

Section 5

Impact Overview

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5. Impact Overview

5.1

Impacts of No Significance

As discussed in Section 1, Introduction, the scope of this EIR was determined through a process that included the preparation of an Initial Study. The Initial Study concluded that an EIR would be required for the proposed project and identified a number of topics for analysis in the EIR. Responses to the Notice of Preparation (NOP) further refined the scope of the EIR, as did comments made during the scoping process. Based on this scoping process and the analysis prepared as part of this EIR it has been determined that all potential impacts of the Draft General Plan may be significant.

5.2

Significant Unavoidable Environmental Impacts

According to CEQA Guidelines Section 15126(b), an EIR should contain a discussion of significant environmental effects that cannot be mitigated to a less than significant level if the proposed project is implemented. This discussion should include a description of the implications related to each of these impacts and why the project is being proposed.

The updated General Plan will allow additional growth and development in the community over existing conditions, but would be less spread out than the 1995 General Plan. Section 4 describes potential impacts. Most potentially significant environmental effects due to adoption and implementation of the City of Hollister General Plan can be avoided with implementation of the mitigation measures contained as part of the Plan's policies and implementation programs. There are significant impacts of any comprehensive planning effort. For a summary of impacts and mitigation measures see the Summary section of the EIR. Unavoidable adverse impacts of the Hollister General Plan would be:

4.1-3 Growth and Concentration of Population

Development consistent with the Draft General Plan would induce substantial growth and concentration of the City's population. This would be a significant unavoidable impact.

4.1-5 Employment Growth Rate

Development under the Draft General Plan would result in an expected increase in employment of 8,970 jobs over 2000 U.S. Census figures.

4.2-1 Increases in Traffic Volumes

Increases in traffic volumes will result in unacceptable levels of service at two intersections — San Benito Street and Fourth Street; and Airline Highway (SR 25) and Sunnyslope Road.

4.2-2 Roadway Capacity Deficiencies

Roadway capacity deficiencies were identified in several areas. These deficiencies are directly related to the future land use designations shown on the updated General Plan Map. The deficiencies can be grouped into several categories of roadway capacity needs. These include: (a) regional commuting; (b) Northwest Hollister circulation needs; (c) Southeast Hollister circulation needs; and, (d) additional roadway capacity serving the Industrial Park.

4.9-1 Seismic Ground Shaking

Seismic hazards in the Hollister Planning Area will expose people and structures to potential, substantial adverse seismic effects, including the potential risk of loss, injury, or death involving strong seismic ground shaking. A similar potential for seismically-induced damage affects most areas located near major active faults within California. The Draft General (Health and Safety) contains numerous policies and programs to reduce these potential impacts to what is defined as an “acceptable level of risk,” as determined by the City, even if the impacts of the Draft General Plan should be considered significant and unavoidable.

4.9-2 Seismic Related Ground Failure

Seismic hazards in the Hollister Planning Area will expose people and structures to potential substantial adverse seismic effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death from seismic-related ground failures of liquefaction, lateral spreading, lurching, differential settlement, and flow failures. The Draft General (Health and Safety) contains numerous policies and programs to reduce these potential impacts to what is defined as an “acceptable level of risk,” as determined by the City, even if the impacts of the Draft General Plan should be considered significant and unavoidable.

4.11-1 Farmland Conversion

Development consistent with the Draft General Plan would result in the irrevocable conversion of Prime Farmland to urban development. While the Draft General Plan proposes a significantly reduced area of development of farmland as compared to 1995 General Plan, this would still be a significant unavoidable impact.

5.3

Significant Irreversible Environmental Changes

Section 15126(e) of the CEQA Guidelines requires a discussion of non-renewable resources during the initial and continued phases of project development. Significant irreversible environmental changes as defined by CEQA (Section 15126 (f)), would include the

commitment of non-renewable resources toward an alternative and any irreversible environmental damage that could result from the project's implementation. The irreversible environmental changes that could ensue from implementation of the Draft General Plan include the following: loss of prime agricultural soils and farmlands if the project is implemented as currently designed, and an increase in impervious surfaces from building pads, new roads, driveways and patios.

Development consistent with the General Plan would require an irreversible commitment of material or natural resources for building construction, such as wood, refined metal, petroleum and stone. It would result in the irretrievable commitment of energy and water resources to support planned uses. Additional vehicle trips due to implementation of the General Plan would contribute to future cumulative air quality impacts, both adverse and beneficial impacts on increased transit ridership, and efficient allocation of higher intensity land uses in proximity to existing major transportation infrastructure improvements. The addition of mixed use designations to the Draft General Plan would allow the development of differing uses that may not have been previously anticipated.

The changes in land use designations proposed by the Draft General Plan would result in commitment of areas to the designated uses for the foreseeable future. Irreversible changes are also likely to occur due to future excavation, grading, and construction activities associated with the development of uses allowed under the Draft General Plan. Although these changes can generally be addressed by mitigation measures, the potential for disturbance would represent an irreversible change.

5.4

Growth Inducing Impacts

Section 15126(f) of the CEQA Guidelines states that the discussion of growth inducing impacts should include ways in which the proposed project could foster economic or population growth, or construction of additional housing, either directly or indirectly, in the surrounding area. Growth can be induced in a number of ways, including through the elimination of obstacles to growth, or through the stimulation of economic activity within the region. The discussion of removal of obstacles to growth relates directly to the removal of infrastructure limitations or regulatory constraints that could result in growth unforeseen at the time of project approval.

Growth inducement is an inherent impact of the General Plan in Hollister, especially in the downtown area. The basic premise is to alter the existing land use pattern, density and character of the downtown area by stimulating economic development and revitalization. The Draft General Plan is consistent with other City policy documents, such as the Redevelopment Plan and downtown revitalization efforts. Development consistent with the General Plan would be expected to create increased population, employment and housing in the City, all of which are beneficial impacts.

Jobs created under the General Plan would also have indirect employment impacts through the multiplier effect. Additional support jobs would be created within Hollister, nearby communities, and throughout the region.

While the Draft General Plan would accommodate this growth, in some instances it would have the effect of restricting development due to changes in land use designations. Adoption of the Draft General Plan would not remove infrastructure limitations that otherwise would limit growth, nor would adoption of the plan remove regulatory constraints that could result in future unforeseen growth. Moreover, the proposed changes would be expected to concentrate urban development in areas that already have urban services or where urban services should be logically extended. Therefore, while the Draft General Plan would induce some growth, it would not be expected to have negative growth inducing impacts. Impacts associated with the growth expected with the Draft General Plan are analyzed in the appropriate sections throughout this EIR.

5.5

Cumulative Impacts

The discussion of cumulative impacts in this section includes those environmental effects which CEQA defines as "two or more individual effects, which, when considered together, are considerable or which compound or increase other environmental impacts" (CEQA Guidelines, Section 15355). According to the CEQA Guidelines (Section 15130), an analysis of cumulative impacts requires either a list of past, present and reasonably anticipated projects, or a summary of projections contained in an adopted general plan or related planning document that is designed to evaluate regional or area-wide conditions. In this EIR, the analysis of cumulative impacts is based on the employment and housing growth expected to occur as a direct result of the General Plan, as compared to the overall growth projected in San Benito County and the region as forecast by the Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (AMBAG).

The Draft General Plan has been specifically undertaken to address the cumulative impacts associated with potential development citywide. The plan includes an analysis of development potential for the Planning Area and presents information on the associated cumulative impacts of the increase in population, housing units and jobs citywide. Accordingly, the Hollister General Plan and this EIR address potential cumulative effects of development and set forth appropriate goals, policies, and implementation programs to minimize adverse cumulative impacts and to mitigate specific impacts.

The City's role, relative to regional conditions such as market demand for land, is also covered by the Hollister General Plan. Growth in population and households is expected to be fairly moderate over the next 20 years. However, the General Plan would be part of a region-wide increase in development over existing conditions and would result in increased development over current development in Hollister.

Impacts on regional air quality can also be considered a cumulative impact. Under cumulative conditions, there could be an increase in short-term construction emissions, including reactive organic gases (ROG), nitrogen oxides (NO_x), particulate matter (PM₁₀), and localized carbon monoxide (CO).

Section 6
Alternatives

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6. Project Alternatives

CEQA Guidelines specify that an EIR must describe a reasonable range of alternatives to the project, which could feasibly attain the basic project objectives. The feasible alternatives to be considered must focus on alternatives that are capable of eliminating or substantially reducing the significant adverse impacts caused by the proposed project. The comparative merits of these alternatives must be described and evaluated, and an environmentally superior alternative be designated. If the environmentally superior alternative is the “no project” alternative, the EIR shall also identify an environmentally superior alternative among the other alternatives (CEQA Guidelines 15126).

The purpose of this section is to compare a variety of development alternatives with the proposed plan in order to provide sufficient information for evaluation of the proposed plan. The alternatives have been developed to the extent that the level of impact relative to the proposed plan can be described. The range of alternatives considered are labeled as follows: (6.1) Existing Conditions/No Development; (6.2) hypothetical “Unconstrained San Benito County” development alternative (which is also the “No Project” alternative, or development under the 1995 General Plan); and, (6.3) a hypothetical “Reduced Development” alternative.

Alternatives Considered But Not Included

The alternatives were formulated to provide a realistic and representative range of potential use and development concepts for the City. The principal criterion for selecting the alternatives studied in the EIR was to ensure that the range of concepts evaluated would be sufficient to provide information to the public and public officials to make decisions about the proposed plan.

An EIR conceivably can analyze an infinite number of alternatives or variations on alternatives. However, CEQA directs EIRs to analyze a reasonable range of alternatives to the project or project location which could feasibly attain basic project objectives and would avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects of the proposed project. The analysis of a range of alternatives is governed by a “rule of reason”. In order for the analyses to be meaningful for readers, the alternatives also must be distinctly different and readily discernible in order to distinguish between their effects and determine the environmentally preferred alternative.

CEQA also requires that an alternative location be identified if any of the significant effects of the project would be avoided or substantially lessened by putting the project in another location. If the lead agency determines that no feasible alternative locations exist, it must disclose the reasons for this conclusion. The City of Hollister, as lead agency, has determined that an off-site location for this project is not feasible and will not be discussed in this EIR. The City is required to maintain an up-to-date General Plan consistent with State law requirements. Another location could not meet this objective and analysis of the environmental impacts associated with implementation of the proposed project at a different location is not necessary.

6.1

Alternative 1: No Project/No Development

This alternative would reflect the existing conditions with no additional development within the City of Hollister Planning Area and current conditions in the City of Hollister Planning Area would remain. The environmental impacts are described by the existing conditions as reflected by the Draft City of Hollister General Plan, dated March 2005. This alternative reflects the least amount of development of the alternatives analyzed.

Figure 19: Vacant Land Designations Within Current City Limits



Table 6.1.A: Vacant Land Summary Within Current City Limits

Proposed Land Use Designations	Designated Acres
High Density Residential	40
Medium Density Residential	144
Low Density Residential	652
West Gateway Commercial and Mixed-Use	21
Mixed-Use Commercial and Residential	22
Source: MIG, 2005	

6.2

Alternative 2: No Project/No Action/1995 General Plan

Alternative 2 (No Project/No Action/1995 General Plan) assumes that no General Plan is adopted for the City, and future development would continue to be guided by the existing General Plan, adopted in 1995, and zoning. This alternative reflects growth under existing General Plan policies, assuming feasible infrastructure improvements and community services. The existing land use concept designates large tracts of land for single family and rural residential development with the expectation that only a portion of these areas would develop during the planning period. There is more land area designated to accommodate anticipated residential development through the year 2010 than demand will justify.

Areas designated for potential residential development are generally contiguous to existing residential areas. Future residential development would take place in portions of the Hollister Planning Area which are either already served by existing infrastructure or which can be served by extending the existing infrastructure. Additional land for industrial and commercial development has been designated, clustering industrial uses in the north near the airport and distributing commercial activities in and around downtown.

Projections under the No Project/1995 General Plan alternative would be consistent with the AMBAG “Unconstrained San Benito County” projections, as shown in Table 6.1.C below, which could be considered as projections under the General Plan 1995 without the growth control initiative. Below is the current Zoning map for the City of Hollister, consistent with the 1995 General Plan. Following that are summary tables.

Figure 20: Current Zoning

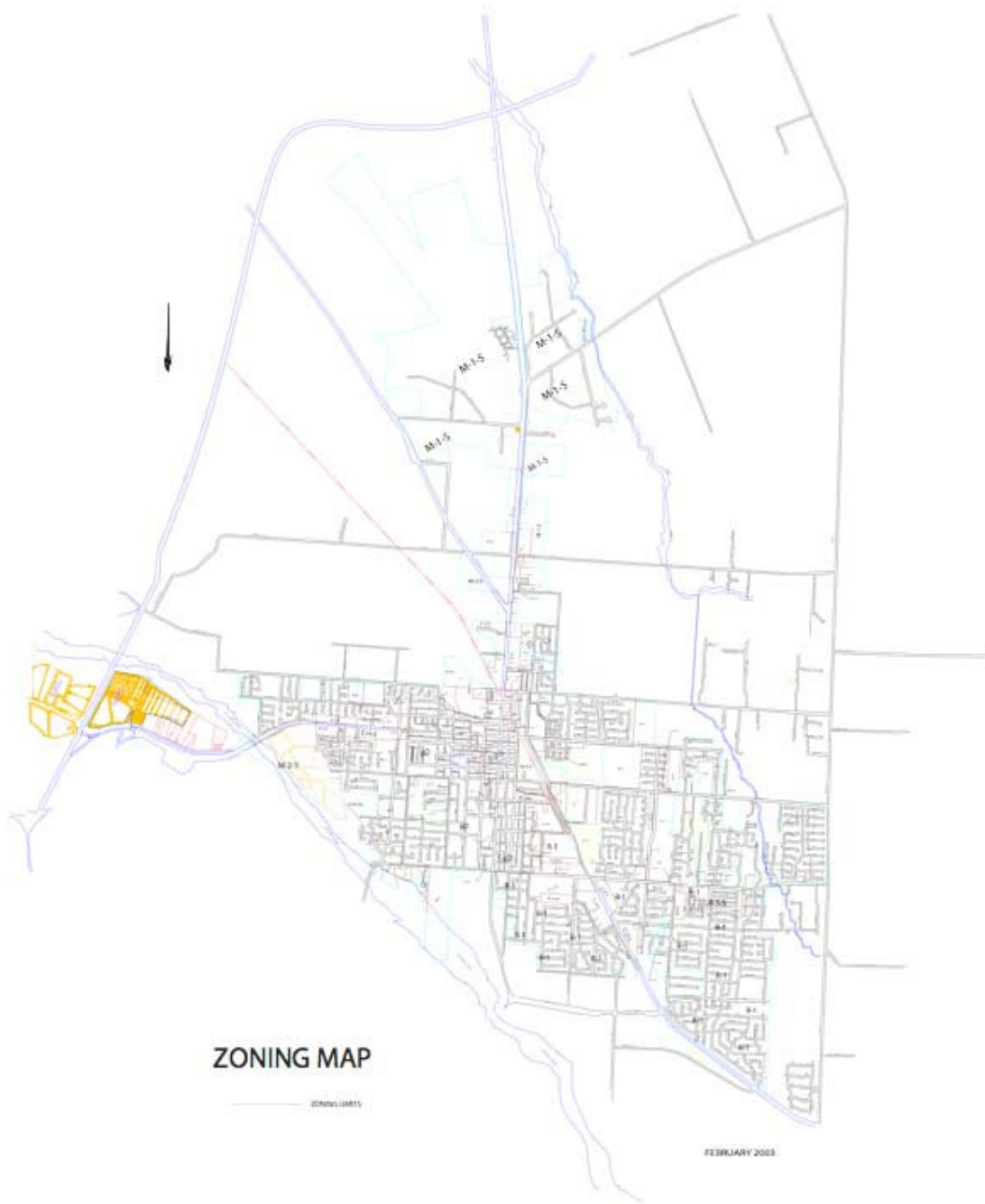


Table 6.2.A: 1995 General Plan Land Use

Land Use Designations	Designated Acres
High Density Residential	186
Medium Density Residential	238
Low Density Residential	3,066
Rural Residential	3,995
Downtown Commercial	52
General Commercial	308
Industrial	1,533
Public Facilities	682
Airport	582
Parks and Open Space	810
Agriculture	3,410
CRO	278
Ag Preserve	983
Neighborhood Commercial	82
Highway Commercial	45
APO	5
MDO	11
Total Acres	16,266

Source: MIG, 2005

Table 6.2.B: Growth Projections Under the AMBAG “Unconstrained San Benito County” Projections (No Project/1995 General Plan Alternative)

Projection Source	2000	2010	2020	2023*	Numeric Change	Annual Numeric Change	Annual Percentage Increase
					(2000-2023)*	(2000-2023)*	(2000-2023)*
AMBAG Projections (“Unconstrained San Benito County”) — General Plan 1995 Alternative							
Employment	13,234	17,105	21,927	23,232	+9,998	+435	3.3%
Housing Units	10,250	15,237	17,162	18,200	+7,950	+346	3.4%
Population	34,413	52,613	60,740	63,700	+29,287	+1,316	3.8%

Source: Assoc. of Monterey Bay Area Government's Forecast Report (January, 2004); MIG, 2005

6.3

Alternative 3: Reduced Development

The Alternative 3 (Reduced Development) land use concept shows the potential impact of lower-density development in Hollister with a reduced planning area boundary. The general organization of land uses is the same as the preferred land use concept, but the intensity of residential and commercial uses is reduced. The concept supports a smaller build-out population and places less of a burden on infrastructure (recreational systems, street networks, water and sewer treatment) than the preferred land use concept, though the developable areas are similar.

Table 6.3.A: Reduced Development Land Use

Land Use Designations	Designated Acres
High Density Residential	100
Medium Density Residential	503
Low Density Residential	3,219
Rural Residential	1,425
West Gateway Commercial and Mixed-Use	57
North Gateway Commercial	162
Downtown Commercial and Mixed-Use	53
General Commercial	136
Industrial/Airport Support	1,614
Public Facilities	457
Airport	319
Parks and Open Space	597
Agriculture	645
Mixed-Use Commercial and Residential	97
Home Office	39
Total Acres	9,422

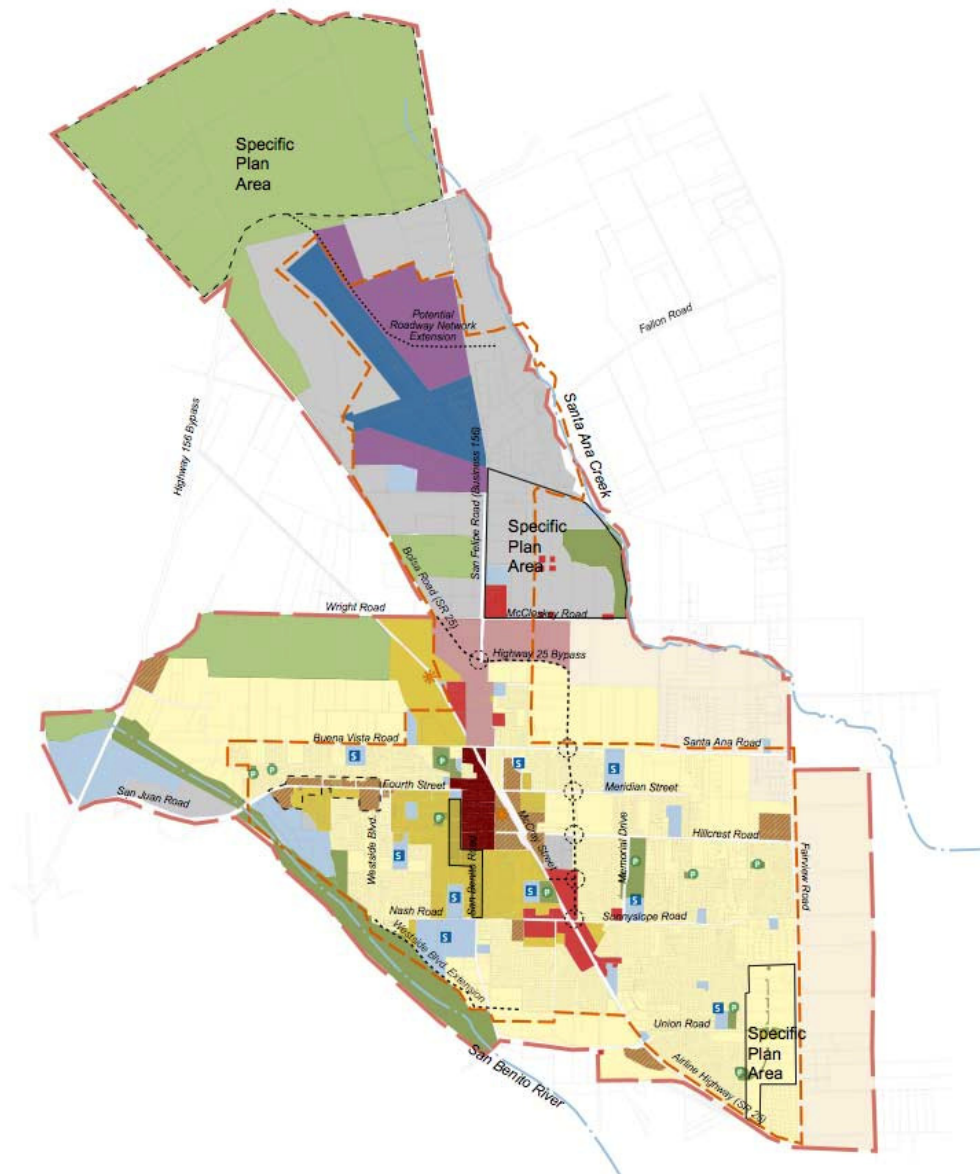
Source: MIG, 2005

Table 6.3.B: Growth Projections Under the Reduced Development Alternative

Projection Source	2000	2010	2020	2023	Numeric Change (2000-2023)	Annual Numeric Change (2000-2023)	Annual Percentage Increase (2000-2023)
Projections Under the Reduced Development Alternative							
Employment	13,234	16,355	21,034	22,204	+8,970	+390	2.9%
Housing Units	10,250	11,868	13,486	13,972	+3,722	+162	1.6%
Population	34,413	41,538	47,201	48,902	+14,489	+639	1.8%

Source: MIG, 2005

Figure 21: Reduced Development Land Use Concept



- | | | | | | |
|---------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Sphere of Influence | High Density Residential | West Gateway Commercial | Industrial | Open Space | Transit Hub |
| Planning Area | Medium Density Residential | North Gateway Commercial | Public | Agriculture | School |
| Creeks and Rivers | Low Density Residential | Downtown Commercial and Mixed-Use | Airport | Mixed-Use | Park |
| | Rural Residential | General Commercial | Home Office | | |

Map prepared by MIG, Inc. - DRAFT - January 21, 2004

Reduced Development Alternative

 City of Hollister Community Development Dept.

General Plan Update

6.4

Environmental Effects of the Alternatives

Table 6.4.A: Year 2023 Growth Projections Under the Alternatives

	<i>Draft General Plan (Proposed Project)</i>	<i>Alternative 1 (No Project/No Development)</i>	<i>Alternative 2 (No Project/1995 General Plan)</i>	<i>Alternative 3 (Reduced Development)</i>
Employment	22,204	13,234	23,232	22,204
Housing Units	15,769	10,250	18,200	13,972
Population	55,192	34,413	63,700	48,902

Source: MIG, 2005

Land Use, Population, Employment and Housing

No Project/No Development Alternative

The No Project / No Development) alternative would be the environmentally superior alternative with respect to land use, population, employment, and housing. This alternative would result in the least possibility of impacts related to these topics. The No Project alternative would not induce substantial population growth or a concentration of population, nor would it displace any residents. Under this alternative it would be impossible for the City to meet its regional housing needs, especially for lower income housing.

No Project/1995 General Plan Alternative

Under the No Project/1995 General Plan alternative there would be few changes to the existing zoning in Hollister. Development under this alternative would be higher than that under the Draft General Plan, and higher than development under the other alternatives. In addition, the planning area is significantly larger and more spread-out. The No Project/1995 General Plan alternative would not result in efficient, transit-supportive, infill land use patterns that take full advantage of planned investments in infrastructure. Because of the increased level of development, there are increased opportunities for land use conflicts, particularly in the areas outside of Downtown. This would result in significant land use impacts. With the increased development there would also be an increase in population, employment, and housing. These increases would result in significant growth and they would result in significant secondary impacts related to public services and utilities.

Reduced Development Alternative

Development under this alternative would be lower than that under the Draft General Plan. This decreased development would also result in a slightly smaller population in the Planning Area but the same number of jobs. Land use impacts for this alternative would be slightly less than those identified for the Draft General Plan, due to the decreased level of development, but not to a significant level (see Table 6.5.A: Comparison of Alternatives). Many impacts of the Reduced Development Alternative would be similar to Draft General

Plan land use impacts and would be less-than-significant and significant unavoidable. Population and employment impacts would also be significant. However, the jobs-to-housing ratio under this alternative and the potential for housing development, since it is less, would make it less likely that the City could meet its regional housing needs, especially for lower income housing.

Transportation and Circulation

No Project/No Development Alternative

Projections for the year 2023 suggest that traffic conditions would improve during both the AM and PM peak hours. The San Benito County traffic forecasting model projects that about 84 percent and 81 percent of the miles roadway would operate at, or better than, the level of service standard of C by 2023 during the AM and PM peak hour, respectively. This is a projected improvement of about two percent over current conditions. The planned roadway improvements are expected “keep pace” with the increase in the commuting population.

No Project/1995 General Plan Alternative

Development under the 1995 General Plan could result in unacceptable LOS at intersections and peak hours.

Reduced Development Alternative

Impacts under this alternative would be similar to the Draft General Plan.

Air Quality

No Project/No Development Alternative

The No Project alternative would not result in substantial population growth and would have the least impact on air quality.

No Project/1995 General Plan Alternative

Impacts under this alternative would be similar to the Draft General Plan.

Reduced Development Alternative

Impacts under this alternative would be similar to the Draft General Plan.

Noise

No Project/No Development Alternative

Noise impacts associated with the No Project/No Development alternative would be similar to the proposed project but somewhat less, because there would be fewer noise and land use compatibility conflicts due to the smaller amount of residential development.

No Project/1995 General Plan Alternative

This alternative would result in an increase in traffic, which would increase traffic noise and impacts to noise sensitive uses near roadways. This alternative would also result in new commercial and/or industrial projects that could result in new stationary noise sources which could impact noise sensitive uses. Additionally, this alternative would result in new development that could be impacted by existing noisy environments.

Reduced Development Alternative

Noise impacts associated with the Reduced Development alternative would be similar to the proposed project but slightly less, because there would be fewer noise and land use compatibility conflicts due to the smaller amount of residential development.

Public Services and Utilities

No Project/No Development Alternative

The No Project/No Development alternative would not significantly increase demand for public services above the existing levels, and would therefore result in fewer effects on those services than identified under the proposed General Plan. The supply of most services would not change; however, increasing the capacity of the wastewater treatment plant will still be required to accommodate development in the City.

No Project/1995 General Plan Alternative

In this alternative, significant amounts of new development would be expected and would require significant amounts of new or additional services.

Reduced Development Alternative

This alternative would result in similar impacts to those expected with the Draft General Plan. Because this alternative would result in slightly less development and lower population, impacts would be accordingly somewhat less significant. However, this difference is minor.

Cultural Resources

Alternative 1 (No Project / No Development), Alternative 2 (1995 General Plan), Alternative 3 (Reduced Development), and the Draft General Plan would all have no significant impacts to archaeological, prehistoric, historic, or cultural resources. Cultural resources impacts would be similar for the Draft General Plan and all of the alternatives.

Visual Quality

No Project/No Development Alternative

Alternative 1 (No Project / No Development) would be the environmentally superior alternative with respect to visual quality as scenic resources as the visual quality of the city would be maintained in the existing conditions.

No Project/1995 General Plan Alternative

Alternative 2 (General Plan 2000) would result in the most visual quality impacts. There would also be potential conflicts with adjacent development. Nighttime lighting impacts would also be significant and unavoidable as lighting plan review is not currently required for new construction.

Reduced Development Alternative

Alternative 3 (Reduced Development) and the Draft General Plan would have similar visual quality impacts. Alternative 3 (Reduced Development) would, however, result in less

development and therefore fewer opportunities for visual quality impacts compared to Draft General Plan. Similarly, this alternative would result in less-than-significant impacts related to conflicts with adjacent development. Nighttime lighting impacts would also be significant, similar to the proposed project. While these impacts would be considered less-than-significant, because this alternative would result in less development, the potential for impacts would be slightly less than those identified with the proposed project.

Biological Resources

No Project/No Development Alternative

Alternative 1 (No Project / No Development) would be the environmentally superior alternative with respect to biological resources as it would result in no biological resources impacts beyond the potential invasive species impact.

No Project/1995 General Plan Alternative

Alternative 2 (General Plan 2000) would result in the most biological resources impacts. As this alternative would develop more land it would also reduce more habitat areas. The introduction of development into the hillside, riparian, grassland, and oak savanna/woodland areas would increase pressure on wildlife species by reducing habitat and movement opportunities and introducing non-native predators, such as dogs and cats.

Reduced Development Alternative

Impacts due to development consistent with this alternative would be similar to those identified for the proposed project, although potentially at a reduced scale due to the somewhat reduced amount of development. However, Alternative 3 (Reduced Development) and the Draft General Plan would have similar biological resources impacts. Similar to the Draft General Plan, this alternative would potentially impact special status species and sensitive natural communities. This alternative would not likely result in invasive exotic species impacts due to residential and commercial landscaping, and this alternative would have a less-than-significant impact on the movement of native wildlife due to the protected areas proposed with this alternative.

Geology and Seismicity

No Project/No Development Alternative

Alternative 1 (No Project / No Development), would be the environmentally superior alternative with respect to geology, soils, and seismicity. This alternative would result in no significant impacts related to geologic resources or seismic activity.

No Project/1995 General Plan Alternative

This alternative would result in new development that could be developed on unstable soils which would result in potential groundshaking, landsliding, subsidence, erosion, expansive soil, and earthquake related ground failure hazards impacts. Similar to the proposed project, these impacts would be considered significant impacts. These impacts would be greater than the impacts identified with the proposed project due to the increased amount of development and the increased population.

Reduced Development Alternative

This alternative would result in new development that could be developed on unstable soils which would result in potential groundshaking, landsliding, subsidence, erosion, expansive soil, and earthquake related ground failure hazards impacts. Similar to the proposed project, these impacts would be considered significant. These impacts would be slightly less than the impacts identified with the proposed project due to the somewhat decreased amount of development and the decreased population. Again, similar to the proposed project, because there is a slight possibility that septic systems could be used within the planning area, there would be a potentially significant impact related to the septic suitability of soils.

Hydrology, Drainage and Flood Hazards, Wastewater Treatment, Water Quality, and Water Supply

No Project/No Development Alternative

While the Draft General Plan would not result in any significant hydrology impacts, Alternative 1 (No Project / No Development), would be the environmentally superior alternative with respect to hydrology, water quality, water supply and flood hazards. Because this alternative would result in no additional development, this alternative would result in the least opportunity for potential significant hydrology-related impacts.

No Project/1995 General Plan Alternative

This alternative would result in new development that would potentially increase impacts to water quality, water supply and groundwater. Erosion and creek siltation, which is typically due to construction activities, would occur, however creek improvements may also be associated with new development.

Reduced Development Alternative

Similar to the proposed project, the new development associated with this alternative would not result in impacts to water quality, groundwater, water supply and the stormwater drainage systems. There would not be significant impacts related to erosion and creek siltation, which is typically due to construction activities.

Agriculture

No Project/No Development Alternative

Alternative 1 (No Project / No Development) would be the environmentally superior alternative with respect to agricultural resources as the city would be maintained in the existing conditions.

No Project/1995 General Plan Alternative

This alternative would have the greatest impact on agricultural resources as the area planned for development is significantly larger than that proposed in the Draft General Plan.

Reduced Development Alternative

Similar to the proposed project, this alternative would not result in significant impacts to agriculture lands

6.5

Environmentally Superior Alternative

The State CEQA Guidelines require that an EIR’s analysis of alternatives identify the “environmentally superior alternative” among all of those considered. Based on the analysis of the project and the alternatives considered, the EIR finds that Alternative 1 (No Project / No Development) would be the environmentally superior alternative because it would avoid most of the environmental impacts associated with increased development. The Guidelines also 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.

Based on a comparison of the of the significant environmental impacts of all the development alternatives in this exhibit, Alternative 3 (Reduced Development) and the Draft General Plan would result in a similar number of significant unavoidable adverse impacts and less-than-significant impacts. The proposed project (Draft General Plan) actually results in one fewer significant unavoidable adverse impacts and therefore would be the environmentally superior alternative.

Table 6.5.A: Comparison of Alternatives

<i>Impact (All impacts below are preceded by the number “4.” in Section 4 of the EIR)</i>	<i>Draft General Plan (Project After Mitigation)</i>	<i>Alternative 1 (No Project/No Development)</i>	<i>Alternative 2 (No Project/1995 General Plan)</i>	<i>Alternative 3 (Reduced Development)</i>
<i>Land Use</i>				
1-1 Conflict with Land Use or Other Plans	LTS	LTS	SU	LTS
1-2 Incompatible Land Uses and Changes to Neighborhood Character	LTS	LTS	LTS	LTS
1-3 Growth and Concentration of Population	SU	LTS	SU	SU
1-4 Disruption of an Established Community	LTS	LTS	LTS	LTS
1-5 Employment Growth Rate	SU	LTS	SU	SU
1-6 Jobs-to-Housing Ratio	LTS	SU	LTS	SU
<i>Transportation and Circulation</i>				
2-1 Increases in Traffic Volumes	SU	SU	SU	SU
2-2 Roadway Capacity Deficiencies	SU	SU	SU	SU
<i>Air Quality</i>				
3-1 Consistency with Clean Air Plan	LTS	LTS	SU	LTS
3-2 Consistency with Clean Air Plan Transportation Control Measures	LTS	LTS	SU	LTS
3-3 Odor/Dust/Toxics Buffer Areas	LTS	LTS	LTS	LTS
<i>Noise</i>				
4-1 Increased Traffic Noise	LTS	LTS	LTS	LTS
4-2 Rail and Airport Noise	LTS	LTS	LTS	LTS
4-3 Stationary Noise Sources and Construction Noise	LTS	LTS	LTS	LTS

Impact (All impacts below are preceded by the number "4." in Section 4 of the EIR)	Draft General Plan (Project After Mitigation)	Alternative 1 (No Project/No Development)	Alternative 2 (No Project/1995 General Plan)	Alternative 3 (Reduced Development)
Public Services and Utilities				
5-1 Fire Protection, Emergency Services and Wildland Fires	LTS	LTS	SU	LTS
5-2 Release of Hazardous Materials	LTS	LTS	LTS	LTS
5-3 Police Services	LTS	LTS	SU	LTS
5-4 Schools	LTS	LTS	SU	LTS
5-5 Library Services	LTS	LTS	LTS	LTS
5-6 Parks	LTS	LTS	LTS	LTS
5-7 Landfill Capacity	LTS	LTS	LTS	LTS
5-8 Electricity, Natural Gas and Gasoline Demand	LTS	LTS	LTS	LTS
Cultural Resources				
6-1 Impacts on Archaeological and Prehistoric Resources	LTS	LTS	LTS	LTS
6-2 Impacts on Historic or Cultural Resources	LTS	LTS	LTS	LTS
Visual Quality				
7-1 Scenic Resources	LTS	LTS	LTS	LTS
7-2 Conflicts with Adjoining Development	LTS	LTS	LTS	LTS
7-3 Visual Setting and Character of the City	LTS	LTS	SU	LTS
7-4 Nighttime Lighting and Glare	LTS	LTS	SU	LTS
Biological Resources				
8-1 Special-Status Plant and Animal Species	LTS	LTS	LTS	LTS
8-2 Sensitive Natural Communities	LTS	LTS	LTS	LTS
8-3 Loss of Wetlands	LTS	LTS	LTS	LTS
8-4 Habitat for Native Wildlife	LTS	LTS	SU	LTS
Geology and Seismicity				
9-1 Seismic Ground Shaking	SU	SU	SU	SU
9-2 Seismic Related Ground Failure	SU	SU	SU	SU
9-3 Expansive Soils	LTS	LTS	LTS	LTS
Hydrology, Drainage and Flood Hazards, Wastewater Treatment, Water Quality, and Water Supply				
10-1 Wastewater Treatment Capacity	LTS	LTS	LTS	LTS
10-2 Water Supply	LTS	LTS	LTS	LTS
10-3 Water Quality Standards	LTS	LTS	LTS	LTS
10-4 Groundwater	LTS	LTS	LTS	LTS
10-5 Erosion and Siltation	LTS	LTS	LTS	LTS
10-6 Flooding and/or Stormwater Drainage System Capacities and Exposure of People to Flooding	LTS	LTS	LTS	LTS
Agriculture				
11-1 Farmland Conversion	SU	LTS	SU	SU
Total Number of Significant Unavoidable Impacts				
	7	5	16	8

- “S” **Significant Impact** – A significant impact, as defined for that impact area, cannot be mitigated to a less-than-significant level under the policies, programs and other proposals of the Draft General Plan, but it can be reduced to a less-than-significant level with additional mitigation proposed in the EIR.
- “SU” **Significant Unavoidable Impact** – A significant unavoidable impact, as defined for that impact area, cannot be mitigated to a less-than-significant level. This would include impacts that can be partly mitigated but cannot be reduced to a less-than-significant level.
- “LTS” **Less-than-Significant Impact** – A less-than-significant impact is a change or effect directly or indirectly attributable to the Draft General Plan which, with implementation of the policies, programs and other proposals contained in the Draft General Plan (or alternative), will result in no impact or in potential impacts that would be reduced to a less-than-significant level.

Section 7

Report Preparation

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7. Report Preparation

7.1

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7.2

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7.3

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