissions associated with vehicle use would be commensurately reduced. Since the proposed Specific Plan would not result in CO “hotspots”, and this



alternative would result in fewer trips, it would result in similarly less than significant impacts. Because this scenario is consistent with the development assumptions made in the San Luis Obispo APCD's 2001 Clean Air Plan (CAP), it would be consistent with the CAP. In comparison, the proposed Specific Plan would be inconsistent with the existing CAP.

This Alternative would generate similar demolition related emissions but potentially greater grading-related emissions, since the areas of disturbance could be greater (no open space preserve is envisioned under this scenario). However, fewer homes would be built, so construction-related emissions may be less than under the proposed project. Overall impacts would likely be *less* because of this scenario's consistency with the 2001 CAP, but the lack of open space may result in *greater* grading-related emissions.

***Alternative 2: Proposed August 2004 Specific Plan Land Use Scenario.*** Although this Alternative would allow for the same number homes as the proposed Specific Plan, the additional commercial development would result in an overall greater traffic generation. Therefore, air contaminant emissions associated with vehicle use would substantially increase in this alternative. Because the proposed Specific Plan is projected to be inconsistent with the San Luis Obispo APCD's 2001 Clean Air Plan (CAP), this alternative, with its increased vehicle traffic, would similarly be inconsistent with the CAP. Despite the increased trips, however, this alternative would not result in CO "hotspots".

This Alternative would generate comparable demolition- and grading-related emissions, since the areas of disturbance would be similar to the Specific Plan. However, more commercial development would be built, so construction-related emissions may be more than under the proposed project. Overall, impacts would likely be *greater* because of this scenario's increased commercial development.

***Alternative 3: No Project, No Development.*** Since no additional vehicle trips would be generated by this alternative, air quality impacts based on trips made to the area would be *less* than the Specific Plan. In addition, no demolition or construction related emissions would occur.

***Conclusion: Alternative 3 would have no air quality impact; therefore, it is the environmentally superior alternative for this issue. Alternative 1 would also be environmentally superior to the proposed Specific Plan, because it would generate less traffic and construction related emissions. Alternative 2 would result in worsened air quality because of additional commercial development.***

## 6.2.4 Noise

***Alternative 1: Existing Zoning.*** As noted in Section 6.2.2, this alternative would generate about 8% more trips than the proposed project, so resulting noise levels on nearby major roadways would be commensurately higher. This could adversely impact existing residential development and other noise-sensitive land uses to a greater extent than would the proposed project. In addition, there would also be no planned buffer between onsite residential and commercial uses, particularly in the center of the site where residential and business park uses would abut over a long common boundary. The location of Airport Road through a low-



lying central drainage would also likely amplify vehicle noise from this roadway, which could adversely affect a greater number of residents within the Specific Plan area. Overall, impacts to both off-site and on-site noise-sensitive land uses would be *greater* under this scenario as compared to the proposed project.

***Alternative 2: Proposed August 2004 Specific Plan Land Use Scenario.*** Because of the increase in commercial development compared to the proposed Specific Plan, this alternative would increase the number of average vehicle trips generated within the site. As a result, associated roadway noise affecting sensitive receptors both within the specific plan area and offsite would increase. Noise generated from construction and demolition related traffic would increase as well, as additional commercial development would likely result in more construction activities over an extended period of time.

In addition, the distribution of housing under this scenario relative to primary noise sources (major roadways and Barney Schwartz Park) would be similar to what is expected under the proposed project. However, incremental noise increases related to increased traffic on these roadways would result in slightly greater noise impacts as compared to the proposed project.

Overall, noise impacts generated under this scenario would be *greater* than expected under the proposed project.

***Alternative 3: No Project, No Development.*** Since no additional vehicle trips would be added to the local roadway system, no construction would occur, and no new noise impacts would occur.

***Conclusion: Alternative 3 would result in no new noise impacts, and is thus environmentally superior overall. Alternative 1 would be both environmentally superior and inferior to the proposed Specific Plan. Alternative 2 would be inferior to the proposed Specific Plan because of increased traffic noise relative to the proposed Specific Plan.***

### 6.2.5 Safety and Geologic Hazards

***Alternative 1: Existing Zoning.*** Development under this alternative would expose fewer residents to geologic hazards on the site, including seismic ground shaking, fault rupture, landslides, shrink-swell potential, erosion, liquefaction, and groundwater percolation. Exposure to residual pesticides in on-site soils would be less than the proposed Specific Plan because there would be fewer workers and future residents. However, there would be no provision to protect open space, particularly within steep drainage areas, where development could be exposed to hazards related to steep slopes, erosion, and liquefaction in lower-lying areas. Overall, this Alternative would result in both lesser and greater impacts than the proposed Specific Plan; *lesser* because of a reduced level of development, but *greater* because development could occur within more steeply sloping areas subject to greater geologic hazards.

***Alternative 2: Proposed August 2004 Specific Plan Land Use Scenario.*** This Alternative would expose more people living and working within the area to geologic hazards, including seismic ground shaking, fault rupture, landslides, shrink-swell potential, erosion, liquefaction, and groundwater percolation. Although the same number of dwellings would be allowed in



this Alternative as in the Specific Plan, the additional commercial development would expose more workers to these hazards. In addition, with more land given to development, more development would be subject to potential hazards than in the Specific Plan. As with the proposed project, a central open space area is protected in this Alternative, prohibiting development within steep drainage areas. This reduces potential exposure to hazards related to steep slopes, erosion, and liquefaction in the lower-lying areas. Overall, development under this alternative would result in *greater* impacts than development under the proposed Specific Plan;

*Alternative 3: No Project, No Development.* With the implementation of this alternative, the site would retain its current level of development. No additional development would be envisioned, so no additional impacts would occur.

*Conclusion: Alternative 3 would be environmentally superior when compared to the Specific Plan. Alternative 1 would result in both lesser and greater impacts than the proposed Specific Plan. Alternative 2 would result in greater impacts because of an increased level of development.*

## 6.2.6 Cultural and Historic Resources

*Alternative 1: Existing Zoning.* No designated open space would occur under this scenario, so a larger area of disturbance may occur. This could result in potentially greater impacts to cultural resources. At the same time, because each residential lot would be generally larger, there may be greater potential to reconfigure such lots to avoid potential cultural resources, if they are discovered on the site. Nevertheless, because this scenario could disturb a larger portion of the site, this alternative would have an incrementally *greater* potential to disturb previously unidentified buried archeological deposits and/or human remains, directly and indirectly impact historical resources, or disturb or possibly destroy unknown paleontological resources.

*Alternative 2: Proposed August 2004 Specific Plan Land Use Scenario.* Development would encompass up to 556 acres, or about 6% more land than would be developed under the proposed Specific Plan. Despite the preservation of open space, 34 additional acres would be disturbed in this alternative scenario. This could result in potentially greater impacts to cultural resources. Because this scenario could disturb a larger portion of the site, this alternative would have an incrementally *greater* potential to disturb previously unidentified buried archeological deposits and/or human remains, directly and indirectly impact historical resources, or disturb or possibly destroy unknown paleontological resources.

*Alternative 3: No Project, No Development.* Since no development would occur under this alternative, no impact to cultural or historic resources in the area would occur.

*Conclusion: Alternative 3 would be environmentally superior to the Specific Plan. Alternatives 1 and 2 would result in greater impacts to the proposed Specific Plan due to larger developed areas in both scenarios.*



### 6.2.7 Aesthetics and Community Design

*Alternative 1: Existing Zoning.* This Alternative would allow 840 fewer residential units, but 440,000 square feet more of commercial development when compared to the Specific Plan. No designated open space would occur under this scenario. In addition, there would be long common boundaries between residential and business park uses in the center of the site. The overall visual effect of development under this alternative would be lower density, but more evenly distributed throughout the site. There would be little continuous open space under this scenario, and instead be dominated by ranchette-style housing development on larger lots. Grading would occur for individual lots, so long-term visual impacts may be greater, since development would likely occur over a relatively long period of time.

More natural amenities, including oak trees, could be lost as a result of this style of development, particularly if grading could occur anywhere within such lots. In addition, there could be substantial light and glare impacts to onsite residential uses, particularly where such uses would abut non-residential development, and adjacent to Barney Schwartz Park. Dominant Business Park uses in the southern portion of the site may be considered visually less desirable to neighboring residential uses to the west. Overall, this alternative would result in *greater* potential impacts than the proposed Specific Plan.

*Alternative 2: Proposed August 2004 Specific Plan Land Use Scenario.* This Alternative would include the same number of residential units, but 374,500 square feet more of commercial development when compared to the proposed Specific Plan. In addition, development would disturb 556 acres, or about 6% more land than the proposed Specific Plan. However, numerous guidelines and mitigation measures are included in this scenario, similar to those included in the proposed Specific Plan. These include open space, residential site and building design standards, commercial site design standards, and grading requirements. It should be noted, however, that the level of detail of the guidelines and standards in the August 2004 Specific Plan is lesser than what is included in the proposed project, which also includes extensive design guidelines particularly for areas of visual sensitivity, such as the oak forest within subarea 1. In addition, the development pattern within the August 2004 Specific Plan is not as refined as in the proposed project, to the degree that there is less assurance that as many oaks would be preserved. In some development areas, such as subarea 6, this alternative includes large areas of steeper slopes that could be potentially developed, which would be preserved as open space under the proposed project. In general, the effects of grading are likely to be greater under this scenario, particularly in subareas 3, 6, 7, 8, and 9, since the development envelopes have been more generally characterized than those shown in the proposed project, which have been refined to attempt to minimize grading impacts to a larger extent. Overall, the visual impacts associated with this alternative are likely to be *greater* than those associated with the proposed project because 1) less land would remain in open space; 2) more grading would likely occur, particularly in the steeper sloping margins of subareas 3, 6, 7, 8 and 9; and 3) the standards and guidelines as included in the August 2004 Specific Plan are not as protective as those included in the proposed project.

*Alternative 3: No Project, No Development.* This Alternative would not change the aesthetic character of the area, nor would it introduce new sources of light and glare. No impacts would occur.



*Conclusion: Alternative 3 would be environmentally superior to the Specific Plan with respect to aesthetic issues. Alternative 2 would result in aesthetic impacts greater than those envisioned in the proposed Specific Plan because it would preserve less open space, could include more grading, and has less protective development standards. Alternative 1 would generally result in greater aesthetic impacts, because it would not necessarily preserve open space on the site.*

## 6.2.8 Flooding and Drainage

*Alternative 1: Existing Zoning.* The area of potential disturbance would be greater than under the proposed Specific Plan, particularly within steeper sloped areas. Thus, a greater amount of soil surface could be disrupted and potentially become subject to erosion, with potential off-site sedimentation and pollutant discharges when compared to the Specific Plan. At the same time, the amount of paved area would be reduced because there would be considerably less residential development, so the potential to result in increased peak stormwater discharges and volumes of runoff would be reduced compared to the Specific Plan. At the same time, the potential for having this development result in undesirable cross-lot drainage patterns is much greater than under the proposed project. Overall, flooding and drainage impacts would be potentially both *greater* and *less* than those expected under the proposed Specific Plan.

*Alternative 2: Proposed August 2004 Specific Plan Land Use Scenario.* This Alternative would include the same number of residential units, but 374,500 square feet more of commercial development when compared to the proposed Specific Plan. In addition, this scenario could disturb up to 556 acres, or about 6% more land than would be used for development under the proposed Specific Plan. Thus, a greater amount of soil surface could be disrupted and potentially become subject to erosion, with potential off-site sedimentation and pollutant discharges when compared to the Specific Plan. The amount of paved area would also increase due to commercial development and associated parking needs, increasing the potential for higher peak stormwater discharges and volumes of runoff compared to the Specific Plan. Overall, flooding and drainage impacts would be potentially *greater* than those expected under the proposed Specific Plan.

*Alternative 3: No Project, No Development.* No development would occur that would have the potential to collect hydrocarbon waste products and contribute additional downstream flows. No impacts would occur as a result of this alternative.

*Conclusion: Alternative 3 would be environmentally superior to the Specific Plan, because it would reduce the amount of impervious surface within the developed area. Alternative 1 would have both greater and lesser impacts than the Specific Plan. Alternative 2 would result in greater impacts, because of the introduction of impervious surfaces within the developed area.*



## 6.2.9 Biological Resources

**Alternative 1: Existing Zoning.** This Alternative would generate the smallest residential buildout potential (599 dwellings), but without clustering the development could impact a much larger portion of the site. No designated open space would be included under this alternative. This alternative would result in removal of non-native annual grassland habitat, oak woodland habitat, riparian habitat, ruderal, agriculture, wildflower fields, coastal scrub habitat, native perennial bunchgrass, and wetland habitat. This could reduce known and unknown populations and available habitat of wildlife in general, including special-status species, to a greater extent than under the proposed Specific Plan. The development area is similar to the Specific Plan and “take” may occur to the San Joaquin kit fox (SJKF) through grading activities and on-site circulation. The lack of a defined open space corridor could impede the ability for the movement of the SJKF through the site, and could reduce the amount of available habitat potentially used for the SJKF within its historic and current range.

Under this alternative, Airport Road would be constructed in the center of the site and would directly impact the low-lying drainage and affect the drainage area’s value as a wildlife movement corridor and the habitat associated with it unlike the proposed Specific Plan. Overall, this Alternative would result in substantially *greater* impacts to biological resources.

**Alternative 2: Proposed August 2004 Specific Plan Land Use Scenario.** This Alternative would generate the same residential buildout potential (1,439 dwellings) as the Specific Plan, but substantially more non-residential development. This scenario would result in the potential disturbance of 556 acres, or about 6% more land than the proposed Specific Plan. This scenario would therefore result in additional removal of non-native annual grassland habitat, oak woodland habitat, riparian habitat, ruderal, agriculture, coastal scrub habitat, native perennial bunchgrass, and wetland habitat. Specifically, native perennial bunchgrass in Subarea 5 of the proposed Specific Plan (designated open space) would instead be fully developed in this Alternative, removing this habitat altogether.

Habitat removal could reduce known and unknown populations, including special-status species, to a greater extent than the Specific Plan. The development area is similar to the Specific Plan and “take” may occur to the San Joaquin kit fox (SJKF) through grading activities and on-site circulation. The existence of a defined open space corridor could permit movement of the SJKF through the site; however, the open space corridor included in this Alternative is 8% smaller than the proposed Specific Plan. Because of a greater development extent, this Alternative would result in incrementally *greater* impacts to biological resources.

**Alternative 3: No Project, No Development.** Because no development would occur, no impacts would be anticipated.

**Conclusion:** *Alternative 3 would be environmentally superior to the proposed Specific Plan. Alternatives 1 and 2 would result in greater impacts compared to the Specific Plan because of a greater extent of development in both scenarios.*



### 6.2.10 Public Services and Infrastructure

*Alternative 1: Existing Zoning.* Under this Alternative, there would be a 63% reduction in potential residential units than the Specific Plan. Consequently, the need for police, fire, school, trails, and, parks/recreation services would be decreased commensurately. However, the 157% increase in commercial potential accommodated under this scenario would require police and fire protection. However, because market demands suggest that such development would be unlikely for a long period of time, the demand for such services would not be imminent. Under this alternative, no school site, open space preservation, or trails are designated within the plan area. The demand for water, amount of wastewater, and solid waste would be reduced compared to the Specific Plan; however, because the development would not be clustered, it would require a greater amount of infrastructure. Therefore, this Alternative is considered to have both *lesser* impacts to providing public services, but *greater* impacts with respect to developing onsite infrastructure.

*Alternative 2: Proposed August 2004 Specific Plan Land Use Scenario.* Under this Alternative, there would be an equivalent amount of residential units as in the Specific Plan. Consequently, the need for police, fire, school, trails, and parks/recreation services would be the same as the Specific Plan. However, the 62% increase in commercial potential accommodated under this scenario would require incrementally more police and fire protection. Similarly, while infrastructure demands for water, wastewater, and solid waste would be similar with respect to residential housing; this infrastructure requirement would be increased as a result of the additional commercial development.

The construction of 1,439 homes would result in an estimated 546 additional Elementary, Middle, and High School students. Under the Alternative, a school site is proposed for subarea 13. Open space is included in this alternative, although less than what would be included in the proposed Specific Plan. Despite the potential school site and open space, this alternative is considered to have *greater* impacts to providing public services and to developing onsite infrastructure because of the increased commercial development.

*Alternative 3: No Project, No Development.* Since no development would occur under this Alternative, there would be no additional demand for public services and infrastructure. Impacts would be less than for the proposed Specific Plan. However, this scenario would not include a school site, public open space, or a trail system, all of which would benefit the City and its residents. In this respect, this Alternative has *greater* and *lesser* impacts than the proposed Specific Plan.

**Conclusion:** *Aspects of Alternatives 1 and 3 would result in both greater and lesser impacts than expected under the proposed Specific Plan. Alternative 2 would result in greater impacts for both public service requirements and on-site infrastructure demands.*



### 6.3 ENVIRONMENTALLY SUPERIOR ALTERNATIVE

This section evaluates the findings for the Specific Plan and the three Alternatives under consideration. It then identifies the environmentally superior Alternative for each issue area, as shown on Table 6-6. In accordance with State *CEQA Guidelines*, if the No Project Alternative is identified as the Environmentally Superior Alternative, the Alternative among the remaining scenarios that is environmentally superior is also identified. In addition, the table shows whether each Alternative's environmental impact is greater, lesser, or similar to the proposed Specific Plan.

**Table 6-6. Comparison of Alternatives Impacts to Proposed Project**

<b>Issue</b>	<b>Alternative 1 (Existing Zoning)</b>	<b>Alternative 2 (Proposed August 2004 Specific Plan)</b>	<b>Alternative 3 (No Project)</b>
Land and Agriculture	-	=/-	+
Traffic/Circulation	+/-	-	+
Air Quality	+/-	-	+
Noise	-	-	+
Safety/Geologic Hazards	+/-	-	+
Cultural/Historic Resources	-	-	+
Aesthetics/Community Design	-	-	+
Flooding/Drainage	+/-	-	+
Biological Resources	-	-	+
Public Services/Infrastructure	+/-	-	+/-
<b>Overall</b>	<b>+/-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>+</b>

- Inferior to the proposed Specific Plan
- + Superior to the proposed Specific Plan
- +/- Characteristics both better and worse than the proposed Specific Plan
- = Similar impact to the proposed Specific Plan

The State *CEQA Guidelines* do not defined a precise methodology regarding the determination of the Environmentally Superior Alternative. For the purposes of this analysis, each Alternative has been compared within each issue area to the Specific Plan and a determination has been made as to whether the Alternative was superior, inferior, or similar to the Specific Plan. For the purpose of this EIR, the analysis assumed each issue was equally weighted. Decision makers and the community in general may choose to emphasize one issue or another, which could lead to differing conclusions regarding environmental superiority.

The No Project Alternative (Alternative 3) is considered environmentally superior overall, since no development would occur. Among the remaining development scenarios, none are considered clearly superior to the proposed project. Alternative 1 has both greater and lesser impacts than the proposed project. Impacts related to physical development are generally greater, since there would be no provision for open space protection, and the entire site could be developed. Impacts related to housing development would generally be less, since this alternative would allow substantially less housing than the proposed project. However, this scenario does not include the extensive mitigative guidelines that are included as part of the proposed project, suggesting that impacts related to land development impacts under this scenario could be greater. The lack of open space, a central location for Airport Road within the



drainage area, and difficulties related to implementing hillside grading techniques produced greater impacts related to land use, noise, geologic hazards, cultural resources, aesthetics, drainage, biological resources and the extension of infrastructure. On the other hand, the reduced level of development made this scenario superior with respect to traffic, air quality, and for some issues related to noise, geology, drainage and public services.

Alternative 2 is the August 2004 Draft Specific Plan Land Use Scenario, and it is not environmentally superior to the proposed project. This conclusion is logical, since the proposed project was developed as a refinement of the August 2004 Draft Specific Plan to address potential impacts that may have occurred as a result of development under the previous scenario. Mitigative features of the proposed project include 1) more open space; 2) less commercial development; 3) refined building envelopes to minimize impacts to habitat and steep slopes; 4) more extensive mitigative development guidelines; and 5) less land use conflict potential in the vicinity of Barney Schwartz Park.

