Chapter 5

Effects Determined Not to Be Significant

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5.1 Introduction

Section 15128 of the State CEQA Guidelines states that an EIR "shall contain a statement briefly indicating the reasons that various possible significant effects of a project were determined not to be significant and [are] therefore not discussed in detail in the EIR." During the initial review and scoping period for the GP Update, the city determined that its implementation would have less than significant impacts on agricultural resources, geology and soils, and mineral resources. This chapter presents a discussion of the GP Update's indirect effect on these environmental resources. Environmental resources that may be subject to a potentially significant impact if the GP Update is implemented are addressed in Chapter 4, "Environmental Analysis."

5.2 Agricultural Resources

The majority of land within the GP Update area is generally urbanized in nature and does not support any substantial areas of agricultural use. The California Department of Conservation's (DOC's) Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP) designates areas of prime soils and soils of statewide importance based on soil characteristics and agricultural use. According to the San Diego County Important Farmland Map, the majority of land within the GP Update area is identified as Urban and Built-Up Land under the FMMP (DOC 2006). Since no substantial areas of agricultural use occur within the majority of the GP Update area, the conversion of farmland to non-agricultural use would not occur. Currently, lands within the city's SOI support agricultural uses related to small-scale horticulture and specialty crops. According to the county's Important Farmland Map, the city's SOI includes lands that are identified as Unique Farmland, Farmland of Local Importance, and Grazing Land by the FMMP (DOC 2006). The GP Update would preserve existing agricultural uses within its SOI by maintaining the existing Rural Residential land use designation for the majority of land within its SOI. The Rural Residential land use category encourages the continuance of agricultural and agri-business land uses within the community. In addition, all future development projects associated with the GP Update would require individual review to ensure compliance with the FMMP and applicable policies, such as LUCI Policy 2.12:

> **LUCI Policy 2.12:** Support and encourage the ability of Vistans to continue the tradition of small-scale horticulture and specialty crop enterprises.

Implementation of the GP Update would not result in the conversion of Prime, Unique, or Farmland of Statewide Importance to non-agricultural use. Therefore, no impacts would occur.

According to the DOC's San Diego County Williamson Act Lands Map, the entire project area, including lands within the city's SOI, is designated as Built-up Land, Incorporated City, and County Held Easements and Open Space (DOC 2008). No Williamson Act lands occur within the project area. Implementation of the GP Update would not conflict with existing agricultural zoning or Williamson Act contracts. Therefore, no impacts would occur.

5.3 Geology and Soils

5.3.1 Faults and Seismically Related Ground Shaking

The project area is not located on any active or potentially active faults as defined by the California Geological Survey and is not located within an Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone. The nearest active fault is the Rose Canyon Fault, located approximately 12 miles west of the city. Thus, fault ground rupture within the city is considered low. In addition, the GP Update includes the following policy related to active faults that would protect future development consistent with the GP Update from fault rupture hazards:

> **PSFS Policy 3.7:** Review the requirements of the Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act at least once yearly to determine if any State updates to seismic hazards' mapping recognize any active faults within the City or its Sphere of Influence (SOI) and, if so, undertake actions to implement the City's regulatory responsibilities.

In terms of seismic-related ground shaking, the project area lies within the western foothills of the San Marcos Mountains and, like most of southern California, is within a seismically active region that is subject to ground shaking during seismic events. However, all development projects proposed under the GP Update would be required to construct structures and new buildings in conformance with the latest seismic structural standards of the CCR Title 24 (California Building Standards Code).

Title 24 of the CCR regulates the design criteria for new buildings to ensure that they are structurally sound under static and dynamic conditions and are free of geotechnical hazards. The purpose of the California Building Standards Code is to establish minimum standards to safeguard the public health, safety, and general welfare through structural strength, means of egress facilities, and general stability by regulating and controlling the design, construction, quality of materials, use and occupancy, location, and maintenance of all buildings and structures within its jurisdiction. Compliance with the code provides a mechanism to ensure that any seismic-related hazards that may exist at a site-specific level are addressed in a manner consistent with current engineering practices and the prevailing engineering standard of care.

Moreover, the GP Update includes the following policies related to seismic groundshaking:

> **PSFS Policy 3.2:** Design critical facilities that will function after a major earthquake.
>
> **PSFS Policy 3.6:** Promote earthquake preparedness within the community by providing information and participating in earthquake awareness programs.

Conformance with California Building Standards Code requirements related to seismic structural standards and compliance with relevant GP Update policies would ensure impacts from seismic groundshaking would be less than significant.

5.3.2 Liquefaction

Most of the city is situated on bedrock with a thin veneer of soil/sediment; in areas such as these, there is little to no risk of liquefaction. However, unconsolidated alluvial deposits along the city's larger drainages and in valley bottoms may be subject to liquefaction, especially in wet years. Additionally, the city is located in the western foothills of the San Marcos Mountains. Slopes within the city are fairly gentle (less than 15 percent), although slopes of as much as 25–40 percent occur

along some of the principal drainages and approaching the San Marcos Mountains. Steeper slopes on the city's west, south, and north edges and within the SOI may be at risk of seismically induced landslides. However, all future development projects consistent with GP Update would include removal, moisture conditioning, and compaction of onsite soils, as necessary, in conformance with the California Building Standards Code, as well as the recommendations of a civil engineering report required under the city's Grading and Erosion Control Ordinance for the issuance of a grading permit. In addition, the GP Update includes the following policies related to seismic-related hazards:

PSFS Policy 3.1: Require a site-specific geotechnical report, prepared by State-licensed personnel as a condition of project approval for development within areas of known or suspected geologic hazard on site.

PSFS Policy 3.2: Design critical facilities that will function after a major earthquake.

PSFS Policy 3.3: Encourage seismic strength evaluations of critical facilities in Vista, such as schools and public infrastructure, to identify vulnerabilities and develop actions to upgrade them to meet current seismic standards.

PSFS Policy 3.4: Identify seismically inadequate buildings and develop or support programs to assist in the seismic upgrading of buildings to meet building and safety codes, including investigating funding opportunities and possibilities for cost-sharing.

PSFS Policy 3.5: Discourage development in areas of known slope instability and/or high landslide risk.

PSFS Policy 3.6: Promote earthquake preparedness within the community by providing information and participating in earthquake awareness programs.

PSFS Policy 3.7: Review the requirements of the Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act at least once yearly to determine if any State updates to seismic hazards' mapping recognize any active faults within the City or its Sphere of Influence (SOI) and, if so, undertake actions to implement the City's regulatory responsibilities.

PSFS Policy 3.8: Review the Seismic Hazards Mapping Act at least once yearly to determine of secondary seismic hazards have been delineated with the City or SOI and, if so, undertake actions to implement the City's regulatory responsibilities.

PSFS Policy 3.9: In areas subject to mudflows and located near development, and where wildfires have removed stabilizing vegetation, implement measures to reduce the likelihood of inundation from mudflows, including but not limited to:

a. Cleaning out existing debris basins prior to rain events; and

b. Applying slope stabilization measures, including but not limited to hydroseeding, using erosion control blankets, and creating flow paths that direct flow on the slopes into stabilized channels and debris basins.

Compliance with California Building Standards Code requirements related to seismic-related ground failure, the city's Grading and Erosion Control Ordinance, and relevant GP Update policies would minimize seismic-related ground failure risks of future development, including landslide and liquefaction. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

5.3.3 Unstable Soils

The GP Update would also have less than significant impacts related to non-seismic and unstable soil conditions such as landslides, liquefaction, subsidence, lateral spreading, expansive soils, and soil erosion. The city is primarily underlain by mid-Cretaceous tonalite of the Peninsular Ranges batholith. However, along the city's west and south edges, basement rocks that are unconformably overlain by the Santiago Formation have been identified. The Santiago Formation, which consists of sandstone, conglomerate, and mudrocks, could pose potentially unstable conditions. Future development near steep slopes along the city's west, south, and east edges, especially those underlain by the Santiago Formation, may be at some risk of unstable soil conditions such as landslide, subsidence, lateral spreading, or collapse. In addition, unconsolidated alluvial deposits along the city's larger drainages and in valley bottoms may be subject to liquefaction. However, all future development consistent with GP Update would include the removal, moisture conditioning, and compaction of onsite soils, as necessary, in conformance with the California Building Standards Code, as well as the recommendations of a civil engineering report required under the city's Grading and Erosion Control Ordinance for the issuance of a grading permit. Furthermore, the GP Update includes the following policy related to non-seismic and unstable soil conditions:

> **PSFS Policy 3.5:** Discourage development in areas of known slope instability and/or high landslide risk.

Expansive and erodible soils are likely to occur throughout much of the city. Most of the city is underlain by soils assigned to the Vista, Fallbrook, and Cieneba series. All of these soils are highly erodible. Typical expansion potential ranges from low in Vista and Cieneba soils to moderate in Fallbrook soils. The city's western and southernmost edges are underlain by soils of the Las Flores and Antioch series, developed on sandstone bedrock. Expansion potential is typically high in Las Flores soils. Finally, the steeper eastern edges of the SOI are underlain by soils of the Las Posas, San Miguel, Friant, and Exchequer series. Expansion potential is typically high in the San Miguel and Las Posas soils. Thus, future development within the project area would be subject to expansive and erodible soils. All new development associated with the GP Update would include implementation of a SWPPP; the removal, moisture conditioning, and compaction of onsite soils, as necessary, in conformance with the California Building Standards Code; and the recommendations of a civil engineering report required under the city's Grading and Erosion Control Ordinance for the issuance of a grading permit. Implementation of a SWPPP and compliance with requirements of the California Building Standards Code, the city's Grading and Erosion Control Ordinance, and the proposed GP Update policies described above would ensure that risks associated with unstable, expansive, and erodible soils would be less than significant.

5.4 Mineral Resources

Mineral resources that would be of future value to the region or state have not been identified within the majority of the GP Update area in the 1996 Update of Mineral Land Classification completed by the California Department of Conservation, Division of Mines and Geology (CDMG). The CDMG Map, Special Report 153, Plate 1, identifies the mineral resource zone (MRZ) designation for the majority of land within the project area as MRZ-3 (CDMG 1996). Areas designated as MRZ-3 have undetermined mineral resource significance, and the significance of areas containing mineral deposits cannot be evaluated from available data. Restricted areas to the southeast of the city are

even less thoroughly understood and are accordingly zoned MRZ-4, defined as areas where available information is inadequate for assignment to any other MRZ zone. Although MRZ-3 and MRZ-4 zones have undetermined mineral resource significance, the potential for viable extraction of mineral resources within these zones is limited due to the city's urbanized character.

Areas within the city's SOI support mineral resources extraction focused on construction aggregate materials. The CDMG Map, Special Report 153, Plate 1, identifies areas to the north, south, and west of the city, within the city's SOI, as MRZ-2. MRZ-2 zones are areas where adequate information indicates that significant mineral deposits are present, or where it is judged that a high likelihood exists for their presence (CDMG 1996). The SOI, however, is not yet part of the city and is not under the city's jurisdiction until it or portions of it are incorporated.

All future development associated with the GP Update would undergo individual review to ensure that significant mineral resources are protected. Compliance with the GP Update policies as well as the Development Code would be required. Chapter 15.16 of the Development Code contains the city's implementation provisions, which recognize minerals extraction, including borrow of fill and construction materials, as essential to the city's economic well-being and the needs of society, but also stress the need to protect public health and safety and support the city's General Plan goals and objectives (Vista Municipal Code Sec. 15.16.010).

Therefore, there would be no impacts on mineral resources as a result of implementing the GP Update.

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Chapter 6

Alternatives

Chapter 6
Alternatives

6.1 Introduction

The State CEQA Guidelines require that an EIR evaluate a "…range of reasonable alternatives to the project, or to the location of the project, which could feasibly attain the basic objectives of the project" (Section 15126.6[a]). A reasonable range of alternatives must be considered to encourage informed decision-making and public participation in the CEQA process.

This chapter evaluates alternatives to the GP Update and examines the potential environmental impacts associated with each alternative. Not every conceivable alternative must be addressed, nor do infeasible alternatives need to be considered. Section 15126.6 of the State CEQA Guidelines states that the factors that may be taken into account when addressing the feasibility of alternatives are: site suitability, economic viability, availability of infrastructure, other plans or regulatory limitations, and jurisdictional boundaries. The Guidelines also state that the discussion of alternatives should focus on "…alternatives capable of avoiding or substantially lessening any significant effects of the project, even if these alternatives could impede to some degree the attainment of the project objectives or would be more costly" (Section 15166.6[b] State CEQA Guidelines). CEQA further directs that "…the significant effects of the alternatives shall be discussed, but in less detail than the significant effects of the project as proposed" (Section 15126.6[d] State CEQA Guidelines).

The following sections discuss the GP Update alternatives that were considered pursuant to CEQA. Section 6.3 discusses the alternatives that were considered but rejected. Section 6.4 discusses the alternatives that were carried forward to be compared with the proposed GP Update: (1) No Project Alternative, (2) Reduced Density Alternative, and (3) No Opportunity Areas Alternative.

6.2 Project Objectives

As stated in Chapter 3, "Project Description," the objectives of the GP Update are to:

1. Create a balanced plan that preserves and enhances Vista's distinctive semi-rural and suburban neighborhoods, historic downtown and other business districts, open spaces, recreational assets, and cultural amenities.
2. Recognize, preserve, and promote those special characteristics that make Vista a beautiful, unique, and desirable place to live, work, and recreate.
3. Provide a variety of housing options that are affordable to a range of citizens.
4. Promote responsible economic development.
5. Provide enhanced connections, both physically and socially.
6. Incorporate smart growth and sustainable policies.
7. Encourage revitalization and improved property maintenance.

8. Improve accessibility and provide alternatives to the use of the personal automobile.
9. Promote a healthy and safe community.
10. Support a diverse population.

6.3 Alternatives Considered but Rejected

6.3.1 Alternative Location

State CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(f)(2) requires that the Lead Agency consider an alternative location for the proposed GP Update and that if there are no feasible alternative locations, reasons for this conclusion must be disclosed in the PEIR. The GP Update, which is a general plan for the City of Vista, is the guiding policy document for future physical development for all areas within the city's boundaries until the year 2030. The proposed GP Update includes new land use designations, possible roadway improvements, and city-wide goals and policies that are specific to the geographic boundaries of Vista. As such, the adoption of the components of the GP Update at an alternate location is not a feasible alternative.

6.4 Alternatives Analyzed

This section presents an evaluation of three alternatives to the GP Update: (1) No Project Alternative, (2) Reduced Density Alternative, and (3) No Opportunity Areas Alternative. A brief description is provided for each alternative, followed by a summary impact analysis relative to the proposed GP Update, and an assessment of the degree to which the alternative would meet the Project Objectives provided above in Section 6.2. Table 6-1 provides a comparison of the significant direct impacts for the GP Update and alternatives. Table 6-2 provides a summary of the selected alternatives' abilities to meet the GP Update objectives.

The No Project Alternative has been selected because CEQA requires that it be evaluated in an EIR. The Reduced Density Alternative has been selected to compare the effects of the GP Update when the intensity of allowed development is reduced by half. When potential development is reduced, impacts are typically reduced for certain issue areas, although significance determinations may not always change as a result of reduced development. Lastly, the No Opportunity Areas Alternative was selected to evaluate and compare potential project impacts when the redesignation of land uses within the OAs is removed, but the goals and policies pertaining to the entire city remain. This alternative reduces development potential to a greater extent than the Reduced Density Alternative by removing a greater number of multi-family and mixed-use land use designations.

Table 6-1. Alternatives to the General Plan 2030 Update – Analysis Summary

Issue Areas and Significance Thresholds	General Plan 2030 Update		Alternatives		
	Before Mitigation	After Mitigation	No Project	Reduced Density	No OAs
4.1 Aesthetics					
Scenic Vistas	LS	LS	=	=	**=**
State Scenic Highway	LS	LS	=	=	**=**
Visual Character or Quality	LS	LS	+	=	**=**
Light or Glare	LS	LS	–	–	–
4.2 Air Quality					
Consistency with RAQS	LS	LS	=	=	=
Consistency with Air Quality Standards	PS	**SU**	=	=	=
Sensitive Receptors	PS	**SU**	=	=	=
Odors	LS	LS	=	=	=
4.3 Biological Resources					
Impacts on Sensitive Species, Riparian, or Other Sensitive Habitats, Federally Protected Wetlands, and Migratory Species	PS	LS	+	=	+
Impacts on Adopted Policies and Plans	LS	LS	=	=	=
4.4 Climate Change					
Direct and Indirect Generation of GHGs	PS	**SU**	+	=	+
Impacts on Projects	PS	**SU**	+	=	+
4.5 Cultural Resources					
Historic Resource	LS	LS	=	=	=
Archaeological Resources and Human Remains	PS	LS	+	=	=
Paleontological Resources	PS	LS	+	=	=
4.6 Hazards and Hazardous Materials					
Public or Environment	LS	LS	=	=	=
Nearby Schools	LS	LS	=	=	=
Airports	LS	LS	=	=	=
Emergency Response and Evacuation	LS	LS	=	=	=
Wildland Fires	LS	LS	=	=	=
4.7 Hydrology and Water Quality					
Water Quality and Waste Discharge Requirements	LS	LS	=	=	=

Issue Areas and Significance Thresholds	General Plan 2030 Update		Alternatives		
	Before Mitigation	After Mitigation	No Project	Reduced Density	No OAs
Stormwater Drainage System Capacity	LS	LS	=	=	=
Drainage and Erosion	LS	LS	=	=	=
Flood Hazard Area	LS	LS	=	=	=
Levee, Dam, Seiche Hazard Area	LS	LS	=	=	=
4.8 Land Use, Population, and Housing					
Physically Divide Established Community	LS	LS	=	=	=
Conflict with Plans, Policies, and Regulations	LS	LS	+	=	=
Conflict with Habitat- or National Conservation Plan	LS	LS	=	=	=
Conflict with Adjacent Land Use	LS	LS	=	=	=
Substantial Population Growth	LS	LS	=	=	=
Displacement of People and/or Housing	LS	LS	=	=	=
4.9 Noise and Vibration					
Local Noise Standards, Ambient Noise Levels, and Temporary Noise Increases	LS	LS	=	=	=
Groundborne Vibrations	LS	LS	=	=	=
Airport Noise	LS	LS	=	=	=
4.10 Public Services and Recreation					
Fire	LS	LS	=	=	–
Police	PS	LS	=	=	=
Public Schools	PS	LS	=	=	=
Parks	LS	LS	–	–	–
Libraries	LS	LS	=	=	=
Recreation Facilities	LS	LS	=	=	=
4.11 Transportation and Circulation					
Roadway Segment and Intersection Capacity	PS	**SU**	+	–	–
Increases in Hazards	LS	LS	+	=	=
Emergency Access	LS	LS	+	=	=
Consistency with RTPs and Alternative Transportation Programs	LS	LS	+	=	+
4.12 Utilities					
Wastewater Treatment Requirements, Infrastructure, and Capacity	LS	LS	–	–	–

Issue Areas and Significance Thresholds	General Plan 2030 Update		Alternatives		
	Before Mitigation	After Mitigation	No Project	Reduced Density	No OAs
Water Supply and Infrastructure	LS	LS	–	–	–
Stormwater Facilities	LS	LS	–	–	–
Solid Waste Disposal	LS	LS	–	–	–
Electricity and Natural Gas	LS	LS	–	–	–

Notes:
LS = Less than Significant
PS = Potentially Significant
SU = Significant and Unavoidable
+ Alternative is likely to result in greater impacts compared to the GP Update.
= Alternative would result in similar impacts compared to the GP Update.
– Alternative is likely to result in less impacts compared to the GP Update.

Table 6-2. Ability of Alternatives to Meet GP Update Objectives

GP Update Objectives	Ability of Alternatives to Meet GP Update Objectives		
	No Project	Reduced Build-out	No OAs
1. Create a balanced plan that preserves and enhances Vista's distinctive semi-rural and suburban neighborhoods, historic downtown and other business districts, open spaces, recreational assets, and cultural amenities.	Partial	Partial	Partial
2. Recognize, preserve, and promote those special characteristics that make Vista a beautiful, unique, and desirable place to live, work, and recreate.	Yes	Yes	Yes
3. Provide a variety of housing options that are affordable to a range of citizens.	Partial	Partial	Partial
4. Promote responsible economic development.	Partial	Partial	Partial
5. Provide enhanced connections, both physically and socially.	Partial	Yes	Yes
6. Incorporate smart growth and sustainable policies.	No	Partial	No
7. Encourage revitalization and improved property maintenance.	Partial	Partial	Partial
8. Improve accessibility and provide alternatives to the use of the personal automobile.	Partial	Partial	Partial
9. Promote a healthy and safe community.	Partial	Yes	Yes
10. Support a diverse population.	Partial	Partial	Partial

6.4.1 No Project Alternative

CEQA requires the No Project Alternative to be addressed in an EIR. This alternative is analyzed within this PEIR as required by State CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(e), which states that the "no project" analysis shall discuss, ". . . what is reasonably expected to occur in the foreseeable future if the project were not approved, based on current plans and consistent with available infrastructure and community services."

Under the No Project Alternative, it is assumed that the General Plan 2030 Update would not be adopted and that the current General Plan would be the applicable planning document guiding future development of the city. Development and redevelopment would continue to occur in the city pursuant to the land use designations, goals, and policies of the current General Plan. However, the opportunities afforded by smart growth neighborhoods as proposed by the GP Update within designated OAs (e.g., compact transit-oriented, multi-family residential and retail/commercial development that encourages more accessible and walkable neighborhoods) would not be realized under the No Project Alternative. Further, the No Project Alternative would not adopt the following elements of the GP Update: the future road improvements and new transportation goals and policies of the Circulation Element; the updated and improved goals, policies, and implementation programs

in the Resource Conservation and Sustainability Element; and the goals and policies that can improve community health by encouraging and supporting healthful behaviors and choices in the new Healthy Vista Element.

6.4.1.1 Impact Analysis

Aesthetics

As with the GP Update, the No Project Alternative would not create significant impacts on any designated scenic vistas or state scenic highways because there are no officially designated state scenic highways within the project area. In addition, like the GP Update the No Project Alternative would implement objectives and policies that would enhance the visual and community character throughout the city. Therefore, impacts related to visual character and quality would be similar under this alternative. Less than significant impacts associated with lighting and glare would be slightly reduced under the No Project Alternative because the intensity of development and redevelopment under this alternative would be less than under the proposed GP Update.

Air Quality

The No Project Alternative would be consistent with the applicable air quality plan because build-out of the current General Plan was included in the population assumptions made by SANDAG and utilized in the air quality plan; therefore, impacts would be similar to the GP Update. Compared to the GP Update, the No Project Alternative would result in similar impacts in terms of consistency with air quality standards because neither scenario would be consistent with air quality standards because of the effects from future construction emissions and traffic emissions. Like the GP Update, the No Project Alternative would accommodate development with the potential to expose sensitive receptors to TACs from nearby industrial and commercial uses such as gas stations or dry cleaners; as a result, impacts would remain significant and unavoidable under this alternative scenario. Finally, implementation of the No Project Alternative would accommodate land uses associated with the production of objectionable odors, which would be similar to the GP Update.

Biological Resources

Future development under the No Project Alternative, as with the GP Update, would have the potential to impact special-status species, nesting birds and/or raptors, and riparian and natural habitats within the city, including wildlife corridors. Additionally, future development under this alternative that would be adjacent to Buena Vista Creek or its tributaries would have the potential to result in a significant impact on a jurisdictional waterway, similar to the GP Update. However, unlike the GP Update, new policies that address the protection and preservation of open creeks and waterways (e.g., RCS Policies 4.5 and 4.8) would not be proposed under the No Project Alternative, and, thus, impacts would have the potential to be greater under the No Project Alternative. Lastly, the No Project Alternative would not conflict with adopted plans, policies, and regulations because the city does not have any adopted ordinances or local habitat conservation plans. Therefore, implementation of the No Project Alternative would be similar to the GP Update.

Climate Change

The No Project Alternative would support a less-intensive build-out of uses in the city compared to the GP Update, which would potentially result in lower GHG emissions. On the issue of reducing GHG

emissions, however, it is arguable whether this alternative would be considered to have a reduced effect. For instance, if just total GHG emissions were considered as the threshold, this alternative would reduce climate change impacts compared with the GP Update. However, if GHG emissions are considered on a per capita basis then the No Project Alternative would potentially create greater GHG emissions because it would not accommodate as much mixed-use transit-oriented development. In addition, policies related to reducing GHG emissions that would be implemented under the GP Update would not be implemented under the No Project Alternative. For example, RCS Policies 2.1 through 2.8 would reduce GHG emissions associated with implementation of the GP Update. Therefore, in consideration of the lower per capita emissions under the GP Update and the policies that would be implemented, impacts related to GHG emissions from vehicular sources, energy consumption, water use, solid waste, and GHG emissions during construction and operation would be greater under the No Project Alternative.

Cultural Resources

As with the GP Update, future development under the No Project Alternative could potentially involve demolition and/or remodeling of potentially significant historic resources in the city. Development could also significantly impact unknown archaeological resources in currently undeveloped areas during ground disturbing construction activities. Similar to the GP Update, development under this alternative would be required to comply with the city's Historic Preservation Ordinance, which would ensure that no significant impacts on historic resources would occur. Potential project impacts on archaeological and paleontological resources under the No Project Alternative would, like the GP Update, be mitigable and reduce impacts to a less than significant level. Lastly, as with the GP Update, in the event that human remains are discovered under the No Project Alternative, the project applicant would be required to comply with applicable state law to ensure this impact would be less than significant.

Hazards and Hazardous Materials

Under the No Project Alternative, and similar to the GP Update, mandatory compliance with applicable federal and state regulations and enforcement of existing city policies would ensure this alternative would not result in potentially significant impacts with regard to: (1) hazards to the public or environment through the routine use, transport, and disposal of hazardous materials; (2) the accidental release of hazardous materials; (3) hazardous materials release near schools; (4) airports; (5) interference with a emergency response plan; and(6) wildland fires. Although the GP Update would include new policies that would not be enforced under the No Project Alternative, impacts are considered to be similar and less than significant.

Hydrology and Water Quality

As is the case of the GP Update, development applications for discretionary permits under the No Project Alternative would be required to comply with local and regional plans and regulations regarding hydrology and water quality, which would avoid potentially significant impacts. Although the GP Update would include goals and policies that could further reduce and avoid impacts, projects developed under the No Project Alternative like the GP Update would not result in any significant impacts as a result of: (1) violating water quality standards or waste discharge requirements; (2) creating substantial sources of polluted runoff; (3) degrading water quality; (4) exceeding existing and/or planned stormwater drainage systems; (5) altering existing drainage patterns resulting in erosion or flooding; (6) placing structures, including housing, within a 100-year

flood hazard area; (7) exposure to dam or levee failure; (8) inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow; or (9) depleting groundwater supplies or interfering with groundwater recharge. As such, the No Project Alternative's impacts related to hydrology and water quality would be similar to the GP Update and would result in less than significant impacts.

Land Use, Population, and Housing

Under the No Project Alternative, impacts related to conflicts with neighboring land uses or the physical division of an established neighborhood would be similar to the GP Update. This alternative would just continue to allow development in accordance with the existing General Plan. Outside of the OAs, development under either the No Project Alternative or the GP Update would result in similar types of activities and uses in the same locations. Because the existing General Plan is a resource SANDAG uses to estimate future growth in the city, the No Project Alternative would be consistent with the population and housing projections for 2030, although it would not provide Mixed-Use land use designations or increase density within SANDAG's smart growth areas. In contrast, as demonstrated in Table 4.8-3, the GP Update would be consistent with SANDAG's RCP and other regional plans that promote smart growth and transit-oriented design. Also, like the GP Update, the No Project Alternative would not conflict with the North County MHCP or any other conservation plans, or with such plans, policies and regulations as the Carlsbad and San Luis Rey River WURMPs, the RCP, RTP, RAQS, and the San Diego Basin Plan.

Like the GP Update, the No Project Alternative would not induce substantial population growth but accommodate an increase in population. As previously discussed, Vista is basically built-out and has few vacant parcels available for new development, none of which is located in areas without infrastructure. As a result, future development under the No Project Alternative would likely be infill development or redevelopment, albeit without the availability of creating compacted mixed-use, transit-oriented development in OAs like the GP Update. Consequently, impacts related to inducing substantial population growth under the No Project Alternative would be similar to the GP Update.

Noise and Vibration

Similar to the GP Update, the No Project Alternative would not result in permanent increases in stationary noise levels. For example, any new project that would locate noise-sensitive receptors in the city would be required to meet the standards set forth in the Noise and Land Use Compatibility Matrix before a building permit is granted. Temporary noise impacts and groundborne vibration impacts from construction of the approved projects under this alternative would be similar to the GP Update because land uses accommodated under the No Project Alternative would be similar to the GP Update and would require similar construction activities. Similar to the GP Update, impacts would be potentially significant and the mitigation measures proposed in Section 4.9, Noise, would be required to reduce them to a less than significant level. Less than significant impacts to traffic noise would remain under this alternative because vehicle trips associated with this alternative would be reduced as compared to the GP Update. Finally, the No Project Alternative would not expose people to excessive aircraft noise and would, therefore, be similar to the GP Update.

Public Services and Recreation

Demand for services from the SDCSD and VUSD currently exceed the capacity of these service providers. Therefore, similar to the GP Update, future development under the No Project Alternative

would result in an increase in demand for police and school services that would have the potential to exceed the capacity of existing SDCSD or VUSD facilities. This impact would require the construction of new facilities or substantial alterations to existing facilities, the effects of which could have significant environmental impacts. However, similar to the GP Update, implementation of the mitigation measures proposed in Section 4.10, Public Services, would be required to reduce impacts under this alternative to a less than significant level. The VFD would have adequate facilities to serve future development in the project area under the No Project Alternative, and impacts to the SDCLS would be similar to the GP Update. As a result, these impacts would be less than significant.

Finally, the No Project Alternative would result in a reduction of residential units compared to the GP Update. The GP Update would result in about 6.81 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents, which would be greater than the city's goal of 4.49 acres per 1,000 persons. This alternative would result in a higher ratio than the GP Update. Therefore, as compared to the GP Update, the No Project Alternative would reduce demand on park service.

Transportation and Circulation

Under the No Project Alternative, the city would allow less-intensive growth as compared to the GP Update, and increases in traffic would be somewhat reduced. However, the GP Update includes several roadway and intersection improvements (e.g., widening, re-striping, etc.) that would not be implemented as a part of the No Project Alternative, resulting in a greater traffic impact compared to the GP Update. Impacts associated with hazards from design or incompatible uses would be potentially greater under the No Project Alternative because policies specific to roadway hazards would not be implemented. These policies include CE Policies 1.10, 2.1 through 2.7, 4.3 and 4.4, 6.5 and 6.6, 6.12, and 6.17. Likewise, impacts related to emergency access would be greater under the No Project than under the GP Update because this alternative would not implement policies designed to prevent impacts on emergency access. Lastly, the No Project Alternative would not be consistent with the SANDAG RTP, which identifies areas where mixed-use would be appropriate within the context of surrounding land uses and transportation facilities. Therefore, impacts related to consistency with alternative transportation plans would be greater under the No Project Alternative as compared to the GP Update.

Utilities

The No Project Alternative would allow for fewer residential units compared to the GP Update, and the demand on utilities would generally be reduced. Although existing stormwater, wastewater, and potable water facilities would be adequate to serve the city under the GP Update, development potential under the No Project Alternative would result in a reduced demand for utilities when compared with the GP Update. Likewise, solid waste disposal, natural gas, and electricity generation would be reduced under the No Project Alternative; however, landfill capacity and local gas and electric providers under the No Project Alternative would be the same as the GP Update.

6.4.1.2 Ability to Accomplish Project Objectives

Under the No Project Alternative the existing General Plan would remain the applicable planning document for the city. The No Project Alternative would meet only one of the ten project objectives identified in the GP Update, Objective 2, as various policies in the current General Plan recognize and promote the city of Vista as a unique and desirable place to live and work (e.g., the policies in the Community Identity/Scenic Roadways Element). This alternative would not meet Objective 6

because the current General Plan did not incorporate any smart growth and sustainable policies. The No Project Alternative would only partially meet Objectives 1, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9 and 10 . While the current General Plan establishes policies that preserves and enhances the city's distinctive neighborhoods and other areas, f provides a variety of housing options for a diverse population, and promotes responsible economic development, these policies would not reach these objectives as effectively as the GP Update. The GP Update provides more housing choices and a wider range of densities within OAs that would enhance these neighborhoods, affords greater access to transportation alternatives, and promotes a greater job-housing balance through the use of Mixed Use land use designations. Furthermore, the No Project Alternative would only partially meet Objectives 5 and 8 because the goals and policies in the Circulation Element of the current General Plan would not achieve physical and social connections and transportation alternatives, to the same extent as the GP Update. For example, the GP Update's CE Policies 6.12 through 6.19 would enhance the city's Safe Routes to School Program, utilize a wayfinding program, and provide for connections between activity centers, which would not be accomplished under the No Project Alternative. In addition, the No Project Alternative would only partially meet Objectives 7 and 9. There is an existing redevelopment area boundary to encourage revitalization and improved property maintenance, and some policies in the existing General Plan do promote a healthy and safe community. However, the No Project Alternative would not include mixed-use development or include a Healthy Vista Element, which addresses health and wellness, community food security, healthcare, community cohesion, and public art.

6.4.2 Reduced Density Alternative

The Reduced Density Alternative would result in a reduced residential density for mixed-use areas. The proposed land use plan designations and goals and policies would not be changed compared to the proposed GP Update. However, the allowed density within mixed-use areas would be reduced from 40 dwelling units per acre to 20 dwelling units per acre, and future development within the OAs would be reduced to about half of what is projected under the proposed GP Update. As such, development under this alternative would result in a net reduction of multi-family residential units from 3,261 to 1,631 within OAs, as compared to the GP Update.

6.4.2.1 Impact Analysis

Aesthetics

Under the Reduced Density Alternative, as with the GP Update, there would be no significant impacts on any designated scenic vistas or state scenic highways because there are no officially designated state scenic highways within the project area. Also similar to the GP Update, the Reduced Density Alternative would include goals and policies that would enhance the visual character and quality throughout the city, and potential impacts on visual character or quality would be similar. Impacts associated with lighting and glare would be slightly reduced under the Reduced Density Alternative because the intensity of allowed development and redevelopment would be less than under the GP Update.

Air Quality

Because the GP Update would be consistent with the San Diego County RAQS, reduced build-out of the OAs under the Reduced Density Alternative would also be consistent, and impacts would be similar to the GP Update. In terms of consistency with air quality standards, the Reduced Density

Alternative would result in violations of air quality standards, and impacts would be similar to the GP Update because of the similar land uses proposed and the likely construction scenarios. The Reduced Project Alternative, as with the GP Update, would accommodate mixed-use development with the potential to expose sensitive receptors to TACs from nearby sources such as gas stations or dry cleaners, and Mitigation Measure M-AQ-3 would not reduce impacts to below a significant level. As a result, impacts would remain significant and unavoidable, similar to the GP Update. Finally, in some circumstances, the construction associated with development under this alternative could result in objectionable odors, though because the Reduced Density Alternative would likely include mitigation measures similar to M-AQ-1a and M-AQ-1b, impacts would be similar to the construction effects under the GP Update.

Biological Resources

Under the Reduced Density Alternative, and similar to the GP Update, future development would have the potential to impact special-status species, nesting birds and/or raptors, and riparian and natural habitats, including wildlife corridors. Also, future development adjacent to Buena Vista Creek or its tributaries would have the potential to result in a significant impact on federally protected wetlands. However, like the GP Update, policies under the Reduced Development Alternative would be proposed to address the protection and preservation of open creeks and waterways (i.e., RCS Policies 4.5 and 4.8), which would similarly reduce potential impacts. Implementation of this alternative would not conflict with adopted plans, policies, and regulations because the city does not have any adopted ordinances or local habitat conservation plans. Therefore, implementation of the Reduced Density Alternative would not conflict with the North County MHCP or NCCP, and as a result its impacts would be similar to the GP Update.

Climate Change

The Reduced Density Alternative would reduce the total number of residential units that could be accommodated as compared to the proposed GP Update by reducing the permitted number of residential units within the OAs by approximately 1,631 dwelling units. Additionally, this alternative would implement the goals and policies within the GP Update that would reduce GHG emissions compared to BAU. On the issue of reducing GHG emissions, it is arguable whether this alternative would be considered to have a reduced effect. For instance, if just total GHG emissions were considered as the threshold, then this alternative would reduce climate change impacts. On the other hand, if GHG emissions are considered on a per capita basis then the GP Update would create fewer GHG emissions and could potentially capture homeowners and renters that would otherwise choose housing in more traditional sprawled developments. Therefore, in consideration of the lower per capita emissions under the GP Update, impacts related to GHG emissions from vehicular sources, energy consumption, water use, solid waste, and GHG emissions during construction and operation would be similar under the Reduced Density Alternative to the GP Update.

Cultural Resources

Under the Reduced Density Alternative, and similar to the GP Update, future development could involve demolition/remodeling of potentially significant historic resources in the city and could also impact significant archaeological resources in currently undeveloped areas during ground disturbing construction activities. Just like the GP Update, development under this alternative would be required to comply with the city's Historic Preservation Ordinance, which would ensure that no significant impacts on historic resources would occur. Potential project impacts on archaeological

and paleontological resources under the No Project Alternative would, like the GP Update, be mitigable and reduce impacts to a less than significant level. In the event that human remains are discovered, the project applicant is mandated to comply with applicable state law to ensure this impact would be less than significant; therefore, this alternative would have effects similar to the GP Update.

Hazards and Hazardous Materials

Under the Reduced Density Alternative, and similar to the GP Update, mandatory compliance with applicable federal and state regulations and enforcement of existing city policies would ensure this alternative would not result in potentially significant impacts with regard to: (1) hazards to the public or environment through the routine use, transport, and disposal of hazardous materials; (2) the accidental release of hazardous materials; (3) hazardous materials release near schools; (4) airports; (5) interference with a emergency response plan; and (6) wildland fires. In addition, the GP Update would include policies dealing with hazards and hazardous materials that would likely be included under the Reduced Density Alternative. Impacts related to hazards or hazardous materials from the Reduced Density Alternative would be similar to the GP Update and less than significant.

Hydrology and Water Quality

As with the GP Update, development applications for discretionary permits under the Reduced Density Alternative would be required to comply with local and regional plans and regulations related to hydrology and water quality, which would avoid potentially significant impacts. This would include compliance with the city's Stormwater Ordinance and Grading Ordinance, including the preparation of an erosion control plan and implementation of minimum BMP requirements. Potentially significant water quality impacts during construction activities and post-construction would be similar to the GP Update because the Reduced Density Alternative would accommodate the development of similar types of uses that have the potential to generate pollutants and would require similar construction activities. As with the GP Update, implementation of BMPs according to the city's Stormwater Standards Manual, and compliance with the SUSMP through the Stormwater Management and Discharge Control Ordinance, the city's Grading and Erosion Control Ordinance, and the required NPDES permits would reduce water quality impacts of the Reduced Density Alternative to a less than significant level.

Land Use, Population, and Housing

Under the Reduced Density Alternative, impacts related to conflicts with neighboring land uses or the physical division of an established neighborhood would be similar to the GP Update because development under this alternative would result in similar types of activities and uses within the OAs and within the city as a whole. Like the GP Update, this alternative would not conflict with approved plans, policies, or regulations nor would it conflict with an approved habitat conservation plan or other conservation plan.

Like the GP Update, the Reduced Density Alternative would not induce substantial population growth but accommodate an increase in population. As previously discussed, the city of Vista is basically built-out and has few vacant parcels available for new development, none of which is located in areas without infrastructure. Although the maximum population that could be accommodated would be less under this alternative than the GP Update, future development under the Reduced Density Alternative would still occur within compact mixed-use, transit-oriented

development in OAs like the GP Update. Consequently, impacts related to inducing substantial population growth under the Reduced Density Alternative would be similar to the GP Update..

Noise and Vibration

Similar to the GP Update, the Reduced Density Alternative would not result in permanent increases in stationary noise levels. For example, any new project that would locate noise-sensitive receptors in the city would be required to meet the standards set forth in the Noise and Land Use Compatibility Matrix before a building permit is granted. Temporary noise impacts and groundborne vibration impacts from construction of the approved projects under this alternative would be similar to the GP Update because land uses accommodated under the Reduced Density Alternative would be similar to the GP Update and would require similar construction activities. Similar to the GP Update, impacts would be potentially significant and the mitigation measures proposed in Section 4.9, Noise, would be required to reduce them to a less than significant level. Less than significant impacts to traffic noise would remain under this alternative because vehicle trips associated with this alternative would be slightly reduced as compared to the GP Update. Finally, the No Project Alternative would not expose people to excessive aircraft noise and would, therefore, be similar to the GP Update.

Public Services and Recreation

Demand for services from the SDCSD and VUSD currently exceed the capacity of these service providers. Therefore, similar to the GP Update, future development under the Reduced Density Alternative would result in an increase in demand for police and school services that would have the potential to exceed the capacity of existing SDCSD or VUSD facilities. This impact would require the construction of new facilities or substantial alterations to existing facilities, the effects of which could have significant environmental impacts. However, similar to the GP Update, implementation of the mitigation measures proposed in Section 4.10, Public Services, would be required to reduce impacts under this alternative to a less than significant level. The VFD would have adequate facilities to serve future development in the project area under the Reduced Density Alternative, and impacts to the SDCLS would result in similar less than significant impacts as with the GP Update.

Finally, the Reduced Density Alternative would result in a reduction of residential units compared to the GP Update. The GP Update would result in about 6.81 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents, which would be greater than the city's goal of 4.49 acres per 1,000 persons. This alternative would result in a higher ratio than the GP Update. Therefore, as compared to the GP Update, the Reduced Density Alternative would reduce demand on parks.

Transportation and Circulation

Under the Reduced Density Alternative, impacts on roadway and intersection LOS would be less severe when compared with the GP Update because this alternative would reduce the density of traffic-generating land uses (i.e., multi-family residential, commercial, and office) within the OAs by half. However, traffic impacts at the same two intersections as in the GP Update would potentially still remain significant and unavoidable, even with the implementation of mitigation measures. Impacts related to hazards from design or incompatible uses would be similar to the GP Update because this alternative would also include several policies that reduce potential impacts, such as policies for roadways, traffic signals, maintenance, parking, roadways speeds, driveways, sidewalks, and crosswalks. Impacts on emergency access would be similar to the GP Update because the

Reduced Density Alternative would likely implement policies similar to those proposed by the GP Update. Lastly, future development under the Reduced Density Alternative would like the GP Update be consistent with the SANDAG RTP; therefore; the Reduced Density Alternative would be similar to the GP Update.

Utilities

The Reduced Density Alternative would allow for fewer residential units compared to the GP Update, and the demand on utilities would generally be reduced. Although existing stormwater, wastewater, and potable water facilities would be adequate to serve the city like under the GP Update, development potential under the Reduced Density Alternative would result in a slight reduction in demand on these facilities when compared with the GP Update. Likewise, solid waste disposal, landfill capacity, natural gas, and electricity generation would be slightly reduced under the Reduced Density Alternative.

6.4.2.2 Ability to Accomplish Project Objectives

The Reduced Density Alternative would meet four of the ten objectives identified in the GP Update and would partially meet the remaining six. This alternative would meet Objectives 2, 5, and 9 because various policies in the GP Update that recognize and promote the city of Vista as a unique and desirable place to live and work would remain in this alternative. The Reduced Density Alternative would also implement the goals and policies within the GP Update to provide both physical and social connections, and it would include the goals and policies of the Healthy Vista Element to promote a healthy and safe community.

The Reduced Density Alternative would partially meet Objectives 1, 3, 6, and 8. While this alternative would maintain a balanced plan, increase the variety of housing options that are affordable to a range of citizens, incorporate smart growth and sustainable policies, and provide alternatives to the personal automobile, the incorporation of a Mixed Use land use designation that allows up to 40 dwelling units per acre within the OAs would better accomplish Objectives 1, 3, 6, and 8. Objectives 4, 7, and 10 would also be partially met because the Reduced Density Alternative would promote economic development by combining residential and non-residential land uses, encourage revitalization and improved property maintenance by redesignating urban areas as Mixed Use, and support a more diverse population by allowing a range of uses and densities within the Mixed Use land use designation. However, allowing a greater density within the OAs would achieve these objectives to a greater degree.

6.4.3 No Opportunity Areas Alternative

The No Opportunity Areas Alternative would eliminate all ten of the OAs included as part of the GP Update. As a result, the proposed land use changes within the OAs would not occur and the policies afforded by smart growth neighborhoods as proposed by the GP Update within designated OAs (compact transit-oriented, multi-family residential and retail/commercial development that encourages more accessible and walkable neighborhoods) would not be realized. . However, the citywide goals and policies of the GP Update would continue to apply under the No Opportunity Areas Alternative. In addition, many of the following elements of the GP Update would be included in the No Opportunity Areas Alternative: the future road improvements and new transportation goals and policies of the Circulation Element; the updated and improved goals, policies, and implementation programs in the Resource Conservation and Sustainability Element; and the goals

and policies that can improve community health by encouraging and supporting healthful behaviors and choices in the new Healthy Vista Element.

6.4.3.1 Impact Analysis

Aesthetics

Under the No Opportunity Areas Alternative, as with the GP Update, there would be no significant impacts on any designated scenic vistas or state scenic highways because there are no officially designated state scenic highways within the project area. Also similar to the GP Update, the No Opportunity Areas Alternative would include goals and policies that would enhance the visual character and quality throughout the city, and potential impacts on visual character or quality would be similar. Less than significant impacts associated with lighting and glare would be slightly reduced under the No Opportunity Areas Alternative because the intensity of allowed development and redevelopment would be less than under the GP Update.,

Air Quality

The GP Update would be consistent with the San Diego County RAQS, and elimination of the OAs under this alternative would not be consistent with the RAQS; therefore, impacts under the No Opportunity Areas Alternative would be greater than the GP Update. Compared to the GP Update, the No Opportunity Area Alternative would result in similar impacts in terms of consistency with air quality standards because neither scenario would be consistent with air quality standards because of the effects from future construction emissions and traffic emissions. Similar to the proposed GP Update, the No Opportunity Areas Alternative would accommodate future growth and development with the potential to expose sensitive receptors to TACs from nearby gas stations or dry cleaners, and Mitigation Measure M-AQ-3 would not reduce impacts to below a significant level. As a result, impacts would remain significant and unavoidable, as with the GP Update. The No Opportunity Areas Alternative would allow development that could be associated with the production of objectionable odors, and because this alternative could include Mitigation Measures M-AQ-1a through M-AQ-1b, impacts would be similar under this alternative.

Biological Resources

Under the No Opportunity Areas Alternative, and similar to the GP Update, future development would have the potential to impact special-status species, nesting birds and/or raptors, and riparian and natural habitats, including wildlife corridors. Also, future development adjacent to Buena Vista Creek or its tributaries would have the potential to result in a significant impact on federally protected wetlands. However, as with the GP Update, policies under the No Opportunity Areas Alternative would be proposed to address the protection and preservation of open creeks and waterways (e.g., RCS Policies 4.5 and 4.8), which would similarly reduce potential impacts under this alternative. Implementation of this alternative would not conflict with adopted plans, policies, and regulations because the city does not have any adopted ordinances or local habitat conservation plans. Therefore, implementation of the No Opportunity Areas Alternative would be similar to the GP Update.

Climate Change

The No Opportunity Areas Alternative would support a less-intensive build-out of uses in the city compared to the GP Update because it would not allow high density mixed-use land uses nor would it accommodate as many acres of high density multi-family residential land uses. On the issue of reducing GHG emissions, however, it is arguable whether this alternative would be considered to have a reduced effect. For instance, if just total GHG emissions were considered as the threshold, then this alternative would reduce climate change impacts. However, if GHG emissions are considered on a per capita basis then the GP Update would create fewer GHG emissions and furthermore could potentially capture homeowners and renters that would otherwise choose housing in more traditional sprawled developments. Many policies related to reducing GHG emissions could be implemented under the No Opportunity Areas Alternative; however, those relating to mixed-use or transit-oriented development would not be included. Therefore, in consideration of the lower per capita emissions under the GP Update and the lack of smart growth policies that would be implemented, impacts related to GHG emissions from vehicular sources, energy consumption, water use, solid waste, and GHG emissions during construction and operation would probably be greater under the No Opportunity Areas Alternative.

Cultural Resources

Under the No Opportunity Areas Alternative, and similar to the GP Update, future development could involve demolition/remodeling of potentially significant historic resources in the city and could also impact significant archaeological resources in currently undeveloped areas during ground disturbing construction activities. Just like the GP Update, development under this alternative would be required to comply with the city's Historic Preservation Ordinance, which would ensure that no significant impacts on historic resources would occur. Potential project impacts on archaeological and paleontological resources under the No Project Alternative would, like the GP Update, be mitigable and reduce impacts to a less than significant level. In the event that human remains are discovered, the project applicant is mandated to comply with applicable state law to ensure this impact would be less than significant; therefore, this alternative would have effects similar to the GP Update.

Hazards and Hazardous Materials

Under the No Opportunity Areas Alternative, and similar to the GP Update, mandatory compliance with applicable federal and state regulations and enforcement of existing city policies would ensure this alternative would not result in potentially significant impacts with regard to: (1) hazards to the public or environment through the routine use, transport, and disposal of hazardous materials; (2) the accidental release of hazardous materials; (3) hazardous materials release near schools; (4) airports; (5) interference with a emergency response plan; and 6) wildland fires. In addition, the GP Update would include policies dealing with hazards and hazardous materials that would likely be included under the No Opportunity Areas Alternative. Impacts related to hazards or hazardous materials from the No Opportunity Areas Alternative would be similar to the GP Update and less than significant.

Hydrology and Water Quality

As with the GP Update, development applications for discretionary permits under the No Opportunity Areas Alternative would be required to comply with local and regional plans and

regulations related to hydrology and water quality, which would avoid potentially significant impacts. This would include compliance with the city's Stormwater Ordinance and Grading Ordinance, including the preparation of an erosion control plan and implementation of minimum BMP requirements. Potentially significant water quality impacts during construction activities and post-construction would be similar to the GP Update because this alternative would accommodate the development of similar types of uses that have the potential to generate pollutants and would require similar construction activities. As with the GP Update, implementation of BMPs according to the city's Stormwater Standards Manual in compliance with the SUSMP, the Stormwater Ordinance, the city's Grading Ordinance, and the required NPDES permits would reduce water quality impacts of the No Opportunity Areas Alternative to a less than significant level.

Land Use, Population, and Housing

Under the No Opportunity Areas Alternative, impacts related to conflicts with neighboring land uses or the physical division of an established neighborhood would be less than significant because this alternative would just continue to allow development similar to the existing General Plan, but with new policies that would prevent any such impacts. Outside of the OAs, development under the No Opportunity Areas Alternative would result in similar types of activities and uses in the same locations as the GP Update. However, as demonstrated in Table 4.8-3, whereas the GP Update would be consistent with SANDAG's RCP and other regional plans that promote smart growth and transit-oriented design, the No Opportunity Areas Alternative would not be consistent because there would not be any mixed-use and high density residential land uses, particularly near transit stops. In addition, the No Opportunity Areas Alternative, like the proposed GP Update, would not conflict with the North County MHCP or any other conservation plans.

Like the GP Update, the No Opportunity Areas Alternative would not induce substantial population growth but accommodate an increase in population. As previously discussed, the city of Vista is basically built-out and has few vacant parcels available for new development, none of which is located in areas without infrastructure. Although the maximum population that could be accommodated would be less under this alternative than the GP Update, future development under the No Opportunity Areas Alternative would still occur. Consequently, impacts related to inducing substantial population growth under the Reduced Density Alternative would be similar to the GP Update.

Noise and Vibration

Similar to the GP Update, the No Opportunity Areas Alternative would not result in permanent increases in stationary noise levels. For example, any new project that would locate noise-sensitive receptors in the city would be required to meet the standards set forth in the Noise and Land Use Compatibility Matrix before a building permit is granted. Temporary noise impacts and groundborne vibration impacts from construction of the approved projects under this alternative would be similar to the GP Update because land uses accommodated under the No Opportunity Areas Alternative would be similar to the GP Update and would require similar construction activities. Similar to the GP Update, impacts would be potentially significant and the mitigation measures proposed in Section 4.9, Noise, would be required to reduce them to a less than significant level. Less than significant impacts to traffic noise would remain under this alternative because vehicle trips associated with this alternative would be slightly reduced as compared to the GP Update. Finally, the No Opportunity Areas Alternative would not expose people to excessive aircraft noise and would, therefore, be similar to the GP Update.

Public Services and Recreation

Under the No Opportunity Areas Alternative, impacts related to fire protection services would be slightly less than under the GP Update because there would be fewer residents and structures. Demand for services from the SDCSD and VUSD currently exceed the capacity of these service providers. Therefore, similar to the GP Update, future development under the No Opportunity Areas Alternative would result in an increase in demand for police and school services that would have the potential to exceed the capacity of existing SDCSD or VUSD facilities. This impact would require the construction of new facilities or substantial alterations to existing facilities, the effects of which could have significant environmental impacts. However, similar to the GP Update, implementation of the mitigation measures proposed in Section 4.10, Public Services, would be required to reduce impacts under this alternative to a less than significant level. Impacts to the SDCLS under the No Opportunity Areas Alternative would result in similar less than significant impacts as with the GP Update.

Finally, the No Opportunity Areas Alternative would result in a reduction of residential units compared to the GP Update. The GP Update would result in about 6.81 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents, which would be greater than the city's goal of 4.49 acres per 1,000 persons. This alternative would result in a higher ratio than the GP Update. Therefore, as compared to the GP Update, the No Opportunity Areas Alternative would reduce demand on parks.

Transportation and Circulation

Under the No Opportunity Areas Alternative, impacts on roadway and intersection LOS would be less severe when compared with the GP Update because this alternative would reduce the density of traffic-generating land uses (i.e., multi-family residential, commercial, and office) within the OAs by eliminating high density residential and mixed uses. However, traffic impacts at the same two intersections as in the GP Update would potentially still remain significant and unavoidable, even with the implementation of mitigation measures. Impacts related to hazards from design or incompatible uses would be similar to the GP Update because this alternative would also include several policies that reduce potential impacts, such as policies for roadways, traffic signals, maintenance, parking, roadways speeds, driveways, sidewalks, and crosswalks. Impacts on emergency access would be similar to the GP Update because the No Opportunity Areas Alternative would likely implement policies similar to those proposed by the GP Update. However, future development under the No Opportunity Areas Alternative might not be consistent with the SANDAG RTP because of the lack of transit oriented development opportunities and the lack of mixed uses that would promote alternative transportation modes; therefore the No Opportunity Areas Alternative would have a greater impact related to consistency with the regional transportation plans and programs as compared to the GP Update.

Utilities

The No Opportunity Areas Alternative would allow for fewer residential units compared to the GP Update, and the demand on utilities would generally be reduced under this alternative. Although existing stormwater, wastewater, and potable water facilities under this alternative would be adequate to serve the city as under the GP Update, development potential under the No Opportunity Areas Alternative would result in a reduced demand for utilities when compared with the GP Update. Likewise, solid waste disposal, natural gas, landfill capacity, and electricity generation would be reduced under the No Opportunity Areas Alternative.

6.4.3.2 Ability to Accomplish Project Objectives

Under the No Opportunity Areas Alternative there would be no re-designation of land uses within the OAs, and policies specific to each OA also would be eliminated. The remaining goals and policies that apply citywide would be included under this alternative, and land uses within the OAs would remain as they are under the current General Plan. The No Opportunity Areas Alternative would meet three of the ten objectives and would partially meet six others included in the GP Update. However, it would not meet Objective 6, because the establishment of OAs would be eliminated under this alternative thereby eliminating an important smart growth strategy. This alternative would meet Objectives 2, 5, and 9 because various policies in the GP Update that recognize and promote the city of Vista as a unique and desirable place to live and work would remain in this alternative. The No Opportunity Areas Alternative would also implement the goals and policies within the GP Update to provide both physical and social connections, and it would include the goals and policies of the Healthy Vista Element to promote a healthy and safe community.

The No Opportunity Areas Alternative would partially meet Objectives 1, 3, and 8. While this alternative would maintain a balanced plan, increase the variety of housing options that are affordable to a range of citizens, and provide alternatives to the personal automobile, the incorporation of a Mixed Use land use designation within the OAs under the GP Update would better accomplish these objectives. Objectives 4, 7, and 10 would also be partially met because while the No Opportunity Areas Alternative would promote economic development by allowing residential and non-residential land uses, encourage revitalization and improved property maintenance, and support a more diverse population by allowing a range of uses and densities, the incorporation of a Mixed Use land use designation within the OAs under the GP Update would better accomplish these objectives.

6.5 Environmentally Superior Alternative

According to Section 15126.6(e)(2) of the State CEQA Guidelines, an EIR is required to identify the environmentally superior alternative, which is the alternative having the potential for the fewest significant environmental impacts, from among the range of reasonable alternatives that are evaluated in the EIR. Table 6-1 provides a summary comparison of the alternatives evaluated in this PEIR with the purpose of highlighting whether the alternative would result in similar (=), greater (+), or reduced (-) impacts compared to the GP Update.

As shown in this table, the Reduced Density Alternative would be the Environmentally Superior Alternative because it would not increase impacts related to any issue area compared to the GP Update, but would decrease impacts related to light and glare, roadway segment and intersection operations, public services and recreation, and utility consumption. Although these impacts would be somewhat reduced, the reduction would not change the overall significance determination for the issue areas from that determined for the proposed GP Update. In other words, all less than significant and significant and unavoidable determinations for the Reduced Density Alternative would be the same as the determinations for the GP Update.

The Reduced Density Alternative would only partially fulfill the objectives to: (1) create a balanced plan that preserves and enhances Vista's distinctive semi-rural and suburban neighborhoods, historic downtown and other business districts, open spaces, recreational assets, and cultural amenities; (3) provide a variety of housing options that are affordable to a range of citizens; (4)

promote responsible economic development; (6) incorporate smart growth and sustainable policies; (7) encourage revitalization and improved property maintenance; (8) improve accessibility and provide alternatives to the use of the personal automobile; and (10) support a diverse population. However, the Reduced Density Alternative would achieve the GP Update objectives to: (2) recognize, preserve, and promote those special characteristics that make Vista a beautiful, unique, and desirable place to live, work, and recreate; (5) provide enhanced connections, both physically and socially; and (9) promote a healthy and safe community.

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Chapter 7

Growth Inducement

Chapter 7
Growth Inducement

7.1 Introduction

State CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.2(d) requires that an EIR include a discussion of the ways in which a proposed project could directly or indirectly foster economic development, population growth, or additional housing, and how that growth would affect the surrounding environment. A project is considered growth inducing if it would remove obstacles to growth, or if it would stimulate economic activity within the region. According to CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.2(d), "it must not be assumed that growth in any area is necessarily beneficial, detrimental, or of little significance to the environment." For a general plan, the project is a long-term comprehensive plan to balance projected growth of population, housing, and employment with necessary public services and infrastructure.

A project can have direct and/or indirect growth-inducement potential. Direct growth inducement potential would result if a project, for example, involved construction of new housing. A project would have indirect growth inducement potential if it would establish land use policies that would promote construction of housing. Thus, while the GP Update would not directly lead to growth-inducing impacts, it could lead indirectly to such impacts.

7.2 Growth Effects of the General Plan 2030 Update

According to California Government Code Section 65300, the GP Update is required to serve as a comprehensive, long-term plan for the physical development of the city and, potentially, the SOI if it is incorporated during the planning period. By definition, the GP Update intends to address and accommodate for the future growth projections in the city and region. Although the GP Update would not result in any direct growth-inducing impacts because it is simply a document designed to provide a well-planned response to anticipated population, housing, and economic growth needs in the city and region through the incorporation of policies, the GP Update could have the potential for indirect growth-inducing impacts because it would permit certain types of development to occur through 2030. Chapter 3, "Project Description," describes the projected growth under a reasonably foreseeable build-out, and the environmental consequences related to build-out are fully assessed in Sections 4.1 through 4.12 of this PEIR.

7.2.1 Population Growth

As described above, the purpose of the GP Update is to guide the future development of the city. Accordingly, the GP Update is premised on a certain amount of growth taking place. Growth projections developed by SANDAG in their 2050 Regional Growth Forecast indicate an anticipated population of 105,062 and approximately 32,508 total housing units in the city by 2030 (SANDAG 2011).

As previously stated in this PEIR, the city of Vista is generally built-out. The proposed policies and land use changes contained within the GP Update would focus on infill and redevelopment efforts within SANDAG's identified "Smart Growth Areas" by proposing a mixture of land uses within areas supported by SPRINTER stations. In four of the ten OAs, land use changes would apply a new Mixed Use designation that encourages multi-family residential housing with local-serving retail and commercial development within a single project. These changes would encourage development that is transit-oriented and integrated into the existing built environment, albeit at higher densities. Development that could take place outside the OAs would generally continue as permitted under the existing general plan. It is estimated that development consistent with the land uses proposed in the GP Update would support approximately 4,532 additional residential units, resulting in a total of 35,757 total housing units in the city by the 2030 build-out, compared to the existing built condition of 31,225 residential units (Co-star.com 2009). These additional dwelling units would accommodate up to 14,775 people, resulting in a total population of 112,288 people at the 2030 build-out, compared to the existing population of 97,513 people (Co-star.com 2009).

Implementation of the GP Update would result in increased population and housing unit projections over SANDAG's projections of 105,062 people and 32,508 residential units for the city in 2030. However, as described in Chapter 3, "Project Description", development of the GP Update Area would focus on infill and redevelopment efforts within SANDAG's identified "Smart Growth Areas" by proposing a mixture of land uses within areas supported by SPRINTER stations and existing infrastructure development (e.g., water, sewer, telephone, etc.). Specifically, four of the ten OAs are designated to be mixed-use and transit-oriented to promote compact, high-density, and affordable housing along with community-serving commercial uses. The GP Update also contains policies that promote smart growth land use patterns. Therefore, buildout of the additional 4,532 residential units accommodated by the proposed policies and land use changes in the GP Update would accommodate the population of approximately 14,775 people in the city compared to the existing built conditions. In addition, the GP Update would be in compliance with SANDAG's Smart Growth policies by accommodating projected growth through proposed land uses with increased density in those areas identified by SANDAG as appropriate for future population growth. Thus, the GP Update would indirectly induce population growth. The specific indirect physical effects associated with build-out of the GP Update are discussed in Sections 4.1 through 4.12 of this PEIR.

7.2.2 Economic Growth

Adoption and implementation of the GP Update would support the development of approximately 2,529,048 square feet of additional industrial, commercial, and office space at 2030 build-out compared to existing built conditions. Therefore, it would have the potential to directly generate jobs and economic activity in the city. In addition, based on a factor of 3.26 persons per dwelling unit (SANDAG 2011), implementation of the GP Update would have the potential to generate approximately 14,775 people; however this additional population would incrementally increase economic activity over the course of the Update. The additional residents would primarily be served by the industrial, commercial, and office uses accommodated by the GP Update. Activity generated for services outside of Vista would be expected to draw on existing commercial, office and industrial services already available in the area rather than inducing new service providers to relocate to the area. As a result, no significant physical effects are anticipated to result from economic growth generated by the GP Update, other than the industrial, commercial, and office uses accommodated directly by the GP Update, the physical effects of which are discussed in Sections 4.1 through 4.12 of

this PEIR. Consequently, implementation of the GP Update is anticipated to have beneficial economic effects on local retailers and service providers already located within the city due to the expected additional activty.

7.2.3 Removal of Obstacles

The GP Update does not meet other criteria for being considered growth inducing because it would not remove obstacles to growth or encourage growth through the provision of new and essential public services or access opportunities. Implementation of the GP Update would include improvements to public services infrastructure; however, these improvements would serve the anticipated 2030 buildout of the city. Vista is already served by public services including water and sewer service. Adoption and implementation of the GP Update would not extend public services into an area where these services were previously unavailable. Nor would it result in urbanization of land in a remote location, resulting in "leapfrog" development. The proposed policies contained within the GP Update focus on the proposed OAs and would change the existing low-density land use policies in these areas to Mixed Use residential/commercial, Medium Density residential, Medium High Density residential, and High Density residential development. More specifically, OA-2 (DVSP), OA-3, OA-7, and OA-10 would allow for up to 369.1 acres of mixed-use residential/commercial development. Development would also continue to be allowed outside the OAs, notably within several of the vacant parcels located throughout the city. These areas are currently served by an existing network of electricity, water, sewer, storm drain, communications, roadways, and other infrastructure.

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Chapter 8

Significant Irreversible Changes

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Significant Irreversible Changes

State CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.2(c) requires that an EIR discuss the significant irreversible environmental changes that would result from implementation of a project, and describes significant irreversible environmental changes that would be caused by a proposed project as follows:

> Uses of nonrenewable resources during the initial and continued phases of the project may be irreversible since a large commitment of such resources makes removal or nonuse thereafter unlikely. Primary impacts and, particularly, secondary impacts (such as highway improvement which provides access to a previously inaccessible area) generally commit future generations to similar uses. Also, irreversible damage can result from environmental accidents associated with the project. Irretrievable commitments of resources should be evaluated to assure that such current consumption is justified.

Implementation of the GP Update would commit future generations to mixed use (i.e., multi-family residential, commercial, and office), medium density residential, medium high density residential, and high density residential development within ten OAs located throughout the project area; industrial, commercial, and residential development within vacant parcels throughout the city; and rural residential development throughout the SOI if the area is annexed into the city. Although the city is largely built out and currently developed with residential, commercial, office, and public development uses, the GP Update would result in the redevelopment of existing developed but underutilized areas as well as an overall increase in land use densities. Due to the existing urbanized character of the project area and the development effort that would result from implementation of the GP Update, restoration of the project area to its original, pre-developed condition would be infeasible.

Although the GP Update does not propose specific development, construction of projects developed under the policies of the GP Update would result in the irretrievable commitment of renewable, nonrenewable, and limited resources including, but not limited to: lumber, sand, gravel, asphalt, water, steel, and energy resources such as natural gas and petroleum products for automobiles and construction equipment (see Sections 4.1 through 4.12 of this PEIR). Furthermore, operation and maintenance of projects developed subsequent to the GP Update would permanently and continually consume renewable, nonrenewable, and limited resources including, but not limited to: water, electricity, natural gas, and petroleum products (diesel fuel and gasoline). The GP Update includes land use policies that would help to ensure resources are consumed in a sustainable manner.

> **LUCI Policy 4.1:** Encourage mixed-use projects (including residential/commercial/office and live/work developments) in designated areas, such as close to Sprinter stations; along public transportation corridors; in the Downtown Vista Specific Plan; in certain Opportunity Areas; and near jobs, schools, parks, and recreational facilities.
>
> **LUCI Policy 4.2:** Locate neighborhood-serving uses where residents can conveniently walk, ride bicycles, or take transit.
>
> **LUCI Policy 4.3:** Ensure that new and redeveloped projects are designed to improve pedestrian and transit connections, and connections to trail and bicycle networks.

LUCI Policy 4.4: Encourage new and redeveloped projects to incorporate facilities that support bicycle use, such as bike racks, lockers, and/or showers, to the extent possible and appropriate.

LUCI Policy 4.8: Develop and provide incentives proportionate to the level of sustainability for projects that utilize sustainable and green building techniques/installations, such as reduction or waiver of fees and/or priority building permit processing.

LUCI Policy 5.1: Facilitate revitalization of underutilized commercial properties, districts, and corridors through promotion of compact and sustainable development patterns that allow flexibility to meet local needs and respond to market demands.

CE Policy 9.1: Implement distinctive treatments, such as water-wise landscaping, hardscape, signage, and public art, for gateways at all entry points into Vista, along key corridors, at focal intersections, semi-rural roads, and at public entries to important cultural and historic sites.

RCS Policy 4.3: Require the incorporation of Low Impact Development (LID) techniques in new commercial and industrial development, and residential development of five or more dwelling units, and for major renovations that exceed a certain dollar amount (such as the amount considered an unreasonable hardship for disabled access) to manage stormwater, reduce runoff and pollution, and assist in maintaining or restoring the natural hydrology of the site. Examples of LID techniques include, but are not limited to the following:

a. Use permeable paving or pavers for sidewalks and parking areas instead of impermeable material, such as concrete and asphalt.

b. Incorporate bioretention facilities, such as cells (small-scale shallow vegetated depressions), bioswales, (linear bioretention features that may mimic natural stream channels), tree box filters (stand-alone or connected mini-bioretention areas that are installed beneath trees), and other bioretention features in site design for development projects and subdivisions.

c. Utilize rain barrels and cisterns to manage rooftop runoff and provide water for irrigating lawns and gardens.

d. Install street trees in stand-alone or connected tree box filters.

RCS Policy 4.4: Encourage the use of LID techniques through public outreach and education by installing demonstration projects at City facilities and by incorporating LID and other green technologies into public infrastructure projects.

RCS Policy 13.2: Partner with energy providers and community services agencies to offer grants to low-income homeowners to encourage energy retrofits for existing residential development, including heating, ventilation, air conditioning, lighting, water heating equipment, insulation, and weatherization energy efficiency projects.

RCS Policy 13.4: Promote voluntary energy retrofits for existing commercial and industrial/business park uses, and require major renovations that exceed a certain dollar amount (such as the amount considered an unreasonable hardship for disabled access) to meet a prescriptive list of energy efficiency requirements.

In addition, future development would be required to meet all applicable laws regarding the use of resources such as CCR Title 24, California Energy Efficiency Standards for Residential and Nonresidential Buildings, as discussed in Section 4.4, "Climate Change." Although the above-mentioned resources would be irreversibly committed over the approximate 20-year life of the GP Update, compliance with its policies, mitigation measures identified in Sections 4.1 through 4.12 of

this PEIR, and all applicable laws regarding the use of resources would reduce the significant irreversible changes associated with implementation of the GP Update.

Finally, irreversible environmental damage from accident conditions associated with projects developed subsequent to the GP Update is not anticipated to occur. As further detailed in Section 4.6, "Hazards and Hazardous Materials," implementation of the GP Update would allow for the development of land uses, such as commercial and industrial facilities, permitted to use, store, and/or transport hazardous materials and wastes in the city. In the State of California, the storage and use of hazardous substances is strictly regulated and enforced by various local, regional, state, and federal agencies, as noted in Section 4.6, "Hazards and Hazardous Materials." Additionally, goals and policies identified in the GP Update would further regulate the storage, use, and disposal of hazardous materials in the city:

- **PSFS Goal 6** would provide for the safe use and disposal of hazardous materials and wastes to protect life and property from exposure.
- **PSFS Policy 6.1** would require Hazardous Materials Business Plans according to Chapter 6.95 of the Health and Safety Code (Section 25500).
- **PSFS Policy 6.2** would ensure the enforcement of provisions under the zoning ordinance regulating the location of facilities that use, produce, or store hazardous materials or wastes.

Enforcement of the existing regulations and proposed policies would reduce the significant irreversible changes related to environmental accidents.

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Chapter 9

List of Preparers and Agencies Consulted

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California Emergency Management Agency

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City of Oceanside

City of San Marcos

County of San Diego

Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC)

EDCO Waste and Recycling Services

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Public Utilities Commission

Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB)

San Diego County Library System (SDCLS)

San Diego County Sherriff's Department

San Diego Gas and Electric (SDG&E)

San Luis Rey Band of Mission Indians

State of California, California Department of Transportation, District 11

State of California, Native American Heritage Commission

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)

Vista Fire Department

Vista Irrigation District

Vista Unified School District

Water Resources Control Board

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Chapter 10

References

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References

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