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ALTERNATIVES ANALYSIS

INTRODUCTION

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The primary intent of the alternatives evaluation in an EIR, as stated in Section 15126.6(a) of the CEQA Guidelines, is to “[...] describe a range of reasonable alternatives to the project, or to the location of the project, which would feasibly attain most of the basic objectives of the project but would avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects of the project, and evaluate the comparative merits of the alternatives [...].”

The following objectives for the project were provided by the applicant:

1. Make efficient use of infill lands largely surrounded by urban uses or other uses preventing economic farming.
2. Ensure a net positive impact on the school system for the district, community and student body;
3. Complete aesthetically pleasing parks, greenbelts, and bikeways that enhance and encourage pedestrian and bicycle circulation and serve as a buffer between potentially incompatible land uses;
4. Build extensive habitats that serve as focal points within the community and the region;
5. Develop a project from which it is economically practical to support slow, balanced growth to help stabilize the community’s housing market;
6. Develop a carefully designed mixed-use plan that meets the needs and desires of the citizens of Davis by accommodating a wide variety of housing types, prices and lifestyles and which addresses Davis’s high cost of housing while preserving open space;
7. Ensure the economic success of the neighborhood retail components of Covell Village by including a sufficient number of nearby dwelling units;
8. Make available sites for centrally located community facilities and public services, including a fire station to serve residents of Covell Village and the rest of Davis;
9. Complete a residential land plan that provides a broad size range of quality, single-family and attached homes that offer diverse neo-traditional designs and craftsmanship in an aesthetic streetscape largely free of driveways, garages or cars in the front yards;
10. Ensure the existence of a high proportion of low and moderately-priced, medium-density housing to meet the needs of a diverse population;
11. Ensure a high proportion of affordable housing that is consistent with the overall project theme and meets the City’s housing goals;

12. Provide sufficient revenues such that funds are available for significant community donations towards the common good as possible in the forms of land, funding and other resources; and
13. Develop the Village Center area into a prototype for the conversion of existing conventional shopping centers into focal points for pedestrian-friendly villages to begin Davis's evolution from what has become auto oriented suburban development into a community which supports its downtown with effectively located sub-centers designed to encourage bicycle and foot traffic in all parts of the City.

Furthermore, Section 15126.6 (f) states that “[...] The range of alternatives required in an EIR is governed by a “rule of reason” that requires the EIR to set forth only those alternatives necessary to permit a reasoned choice [...].”

The CEQA Guidelines (§15126.6 (e)(1)) state that a ‘no project’ alternative should be evaluated along with its impact. Specifically, the Guidelines state:

The specific alternative of the “no project” shall also be evaluated along with its impact. The purpose of describing and analyzing a no project alternative is to allow decision makers to compare the impacts of approving the proposed project with the impacts of not approving the proposed project. The no project alternative analysis is not the baseline for determining whether the proposed project’s environmental impacts may be significant, unless it is identical to the existing environmental setting analysis which does establish that baseline.

In addition, Section 15126.6 (d) of the CEQA Guidelines states that “[...] If an alternative would cause one or more significant effects in addition to those that would be caused by the project as proposed, the significant effects of the alternative shall be discussed, but in less detail than the significant effects of the project as proposed.”

### **Selection of Alternatives**

Alternatives that are included and evaluated in this EIR must be feasible alternatives. According to the CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(f), “[...] the alternatives shall be limited to ones that would avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects of the project [...].” In addition, Section 15126.6(f)(1) states that the feasibility of an alternative may be determined based on a variety of factors including, but not limited to, site suitability, economic viability, availability of infrastructure, general plan consistency, other plans or regulatory limitations, jurisdictional boundaries, and site accessibility and control.

Eleven alternatives are considered in this chapter. Five alternatives are considered and dismissed from further analysis (Alternative 1, 3-6), five alternatives (Alternatives 7-11)

are studied comparatively, and one alternative is studied with equal weight (Alternative 12).

**ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED AND ELIMINATED FROM FURTHER ANALYSIS**

Consistent with CEQA, primary consideration was given to alternatives that could reduce significant impacts, while still meeting most of the project objectives. Those alternatives that would have impacts identical to or more severe than the Proposed Project, and/or that would not meet any or most of the project objectives were rejected from further consideration. These rejected alternatives are discussed below.

The City of Davis Planning Department prepared six (6) different land use alternatives for the Covell Village project site in July 2003. The following table and corresponding figures illustrate the details of the six alternatives prepared by the Planning Department (The project site boundaries on the below figures are approximate). It should be noted that the table below does not include Alternative 2 proposed by the City in July 2003. The reason for this is that the City's "Alternative 2" is being evaluated as the Reduced Acreage Alternative (Alternative 8) in the section below entitled "Alternatives Considered in This EIR."

**Table 5-1: Alternatives Considered But Dismissed**

<b>Summary of Alternatives</b>						
	Total Acres	Total Units	Total Non-Res.	Total "Green"	Gross Density	Urban Reserve Post 2015
Alt. 1 Area South of Channel A and North Half of Con Agra	297	1400	40 Acres	67 Acres 22.50%	7.9 DU/Acre	136 Acres
Alt. 2 Covell Village Area South of Channel A	247	1400	40 Acres	62.6 Acres 25.30%	10.5 DU/Acre	136 Acres
See Reduced Acreage Alternative under "Alternatives Considered in This EIR."						
Alt. 4 Lower Portion of Covell Village and North Half of Con Agra	182	1400	40 Acres	41.7 Acres 22.90%	15.2 DU/Acre	251 Acres
Alt. 5 Reduced Build Out of Covell Village	132	785	20 Acres	27.2 Acres 27.40%	10.0 DU/Acre	251 Acres
Alt. 6 Off Site Peripheral	235	1400	40 Acres	59.8 Acres 25%	10.8 DU/Acre	Not Determined

Total "Green" = on-site Parks, Greenbelts, Ag Buffer, and Channel.

\* Percentage based on total site area of 383 plus 40 acres of off-site habitat area for total of 423 acres.

Total "Green" = on-site Parks, Greenbelts, Ag Buffer, and Channel.

\* Percentage based on total site area of 383 plus 40 acres of off-site habitat area for total of 423 acres.

**Figure 5-1  
Alternative 1**



**Figure 5-2  
Alternative 3**



**Figure 5-3  
Alternative 4**



**Figure 5-4  
Alternative 5**



**Figure 5-5  
Alternative 6**



Plus additional undetermined site of 90 acres.

**Alternatives 1, 3, 4, and 6**

Alternatives 1,3,4, and 6 involve all, or a portion, of the ConAgra / Hunt Wesson site. A pre-application has been submitted to the Davis Planning and Building Department for the ConAgra site, dated July 16, 2004. Therefore, due to the recent submittal of a project pre-application to the City of Davis for the ConAgra site, Covell Village Alternatives 1, 3, 4, and 6, which involve a portion of the ConAgra site, are deemed economically infeasible and hereby dismissed from further analysis in this chapter. Section 15126.6 (f)(1) of the CEQA Guidelines states that among the factors that may be taken into account when addressing the feasibility of alternatives is economic viability. It should be noted that one of the offsite alternatives considered in this analysis (Four Site Alternative - #11) also includes a portion of the Con Agra property; however, because this alternative includes three other sites, which have the potential to reduce environmental impacts, the alternative is further considered in this chapter.

## **Alternative 5**

Alternative 5 would result in only a portion of the Covell Village site being developed. Generally, for Alternative 5, development would occur south of Channel “A”. The Reduced Intensity Alternative, analyzed below under “Alternatives Considered in This EIR” also restricts development of the site north of Channel “A”. As mentioned previously, alternatives to the Covell Village project should feasibly attain most of the basic objectives the applicant has for the project, but avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects of the project. The determination has been made in consultation with City staff that the Reduced Intensity Alternative is superior to Alternative 5 because it would provide the greatest balance of achieving the basic project objectives while reducing environmental impacts. Therefore, Alternative 5 is hereby dismissed from further analysis.

### ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED IN THIS EIR

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This section provides a description of the alternatives to the Proposed Project analyzed in this Draft EIR and evaluates the anticipated environmental effects of those alternatives. Table 5-2 includes a comparison of all of the key features of the alternatives considered in this Draft EIR.

#### **Alternative 7: No Project/No Build Alternative**

CEQA requires the evaluation of the comparative impacts of the “No Project” alternative (CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6 (e)). The No Project Alternative can be defined either as “no action taken on the proposed project” or “no build” on the project site.

A “no build” alternative means that the existing environmental setting is maintained. A “no build” alternative is the type of No Project Alternative that is evaluated below for the Proposed Project. Therefore, under the No Project / No Build Alternative, the project site would remain active agricultural land. Furthermore, because the project site would not be developed, the site would not be annexed to the City of Davis, but would remain within the jurisdiction of Yolo County.

#### Environmental Effects

##### *Aesthetics*

The Draft EIR identified significant and unavoidable project-level and cumulative aesthetics impacts as a result of project implementation for Impacts 4.1-1 and 4.1-3, respectively. The No Project/No Build Alternative would not result in the development of the project site. Therefore, the site would remain agricultural and open views would be preserved for motorists traveling along Pole Line Road and Covell Boulevard. Therefore, the No Project/No Build Alternative would not result in significant and unavoidable aesthetics impacts, as would the Proposed Project.

**Table 5.2  
 Comparison of Alternatives Features**

Features	Project and Project Alternatives						
	Proposed Project	Reduced Acreage Alternative (A7)	No Project/No Build Alternative (A8)	Reduced Intensity Alternative (A9)	Offsite Alternative (A10)	Four Site Alternative (A11)	High Density Alternative (A12)
Residential units	1,515	1,515	0	1,000	1,515	1,515	1,990
Acreage	422	247	0	422	319.5	190.1	422
Hospice facility	Y	N	N	N	Y	Y	Y
Commercial center (Village Center)	Y	Y- (approx. ½ size)	N	N	Y	Y	Y
Creation of jobs at commercial center	Y	Y- (approx. ½ amount)	N	N	Y	Y	Y
Senior-only home site	Y	N	N	Y-	Y	Y	N
Senior core care facility	Y	N	N	N	Y	Y	N
Affordable housing units	Y	Y	N	Y-	Y	Y	Y
Larger residential lot sizes	N	N	N	Y	N	N	N
School site	Y	N	N	N	Y*	Y *	Y
Fire station site	Y	Y	N	N	Y *	Y *	Y
Dedication of parkland	Y	Y	N	Y-	Y	Y	Y+
Dedication of greenbelt	Y	Y-	N	Y	Y-	N	Y
Dedication of habitat area	Y	N	N	Y+	N	N	Y
Notes: “-” = Alternative would include this feature, but to a lesser degree than the PP “+” = Alternative would include this feature, but to a greater degree than the PP * Alternative would include this feature, but would not likely include mitigation and/or accommodations equivalent to the PP							

### Agricultural Resources

The Draft EIR identified significant and unavoidable project-level and cumulative agricultural conversion impacts associated with project implementation under Impacts 4.2-1 and 4.2-3, respectively. Because the No Project/No Build Alternative would not result in the conversion of the project site from agricultural land to urban uses, the No Project Alternative would not result in the conversion of Prime Farmland. Furthermore, because the No Project/No Build Alternative would not place residential uses on the site, incompatibility conflicts would not occur between the project site and existing agricultural operations occurring north of the project site. Therefore, the No Project/No Build Alternative would not have impacts to agricultural resources.

### Land Use

The No Project/No Build Alternative would result in the project site remaining in agricultural production. This would be consistent with the current Davis General Plan land use and zoning designations for the site. In addition, unlike the Proposed Project, the No Project/No Build Alternative would not result in land use incompatibility impacts because the Alternative would not result in the introduction of additional residents and employees to the site. Therefore, the No Project/No Build Alternative would not have land use impacts.

### Transportation and Circulation

The No Project/No Build Alternative would not result in the construction of any residential, commercial, or public uses on the Covell Village site and would consequently not generate additional trips to the existing local roadway traffic volumes. Therefore, the No Project/No Development Alternative would not cause a traffic increase in the surrounding area and, unlike the Proposed Project, would have no impacts to traffic.

### Air Quality

The Covell Village Project site consists of approximately 422 acres located within Yolo County, just outside the Davis city limits. The property is currently used for agricultural operations, and is designated Agriculture by the Davis General Plan. The No Project/No Build Alternative would not result in a change in land use designation for the site. Agricultural operations on the site could adversely impact air quality due to emissions from agricultural equipment, particulate matter that becomes airborne during field activities such as plowing and tilling, and pesticide and herbicide use. Implementation of the No Project/No Build Alternative would result in continued agricultural operations and subsequent emissions; however, construction and operational emissions associated with the Proposed Project would result in substantially increased airborne pollutant emissions from construction of new residential, commercial, and other uses on the site. Therefore, implementation of the No Project/No Build Alternative would be considered to have fewer impacts to air quality compared to the Proposed Project.

### Noise

The No Project/No Build Alternative would result in continued agricultural operations on the project site and the attendant noise generated by heavy farm equipment. However, the uses associated with the Proposed Project are expected to generate substantial noise due to the construction of residential, commercial, and public uses on the Covell Village site. Therefore, the No Project/No Build Alternative would not expose new residents to noise impacts from traffic, the California Northern Railroad (CNRR), or the Blue Max Kart Club go-cart racetrack, as would the Proposed Project. Nor would this alternative result in the generation of vehicle trips, and therefore traffic noise, which would affect off-site uses in existing neighborhoods surrounding the project site. Therefore, implementation of the No Project/No Build Alternative would result in fewer noise impacts than would the Proposed Project.

### Cultural Resources

The No Project/No Build Alternative would not result in changes to the current land use (agricultural production) on the project site. Because the site soils have been continuously disturbed by agricultural activities for decades, it is unlikely that continuing such activities would result in additional impacts to buried cultural resources. Additionally, this alternative would not result in the disturbance of the Harbin Ranch headquarters complex, also known as Site P-57-000199. This site includes a stone monument of unknown significance, which could potentially mark a human or animal grave. Under the No Project/No Build Alternative, construction-related disturbances to previously undiscovered cultural resources and/or Site P-57-000199 would not occur.

### Biological Resources

The No Project/No Development Alternative would not result in development of the project site to residential, commercial, and public uses. Additionally, agricultural land is often as foraging area by migratory birds and other species. However, the possibility exists that the property owner may choose to remove trees and convert natural areas within the site to agricultural operations; moreover, continuous agricultural operations are detrimental to suitable foraging and nesting habitat for wildlife, and to the survival of native plant life. Therefore, the No Project/No Development Alternative would have similar impacts to the Proposed Project.

### Geology

The Draft EIR identified that the expansive soils would have a potentially significant impact on Proposed Project structures (Impact 4.9-3). The No Project/No Build Alternative would not result in potential impacts to structures via expansive soils because the Alternative would not involve the development of any on-site structures. Impact 4.9-2 of the Draft EIR identified that the Proposed Project would have a potentially significant impact to downstream water quality due to soil erosion. The No Project/No Build

Alternative would maintain the agricultural condition of the project site. Because the site is currently farmed, soils are loosened during farming operations, which are subject to wind and water erosion. Therefore, similar to the Proposed Project, the No Project/No Build Alternative would result in soil erosion. Overall, due to the decreased number of structures, the No Project/No Build Alternative would have fewer geological impacts compared to the Proposed Project.

### Hazards

The No Project Alternative would not result in the introduction of additional people to the site. Therefore, potentially significant hazards identified in the Draft EIR, such as on-site wells and PCB transformers, would not be considered an issue under the No Project/No Build Alternative. However, a few of the potential on-site hazards identified in the Draft EIR are associated with the existing residence in the south-central portion of the site, including the septic tank, lead-based paints, and asbestos-containing materials. Therefore, the hazards associated with existing residence would also be considered potentially significant under the No Project Alternative because of their ability to impact occupants of the existing residence. For example, should the existing residence contain lead-based paints or asbestos-containing materials, dilapidation of the structure over time could expose residents to hazardous materials. However, because the gas, groundwater monitoring, and agricultural wells, as well as on-site PCB transformers would not impact people under the No Project Alternative, the Alternative would be expected to have fewer hazards impacts.

### Hydrology, Water Quality, and Drainage

The No Project/No Build Alternative would not result in construction, which could change the existing drainage pattern for the project area. In addition, the No Project/No Build Alternative would not generate urban runoff that would affect water quality in the area, including the quality of the water in Channel "A". Therefore, the No Project/No Build Alternative would not result in the need to treat stormwater runoff, as would the Proposed Project. In addition, implementation of the No Project/No Build Alternative would not result in the placement of structures and people in the 100-year floodplain as would the Proposed Project. Overall, compared to the Proposed Project, the No Project/No Build Alternative would result in decreased impacts on hydrology and water quality.

### Public Services and Facilities

The No Project Alternative would not result in the introduction of new residents to the City of Davis. Therefore, unlike the Proposed Project, the No Project/No Build Alternative would not create an increased need for public services and utilities, such as law enforcement, fire protection, the public school system, parks and recreation facilities, wastewater treatment and disposal, and water supply and delivery. As a result, the No Project/No Build Alternative would have fewer impacts to public services compared to the Proposed Project.

Population, Housing, and Employment

The No Project/No Build Alternative would not result in an increase in housing and subsequently, the population of the City of Davis. Therefore, this Alternative would not result in an adverse impact to the City's existing population goals as compared to the Proposed Project. However, it should be noted that because the No Project Alternative does not involve the construction of new housing, affordable housing units would not be added to the City. In addition, unlike the Proposed Project, the Alternative would not result in an increase in employment opportunities in the City. Overall, the No Project Alternative would result in less intense impacts to the City of Davis as compared to the Proposed Project because the City's population would not be further exceeded.

**Alternative 8: Reduced Acreage Alternative**

The Reduced Acreage Alternative would result in the development of 1,515 single family units on the portion of the project site south of Channel "A". Therefore, the northern portion of the site planned for development is not part of the Reduced Acreage Alternative. In addition, the habitat area and hospice facility proposed to be located in the northwestern corner of the Covell Village site are not part of the Reduced Acreage Alternative. Other land use types excluded from this Alternative include fifty percent (50%) of the commercial center (Village Center) and the school site.

Parkland obligation remains the same as the Proposed Project for this Alternative at 18.143 acres. However, the Greenbelt requirement would be less for this Alternative because the portion of the site proposed for residential development would be 147 total acres (fewer major streets), instead of 236 acres as in the Proposed Project. Therefore, the amount of greenbelt required for the Reduced Acreage Alternative is 11.89 acres.

**Figure 5-6**  
**Reduced Acreage Alternative**



## Environmental Effects

### Aesthetics

Unlike the Proposed Project, the Reduced Acreage Alternative would not result in the development of the entire project site. Specifically, the Alternative involves the development of the site with residential uses south of Channel "A". Although the existing views of agricultural lands in the northern portion of the site would be preserved by this Alternative, the conversion of the site south of Channel "A" from open agricultural fields to an urban setting would still be considered a significant and unavoidable impact. Therefore, although aesthetics impacts would be reduced under this Alternative, the project-level and cumulative impacts would remain significant and unavoidable.

### Agricultural Resources

The Draft EIR identified significant and unavoidable project-level and cumulative agricultural conversion impacts associated with project implementation under Impacts 4.2-1 and 4.2-3, respectively. The Reduced Acreage Alternative would not result in the entire project site being developed; therefore, although cumulative impacts would result from Prime Farmland being converted, a lesser amount would be converted via the implementation of this Alternative compared to the Proposed Project. Land north of the Channel "A" would not be converted, and could feasibly continue to be farmed. In terms of land use incompatibility impacts, because the Reduced Acreage Alternative would not result in the development of the project site north of Channel "A", adverse impacts associated with the placement of the hospice adjacent to existing agricultural operations would not occur. Furthermore, Channel A could serve as a buffer between proposed project residences and existing agricultural operations to the north. Therefore, the Reduced Acreage Alternative would have fewer impacts to agricultural resources compared to the Proposed Project.

### Land Use

The Reduced Acreage Alternative would result in the development of the project site with residential and commercial uses south of Channel "A". This would be inconsistent with the current Davis General Plan land use and zoning designations for the site. As a result, the Reduced Acreage Alternative would require amendments to the General Plan land use designations for the site prior to approval. As identified in the Draft EIR (Impact 4.3-4), the Proposed Project would also require amendments to the General Plan land use designations for the project site, and to a greater degree (i.e., the entire project site would require re-designation). Unlike the Proposed Project, the Reduced Acreage Alternative would not result in land use incompatibility impacts regarding the Davis Landfill because the Alternative would not result in development north of Channel "A". Overall, the Reduced Acreage Alternative would have fewer land use impacts compared to the Proposed Project.

### Transportation and Circulation

The Reduced Acreage Alternative would include the same number of residences (1,515) as included in the Proposed Project, but would not include development north of Channel “A”, which excludes development of the hospice. In addition, the Reduced Acreage Alternative includes only 50 percent of the commercial Village Center and does not include the school site. The Traffic Impact Analysis prepared for the Proposed Project by Fehr & Peers identified unacceptable AM and PM peak hour levels of service (LOS F) during Phase I of Proposed Project construction at the intersections of Picasso Avenue/Pole Line Road, Covell Boulevard (EB)/L Street, and Covell Boulevard (WB)/L Street. Therefore, full build-out of the project site with residential and commercial uses would presumably result in significant impacts to nearby intersections. However, according to the same Fehr & Peers study, the Proposed Project would generate approximately 27,627 average daily trips (ADT), while the Reduced Acreage Alternative would generate approximately 17,506 trips. Because the Village Center would generate approximately 50 percent of the Proposed Project’s vehicle trips, the Reduced Acreage Alternative would generate substantially fewer vehicle trips than the Proposed Project. Therefore, although the Reduced Acreage Alternative would result in traffic impacts, the impacts would be expected to be less intense than the Proposed Project due to the decreased number of vehicle trips.

### Air Quality

As with the Proposed Project, the Reduced Acreage Alternative would involve the development only on the portion of the project site south of Channel “A”. Impact 4.5-1 of the Draft EIR concludes that PM<sub>10</sub> emissions associated with grading and clearing would be considered a nuisance to nearby residential areas and would have a potentially significant impact in addition to ROG and NO<sub>x</sub> emissions generated by the Proposed Project. Because this Alternative involves grading and clearing of a smaller area, less fugitive dust would be generated as compared to the Proposed Project. In addition, the Draft EIR identified that the Proposed Project would generate project-level and cumulative operational emissions, which would be considered significant and unavoidable. Because the hospice facility and school site would not be included under this Alternative, and because the Alternative includes only 50 percent of the commercial uses included in the Proposed Project, operational emissions would be less for the Alternative as compared to the Proposed Project. Although the Reduced Acreage Alternative would generate fewer amounts of fugitive dust, ROG, and NO<sub>x</sub> during construction and fewer operational emissions, impacts would still be expected to remain significant and unavoidable.

### Noise

Under the Reduced Acreage Alternative, the portion of the project site north of Channel “A” would not be developed. Agricultural operations would therefore continue on the land north of Channel “A”, and potential impacts could result from the adjacent residential development of the Covell Village site. However, noise impacts to Covell

Village residents from operation of the Blue Max Kart Club, which is located northeast of the Proposed Project site, would be reduced. In addition, noise impacts to future residents from CNRR operations would be reduced, because the portion of the project site which is directly adjacent to the CNRR tracks and available for residential development (i.e. excluding the habitat area) would be reduced in size. Therefore, overall noise-related impacts from this alternative would be expected to be similar as compared to the Proposed Project.

### Cultural Resources

The Reduced Acreage Alternative would result in the development of the area south of Channel "A" with residential uses, for a total development area of 247 acres, as opposed to the 422-acre size of the Proposed Project. Like the other alternatives, this Alternative would involve excavation and grading which could disturb currently unknown prehistoric resources. However, the site's historic agricultural activities have already extensively disturbed the on-site soils. Furthermore, the October 2004 Peak & Associates assessment notes that two cultural resources investigations conducted in the 1990s did not reveal the existence of significant resources in the project area. Similar to the Proposed Project, this Alternative would result in the demolition of the Harbin Ranch farm structures (Site P-57-000199). Although the ranch buildings have no known association with historic persons or events and are not considered architecturally significant, the site also includes a stone monument of unknown significance, which could potentially mark a human or animal grave. The reduction in development acreage under this Alternative could slightly decrease the likelihood of construction activities disrupting known or unknown cultural resources; however, impacts would remain essentially similar to those of the Proposed Project.

### Biological Resources

The Reduced Acreage Alternative would include the construction of 1,515 residential units, but would not include the school site, hospice facility, and 50 percent of the commercial Village Center, as included in the Proposed Project. Many of the impacts identified for the Proposed Project, such as impacts to burrowing owl, Swainson's hawks, etc. would be applicable to the Reduced Acreage Alternative. However, because the Reduced Acreage Alternative would develop a smaller area as compared to the Proposed Project, fewer impacts would occur, such as impacts to existing trees and seasonal wetlands.

### Geology

The Draft EIR identified that the expansive soils would have a potentially significant impact on Proposed Project structures (Impact 4.9-3). Although the Reduced Acreage Alternative would result in the development of a smaller portion of the site, the same number of residential units would be built that could be impacted by expansive soils. However, because the Reduced Acreage Alternative does not include the hospice facility, senior home sites, and only includes 50 percent of the commercial uses, a fewer number

of structures would be subject to expansive soils. Impact 4.9-2 of the Draft EIR identified that the Proposed Project would have a potentially significant impact to downstream water quality due to soil erosion caused primarily by construction activities. The Reduced Acreage Alternative would also involve the disturbance of topsoils via construction activities, though to a lesser extent as compared with the Proposed Project. Therefore, although geological impacts would be reduced under this Alternative, the project-level impacts would remain similar to those generated by the Proposed Project.

### Hazards

Because the Reduced Acreage Alternative would not result in the development of the project site north of Channel “A”, certain hazardous impacts identified in the Draft EIR for the Proposed Project would not occur. For example, two gas wells and three groundwater monitoring wells are located north of Channel “A” and therefore would not impact structures built for this Alternative. However, other potential impacts identified in the Draft EIR for Proposed Project would also occur upon implementation of the Reduced Acreage Alternative. These include potential impacts associated with pesticides, agricultural wells, PCB transformers, aboveground and underground storage tanks, lead-based paint, and asbestos-containing materials. Therefore, although the Reduced Acreage Alternative would be expected to have fewer hazardous impacts, the impacts resulting from this Alternative would be similar to the Proposed Project overall.

### Hydrology, Water Quality, and Drainage

The Reduced Acreage Alternative would result in the creation of impervious surfaces through the development of residential and commercial uses, which would increase the amount of stormwater runoff generated on the project site. Therefore, similar to the Proposed Project, the Reduced Acreage Alternative would require the incorporation of a stormwater drainage system to maintain post-development flows on the site at pre-development levels. In addition, the Reduced Acreage Alternative would result in the short-term degradation of water quality through construction activities, which would require the preparation of a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP). The Reduced Acreage Alternative would also result in the long-term degradation of downstream water quality, as would the Proposed Project. However, because the Reduced Acreage Alternative would create a lesser amount of impervious surfaces compared to the Proposed Project, impacts to short – and long-term water quality degradation and stormwater flows would be fewer than the Proposed Project.

### Public Services and Facilities

The Reduced Acreage Alternative involves the development of the same number of housing units proposed for the project – 1,515. Therefore, public services and utilities impacts (i.e., public safety, parks and recreation facilities, wastewater and water) created by this Alternative would be expected to be the same as those created by the Proposed Project. The only exception would be for impacts associated with schools because the Reduced Acreage Alternative does not involve the dedication of a new school site or fire

station site. As a result, the overall impacts from the Reduced Acreage Alternative would be greater as compared to the Proposed Project.

Population, Housing, and Employment

The Reduced Acreage Alternative would result in the same number of housing units proposed for the project – 1,515. Therefore, consistent with Impact 4.13-2 of the Draft EIR, the Reduced Acreage Alternative would result in a potentially significant impact to the City of Davis General Plan growth management action “e.” However, because this Alternative includes only 50 percent of the commercial uses, beneficial impacts to Davis’ economy through the creation of jobs would not occur. Consistent with Impact 4.13-1 of the Draft EIR, the Reduced Acreage Alternative would result in beneficial impacts to the City through the construction of affordable housing units consistent with Davis’ Affordable Housing Ordinance. Overall, the Reduced Acreage Alternative would have similar impacts to population increase compared to the Proposed Project but greater impacts to employment.

**Alternative 9: Reduced Intensity Alternative**

The Reduced Intensity Alternative would involve the development of 1,000 residential units on the approximately 422-acre project site, as opposed to the 1,515 units planned for the Proposed Project. Although residential lot sizes would be larger under this Alternative, the same types of residential units, and ratios of unit types, proposed for the Proposed Project would be included in the Reduced Intensity Alternative. For example, under the Proposed Project, approximately 59 percent of the total number of units is single family units. Therefore, for the Reduced Intensity Alternative, 59 percent of 1,000 units, or 590 units, would be single family units. The Village Center, hospice facility, and fire station and school site would not be included as part of this Alternative. The following breakdown (Table 5-3) lists the number and type of units included in the Reduced Intensity Alternative:

<i>Housing Type</i>	<i>Total Number of Units</i>
Single Family	
Single Family	590
Senior Homes For Sale	
Single Family	122
Multi-Family For Sale	
Six-Plex Cluster Homes	16
Co-Housing	20
Multi-Family Rental	
All Apartments	230
Live / Work Units	
Mixed-Use (Live/Work Units)	22
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,000</b>

The City of Davis General Plan requires that 0.123 acres of parkland be dedicated per new residential unit; therefore, based on General Plan standards, the required amount of parkland under this alternative would be reduced as compared to under the Proposed Project. However, under the Reduced Intensity Alternative, the amount of greenbelt acreage proposed for the site would remain the same, because the greenbelt standard is based upon the amount of residential land to be developed. The assumption is made for the Reduced Intensity Alternative that the developer would propose to retain the parks and greenbelts as shown in the current project application.

### Environmental Effects

#### Aesthetics

The Reduced Intensity Alternative would result in the development of only 1,000 residential units on the project site, and would not include construction of the Village Center and hospice facility or the dedication of the fire station site and school site. Although the intensity of development would be reduced under this alternative, existing views of agricultural lands on the site would still be converted from vistas of open agricultural fields to those of an urban setting, and would still be considered a significant and unavoidable impact under the Davis General Plan Update EIR criteria. Therefore, although aesthetics impacts would be reduced under this Alternative, the project-level and cumulative impacts would remain significant and unavoidable.

#### Agricultural Resources

The Draft EIR identified significant and unavoidable project-level and cumulative agricultural conversion impacts associated with project implementation under Impacts 4.2-1 and 4.2-3, respectively. Like the Proposed Project, the Reduced Intensity Alternative would result in development of the entire project site; therefore, a similar amount of Prime Farmland would be converted via the implementation of this Alternative as compared to the Proposed Project. In terms of land use incompatibility impacts, because the Reduced Intensity Alternative would not result in the construction of a hospice facility, adverse impacts associated with the placement of the hospice adjacent to existing agricultural operations would not occur. Therefore, the Reduced Intensity Alternative would have fewer impacts to agricultural resources compared to the Proposed Project.

#### Land Use

The Reduced Intensity Alternative would result in the development of the entire project site with residential uses, which would be inconsistent with current General Plan land use and zoning designations for the site. For this reason, implementation of the Reduced Intensity Alternative would require General Plan Amendments for the site prior to project approval, as would the Proposed Project (please refer to Draft EIR Impact 4.3-4). In

addition, like the Proposed Project, the Reduced Intensity Alternative would result in land use incompatibility impacts regarding the Davis Landfill, which is situated directly to the north of the project site. Therefore, the Reduced Intensity Alternative would have land use impacts similar to those associated with the Proposed Project.

#### Transportation and Circulation

Traffic levels generated from the Reduced Intensity Alternative would be reduced overall to and from the project site as compared to the Proposed Project. The lower level of residential units on the project site would reduce the level of traffic in the area, as would the fact that the Village Center, school site, and fire station site are excluded from this Alternative. However, the development of 1,000 residential units would still increase the traffic level above existing conditions. Therefore, similar to the Proposed Project, this Alternative would result in traffic-related impacts, although the impacts are expected to be fewer than those identified for the Proposed Project.

#### Air Quality

The Reduced Intensity Alternative would involve the construction of 1,000 residential units on the 422-acre project site. Residential lot sizes would be larger than with implementation of the Proposed Project, and the commercial Village Center, hospice facility, fire station, and school site would not be included with this Alternative. Because of the reduced number of homes, and omission of the commercial and public uses slated for the Proposed Project, airborne pollutant emissions resulting from construction and operation of the Alternative would be decreased as compared to the Proposed Project.

#### Noise

Because only 1,000 dwelling units would be constructed on the project site under the Reduced Intensity Alternative, the population introduced to the area would be accordingly reduced as compared to the Proposed Project. As a result, fewer sensitive receptors would be affected by noise impacts due to traffic, CNRR operations, and the go-cart racetrack as identified in the Draft EIR. However, because the entire project site would be developed as with the Proposed Project, residents would still be exposed to noise from a variety of sources. In addition, impacts to off-site sensitive receptors resulting from project-generated traffic would increase, although not to the extent that would occur with implementation of the Proposed Project. Therefore, although the Reduced Intensity Alternative would be expected to have fewer noise impacts, the impacts resulting from this Alternative would be similar to the Proposed Project overall.

#### Cultural Resources

The Reduced Intensity Alternative would result in the development of 1,000 residential units on the project site, as opposed to 1,515 units with the Proposed Project. However, the same amount of acreage would be disturbed through implementation of the Reduced Intensity Alternative because residential lot sizes would be larger. Similar to the

Proposed Project, excavation and grading associated with the Alternative would have the potential to disturb currently unknown subterranean cultural resource deposits, and Site P-57-000199 would be demolished. Therefore, the effects of this alternative would be similar to those of the Proposed Project.

### Biological Resources

The Reduced Intensity Alternative would reduce the amount of housing units proposed for the project site. Fewer houses would allow greater flexibility for placement strategies of the houses on the site; therefore, the units could potentially be clustered to maintain sensitive habitat areas. However, as currently proposed, the Reduced Intensity Alternative would increase residential lot sizes; thereby, resulting in the same area of impact as the Proposed Project. Therefore, the Alternative would be expected to result in the same biological impacts as the Proposed Project.

### Geology

As discussed in Impact 4.9-3 of the Draft EIR, the project site's expansive soils would have a potentially significant impact on project construction. However, because the Reduced Intensity Alternative would include 515 fewer residential units than the Proposed Project, and would not include the commercial Village Center, hospice facility, fire station site, or school site, potential impacts to structures from expansive soils would be expected to be fewer than with the Proposed Project. Moreover, Impact 4.9-2 of the Draft EIR identified that the Proposed Project would have a potentially significant impact to downstream water quality due to soil erosion caused primarily by construction activities. Although fewer units would be constructed, the Reduced Intensity Alternative could involve the disturbance of a similar amount of topsoil via construction activities, due to grading for larger lot sizes. Therefore, although the Reduced Intensity Alternative would be expected to have fewer geological impacts, the impacts resulting from this Alternative would be similar to the Proposed Project overall.

### Hazards

The Reduced Intensity Alternative would result in development of the entire 422-acre project site, albeit with fewer structures proposed for construction. Hazardous impacts identified in the Draft EIR for the Proposed Project would be expected to be similar for the Reduced Intensity Alternative because the Alternative involves development on the same amount of acreage as the Proposed Project. As identified in Draft EIR Section 4.10 (Hazards), a total of ten (10) wells exist on the site. These include groundwater and gas monitoring wells, an inactive natural gas well, and agricultural wells. Moreover, potential impacts associated with pesticides, agricultural wells, PCB transformers, aboveground and underground storage tanks, lead-based paint, and asbestos-containing materials would not be expected to change significantly from those expected with implementation of the Proposed Project. Overall, the Reduced Intensity Alternative would have hazardous materials impacts similar to those of the Proposed Project.

### Hydrology, Water Quality, and Drainage

The Reduced Intensity Alternative involves the construction of 1,000 residential units and does not include the Village Center or hospice facility. Therefore, fewer structures would be constructed for the Alternative compared to the Proposed Project. Although the Alternative would involve the development of fewer structures, essentially the same amount of area would be developed for Alternative (through increased lot sizes) as compared to the Proposed Project. Therefore, this Alternative would still have the potential to cause short-term impacts to water quality due to grading and other construction activities throughout the 422-acre project site. In addition, similar to the Proposed Project, this Alternative would result in an increase in the amount of impervious surfaces on-site. For this reason, the Reduced Intensity Alternative would require the installation of a storm drain system to maintain stormwater runoff flows on the site at pre-development levels. Because the Reduced Intensity Alternative is expected to create the same amount of impervious surfaces compared to the Proposed Project, impacts to short – and long-term water quality degradation and stormwater flows would be similar to the Proposed Project.

### Public Services and Facilities

The Reduced Intensity Alternative involves the development of 1,000 residential units and does not include the commercial Village Center, hospice facility, fire station site or school site. Therefore, public services and utilities impacts (i.e., law enforcement, parks and recreation facilities, water, and wastewater) created by this Alternative would be expected to be reduced as compared to the Proposed Project, which includes the development of 1,515 units, a commercial Village Center, hospice facility, fire station site, and school site. However, impacts to the school system and fire protection facilities would be greater under the Reduced Intensity Alternative because, unlike the Proposed Project, the Alternative does not involve the dedication of a new school site and fire station site. As a result, the overall impacts from the Reduced Intensity Alternative would be similar compared to the Proposed Project.

### Population, Housing, and Employment

The Reduced Intensity Alternative would result in the construction of 1,000 dwelling units, as opposed to 1,515 units, which are proposed for the Project. Consistent with Impact 4.13-1 of the Draft EIR, the Reduced Intensity Alternative would result in beneficial impacts to the City through the construction of affordable housing units consistent with Davis' Affordable Housing Ordinance. Furthermore, although the Alternative would not increase the City's population as much as the Proposed Project, consistent with Impact 4.13-2 of the Draft EIR, the Reduced Intensity Alternative would result in a potentially significant impact to the City of Davis General Plan growth management action "e." However, because this Alternative does not include the commercial Village Center, beneficial impacts to Davis' economy through the creation of jobs would not occur. Overall, because the Reduced Intensity Alternative would further exceed the City's target population and would not provide jobs for the new residents, the

Reduced Intensity Alternative would have more impacts to population, housing, and employment compared to the Proposed Project.

### **Alternative 10: Offsite Alternative**

One of the requirements of CEQA is the assessment of the comparative environmental impacts of alternative locations for the “project.” Only locations that would avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects of the project need be considered for inclusion in the EIR.

The Offsite Alternative project site is located in Yolo County, immediately west of the City of Davis City limits and State Route 113, north of Russell Boulevard, south of County Road 31, east of County Road 98. The project site is comprised of a total of 319.5 acres and is made up of two parcels with the following acreages: 159.48 acres and 160 acres. Similar to the Proposed Project, the project site would need to be annexed to the City of Davis. The site is not currently owned by the current project applicant.

The Offsite Alternative would have the same types and intensity of uses as the Proposed Project (1,515 residential units, Village Center, etc.).

#### Environmental Effects

##### *Aesthetics*

The Offsite Alternative consists of 319.5 acres of agricultural land located north of Russell Boulevard, south of County Road 31, east of County Road 98, and west of a residential subdivision. The Offsite Alternative would have the same type and intensity of uses as the Proposed Project (1,515 residential units, Village Center, etc.). Furthermore, the Offsite Alternative project site is similar to the currently proposed project site in that the Alternative site is surrounded by residential development on more than one side. Therefore, the significant and unavoidable impact identified in the Draft EIR (Impact 4.1-1) associated with the Proposed Project’s conversion of open views, would still occur upon implementation of the Offsite Alternative. Therefore, the Offsite Alternative would have the same amount of aesthetics impacts compared to the Proposed Project.

##### *Agricultural Resources*

The Offsite Alternative project site is composed of the following soils, which are considered Prime Farmland if irrigated: Mf: Marvin Silty Clay Loam, Ms: Myers Clay, Rg: Rincon Silty Clay Loam, and Ya: Yolo Silt Loam. The conversion of the existing Prime Farmland soils on the project site via the development of residential, commercial, and recreational uses for the Offsite Alternative would result in a significant and unavoidable impact, as would the Proposed Project. However, it should be noted that the Offsite Alternative would result in the conversion of a lesser amount of Prime Farmland. Similar to the Proposed Project, the Offsite Alternative would result in land use conflicts between proposed residences and existing agricultural operations occurring west and

north of the project site. Therefore, although a lesser amount of Prime Farmland would be converted by the Offsite Alternative, overall, agricultural impacts would be similar to the Proposed Project.

### Land Use

Similar to the Covell Village project site, Figure 11b of the Davis General Plan shows the Offsite Alternative site being designated for Agriculture and outside the City Limits. Therefore, in order to develop the Offsite Alternative as proposed, the site would have to be annexed and the General Plan land use designation for the site would have to be amended. Unlike the Proposed Project, the Offsite Alternative would not result in land use incompatibility impacts regarding the Davis Landfill because the location of the Alternative is not near the landfill. However, similar to the Proposed Project, the Offsite Alternative would result in potential incompatibility impacts between proposed residential uses and adjacent farming operations located west and north of the site. Therefore, although the Offsite Alternative would be expected to have fewer land use impacts, the impacts resulting from this Alternative would be similar to the Proposed Project overall.

### Transportation and Circulation

The Offsite Alternative would have the same type and intensity of uses as the Proposed Project (1,515 residential units, Village Center, etc.) on a vacant 319.5-acre site. Roadways surrounding the Offsite Alternative include Russell Boulevard to the south, County Road 98 to the east, and County Road 31 to the north. The immediate vicinity of the Offsite Alternative location is more rural than the Proposed Project site, which is surrounded by existing development on three sides. Therefore, the possibility exists that additional vehicle trips generated by the Offsite Alternative would not adversely impact surrounding intersections and roadway segments to the same degree that the Proposed Project would. However, because the roadways surrounding the site have been designed for rural uses and not uses generating high traffic, additional vehicle trips associated with the Proposed Project could necessitate roadway improvements. Therefore, although the Offsite Alternative would be expected to result in less intense traffic impacts compared to the Proposed Project, impacts would occur nonetheless.

### Air Quality

The Offsite Alternative would result in the construction of 1,515 residential units, a commercial Village Center, and the other uses planned for the Proposed Project, on a vacant (agricultural) site occupying approximately 319.5 acres just west of the Davis City Limits. Considering the fact that the Offsite Alternative location would be approximately 100 acres smaller than the Proposed Project site, construction impacts associated with fugitive dust and ROG and NO<sub>x</sub> would be reduced, though still potentially significant as identified in the Draft EIR. In terms of operational emissions, because the Offsite Alternative would include the same types and intensity of uses as would the Proposed Project, impacts to air quality from project operation would be expected to be similar.

Overall, the impacts to air quality resulting from implementation of the Offsite Alternative would be similar to the Proposed Project.

### Noise

As noted above, the two parcels comprising the 319.5-acre Offsite Alternative just west of the Davis City Limits are currently used for agriculture, and the site is adjacent to existing residential development on its east and south sides. Because the Offsite Alternative would have the same types and intensity of uses as the Proposed Project, noise impacts relating to vehicle traffic would be similar to the vehicular noise generated by the Proposed Project. Residences, businesses, and other uses on the site would be subject to traffic noise from both perimeter and on-site roadways. Off-site sensitive uses in the vicinity (south and east) would experience increased traffic noise levels as well. However, impacts from the CNRR and the Blue Max Kart Club would not be present on the Alternative site, as they would at the Proposed Project site. Overall, noise impacts from the Offsite Alternative would be expected to be reduced from those of the Proposed Project.

### Cultural Resources

The Offsite Alternative would involve the development of 319.5 acres west of the existing Davis City Limits. Peak & Associates' Cultural Resources Assessment for the proposed project notes that previously unknown archaeological sites have been discovered during construction on the U.C. Davis campus, less than two miles from the Offsite Alternative location. Therefore, the possibility exists that excavation and grading activities could disturb currently undiscovered cultural resources on the site. In addition, a review of aerial photographs of the Offsite location (located on City of Davis website) indicates that a residence is currently located on-site. The determination cannot be made at this time regarding the age of the residence and consequently, the structure's historicity. Therefore, although the Harbin Ranch complex is not located on this site, the possibility exists for other historic structures to be present, though unlikely. Overall, potential impacts to cultural resources associated with implementation of the Offsite Alternative would be similar to those of the Proposed Project.

### Biological Resources

The types of habitat occurring at the offsite location are similar to those found at the Proposed Project site, with agricultural uses and a drainage channel that bisects the property from east to west (similar to Channel "A" located on the Proposed Project site). In addition, mature trees are located along the drainage channel. Although the Offsite Alternative would have the same type and intensity of uses as the Proposed Project (i.e., 1,515 residential units, Village Center, etc), the Offsite Alternative is approximately 100 acres smaller than the Proposed Project site. Therefore, the Offsite Alternative would have fewer impacts to biological resources than the Proposed Project.

### Geology

The soil types that make up the Offsite Alternative location are similar to those identified for the Proposed Project site studied in the Draft EIR. In fact, two of the predominant soil types that make up the Offsite Alternative location (Rg – Rincon silty clay loam and Ya – Yolo silt loam) are predominant soil types for the Proposed Project site. Therefore, potential expansive soils impacts to structures identified in the Draft EIR (Impact 4.9-3) would be expected to be the same for the Proposed Project and the Offsite Alternative. This conclusion is further supported by the fact that the Offsite Alternative proposes to construct the same number and types of units as the Proposed Project, including the commercial Village Center. Impact 4.9-2 of the Draft EIR identified that the Proposed Project would have a potentially significant impact to downstream water quality due to soil erosion caused primarily by construction activities. The Offsite Alternative would also involve the disturbance of topsoils via construction activities, though to a lesser extent as compared with the Proposed Project because the Offsite Alternative site is made up of 319.5 acres. Overall, the project-level impacts associated with the Offsite Alternative would remain similar to those generated by the Proposed Project.

### Hazards

The Draft EIR identified potential impacts for the project site associated with pesticides, PCB transformers, asbestos and lead-based paint, above-ground and underground storage tanks, wells, and the Davis landfill facility. A review of the 2003 aerial photograph of the City of Davis (located on the City of Davis website) found that the Offsite Alternative site is very similar to the Proposed Project site in that the site is currently used for agricultural purposes and one residence is located in the southern portion of the site. Although inconclusive at this time, the rural residence located in the southern portion of the Offsite Alternative site could have similar hazards as those identified for the residence on the Proposed Project site, such as above-ground and underground storage tanks, wells, and asbestos-containing materials and lead-based paints. In addition, the possibility also exists that the Offsite Alternative site has PCB transformers and pesticides associated with it. Overall, the hazardous impacts associated with the Offsite Alternative site would be similar to hazards associated with the Proposed Project site.

### Hydrology, Water Quality, and Drainage

Although the Offsite Alternative site is smaller than the Proposed Project site, the Offsite Alternative would involve the construction of the same amount of impervious surface area compared to the Proposed Project because the same number and type of units would be constructed (i.e., 1,515 residential units, Village Center, etc). Therefore, the amount of runoff expected to be generated for the Offsite Alternative would be the same as the runoff projected for the Proposed Project. As a result, similar to the Proposed Project, the Offsite Alternative would involve the construction of a storm drainage system to detain stormwater flows. A review of the 2003 Davis aerial photograph on the City of Davis' website shows that a drainage channel appears to bisect the property from east to west (similar to Channel "A" located on the Proposed Project site). The possibility exists that

this drainage channel could be incorporated into the project design as a drainage feature – similar to the plan for the Proposed Project.

In addition, similar to the Proposed Project, Figure 35 of the Davis General Plan shows that large portions of the Offsite Alternative site are within the 100-year floodplain. Therefore, impacts associated with flooding would be the same for this Alternative and the Proposed Project. Impacts 4.11-3 and 4.11-4 identified in the Draft EIR found that the Proposed Project would have short and long term impacts to downstream water quality. The Offsite Alternative would be expected to impact short- and long-term downstream water quality at the same level of intensity because the same number and type of units proposed for the Proposed Project would be constructed for the Offsite Alternative. Therefore, overall, the Offsite Alternative would have similar impacts to hydrology, water quality, and drainage compared to the Proposed Project.

#### Public Services and Facilities

The Offsite Alternative involves the development of the same number and type of uses proposed for the project, but the Offsite Alternative may not involve equivalent accommodations for a free fire station and full mitigation for schools. Because the offsite location is far west of the downtown area, this alternative would also not improve the response time performance or help with simultaneous calls. Therefore, public services and utilities impacts (i.e., law enforcement, fire protection, the school system, parks and recreation facilities, wastewater and water) created by this Alternative would be expected to be greater than those created by the Proposed Project.

#### Population, Housing, and Employment

The Offsite Alternative would result in the same number of housing units proposed for the project (1,515) in addition to the construction of other components, such as the commercial Village Center. Consistent with Impact 4.13-1 of the Draft EIR, the Offsite Alternative would result in beneficial impacts to the City through the construction of affordable housing units consistent with Davis' Affordable Housing Ordinance. In addition, because this Alternative includes the commercial Village Center, beneficial impacts would occur to Davis' economy through the creation of jobs. However, similar to the Proposed Project, the Alternative would have a potentially significant impact to population growth in Davis as identified in Impact 4.13-2 of the Draft EIR. Overall, the Offsite Alternative would have similar impacts to Population, Housing, and Employment compared to the Proposed Project.

#### **Alternative 11: Four Site Alternative**

The Four Site Alternative is comprised of four geographically separated sites, which make up a total of 190.1 acres. The types of uses included in the Proposed Project would also be included in the Four Site Alternative. The Four Site Alternative would also construct the same number of residential units as planned for the Proposed Project. However, due to the geographical separation of the four sites, this alternative project

would have to be redesigned in order to be distributed over four different sites. The Four Site Alternative is comprised of the following sites:

1. ConAgra / Hunt Wesson Site
2. Wildhorse Horse Ranch
3. Willowbank 9 South
4. Signature (inside-the-curve)

The 100-acre ConAgra / Hunt Wesson site is located adjacent to the western boundary of the Covell Village site, and is within the City of Davis city limits. The southern portion of the site consists of the old Hunt Wesson industrial site, while the northern portion consists of farmland. The Assessor's Parcel Numbers for the site are 035-970-034 to -037.

The 25.8-acre Horse Ranch site is located north of East Covell Boulevard and west of the Wildhorse development, and is within the City of Davis. The site consists of farmland along with three rural residences and associated outbuildings. The Assessor's Parcel Number for the site is 071-140-011.

The 17.15-acre Willowbank 9 South site is located west of Mace Boulevard and north of Montgomery Avenue in the City of Davis. The site is currently vacant and does not contain any structures. The Assessor's Parcel Numbers for the site are 069-100-025 and -026.

The 47.1-acre Signature (inside-the-curve) site is located south of East Covell / Mace Boulevard in Yolo County, adjacent to the new junior high school site. The project site is currently farmland and does not contain any structures. The Assessor's Parcel Number for the site is 071-130-005. Utilization of the Signature site for the development of the project would require annexation of the site to the City of Davis.

### Environmental Effects

#### *Aesthetics*

The Hunt Wesson site currently contains the non-operative former cannery and is designated "Industrial." The Signature site and the Horse Ranch site are designated for Agriculture in the General Plan and they are currently surrounded on at least two sides by residential development. Furthermore, the Horse Ranch site currently contains multiple buildings. The Willowbank 9 South site is a vacant site that is surrounded on three sides by existing residential development. Therefore, the four sites are either already developed (Hunt Wesson) or are considered infill sites. The infill sites have limited views through the sites because they are generally surrounded by urban uses. Therefore, development of these sites would not significantly degrade existing views and the assumption is hereby made that the implementation of the Four Site Alternative would not result in significant and unavoidable impacts to aesthetics. As a result, the Four Site Alternative would result in fewer aesthetics impacts compared to the Proposed Project.

### Agricultural Resources

The sites making up the Four Site Alternative consist of the following soil series types:

Signature = Sp and Sv

Horse Ranch = Sp and Rb

Willowbank 9 South = Sp

Hunt Wesson = St; Yb; Pb; Rg

The above soil types are all considered Prime Farmland soils except for Pb. A portion of the Proposed Project site also contains Pb soils. Therefore, similar to the Proposed Project site, the majority of soil types for the Four Site Alternative locations are considered Prime Farmland. Although implementation of both the Proposed Project and the Four Site Alternative would result in Prime Farmland conversion, the Four Site Alternative would result in the conversion of less acreage (190.1 acres). In addition, the four sites are small, constrained agricultural pieces that do not equal the agricultural value of one consolidated farm as on the Covell Village site. In terms of incompatibility impacts identified in the Draft EIR for the Proposed Project, the Four Site Alternative would be expected to result in similar impacts because all four of the sites are surrounded by agricultural land on at least one side. Therefore, the introduction of people to these sites as a result of the implementation of this Alternative could cause incompatibilities between adjacent agricultural operations. Therefore, the Four Site Alternative would result in fewer agricultural impacts than the Proposed Project.

### Land Use

According to Figure 11b of the Davis General Plan, two of the four sites are designated for Agriculture (Horse Ranch and Signature). In addition, the Willowbank 9 South site is designated Public/Semi-Public and Residential Low Density, and the Hunt Wesson site is designated Industrial. Therefore, in order to develop the Four Site Alternative as proposed, the General Plan land use designations for the sites would have to be amended. As identified in Impact 4.3-4 of the Draft EIR, the Proposed Project would also require amendments to the General Plan land use designations. In addition, similar to the Proposed Project, the Four Site Alternative would result in potential incompatibility impacts between proposed residential uses and adjacent farming operations. However, unlike the Proposed Project, the Four Site Alternative would not result in land use incompatibility impacts regarding the Davis Landfill because the location of the Alternative is not near the landfill. Like the Proposed Project, the Signature is not within City limits and would require Measure J approval; The Horse Ranch is within the City limits, and would also require Measure J approval. Therefore, although the Four Site Alternative would be expected to have fewer land use impacts, the impacts resulting from this Alternative would be similar to the Proposed Project overall.

### Transportation and Circulation

The Four Site Alternative would include development of the same type and intensity as the Proposed Project, although the uses would be distributed on four geographically separated sites. Because the four sites are geographically separated, traffic impacts would not be localized, as is the case with the Proposed Project. However, traffic impacts would still be expected to occur. For example, the Con Agra/Hunt Wesson site is one of the four sites that make up the Four Site Alternative. The Con Agra site is located immediately west of the Proposed Project site, north of Covell Boulevard and east of F Street. The Traffic Impact Analysis prepared for the Proposed Project by Fehr & Peers identified that at Phase I of construction the intersections of Picasso Avenue/Pole Line Road, Covell Boulevard (EB)/L Street, and Covell Boulevard (WB)/L Street are projected to operate at an unacceptable level of service (LOS F) in both the AM and PM peak period with the Phase 1 traffic. Phase 1 contains 33 percent of the Village Center and 34 percent of the residential. Therefore, it is reasonable to expect that full build-out of the Con Agra site would also result in significant impacts to nearby intersections.

Build-out of the three remaining sites with uses proposed for the Four Site Alternative could also necessitate roadway improvements to nearby intersections and/or roadways. The following provides a brief description of the roadways surrounding these sites: 1) the Horse Ranch site is located north of East Covell Boulevard and west of the Wildhorse development; 2) the Signature (inside-the-curve) site is located south of East Covell / Mace Boulevard in Yolo County, adjacent to the new junior high school site; and 3) the Willowbank 9 South site is located west of Mace Boulevard and north of Montgomery Avenue. Overall, although the Four Site Alternative would be expected to result in traffic impacts, the impacts would be expected to be less intense than the Proposed Project due to the distribution of the Alternative's land uses over four geographically separated sites.

### Air Quality

The Four Site Alternative would result in construction of 1,515 residential units, and commercial and public uses, on four properties located throughout the Davis area. Because the types and intensity of uses would be the same as with implementation of the Proposed Project, air quality impacts associated with construction and operation of the Four Site Alternative would be similar to those generated by the Proposed Project.

### Noise

As noted above under land use, two of the four sites designated for development under this alternative are currently used for agriculture. The Con Agra industrial parcel, is approximately half farmland. The Willowbank 9 site has been approved for residential development and is now vacant. Because development under this Alternative would be constructed on a total land area of 190.1 acres, as opposed to approximately 422 acres under the Proposed Project, noise impacts from the development of the Four Site Alternative could be expected to be intensified for the residents at each project site. Additionally, similar to the Proposed Project, existing traffic noise would be expected to

increase in the vicinity of each of the four sites, thereby potentially affecting off-site residents. However, impacts from one significant stationary noise source on the Covell site, the Blue Max Kart Club, would not be present at these other sites. For these reasons, noise impacts from the Four Site Alternative would be expected to be essentially the same compared to the Proposed Project.

### Cultural Resources

The Four Site Alternative would involve the construction of 1,515 residential units on four parcels throughout the Davis area, totaling 190.1 acres. Peak & Associates' Cultural Resources Assessment for the proposed project notes that although surveys in the immediate vicinity of the Proposed Project have not revealed the presence of significant cultural resources, previously unknown archaeological sites have been discovered during construction on the U.C. Davis campus. Therefore, the possibility exists for excavation and grading activities to disturb currently undiscovered cultural resources on these sites. In addition, a review of aerial photographs of the Four Site locations (located on City of Davis website) indicates that structures are currently located on the various sites. The determination cannot be made at this time regarding the age of the structures and consequently, their historicity. Therefore, although the Harbin Ranch complex is not located on any of these sites, the possibility exists for other historic structures to be present, though unlikely. Overall, potential impacts to cultural resources associated with implementation of the Four Site Alternative would be considered less than the Proposed Project because the Alternative involves the development of less than half the area, which would be developed through Proposed Project implementation.

### Biological Resources

The Four Site Alternative would result in the construction of the same amount of residential units and commercial and public uses as the Proposed Project. The four sites are either already developed (Hunt Wesson) or are considered infill sites, which are surrounded by urban uses. However, three of the four sites are primarily agricultural and could therefore support burrowing owl and/or provide important foraging habitat for Swainson's hawk, as would the Proposed Project site. A review of the aerial photograph located on the Davis website appears to indicate that aquatic habitats are not located on any of the four sites comprising the Four Site Alternative. Overall, because the locations making up the Four Site Alternative appear to lack aquatic habitat and the fact that the Alternative involves the development of 190.1 acres as opposed to the Proposed Project's 422 acres, impacts to biological resources would be less than with the Proposed Project.

### Geology

The soil types that make up the Four Site Alternative sites have similar characteristics as those identified for the project site studied in the Draft EIR. Therefore, potential expansive soils impacts to structures identified in the Draft EIR (Impact 4.9-3) would be expected to be similar for the Proposed Project and the Four Site Alternative. This conclusion is further supported by the fact that the Four Site Alternative proposes to

construct the same number and types of units as the Proposed Project, including the commercial Village Center. Impact 4.9-2 of the Draft EIR identified that the Proposed Project would have a potentially significant impact to downstream water quality due to soil erosion caused primarily by construction activities. The Four Site Alternative would also involve the disturbance of topsoils via construction activities, though to a lesser extent as compared with the Proposed Project because the Offsite Alternative site is made up of 190.1 acres. Overall, the project-level impacts associated with the Four Site Alternative would remain similar to those generated by the Proposed Project.

### Hazards

The Hunt Wesson site is one of the four sites identified for the Four Site Alternative. As previously mentioned, the Hunt Wesson site is the location of a former cannery. This site represents numerous potential industrial-related hazards that are not associated with the Proposed Project site. Furthermore, the other impacts identified in the Draft EIR for the Proposed Project such as pesticides, PCB transformers, asbestos and lead-based paint, above-ground and underground storage tanks, and wells could all be associated with the remaining three sites because all of the sites are agricultural and some of the sites contain structures, which could have possible lead-based paints, asbestos-containing materials, wells, and above-ground or underground storage tanks. Therefore, the Four Site Alternative would result in more potential hazardous impacts compared to the Proposed Project.

### Hydrology, Water Quality, and Drainage

In totality, the Four Site Alternative locations are approximately half the size of the 422-acre Proposed Project site. Although the Four Site Alternative would involve the same number and type of units as the Proposed Project (i.e., 1,515 residential units, Village Center, etc.), the lots would have to be compressed to accommodate all of the units. Therefore, the assumption is hereby made that the amount of impervious surface area would be decreased, subsequently resulting in a decreased amount of cumulative runoff from all four sites as compared to the Proposed Project site. However, similar to the Proposed Project, the Four Site Alternative would still be required to detain stormwater runoff. As a result, a storm drainage system would have to be constructed to detain stormwater flows.

Unlike the Proposed Project, Figure 35 of the Davis General Plan shows that none of the four sites that make up this Alternative are within the 100-year floodplain. Therefore, impacts associated with flooding would be less for this Alternative compared to the Proposed Project. Impacts 4.11-3 and 4.11-4 identified in the Draft EIR found that the Proposed Project would have short- and long-term impacts to downstream water quality. The Four Site Alternative would also be expected to impact short- and long-term downstream water quality; however, not at the same level of intensity as the Proposed Project because of the significantly smaller project site. Therefore, although impacts to hydrology, water quality, and drainage would be similar between the Four Site

Alternative and the Proposed Project, the Alternative would be expected to generate impacts at a lower level of intensity.

#### Public Services and Facilities

The Four Site Alternative involves the development of the same number and type of uses proposed for the Project. However, the schools would likely receive statutory provisions under the Four Site Alternative rather than full mitigation. The fire station site would also not likely have full accommodations as under the Proposed Project, and the only location that would improve emergency response times is the ConAgra property. Therefore, public services and utilities impacts (i.e., law enforcement, fire protection, the school system, parks and recreation facilities, wastewater and water) created by this Alternative would be expected to be greater than those created by the Proposed Project.

#### Population, Housing, and Employment

The Four Site Alternative would result in the same number of housing units proposed for the project (1,515) in addition to the construction of other components, such as the commercial Village Center. Consistent with Impact 4.13-1 of the Draft EIR, the Offsite Alternative would result in beneficial impacts to the City through the construction of affordable housing units consistent with Davis' Affordable Housing Ordinance. In addition, because this Alternative includes the commercial Village Center, beneficial impacts would occur to Davis' economy through the creation of jobs. However, similar to the Proposed Project, the Alternative would have a potentially significant impact to population growth in Davis as identified in Impact 4.13-2 of the Draft EIR. Overall, the Four Site Alternative would have similar impacts to Population, Housing, and Employment compared to the Proposed Project.

#### **Alternative 12: High Density Alternative**

The High Density Alternative involves the development of 1,990 residential units on the project site. The breakdown of units proposed for the High Density Alternative is shown below in Table 5-4. The construction of an additional 343 single family units on the project site would be accomplished by decreasing the lot sizes of the currently proposed single family lots. As shown in Table 5-4, the High Density Alternative also includes 347 townhouse units that include 30 co-housing units, whereas the Proposed Project only includes 30 co-housing units. The High Density Alternative would not include the senior-only home sites, but would include the same number and types of other units proposed for the Proposed Project, including but not limited to, 24 six-plex cluster homes. The High Density Alternative would also include the commercial Village Center and hospice facility, as well as dedication of a fire station site and a school site.

<i>Housing Type</i>	<i>Total Number of Units</i>
Single Family	
Single Family	1,236
Multi-Family For Sale	
Six-Plex Cluster Homes	24
Townhouse/Co-Housing Units	347
Multi-Family Rental	
Apartments outside of Village Center	289
Village Center Apartments	60
Live / Work Units	
Mixed-Use (Live/Work Units) outside Village Center	14
Mixed-Use (Live/Work Units) in Village Center	20
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,990<sup>1</sup></b>
<sup>1</sup> The total unit number of 1,990 does not include any homes restricted for senior occupancy.	
<sup>2</sup> SF = Square feet	

For the High Density Alternative, parkland obligation increases to 23.985 acres, while greenbelt obligation would remain at 23.6 acres. City staff has noted that the City may approve fees in lieu of dedicated parkland.

Summary

The High Density Alternative was evaluated throughout this Draft EIR at a level equal to the Proposed Project. The *Impacts and Mitigation Measures* section found in Chapters 4.1 through 4.13 of the Draft EIR include discussions of both the Proposed Project and the High Density Alternative. Below is a brief summary of the High Density Alternative analysis found in Chapters 4.1 through 4.13.

The Draft EIR found that similar to the Proposed Project, the High Density Alternative would result in significant and unavoidable impacts regarding the conversion of the current aesthetic qualities of the site; loss of Prime Farmland; roadway operations along Pole Line Road south of Covell Boulevard; NO<sub>x</sub> emissions generated during construction activities, and project-level and cumulative operational emissions; additional residences outside the five-minute response time area; and project-level and cumulative impacts associated with an increase in the City of Davis population.

Other potentially significant impacts identified in the Draft EIR, but found to be less-than-significant with mitigation, were similar to those identified for the Proposed Project. However, several additional traffic-related impacts were identified for the High Density Alternative. For example, under the “Existing Plus High Density Alternative” scenario, four roadway segments would operate unacceptably, while under the “Existing Plus Proposed Project” scenario, only two would operate unacceptably. In addition, under the “Cumulative Plus High Density Alternative” scenario, an additional intersection (Pole

Line Road/Covell Boulevard) would be impacted; this intersection would not be impacted under the “Cumulative Plus Proposed Project” scenario.

In addition, the Draft EIR concluded in Impact 4.6-7 that implementation of the High Density Alternative would result in a potentially significant cumulative impact to traffic noise levels on L Street between Covell Boulevard and Drexel Drive. However, the mitigation measures provided would reduce this impact to a less-than-significant level.

### **Environmentally Superior Alternative**

An EIR is required to identify the environmentally superior alternative from among the range of reasonable alternatives that are evaluated. Section 15126(d)(2) of the CEQA Guidelines requires that an environmentally superior alternative be designated and states that “if the environmentally superior alternative is the ‘no project’ alternative, the EIR shall also identify an environmentally superior alternative among the other alternatives.” Generally, the environmentally superior alternative is the one that would result in the fewest of least unmitigable impacts or less environmental impact overall.

The CEQA Guidelines (Section 15126.6(e)(2)) further state that if the environmentally superior alternative is the “No Project” alternative, the EIR shall also identify an environmentally superior alternative among the other alternatives. For the Covell Village Project, aside from the No Project Alternative, the Reduced Acreage Alternative would be considered the environmentally superior alternative. Although the Reduced Acreage Alternative would not achieve all of the applicant’s project objectives (in particular, Objective 13 listed at the beginning of the Alternatives section), the Reduced Acreage Alternative would result in fewer environmental impacts than the Proposed Project while still providing a mix of housing types consistent with the goals of the applicant (See Tables 5-5 and 5-6 for a comparison of environmental impacts among the various alternatives considered in this Draft EIR and a list of how each alternative meets the project objectives stated by the applicant, respectively).

The Reduced Acreage Alternative does not involve the construction of a hospice facility in the northwestern corner of the project site. Therefore, unlike the Proposed Project, the Reduced Acreage Alternative would not result in potentially significant impacts associated with locating a hospice facility adjacent to agricultural operations. As a result, the applicant would not be required to revise the site plan to include a 500-foot buffer along the northwestern perimeter of the project site.

In addition, the Reduced Acreage Alternative would not involve the placement of residences directly south of the decommissioned Davis landfill. Therefore, impacts associated with the Davis landfill would be reduced should the Reduced Acreage Alternative be approved. Furthermore, because the Reduced Acreage Alternative would convert fewer acres of Prime Farmland, the impacts associated with conversion of agricultural land would be fewer, although the impacts would still be considered significant and unavoidable. Biological impacts would also be reduced should the

Reduced Acreage Alternative be approved, because seasonal wetland habitat located north of Channel “A” would not be developed.

The Reduced Acreage Alternative would also reduce environmental impacts pertaining to noise, air quality, and geology because the Alternative does not include the construction of the Village Center, hospice facility, senior-only home sites, or the dedication of the school site and the fire station site. However, although noise, air quality, and geology impacts would be reduced compared to the Proposed Project, impacts would be expected to remain potentially significant.

Similarly, due to the decreased number of vehicle trips, which would be generated by the Reduced Acreage Alternative, traffic impacts would be expected to be less intense than with implementation of the Proposed Project. Utilizing trip generation information provided in the Traffic Impact Analysis prepared by Fehr & Peers for the Proposed Project, the Reduced Acreage Alternative would generate approximately 17,506 average daily trips (ADT), while the Proposed Project would generate approximately 27,627 ADT.

**Table 5-5  
 Environmental Impacts**

	<b>Proposed Project (PP)</b>	<b>Reduced Acreage Alternative (A2)</b>	<b>No Project/ No Build Alternative (A7)</b>	<b>Reduced Intensity Alternative (A8)</b>	<b>Offsite Alternative (A9)</b>	<b>Four Site Alternative (A10)</b>	<b>High Density Alternative (A11)</b>
<b>Aesthetics</b>	Significant & Unavoidable	Less**	None	Less**	Equal	Less**	Equal
<b>Agricultural Resources</b>	Significant & Unavoidable	Less	None	Less**	Equal	Less	Equal
<b>Land Use</b>	Less-Than-Significant with Mitigation	Less	None	Equal	Equal	Less*	Equal
<b>Transportation &amp; Circulation</b>	Less-Than-Significant with Mitigation	Less	None	Less	Less	Less	<b>Greater*</b>
<b>Air Quality</b>	Significant & Unavoidable	Less**	Less	Less	Equal	Equal	<b>Greater*</b>
<b>Noise</b>	Less-Than-Significant with Mitigation	Equal	Less	Less*	Less	Equal	<b>Greater</b>
<b>Cultural</b>	Less-Than-Significant with Mitigation	Less*	None	Equal	Equal	Equal	Equal
<b>Biology</b>	Less-Than-Significant with Mitigation	Less	Equal	Equal	Less	Less	Equal
<b>Geology</b>	Less-Than-Significant with Mitigation	Less*	Less	Less*	Equal	Equal	Equal
<b>Hazards</b>	Less-Than-Significant with Mitigation	Less*	Less	Equal	Equal	<b>Greater</b>	Equal
<b>Hydrology, Water Quality &amp; Drainage</b>	Less-Than-Significant with Mitigation	Less	Less	Equal	Equal	Less	<b>Greater*</b>
<b>Public Services</b>	Less-Than-Significant with Mitigation	<b>Greater</b>	None	Equal	<b>Greater</b>	<b>Greater</b>	<b>Greater*</b>
<b>Population &amp; Employment</b>	Less-Than-Significant with Mitigation	Less (Pop) <b>Greater (Emp)</b>	Less	Less (Pop) <b>Greater (Emp)</b>	Equal	Equal	<b>Greater*</b>

\*Although alternative would reduce or increase potential impacts, the overall result is still either less-than-significant or significant and unavoidable (equivalent to the Proposed Project conclusion).

\*\*Although alternative would reduce potential impacts, the overall result would remain “Significant and Unavoidable.”

No Impact = “None”    Less Than PP = “Less”    Equal to PP = “Equal”    **Greater Than PP = “Greater”**