
17. ALTERNATIVES TO THE PROPOSED PROJECT

The proposed Bayside Gardens project described in chapter 3 (600 residential units and 8,300 sq. ft. of retail space) has been considered in this EIR as the principal proposal for development of the project site and has been analyzed in detail. To provide a basis for further understanding of the environmental effects of the proposed high intensity residential project and possible approaches to reducing its identified significant impacts, section 15126.6(a) of the CEQA Guidelines requires an EIR to also "...describe a range of reasonable alternatives to the project, or to the location of the project, which would feasibly attain most of the basic objectives of the project, but would avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects of the project, and evaluate the comparative merits of the alternatives." Section 15126.6(b) of the CEQA Guidelines states that, because the EIR must identify ways to mitigate or avoid significant effects of the proposed project on the environment, "[T]he discussion of alternatives shall focus on alternatives to the project or its location which are capable of avoiding or substantially lessening any significant effects of the project, even if these alternatives would impede to some degree the attainment of the project objectives, or would be more costly."

Pursuant to these CEQA sections, this EIR chapter identifies and evaluates a range of reasonable alternatives to the proposed project which would feasibly attain most of the applicant's basic objectives of the project, but would avoid or substantially lessen some of the significant adverse environmental effects identified in chapters 4 through 15.¹

The proposed project calls for elimination of the existing 12-screen cinema use of the project site and a General Plan and zoning change from commercial to predominantly high-density residential/planned development designations in order to permit redevelopment of the site with a

¹For example, an obvious alternative development program to be considered for the project site under its current Redwood City Strategic General Plan Commercial/Office (Office Park Orientation) land use designation would be an office park development. The *Land Use Plan--Redwood City* map adopted by the City in January 1990 designates the project site and surrounding area between Smith Slough and Redwood Creek as *Commercial/Office (Office Park Oriented Uses)*. Assuming a floor area ratio (FAR) of 0.70, excluding parking, the 14.13-acre project site, minus the approximately one-acre BCDC trail easement, would yield an approximately 400,000 square-foot office park. An office park of this size would probably consist of 4- to 6-story structures plus a combination of surface and structured parking. Such a project could be expected to generate roughly 4,120 daily vehicular trips, including 597 and 557 in the AM and PM peak hours, respectively--i.e., substantially more peak hour trips than the proposed project (307 and 172 trips respectively) and substantially more than all of the other identified alternatives. These estimates indicate that an office park alternative would have substantially greater traffic, noise, and air quality impacts than the proposed project--i.e., would not "avoid or substantially lessen" the effects of the project. Accordingly, an office park alternative has not been evaluated.

high density, 42.5-units/acre, multi-family residential (apartment) complex, which would exceed the high end (40 units/acre) of the General Plan described density range for high density residential development, plus an 8,300-square-foot ground floor retail commercial component, associated parking, and BCDC easement/trail provisions. Parking provisions would include three 4.5-level parking structures for 1,168 cars.

A range of seven alternatives to this proposed project has been identified for evaluation in this chapter. Alternative 1 represents the CEQA required "no project" alternative--i.e., retaining the existing 12-screen cinema use of the project site. The current General Plan and zoning designations for the project site (*Commercial/Office* and *General Commercial*, respectively) permit a range of commercial development. To test the comparative environmental implications of such permitted commercial land uses, Alternative 2 assumes development of a "big box" retail store, Alternative 3 assumes development of a new, 20-screen cinema complex, and Alternative 4 assumes development of an auto dealership more consistent with existing adjacent uses. Alternative 5 assumes a combination of residential and commercial development, with roughly half of the project site developed with a 40-units-per-acre apartment complex and roughly half developed with one or two auto dealerships. Alternative 6 assumes a predominantly multi-family residential (apartment) development similar to the proposed project, but at the lower rather than higher end of the General Plan described density range for high density residential development. Alternative 7 assumes a development program similar to the proposed project (600 residential units and 8,300 square feet of retail space), but constructed at an alternative site in the downtown, downtown periphery, El Camino Real corridor or Woodside Road corridor--locations suggested in the City's Strategic General Plan as more appropriate for high density residential development.

Each of these seven identified alternatives is described in more detail below.

- **Alternative 1: No Project (Current Site Status).** As required by the CEQA Guidelines (section 15126.6[e][1]), this alternative assumes that the applicant-proposed conversion of the site from commercial to residential use would not occur and the project site would remain in its present condition with the existing 12-screen cinema continuing to operate.
- **Alternative 2: Current General Plan/Zoning Buildout Scenario: All Retail ("Big Box").** Alternative 2 assumes redevelopment of the General Plan designated "commercial" site with a one-story "big box" retail store. In order to accommodate City parking requirements on-site (i.e., one space per 200 square feet of retail floor area) and retain the same BCDC easement/trail provisions as the proposed project, a one-story retail store of up to 160,000 square feet is assumed.
- **Alternative 3: Current General Plan/Zoning Buildout Scenario: 20-Screen Cinema.** This alternative assumes redevelopment of the General Plan designated "commercial" site with a new, state-of-the-art 20-screen cinema complex with 4,356 seats, replacing the existing 12-screen, 3,645-seat cinema complex. The alternative would also retain the same BCDC easement/trail easement provisions as the proposed project.

- **Alternative 4: Current General Plan/Zoning Buildout Scenario: Auto Dealership.** This alternative assumes redevelopment of the General Plan designated "commercial" site with an auto dealership, with approximately 74,305 square feet of auto showroom/office space, 30,960 square feet of auto service station space, parking for approximately 1,110 cars (361 spaces for employees and visitors, and 749 spaces for vehicle inventory), and the same BCDC easement provisions as the proposed project.
- **Alternative 5: Mixed Use: Auto Dealership and Residential.** This alternative assumes that the project site would be developed as a mixed use project, with both an auto dealership and an apartment complex. The northern approximately 60 percent of the site (8.65 acres) near the Bay would be developed with a four-story apartment complex with up to 292 units, a residents' recreational center and pool, and 4.5-level parking structure for 555 cars. The southern approximately 40 percent of the site (5.48 acres) along East Bayshore Road would be developed with an auto dealership with a 28,800-square-foot auto showroom/office, 12,000-square-foot auto service station, parking for 430 cars (140 spaces for employees and visitors, and 290 spaces for vehicle inventory), and the same BCDC easement trail provisions as the proposed project.
- **Alternative 6: Reduced Intensity Multi-Family Residential.** Alternative 6 assumes that the project site would be developed with a predominantly multi-family residential apartment concept similar to the proposed project, but at the lower rather than the higher end of the General Plan described density range for the *Residential High Density* designation--i.e., at 21.25 rather than 42.5 units per acre, which would yield approximately 300 rather than 600 residential apartments, plus similar parking ratio provisions and the same 8,300 square feet of ground-floor retail space and BCDC easement/trail provisions as the proposed project.
- **Alternative 7: Alternative Sites.** The City's General Plan calls for development of high intensity residential development only where the necessary supporting services and facilities, including transit, can be readily provided, and where land use incompatibilities can be minimized. In particular, the General Plan encourages location of high density residential development near or within the City's financial center, employment centers, transportation hubs, and transit corridors. This alternative addresses the question whether there currently is such an alternative location in the City where development of a high density residential project similar to the proposed 600-unit project could feasibly occur, achieving most of the basic project objectives while avoiding or lessening some of the significant environmental effects identified in this EIR.

CEQA Guidelines section 15126.6(d) indicates that the EIR comparison of the impacts of the identified alternatives is intended to be less detailed than the discussion of the impacts of the

proposed project.¹ Following that guideline, the discussions in this chapter of the comparative impacts of the identified alternatives are intentionally less detailed than the discussions in EIR chapters 4 through 15 of the significant effects of the proposed project.

CEQA Guidelines section 15126.6(d) states, "A matrix displaying the major characteristics may be used to summarize the comparison." Accordingly, Table 17.1 herein (Alternatives Comparison: Project Characteristics) compares the key project description characteristics of each of the alternatives. Table 17.2 (Alternatives Comparison--Relationship to Redwood City Strategic General Plan Policies Regarding Location of Residential and Commercial Development) presents a summary comparison of the relationship of each alternative to City General Plan policies pertaining to the location of residential and commercial land uses. Table 17.3 (Alternatives Comparison: Trip Generation) compares the vehicular trip generation characteristics of each alternative. Table 17.4 (Alternatives Comparison: Water Demand) compares the projected water demand characteristics of each alternative. Finally, Table 17.5 herein (Alternatives Comparison--Summary Overview) provides a summary of the various impact conclusions for each alternative, leading to selection of the "environmentally superior" alternative, as called for under CEQA Guidelines section 15126.6(e)(2).

The information summarized in these tables has been derived from text sections 17.1 through 17.7 which follow and provide a comparative, narrative description of each of the seven alternatives, including the principal characteristics and comparative mitigating and adverse effects of each, followed by section 17.8 which identifies and explains the "environmentally superior" alternative.

¹CEQA Guidelines section 15126.6(d) states, "If an alternative would cause one or more significant effects in addition to those that would be caused by the project as proposed, the significant effects of the alternative shall be discussed, but in less detail than the significant effects of the project as proposed."

**Table 17.1
ALTERNATIVES COMPARISON: PROJECT CHARACTERISTICS**

Project Alternative	Max. Hgt. (feet)	Max. Stories	Residential Component		Commercial Component			Parking Component		
			Total Units	Density (units/ac.)	Retail (sq. ft.)	Auto Dealer- ship (sq. ft.)	Cinema (sq. ft./seats)	Number of Spaces	Number of Structures	Max. Hgt. (feet)
Proposed Project: Residential (600 dus)	60	4	600	42.46	8,300	--	--	1,208	3	55
Alternative 1: 12-Screen Cinema	50	1	--	--	--	--	69,245 (3,645)	901	--	--
Alternative 2: "Big Box" Retail	30	1	--	--	160,000	--	--	800	--	--
Alternative 3: 20-Screen Cinema	30	1	--	--	--	--	77,587 (4,356)	1,245	--	--
Alternative 4: All Auto Dealership	30	1	--	--	--	105,265	--	1,110 ^(b)	--	--
Alternative 5: Auto Dir./Residential	55	4	292	33.37	--	40,800	--	985 ^(c)	1	55
Alternative 6: Reduced Intensity Predominantly Multi- Family Residential (300 dus)	45	3	300	21.23	8,300	--	--	648 ^(d)	--	--
Alternative 7: Alternative Site (600 dus)	75	5	600	40.00	8,300	--	--	900	1	55

SOURCE: Wagstaff and Associates.

- (a) Includes 1,159 residential spaces (1,136 structured, 23 surface), 32 retail spaces (all structured), 12 public trail spaces, and 5 leasing office spaces.
- (b) Includes 361 spaces for employees and visitors plus 749 spaces for vehicle inventory.
- (c) Includes 555 spaces for residential component, 140 spaces for car dealership employees and visitors, and 290 spaces for vehicle inventory.
- (d) Includes 600 residential spaces (all surface), 32 retail spaces (all surface), 12 public trail spaces, and 4 leasing office spaces.

Table 17.2
ALTERNATIVES COMPARISON--RELATIONSHIP TO REDWOOD CITY STRATEGIC
GENERAL PLAN POLICIES REGARDING LOCATION OF RESIDENTIAL AND
COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Pertinent Strategic General Plan Objectives, Goals and Policies	Proposed Project: General Plan/Zoning Change to Residential/Commercial--600 Apartments/8,300 s.f. of Retail	Alternative 1: No Project--Maintain Existing 12-Screen Cinema Use
<i>"Bringing people into the downtown will make the area more exciting and will also allow greater use of transit for work and shopping trips" (SGP page 2-1)</i>	Proposed general plan amendment to convert site from commercial to high-density residential use would be inconsistent with this policy.	No general plan amendment or other City action involved, so no need to consider general plan policy consistency.
<i>Policy L-1: Residential development should be located only where services and facilities can be provided.</i>	Proposed general plan amendment to convert site from commercial to high-density residential use would be inconsistent with this policy.	No general plan amendment or other City action involved, so no need to consider general plan policy consistency.
<i>Policy L-2: Residential neighborhoods should be protected from encroachment of incompatible activities or land uses that may have a negative impact on the residential living environment.</i>	Proposed general plan amendment to convert site from commercial to high-density residential use would be inconsistent with this policy.	No general plan amendment or other City action involved, so no need to consider general plan policy consistency.
<i>Policy L-3: Higher residential densities should be promoted at locations near or within commercial and financial centers, employment centers, and transportation terminals.</i>	Proposed general plan amendment to convert site from commercial to high-density residential use would be inconsistent with this policy.	No general plan amendment or other City action involved, so no need to consider general plan policy consistency.
<i>Policy L-5: New commercial uses should be located in or adjacent to existing or new shopping centers or other established commercial areas.</i>	Project site is surrounded by existing commercial development; proposed general plan amendment to convert site from commercial to primarily high-density residential use would be inconsistent with this policy.	Alternative 1, no change in the current cinema use, would remain generally consistent with this policy.

**Alternative 2: Site
Redevelopment Under Current
General Plan/Zoning--All Retail**

**Alternative 3: Site
Redevelopment Under Current
General Plan/Zoning--20-Screen
Cinema**

**Alternative 4: Site Development
Under Current General
Plan/Zoning--All Auto
Dealership**

Development of this commercial use on the proposed project site, rather than the proposed primarily residential use, would be more consistent with this policy.

Development of this commercial use on the proposed project site, rather than the proposed primarily residential use, would be more consistent with this policy.

Development of this auto commercial use, rather than the proposed primarily residential use, would be more consistent with this policy.

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Development of this commercial use on the proposed project site, rather than the proposed primarily residential use, would be more consistent with this policy.

Table 17.2 (continued)

**ALTERNATIVES COMPARISON--RELATIONSHIP TO REDWOOD CITY STRATEGIC
GENERAL PLAN POLICIES REGARDING LOCATION OF RESIDENTIAL AND
COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT**

Alternative 5: General Plan/ Zoning Change to Residential/ Commercial--Auto Dealership and 290 Rental Apartments	Alternative 6: Reduced Residential/ Commercial--300 Apartments/ 8,300 s.f. of Retail	Alternative 7: Proposed Project (600 Residential Units; 8,300 s.f. of Retail) on Alternative Site (e.g., Downtown, El Camino, or Woodside Rd.)
The residential component of this alternative would be inconsistent with this policy.	Required general plan amendment to convert site from commercial to residential use would be inconsistent with this policy.	Development of the proposed primarily residential use at one of the alternative locations would be more consistent with this policy.
The residential component of this alternative would be inconsistent with this policy.	Required general plan amendment to convert site from commercial to residential use would be inconsistent with this policy.	Development of the proposed primarily residential use at one of the alternative locations would be more consistent with this policy.
The residential component of this alternative would be inconsistent with this policy.	Required general plan amendment to convert site from commercial to residential use would be inconsistent with this policy.	Development of the proposed primarily residential use at one of the alternative locations would be more consistent with this policy.
The residential component of this alternative would be inconsistent with this policy.	Required general plan amendment to convert site from commercial to residential use would be inconsistent with this policy.	Development of the proposed primarily residential use at one of the alternative locations would be more consistent with this policy.
The commercial (auto dealership) component of this alternative would be consistent with this policy.	Project site is surrounded by existing commercial development; required general plan amendment to convert site from commercial to primarily residential would be inconsistent with this policy.	Under this alternative, the E. Bayshore Road site would remain in commercial use, which would be generally more consistent with this policy.

Table 17.3
 ALTERNATIVES COMPARISON: TRIP GENERATION¹

Project Alternative	Number of Trips						
	Daily	AM Peak Hour			PM Peak Hour		
		In	Out	Total	In	Out	Total
Proposed Project: Residential/Retail (600 dus)	3,995	52	255	307	241	125	366
Alternative 1: 12-Screen Cinema	613	0	0	0	88	106	194
Alternative 2: "Big Box" Retail	5,608	157	80	237	227	232	459
Alternative 3: 20-Screen Cinema	926	0	0	0	133	160	293
Alternative 4: All Auto Dealership	3,948	170	63	233	118	177	295
Alternative 5: Auto Dlr./Residential	3,347	50	137	187	199	142	341
Alternative 6: Residential/Retail (300 dus)	2,153	28	129	157	127	70	197
Alternative 7: Alternative Site (600 dus) ²	3,196	42	204	246	193	100	293

SOURCE: Wagstaff and Associates, and Fehr & Peers, based on ITE Trip Generation Manual.

¹ For Alternatives 1 through 6, which would be located on the proposed project East Bayshore Road site, the figures in this table represent total trip generation. For Alternative 7, which would be located in the City's central area, the figures in this table represent the total vehicular trips that would be generated by a 600-unit multi-family apartment/retail project, adjusted to account for the reduction in vehicular use that could be anticipated with more convenience to transit and other services (see footnote 2).

² Assumes same trip generation characteristics as indicated in Table 7.10 for 600 apartment units plus 8,300 square feet of retail, but with 20 percent reduction in vehicular trips due to central area location near transit and other services.

Table 17.4

ALTERNATIVES COMPARISON: WATER DEMAND

<u>Project Alternative</u>	<u>Water Demand in Acre-Feet per Year¹</u>
Proposed Project: Residential (600 dus)/Retail	121.83
Alternative 1: 12-Screen Cinema	18.43
Alternative 2: "Big Box" Retail	23.30
Alternative 3: 20-Screen Cinema	29.28
Alternative 4: All Auto Dealership	12.99
Alternative 5: Auto Dlr./Residential	70.53
Alternative 6: Residential (300 dus)/Retail	73.37
Alternative 7: Alternative Site--Residential (600 dus)/Retail	117.62

SOURCE: Phong Du, Senior Civil Engineer, City of Redwood City Engineering and Construction Department, December 2003.

¹ Projected water demand estimates are approximate and include residential, commercial, and irrigation demands. One acre-foot = 325,851 gallons.

17.1 ALTERNATIVE 1: NO PROJECT (CURRENT SITE STATUS)

17.1.1 Principal Characteristics

This alternative represents the "status quo"; the project site would not be developed with the proposed new high-density residential and ground floor retail land uses, but rather would remain in its current condition. The 12-screen cinema complex, which was constructed in 1990 and is described in EIR subsections 3.1.3 (General Site Characteristics) and 4.1.1 (Existing On-Site Land Uses) of this EIR, would remain. All existing activities on the site would continue. The land use characteristics of this alternative in comparison to the proposed project and other identified alternatives are summarized in Table 17.1.

17.1.2 Alternative 1 Evaluation: Comparative Adverse and Mitigating Effects

(a) Land Use. No significant land use impacts would occur. Existing on-site land use characteristics would remain unchanged under the "No Project" alternative. No concerns regarding compatibility of high-density residential buildings with electrical transmission lines would be introduced. No nuisance conflicts between on-site residential uses and nearby industrial and commercial uses would be introduced.

(b) Attainment of City Land Use Objectives. Consistent with the General Plan. The project site is designated *Commercial/Office (Office Park Oriented Uses)* by the Redwood City Strategic General Plan Land Use Plan map (January 1990), a designation which allows development of retail, office and a variety of other commercial uses, and appears to encourage office park development. The existing 12-screen cinema, although not an "office park," is a general plan permitted use.

Table 17.2 presents a summary comparison of the relationship of the proposed project and seven identified alternatives to various adopted Redwood City Strategic General Plan goals and policies pertaining to the location of residential and commercial development.

(c) Visual Factors. No significant visual impacts would occur. The existing visual character of the project site would remain unchanged. Visual impacts associated with development of high-density mid-rise residential buildings, parking structures, and other elements of the proposed project would not occur. On the other hand, aesthetic improvements to the project site would also not occur. Improvements (e.g., new trail surface, landscaping, seating) to the BCDC easement/trail on the northern edge of the project site, and creation of the associated public pedestrian/bicycle access path on the eastern edge of the site, would also not occur.

(d) Transportation and Circulation. No significant transportation or circulation impacts would occur. Table 17.3 presents the comparative vehicular trip generation characteristics of the proposed project versus alternatives 1 through 7. There would be no change in existing project

site traffic generation characteristics or associated off-site transportation system conditions under the "no project" alternative.

(e) Biological Resources. No significant environmental impacts would occur. There would be no change in existing on-site biological conditions, including the existing BCDC easement/trail provisions on the northern edge of the site.

(f) Hydrology and Water Quality. No significant hydrology or water quality impacts would occur. No changes in on-site flooding potential, soil erosion and sedimentation characteristics, the amount of stormwater runoff from the site, or associated contaminant discharge into tidal channel and Bay waters would occur. The overall impact of the "No Project" scenario on the quality of stormwater discharged into the Smith Slough tidal channel would probably be less significant than the project with implementation of the project mitigations ("best management practices") identified in this EIR. Project impacts to Smith Slough tidal channel water quality due to site grading and potential post-construction erosion would also not occur.

(g) Infrastructure and Public Services. No significant public services impacts would occur. No changes in infrastructure or public service demands associated with the existing on-site land uses would occur.

(h) Soils and Geology. No significant soils or geology impacts would occur. No grading or surface modifications, changes in on-site seismic hazards, changes in on-site soil erosion and sedimentation characteristics, or introduced potentials for significant differential settlement or ground-shaking-induced failure of Bay mud soils would occur.

(i) Public Health and Safety. No significant public health and safety impacts would occur. No demolition or construction activities with potential health or public safety impacts would occur. No introduction of new residents within the San Carlos Airport planning area would occur.

(j) Noise. No significant noise impacts would occur. No potential land use/noise environment incompatibilities would be introduced. No demolition or construction period vibration or noise impacts on adjacent uses would occur.

(k) Cultural and Historic Resources. No significant cultural or historic resources impacts would occur. No development-related potentials for disturbance of on-site cultural and historic resources would occur.

(l) Air Quality. No significant air quality impacts would occur. No construction period or long-term local or regional air emissions impacts would occur.

(m) Attainment of Project Objectives. This alternative would accomplish none of the project objectives identified in section 3.3 of this EIR--i.e., it would not meet market demands identified by the applicant, who specializes in such residential development, for apartment residential units in this subregion which are in close proximity to a freeway interchange and benefit from

the Bayfront view and recreational amenities offered by this project site.

17.2 ALTERNATIVE 2: CURRENT GENERAL PLAN/ZONING BUILDOUT SCENARIO: ALL RETAIL (“BIG BOX”).

17.2.1 Principal Characteristics

Alternative 2 assumes redevelopment of the project site with a one-story “big box” retail store and associated surface parking. In order to accommodate City parking requirements (i.e., one space per 200 square feet of retail floor area), a one-story retail store of up to 160,000 square feet is assumed, in addition to the improved BCDC easement/trail and approximately two additional acres of open space (similar to the proposed project trail/open space provisions).

Neither the precise floor area or retail store operator has been identified for this alternative; however, 160,000 square feet of retail space in a single one-story building would be typical of such “big-box” retailers as Home Depot, Wal-Mart or Target. A retail store of this size would require 800 parking spaces per City of Redwood City standards, which would require approximately 8.3 acres of surface parking area (based on the existing ratio on-site of approximately 97 spaces per acre, including driveways, landscaping, etc.).

17.2.2 Alternative 2 Evaluation: Comparative Adverse and Mitigating Effects

(a) Land Use. No significant adverse environmental impacts. This alternative would be consistent with the general commercial development pattern along the East Bayshore Road frontage. No concerns regarding compatibility of residential buildings with electrical transmission lines would be introduced. No nuisance conflicts between on-site residential uses and adjacent industrial and commercial uses would be introduced.

(b) Attainment of City Land Use Objectives. Consistent with the General Plan. Redevelopment of the project site with an all-retail (“big box”) use, although not an “office park,” would represent a permitted use under the sites current Redwood City Strategic General Plan Commercial/Office (Office Park Oriented Uses) designation.

(c) Visual Impacts. Reduced environmental impacts (in comparison to proposed project). The anticipated maximum building height would be 30 feet, as compared to 60 feet for the proposed project. Overall building site coverage and height would not be as great as the proposed project, and building setbacks would be substantially greater than the proposed project. The expanse of surface parking for the “big box” retail store could detract from the visual character of the area (similar to the existing 12-screen cinema use), but a coordinated frontage design (e.g., coordinated signage, access, landscaping) between the new retail store and existing adjacent auto dealerships could result in a more visually consistent and cohesive commercial frontage along East Bayshore Road.

(d) Transportation and Circulation. Increased environmental impacts (in comparison to proposed project). As indicated by Table 17.3, Alternative 2 would generate a greater increase in daily traffic than the proposed project (an estimated 5,608 versus 3,995 trips), including a substantially greater increase in traffic during the critical PM peak hour (459 versus 366 trips), resulting in greater overall PM peak hour traffic impacts on intersection and freeway ramp operations.

(e) Biological Resources. Similar environmental impacts (in comparison to proposed project), since the same site area would be developed. Alternative 2 would require the same jurisdictional approvals as the proposed project. Bird collision mortality impacts due to lighting and window hazards would be considered less-than-significant due to the decreased site coverage and height of the project buildings (i.e., below the existing, generally uniform 50-foot-height "visual plane" in the Bayfront Area--see EIR subsection 5.1.2).

(f) Hydrology and Water Quality. Similar environmental impacts (in comparison to proposed project). Impacts on erosion and sedimentation and on tidal channel quality would not vary substantially from those identified for the proposed project.

(g) Infrastructure and Public Services. Reduced, but still significant, environmental impacts (in comparison to proposed project). The absence of residential population under Alternative 2 (as compared to approximately 1,200 residents for the proposed project) would result in corresponding reductions in project demands for water (from 121.83 to 23.30 acre-feet per year--see Table 17.4), sewer, police, fire, emergency medical, schools, parks and recreation, solid waste disposal, and child care services.

(h) Soils and Geology. Reduced, but still significant, environmental impacts (in comparison to proposed project). Alternative 2 would be subject to the same range of geotechnical hazards as the proposed project, and the same potentials for differential settlement and earthquake ground-shaking-induced liquefaction, although no on-site residents (versus 1,200 for the proposed project) would be subject to associated on-site hazards.

(i) Public Health and Safety. Reduced, but still significant, environmental impacts (in comparison to proposed project). Alternative 2 would be subject to similar potentials for significant health and safety impacts associated with demolition and construction activities; however, no residents would be introduced within the San Carlos Airport planning area.

(j) Noise. Substantially reduced environmental impacts (in comparison to proposed project). Since Alternative 2 does not include a residential component, no residents would be affected by local freeway and aviation noise levels. Similar construction period ground vibration and noise impacts on adjacent uses would occur.

(k) Cultural and Historic Resources. Similar environmental impacts (in comparison to proposed project). The degree of foundation excavation and surface disturbance would be similar to the proposed project. The potential for disturbance of an as yet unidentified,

subsurface, cultural resource during project grading would remain significant.

(l) Air Quality. Increased environmental impacts (in comparison to proposed project). Construction period exhaust and fugitive particulate emissions would be similar to the proposed project; however, regional air emissions produced by vehicular traffic generation would be substantially greater (Table 17.3 indicates a substantially greater increase in daily and PM peak period trip generation totals).

(m) Attainment of Project Objectives. This alternative would accomplish none of the project objectives identified in section 3.3 of this EIR--i.e., it would not meet market demands identified by the applicant, who specializes in such residential development, for apartment residential units in this subregion which are in close proximity to a freeway interchange and benefit from the Bayfront view and recreational amenities offered by this project site.

17.3 ALTERNATIVE 3: CURRENT GENERAL PLAN/ZONING BUILDOUT SCENARIO: 20-SCREEN CINEMA

17.3.1 Principal Characteristics

Under this alternative, the existing 12-screen, 3,645-seat cinema complex, which was constructed in 1990, would be demolished and replaced with a new, state-of-the-art 20-screen cinema complex (e.g., with all-amphitheater seating and/or digital projection capabilities in all theaters, etc.) with 4,356 seats (a 20 percent increase). A reconstructed on-site surface parking lot would accommodate the City-required 1,245 spaces. The BCDC easement/trail would still be improved as described for the proposed project (e.g., new trail surface, landscaping, seating), but the public pedestrian/bicycle path from East Bayshore Road to the easement/trail and Bay Trail would not be included. Figure 17.1 depicts a site plan for this alternative (prepared for EIR purposes by the applicant).

17.3.2 Alternative 3 Evaluation: Comparative Adverse and Mitigating Effects

(a) Land Use. No significant environmental impacts. This alternative would continue the existing cinema use of the site, but with a more intensive new state-of-the-art cinema complex. No new nuisance conflicts between on-site residential uses and nearby industrial and commercial uses would be introduced. No new concerns regarding compatibility of residential buildings with electrical transmission lines would be introduced.

(b) Attainment of City Land Use Objectives. Redevelopment of the project site with a more intensive 20-screen cinema use, although not "office park oriented," would represent a

Figure 17.1. Alternative 3: 20-Screen Cinema Site Plan.

permitted use under the site's current Redwood City Strategic General Plan Commercial/Office (Office Park Oriented Uses) land use designation.

(c) Visual Factors. Reduced environmental impacts (in comparison to proposed project). The anticipated maximum building height would be reduced to 30 feet, as compared to 60 feet for the proposed project. The overall building site coverage and height would not be as great as the proposed project. The greater expanse of surface parking could detract from the potential visual character of the area, similar to the existing cinema use. On the other hand, a coordinated frontage design (e.g., coordinated signage, access, landscaping) between this new commercial use and existing adjacent auto dealerships could result in a more visually consistent and cohesive commercial frontage along East Bayshore Road.

(d) Transportation and Circulation. Reduced environmental impacts (in comparison to proposed project). As indicated by Table 17.3, Alternative 3 would generate less daily traffic than the proposed project (an estimated 926 versus 3,995 trips), as well as a reduced amount of AM and PM commute period traffic volumes (293 versus 366 PM peak hour trips), resulting in reduced traffic impacts on intersection and freeway ramp operations.

(e) Biological Resources. Similar environmental impacts (in comparison to proposed project). Since the same site area would be developed, and the BCDC easement/trail still would be protected and improved, Alternative 3 would result in biological resource impacts similar to the proposed project. Alternative 3 would require the same jurisdictional approvals as the proposed project. Bird collision mortality impacts due to lighting and window hazards would be considered less-than-significant due to the decreased site coverage and height of the project buildings (i.e., below the existing, generally uniform 50-foot-height "visual plane" in the Bayfront Area--see EIR subsection 5.1.2).

(f) Hydrology and Water Quality. Similar environmental impacts (in comparison to proposed project). Potential project impacts on erosion and sedimentation and on tidal channel quality would not vary substantially from those identified for the proposed project.

(g) Infrastructure and Public Services. Reduced, but still significant, environmental impacts (in comparison to proposed project). The absence of residential population under Alternative 3 (as compared to approximately 1,200 residents for the proposed project) would result in corresponding reductions in project demands for water (from 121.83 to 29.28 acre-feet per year--see Table 17.4), sewer, police, fire, emergency medical, schools, parks and recreation, solid waste disposal, and child care services.

(h) Soils and Geology. Reduced, but still significant, environmental impacts (in comparison to proposed project). Alternative 3 would be subject to the same range of geotechnical hazards associated with grading and surface modifications as the proposed project, and the same potentials for differential settlement and earthquake ground-shaking-induced liquefaction and differential settlement, but no on-site residents (versus 1,200 for the proposed project) would be subject to associated hazards.

(i) Public Health and Safety. Reduced, but still significant, environmental impacts (in comparison to proposed project). Alternative 3 would be subject to similar potentials for significant health and safety impacts associated with demolition and construction activities; however, no residents would be introduced within the San Carlos Airport planning area.

(j) Noise. Reduced environmental impacts (in comparison to proposed project). Since Alternative 3 does not include a residential component, no residents would be affected by local freeway and aviation traffic noise. Similar construction period ground vibration and noise impacts on adjacent uses would occur.

(k) Cultural and Historic Resources. Similar environmental impacts (in comparison to proposed project). The degree of foundation excavation and surface disturbance would be similar compared to the proposed project. The potential for disturbance of an as yet unidentified subsurface cultural resource during project grading would therefore remain significant.

(l) Air Quality. Substantially reduced, but still significant, environmental impacts (in comparison to proposed project). Construction period generation of exhaust emissions and fugitive particulate emissions would be similar to the proposed project. Regional air emissions produced by additional vehicular traffic would be substantially less (Table 17.3 indicates substantially fewer daily and peak period trip generation totals).

(m) Attainment of Project Objectives. This alternative would accomplish none of the project objectives identified in section 3.3 of this EIR--i.e., it would not meet market demands identified by the applicant, who specializes in such residential development, for apartment residential units in this subregion which are in close proximity to a freeway interchange and benefit from the Bayfront view and recreational amenities offered by this project site.

17.4 ALTERNATIVE 4: CURRENT GENERAL PLAN/ZONING BUILDOUT SCENARIO: AUTO DEALERSHIP

17.4.1 Principal Characteristics

Alternative 4 assumes redevelopment of the site with an auto dealership use, consistent with the existing auto dealership uses along East Bayshore Road on either side of the project site (Boardwalk Motors). This alternative is intended to create a continuous "Auto Row" along East Bayshore Road adjacent to U.S. 101. The alternative assumes approximately 74,300 square feet of auto showroom/office space, 30,960 square feet of auto service station space, and parking for 1,110 cars, including the City-required 361 spaces for employees and visitors, plus 749 spaces for vehicle inventory. An approximately 14-acre auto dealership alternative could be configured in several ways, with approximately three to five auto dealerships; therefore, an illustrative site plan has not been developed at this conceptual stage.

17.4.2 Alternative 4 Evaluation: Comparative Adverse and Mitigating Effects

(a) Land Use. No significant environmental impacts. The alternative would provide consistent infill between two existing, non-contiguous auto dealerships (Boardwalk Motors) along East Bayshore Road, resulting in a more desirable continuous and cohesive frontage of auto dealerships. No new nuisance conflicts between on-site residential uses and adjacent industrial and commercial uses would be introduced. No concerns regarding compatibility of residential buildings with existing electrical transmission lines would be introduced.

(b) Attainment of City Land Use Objectives. Redevelopment of the 14.13-acre project site with an auto dealership use would be allowable under the site's current Redwood City Strategic General Plan Commercial/Office (Office Park Oriented) land use designation. Although not an "office park oriented" use, the auto dealership development would be consistent and compatible with adjacent existing automobile dealership uses along East Bayshore Road east (Boardwalk Motors) and west (also Boardwalk Motors) of the project site.

(c) Visual Factors. Reduced environmental impacts (in comparison to proposed project). A coordinated frontage design (e.g., signage, access, landscaping) between the new auto dealership and existing adjacent auto dealerships could result in a more visually consistent and cohesive "Auto Row" along East Bayshore Road. The anticipated maximum building height would be 30 feet, compared to 60 feet for the proposed project.

(d) Transportation and Circulation. Reduced, but still significant, environmental impacts (in comparison to proposed project). As indicated by Table 17.3, Alternative 4 would generate daily traffic compared to the proposed project (an estimated 3,948 versus 3,995 trips). However, Alternative 4 would generate lower traffic volume totals compared to the proposed project during the critical peak commute hours, resulting in fewer impacts on peak period intersection and freeway ramp operations.

(e) Biological Resources. Similar environmental impacts (in comparison to proposed project). Since the same site area would be developed, and the BCDC easement/trail still would be protected and improved, Alternative 4 would result in similar biological resource impacts to the proposed project. Alternative 4 would require the same jurisdictional review as the proposed project. Bird collision mortality impacts due to lighting and window hazards would be considered less-than-significant due to the decreased site coverage and height of the project buildings (i.e., below the existing, generally uniform 50-foot-height "visual plane" in the Bayfront Area--see EIR subsection 5.1.2).

(f) Hydrology and Water Quality. Similar environmental impacts (in comparison to proposed project). Potential impacts on erosion and sedimentation and on tidal channel water quality would not vary substantially from those identified for the proposed project. Potentials for surface runoff pollution by auto-related petroleum and other products would be greater than the proposed project, but could be residentially mitigated.

(g) Infrastructure and Public Services. Reduced environmental impacts. The absence of residential population (compared to approximately 1,200 residents for the proposed project)

would result in corresponding reductions in project demands for water (from 121.83 to 12.99 acre-feet per year--see Table 17.4), sewer, police, fire, emergency medical, schools, parks and recreation, solid waste disposal, and child care services.

(h) Soils and Geology. Reduced environmental impacts. Alternative 4 would be subject to the same range of geotechnical hazards as the proposed project, and the same potentials for differential settlement and earthquake ground-shaking-induced liquefaction, although no on-site residents (versus 1,200 for the proposed project) would be subject to associated on-site hazards.

(i) Public Health and Safety. Reduced environmental impacts. Alternative 4 would be subject to similar potentials for significant health and safety impacts associated with demolition and construction activities; however, no residents would be introduced within the San Carlos Airport planning area.

(j) Noise. Reduced environmental impacts. Since Alternative 4 does not include a residential component, no residents would be affected. However, similar construction period ground vibration and noise impacts on adjacent uses would occur.

(k) Cultural and Historic Resources. Similar environmental impacts. The potential for disturbance of an as yet unidentified sensitive, on-site, subsurface cultural resource during project grading would remain significant.

(l) Air Quality. Reduced, but still significant, environmental impacts. Construction period exhaust and fugitive particulate emissions would be similar to the proposed project, with similar temporary effects on local air quality. Regional air emissions produced by additional vehicular traffic generation would be less than the proposed project (Table 17.3 indicates slightly reduced daily and peak period trip generation totals).

(m) Attainment of Project Objectives. This alternative would accomplish none of the project objectives identified in section 3.3 of this EIR--i.e., it would not meet market demands identified by the applicant, who specializes in such residential development, for apartment residential units in this subregion which are in close proximity to a freeway interchange and benefit from the Bayfront view and recreational amenities offered by this project site.

17.5 ALTERNATIVE 5: MIXED USE: AUTO DEALERSHIP AND RESIDENTIAL

17.5.1 Principal Characteristics

Alternative 5 assumes that the project site would be redeveloped with a combination of commercial and residential uses--i.e., a mixed-use auto dealership/high density residential (apartment) layout. The intent of this alternative would be to combine aspects of Alternative 5, the all auto dealership alternative, and the proposed predominantly high-density residential

project, thereby achieving a continuous "Auto Row" along East Bayshore Road adjacent to U.S. 101, while also partially meeting the project objectives of introducing a high-density residential component in proximity to a freeway interchange with Bayfront visual and recreational amenities.

Alternative 5 assumes that the northern approximately 60 percent of the site (8.65 acres) along the tidal channel would be developed with a four-story apartment complex with up to 292 units, a residents' recreational center and pool, and one 4.5-level parking structure for 555 cars. The southern approximately 40 percent of the site (5.48 acres) along East Bayshore Road would be developed with an auto dealership with a 28,800-square-foot auto showroom/office, 12,000-square-foot auto service station, and parking for 430 cars, including the City-required 140 spaces for employees and visitors, plus 290 spaces for vehicle inventory. The 5.48-acre auto dealership portion of the site might alternatively accommodate two dealerships, but the *total* square footages and parking spaces noted above would be similar.

17.5.2 Alternative 5 Evaluation: Comparative Adverse and Mitigating Effects

(a) Land Use. Similar environmental impacts (in comparison to proposed project). Nuisance conflicts between the on-site residential and the on-site auto dealership uses, as well as between the on-site residential uses and adjacent industrial and commercial uses, would be introduced. Concerns regarding compatibility of the new residential uses with existing electrical transmission lines would also be introduced at the north portion of the project site.

(b) Attainment of City Land Use Objectives. Redevelopment of the project site with a mixed use auto dealership and high density residential combination would be partially consistent and partially inconsistent with the project site's current *Commercial/Office (Office Park Oriented)* General Plan designation. The auto dealership component would be allowable and would be consistent with adjacent auto dealership uses on either side of the project site, but the residential component would require a General Plan Amendment and rezoning, and would be inconsistent with General Plan policies calling for location of high-density residential development where the necessary supporting services and facilities, including transit, can be readily provided, and where land use compatibilities can be minimized.

(c) Visual Factors. Reduced environmental impacts (in comparison to proposed project). The project's East Bayshore Road frontage would be more visually consistent with adjacent auto dealership uses on either side of the site, providing for a more cohesive appearance to the area. The anticipated maximum building height for the one-story auto dealership would be 30 feet, with a proposed maximum 55 feet for the residential component (as compared to 60 feet for the entire proposed project). On the other hand, a coordinated design (e.g., coordinate signage, access, landscaping) between this new commercial use and existing adjacent auto dealerships could result in a more visually consistent and cohesive commercial frontage along East Bayshore Road.

(d) Transportation and Circulation. Reduced, but still significant, environmental impacts (in comparison to proposed project). As indicated by Table 17.3, Alternative 5 would generate less daily traffic than the proposed project (an estimated 3,347 versus 3,995 trips), as well as lower commute period traffic volumes compared to the proposed project (except for PM peak-hour outbound trips), resulting in reduced impacts on intersection and freeway ramp operations.

(e) Biological Resources. Similar environmental impacts (in comparison to proposed project). Since the same site area would be developed, and the BCDC easement/trail still would be protected and improved, Alternative 5 would result in similar biological resource impacts to the proposed project. Alternative 5 would also require the same jurisdictional review and approvals as the proposed project. Bird collision mortality impacts due to lighting and window hazards would remain significant (i.e., building heights of 55 feet are above the existing, generally uniform 50-foot-height "visual plane" in the Bayfront Area--see EIR subsection 5.1.2), but would be reduced due to the decreased site coverage and heights of the project buildings.

(f) Hydrology and Water Quality. Similar environmental impacts (in comparison to proposed project). Potential project impacts on erosion and sedimentation and on tidal channel quality would not vary substantially from those identified for the proposed project.

(g) Infrastructure and Public Services. Reduced, but still significant, environmental impacts (in comparison to proposed project). The substantial reduction in residential population under Alternative 5 (approximately 584 residents versus 1,200 residents for the proposed project) would result in corresponding reductions in project demands for water (from 121.83 to 70.53 acre-feet per year--see Table 17.4), sewer, police, fire, emergency medical, schools, parks and recreation, solid waste disposal, and child care services.

(h) Soils and Geology. Reduced, but still significant, environmental impacts (in comparison to proposed project). Alternative 5 would be subject to the same range of geotechnical hazards associated with grading and surface modifications as the proposed project, and the same potentials for differential settlement and earthquake ground-shaking-induced liquefaction and differential settlement, although fewer on-site residents (584 versus 1,200) would be subject to associated on-site hazards.

(i) Public Health and Safety. Reduced, but still significant, environmental impacts (in comparison to proposed project). Alternative 5 would be subject to similar potentials for significant safety impacts associated with demolition and construction activities. Potentially significant safety impacts associated with the introduction of new residents (584 versus 1,200 for the proposed project) in the San Carlos Airport planning area would be reduced.

(j) Noise. Reduced environmental impacts (in comparison to proposed project). The project site would be exposed to similar freeway and aviation noise levels as the proposed project, but the noise-sensitive (residential) component of the project would be separated and buffered from the freeway and East Bayshore Road by the auto retail use. Similar construction period ground vibration and noise impacts on adjacent uses would occur.

(k) Cultural and Historic Resources. Similar environmental impacts (in comparison to proposed project). The degree of foundation excavation and surface disturbance would be similar to the proposed project.

(l) Air Quality. Reduced, but still significant, environmental impacts (in comparison to proposed project). Construction period exhaust and fugitive particulate emissions would be similar to the proposed project, with similar temporary effects on local air quality. Regional air emissions would be less than the proposed project (Table 17.3 indicates fewer daily and peak period trip generation totals).

(m) Attainment of Project Objectives. This alternative would partially accomplish the applicant's identified project objectives. The residential portion of the project would respond to applicant-identified market demands for apartment residential units to this subregion which are in close proximity to a freeway interchange and benefit from the Bayfront view and recreational amenities offered by this project site.

17.6 ALTERNATIVE 6: REDUCED INTENSITY MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL

17.6.1 Principal Characteristics

Alternative 6 assumes that the project site would be developed with a predominantly multi-family residential apartment layout similar to the proposed 600-unit high density residential project, but at a substantially reduced density. Under this alternative, the 14.13-acre project site would be developed at the lower rather than the higher end of the General Plan identified density range for the *Residential High Density* designation--i.e., at 21.25 units per acre rather than the project-proposed 42.50 units per acre. The reduced density would yield approximately 300 rather than 600 residential apartments, with associated reductions in residential building height and floor area ratio. Parking provisions (ratios) would be similar to the proposed project, but in fewer and/or lower parking structures. The same 8,300-square-foot ground floor retail component and BCDC easement/trail provisions as the proposed project are also assumed.

17.6.2 Alternative 6 Evaluation: Comparative Adverse and Mitigating Effects

(a) Land Use. Similar environmental impacts (in comparison to proposed project). Nuisance conflicts between the on-site residential and adjacent industrial and commercial uses would still occur. Concerns regarding compatibility of the new residential uses with existing electrical transmission lines would also still occur in the north portion of the project site.

(b) Attainment of City Land Use Objectives. Redevelopment of the project site with this reduced density residential complex would still be inconsistent with the project site's current *Commercial/Office (Office Park Oriented)* General Plan designation. The residential use would still require a General Plan Amendment and rezoning, and would still be inconsistent with

General Plan policies calling for location of high-density residential development where necessary support services and facilities, including transit, can be readily provided, and where land use compatibilities can be minimized.

(c) Visual Factors. Reduced environmental impacts (in comparison to proposed project). The project's East Bayshore Road frontage would still be visually inconsistent with adjacent auto dealership uses on either side of the site. The anticipated maximum building height for the project would be reduced. The lower floor area ratio would also permit greater site planning flexibility, including potentials for increased building setbacks from East Bayshore Road. Visually adverse parking structures would be reduced in size and prominence.

(d) Transportation and Circulation. Reduced environmental impacts (in comparison to proposed project). As indicated by Table 17.3, Alternative 6 would generate substantially less daily traffic than the proposed project (an estimated 2,153 versus 3,995 trips), as well as lower commute period traffic volumes, resulting in reduced impacts on intersection and freeway ramp operations.

(e) Biological Resources. Similar environmental impacts (in comparison to proposed project). Since the same site area would be developed, and the BCDC easement/trail still would be protected and improved, Alternative 6 would result in similar biological resource impacts to the proposed project. Alternative 6 would also require the same jurisdictional review and approvals as the proposed project. Bird collision mortality impacts due to lighting and window hazards would be considered less-than-significant due to the decreased site coverage and height of the project buildings (i.e., below the existing, generally uniform 50-foot-height "visual plane" in the Bayfront Area--see EIR subsection 5.1.2).

(f) Hydrology and Water Quality. Similar environmental impacts (in comparison to proposed project). Potential project impacts on erosion and sedimentation and on tidal channel quality would not vary substantially from those identified for the proposed project.

(g) Infrastructure and Public Services. Reduced, but still significant, environmental impacts (in comparison to proposed project). The substantial reduction in residential population under Alternative 6 (approximately 600 residents versus 1,200 residents for the proposed project) would result in corresponding reductions in project demands for water (from 121.83 to approximately 73.37 acre-feet per year--see Table 17.4), sewer, police, fire, emergency medical, schools, parks and recreation, solid waste disposal, and child care services.

(h) Soils and Geology. Reduced, but still significant, environmental impacts (in comparison to proposed project). Alternative 6 would be subject to the same range of geotechnical hazards associated with grading and surface modifications as the proposed project, and the same potentials for differential settlement and earthquake ground-shaking-induced liquefaction and differential settlement, although fewer on-site residents (600 versus 1,200) would be subject to associated on-site hazards.

(i) Public Health and Safety. Reduced, but still significant, environmental impacts (in comparison to proposed project). Alternative 6 would be subject to similar potentials for significant safety impacts associated with demolition and construction activities. Potentially significant safety impacts associated with the introduction of new residents (600 versus 1,200 for the proposed project) in the San Carlos Airport planning area would be reduced.

(j) Noise. Reduced environmental impacts (in comparison to proposed project). The project site would be exposed to similar freeway and aviation noise levels as the proposed project, but fewer residents would be affected. Similar construction period ground vibration and noise impacts on adjacent uses would occur.

(k) Cultural and Historic Resources. Similar environmental impacts (in comparison to proposed project). The degree of foundation excavation and surface disturbance would be similar to the proposed project.

(l) Air Quality. Reduced, but still significant, environmental impacts (in comparison to proposed project). Regional air emissions would be less than the proposed project (Table 17.3 indicates fewer daily and peak period trip generation totals). Construction period exhaust and fugitive particulate emissions would be similar to the proposed project, with similar temporary effects on local air quality.

(m) Attainment of Project Objectives. This alternative would partially accomplish the applicant's identified project objectives. Although substantially smaller than the proposed project, the residential project would still respond to applicant-identified market demands for apartment residential units to this subregion which are in close proximity to a freeway interchange and benefit from the Bayfront view and recreational amenities offered by this project site.

17.7 ALTERNATIVE 7: ALTERNATIVE SITES

Section 15126.6 of the CEQA Guidelines indicates that the EIR evaluation of alternatives may include alternatives to the project's proposed location. CEQA Guidelines section 15126.6(f)(2)(A) states, "[T]he key question and first step in the analysis [of an alternative location] is whether any of the significant effects of the project would be avoided or substantially lessened by putting the project in another location. Only locations that would avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects of the project need to be considered for inclusion in the EIR." For the Bayside Gardens project in particular, alternative site possibilities warrant consideration for the following reasons:

(1) EIR-identified significant impacts (land use compatibility, traffic, air quality) could be substantially lessened or avoided by choosing another site;

- (2) the Redwood City Strategic General Plan discourages location of high-density residential development in areas that are not well-served by transit and other necessary services, and that include existing land uses that are incompatible with residential uses;
- (3) the Redwood City Strategic General Plan and zoning ordinance do not anticipate high-density residential use of the project site (the site is designated for commercial use);
- (4) the courts have indicated an analysis of alternative sites is particularly appropriate where a project requires a general plan amendment or rezoning;
- (5) the project design does not appear to fully capitalize of the specific Bayfront visual and recreational amenities of the project site (e.g., the project design does not display a strong orientation to the Bay and Smith Slough).

As discussed in sections 4.2 and 4.3 in Chapter 4 (Land Use) of this EIR, the Redwood City Strategic General Plan generally encourages the development of high-density residential development only where services and facilities to support such development, including transit, can be readily provided, and where land use incompatibilities can be minimized. In particular, the General Plan encourages location of high-density residential development near or within the City's financial center, employment centers, established commercial areas, transportation hubs, and transit corridors.

General Plan Policy L-1 states that "Residential development should be located only where services and facilities can be provided." General Plan Policy L-3 states that "Higher residential densities should be promoted at locations near or within commercial and financial centers, employment centers, and transportation terminals." The General Plan encourages "more efficient use of the existing bus system, making it more accessible to riders" and states that "...it would seem logical to plan for more intensive, higher density land uses along public transit routes..." and that "These uses might include apartments, condominiums, and multi-story office and retail buildings." (GP page 7-7). More specifically, the General Plan encourages location of residential projects in the downtown and downtown periphery and along selected segments of El Camino Real and Woodside Road, primarily in the interest of transit efficiency (page 7-9). The General Plan states that the downtown has the "opportunity to become a special place" through a number of means, including "constructing dwelling units which will bring a different clientele to the downtown." (page 2-1 or 2-2).

The possibility of such alternative locations for the proposed 600-unit high-density residential project has been fully considered by the EIR authors. No specific vacant or underutilized sites have been identified in the General Plan suggested downtown, downtown periphery, El Camino Real, or Woodside Road areas or any other area in the City that could reasonably accommodate a consolidated high-density residential development similar in scale to the proposed 600-unit apartment project.

As stated in the General Plan, "Even with the help of the Redevelopment Agency, it will be difficult to assemble development parcels of one or more acre or more [in the downtown] except in rare instances" (2-1, 2-2). Instead, the General Plan encourages a different, multi-story, mixed-use development approach, involving location of commercial uses at ground level and residential uses above. The General Plan states that *"Instead of land uses [in the downtown] being separated by zoning districts, a mix of uses is encouraged, particularly commercial uses at ground level with residential uses above. Bringing people into the downtown will make the area more exciting and will also allow greater use of transit for work and shopping trips."* (2-1, 2-2). With respect to El Camino Real and Woodside Road and the periphery of the downtown area, the General Plan suggests that *"Some existing commercial use property located along these streets could eventually be redeveloped. Because bus routes exist on both of these streets, transit-supportive higher-density and mixed use development could locate along these streets in selected areas"* (page 7-9). The General Plan also states that *"These areas were selected based on such criteria as existing land use, compatibility with adjacent land uses and proximity to public transportation"* (page 7-9).

The General Plan indicates that there were approximately 43 acres along El Camino Real in 1993 that had been recently rezoned for mixed use development, some vacant and some underutilized (page 8-17), and on that basis identified the El Camino Real corridor as a potential location for development of high-density and mixed use (residential/commercial) development. In 1993, the General Plan estimated that the estimated total potential intensification capacity of the El Camino corridor area was approximately 1,280 units. Similarly, the General Plan indicates that there were approximately 19 acres along Woodside Road in 1993 that had also been recently rezoned for mixed use development, with an estimated total cumulative potential yield of approximately 560 residential units (page 8-17). However, neither of these identified residential development opportunity areas included an individual site which could conceivably be available to reasonably accommodate a consolidated, 600-unit, high-density residential project.

Development of the proposed high-density residential-commercial project on other identified vacant or undeveloped sites in the Mid-Peninsula subregion would likely result in land use impacts on surrounding lower density neighborhoods (the proposed project site is separated by U.S. 101 from established, lower density Redwood City residential areas), similar adverse visual impacts (the project proposes a maximum height of 60 feet), similar or greater traffic impacts on the local roadway network (the proposed project site is close to the U.S. 101 freeway and would be conveniently served by two interchanges), similar impacts on water demand and supply (a regional problem), similar or greater air quality impacts (i.e., other possible sites would have less direct access to the freeway), and similar or greater noise impacts on adjoining and nearby neighborhoods.

The proposed project would result in biological habitat impacts unique to the proposed site, associated with its estuarine waterfront and proximity to the Bair Island Wildlife Refuge. Alternative locations more removed from these features would of course reduce these impacts. However, the EIR does identify mitigations to reduce project impacts on these unique biological

resources to less-than-significant levels, except for project-related bird collisions (see chapter 8, Biological Resources).

Although an alternative site in one of the General Plan suggested high-density residential locations (downtown, downtown periphery, El Camino Real, Woodside Road) could offer other substantial environmental advantages over the proposed project Bayshore Boulevard location, including reduced vehicular traffic and associated air quality impacts, this "alternative site" choice has been determined to be infeasible for the following reasons:

- (1) the possibility of implementing this alternative is remote and speculative;¹
- (2) no specific site or combination of sites of adequate size has been identified in these areas or elsewhere in the City that could accommodate the proposed 600-unit or a similar project;²
- (3) no alternative site has been identified within the City's jurisdiction that the applicant can reasonably acquire, control or otherwise have access to; that could successfully accomplish such a project in an expeditious or reasonable period of time;³
- (4) City staff could not identify a single site or reasonable combination of sites where a project of this type and size could be constructed; and
- (5) the availability of other sites in the downtown, downtown periphery, El Camino Real corridor, Woodside Road corridor, or in any other area of the City, for development of such a project with environmental benefits over the proposed project site, is at this point entirely speculative.

It has not been demonstrated that this alternative could feasibly attain the applicant's project objectives. This alternative does not represent a feasible opportunity to create a largely consolidated, large-scale (300 to 600 units) apartment residential project in the Redwood City subregion with good interregional access and attractive (competitive) site amenities.

¹The Guide to the Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) ("the Guide") by Remy et al. (1999 edition), which is cited as an authoritative source by the California Courts, states on page 433 that where the possibility of implementing an alternative is remote and speculative, it may be considered infeasible. The same Guide states on pages 449 and 450 that a "project alternative which cannot be feasibly accomplished need not be exhaustively considered."

²The Guide states on page 446 that, where no specific site or combination of sites of adequate size has been identified that could accommodate the project, the further consideration of alternative sites is not indicated.

³The Guide, pages 449 and 450.

Nevertheless, the City is continuing to pursue such possibilities, perhaps in the form of redevelopment of existing underutilized land. In particular, the pending draft of the City's proposed General Plan *Housing Element* update lists a number of candidate sites for possible future housing development, and the City has recently commenced formulation of a new *Downtown Precise Plan* which is expected to include specific urban design guidelines and policies for achieving more housing in the downtown.

The pending General Plan *Housing Element* draft (March 4, 2004) includes a list of 28 "sites" identified as underutilized and well-located candidate areas for future additional housing development. Of these, 18 areas are identified as candidate locations for redevelopment with high density (35 to 65 units/acre) residential development. Of these 18, the following five locations have been identified as having development capacities near or greater than the project-proposed 600 units:

<u>Location</u>	<u>Total Acreage</u>	<u>Potential Dwellings</u>	<u>Density (units/acre)</u>	<u>Area Size (Number of blocks)</u>
Downtown Plan Area 4--North El Camino Corridor	9.7	533	45-55	3
Downtown Plan Area 5--South Main Corridor, Phase I & II	18.2	819	33-45	13-18
Downtown Plan Area 7--Broadway Terminus	13	585	35-45	1
El Camino Transit Corridor	16	710	40-45	14
Woodside Road Transit Corridor	21	903	43	165

However each of these identified high density residential development "sites" is actually comprised of a number of separate, non-contiguous underutilized ownerships which may be concentrated, but are nevertheless spread throughout local areas ("sites") ranging in size from one to 18 city blocks. None of these "sites" appears to involve a contiguous, underutilized area of sufficient size for development of a consolidated rental apartment complex similar to what is being proposed for the project site, and none are controlled by the applicant. Similarly, to date, the ongoing *Downtown Precise Plan* formulation effort has not yet identified such an alternative site opportunity.

The courts have found that a feasible alternative is one which can be "accomplished in a successful manner within a reasonable period of time, taking into account economic, legal, social and technical factors. Whether a project site is owned or can be reasonably acquired by the project proponent has a strong bearing on the project's ultimate costs and the chances for an expeditious and "successful accomplishment."¹

¹The Guide, pages 449 and 450.

For these reasons, it has been determined for purposes of this EIR that no feasible alternative sites for development of the project have been identified.

No further environmental analysis of alternative sites is required under CEQA.¹

17.8 CONCLUSIONS: ENVIRONMENTALLY SUPERIOR ALTERNATIVE

The CEQA Guidelines (section 15126[e][2]) stipulate, "If the environmentally superior alternative is the 'no project' alternative, the EIR shall also identify an environmentally superior alternative among the other alternatives." Table 17.5 which follows provides a consolidated, summary comparison of the environmental implications of the various identified alternatives for all of the environmental issues considered in this EIR (land use, General Plan and zoning consistency, visual factors, population and housing, traffic, etc.). The summary comparisons in Table 17.5 indicate that, of the various alternatives evaluated in this EIR other than the "no project" alternative, **Alternative 3: Current General Plan/Zoning Buildout Scenario: 20-Screen Cinema**, would result in the least adverse combination of net additional environmental impacts (i.e., over the existing 12-screen cinema complex), and therefore would be the "environmentally superior" alternative. The 20-screen cinema alternative would nevertheless result in its own significant adverse impacts. In particular, a 20-screen cinema would generate the highest weekend traffic volume totals of all of the identified alternatives. On Friday and Saturday evenings between 7:00 and 8:00 PM (the "cinema PM peak hour"), a 4,356-seat 20-screen cinema complex could be expected to generate roughly 1,500 to 1,700 total vehicular trips, including approximately 1,100 to 1,300 trips into, and 300 to 500 trips out of, the project site. The 20-screen cinema would also generate more water use than other identified commercial land use choices, including the "big-box" retail and all-auto dealership alternatives (see Table 17.4).

It should also be noted that Alternative 3 would not attain the basic project objectives of meeting identified demands in the Redwood City subregion for multi-family (apartment) residential units in close proximity to the freeway and with attractive visual and recreational amenities (e.g., a

¹CEQA Guidelines section 15126.6(c) explains that alternatives may be eliminated from detailed consideration in the EIR if they fail to meet most of the basic project objectives, are infeasible, or do not avoid any significant environmental effects. CEQA Guidelines section 15126.6(f) indicates that the Lead Agency should consider site suitability, economic viability, availability of infrastructure, general plan consistency, other regulatory limitation, jurisdictional boundaries, and the proponents control over alternative sites in determining the range of alternatives to be evaluated in an EIR. With respect to alternative locations, CEQA Guidelines section 15126.6(f) indicates that alternative locations need not be evaluated in every case. The key question in determining whether to evaluate alternative locations is whether any of the significant effects of the project would be avoided or substantially lessened by putting the project in another location. Only locations that would avoid or substantially lessen any significant effects need be evaluated in the EIR. CEQA Guidelines section 15126(f)(2) indicates that alternatives that are remote or speculative, or the effects of which cannot be reasonably predicted, need not be considered.

Bayfront location). Of the identified alternatives that do meet most of the basic project objectives, **Alternative 6: Reduced Intensity (300 unit) Multi-Family Residential**, would result in the least adverse combination of environmental impacts and therefore would be the "environmentally superior" alternative.¹

In summary, as indicated by Table 17.5, Alternatives 3 and 6 would result in the optimal combination of highest land use compatibility, General Plan consistency and zoning consistency, with the lowest traffic, infrastructure, public service demand, noise, and air emissions impacts, as compared with the proposed project and other three feasible alternatives.

¹See first sentence under footnote 1 above.

Table 17.5
ALTERNATIVES COMPARISON--SUMMARY OVERVIEW

Impact	Alternatives	
	Alternative 1: No Project--Current Site Status (existing cinema use)	Alternative 2: Current General Plan/Zoning Buildout Scenario: All Retail ("Big Box")
(a) Land Use	No significant environmental impacts.	No significant environmental impacts.
(b) General Plan and Zoning Consistency	Consistent	Consistent
(c) Visual Factors	No significant environmental impacts.	Reduced environmental impacts.
(d) Population and Housing	No significant environmental impacts.	No beneficial jobs/housing balance effect.
(e) Transportation and Circulation	No significant environmental impacts.	Increased environmental impacts.
(f) Biological Resources	No significant environmental impacts.	Similar environmental impacts.
(g) Hydrology and Water Quality	No significant environmental impacts.	Similar environmental impacts.
(h) Infrastructure and Public Services	No significant environmental impacts.	Reduced, but still significant, environmental impacts.
(i) Soils and Geology	No significant environmental impacts.	Reduced, but still significant, environmental impacts.
(j) Public Health and Safety	No significant environmental impacts.	Reduced, but still significant, environmental impacts.
(k) Noise	No significant environmental impacts.	Substantially reduced environmental impacts.
(l) Cultural and Historic Resources	No significant environmental impacts.	Similar environmental impacts.
(m) Air Quality	No significant environmental impacts.	Increased environmental impacts.

SOURCE: Wagstaff and Associates

Note: Alternative 7, Alternative Project Sites, is excluded from this summary comparison since no specific alternative sites have been identified.

Alternative 3: Current General Plan/Zoning Buildout Scenario: 20-Screen Cinema	Alternative 4: Current General Plan/Zoning Buildout Scenario: Auto Dealership	Alternative 5: Mixed Use: Auto Dealership and Residential	Alternative 6: Reduced Intensity Residential (300 units)
No significant environmental impacts.	No significant environmental impacts.	Similar environmental impacts.	Similar impacts.
Consistent.	Consistent.	Partially consistent, partially inconsistent.	Inconsistent.
Reduced environmental impacts.	Reduced environmental impacts.	Reduced environmental impacts.	Similar, but reduced impacts.
No beneficial jobs/housing balance effect.	No beneficial jobs/housing balance effect.	Reduced beneficial jobs/housing balance effect.	Beneficial, but reduced impacts.
Reduced environmental impacts.	Reduced, but still significant, environmental impacts.	Reduced, but still significant, environmental impacts.	Reduced, but still significant impacts.
Similar environmental impacts.	Similar environmental impacts.	Similar environmental impacts.	Similar environmental impacts.
Similar environmental impacts.	Similar environmental impacts.	Similar environmental impacts.	Similar environmental impacts.
Reduced, but still significant, environmental impacts.	Reduced environmental impacts.	Reduced, but still significant, environmental impacts.	Similar, but reduced demands.
Reduced, but still significant, environmental impacts.	Reduced environmental impacts.	Reduced, but still significant, environmental impacts.	Similar environmental impacts.
Reduced, but still significant, environmental impacts.	Reduced environmental impacts.	Reduced, but still significant, environmental impacts.	Reduced, but still significant, environmental impacts.
Reduced environmental impacts.	Reduced environmental impacts.	Reduced environmental impacts.	Reduced environmental impacts.
Similar environmental impacts.	Similar environmental impacts.	Similar environmental impacts.	Similar environmental impacts.
Substantially reduced, but still significant, environmental impacts.	Reduced, but still significant environmental impacts.	Reduced, but still significant, environmental impacts.	Reduced, but still significant environmental impacts.

MINUTES

PLANNING COMMISSION

May 3, 2005

7:30 p.m.

Council Chambers *

City Hall

1017 Middlefield Rd

Redwood City, CA

Ph: 650-780-7233

Accessible to Disabled

APPROVED

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Commissioner Claire, Commissioner Cronin, Commissioner Garcia, Chair Paulson, and Commissioner Piulle, Commissioner Radcliffe, and Vice-Chair Seybert

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: None

STAFF PRESENT: Principal Planner Passanisi, Assistant City Attorney Brower, Economic Development Coordinator Webb, Staff Consultant Williams, Planning Secretary Mateo, and Planning Commission Secretary Shaw.

GUESTS: John Wagstaff (EIR Consultant), Mr. Ray Pendro, Senior Planner (Wagstaff & Associates), Students from Sequoia High School

PROCEEDINGS RECORDED: For further information not contained in this draft of the written minutes, a tape recording of the entire meeting is available for listening at the Planning office, located in City Hall, Redwood City.

AGENDA POSTED: Copies of the Agenda for this meeting are posted in the Main Branch of the Redwood City Library on the Friday prior to the Planning Commission meeting.

1. ROLL CALL

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: April 19, 2005 and April 26, 2005

M/S: (Garcia/Claire) to approve the Minutes of April 19, 2005, as submitted.

Motion Passed with two abstentions: Commissioners Seybert & Radcliffe

M/S: (Seybert/Cronin) to approve the Minutes of April 26, 2005, as corrected.

Motion Passed with one abstention: Commissioner Piulle

3. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS: None

4. BAYSIDE GARDENS FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT (FEIR)

This project is to construct approximately 600 apartment units, retail, and associated recreational facilities on a 14.13 acre site. The EIR also examines alternative projects as required by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). This item is not a public hearing, but the Commission may take public testimony if it decides to do so.

Staff is recommending that the Commission make appropriate findings and certify the Final Environmental Impact Report.

John Wagstaff, EIR Consultant, gave a brief overview of the Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR) for the Bayside Gardens Project.

Mr. Wagstaff said the FEIR answers questions and comments the Planning Commission posed regarding the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR), at the August 24, 2004 meeting. He said the FEIR also includes a number of revisions to the DEIR text considered necessary to fully acknowledge and respond to all of the various comments received during the 45-day review period of the Draft EIR.

Mr. Wagstaff said the FEIR also includes a thorough and detailed evaluation of a range of possible alternative development plans for the project site, which includes:

- An all retail use;
- A new state-of-the-art 20-screen cinema use;
- An auto dealership;
- A mixed-use auto dealership and residential development layout, and
- A reduced density multi-family residential project.

Mr. Wagstaff said that having a certified EIR will provide an official basis for determining what additional CEQA documentation is required, for the iteration of the project, perhaps, or possibly for the evaluated alternatives in the FEIR.

Mr. Wagstaff said that, if this FEIR is not certified, any future revised project applications would require the Commission to completely repeat the EIR process.

COMMISSION DISCUSSION

Commissioner Cronin referred to page 2-13 of the FEIR - "Revisions", and asked Mr. Wagstaff for clarification as to why there was a page insert with no revisions identified.

Mr. Wagstaff said it was just for continuity.

Commissioner Piulle referred to the Blomquist Street/island Parkway Intersection (Blomquist Extension Project). She said in the DEIR, it stated that this intersection was "under construction", but she noted that the language was changed in the FEIR (Page 2-18 Mitigation Impact 7-2) to say it was just 'planned'. She asked how a project that is just "planned, could still be classified as LS (Less than Significant) Impact Measure, when no one has any idea when it will be built

Mr. Wagstaff said, it is based on "if" the Blomquist Street Extension is planned and will be implemented. This measure assumes it will go forward within the next twenty years.

Commissioner Piulle said she doesn't think it should be a LS mitigation measure, if it's just "planned" and there is no design. She said if it is not implemented, then the mitigation measure would have to be changed.

Mr. Wagstaff said that what the FEIR is saying is that, in order to mitigate this particular impact, the Blomquist Street Extension would need to be implemented. He said if the City elects not to implement that mitigation, then the Findings on the EIR, which tie together the Commission's decision-making on the project, would need to make that clarification, and explain how this mitigation has been changed to illuminate that

measure. The mitigation as currently written requires and assumes implementation of the Blomquist Street Extension, for this particular impact.

Commissioner Piulle asked if the wording could be changed.

Commissioner Seybert said that all mitigation measures are based on “if”.

Mr. Wagstaff said that was correct. He said in order to tie it all together and complete the loop, the guidelines and statutes of CEQA require a “Statement of Findings”,

Mr. Pendro, Senior Planner (Wagstaff & Associates) said the Impact Measure is based on build-out of the Marina Shores Village and Bayside Gardens projects. He said when the Measure was written, it was based on the threshold of 750 units in Marina Shores Village, which would trigger the need for the Blomquist Street Extension for emergency evacuation. He said basically that impact has gone away, because the Marina Shores Village was not approved. If the project goes forward, then it will become an impact.

Chair Paulson referred to two documents, one from the Department of Transportation and one from BCDC, both which had challenges to the sufficiency of the original DEIR. She said she was satisfied with the responses to the Department of Transportation, but questioned Mr. Wagstaff about a couple of responses to BCDC, which stated, “No, the Draft EIR is fine”.

Mr. Wagstaff said that they did outline why they believed the DEIR was adequate, He said CEQA doesn’t require reconciliation of the differences, they only require disclosure.

Jon Lynch, City Engineer said the Blomquist Street Extension project was on the verge of implementation one year ago. He said the City lost the funding for the project, when the public voted to disapprove the Marina Shores Village project. Mr. Lynch said we are now in the process of acquiring right-of-way, from the property owner. He said there may be relocation expenses involved.

PUBIC COMMENT

Ralph Nobles, Redwood City resident representing the “Friends of Redwood City” expressed a few concerns of the organization:

1. Is this where we want to put housing? What is the carrying capacity for traffic, water, etc.? He said housing should be near transportation, and this particular site was not.
2. Will the Wildlife Refuge be protected from urban predators (i.e., cats, rats, etc.). He said dogs are able to walk across the slough between the trail and Wildlife Refuge, when the tide is low.
3. He said this particular site would be better suited for industrial and commercial uses.

Mr. Passanisi, Principal Planner, pointed out for the record, that the EIR does recognize the inconsistency with the land use, and it is recognized as a Significant Unavoidable Adverse Impact in the Land Use Element of the General Plan.

M/S: (Seybert/Radcliffe) that the Planning Commission has reviewed and considered all the information contained in the Final EIR; and that the Final EIR reflects the City's independent judgment and analysis, and that the Final EIR has been completed in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), and based on these findings, the Planning Commission seeks to certify the EIR.

Motion Passed 7-0

6. MATTERS OF COMMISSION INTEREST

- May 17, 2005 – Downtown Parking Management Plan – (Tentative)
- June 13, 2005 - Downtown Precise Plan Joint Meeting with the ARC

7. ADJOURNMENT

M/S: (Garcia/Piulle) to adjourn the meeting

Motion Passed

The meeting adjourned at 8:10 p.m. to reconvene at its next regular meeting scheduled for 7:30 p.m. on May 17, 2005, in the City Hall Council Chamber, 1017 Middlefield Road, Redwood City, California.

Respectfully Submitted,

Tom Cronin, Secretary
REDWOOD CITY PLANNING COMMISSION