

## 6.0 ALTERNATIVES

As required by Section 15126.6 of the *State CEQA Guidelines*, this EIR examines a range of reasonable alternatives to the proposed project. Included in this analysis are four alternatives that involve different land uses and development configurations on the site, including the CEQA-required “no project” alternative. This section also discusses why off-site alternatives were not chosen for further review, and, in accordance with CEQA, identifies the Environmentally Superior Alternative.

The alternatives evaluated in this EIR are summarized below and subsequently discussed in greater detail within the impact analysis for each alternative:

- *Alternative 1: No Project Alternative (no change in existing land uses)*
- *Alternative 2: Build-out of the Adopted 1993 Civic Center Specific Plan, as amended in 2000.*
- *Alternative 3: Increased Density Alternative*
- *Alternative 4: Reduced Density Alternative*

In addition to the formal alternatives considered in this Section, Sections 4.1, *Aesthetics*, 4.8 *Land Use/Planning*, and 4.13 *Shadows*, consider options related to heights and massing of the proposed residential developments in Components 1 and 2. Within Component 1, the first option includes a maximum building height of five floors, with one building element permitted to a maximum height of eleven floors, pursuant to specific development standards related to massing and stepbacks. The second option provides for a maximum height of eight floors, pursuant to specific development standards related to massing and stepbacks. Within Component 2, three maximum height limits were analyzed at 56 feet, 85 feet and 160 feet, pursuant to specific development standards related to massing and stepbacks.

### 6.1 ALTERNATIVE 1: No Project Alternative (No Change in Existing Land Uses)

#### 6.1.1 Description

This alternative assumes that the site remains with its current land uses, with the exception that the currently approved projects (the RAND project and the Civic Center Parking Garage) would go forward. This alternative would not require an amendment to the Civic Center Specific Plan.

#### 6.1.2 Impact Analysis

**a. Aesthetics.** This alternative would not result in the development of the proposed project components or in buildout of the existing CCSP. Under this alternative, the project site would remain in its current condition. Therefore, this alternative would not result in the mitigable impacts of the project related to building height and massing, and nightlighting. However, this alternative would also not result in the overall beneficial project impacts related to improvement of views along City-identified scenic corridors and other view corridors, and the overall aesthetic improvement of the site by the replacement of surface parking areas with



landscaped open space and improved urban design. Therefore, overall, this alternative would be considered inferior to the mitigated proposed project.

**b. Air Quality.** This alternative would not result in the generation of additional trips and therefore, would not result in the Class I, significant and unavoidable impacts of the proposed project related to air quality after implementation of Component 2. Therefore, this alternative would be superior to the proposed project in that no additional emissions would be generated.

**c. Construction Effects.** This alternative would not result in the adverse, but less than significant, impacts related to an increase in truck traffic and disruption of the normal use of sidewalks and roadways within and adjacent to project boundaries. This alternative would also not result in the significant and unavoidable impact related to the exceedance of SCAQMD thresholds for NO<sub>x</sub> and ROC during construction. In addition, this alternative would not result in potentially significant, but mitigable impacts related to the generation of noise during construction and its impacts on sensitive receptors near the site. Therefore, this alternative would be superior to the proposed project when considering construction effects.

**d. Cultural Resources.** This alternative would not result in the potentially significant, but mitigable impacts related to historic resources, or the discovery of unknown archaeological resources during excavation and grading activities. This alternative would also not result in the potentially significant, but mitigable impacts on the Civic Auditorium. In addition, this alternative would not result in the potentially significant and unmitigable impacts to the Moreton Bay Fig tree, if the option that resulted in relocation or removal of the tree were selected. However, if the Moreton Bay Fig Tree is not in the path of the proposed street extension, or the proposed street extension is redesigned to avoid the tree, neither this alternative nor the proposed project would result in impacts to the Bay Fig. In addition, this alternative would not result in the beneficial impacts related to restoration of City Hall and the courtyard. Because the impacts to the Civic Auditorium would be mitigable, and because the impacts to City Hall would be considered beneficial, overall, the No Project Alternative is considered inferior to the mitigated proposed project if the Moreton Bay Fig were not impacted (Option 1), and the No Project Alternative would be considered superior to the mitigated proposed project if the Moreton Bay Fig Tree were impacted (Options 2 or 3 were selected).

**e. Geology/Soils.** This alternative would not result in the potentially significant but mitigable impacts related to seismic-related activity, including the potential for liquefaction, settlement of artificial fill, and expansive soils. This alternative would also not result in potentially significant, but mitigable impacts related to excavation for the below-grade parking garage and erosion during construction. Therefore, this alternative is considered superior to the proposed project when considering geological resource issues.

**f. Hazards and Hazardous Materials.** This alternative would not result in the potentially significant but mitigable impacts related to asbestos, lead, contaminated soils and groundwater, abandoned underground tanks, and other potential environmental hazards identified for the proposed project. However, this alternative would also not result in the clean-up of any potentially hazardous materials on the site. Overall, this alternative is comparable to the mitigated proposed project.



**g. Hydrology and Water Quality.** This alternative would not result in the potentially significant, but mitigable, impacts related to construction-related runoff, groundwater intrusion, and water quality. However, this project would also not result in the potentially beneficial impacts related to a decrease in impervious surfaces through the replacement of paved surface parking areas with permeable open space. Therefore, this alternative is considered inferior to the proposed project.

**h. Land Use/Planning.** Overall, the proposed CCSP would allow for the development of up to 16.4 acres of public open space, up to 775 units of mixed-use multifamily housing with 20,000 square feet (sf) of new ground-floor neighborhood-serving commercial, 150,000 sf of public and community facilities, 560,000 sf of reconfigured or reconstructed commercial retail, 85,000 sf of commercial office space, and associated street and parking improvements. The No-Project Alternative would not result in the development of these land uses, and thus would not require an amendment to the CCSP, nor result in the potentially significant, but mitigable impacts related to land use compatibility. However, this alternative would also not result in the creation of up to 16.4 acres of open space, which represents an addition of approximately 13 acres of open space over existing conditions, nor in the improvements in pedestrian circulation. Therefore, overall, this alternative is considered inferior to the proposed project.

**i. Neighborhood Impacts.** This alternative would not result in the significant and unavoidable neighborhood traffic impacts on 4<sup>th</sup> Street between Pico Boulevard and Ocean Park Boulevard, and on 4<sup>th</sup> Street south of Ocean Park Boulevard. This alternative would also not result in the significant and unavoidable impacts related to exceedances of SCAQMD thresholds for ROG, NO<sub>x</sub> and CO during project operation, or the exceedances of SCAQMD thresholds for ROG and NO<sub>x</sub> during project construction. Therefore, this alternative is considered superior to the proposed project.

**j. Noise.** This alternative would not result in the potentially significant impacts of the proposed project as they relate to operational noise (e.g., stationary noise from rooftop ventilation and heating, and the athletic field). This alternative would also not result in the less than significant impact of the project on increased noise levels from project trip generation. Therefore, this alternative is considered superior to the proposed project.

**k. Population and Housing.** This alternative would not result in the population and employment increases expected with the proposed project. However, this alternative would also not add the up to 775 housing units or associated affordable housing, nor add the estimated 811 jobs. This alternative would also not help to alleviate the jobs/housing imbalance in the City, as would the proposed project. Therefore, because this alternative would not provide housing units nor help to alleviate the jobs/housing imbalance in the City, it is considered inferior to the proposed mitigated project.

**l. Public Services.** This alternative would not result in the generation of approximately 122 students, nor the demand on police and fire protection services, since no housing units would be developed. However, impacts of the proposed project on schools, and police and fire protection services were considered less than significant. With respect to parks,



this alternative would not result in the addition of approximately 13 acres of park/open space area, which includes the project active recreation field. Therefore, overall, this alternative is generally comparable to the proposed project.

**m. Shade and Shadows.** This alternative would not result in the adverse but less than significant impacts of the project related to new structures casting shadows onto adjacent areas, particularly in wintertime. Therefore, this alternative is considered superior to the proposed project.

**n. Transportation/Traffic.** This alternative would not result in the project related significant and unmitigable impacts at the following intersections: Ocean Avenue and Colorado Avenue; Fourth Street and I-10 Eastbound On-ramp; Fourth Street and I-10 Westbound Off-ramp; Lincoln Boulevard & Pico (AM, PM and Weekend); Palisades Beach Rd (PCH) & California Incline (AM, PM, and Weekend); 4<sup>th</sup> and Broadway (PM and Weekend); 4<sup>th</sup> and Colorado (PM and Weekend), and Lincoln and I-10 WB Off Ramp (AM, PM and Weekend). Therefore, this alternative is considered superior to the proposed project.

**o. Utilities.** This alternative would not result in the proposed project's potentially significant but mitigable impacts related to sewer capacity, nor the project's adverse but less than significant impact related to water demand, solid waste generation and energy. Therefore, this alternative is considered superior to the proposed project.

## **6.2 ALTERNATIVE 2: BUILDOUT THE EXISTING ADOPTED 1993 CIVIC CENTER SPECIFIC PLAN, AS AMENDED IN 2000**

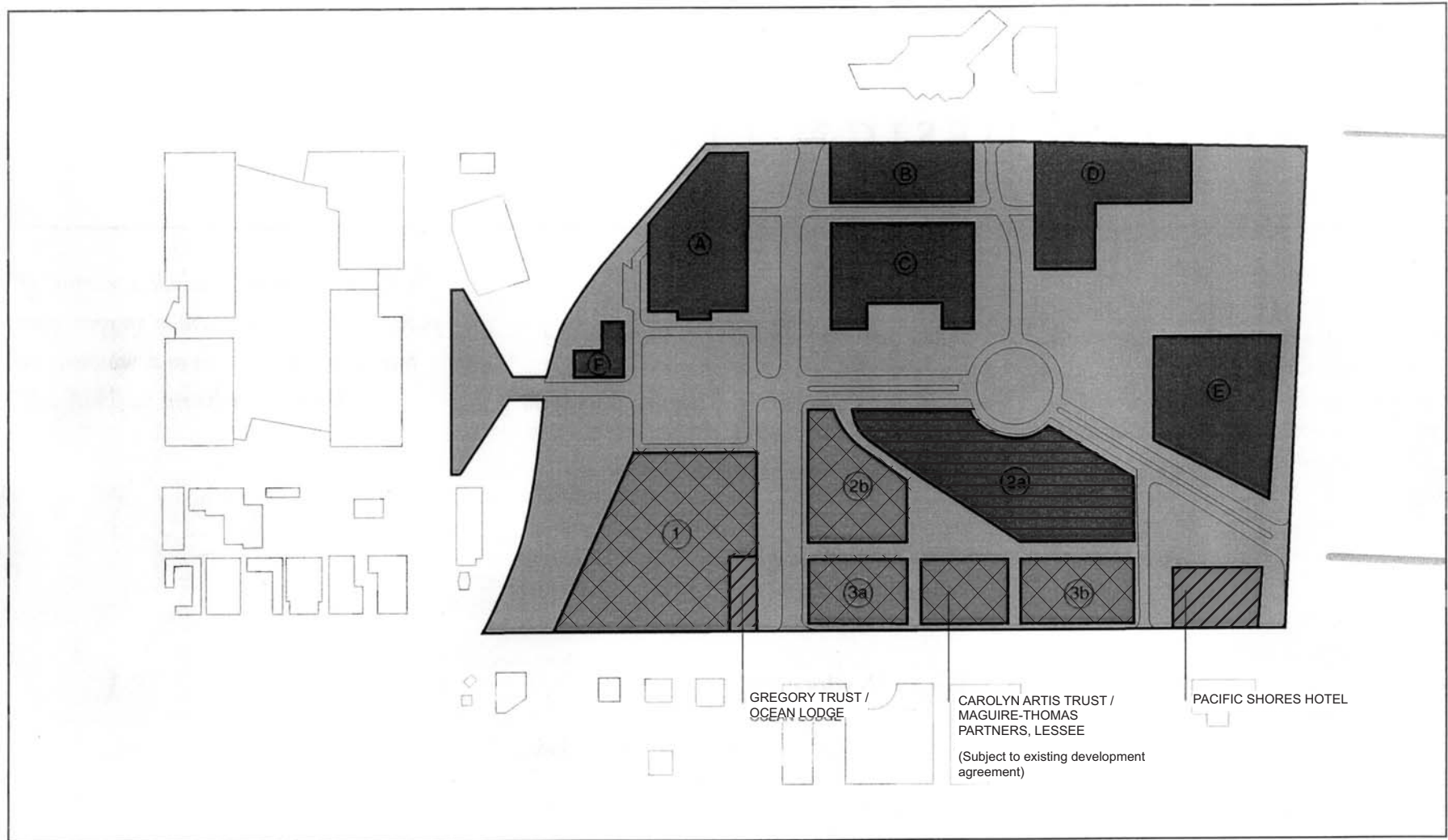
### **6.2.1 Description**

This alternative assumes the existing Civic Center Specific Plan (2000) is implemented and that development would proceed in accordance with the existing approved Civic Center Specific Plan (CCSP). The existing CCSP does not include the Santa Monica Place or Colorado Avenue Special Use Districts (SUD). Therefore, the Santa Monica Place shopping center would remain intact with its current configuration of 560,000 sf commercial uses, and no housing units within the Santa Monica Place area would be developed. In addition, the extension of the Third Street Promenade would not occur with this alternative.

The existing CCSP (2000) contains many of the same elements as the proposed CCSP. This includes extending the palisades landscape into the Civic Center, a Main Street Circle, a civic/cultural park adjacent to the Civic Auditorium, a child care center and a community, cultural and/or recreational facility on the northeast corner of the existing Civic Auditorium parking lot. The existing CCSP also includes development of a mix of residential and commercial uses situated in a Village setting, where the ground floor of the residential buildings could house artist studios and create live/work environments, similar to the proposed project. The Land Use Diagram for the existing CCSP is provided in Figure 6-1.

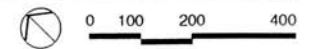
This alternative envisions that the following uses allowed for in the existing CCSP be developed:





Land Use Diagram

- |                       |   |                             |                        |
|-----------------------|---|-----------------------------|------------------------|
| PUBLIC USE            | D. CULTURAL / COMMUNITY FACILITY AND PUBLIC PARKING | INSTITUTIONAL ( 2A )        | HOTEL                  |
| A. CITY HALL / POLICE | E. CIVIC AUDITORIUM                                 | MIXED USE ( 1, 2B, 3A, 3B ) | STREETS AND OPEN SPACE |
| B. PUBLIC PARKING     | F. VIEWING TOWER AND CULTURAL / COMMUNITY FACILITY  |                             |                        |
| C. COUNTY COURTS      |   |                             |                        |



Source: Santa Monica Civic Center Specific Plan,  
 Draft: November 18, 2002

Land Use Diagram Existing CCSP (2000)

Figure 6-1

**Public Uses:**

- Up to 140,000 sf of additional county courts related uses between the two existing wings of the courthouse with a height limit of 65 feet;
- Up to 120,000 sf of additional City office uses;
- Up to 55,000 sf of community, cultural or recreational uses (with child care facility) with a height limit of 35 feet in the Civic Auditorium area;
- Up to 15,000 sf of community-oriented uses that provide a landmark viewing tower north of the Main Street Square adjacent to Santa Monica Freeway and Main Street bridge;

**Institutional Uses:**

- Up to 5,000 sf retail in addition to the existing 310,000 institutional office (RAND), up to 72 feet in height.

**Mixed-Uses:**

- Mixed-use housing with up to 350 residential units (30 percent of which shall be affordable to very low, low, and moderate income households) on Parcel 1 (north of Olympic Drive extension) plus up to 35,000 sf live-work space on the ground level, with a height limit of 70 feet;
- Up to 250,000 sf private office space fronting Ocean Avenue, with a height limit of 56 feet on Parcels 3A, and 3B (the Village area);
- Up to 15,000 sf neighborhood commercial with a height limit of 56 feet.

**6.2.2 Impact Analysis**

**a. Aesthetics.** This alternative would result in similar impacts of the proposed project related to light and glare and replacement of surface parking lots with subterranean parking structures. However, this alternative would not result in the potentially significant, but mitigable impacts related to increased building height and massing due to the lower building heights proposed. This alternative would also not result in the beneficial impact related to the development of the Palisades Garden Walk District and associated view corridor benefits along Ocean Avenue and through the site, since this area would be developed with housing. Therefore, overall, this alternative would be considered inferior when compared to the proposed project with respect to aesthetics.

**b. Air Quality.** This alternative would result in the development of less than half the housing units as the proposed project and 35,000 fewer square feet of cultural/community facilities, and would not include the reconfiguration of the Santa Monica Place Shopping Center. However, this alternative would result in the development of 250,000 sf of office use, as opposed to 85,000 sf for the proposed project, and development of 140,000 sf of governmental uses, compared with 100,000 sf of governmental uses for the proposed project. The air quality impacts of the additional 165,000 sf of office use and 40,000 sf of governmental use under this alternative would be expected to be more adverse than those of the additional residential units. Therefore, overall, this alternative would be expected to still result in exceedances of the SCAQMD's thresholds for Reactive Organic Gases (ROG), NO<sub>x</sub>, and CO, similar to that for the



proposed project, and would have similar overall air quality impacts when compared to the proposed project.

**c. Construction Effects.** This alternative would result in similar impacts of the proposed project related to an increase in truck traffic and disruption of the normal use of sidewalks and roadways along project boundaries, the significant and unavoidable impact related to the exceedance of SCAQMD thresholds for NO<sub>x</sub> and ROC, and, potentially significant, but mitigable impacts related to construction waste generation, water erosion runoff, and generation of noise during construction. Because this alternative does not include reconfiguration of the Santa Monica Place Shopping Center, it would be expected to result in lesser impacts related to these issues. However, this would be expected to be offset by the construction related impacts of the additional 165,000 sf of office use and 40,000 sf of governmental use under this alternative. Therefore, overall, this alternative is considered superior to the proposed project.

**d. Cultural Resources.** This alternative would result in similar potentially significant, but mitigable impacts of the proposed project as they relate to the discovery of unknown archaeological resources during excavation and grading activities. This alternative also would result in the restoration of City Hall, and the potentially significant but unmitigable impacts to the Civic Auditorium expansion. However, this alternative would not result in the potentially significant and unavoidable impacts related to removal/relocation of the Moreton Bay Fig tree if Option 2 or 3 were selected. If Option 1 of the project were selected (aligning the second Street extension to avoid the tree), then this alternative would have similar impacts to the proposed project. However, if Option 2 or 3 were selected, this alternative would be inferior to the proposed project.

**e. Geology/Soils.** This alternative would result in impacts similar to the proposed project as they relate to seismic-related activity, including the potential for liquefaction, settlement of artificial fill, expansive soils. This alternative would also result in similar potentially significant, but mitigable impacts related to excavation for the below-grade parking garage and erosion during construction.

**f. Hazards and Hazardous Materials.** This alternative would result in similar potentially significant but mitigable impacts related to asbestos, lead, contaminated soils and groundwater, abandoned underground tanks, and other potential environmental hazards identified for the proposed project.

**g. Hydrology and Water Quality.** This alternative would result in similar impacts related to construction-related runoff, groundwater intrusion, and water quality, as the proposed project. However, this alternative would result in lesser benefits related to a decrease in impervious surfaces through the replacement of paved areas with permeable open space, since the Palisades Garden Walk area would be developed with housing under this alternative. Therefore, this alternative is considered inferior to the proposed project.

**h. Land Use/Planning.** This alternative would result in similar land use related impacts related to development of mixed uses. However, the proposed CCSP would revise the overall program of Civic Center development set forth in the 1993 and amended 2000 CCSP for



the area south of the Santa Monica Freeway, by accomplishing the following: eliminating commercial office as a permitted use, reducing the anticipated cultural and community facilities from 55,000 square feet to 20,000 square feet, and adding the 100,000 square foot City Services Building to the development program. The net reduction of square footage is approximately 185,000 square feet of overall floor area. In addition, the proposed CCSP promotes some increases of building heights on specific parcels in order to preserve as much public land for open space as possible, and it promotes intensification and redevelopment of the Santa Monica Place property. This alternative would result in the ultimate creation of approximately 13.2 acres of open space for both passive and active recreational uses, whereas the proposed CCSP would ultimately result in 16.4 acres of open space and park uses. For this reason, this alternative is considered inferior when compared to the proposed project.

**i. Neighborhood Impacts.** This alternative would be expected to result in fewer neighborhood impacts related to traffic on neighborhood streets, and associated air quality and traffic noise impacts due to the reduced residential units under this alternative. However, this benefit would generally be offset by the additional 165,000 sf of office use and 40,000 sf of governmental use under this alternative, which would be expected to generate more trips (and associated air emissions and noise) than the additional residential units. Therefore, overall, this alternative would be considered similar to the proposed project.

**j. Noise.** This alternative would be expected to result in similar operational noise impacts of the proposed project related to stationary noise from rooftop ventilation and heating systems, trash hauling, and noise from the athletic field. Noise impacts from project-generated traffic would be less for this alternative due to the reduced number of residential units proposed. However, because traffic noise impacts of the proposed project were not considered potentially significant, overall noise impacts of this alternative would be considered comparable to the proposed project.

**k. Population and Housing.** This alternative would result in the development of up to 350 residential units (mixed-use with a residential emphasis), as opposed to a maximum of 775 units for the proposed project. This would result in a population of approximately 863 persons as opposed to approximately 1,910 persons generated by the proposed project. However, this was not considered a potentially significant project impact because the population generated by the proposed project would be within overall SCAG growth projections for the City. This alternative would also result in up to 425 fewer housing units, approximately 30 percent of which could be affordable units. The additional 165,000 sf of office use and 40,000 sf of governmental use under this alternative would be expected to also create a further imbalance in the City's jobs/housing ratio. Because the City is considered jobs rich and housing poor, overall, this alternative is considered inferior to the proposed project.

**l. Public Services.** This alternative would result in reduced impacts on schools, police and fire protection services, due to the decreased residential units proposed in the existing CCSP. The existing CCSP would result in the development of 350 housing units, which would generate approximately 55 additional students, compared with the up to 122 additional students generated by the proposed project. However, impacts on schools, police and fire protection services were determined to be less than significant with the proposed project. The policies of the existing CCSP call for approximately 13.2 acres of open space for both passive



and active recreational uses, which is less than the 16.4 acres of open space and park uses planned for in the proposed project. Overall this alternative is considered comparable to the proposed project.

**m. Shade and Shadows.** This alternative would result in lesser shade and shadow impacts than the proposed project with respect to new buildings casting shadows onto adjacent areas, particularly in the wintertime. This alternative would result in structures up to 70 feet in height (excluding the RAND building currently under construction at 72 feet in height), while the proposed project would allow structures up to either 120 feet or 160 feet in height. Therefore, although shadows were considered less than significant with the proposed project, this alternative would be considered superior to the proposed project, since shadowing from the structures would be less extensive.

**n. Transportation/Traffic.** The residential portion of this alternative would be expected to result in substantially fewer trips than the proposed project, due to the decrease in the number of housing units proposed under the existing CCSP (350 units as opposed to 775 units for the proposed project). However, the additional 165,000 sf of office use and 40,000 sf of governmental use under this alternative would be expected to generate more trips than residential uses. Therefore, overall, this alternative would be considered similar to the proposed project with respect to traffic impacts.

**o. Utilities.** Due to the decrease in the number of housing units proposed under this alternative, this alternative would be expected to result in lesser impacts than the proposed project related to the increase in water demand, solid waste generation, wastewater requiring treatment, and energy usage. However, this decrease would likely be offset by the additional 165,000 sf of office use and 40,000 sf of governmental use under this alternative. Therefore, overall, this alternative would be considered similar to the proposed project.

## 6.3 ALTERNATIVE 3: Increased Density Alternative

### 6.3.1 Description

This alternative proposes that an additional 225 housing units be constructed within the CCSP area, in addition to the up to 775 housing units for the proposed project. This would result in a total of up to 1,000 housing units for this alternative, as opposed to a total of up to 775 housing units for the proposed project. Specifically, under this alternative, the Santa Monica Place Special Use District (SUD) would provide up to 350 housing units (as opposed to up to 450 units with the proposed project), the Village SUD would provide up to 325 housing units (the same as for the proposed project), and an additional 325 housing units would be constructed north of Olympic Drive within the park area designated for the 4-acre Palisades Garden Walk, with Fujinomura Douri extended to Ocean Avenue. It is anticipated that 30% of the additional 325 residential units would be affordable.



### 6.3.2 Impact Analysis

**a. Aesthetics.** This alternative would have similar impacts as the proposed project, with the exception that this project would not preserve the view corridor from the County Courthouse towards Palisades Park. Therefore, this alternative is considered inferior when compared to the proposed project.

**b. Air Quality.** This alternative would result in the generation of a substantially greater number of vehicle trips with associated increased air emissions due to the increase in the number of residential units. Therefore, this alternative would be considered inferior to the proposed project.

**c. Construction Effects.** This alternative would result in a moderate increase in the potentially significant, but mitigable impacts related to the generation of noise during construction activities. This alternative would also result in a moderate increase in the Class I (significant and unavoidable) impacts related to the exceedance of SCAQMD's thresholds for NO<sub>x</sub> and ROC. In addition, this alternative would result in the adverse, but not significant, disruption of use of sidewalks and roadways during construction. Overall, due to the increased density of this alternative, it is expected that construction impacts would be increased over that anticipated for the proposed project. Therefore, this alternative is considered inferior to the proposed project with respect to construction impacts.

**d. Cultural Resources.** This alternative would result in similar impacts related to the proposed project, including the mitigable impacts related to historic resources (e.g., Civic Auditorium), and the potential discovery of unknown archaeological resources during excavation and grading activities. In addition, this alternative would result in the potentially significant and unmitigable impacts to the Moreton Bay Fig tree, if the option that resulted in relocation or removal of the tree were selected. However, if the Moreton Bay Fig Tree is not in the path of the proposed street extension, or the proposed street extension is redesigned to avoid the tree, neither this alternative nor the proposed project would result in impacts to the Bay Fig. In addition, this alternative would result in the beneficial impacts related to restoration of City Hall and the courtyard. Therefore, this alternative would be similar to the proposed project.

**e. Geology/Soils.** This alternative would be expected to result in similar impacts as the proposed project related to erosion or hazards during excavation, seismically-induced liquefaction and settlement. However, it is assumed that the parking for the additional 225 units would be constructed in a new subterranean parking garage under the housing units. This would moderately increase associated mitigable impacts related to geology and groundwater intrusion. However, overall, this alternative is considered comparable to the proposed project.

**f. Hazards and Hazardous Materials.** This alternative would be expected to result in similar potentially significant but mitigable impacts related to asbestos, lead, contaminated soils and groundwater, abandoned underground tanks, and other potential environmental hazards identified for the proposed project. This is because the clean up levels required for residential



uses and park uses are generally the same. Therefore, this alternative is similar to the proposed project.

**g. Hydrology and Water Quality.** This alternative would be expected to result in similar impacts related to construction-related runoff, groundwater intrusion, and water quality as the proposed project. However, this alternative would be expected to result in slightly less benefits related to the potentially beneficial impacts of a decrease in impervious surfaces through the replacement of paved surface parking areas with permeable open space. This is because a portion of the proposed open space area in the Palisades Garden Walk SUD would be developed with the additional housing. However, overall, this alternative is considered generally comparable to the proposed project.

**h. Land Use/Planning.** Overall, the land use compatibility impacts of this alternative would be similar to those anticipated for the proposed project. However, this alternative would result in greater intensification of use of the CCSP area, resulting in a stronger mixed-use district with residential uses throughout the area, but would result in a large portion of the project-proposed 4.0 acre Palisades Garden Walk Park being developed with housing. Therefore, this alternative would have fewer beneficial impacts related to provision of open space than would the proposed project, and would thus be considered inferior to the proposed project.

**i. Neighborhood Impacts.** This alternative would be expected to result in increased neighborhood impacts related to all issue areas, including neighborhood traffic, air quality, noise and aesthetics. Therefore, this alternative would be inferior when compared to the proposed project with respect to neighborhood impacts.

**j. Noise.** This alternative would be expected to result in similar noise impacts as the proposed project related to operational noise (e.g., stationary noise from rooftop ventilation and heating, and the athletic field). This alternative would also result in increased impacts when compared to the proposed project as they relate to noise levels from project trip generation. Therefore, this alternative is considered inferior to the proposed project.

**k. Population and Housing.** This alternative would result in similar job creation as the proposed project (approximately 811 jobs). However, this alternative would, overall, result in the development of up to 225 additional housing units within the CCSP area. This alternative would also result in a commensurate increase in population associated with the additional 225 housing units (an increase of approximately 555 persons over that generated by the proposed project). Because the increase in population projections would still be within the build-out projections for the City, and because the City is considered jobs rich and housing poor, the provision of additional housing would be considered a beneficial impact. Therefore, overall, this alternative would be considered superior to the proposed project with respect to population and housing.

**l. Public Services.** The additional 225 housing units under this alternative would result in greater impacts on schools, police, fire protection and park services than the proposed project. The additional 225 housing units under this alternative would generate an additional 35 students over the proposed project's generation of 122 students for the 775 units. However,



these impacts were considered less than significant for the proposed project. This alternative would also, however, result in fewer beneficial impacts related to provision of parkland, since this alternative would result in the development of approximately 3-4 acres of parkland for the additional housing units. Therefore, overall, this alternative is considered inferior to the proposed project.

**m. Shade and Shadows.** This alternative would result in similar less than significant, shadow impacts as the proposed project for the Village Special Use District (325 units) and the Santa Monica Place SUD with 350 units. However, this alternative would also result in additional shadow impacts in the area north of Olympic Drive and east of Ocean Avenue, which is proposed as parkland in the proposed project, but which would be developed with 325 housing units under this alternative. It is anticipated that this alternative would result in shadow impacts in this area which are similar in scope as the shadow impacts of the Santa Monica Place SUD with 350 units. These additional housing units would be expected to cast adjacent shadows on the proposed Town Square park during the winter afternoon hours. Overall, this alternative is considered inferior to the proposed project with respect to shadow impacts.

**n. Transportation/Traffic.** This alternative would result in the overall addition of 225 housing units. Based upon the trip generation rates used for the Santa Monica Place SUD and Village SUD residential units, these additional 225 units would generate approximately 1,492 additional average daily trips (ADT), 115 AM peak hour trips, 140 PM peak hour trips, and 117 Saturday midday trips. Therefore, this alternative is considered inferior to the proposed project when considering traffic impacts.

**o. Utilities.** This alternative would result in a greater demand on public utilities due to the increase in housing units. The additional 225 housing units proposed under this alternative would result in increased water demand, solid waste generation, wastewater treatment and energy usage. However, because these impacts were considered less than significant, with wastewater generation less than significant after mitigation, this alternative is generally considered comparable to the proposed project.

## 6.4 ALTERNATIVE 4: Reduced Density Alternative

### 6.4.1 Description

This alternative is a reduced density alternative. It assumes that the amount of housing in both the Santa Monica Place SUD and the Village SUD are reduced, the playfield at the Civic Auditorium Park is eliminated and the Childhood Development Center is moved closer to the Civic Auditorium. This Reduced Density Alternative assumes that 150 residential units would be developed in the Santa Monica Place SUD (as opposed to up to 450 units for the proposed project) and 150 residential units would be developed in the Village SUD (as opposed to up to 325 units for the proposed project). The 150 residential units in the Village SUD would be developed on Site C, with no development on Sites A and B. The extension of Olympic Drive that is proposed as part of the project would be eliminated. In addition, the active playfield proposed for the Civic Auditorium Park would be eliminated and replaced with passive open space and the Childhood Development Center would be moved closer to the Civic Auditorium. This Reduced Density



Alternative therefore, assumes that the area of Site A and B in the Village SUD would be open space.

Therefore, the overall number of residential units for the Reduced Density Alternative would be 300 units, as opposed to up to 775 residential units for the proposed project. The amount of commercial, office, and civic square footage would remain the same as for the proposed project. In addition, all other elements of the proposed project (with the exception of the extension of Olympic Drive, the playfield and the location of the Childhood Center) would remain the same for this alternative.

#### 6.4.2 Impact Analysis

**a. Aesthetics.** This project would be expected to have similar impacts related to aesthetics when compared to the proposed project, however, aesthetic benefits of this alternative may be slightly superior when compared to the proposed project, since Sites A and B of the Village SUD would become landscaped open space. This is considered a benefit under Land Use below. Overall, this project would be considered to have similar aesthetic benefits as the proposed project.

**b. Air Quality.** As discussed below, the 300 residential units for this alternative would be expected to result in the generation of approximately 3,300 fewer average daily trips than the proposed project. Because this housing alternative would result in fewer trips than that for the proposed project, it would have lesser impacts related to air quality emissions. Therefore, this alternative would be considered superior to the proposed project with respect to air quality.

**c. Construction Effects.** This alternative would be expected to result in similar impacts of the proposed project related to an increase in truck traffic and disruption of the normal use of sidewalks and roadways along project boundaries, as well as the significant and unavoidable impact related to the exceedance of SCAQMD thresholds for NO<sub>x</sub> and ROC. This alternative would also be expected to result in similar construction impacts related to solid waste generation (due to the reconfiguration of Santa Monica Place), and the generation of noise during construction. Therefore, this alternative would generally be comparable to the proposed project with respect to construction effects.

**d. Cultural Resources.** This alternative would result in similar impacts as the proposed project related to the restoration of City Hall, the potential for significant, but mitigable impacts related to the discovery of unknown archaeological resources during excavation and grading activities, and potential impacts to the Moreton Bay Fig tree. Therefore, this alternative would be similar to the proposed project.

**e. Geology/Soils.** This alternative would result in impacts similar as the proposed project as they relate to seismic-related activity, including the potential for liquefaction, settlement of artificial fill, and expansive soils. This alternative would also result in similar potentially significant, but mitigable impacts related to excavation for below-grade parking garages and erosion during construction.



**f. Hazards and Hazardous Materials.** This alternative would result in similar potentially significant but mitigable impacts related to asbestos, lead, contaminated soils and groundwater, abandoned underground tanks, and other potential environmental hazards identified for the proposed project.

**g. Hydrology and Water Quality.** This alternative would be expected to result in similar impacts related to construction-related runoff, groundwater intrusion, and water quality as the proposed project. However, this alternative would be expected to result in slightly greater benefits related to the potentially beneficial impacts of a decrease in impervious surfaces through the replacement of paved surface parking areas with permeable open space. This is because a portion of the proposed Village SUD would be developed with open space instead of housing on Areas A and B. However, overall, this alternative is considered generally comparable to the proposed project.

**h. Land Use/Planning.** This alternative would result in a greater increase of open space than the proposed project, since it is assumed that the area for housing on Sites A and B of the Village SUD for the proposed project, would be left as landscaped open space for this alternative. Other land use impacts of this alternative would be similar to the proposed project. Therefore, this alternative is considered superior to the proposed project.

**i. Neighborhood Impacts.** It is expected that this alternative would result in reduced neighborhood impacts when compared to the proposed project, due to the development of 300 residential units, as opposed to up to 775 units for the proposed project. This would include reduced impacts related to the significant and unavoidable project neighborhood traffic impacts on 4<sup>th</sup> Street between Pico Boulevard and Ocean Park Boulevard, and on 4<sup>th</sup> Street south of Ocean Park Boulevard. This alternative would also be expected to result in reduced air emissions due to the reduced vehicle trips, and therefore, would result in reduced impacts related to exceedances of SCAQMD thresholds for ROG, NO<sub>x</sub> and CO during project operation. This alternative would be expected to generally result in similar impacts as the proposed project related to potentially significant but mitigable impacts from temporary noise increases during construction, and less than significant long-term noise increases from traffic, as well as shadow related impacts. Overall, this alternative is considered superior to the proposed project.

**j. Noise.** This alternative would result in fewer noise impacts than the proposed project due to the decrease in the number of trips generated. It is anticipated that the number of trips generated by this alternative would be substantially less than that generated by the proposed project (approximately 3,300 less ADT) due to the reduction in housing units. In addition, elimination of the playfield would reduce mitigable impacts related to noise. Therefore, traffic-related and operational noise impacts of this alternative would be substantially less than the proposed project, and this alternative would therefore, be considered superior to the proposed project.

**k. Population and Housing.** This alternative would result in the development of 300 housing units as opposed to up to 775 housing units for the proposed project. Therefore, this alternative would result in an estimated population of 739 persons, as opposed to up to 1,910 persons for the proposed project. This alternative would be expected to result in a similar number of jobs as the proposed project (approximately 811 jobs). This alternative would



provide less than half the number of housing units than the proposed project and therefore, would not help to alleviate the jobs/housing imbalance in the City, as much as the proposed project. Therefore, because this alternative would not provide as many needed housing units nor help as much to alleviate the jobs/housing imbalance in the City, it is considered inferior to the proposed mitigated project.

**l. Public Services.** This alternative would result in lesser impacts related to the demand for police, fire protection services, and park demand due to the smaller population generated by the proposed project. This alternative would result in the generation of approximately 47 students, in comparison to the approximately 122 students generated by the proposed project. In addition, this alternative would result in a larger area of open space and parkland than the proposed project, since Areas A and B in the Village SUD would be open space instead of housing units. Therefore, this alternative is considered superior to the proposed project.

**m. Shade and Shadows.** Because this alternative would result in fewer structures, it would be expected to result in lesser shadow impacts than those expected for the proposed project. Under this alternative, sites A and B of the Village SUD would be open space and would therefore, not result in the adverse, but less than significant shadow impacts on the mews and other adjacent areas, particularly during the wintertime. In addition, the shadow impacts of this alternative in the Santa Monica Place SUD would be those that would occur under Option A (150 units) of the proposed project, which result in lesser shadow impacts than the 350 and 450 unit options for Santa Monica Place. Therefore, even though shadow impacts of the proposed project would be less than significant, the shadow impacts anticipated under this reduced density alternative would be less than those for the proposed project. Thus, this alternative is considered superior to the proposed project when considering shadow impacts.

**n. Transportation/Traffic.** The 300 residential units for this alternative would result in substantially less trip generation than the proposed project. The 300 residential units would generate approximately 1,989 ADT, 153 AM peak hour trips, 187 PM peak hour trips, and 155 Saturday midday trips. This is in contrast to the 5,305 ADT, 408 AM peak hour trips, 498 PM peak hour trips, and 416 Saturday midday trips generated by the residential component of the proposed project. Therefore, overall, this alternative would result in approximately 3,300 fewer average daily trips than the proposed project. However, with this Alternative, Olympic Drive would not be extended to Ocean Avenue, resulting in negative impacts due to increased pressure on existing intersections from CCSP development. The decrease in the number of trips generated by this reduced housing alternative may decrease the number of intersections which would be significantly impacted, although this would generally be offset by the increase in impacts on other intersections due to the elimination of the Olympic Drive extension proposed under the proposed project. This alternative would also be expected to result in fewer neighborhood traffic impacts than that projected for the proposed project. Although the magnitude of neighborhood traffic impacts under this alternative would be less than that for the proposed project, this Alternative would still result in significant impacts at the two intersections on Fourth Street. Therefore, overall, this alternative is considered similar to the proposed project.



**o. Utilities.** This alternative would result in substantially less impacts than the proposed project related to the increase in water demand, solid waste generation during operation, energy usage, and wastewater requiring treatment. Therefore, this alternative is considered superior to the proposed project.

## 6.5 ALTERNATIVE SITE ANALYSIS

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

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

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

As discussed in Section 2.0, Project Description, of this EIR, in 1999, the City Redevelopment Agency purchased 11.3 acres of RAND’s 15-acre land holding in the Civic Center Specific Plan (CCSP) area. The purchase of the RAND property enabled the City to broaden the vision of the 1993 plan and consider new options that were not previously possible. With the newly acquired property, the City Council decided that the CCSP needed to be fully reconsidered and updated. It was acknowledged that the Civic Center area offers enormous potential for redevelopment and open space improvements that could realize the linkages between key districts and neighborhoods.

No other sites are currently available to the applicant in the City of Santa Monica that would provide for the development planned for in the proposed CCSP, nor that would meet the project objectives. Because of their lack of availability of local sites, no other sites in Santa Monica have been considered nor have any been suggested as a part of this process. The economic feasibility of developing the project at any of the alternative sites is therefore not known. In general, uncertainty regarding site availability and timing issues would preclude all sites from further consideration.



## 6.6 ENVIRONMENTALLY SUPERIOR ALTERNATIVE

This section evaluates the findings for the proposed project and the alternatives under consideration. It then identifies the environmentally superior alternative for each issue area, as shown on Table 6-1. The table indicates whether each alternative’s environmental impact is greater, lesser, or similar to the proposed project.

Among the alternatives analyzed, Alternative 4, the Reduced Density Alternative, is considered environmentally superior overall, since the reduced number of housing units would result in fewer vehicle trips, and therefore, lesser air quality and noise impacts. The reduced number of housing units would also result in less of a demand on utilities and public services. However, it should be noted that the proposed project did not result in significant impacts related to utilities, public services or noise. However, Alternative 4 would provide only 300 housing in contrast to the up to 775 housing units analyzed for the proposed project, and thus would not result in the positive benefits related to provision of much-needed housing (including affordable housing) in the City.

**Table 6.1 Impact Comparison of Alternatives**

Issue	Proposed Project	Alternative 1 No Project	Alternative 2 Buildout of the Existing CCSP	Alternative 3 Increased Housing	Alternative 4 Reduced Housing
<b>Aesthetics</b>	=	-	-	-	=
<b>Air Quality</b>	=	+	=	-	+
<b>Construction Effects<sup>1</sup></b>	=	+	=	-	=
<b>Cultural Resources<sup>2</sup></b>	=	-	=	=	=
<b>Geology/Soils</b>	=	+	=	=	=
<b>Hazards and Hazardous Materials</b>	=	=	=	=	=
<b>Hydrology and Water Quality</b>	=	-	-	=	=
<b>Land Use</b>	=	-	-	-	+
<b>Neighborhood Impacts<sup>3</sup></b>	=	+	=	-	+
<b>Noise</b>	=	+	=	-	+
<b>Population and Housing</b>	=	-	-	+	-
<b>Public Services</b>	=	=	=	-	+
<b>Shadows</b>	=	+	+	-	+
<b>Traffic</b>	=	+	=	-	=
<b>Utilities</b>	=	+	=	=	+
<b>Overall</b>	n/a	+	=	-	+

+ Superior to the proposed project

- Inferior to the proposed project

= Similar impact to the proposed project

**Bold typeface and outline indicates an unavoidably significant (Class I) impact.**

<sup>1</sup> For Construction Effects, the unavoidably significant (Class I) impact applies to construction-related increase in air pollutant emissions only, and not to other construction-related impacts.

<sup>2</sup> Note that for Cultural Resources, impacts to the Moreton Bay Fig tree would be unavoidably significant (Class I) only if the tree is removed or relocated, and not if the proposed new Second Street Bridge is designed to avoid the tree.

<sup>3</sup> Neighborhood Impacts would be unavoidably significant (Class I) as indicated for Air Quality, Construction Air Quality, and Traffic.

