

## 5 ALTERNATIVES

The proposed Project is described and analyzed in Chapter 4 of this EIR with an emphasis on potentially significant impacts and recommended mitigation measures to avoid those impacts. The State CEQA Guidelines require the description and comparative analysis of a range of alternatives to the proposed Project that could feasibly attain the objectives of the Project, while avoiding potential impacts.

The following discussion is intended to inform the public and decision makers of the feasible alternatives that consider mitigation measures recommended in this EIR. Three alternatives are discussed below.

CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(e) requires consideration of a “No Project Alternative” in every EIR. In most project EIRs, the No Project Alternative is assumed to be one in which no new development would take place on the Project site. Such an alternative is considered as the No Project Alternative in this EIR. It is possible that the Project site would be developed as residential development with fewer residential units than the proposed Project to avoid potential environmental impacts. This alternative is considered as the Mitigated Project Alternative. Lastly, it could be reasonably expected that without the proposed Project, the Project site would be developed as office development, which is allowed under its existing zoning. Such an alternative is considered as the Office Development Alternative.

CEQA Guidelines also require that the environmentally superior alternative be designated. If the alternative with the least environmental impact is the No Project Alternative, then the EIR must also designate the next most environmentally superior alternative.

The three alternatives are as follows:

- ◆ **No Project Alternative.** Under the No Project Alternative, the proposed Project would not occur, and the site would remain in its existing condition. The Project site would remain with its existing General Plan land use designation and zoning. This alternative provides a general discussion of what would reasonably be expected to occur on the Project

site in the foreseeable future if the proposed Project is not approved and no new development were to occur.

- ◆ **Mitigated Project Alternative.** This alternative describes a revised Project designed to avoid the significant impacts associated with the proposed Project that are evaluated in Chapter 4 of this EIR. Figure 5-1 shows the Project site plan, revised to illustrate the Mitigated Project Alternative. Under this alternative, there would be no development except roadways within the ridgeline setback area and along the creek and its riparian area. The oak woodland area would remain unchanged. This alternative proposes six two- or three-story residential buildings with 153 dwelling units. The five, three-story buildings would be built at the same location as Buildings H, I, J, K, and L of the proposed Project. Building A, located in the southwest corner of the site, would be relocated on the site or redesigned to avoid blockage of ridgelines. Similar to the proposed Project, a one-story leasing office would be built approximately 240 feet northeast of the main entrance on Pleasant Hill Road. The parking areas adjacent to Buildings A, H, I, J, K, and L, would be retained. Parking areas adjacent to Buildings B, C, D, E, F, G, M, and N would not be developed. Portions of the parking area near Buildings L and A that are within the ridgeline setback would not be developed. Under the Mitigated Project Alternative, to avoid some of the traffic and transportation impacts of the proposed Project, the west proposed Project driveway on Deer Hill Road would be relocated by at least 100 feet to the west of the proposed location and adequate turning radii for emergency response vehicles would be provided on-site.
- ◆ **Office Development Alternative.** Under this alternative, the proposed Project would be revised to propose office development on the site. Similar to the Mitigated Project Alternative, this alternative would avoid the impacts associated to ridgeline views and sensitive biological resources. Pursuant to Administrative/Professional Office (APO) district regulations, four three-story office buildings would be developed on the site, with a total net square footage of 90,000. These buildings would be located in the areas where Buildings H through L are located on the



proposed site plan. Consistent with City's Hillside Development Ordinance, no development or parking would occur within the ridgeline setback, except a driveway, which would pass through the setback area. No development would occur along the riparian area where the proposed Project would develop Buildings M and N and associated parking lots. The area where Building A on the Project site is located would be developed as a surface parking lot. This alternative would provide a total of 390 surface parking spaces. The Office Development Alternative would not include the leasing office included in the proposed Project. Under the Office Development Alternative, to avoid some of the traffic and transportation impacts of the proposed Project, the west proposed Project driveway on Deer Hill Road would be relocated by at least 100 feet to the west of the proposed location and adequate turning radii for emergency response vehicles would be provided on-site.

#### *A. Alternatives Considered but Not Evaluated*

The following alternative to the proposed Project was considered, but not carried through to evaluation in this Draft EIR.

##### **Off-Site Alternative**

The City considered an off-site alternative to the proposed Project under which the proposed Project would be developed on a 63-acre parcel (APN 252-050-015) in the west end of downtown Lafayette. The parcel is located on the south side of Mount Diablo Boulevard, between Acalanes Road and the Lafayette Reservoir Recreation Area. Since there are no other sites in the vicinity of downtown Lafayette that are comparable in size to the proposed Project site, this 63-acre site was considered to be the most suitable off-site alternative location. An assisted living facility was proposed on this site in 2004, but it was withdrawn, in part, due to public opposition.

Under this alternative, the 63-acre site would be developed as residential multi-family development. However, this site has a General Plan land use design-

nation of Rural Residential-10, which allows a maximum density of 1 dwelling unit per 10 acres. Therefore, a maximum of 6 units would be permitted.<sup>1</sup> To build approximately 315 residential units, this alternative would require a General Plan amendment from Rural Residential-10 to APO or Multi-Family Residential. This alternative is not evaluated in this EIR because development of the proposed Project on this site would be inconsistent with the General Plan.

### *B. Comparison of Alternatives*

Table 5-1 presents a comparative summary of the alternatives considered in this analysis. In Table 5-1, the use of the phrase “substantial improvement” compared to the proposed Project reflects a determination that an alternative would avoid or reduce a significant and unavoidable impact. The use of the phrase “slight improvement” reflects a determination that an alternative would lessen the severity of a significant impact that could be mitigated to a less-than-significant level under the proposed Project. The basis for the determinations presented in the table is presented in the next section of this chapter, where each of the topics listed is evaluated for each alternative.

### *C. No Project Alternative*

Under the No Project Alternative, the Project site would remain in its existing use

#### **1. Principal Characteristics**

This alternative assumes that the site would remain in its existing condition and none of the proposed improvements would be implemented. No new structures would be built on the Project site. The Project site would remain

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<sup>1</sup> The estimate of 6 units is based solely on a mathematical calculation (63 acres / 10 units per acre = 6.3 units) and does not take into account site topography, setbacks, circulation requirements, or other site constraints.

TABLE 5-1 COMPARISON OF PROJECT ALTERNATIVES

Topic	No Project Alternative	Mitigated Project Alternative	Office Development Alternative
Aesthetics and Visual Resources	++	+	+
Air Quality	++	+	+
Biological Resources	++	++	++
Cultural and Historic Resources	+	+	+
Geology, Soils, and Seismicity	+	+	+
Greenhouse Gas Emissions	+	+	+
Hazards and Hazardous Materials	+	=	=
Hydrology and Water Quality	+	+	+
Land Use and Planning	++	++	++
Noise	+	+	+
Population and Housing	=	=	=
Public Services	+	+	+
Transportation and Traffic	++	++	-
Utilities and Service Systems	+	=	=
++	Substantial improvement compared to the proposed Project.		
+	Slight improvement compared to the proposed Project.		
=	Similar to the proposed Project.		
-	Slight deterioration compared to the proposed Project.		
--	Substantial deterioration compared to the proposed Project.		

with its existing General Plan land use designation and zoning. The existing buildings on the Project site would remain and could be improved over time and leased, at the discretion of the property owner.

## 2. Impact Discussion

The No Project Alternative would have the following impacts relative to the proposed Project:

### a. Aesthetics and Visual Resources

The proposed Project would result in four significant and unavoidable impacts, associated with blocking views of ridgelines, degrading the existing visual character, and introducing new sources of light and glare. The proposed Project would result in significant but mitigable impacts associated with glare from photovoltaic panels. Under the No Project Alternative, the Project site would remain in its existing state. The Project site would maintain its appearance as a largely undeveloped, grassy site. No new structures would be developed that would block views to ridgelines, and no new lighting or sources of glare would be introduced to the site. Therefore, the No Project Alternative would avoid the significant and unavoidable impacts associated with the Project, and this alternative would be a *substantial improvement* over the proposed Project.

### b. Air Quality

The proposed Project would not conflict with the 2010 Bay Area Clean Air Plan, but would result in significant but mitigable and significant and unavoidable impacts related to construction emissions. In addition, the Project would pose a risk to on-site receptors (residents) due to average annual PM<sub>2.5</sub> concentrations that would exceed the BAAQMD significance threshold. Other impacts associated with community risks and hazards, odors, carbon monoxide hotspots, and operational emissions would be less than significant following mitigation. Under the No Project Alternative, there would be no construction or operation of the proposed Project that would result in impacts to air quality. Therefore, the No Project Alternative would avoid the significant but mitigable and significant unavoidable impacts associated with the Project, and this alternative would be a *substantial improvement* over the proposed Project.

c. Biological Resources

The proposed Project would result in significant and unavoidable impacts associated with the fill of on-site creek channel, the loss of native trees and sensitive natural communities, and the conflicts with relevant plans and ordinances. The proposed Project would result in significant but mitigable impacts to special-status plant and animal species, raptors and other migratory birds, roosting bats, and movement corridors. The No Project Alternative would not result in any disturbance to biological resources on the Project site or require off-site mitigation. Therefore, the No Project Alternative would avoid all of the significant impacts of the Project. Neither the No Project Alternative nor the proposed Project would conflict with a habitat conservation plan. Overall, the No Project Alternative would be considered a *substantial improvement* in relation to the proposed Project.

d. Cultural Resources

Under the proposed Project, project-related ground-disturbing activities could disturb unidentified archaeological or paleontological resources, or human remains. However, as the Project site was previously quarried and graded for previous uses, the likelihood of unearthing as-yet-undiscovered resources or remains is minimal with development of the proposed Project. Under the No Project Alternative, no ground-disturbing activities would occur. Therefore, this alternative would not have the potential to damage or destroy known and unknown archaeological resources or unknown paleontological resources and human remains. Overall, the No Project Alternative represents a *slight improvement* in relation to the proposed Project.

e. Geology, Soils, and Seismicity

The proposed Project would result in significant impacts associated with landslides, soil erosion, liquefaction, lateral spreading, and expansion of soils. These impacts would be mitigated to less-than-significant levels. Additionally, given that the Project site is served by the Contra Costa County Sanitary District and its wastewater facilities, no septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems would be required to serve new development. Under the No Project Alternative, the site would remain in its existing state. Therefore, no



new structures or people would be exposed to geologic or seismic hazards. As under the proposed Project, no septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems would be required. Overall, the No Project Alternative would be considered a *slight improvement* in relation to the proposed Project.

f. Greenhouse Gas Emissions

The proposed Project would result in a significant greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions impact, due primarily to GHG emissions from the relatively high number of vehicle miles traveled (VMT). The Project would not result in an impact due to construction emissions or conflict with GHG reduction plans. Under the No Project Alternative, the Project site would remain in its existing state. No new structures would be built on the site, and no housing units, residents, or workers would be added to the site. Therefore, the significant impact associated with transportation emissions would be avoided. Overall, the No Project Alternative would be considered a *slight improvement* in relation to the proposed Project.

g. Hazards and Hazardous Materials

The proposed Project would result in significant but mitigable impacts from hazards and hazardous materials due to the demolition of existing buildings, which may release asbestos-containing materials (ACMs) or lead-based paints (LBPs) into the environment. Project impacts associated with the transport, handling, use, and disposal of hazardous materials would be considered less than significant. In addition, because the Project site is not located within two miles of an airport, airstrip, or airport land use plan, the Project would not be exposed to airport hazard impacts. Wildland fire hazards and impacts on Acalanes High School from emissions or hazardous materials accidents would be less than significant. Finally, the Project would not impair implementation of or physically interfere with the City of Lafayette's Emergency Operations Plan. Similarly, the No Project Alternative would not involve hazardous materials, be located in proximity to an airport, result in wildland fire hazards, or impair implementation of the Emergency Operations Plan. However, under the No Project Alternative the existing structures on the Project site would not be demolished and therefore would not pose the risk of

releasing hazardous materials. Overall, the No Project Alternative would be considered a *slight improvement* in relation to the proposed Project.

h. Hydrology and Water Quality

The proposed Project would increase the impervious surface on the site and would result in significant but mitigable impacts to the existing drainage pattern of the site due to an increase in surface runoff. The Project site is not located in a significant groundwater basin and therefore no impact to a groundwater table or aquifer is expected. The construction of the Project would not expose people or structures to risks associated with any flooding and inundation by seiche and tsunamis. However, as discussed in Chapter 4.5, Geology, Soils, and Seismicity, of this EIR, because the Project site is located on a hillside that is susceptible to landslides, there is a potential for mudflows, which would be a less-than-significant impact following mitigation.

In comparison, the No Project Alternative would present no change to the existing hydrological or water quality conditions of the site. The No Project Alternative would not alter existing drainage patterns or increase surface runoff rates, and no new structures or people would be exposed to impacts associated with mudflows. Overall, the No Project Alternative would be considered a *slight improvement* in relation to the proposed Project.

i. Land Use and Planning

The proposed Project would not result in land use conflicts or conflicts with a habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan. However, the Project would be inconsistent with General Plan policies associated with hillside development and cluster development and the Hillside Development Permit requirements set forth by the City's Municipal Code. Impacts associated with policy or regulation inconsistencies would be significant and unavoidable. The No Project Alternative would also not create land use conflicts or conflicts with habitat plans, and would avoid the significant and unavoidable impacts associated with policy inconsistencies. Therefore, the No Project Alternative would be a *substantial improvement* over the proposed Project.

j. Noise

Under the proposed Project, less-than-significant impacts related to noise emissions, excessive groundborne noise levels, and a permanent or temporary increase in ambient noise levels would occur after mitigation. The primary source of noise emissions would be construction activities and traffic generated by the Project. In comparison, the No Project Alternative would not involve any construction activities or operation of the proposed Project, and therefore would not generate noise emissions. As a result, this alternative would be a *slight improvement* over the proposed Project.

k. Population and Housing

The proposed Project would create 315 new residential units in the city but the estimated population generated as a result of the Project would not exceed local or regional growth projections. Moreover, given that the existing housing unit on the Project site is vacant, no impacts associated with displacement of substantial numbers of existing housing and people would occur. In comparison, the No Project Alternative would not result in a change to population or housing, and similarly would not displace any existing housing or people. Because neither the proposed Project nor the No Project Alternative would result in significant impacts to population or housing, the No Project Alternative would be *similar* to the proposed Project.

l. Public Services

The proposed Project would result in an increase in population and an increased demand for public services and recreation. Project impacts associated with police protection services would be potentially significant but mitigable. Impacts to other public services would be less than significant. Conversely, the No Project Alternative would not increase population or result in an increase in demand for public services or recreation. Therefore, the No Project Alternative would be considered a *slight improvement* when compared to the proposed Project.

m. Transportation and Traffic

The proposed Project would increase vehicle miles traveled (VMT) in the area and have two significant and unavoidable impacts on the level of service (LOS) for arterial segments and intersections in the vicinity of the Project site. Four significant and unavoidable cumulative impacts associated with left-turn queue length, speed reduction, or Delay Index would occur. Construction of the Project would also result in significant impacts associated with traffic hazards due to inadequate sight distance, construction traffic, parking conditions, and inadequate emergency access. Additionally, the Project would conflict with adopted policies or plans regarding transit, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities, as well as increase hazards with vehicles, pedestrians, and bicyclists. These impacts could be mitigated to less-than-significant levels. There would be no impact to air traffic. In comparison, the No Project Alternative does not propose any development that would alter vehicular, pedestrian, or bicycle traffic within the Project site or in its vicinity. Furthermore, this alternative would not affect demand for parking. Intersections, including those that currently operate at unacceptable levels, would continue to operate at existing levels. Overall, because the No Project Alternative would avoid the significant impacts of the proposed Project, the No Project Alternative would be considered a *substantial improvement* when compared to the proposed Project.

n. Utilities and Service Systems

The proposed Project would increase demand for utilities and service systems, but impacts would be less than significant. The No Project Alternative would not result in an increase in population, and therefore would not affect demand for water supply, wastewater services, solid waste disposal, or energy. Because the No Project Alternative would not have the same utility and service system demands as the proposed Project, the No Project Alternative would be considered a *slight improvement* compared to the proposed Project.

#### *D. Mitigated Project Alternative*

The Mitigated Project Alternative would reconfigure the locations and number of buildings on the Project site to avoid aesthetic, biological resource, and land use impacts.

##### **1. Principal Characteristics**

This alternative assumes six two- or three-story residential buildings and associated surface parking lots, located in close proximity to the southern perimeter of the Project site. The 400-foot ridgeline setback area would be maintained, as shown in Figure 5-1. The creek corridor would also be unchanged, except for construction of new paved driveways connecting the residential buildings on the site to the proposed Project driveways on Deer Hill Road and Pleasant Hill Road. The oak woodland area, containing the 200-year-old oak, would remain unchanged except for the removal of the buildings built around the trunk. Building A, located in the southwest corner of the site, would be relocated or designed to avoid blockage of views of Lafayette Ridge from Mount Diablo Boulevard. The five, three-story buildings would be built at the same location as Buildings H, I, J, K, and L of the proposed Project. Overall, the number of residential units would be reduced from 315 units to 153 units, generating up to 320 residents on the site.<sup>2</sup> The parking areas adjacent to Buildings A, H, I, J, K, and L, would be retained, except portions of the parking area near Buildings A and L that are within the ridgeline setback. Parking areas adjacent to Buildings B, C, D, E, F, G, M, and N would not be developed. Similar to the proposed Project, a one-story leasing office would be built 240 feet northeast of the main entrance on Pleasant Hill Road. It is assumed that the on-site amenities – including a clubhouse with fitness facilities, theatre, pool, meeting rooms, men’s and women’s showers, and game room – would be retained through a re-designed site plan.

Under the Mitigated Project Alternative, the west Project driveway on Deer Hill Road would be relocated by 100 feet to the west to mitigate the sight line

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<sup>2</sup> Based on the average household size of renter-occupied units of 2.09 persons per the United States Census Bureau, Census 2010 for Lafayette.

hazard impact identified in Chapter 4.13, Transportation and Traffic. The site plan would be amended to provide adequate turning radii for emergency response vehicles, and all Project driveways would be amended to provide adequate turning radii for large trucks. This alternative would include the configuration for southbound Pleasant Hill Road recommended in Mitigation Measures TRAF-17B, TRAF-19, TRAF-20, TRAF-21, and TRAF-22 in Chapter 4.13, Transportation and Traffic, to avoid significant impacts associated with the design of pedestrian facilities, conflicts between vehicular traffic and bicycle and pedestrian facilities, and the elimination of parking and loading spaces. Consistent with these mitigation measures, under this alternative southbound Pleasant Hill Road would be widened along the Project frontage to provide a Class II bike lane, a curb loading and parking lane, and the existing traffic lanes. This configuration would maintain the existing curb loading and parking lane, except for a segment extending up to 100 feet north from the Project driveway, where the roadway would be widened to accommodate a right-turn lane along with the bike lane. The curb segment between Deer Hill Road and the right-turn lane would be designated as a passenger loading zone. On the west side of Pleasant Hill Road along the Project site frontage, a new shared path would be constructed for bicycles and pedestrians. This alternative would provide an appropriate route on the Project site for a bike path alignment that would intersect the driveway approximately 50 feet or more from Pleasant Hill Road. In addition, under this alternative the Project applicant would coordinate with the City and Caltrans to ensure that site improvements adjacent to the Caltrans State Highway 24 right-of-way would not preclude construction of a Class I bicycle path, and the Project applicant would dedicate additional right-of-way as needed to ensure the feasibility of constructing such a path.

The Mitigated Project Alternative would not preclude the implementation of the following features included in the proposed Project objectives: reintroducing diverse species native to Contra Costa County, stabilizing slopes, mitigating on-site drainage disturbances, and transplanting on-site existing oak trees.

## 2. Impact Discussion

Mitigated Project Alternative would have the following impacts relative to the proposed Project:

### a. Aesthetics and Visual Resources

The proposed Project would result in four significant and unavoidable impacts, associated with blocking views of ridgelines, degrading the existing visual character, and introducing new sources of light and glare. The proposed Project would result in significant but mitigable impacts associated with glare from photovoltaic panels. Under the Mitigated Project Alternative, there would be new structures on the site, but the development would not block the views to ridgelines. As described above, Building A would be shifted or redesigned to avoid blocking the views. New lighting or sources of glare, including buildings, photovoltaic panels, and parked cars, would be introduced to the site. Although this alternative would involve a lesser amount of development than the proposed Project, because the site is currently undeveloped, like the proposed Project this alternative would result in a significant and unavoidable lighting and glare impact. This alternative would not result in significant impacts associated with visual character or scenic resources. Overall, this alternative would be a *slight improvement* over the proposed Project.

### b. Air Quality

The proposed Project would not conflict with the 2010 Bay Area Clean Air Plan, but would result in significant but mitigable and significant and unavoidable impacts related to construction emissions. In addition, the Project would pose a risk to on-site receptors (residents) due to average annual PM<sub>2.5</sub> concentrations that would exceed the BAAQMD significance threshold. Other impacts associated with community risks and hazards, odors, carbon monoxide hotspots, and operational emissions would be less than significant following mitigation. Under the Mitigated Project Alternative, air quality impacts would occur at a lower level than those of the proposed Project due to a reduced amount of development on the site. The risk to on-site receptors due to average annual PM<sub>2.5</sub> concentrations that would exceed the BAAQMD

significance threshold would remain. Construction activities and the number of new traffic trips would be reduced. The “no build areas” indicated in Figure 5-1 would remain largely undeveloped, with the exception of the on-site roadway. Moreover, this alternative would generate less pollutant emissions associated with long-term operation of a residential development. Both the proposed Project and this alternative would be consistent with the 2010 Bay Area Clean Air Plan. All mitigation measures that are applicable to the proposed Project would also be applied to this alternative, as needed. Overall, because the vehicle air emissions and construction-related air emissions would be lower than the proposed Project, this alternative would be a *slight improvement* over the proposed Project.

c. Biological Resources

The proposed Project would result in significant and unavoidable impacts associated with the fill of on-site creek channel, the loss of native trees and sensitive natural communities, and the conflicts with relevant plans and ordinances. The proposed Project would result in significant but mitigable impacts to special-status plant and animal species, raptors and other migratory birds, roosting bats, and movement corridors. In comparison, the Mitigated Project Alternative would largely avoid removing trees and disturbing riparian habitats and native grasslands on the site. Some areas of native grassland and native trees would be disturbed by on-site buildings, driveways, and parking areas. Overall, the Mitigated Project Alternative would substantially reduce the significant impacts of the Project. Neither the Mitigated Project Alternative nor the proposed Project would conflict with a habitat conservation plan. Overall, the Mitigated Project Alternative would be considered a *substantial improvement* in relation to the proposed Project.

d. Cultural Resources

Under the proposed Project, project-related ground-disturbing activities could disturb unidentified archaeological or paleontological resources, or human remains. However, as the Project site was previously quarried and graded for previous uses, the likelihood of unearthing as-yet-undiscovered resources or remains is minimal with development of the proposed Project. Under the



Mitigated Project Alternative, ground-disturbing activities, with the exception of the construction of the Project driveway, would not occur near the creek where unidentified archaeological or paleontological resources or human remains would be more likely to be found. Therefore, this alternative would have a reduced potential to damage or destroy known and unknown archaeological resources or unknown paleontological resources and human remains. Overall, the Mitigated Project Alternative represents a *slight improvement* in relation to the proposed Project.

e. Geology, Soils, and Seismicity

The proposed Project would result in significant impacts associated with landslides, soil erosion, liquefaction, lateral spreading, and expansion of soils. These impacts would be mitigated to less-than-significant levels. Additionally, given that the Project site is served by the Contra Costa County Sanitary District and its wastewater facilities, no septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems would be required to serve new development. Under the Mitigated Project Alternative, the reduced number of dwelling units would result in reduced exposure of residents and property to geologic or seismic hazards. This alternative is otherwise considered the same as the proposed Project, and all the impacts identified under the proposed Project could be similarly mitigated under this alternative. Overall, the Mitigated Project Alternative would be considered a *slight improvement* in relation to the proposed Project.

f. Greenhouse Gas Emissions

The proposed Project would result in a significant but mitigable GHG emissions impact, due primarily to GHG emissions from the relatively high number of VMT. GHG emissions associated with construction period activities of the proposed Project were found to be less than significant. In addition, the proposed Project was found not to conflict with applicable GHG reduction plans. Under the Mitigated Project Alternative, the fewer number of housing units would result in lower VMT compared to the proposed Project. The “no build areas” indicated in Figure 5-1 would remain largely undeveloped, with the exception of the on-site roadway, and therefore the Mitigated

Project Alternative would result in fewer emissions associated with construction and construction vehicle trips. Additionally, given the larger size of the proposed Project, operational GHG emissions would be higher compared to the Mitigated Project Alternative. Overall, the Mitigated Project Alternative would be considered a *slight improvement* in relation to the proposed Project.

g. Hazards and Hazardous Materials

The proposed Project would result in significant but mitigable impacts from hazards and hazardous materials due to the demolition of existing buildings, which may release ACMs or LBPs into the environment. Project impacts associated with hazardous materials and wildland fire hazards would be considered less than significant. In addition, the Project would not be exposed to airport hazard impacts. Finally, the Project would not impair implementation of the City of Lafayette's Emergency Operations Plan. Similarly, under the Mitigated Project Alternative, the existing structures on the Project site would be demolished and pose the risk of releasing hazardous materials. This alternative would not involve use of hazardous materials, other than those associated with construction, maintenance, and typical household chemicals. The alternative would also not be located in proximity to an airport, result in wildland fire hazards, or impair implementation of the Emergency Operations Plan. Because all potential impacts under the proposed Project and this alternative could be mitigated to less than significant levels, the Mitigated Project Alternative would be considered *similar* in relation to the proposed Project.

h. Hydrology and Water Quality

The proposed Project would result in significant but mitigable impacts to the existing drainage pattern of the site due to an increase in surface runoff. The proposed Project would not result in impacts to a groundwater table or aquifer nor would it expose people or structures to risks associated with any flooding and inundation by seiche and tsunamis. However, because the Project site is located on a hillside that is susceptible to landslides, there is potential for mudflows, which would be a less-than-significant impact following mitigation.

In comparison, the Mitigated Project Alternative would result in less impervious surface on the site than the Project because less of the site would be developed. Consequently, impacts associated with altering existing drainage patterns or increasing surface runoff rates would be reduced. Under this alternative, there would be fewer structures or people exposed to impacts associated with mudflows. Overall, the Mitigated Project Alternative would be considered a *slight improvement* in relation to the proposed Project.

i. Land Use and Planning

Neither the proposed Project nor the Mitigated Project Alternative would result in land use conflicts or conflicts with a habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan. However, the Project would be inconsistent with General Plan policies associated with hillside development and cluster development and the Hillside Development Permit requirements set forth by the City's Municipal Code. Impacts associated with policy or regulation inconsistencies would be significant and unavoidable. The Mitigated Project Alternative would also not create land use conflicts or conflicts with habitat plans and would avoid development within the ridgeline setback, consistent with Chapter 6-20 of the Lafayette Municipal Code. In addition, the Mitigated Project Alternative would avoid the other significant and unavoidable impacts associated with policy or regulation inconsistencies because buildings would be clustered to preserve open space areas. Overall, the Mitigated Project Alternative would be a *substantial improvement* over the proposed Project.

j. Noise

Under the proposed Project, less-than-significant impacts related to exposure of people to noise in excess of City standards, excessive groundborne noise levels, and a permanent or temporary increase in ambient noise levels would occur after mitigation. The primary source of noise emissions would be construction activities and traffic generated by the Project. In comparison, with fewer units, construction and operational noise impacts would be lower compared to the proposed Project. All mitigation measures that are applicable to the proposed Project would also be applied to this alternative. Because the

Mitigated Project Alternative would generate less noise than the Project, this alternative would be a *slight improvement*.

k. Population and Housing

The proposed Project would create 315 new residential units in the city, but the estimated population generated as a result of the Project would not exceed local or regional growth projections. Moreover, given that the existing housing unit on the Project site is vacant, no impacts associated with displacement of substantial numbers of existing housing and people would occur.

The Mitigated Project Alternative would result in 153 housing units, with an estimated population of up to 320 residents as a result of the reduced number of housing units. Therefore, the Mitigated Project Alternative would also be within local and regional growth projections. This alternative would also not displace any existing housing or people. Because neither the proposed Project nor the Mitigated Project Alternative would result in significant impacts to population or housing, the Mitigated Project Alternative would be *similar* to the proposed Project.

l. Public Services

The proposed Project would result in an increase in population and demand for public services and recreation. Project impacts associated with police protection services would be potentially significant but mitigable. Impacts to other public services would be less than significant. Similarly, the Mitigated Project Alternative would increase population and result in an increase in demand for public services or recreation. However, the increase in population and demand would be less than the proposed Project, and the same mitigation measures would be applicable. Therefore, the Mitigated Project Alternative would be considered a *slight improvement* when compared to the proposed Project.

m. Transportation and Traffic

The proposed Project would increase VMT in the area and have significant and unavoidable impacts on the level of service for arterial segments and in-

tersections in the vicinity of the Project site under Existing plus Project conditions. Four significant and unavoidable cumulative impacts associated with left-turn queue length, speed reduction, or Delay Index would occur. Construction of the Project would also result in significant impacts associated with traffic hazards due to inadequate sight distance, construction traffic, parking conditions, and inadequate emergency access. Additionally, the Project would conflict with adopted policies or plans regarding transit, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities, as well as increase hazards with vehicles, pedestrians, and bicyclists. These impacts could be mitigated to less-than-significant levels. There would be no impact to air traffic. Under the Mitigated Project Alternative, because of the reduction in dwelling units, there would be a reduction in daily vehicle trips, as shown in Table 5-2. Consequently, this alternative would have a reduced impact on the affected arterial segments and intersections. Although traffic levels would be reduced, many of the same impacts would still be expected to occur under this alternative. Overall, there would be the same potential for impacts associated with safety hazards, bicycle and pedestrian circulation, and transit facilities under this alternative, and the same mitigation measures would apply. However, under the Mitigated Project Alternative the west Project driveway on Deer Hill Road would be relocated to provide adequate sight distance for vehicles traveling westbound on Deer Hill Road, and adequate turning radii would be provided for emergency response vehicles and large trucks at Project driveways and on site. In addition, under this alternative southbound Pleasant Hill Road would be reconfigured to avoid significant impacts associated with the design of pedestrian facilities, conflicts between vehicular traffic and bicycle and pedestrian facilities, and the elimination of parking and loading spaces.

The following significant impacts of the proposed Project would be expected to also occur under the Mitigated Project Alternative:

- ◆ Impact TRAF-1: At the Deer Hill Road – Stanley Boulevard/Pleasant Hill Road intersection, the Project’s significant and unavoidable impact on existing AM peak-hour traffic delay would be expected to also occur under the Mitigated Project Alternative. However, the increase in

TABLE 5-2 PROPOSED PROJECT VS. ALTERNATIVE TRIP GENERATION

Land Use (ITE Code) <sup>a</sup>	Size	Daily Trips	AM Peak Hour			School PM Dismissal <sup>b</sup>				PM Peak Hour				
			In:Out %	In	Out	Total Trips	In:Out %	In	Out	Total Trips	In	Out	Total Trips	
<b>Proposed Project<sup>c</sup></b>														
Apartments (220)	315 DU	2,032	20:80	32	126	158	48:52	71	77	148	65:35	124	67	191
<b>Mitigated Project Alternative<sup>d</sup></b>														
Apartments (220)	153 DU	1,050	20:80	16	63	79	48:52	37	40	77	65:35	66	36	102
<i>Difference from Proposed Project</i>		-982		-16	-63	-79		-34	-37	-71		-58	-31	-89
<b>Office Development Alternative<sup>e</sup></b>														
General Office Building (710)	112 KSF	1,456	88:12	181	24	205	41:59	25	36	61	17:83	35	169	204
<i>Difference from Proposed Project</i>		-576		149	-102	47		-46	-41	-87		-89	102	13

Notes: DU = dwelling units; KSF = 1,000 square feet

<sup>a</sup> Source of ITE Code is ITE Trip Generation, 8<sup>th</sup> Edition, Regression Equations

<sup>b</sup> School PM dismissal rate is the same proportion of the Daily Rate as that used in the *Lafayette Downtown Specific Plan Draft EIR* for residential land use, based on Urban Land Institute (ULI) published data and other available traffic studies.

<sup>c</sup> Trip generation for the proposed Project calculated based on total trips from regression equation divided by size:

- ◆ Daily: Total trips = 6.06 (DU) + 123.56
- ◆ AM Peak: Total trips = 0.49 (DU) + 3.73
- ◆ PM Peak: Total trips = 0.55 (DU) + 17.65

<sup>d</sup> Trip generation for the Mitigated Project Alternative calculated based on total trips from regression equation divided by size:

- ◆ Daily: Total trips = 6.06 (DU) + 123.56
- ◆ AM Peak: Total trips = 0.49 (DU) + 3.73
- ◆ PM Peak: Total trips = 0.55 (DU) + 17.65

<sup>e</sup> Trip generation for the Office Development Alternative calculated based on total trips from regression equation divided by size:

- ◆ Daily: Ln(Total trips) = 0.77 Ln(KSF) + 3.65
- ◆ AM Peak: Ln(Total trips) = 0.80 Ln(KSF) + 1.55
- ◆ PM Peak: Total trips = 1.12 (KSF) + 78.81

Source: TJKM, 2012.

average delay during the AM peak hour with the Mitigated Project Alternative would be close to the five-second threshold for a significant impact, compared to a nine-second delay increase under the proposed Project.

- ◆ Impacts TRAF-2 and TRAF-10: At the Deer Hill Road/Brown Avenue intersection, the Project's significant impact under Existing plus Project and Cumulative Year 2030 traffic delay during peak hours would also occur under the Mitigated Project Alternative.
- ◆ Impact TRAF-3: On northbound Pleasant Hill Road between the State Highway 24 westbound off-ramp and Acalanes Avenue under Existing plus Project conditions, the Project's significant and unavoidable impact on traffic safety during the PM peak hour would be expected to also occur under the Mitigated Project Alternative. However, the reduction in average speed during the PM peak hour with the Mitigated Project Alternative could be close to the 10 percent threshold for this significant impact, compared to a 17 percent speed reduction with the proposed Project.
- ◆ Impacts TRAF-4 and TRAF-5: The Project's significant impact to traffic safety on Deer Hill Road at new driveway locations proposed with both the Mitigated Project Alternative and the Project, which would be mitigated to a less-than-significant level by implementing specified design features and requirements, would be expected to also occur under the Mitigated Project Alternative. The exception would be the west driveway on Deer Hill Road, which would be located 100 feet to the west under the Mitigated Project Alternative.
- ◆ Impact TRAF-6: The Project's significant impact to emergency vehicle access because of the impacts on PM peak-hour traffic speeds for northbound Pleasant Hill Road, which would be mitigated to a less-than-significant level by installing advance detection for emergency vehicle preemption of traffic signals, would be expected to also occur under the Mitigated Project Alternative.

- ◆ Impact TRAF-8: The Project's significant impact on traffic delay and safety for school pedestrians and vehicle traffic during construction, which would be mitigated to a less-than-significant level by implementing a Construction Staging Plan, would be expected to also occur under the Mitigated Project Alternative.
- ◆ Impacts TRAF-12 and TRAF-13: On northbound Pleasant Hill Road at the driveway and at Deer Hill Road, the Project's significant and unavoidable impacts during peak hours under Cumulative Year 2030 conditions, which would result from left-turn queue lengths exceeding available storage lane capacities, would be expected to also occur under Mitigated Project Alternative. However, the peak 95<sup>th</sup>-percentile left-turn queue length at the proposed driveway with the Mitigated Project Alternative could be close to the proposed 100-foot storage lane length, compared to a peak estimated 95<sup>th</sup>-percentile left-turn queue length of 177 feet with the proposed Project.
- ◆ Impact TRAF-15: On Pleasant Hill Road, the Project's significant and unavoidable impact on the peak-hour peak direction Delay Index under Cumulative Year 2030 conditions would be expected to also occur under the Mitigated Project Alternative.
- ◆ Impacts TRAF-16 and TRAF-17: The Project's significant transit impacts because of increased parking demand at the Lafayette BART station and lack of a loading area for school bus service, which would be mitigated to less than significant by implementing shuttle service to the BART station and construction of bus stop pullouts, would be expected to also occur under the Mitigated Project Alternative.

The following impacts of the proposed Project would not be expected to occur under the Mitigated Project Alternative:

- ◆ Impact TRAF-6: On northbound Pleasant Hill Road, under Cumulative Year 2030 conditions, a significant emergency vehicle access impact caused by speed reduction with the proposed Project would be less than significant with the Mitigated Project Alternative.



- ◆ Impact TRAF-7: The Project's significant impact to emergency vehicle access because of the proposed Project's inadequate turning radii on-site would not occur under the Mitigated Project Alternative because the site plan would incorporate adequate turning radii.
- ◆ Impact TRAF-9: The Project's significant impact associated with large truck access at Project driveways would not occur under the Mitigated Project Alternative because the site plan would incorporate adequate turning radii at Project driveways.
- ◆ Impact TRAF-14: On northbound Pleasant Hill Road between the State Highway 24 westbound off-ramp and Acalanes Avenue, under Cumulative Year 2030 conditions, the Project's significant and unavoidable impact associated with weaving conditions would be less than significant under the Mitigated Project Alternative.
- ◆ Impacts TRAF-18B, TRAF-20, TRAF-21, TRAF-22, and TRAF-23: Significant impacts on existing and planned pedestrian and bicycle facilities along Pleasant Hill Road, which would be mitigated to a less-than-significant level by implementing specified design features and accommodation requirements for such facilities, would not occur under the Mitigated Project Alternative.

Because several significant impacts would be avoided and others impact would be reduced measurably, this alternative would be a *substantial improvement* over the proposed Project.

n. Utilities and Service Systems

The proposed Project would increase demand for utilities and service systems, but impacts would be less than significant. The Mitigated Project Alternative would also result in an increase in demand but, with 153 units, the demand would be less than half of the proposed Project. Therefore, demand for water supply, wastewater services, solid waste disposal, and energy would be reduced, and impacts would also be less than significant. Overall, the Mitigated Project Alternative would be *similar* to the proposed Project.

### *E. Office Development Alternative*

The Office Development Alternative would propose office uses on the Project site, consistent with the APO zoning district, and redesign the location and number of buildings to avoid aesthetic, biological resource, and land use impacts.

#### **1. Principal Characteristics**

The Office Development Alternative would be developed consistent with APO district regulations. Office uses are allowed without a land use permit in the APO district. This alternative assumes four three-story office buildings, with a total square footage of 112,000, and associated surface parking lots, which would provide a total of 390 parking spaces. Assuming that net square footage would be 80 percent of gross square footage, this alternative would include approximately 90,000 net square feet of office space. Assuming one employee per 200 square feet of office space, this alternative would generate approximately 450 jobs on the Project site.<sup>3</sup> Consistent with City's Hillside Development Ordinance, no development or parking would occur within the ridgeline setback, except a driveway, which would pass through the setback area.

The four office buildings would be located in the areas where Buildings H through L of the proposed Project are located. The ridgeline setback area and the creek corridor would remain in their existing condition except for construction of new paved driveways. The northwestern corner of the site, where Building A of the proposed Project would have been built, would be developed as a surface parking lot, and therefore avoid blockage of views of Lafayette Ridge from Mount Diablo Boulevard. No development would occur along the riparian area where the proposed Project would develop Buildings M and N and associated parking lots. The oak woodland area, containing the 200-year-old oak, would remain unchanged except for the removal of the buildings built around the trunk. The proposed improvements, such as

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<sup>3</sup> Employee generation rate is consistent with that used in the City of Lafayette Downtown Specific Plan Draft Environmental Impact Report, 2010.

off-site sidewalk installations, would be implemented. This alternative would not include the leasing office included in the proposed Project.

As under the Mitigated Project Alternative, under the Office Development Alternative the west proposed Project driveway on Deer Hill Road would be relocated by at least 100 feet to the west of the proposed location, the site plan would be amended to provide adequate turning radii for emergency response vehicles, and all Project driveways would be amended to provide adequate turning radii for large trucks. In addition, as under the Mitigated Project Alternative, the Office Development Alternative would include the configuration for southbound Pleasant Hill Road recommended in Mitigation Measures TRAF-17B, TRAF-19, TRAF-20, TRAF-21, and TRAF-22 in Chapter 4.13, Transportation and Traffic, to avoid significant impacts associated with the design of pedestrian facilities, conflicts between vehicular traffic and bicycle and pedestrian facilities, and the elimination of parking and loading spaces.

The Office Development Alternative would not preclude the implementation of the following features included in the proposed Project objectives: reintroducing diverse species native to Contra Costa County, stabilizing slopes, mitigating on-site drainage disturbances, and transplanting on-site existing oak trees.

## **2. Impact Discussion**

The Office Development Alternative would have the following impacts relative to the proposed Project:

### **a. Aesthetics and Visual Resources**

The proposed Project would result in four significant and unavoidable impacts, associated with blocking views of ridgelines, degrading the existing visual character, and introducing new sources of light and glare. The proposed Project would result in significant but mitigable impacts associated with glare from photovoltaic panels. As described above, under the Office Development Alternative, there would be no development in the ridgeline setback

area, and Building A would be replaced with a surface parking lot. Therefore, this alternative would not block the views to ridgelines. This alternative would not result in significant impacts associated with visual character or scenic resources. New lighting or sources of glare, including buildings, photovoltaic panels, and parked cars, would be introduced to the site. Although this alternative would involve a lesser amount of development and would be kept darker than the proposed Project when offices are empty after business hours, because the site is currently undeveloped and some lighting would remain on-site due for security purposes, this alternative would result in significant and unavoidable lighting and glare impacts as under the proposed Project. Overall, this alternative would be a *slight improvement* over the proposed Project.

b. Air Quality

The proposed Project would not conflict with the 2010 Bay Area Clean Air Plan, but would result in significant but mitigable and significant and unavoidable impacts related to construction emissions. In addition, the Project would pose a risk to on-site receptors (residents) due to average annual PM<sub>2.5</sub> concentrations that would exceed the BAAQMD significance threshold. Other impacts associated with community risks and hazards, odors, carbon monoxide hotspots, and operational emissions would be less than significant following mitigation. Under the Office Development Alternative, air quality impacts would occur at a lower level than under the proposed Project due to a reduced amount of development on the site. Because no residences would be constructed on-site, there would be no risk to on-site sensitive receptors. Construction activities would decrease due to the reduced amount of on-site development, and the office uses would generate fewer total daily vehicle trips than the proposed Project; as a result, emissions associated with VMT would be reduced. The “no build areas” indicated in Figure 5-1 would remain largely undeveloped, with the exception of the on-site roadway. Further, this alternative would generate less pollutant emissions associated with long-term operation of an office development. All mitigation measures that are applicable to the proposed Project would also be applied to this alternative. Therefore, this alternative would be a *slight improvement* over the proposed Project.

c. Biological Resources

The proposed Project would result in significant and unavoidable impacts associated with the fill of on-site creek channel, the loss of native trees and sensitive natural communities, and the conflicts with relevant plans and ordinances. The proposed Project would result in significant but mitigable impacts to special-status plant and animal species, raptors and other migratory birds, roosting bats, and movement corridors. In comparison, with a smaller development footprint, the Office Development Alternative would avoid disturbing the creek and woodland areas on the site. Some areas of native grassland and native trees would be disturbed by on-site buildings, driveways, and parking areas. Overall, the Office Development Alternative would substantially reduce the significant impacts of the Project. Neither the Office Development Alternative nor the proposed Project would conflict with a habitat conservation plan. Overall, the Office Development would be considered a *substantial improvement* in relation to the proposed Project.

d. Cultural Resources

Under the proposed Project, project-related ground-disturbing activities could disturb unidentified archaeological or paleontological resources, or human remains. However, as the Project site was previously quarried and graded for previous uses, the likelihood of unearthing as-yet-undiscovered resources or remains is minimal with development of the proposed Project. Under the Office Development Alternative, ground-disturbing activities, with the exception of the construction of the Project driveway, would not occur near the creek where unidentified archaeological or paleontological resources or human remains would be more likely to be found. Therefore, the potential to damage or destroy known and unknown archaeological resources or unknown paleontological resources and human remains would be slightly lower compared to the proposed Project. Overall, the Office Development Alternative represents a *slight improvement* in relation to the proposed Project.

e. Geology, Soils, and Seismicity

The proposed Project would result in significant but mitigable impacts associated with landslides, soil erosion, liquefaction, lateral spreading, and expan-

sion of soils. No septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems would be required to serve new development. Under the Office Development Alternative, there would be fewer people and structures on site exposed to geologic or seismic hazards. This alternative is otherwise considered the same as the proposed Project, and all the impacts identified under the proposed Project could be similarly mitigated under this alternative. Overall, the Office Development Alternative would be considered a *slight improvement* in relation to the proposed Project.

f. Greenhouse Gas Emissions

The proposed Project would result in a significant but mitigable GHG emissions impact, due primarily to GHG from the relatively high number of VMT. GHG emissions associated with construction period activities of the proposed Project were found to be less than significant. In addition, the proposed Project was found not to conflict with applicable GHG reduction plans. Under the Office Development Alternative, construction activities would decrease due to the reduced amount of on-site development, and the office uses would generate fewer total daily vehicle trips than the proposed Project; as a result, GHG emissions associated with VMT would be reduced. Similar to the Mitigated Project Alternative, the “no build areas” indicated in Figure 5-1 would remain largely undeveloped, with the exception of the on-site roadway, and therefore emissions associated with construction and operation of the Office Development Alternative would be lower. Additionally, given the larger size of the proposed Project, operational GHG emissions would be higher compared to the Office Development Alternative. Overall, the Office Development Alternative would be considered a *slight improvement* in relation to the proposed Project.

g. Hazards and Hazardous Materials

The proposed Project would result in significant but mitigable impacts from hazards and hazardous materials due to the demolition of existing buildings, which may release ACMs or LBPs into the environment. Project impacts associated with hazardous materials and wildland fire hazards would be considered less than significant. Similarly, under the Office Development Alter-

native, the existing structures on the Project site would be demolished and pose the risk of releasing hazardous materials. Otherwise, neither the Project nor this alternative would involve hazardous materials, be located in proximity to an airport, result in wildland fire hazards, or impair implementation of the Emergency Operations Plan. Overall, the Office Development Alternative would be considered *similar* in relation to the proposed Project.

h. Hydrology and Water Quality

The proposed Project would result in significant but mitigable impacts to the existing drainage pattern of the site due to an increase in surface runoff. The proposed Project would not result in impacts to a groundwater table nor would it expose people or structures to risks associated with any flooding and inundation by seiche and tsunamis. However, because the Project site is located on a hillside that is susceptible to landslides, there is potential for mudflows, which would be a less-than-significant impact following mitigation.

In comparison, the Office Development Alternative would result in less impervious surface on the site than the Project because less of the site would be developed. Consequently, impacts associated with altering existing drainage patterns or increasing surface runoff rates would be reduced. Additionally, under this alternative, there would be fewer structures or people exposed to impacts associated with mudflows. Overall, the Office Development Alternative would be considered a *slight improvement* in relation to the proposed Project.

i. Land Use and Planning

Neither the proposed Project nor the Office Development Alternative would result in land use conflicts or conflicts with a habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan. However, the proposed Project would be inconsistent with General Plan policies associated with hillside development and cluster development and the Hillside Development Permit requirements set forth by the City's Municipal Code. Impacts associated with policy or regulation inconsistencies would be significant and unavoidable. The Office Development Alternative would not include buildings in areas

that would substantially block scenic views to ridgelines, and preserve more of the Project site as undeveloped, and buildings would be clustered in one area of the Project site. Therefore, this alternative would avoid the significant and unavoidable impacts associated with policy or regulation inconsistencies, and the Office Development Alternative would be a *substantial improvement* to the proposed Project.

j. Noise

Under the proposed Project, noise impacts related to the exposure of people to noise in excess of City standards, excessive groundborne vibrations, and a permanent or temporary increase in ambient noise levels would be less than significant after mitigation. In comparison, the Office Development Alternative would reduce the area of development on the Project site, and therefore fewer people would be exposed to noise and vibration associated with construction or traffic. All mitigation measures that are applicable to the proposed Project would also be applied to this alternative. Therefore, this alternative would be a *slight improvement*.

k. Population and Housing

The proposed Project would create 315 new residential units in the city, but the estimated population generated as a result of the Project would not exceed local or regional growth projections. Moreover, given that the existing housing unit on the Project site is vacant, no impacts associated with displacement of substantial numbers of existing housing and people would occur.

The Office Development Alternative would not generate new residential units but would introduce new office development, and could generate approximately 450 new jobs on the Project site. It is possible that some of these jobs could bring new residents to Lafayette. However, it is assumed that the future employees currently reside in the greater East Bay and any indirect population growth would be substantially lower than the number of new residents under the proposed Project. Therefore, this growth would also be within the local or regional growth projections. Like the proposed Project, this alternative would not displace any existing housing or people. Because neither the



proposed Project nor the Office Development Alternative would result in significant impacts to population or housing, overall this alternative would be *similar* to the proposed Project.

l. Public Services

The proposed Project would result in an increase in demand for public services and recreation. Project impacts associated with police protection services would be potentially significant but mitigable. Impacts to other public services would be less than significant. In comparison, the Office Development Alternative would generate less population than the proposed Project, and therefore the increase in demand would be less. With a daytime population of 450 employees, the office buildings would also be expected to generate calls for fire and police services, although the demand would be lower than the proposed Project, with a resident population of 658. While the addition of new employees could indirectly result in new public school students due to the potential for employees to move to Lafayette, the number would be lower than the number of students that could be generated by the proposed Project, because employees would be dispersed, with some residing in Lafayette as well as other East Bay communities. Overall, the Office Development Alternative would be considered a *slight improvement* when compared to the proposed Project.

m. Transportation and Traffic

The proposed Project would increase VMT in the area and have two significant and unavoidable impacts on the level of service for arterial segments and intersections in the vicinity of the Project site under Existing plus Project conditions. Four significant and unavoidable cumulative impacts associated with left-turn queue length, speed reduction, or Delay Index would occur. Construction of the Project would also result in significant impacts associated with traffic hazards due to inadequate sight distance, construction traffic, parking conditions, and inadequate emergency access. Additionally, the proposed Project would conflict with adopted policies or plans regarding transit, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities, as well as increase hazards with vehicles, pe-

destrians, and bicyclists. These impacts could be mitigated to less-than-significant levels. There would be no impact to air traffic.

Under the Office Development Alternative, there would be a reduction in total daily vehicle trips in comparison to the proposed Project, as shown in Table 5-2. Office land uses have different trip generation characteristics than residential uses particularly concerning the relative proportions of entering and exiting traffic during peak commute hours. Overall, there would be the same potential for impacts associated with safety hazards, bicycle and pedestrian circulation, and transit facilities under this alternative, and the same mitigation measures would apply. However, under the Office Development Alternative the west Project driveway on Deer Hill Road would be relocated to provide adequate sight distance for vehicles traveling westbound on Deer Hill Road, and adequate turning radii would be provided for emergency response vehicles and large trucks at Project driveways and on site. In addition, under this alternative southbound Pleasant Hill Road would be reconfigured to avoid significant impacts associated with the design of pedestrian facilities, conflicts between vehicular traffic and bicycle and pedestrian facilities, and the elimination of parking and loading spaces.

The following significant impacts of the proposed Project would be expected to also occur under the Office Development Alternative:

- ◆ Impact TRAF-1: At the Deer Hill Road – Stanley Boulevard/Pleasant Hill Road intersection, the Project’s significant and unavoidable impact on existing AM peak-hour traffic delay would be expected to also occur under the Office Development Alternative. Additionally, under Cumulative Year 2030 conditions at this intersection, a significant and unavoidable impact on AM peak-hour traffic delay would occur under the Office Development Alternative, where the cumulative impact under the proposed Project would be less than significant.
- ◆ Impacts TRAF-2 and TRAF-10: At the Deer Hill Road/Brown Avenue intersection, the Project’s significant impact under Existing plus Project and Cumulative Year 2030 traffic delay during peak hours would also occur under the Office Development Alternative.

- ◆ Impact TRAF-3: On northbound Pleasant Hill Road between the State Highway 24 westbound off-ramp and Acalanes Avenue under Existing plus Project conditions, the Project's significant and unavoidable impact on traffic safety during the PM peak hour would instead occur during the AM peak hour under the Office Development Alternative.
- ◆ Impacts TRAF-4 and TRAF-5: The Project's significant impact to traffic safety on Deer Hill Road at new driveway locations, which would be mitigated to a less-than-significant level by implementing specified design features and requirements, would be expected to also occur under the Office Development Alternative. The exception would be the west driveway on Deer Hill Road, which would be located 100 feet to the west.
- ◆ Impact TRAF-6: The Project's significant impact to emergency vehicle access because of the impacts on PM peak-hour traffic speeds for northbound Pleasant Hill Road, which would be mitigated to a less-than-significant level by installing advance detection for emergency vehicle preemption of traffic signals, would be expected to instead occur during the AM peak hour under the Office Development Alternative. However, the northbound traffic speeds during the AM peak hour with the Office Development Alternative would provide better emergency access than the low PM peak-hour traffic speeds on this roadway segment.
- ◆ Impact TRAF-8: The Project's significant impact on traffic delay and safety for school pedestrians and vehicle traffic during construction, which would be mitigated to a less-than-significant level by implementing a Construction Staging Plan, would be expected to also occur under the Office Development Alternative.
- ◆ Impacts TRAF-12 and TRAF-13: On northbound Pleasant Hill Road at the driveway and at Deer Hill Road, the Project's significant and unavoidable impacts during peak hours under Cumulative Year 2030 conditions, which would result from left-turn queue lengths exceeding available storage lane capacities, would be expected to also occur under Office Development Alternative. However, the excessive left-turn queue length at the proposed driveway with the Office Development Alternative would occur during the AM peak hour instead of the during the PM peak

hours, as found under the proposed Project. Additionally, under Existing plus Project conditions on northbound Pleasant Hill Road at the proposed driveway, a significant and unavoidable impact resulting from excessive left-turn queue lengths during the AM peak-hour would occur for the Office Development Alternative, where the impact under the proposed Project would be less than significant.

- ◆ Impact TRAF-15: On Pleasant Hill Road, the Project's significant and unavoidable impact on the peak-hour peak direction Delay Index under Cumulative Year 2030 conditions would be expected to also occur under the Office Development Alternative.

The following impacts of the proposed Project would not be expected to occur under the Office Development Alternative:

- ◆ Impact TRAF-7: The Project's significant impact to emergency vehicle access because of the proposed Project's inadequate turning radii on-site would not occur under the Office Development Alternative because the site plan would incorporate adequate turning radii.
- ◆ Impact TRAF-9: The Project's significant impact associated with large truck access at Project driveways would not occur under the Office Development Alternative because the site plan would incorporate adequate turning radii.
- ◆ Impacts TRAF-16 and TRAF-17: The Project's significant transit impacts because of increased parking demand at the Lafayette BART station and lack of a loading area for school bus service would not be expected to occur under the Office Development Alternative.
- ◆ Impacts TRAF-18B, TRAF-20, TRAF-21, TRAF-22, and TRAF-23: Significant impacts on existing and planned pedestrian and bicycle facilities along Pleasant Hill Road, which would be mitigated to less than significant by implementing specified design features and accommodation requirements for such facilities, would occur with either the Office Development Alternative or the proposed Project.

Although total daily trip generation would be decreased under the Office Development Alternative, in many instances traffic impacts would be shifted to a different peak hour rather than altogether avoided. Under this alternative, some significant but mitigable impacts would be avoided, but two new significant and unavoidable impacts would be created. The Lafayette BART station parking impact would be avoided under this alternative, and all other impacts would be the same as the proposed Project with its mitigations. Therefore, overall the Office Development Alternative would be a *slight deterioration* in comparison to the proposed Project.

n. Utilities and Service Systems

The proposed Project would increase demand for utilities and service systems, but impacts would be less than significant. The Office Development Alternative would result in an increase in a daytime population of 450 workers but would result in fewer residents. Therefore, demand for water supply, wastewater services, solid waste disposal, and energy would be reduced, and impacts would also be less than significant. Because neither the Office Development Alternative nor the proposed Project would result in impacts to utilities and service systems, this alternative would be *similar* to the proposed Project.

*F. Ability to Meet Project Objectives*

This section describes how each alternative would meet the Project objectives, described in Chapter 3 of this Draft EIR, and repeated here for reference:

- ◆ Provide multi-family moderate-income rental housing in Lafayette with convenient access to downtown Lafayette and BART.
- ◆ Create a semi-rural village-like community compatible with, and similar to, other multi-family projects in Lafayette.
- ◆ Minimize visual impacts of the Project by providing extensive perimeter landscaping consistent with other similar developments near the Pleasant Hill Road, and State Highway 24 interchange.

- ◆ Maximize stewardship of limited resources by:
  - Designing and constructing the Project with the goal of a minimum LEED Silver certification.
  - Reintroducing diverse species native to Contra Costa County, including Coastal Live Oak, California Buckeye, Madrone, and California Bay.
  - Stabilizing slopes and providing extensive new and maintained landscaping.
  - Minimizing disturbance of existing on-site seasonal drainage and mitigating disturbance by environmentally enhancing a portion of drainage to remain and enhancing other off-site drainages.
  - Transplanting on-site, existing oak trees which are suitable for relocation.

### **1. No Project Alternative**

Under the No Project Alternative, the proposed Project would not be constructed, and therefore this alternative does not meet any of the Project objectives.

### **2. Mitigated Project Alternative**

This alternative would provide an additional 153 moderate-income rental housing units in the city at a site with access to downtown Lafayette and BART. Therefore, the Mitigated Project Alternative would meet all of the Project objectives.

### **3. Office Development Alternative**

This alternative would not provide housing units, and would not meet the first two Project objectives. Therefore, this alternative would meet two Project objectives out of four.

### ***G. Environmentally Superior Alternative***

In addition to the discussion and comparison of impacts of the proposed Project and the alternatives, Section 15126.6 of the State CEQA Guidelines re-

quires that an “environmentally superior” alternative be selected and the reasons for such a selection be disclosed. In general, the environmentally superior alternative is the alternative that would be expected to generate the least amount of significant impacts. Identification of the environmentally superior alternative is an informational procedure and the alternative selected may not be the alternative that best meets Project objectives. The Project under consideration cannot be identified as the Environmentally Superior Alternative. As shown in Table 5-1, the No Project Alternative would have the fewest environmental impacts as compared to the other two alternatives, and would therefore be considered the environmentally superior alternative. However, in accordance with State CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(e)(2), if the Environmentally Superior Alternative is the “no project” alternative, the EIR shall also identify an environmentally superior alternative among the other alternatives. In this case, the Mitigated Project Alternative would be considered the environmentally superior alternative.

CITY OF LAFAYETTE  
THE TERRACES OF LAFAYETTE EIR  
ALTERNATIVES