



Section 6.0:

Alternatives



6.0 ALTERNATIVES

6.1 INTRODUCTION

CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6 requires the identification and evaluation of reasonable alternatives designed to feasibly achieve the most basic objectives of the project, while avoiding or substantially lessening any of the significant environmental effects of the project. In addition, *CEQA* requires a comparative evaluation of the merits of the alternatives.

Pursuant to *CEQA Guidelines* Section 15126.6 (f)(1), factors that may be taken into account when addressing the feasibility of alternatives include, but are not limited to, site suitability, economic viability, availability of infrastructure, general plan consistency, other plans or regulatory limitations, jurisdictional boundaries, and whether the proponent can reasonably acquire, control or otherwise have access to the alternative site (or the site is already owned by the proponent). Although these factors do not present a strict limit on the scope of reasonable alternatives to be considered, they help establish the context in which “the rule of reason” is measured against when determining an appropriate range of alternatives sufficient to establish and foster meaningful public participation and informed decision-making.

GENERAL PLAN 2035 PROCESS

It is important to discuss the General Plan 2035 process, as that process lead to the selection of the preferred General Plan Land Use Diagram. The following outlines the General Plan 2035 process:

- ***Project Understanding and Initiation.*** This task involved the General Plan Team reviewing existing plans and studies, conducting site visits, and collecting new data needed for the General Plan. This task culminated in the preparation of an Existing Conditions Report.
- ***Visioning and Community Involvement.*** The first phase of community participation in the General Plan 2035 was called “visioning” because it asked the community to help define a vision of what Murrieta should be in the future. Participation opportunities included workshops and surveys, as described below. The input received from the community through these various opportunities shaped the following ten community priorities that served as the foundation for the General Plan.



Natural Environment	<i>Protect the natural beauty of the mountains, hills, and waterways.</i>
Rural Areas	<i>Preserve elements of Murrieta’s rural heritage.</i>
Community Character	<i>Protect and foster a strong sense of community and safety, as well as the "small town" feeling.</i>
Recreation and Culture	<i>Provide abundant parks and facilities for recreational activities, and cultural amenities.</i>
Historic Downtown Murrieta	<i>Create a vibrant, prosperous Historic Downtown that serves as a community center and provides a variety of quality shopping and dining experiences.</i>
Governance	<i>Promote community involvement and provide for a fiscally sound future.</i>
Sustainable Economy	<i>Pursue economic vitality and longevity by attracting higher education and growing a base of clean industry, while maintaining the current housing affordability.</i>
Transportation	<i>Improve roadway networks to reduce traffic, and provide a citywide system of bicycle lanes and recreational trails that improve accessibility without a car.</i>
Infrastructure and Services	<i>Improve health care within the City, and continue to provide excellent school, police, fire, library, and recreation services.</i>
Youth Amenities	<i>Provide ample activities for all ages of youth, and jobs for teens.</i>

- **Land Use Alternatives.** The next major phase in the planning process considered and analyzed different scenarios for land use change, with several opportunities for community input.

Before commencing work on the General Plan 2035, the City Council decided on four “Focus Areas” that were targeted for land use change:

- North Murrieta Business Corridor
- Clinton Keith/Mitchell Area



- Golden Triangle North (Central Murrieta)
- South Murrieta Business Corridor

These areas included key locations along freeway corridors that are suitable for major land development and redevelopment to carry out the City Council's economic development strategy. It also included rural residential areas north of Clinton Keith Road that are adjacent to major new development along I-215.

Through the General Plan 2035 process, three additional Focus Areas were identified:

- Multiple Use Area 3 (MU-3)
- Los Alamos Hills
- Historic Downtown Murrieta

The Focus Areas are shown on *Exhibit 3-3* in Section 3.0, Project Description.

Following the community workshops and City Council and Planning Commission joint workshops (described below), a preferred Land Use Alternative was selected for analysis in the EIR.

- ***Preparation of the General Plan Elements and Program Environmental Impact Report.*** During this phase in the General Plan process, goals and policies were developed to reflect the vision and priorities of the community. Joint City Council and Planning Commission workshops were held to provide a preview of the updated General Plan, including a review of some of the draft goals and policies (described below). Following the development of the goals and policies, an environmental review was conducted to evaluate the impacts of the policy program and the preferred land use alternative. A Draft General Plan and Draft Program EIR were developed for public review.

Community Involvement

The following provides an overview of the visioning and community involvement that occurred during the General Plan 2035 process:

- ***Outreach.*** In January 2010, the City of Murrieta kicked off an outreach campaign to raise public awareness of the General Plan 2035 process and opportunities to participate. Early outreach efforts included "information centers" at City Hall and the Library, presentations to business groups, and staffed tables at local retailers (Wal-Mart) and the City's Recreation Expo. Outreach continued throughout the process with updates to the project website, press releases, and email newsletters.
- ***Online Survey.*** Residents were invited to participate in an online survey from January 8 to February 8, 2010 and describe what about Murrieta they wanted to stay the same, the challenges they felt Murrieta needs to overcome, and their hopes for Murrieta's future (Treasures, Challenges, and Visions). There were 94 responses to the visioning survey.



- **Workshops.** Visioning workshops began with the same questions as the survey, asking for ideas on Treasures, Challenges, and Visions. Participants then worked in groups to provide further direction on the popular topics. Students at Vista Murrieta High School participated in a youth visioning workshop which engaged 48 students from grades 9-12 on January 22, 2010 and led students to create vision statements for Murrieta. This was followed by two workshops for the community at large, held at Murrieta Mesa High School on the evening of Thursday, January 28, 2010 and duplicated on the morning of Saturday, January 30, 2010. Over 60 people participated in these community workshops, suggesting objectives and action steps for several topics.

A visioning workshop was held for the rural Los Alamos area on April 13, 2010. Approximately 50 participants did a Treasures, Challenges, Visions exercise and then worked in groups to write vision statements for the Los Alamos area.

- **Feedback on Community Priorities.** A summary of the initial visioning input was placed online and provided a detailed description of participation in the survey and workshops. In that summary, the General Plan Team distilled all input into several “community priorities” for the future of Murrieta. The public was then asked to provide feedback on these community priorities through a second online survey and a room-wide polling exercise at the land use workshop on March 27, 2010.

A Community Vision Report presented the ten final community priorities, a summary of visioning activities, and verbatim input from the community. The report was posted on the General Plan 2035 website.

- **Land Use Alternatives Workshops.** Development of the land use alternatives involved several community and joint City Council and Planning Commission workshops.

COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS

The General Plan Team sought input on land use changes in five Focus Areas from local residents, property owners, and other stakeholders by holding a series of land use workshops from March to June 2010. A community workshop was held on March 27, 2010 in which participants worked in groups to provide general direction on land use in the Focus Areas anticipated for land use changes.

Local meetings were held in each of the Focus Areas to discuss land use in those areas. Formats of these meetings were tailored to the needs for each area. Generally, the first meeting for each area asked participants for open-ended input on land use, and a follow-up meeting presented land use alternatives for additional feedback. These meetings were held as follows:

- North Murrieta Business Corridor – March 23 and June 2, 2010
- Clinton Keith/Mitchell – March 25 and June 8, 2010



- South Murrieta Business Corridor – March 29, 2010
- Multiple Use 3 (MU-3) Area – April 22 and June 7, 2010
- Golden Triangle North – May 3 and June 10, 2010

The input received at those meetings, and submitted in writing, was summarized in the Land Use Summary Report: Community Workshop and Land Use Area Meetings, which was posted on the General Plan 2035 website.

CITY COUNCIL AND PLANNING COMMISSION WORKSHOPS

Joint meetings of the City Council and Planning Commission were held on June 23, 2010 and July 6, 2010, so that these officials could review a series of land use alternatives for the five Focus Areas targeted for land use change, consider community comments, and provide direction to City Staff and the General Plan Team on a Recommended Land Use Alternative.

- ***Goals and Policies/General Plan Drafts Workshops.*** A community workshop and two joint City Council and Planning Commission workshops were held to obtain input of the draft goals and policies.

“GOALS FOR A HEALTHY MURRIETA” WORKSHOP

A public workshop on October 21, 2010 had the dual purpose of obtaining direction on General Plan 2035 goals and hearing ideas on how Murrieta can be a healthy community. A brief presentation at the beginning of the workshop reviewed the purpose and progress of the General Plan 2035. The presentation then described the relationships between the built environment and health, and provided information on health in Murrieta. Groups of participants were asked to write goals that could help the City to achieve the Community Priorities derived in the visioning process, and to suggest ways to promote health while pursuing those goals.

CITY COUNCIL AND PLANNING COMMISSION WORKSHOPS

Two joint workshops of the City Council and Planning Commission were held on November 30, 2010 and January 11, 2011 to provide a preview of the major features of the updated General Plan, in anticipation of the release of the public review draft. Presentations at these workshops reviewed some of the draft goals and policies, and introduced the concept of separating the land use map from the zoning map. Public comments were received at both workshops.



Determination of Alternatives to Be Analyzed

Key factors used to determine the range of feasible alternatives to the proposed General Plan 2035 include the objectives established for the EIR process, the City Council’s number one priority of Economic Development, and the community values and vision for the General Plan 2035.

The basic objectives of the proposed General Plan 2035 and General Plan EIR are set forth specifically and in detail in [Section 3.3, Statement of Objectives](#). [Section 3.2, Background](#), provides the framework for the economic development foundation for the General Plan 2035, and is summarized in the following sentences. The City Council established a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy in October 2008, making economic development of Murrieta the number one priority for the City. The Strategy served as one of the key factors to initiate a comprehensive General Plan Update. The update process involved a number of steps, including but not limited to, visioning and community involvement that led to the establishment of ten community priorities; a complete revision to all the elements, and the addition of new elements. The community priorities are reflected throughout the General Plan 2035, and have been previously stated in this Section. The land use alternatives for the General Plan Update were developed based upon the City Council’s number one priority along with the City’s goal to revitalize and make Murrieta a regional hub of economic activity. Both of these served as key driving factors for the update and ultimately to the City Council and Planning Commission selection of a Recommend Land Use Scenario and two additional alternatives (Scenario A and Scenario B). The land use changes identified in the Land Use Element that make way for this revitalization and economic activity are the cornerstones of General Plan 2035.

With these factors in mind, the following alternatives have been identified for detailed analysis in this section:

- No Project/Existing General Plan
- Scenario A
- Scenario B

ALTERNATIVES ANALYSIS

Potentially significant impacts that would result from implementation of the proposed General Plan 2035 are identified in [Section 5.0, Environmental Analysis](#), which indicates that the proposed General Plan 2035 would result in significant and unavoidable impacts related to:

- *Traffic*
 - Roadway Segments Exceeding LOS Standards (LOS D, E, or F) – Project and Cumulative Impacts
 - Intersections Exceeding LOS Standards (LOS D, E, or F) – Project and Cumulative Impacts



- **Air Quality**
 - Short-Term Construction Emissions – Project and Cumulative Impacts
 - Long-Term Mobile and Stationary Source Emissions – Project and Cumulative Impacts

- **Noise**
 - Cumulative Long-Term Operation Noise Impacts

- **Parks and Recreation Facilities**
 - Parks and Recreational Facilities – Project and Cumulative Impacts

Implementation of the identified goals, policies, or mitigation measures can mitigate all other potentially significant impacts to less than significant levels. This section considers alternatives to otherwise avoid or minimize these impacts.

A description of each alternative and a comparative environmental evaluation to the impacts identified for the proposed General Plan 2035 is provided below. The evaluation is followed by a conclusion.

6.2 NO PROJECT/EXISTING GENERAL PLAN ALTERNATIVE

6.2.1 DESCRIPTION

As required by *CEQA Guidelines* Section 15126.6 (e), the No Project/Existing General Plan Alternative describes buildout of the City of Murrieta in accordance with existing zoning and General Plan land use designations and policies of the current General Plan, which was adopted in 1994 with amendments in 2006 (refer to *Exhibit 5.1-3, Existing General Plan/Zoning Map*). This Alternative assumes that the existing General Plan would continue to provide outdated information regarding several issues, such as land uses, traffic conditions, community noise levels, air quality data, public services and utilities levels of service, and population, employment and housing.

This Alternative assumes that ultimate buildout of the existing General Plan would occur. The No Project/Existing General Plan Alternative encompasses the same geographic area as that in the proposed General Plan 2035. The General Plan 2035 proposes the revisions to the Existing General Plan, as outlined in Section 3.5.1, Components of the Proposed General Plan 2035.



6.2.2 IMPACT EVALUATION

LAND USE

Two objectives of the proposed General Plan 2035 are to provide comprehensive and concise land use designations that better reflect the land use vision for the City and to update the General Plan development projections to the year 2035. The No Project/Existing General Plan Alternative land use designations do not adequately address the development patterns and land use vision for the City. Further, this Alternative does not include a land use plan that reflects the current development projections for future years. Under the No Project/Existing General Plan Alternative, the existing Land Use Element would continue to provide outdated information that does not reflect the current conditions or goals of the City. This Alternative would prevent the City from achieving some of the core objectives of the 2035 General Plan, including economic revitalization, job creation, and healthy community goals. The proposed General Plan 2035 revises and updates the existing Land Use Element, including establishing Focus Areas for future growth that reflect the economic development priorities of the City. The General Plan 2035 proposes removal of the MU-1, MU-2, and MU-3 land use and zoning designations and the introduction of a mixed-use land use designation. The proposed General Plan 2035 provides updated land use information for the City, including land uses that have changed over time and may not be reflective of the existing General Plan’s land use designations. It establishes the policy foundation to address current and anticipated buildout conditions over the next 25 years. The existing inconsistency impact with the *Riverside County Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan* associated with the French Valley Airport would continue to occur with this Alternative, as no new policies would be included to address the inconsistency.. In this regard, the No Project/Existing General Plan Alternative is considered environmentally inferior to the proposed General Plan 2035.

POPULATION, HOUSING, AND EMPLOYMENT

Two objectives of the proposed General Plan 2035 are to update the City’s environmental baseline conditions to 2009 and to update the General Plan development projections to the year 2035 for dwelling units, non-residential square footage, population, and employment. The No Project/Existing General Plan Alternative does not reflect the most current population, employment, and housing numbers or projections, nor does it provide quantitative population, employment, and housing projections for future years. The existing General Plan was adopted in 1994 with amendments in 2006, and therefore does not address current conditions or plan for anticipated growth within the City over the next 25 years. In contrast, the proposed General Plan 2035 reflects the current priorities of the City, including economic development and increased employment opportunities within the City. The No Project/Existing General Plan Alternative does not provide for the type and intensity of non-residential development within specific Focus Areas of the City in order to achieve these priorities to the extent of the General Plan 2035. Further, the jobs/housing balance would not be improved to the extent of the General Plan 2035.



Therefore, the No Project/Existing General Plan Alternative is considered environmentally inferior to the proposed General Plan 2035 in this regard.

AESTHETICS

Both the No Project/Existing General Plan Alternative and the General Plan 2035 would encourage preservation of existing residential neighborhoods within the City. Vacant land within the City comprises approximately 7,291 acres, representing approximately 34 percent of the City's acreage. The proposed General Plan 2035 has identified Focus Areas within the City for development, which includes areas of vacant land. New development within these areas would change the character of the areas and their surroundings. It is anticipated that similar areas would be developed under the No Project/Existing General Plan Alternative resulting in changes to the existing character of the areas. However, the proposed General Plan 2035 would involve land use changes within these areas to provide for more consistent and compatible development, while allowing for the City's economic development priorities to be achieved. The No Project/Existing General Plan Alternative does not provide the framework and focused vision to address the visual character of future development within the City to the extent of the proposed General Plan 2035. The proposed General Plan 2035 establishes policies that address the desired character of development within these areas. Thus, the No Project/Existing General Plan Alternative is considered environmentally inferior to the Proposed General Plan 2035 in this regard.

TRAFFIC AND CIRCULATION

Levels of service associated with the No Project/Existing General Plan Alternative were calculated for both roadway segments and intersections (refer to Appendix C for the detailed traffic impact analysis). Two scenarios were modeled: without the extension of Whitewood Road between Jackson Avenue and Murrieta Hot Springs Road in place; and with the extension of Whitewood Road between Jackson Avenue and Murrieta Hot Springs Road in place.

Roadway Segments – Without the Whitewood Road Extension

Using the No Project/Existing General Plan buildout scenario daily traffic volumes and the maximum daily roadway capacity values, daily volume-to-capacity ratios have been determined for the scenario without the Whitewood Road extension. Several roadway segments are projected to operate at an unacceptable level of service (LOS D, E, or F) per the City of Murrieta's LOS standards; refer to Appendix C, Figure 12. The roadway segments generally include, but are not limited to:

Level of Service D

- Portions of Jefferson Avenue, Whitewood Road, Winchester Road, and Washington Avenue.



Level of Service E

- Portions of Jefferson Avenue, Monroe Avenue, Jackson Avenue, Alta Murrieta Drive, and Clinton Keith Road.

Level of Service F

- Portions of Jefferson Avenue, Clinton Keith Road, California Oaks Road, Los Alamos Road, Hancock Avenue, Winchester Road, Menifee Road, and Kalmia Street.

Roadway Segments – With the Whitewood Road Extension

Using the No Project/Existing General Plan buildout scenario daily traffic volumes and the maximum daily roadway capacity values, daily volume-to-capacity ratios have been determined for the scenario with the Whitewood Road extension in place. The following roadway segments are projected to operate at an unacceptable level of service (LOS D, E, or F) per the City of Murrieta’s Level of Service standards; refer to Appendix C, Figure 14. The roadway segments generally include, but are not limited to:

Level of Service D

- Portions of Madison Avenue, Jefferson Avenue, Guava Street, Hancock Avenue, California Oaks Road, and Monroe Avenue.

Level of Service E

- Portions of Jefferson Avenue, California Oaks Road, Clinton Keith Road, Murrieta Hot Springs Road, Winchester Road, Menifee Road, and Hancock Road.

Level of Service F

- Portions of Murrieta Hot Springs Road, Jefferson Avenue, Clinton Keith Road, Winchester Road, Los Alamos Road.

Intersections

Under the No Project/Existing General Plan Alternative, all future study intersections are projected to operate at LOS D or better with the exception of the following 15 intersections:

- Menifee Road/Scott Road
- Winchester Road - SR-79/Scott Road
- Antelope Road/Keller Road
- Whitewood-Meadowlark/Golden City Drive – Baxter Road
- I-215 NB Off-Ramp/Clinton Keith Road
- Meadowlark – Whitewood Road/Clinton Keith Road
- Winchester Road - SR-79/Benton Road
- Jefferson Avenue/Murrieta Hot Springs Road
- Madison Avenue/Murrieta Hot Springs Road
- Jefferson Avenue/Kalmia Street



- Winchester Road (SR-79)/Murrieta Hot Springs Road
- Hancock Avenue/Los Alamos Road
- I-215 SB Ramps/Los Alamos Road
- Whitewood Road/Murrieta Hot Springs Road
- Nutmeg Street/Clinton Keith Road

As indicated in [Section 5.4, Traffic and Circulation](#), 18 study intersections would operate at an unacceptable LOS under the proposed General Plan 2035. With intersection improvements, 16 intersections would continue to operate at an unacceptable LOS based upon the City's performance criteria under the proposed General Plan 2035. Thus, fewer impacts would occur under the No Project/Existing General Plan Alternative when compared to the proposed General Plan 2035.

The proposed General Plan 2035 encourages new and/or improved transit operations within the City, as well as accessibility between major uses and users. Other alternative modes of transportation, including walking and biking are also encouraged. The Circulation Element of the proposed General Plan 2035 identifies the provision of a multi-modal circulation system with accessibility to all users as a key goal. The General Plan 2035 proposes policies that would support and encourage the use of alternative transportation and ensure that adequate alternative transportation is available to serve demand. Although the No Project/Existing General Plan Alternative provides goals and policies to support and encourage alternative modes of transportation, it does not do so to the extent of the proposed General Plan 2035. However, since the number of deficient intersections would be less with the No Project/Existing General Plan Alternative when compared to the General Plan 2035, this Alternative is considered environmentally superior to the proposed General Plan 2035.

AIR QUALITY

The No Project/Existing General Plan Alternative would allow for new development on existing vacant land or through redevelopment of currently developed land, similar to the proposed General Plan 2035. Although the amount and intensity of development would be greater under the proposed General Plan 2035, development under either the No Project/Existing General Plan Alternative or the proposed General Plan 2035 would result in significant unavoidable impacts related to construction-related emissions, regional operational emissions, AQMP consistency, and cumulative construction and operational impacts. All other air quality impacts associated with the proposed General Plan 2035 and No Project/Existing General Plan Alternative can be mitigated to less than significant levels. However, the proposed General Plan 2035 land use plan and goals and policies provide for greater opportunities to protect and improve air quality, including updated goals and policies that reflect current regulatory requirements, as well as providing opportunities for a better jobs/housing balance to reduce vehicle miles traveled, encouraging energy conservation and new and expanded regional and local transit opportunities, and providing future opportunities to developed mixed-use and transit-oriented developments. Thus, the No Project/Existing General Plan Alternative is considered environmentally inferior to the proposed General Plan 2035 in this regard.



GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

In accordance with AB 32, the City would be required to reduce GHG emissions to 1990 levels by 2020. Development pursuant to the No Project/Existing General Plan Alternative would result in additional GHG emissions with future development, similar to the proposed General Plan 2035. The City has prepared a Climate Action Plan (CAP) as part of the proposed General Plan 2035 to address GHG emissions reduction within the City. The strategies identified in the CAP contain emission reduction measures from municipal and non-municipal operations. These measures are consistent with and build upon the goals and policies within the proposed General Plan 2035. The strategies identified in the CAP would achieve the desired reduction target of 15 percent below baseline levels by 2020 under the proposed General Plan 2035. Since the No Project/Existing General Plan Alternative does not include goals and policies that would address GHG emissions reductions within the City to the extent of the proposed General Plan 2035, it is possible that the City would not meet its reduction targets of AB 32 under this Alternative, resulting in a significant impact. Thus, the No Project/Existing General Plan Alternative is considered environmentally inferior to the proposed General Plan 2035 in this regard.

NOISE

The No Project/Existing General Plan Alternative would allow for new development on existing vacant land or through redevelopment of currently developed land, similar to the proposed General Plan 2035. Although the amount and intensity of development would be greater under the proposed General Plan 2035, development under either the No Project/Existing General Plan Alternative or the proposed General Plan 2035 would result in additional noise from construction activities and the resulting increase in traffic associated with future development. Cumulative long-term operational noise impacts would be significant and unavoidable due to anticipated City growth, along with cumulative growth in the Sphere of Influence and outside the City. Thus, the No Project/Existing General Plan Alternative is considered neither environmentally superior nor inferior to the proposed General Plan 2035 in this regard.

GEOLOGY AND SEISMIC HAZARDS

Development under either the No Project/Existing General Plan Alternative or the proposed General Plan 2035 would potentially result in new development (i.e., new residential and non-residential land uses), thereby resulting in an increase in population. Potential new development would be located throughout the City and would result in a larger number of structures/people potentially exposed to substantial adverse effects associated with severe ground shaking or ground failure. However, impacts related to geologic and seismic hazards associated with either the No Project/Existing General Plan Alternative or the proposed General Plan 2035 would be less than significant by adherence to and/or compliance with building codes and standards and the goals and policies of the proposed General Plan 2035. However, it should be noted that the No Project/Existing General Plan Alternative would involve the development of fewer residential units and non-residential square footage than the proposed General Plan 2035.



Therefore, the number of people or structures that would potentially be exposed to seismic hazards would be reduced with this Alternative. Therefore, the No Project/Existing General Plan Alternative would be considered environmentally superior to the proposed General Plan 2035 in this regard.

CULTURAL RESOURCES

The No Project/Existing General Plan Alternative and proposed General Plan 2035 would allow for new development on existing vacant land. Therefore, potential impacts to known or unknown/undiscovered historical, archaeological, or paleontological resources would be similar under the No Project/Existing General Plan Alternative or the proposed General Plan 2035. However, impacts related to cultural resources associated with either the No Project/Existing General Plan Alternative or the proposed General Plan 2035 would be less than significant by adherence to and/or compliance with the goals and policies of the No Project/Existing General Plan Alternative or proposed General Plan 2035, respectively and mitigation measures. Therefore, the No Project/Existing General Plan Alternative is considered neither environmentally superior nor inferior to the proposed General Plan 2035 in this regard.

BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

The No Project/Existing General Plan Alternative and proposed General Plan 2035 would allow for new development of vacant land or through redevelopment of currently developed land that may contain biological resources. Therefore, potential impacts to habit modifications of any species identified as sensitive or special status species, riparian habitat, sensitive natural communities, federally protected wetlands, movement of native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species would be similar under the No Project/Existing General Plan Alternative or the proposed General Plan 2035. It is anticipated that impacts related to biological resources associated with either the No Project/Existing General Plan Alternative or the proposed General Plan 2035 would be less than significant by adherence to and/or compliance with the current regulatory requirements and the goals and policies of the No Project/Existing General Plan Alternative or proposed General Plan 2035, respectively. Therefore, the No Project/Existing General Plan Alternative is considered neither environmentally superior nor inferior to the proposed General Plan 2035 in this regard.

AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES

Future development under the No Project/Existing General Plan Alternative and proposed General Plan 2035 may involve parcels of land currently operating for agricultural purposes or identified for agricultural production. Therefore, potential impacts to prime farmland, unique farmland, farmland of statewide importance, or Williams Act contracts would be similar under the No Project/Existing General Plan Alternative or the proposed General Plan 2035. It is anticipated that impacts related to agricultural resources associated with either the No Project/Existing General Plan Alternative or the proposed General Plan 2035 would be less than



significant. However, the proposed General Plan 2035 provides better protection and promotion of agricultural resources and activities, including the promotion of urban agriculture, when compared to the No Project/Existing General Plan Alternative. Therefore, the No Project/Existing General Plan Alternative is considered environmentally inferior to the proposed General Plan 2035 in this regard.

MINERAL RESOURCES

Future development under the No Project/Existing General Plan Alternative and proposed General Plan 2035 may involve lands that contain unknown mineral resources. Therefore, potential impacts to mineral resources would be similar under the No Project/Existing General Plan Alternative or the proposed General Plan 2035. It is anticipated that impacts related to mineral resources associated with either the No Project/Existing General Plan Alternative or the proposed General Plan 2035 would be less than significant by adherence to and/or compliance with goals and policies of the No Project/Existing General Plan Alternative or the proposed General Plan 2035, respectively. Therefore, the No Project/Existing General Plan Alternative is considered neither environmentally superior nor inferior to the proposed General Plan 2035 in this regard.

HYDROLOGY, DRAINAGE, AND WATER QUALITY

The No Project/Existing General Plan Alternative and proposed General Plan 2035 would potentially allow for new development on existing vacant land, resulting in increased population and development that could result in hydrology, drainage, or water quality impacts. The proposed General Plan 2035 would allow for greater development when compared to the No Project/Existing General Plan Alternative, resulting in increased hydrology, drainage and water quality impacts. Buildout of the proposed General Plan 2035 would involve greater development and greater demand for groundwater resources due to increased growth and decreased reliance of imported water supplies, when compared to the No Project/Existing General Plan Alternative. The Conservation Element of the proposed General Plan 2035 includes goals and policies that address stormwater management and water quality to ensure that potential impacts would be reduced. These policies provide for increased protection and provide updated and current information regarding stormwater and water quality requirements. However, compliance with the regulatory requirements and existing goals and policies would reduce impacts to a less than significant level under the No Project/Existing General Plan Alternative. Since the No Project/Existing General Plan Alternative would allow for less development than the proposed General Plan 2035, the No Project/Existing General Plan Alternative is considered environmentally superior to the proposed General Plan 2035 in this regard.



HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Implementation of the No Project/Existing General Plan Alternative or the proposed General Plan 2035 would potentially result in the expansion or development of facilities that could impact the health and safety of Murrieta residents and employees. Both the No Project/Existing General Plan Alternative and the proposed General Plan 2035 provide goals and policies to reduce the potential threat associated with hazardous material use, disposal, and transport. The MU-3 designation that occurs under the No Project/Existing General Plan Alternative currently allows for the development of mixed-uses, including the placement of residential and non-residential uses in proximity to each other. These non-residential uses may involve the storage and/or use of hazardous materials. Although the MU-3 designation would be removed as part of the proposed General Plan 2035, the General Plan 2035 proposes a mixed-use land use designation that would allow for mixed-use development in the future, including the placement of residential and non-residential uses in proximity to each other. The General Plan 2035 proposes new policies to address the potential for hazards and hazardous materials impacts associated with mixed-use developments and the protection of residential uses. Thus, the General Plan 2035 would provide for better protection related to potential hazards and hazardous materials impacts associated with mixed-use developments when compared to the No Project/Existing General Plan Alternative. Therefore, the No Project/Existing General Plan Alternative is considered environmentally inferior to the proposed General Plan 2035 in this regard.

PUBLIC SERVICES AND UTILITIES

The No Project/Existing General Plan Alternative does not represent the true level of service demand based on current conditions. Implementation of the proposed General Plan 2035 would provide a comprehensive inventory of existing public services and utilities and the levels of service provided to the City. Growth associated with the proposed General Plan 2035 would exceed the growth anticipated with the No Project/Existing General Plan Alternative. Therefore, the level of service and demand for service would be less with the No Project/Existing General Plan Alternative than the proposed General Plan 2035. However, with the exception of parks and recreational facilities, goals and policies in the proposed General Plan 2035 would reduce potential impacts to a less than significant level. Impacts to parks and recreational facilities would be significant and unavoidable with the No Project/Existing General Plan Alternative and the proposed General Plan 2035. Thus, the No Project/Existing General Plan Alternative is considered neither environmentally superior nor inferior to the proposed General Plan 2035 in this regard.

CONCLUSION

The No Project/Existing General Plan Alternative would result in similar environmental impacts as the proposed General Plan 2035 for noise, cultural resources, biological resources, mineral resources, and public services and utilities. However, this Alternative may generate higher



impacts than the proposed General Plan 2035 with respect to land use, population, housing, and employment, aesthetics, air quality, greenhouse gas emissions, agricultural resources, and hazards and hazardous materials. This Alternative would generate fewer impacts than the proposed General Plan 2035 with respect to traffic and circulation, geology and seismic hazards, and hydrology, drainage, and water quality. It is the intent of the proposed General Plan 2035 to provide new information based on current conditions within the City and to provide goals and policies that address current conditions. The conditions evaluated under the No Project/Existing General Plan Alternative would not serve the City as effectively as the proposed General Plan 2035 and provides environmental data that is inferior to the proposed General Plan 2035. Additionally, the No Project/Existing General Plan Alternative would not provide the land use plan and policy direction to achieve the core economic development objectives of the General Plan 2035, which focuses on guiding the development of vacant land, specifically focusing on opportunities for economic development within key Focus Areas. To achieve this vision, the City seeks to encourage private sector investment in the creation of higher paying jobs, income, and wealth through economic diversification. The City is focusing its efforts to attract a variety of businesses and industries, higher educational institutions, and health care facilities. A full range of quality new development would be part of this effort, including retail centers, corporate/technology parks, hotels, and upscale restaurants that would be supported by the proposed General Plan 2035.

6.3 SCENARIO A ALTERNATIVE

6.3.1 DESCRIPTION

The Scenario A Alternative assumes that the proposed General Plan 2035, including all goals and policies would be adopted; however, the land use plan within the Clinton Keith/Mitchell, North Murrieta Business Corridor, and Multiple Use Area 3 (MU-3) Focus Areas would provide for greater residential dwelling units and less non-residential square footage when compared to the proposed General Plan 2035 (refer to *Exhibit 6-1, Scenario A Alternative*). Citywide growth and anticipated growth within the remaining Focus Areas would be the same for both the Scenario A Alternative and the proposed General Plan 2035.

The anticipated growth over existing conditions within the Focus Areas with the Scenario A Alternative would be:

- 10,890 dwelling units; and
- 18,333,890 square feet of non-residential uses.

When compared to the proposed General Plan 2035, the Scenario A Alternative would result in the following within the Focus Areas:

- 7,544 more dwelling units; and
- 2,822,894 fewer square feet of non-residential uses.



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6.3.2 IMPACT EVALUATION

LAND USE

As with the proposed General Plan 2035, the Scenario A Alternative revises and updates the existing Land Use Element, including establishing Focus Areas for future growth that reflect the economic development priorities of the City. The Scenario A Alternative proposes removal of the MU-1, MU-2, and MU-3 land use and zoning designations and the introduction of a mixed-use land use designation, similar to the proposed General Plan 2035. The Scenario A Alternative provides updated land use information for the City, including land uses that have changed over time and may not be reflective of the existing General Plan's land use designations. It establishes the policy foundation to address current and anticipated buildout conditions over the next 25 years. The Scenario A Alternative would involve changes to land use designations that would allow for the development of additional multiple-family residential uses within the Clinton Keith/Mitchell and North Murrieta Business Corridor Focus Areas, when compared to the General Plan 2035. These land use changes would continue to provide consistent and compatible development within the City and be consistent with Federal, State, and regional plans, policies, or regulations, similar to the proposed General Plan 2035. Similar to the proposed General Plan 2035, this Alternative would provide additional land use policies for consistency with the *Riverside County Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan* associated with the French Valley Airport. The Scenario A Alternative is considered neither environmentally superior nor inferior to the proposed General Plan 2035.

POPULATION, HOUSING AND EMPLOYMENT

The Scenario A Alternative would update the City's environmental baseline conditions to 2009 and update the General Plan development projections to the year 2035, similar to the General Plan 2035. Development projections include projections for dwelling units, non-residential square footage, population, and employment. The Scenario A Alternative would provide the most current population, housing, and employment numbers or projections, and quantitative population, employment, and housing projections for future years. Although the Scenario A Alternative reflects the current priorities of the City, including economic development and increased employment opportunities within the City, it does not provide the amount of non-residential development to achieve these priorities to the extent of the proposed General Plan 2035. The Scenario A Alternative would provide for greater residential development (7,544 more dwelling units) and decreased non-residential development (2,822,894 fewer square feet of non-residential uses) when compared to the proposed General Plan 2035. As indicated in Section 5.2, Population, Housing, and Employment and Section 7.0, Other CEQA Considerations, potential buildout of the proposed General Plan 2035 would result in 44,484 dwelling units and 130,153 jobs, resulting in a jobs/housing ratio of approximately 2.9. A ratio of 1.0 or greater generally indicates that a City provides adequate employment opportunities, potentially allowing its residents to work within the City. A desirable jobs/housing balance improves regional mobility (traffic), reduces vehicle miles traveled, and improves air quality.



Potential buildout of the Scenario A Alternative would result in 44,640 dwelling units and 118,783 jobs, resulting in a jobs/housing ratio of approximately 2.7. Although the Scenario A Alternative would provide an improved jobs/housing balance over existing conditions, it would not be improved to the extent of the proposed General Plan 2035. Therefore, the Scenario A Alternative is considered environmentally inferior to the proposed General Plan 2035 in this regard.

AESTHETICS

Both the Scenario A Alternative and the proposed General Plan 2035 would encourage preservation of existing residential neighborhoods within the City. Vacant land within the City comprises approximately 7,291 acres, representing approximately 34 percent of the City's acreage. Similar to the proposed General Plan 2035, the Scenario A Alternative would involve development of Focus Areas, which includes areas of vacant land. New development within these areas would change the character of the areas and their surroundings. Both the Scenario A Alternative and proposed General Plan 2035 would involve land use changes within these areas to provide for more consistent and compatible development, while allowing for the City's economic development priorities to be achieved. The Scenario A Alternative would provide the framework and focused vision to address the visual character of future development within the City, similar to the proposed General Plan 2035. The Scenario A Alternative establishes policies that address the desired character of development within these areas. Thus, the Scenario A Alternative is considered neither environmentally superior nor inferior to the Proposed General Plan 2035 in this regard.

TRAFFIC AND CIRCULATION

The Scenario A Alternative would allow for similar development identified for the Scenario B Alternative (described below). The land use plan for both the Scenario A and Scenario B Alternatives would provide for greater residential dwelling units and less non-residential square footage within the Clinton Keith/Mitchell, North Murrieta Business Corridor, and Multiple Use Area 3 (MU-3) Focus Areas when compared to the proposed General Plan 2035. The Scenario A Alternative would allow for slightly more residential and non-residential growth than the Scenario B Alternative. Based on the similar land use plans and development potential identified for the Scenario A and Scenario B Alternatives, it is anticipated that similar roadway and intersection impacts would occur. Therefore, potential buildout under the Scenario A Alternative would result in several roadway segments and intersections to operate at an unacceptable LOS based on the City of Murrieta's performance standards.

As indicated in [Section 5.4, Traffic and Circulation](#), 18 study intersections would operate at an unacceptable LOS under the proposed General Plan 2035. With intersection improvements, 16 intersections would continue to operate at an unacceptable LOS based upon the City's performance criteria under the proposed General Plan 2035. Since many of the same intersections would operate at an unacceptable LOS under both the Scenario A Alternative and



the proposed General Plan 2035, it is assumed that with intersection improvements identified for the proposed General Plan 2035, similar impacts would remain under the Scenario A Alternative.

As with the proposed General Plan 2035, the Scenario A Alternative encourages new and/or improved transit operations within the City, as well as accessibility between major uses and users. Other alternative modes of transportation, including walking and biking are also encouraged. The Circulation Element identifies the provision of a multi-modal circulation system with accessibility to all users as a key goal. The Scenario A Alternative proposes policies that would support and encourage the use of alternative transportation and ensure that adequate alternative transportation is available to serve demand. The Scenario A Alternative is considered neither environmentally superior nor inferior to the proposed General Plan 2035 in this regard.

AIR QUALITY

The Scenario A Alternative would allow for new development on existing vacant land or through redevelopment of currently developed land, similar to the proposed General Plan 2035. Development under either the Scenario A Alternative or the proposed General Plan 2035 would result in significant unavoidable impacts related to construction-related emissions, regional operational emissions, AQMP consistency, and cumulative construction and operational impacts. All other air quality impacts associated with the proposed General Plan 2035 and Scenario A Alternative can be mitigated to less than significant levels. Thus, the Scenario A Alternative is considered neither environmentally superior nor inferior to the proposed General Plan 2035 in this regard.

GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

In accordance with AB 32, the City would be required to reduce GHG emissions to 1990 levels by 2020. Development pursuant to the Scenario A Alternative would result in additional GHG emissions with future development, similar to the proposed General Plan 2035. The City has prepared a Climate Action Plan (CAP) as part of the proposed General Plan 2035 to address GHG emissions reduction within the City, which would also be applicable to this Alternative. The strategies identified in the CAP contain emission reduction measures from municipal and non-municipal operations. These measures are consistent with and build upon the goals and policies within the proposed General Plan 2035. The strategies identified in the CAP would achieve the desired reduction target of 15 percent below baseline levels by 2020. Therefore, similar to the proposed General Plan 2035, the Scenario A Alternative would be consistent with the reduction targets of AB 32, resulting in a less than significant impact. Thus, the Scenario A Alternative is considered neither environmentally superior nor inferior to the proposed General Plan 2035 in this regard.



NOISE

The Scenario A Alternative would allow for new development on existing vacant land or through redevelopment of currently developed land, similar to the proposed General Plan 2035. Development under either the Scenario A Alternative or the proposed General Plan 2035 would result in additional noise from construction activities and the resulting increase in traffic associated with future development. Similar to the proposed General Plan 2035, cumulative long-term operational noise impacts would be significant and unavoidable with the Scenario A Alternative due to the redistribution of traffic on City streets due to the change in land uses and anticipated City growth, along with cumulative growth in the Sphere of Influence and outside the City. All other noise impacts can be mitigated to less than significant levels. Thus, the Scenario A Alternative is considered neither environmentally superior nor inferior to the proposed General Plan 2035 in this regard.

GEOLOGY AND SEISMIC HAZARDS

Development under the Scenario A Alternative or the proposed General Plan 2035 would potentially result in new development (i.e., new residential and non-residential land uses), thereby resulting in an increase in population. Potential new development would be located throughout the City and would result in a larger number of structures/people potentially exposed to substantial adverse effects associated with severe ground shaking or ground failure. However, compliance with building codes and standards would reduce impacts to a less than significant level. Although the Scenario A Alternative would allow for development of more residential units when compared to the proposed General Plan 2035, it would allow for less non-residential development. Therefore, the potential impacts associated with the number of people or structures potentially exposed to seismic hazards would be similar with this Alternative. Therefore, the Scenario A Alternative would be considered neither environmentally superior nor inferior to the proposed General Plan 2035 in this regard.

CULTURAL RESOURCES

The Scenario A Alternative and proposed General Plan 2035 would allow for new development on existing vacant land. Therefore, potential impacts to known or unknown/undiscovered historical, archaeological, or paleontological resources would be similar under the Scenario A Alternative or the proposed General Plan 2035. However, impacts related to cultural resources associated with either the Scenario A Alternative or the proposed General Plan 2035 would be less than significant by adherence to and/or compliance with the goals and policies of the proposed General Plan 2035 and mitigation measures. Therefore, the Scenario A Alternative is considered neither environmentally superior nor inferior to the proposed General Plan 2035 in this regard.



BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

The Scenario A Alternative and proposed General Plan 2035 would allow for new development of vacant land or through redevelopment of currently developed land that may contain biological resources. Therefore, potential impacts to habit modifications of any species identified as sensitive or special status species, riparian habitat, sensitive natural communities, federally protected wetlands, movement of native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species would be similar under the Scenario A Alternative or the proposed General Plan 2035. It is anticipated that impacts related to biological resources associated with either the Scenario A Alternative or the proposed General Plan 2035 would be less than significant by adherence to and/or compliance with the current regulatory requirements and the goals and policies of the proposed General Plan 2035. Therefore, the Scenario A Alternative is considered neither environmentally superior nor inferior to the proposed General Plan 2035 in this regard.

AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES

Future development under the Scenario A Alternative and proposed General Plan 2035 may involve parcels of land currently operating for agricultural purposes or identified for agricultural production. Therefore, potential impacts to prime farmland, unique farmland, farmland of statewide importance, or Williams Act contracts would be similar under the Scenario A Alternative or the proposed General Plan 2035. It is anticipated that impacts related to agricultural resources associated with either the Scenario A Alternative or the proposed General Plan 2035 would be less than significant by adherence to and/or compliance with goals and policies of the proposed General Plan 2035. Therefore, the Scenario A Alternative is considered neither environmentally superior nor inferior to the proposed General Plan 2035 in this regard.

MINERAL RESOURCES

Future development under the Scenario A Alternative and proposed General Plan 2035 may involve lands that contain unknown mineral resources. Therefore, potential impacts to mineral resources would be similar under the Scenario A Alternative or the proposed General Plan 2035. It is anticipated that impacts related to mineral resources associated with either the Scenario A Alternative or the proposed General Plan 2035 would be less than significant by adherence to and/or compliance with goals and policies of the proposed General Plan 2035. Therefore, the Scenario A Alternative is considered neither environmentally superior nor inferior to the proposed General Plan 2035 in this regard.

HYDROLOGY, DRAINAGE, AND WATER QUALITY

The Scenario A Alternative and proposed General Plan 2035 would potentially allow for new development on existing vacant land, resulting in increased population and development that could result in hydrology, drainage, or water quality impacts. Buildout under either the Scenario A Alternative or the proposed General Plan 2035 would result in increased demand for



groundwater resources due to increased growth and decreased reliance of imported water supplies. The Conservation Element includes goals and policies that address stormwater management and water quality to ensure that potential impacts would be reduced, which would be applicable to this Alternative. Additionally, the proposed General Plan 2035 provides updated and current information regarding stormwater and water quality requirements. Since the Scenario A Alternative and the proposed General Plan 2035 would provide for increased development Citywide and within the Focus Areas that would potentially impact hydrology, drainage, and water quality, the Scenario A Alternative is considered neither environmentally superior nor inferior to the proposed General Plan 2035 in this regard.

HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Implementation of the Scenario A Alternative or the proposed General Plan 2035 would result in the expansion or development of facilities that could impact the health and safety of Murrieta residents and employees. Both the Scenario A Alternative and the General Plan 2035 would provide for a mixed-use land use designation that could potentially allow for mixed-use development in the future, including the placement of residential and non-residential uses in proximity to each other. These non-residential uses may involve the storage and/or use of hazardous materials. Implementation of goals and policies would minimize risk under both the Scenario A Alternative and the General Plan 2035. Therefore, the Scenario A Alternative is considered neither environmentally superior nor inferior to the proposed General Plan 2035 in this regard.

PUBLIC SERVICES AND UTILITIES

Similar to the General Plan 2035, implementation of the Scenario A Alternative would provide a comprehensive inventory of existing public services and utilities and the levels of service provided to the City. Growth associated with both the Scenario A Alternative and proposed General Plan 2035 would result in increased demand for public services and utilities beyond existing conditions. With the exception of parks and recreational facilities, goals and policies in the proposed General Plan 2035 would reduce potential impacts to a less than significant level. Impacts to parks and recreational facilities would be significant and unavoidable with the Scenario A Alternative and the proposed General Plan 2035. However, Scenario A would allow for the development of 7,544 additional dwelling units when compared to the proposed General Plan 2035. This would result in a greater demand on parks and recreational facilities due to the population growth associated with the residential units. Although both the Scenario A Alternative and General Plan 2035 would result in a significant and unavoidable impact to parks and recreational facilities, the deficiency would be greater under the Scenario A Alternative. Thus, the Scenario A Alternative is considered environmentally inferior to the proposed General Plan 2035 in this regard.



CONCLUSION

The Scenario A Alternative would result in similar environmental impacts as the proposed General Plan 2035 for land use, aesthetics, traffic and circulation, air quality, greenhouse gas emissions, noise, geology and seismic hazards, cultural resources, biological resources, agricultural resources, mineral resources, hydrology, drainage, and water quality, and hazards and hazardous materials. However, this Alternative may generate higher impacts than the proposed General Plan 2035 with respect to population, housing, and employment and public services and utilities. It is the intent of the proposed General Plan 2035 to provide new information based on current conditions within the City and to provide goals and policies that address current conditions. The Scenario A Alternative would provide updated environmental data and goals and policies that address current and future conditions, similar to the proposed General Plan 2035. The Scenario A Alternative would provide the land use plan and policy direction to achieve the core economic development objectives of the General Plan 2035, which focuses on guiding the development of vacant land, specifically focusing on opportunities for economic development within key Focus Areas. To achieve this vision, the City seeks to encourage private sector investment in the creation of higher paying jobs, income, and wealth through economic diversification. The City is focusing its efforts to attract a variety of businesses and industries, higher educational institutions, and health care facilities. A full range of quality new development would be part of this effort, including retail centers, corporate/technology parks, hotels, and upscale restaurants that would be supported by this Alternative. However, this Alternative would allow for fewer employment opportunities within the City when compared to the proposed General Plan 2035. Thus, this Alternative would not meet the economic development objectives to the same extent as the General Plan 2035.

6.4 SCENARIO B ALTERNATIVE

6.4.1 DESCRIPTION

The Scenario B Alternative assumes that the proposed General Plan 2035, including all goals and policies would be adopted; however, the land use plan within the Clinton Keith/Mitchell, North Murrieta Business Corridor, and Multiple Use 3 (MU-3) Focus Areas would provide for greater residential dwelling units and less non-residential square footage when compared to the proposed General Plan 2035 (refer to *Exhibit 6-2, Scenario B Alternative*). Citywide growth and anticipated growth within the remaining Focus Areas would be the same for both the Scenario B Alternative and the proposed General Plan 2035.

The anticipated growth over existing conditions within the Focus Areas with the Scenario B Alternative would be:

- 10,835 dwelling units; and
- 18,149,507 square feet of non-residential uses.



When compared to the proposed General Plan 2035, the Scenario B Alternative would result in the following within the Focus Areas:

- 7,489 more dwelling units; and
- 3,007,277 fewer square feet of non-residential uses.

6.4.2 IMPACT EVALUATION

LAND USE

As with the proposed General Plan 2035, the Scenario B Alternative revises and updates the existing Land Use Element, including establishing Focus Areas for future growth that reflect the economic development priorities of the City. The Scenario B Alternative proposes removal of the MU-1, MU-2, and MU-3 land use and zoning designations and the introduction of a mixed-use land use designation, similar to the proposed General Plan 2035. The Scenario B Alternative provides updated land use information for the City, including land uses that have changed over time and may not be reflective of the existing General Plan's land use designations. It establishes the policy foundation to address current and anticipated buildout conditions over the next 25 years. The Scenario B Alternative would involve changes to land use designations that would allow for the development of additional multiple-family residential uses within the Clinton Keith/Mitchell, North Murrieta Business Corridor, and Multiple Use 3 Focus Areas, when compared to the General Plan 2035. These land use changes would continue to provide consistent and compatible development within the City and be consistent with Federal, State, and regional plans, policies, or regulations, similar to the proposed General Plan 2035. Similar to the proposed General Plan 2035, this Alternative would provide additional land use policies for consistency with the *Riverside County Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan* associated with the French Valley Airport. The Scenario B Alternative is considered neither environmentally superior nor inferior to the proposed General Plan 2035.

POPULATION, HOUSING, AND EMPLOYMENT

The Scenario B Alternative would update the City's environmental baseline conditions to 2009 and update the General Plan development projections to the year 2035, similar to the General Plan 2035. Development projections include projections for dwelling units, non-residential square footage, population, and employment. The Scenario B Alternative would provide the most current population, housing, and employment numbers or projections, and quantitative population, housing, and employment projections for future years. Although the Scenario B Alternative reflects the current priorities of the City, including economic development and increased employment opportunities within the City, it does not provide the amount of non-residential development to achieve these priorities to the extent of the proposed General Plan 2035. The Scenario B Alternative would provide for greater residential development (7,489 more dwelling units) and decreased non-residential development (3,007,277 fewer square feet of non-residential uses) when compared to the proposed General Plan 2035. As indicated in



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Section 5.2, Population, Housing, and Employment and Section 7.0, Other CEQA Considerations, potential buildout of the proposed General Plan 2035 would result in 44,484 dwelling units and 130,153 jobs, resulting in a jobs/housing ratio of approximately 2.9. A ratio of 1.0 or greater generally indicates that a City provides adequate employment opportunities, potentially allowing its residents to work within the City. A desirable jobs/housing balance improves regional mobility (traffic), reduces vehicle miles traveled, and improves air quality. Potential buildout of the Scenario B Alternative would result in 44,585 dwelling units and 118,412 jobs, resulting in a jobs/housing ratio of approximately 2.7. Although the Scenario B Alternative would provide an improved jobs/housing balance over existing conditions, it would not be improved to the extent of the proposed General Plan 2035. Therefore, the Scenario B Alternative is considered environmentally inferior to the proposed General Plan 2035 in this regard.

AESTHETICS

Both the Scenario B Alternative and the proposed General Plan 2035 would encourage preservation of existing residential neighborhoods within the City. Vacant land within the City comprises approximately 7,291 acres, representing approximately 34 percent of the City's acreage. Similar to the proposed General Plan 2035, the Scenario B Alternative would involve development of Focus Areas, which includes areas of vacant land. New development within these areas would change the character of the areas and their surroundings. Both the Scenario B Alternative and proposed General Plan 2035 would involve land use changes within these areas to provide for more consistent and compatible development, while allowing for the City's economic development priorities to be achieved. The Scenario B Alternative would provide the framework and focused vision to address the visual character of future development within the City, similar to the proposed General Plan 2035. The Scenario B Alternative establishes policies that address the desired character of development within these areas. Thus, the Scenario B Alternative is considered neither environmentally superior nor inferior to the Proposed General Plan 2035 in this regard.

TRAFFIC AND CIRCULATION

Levels of service associated with buildout of the Scenario B Alternative were calculated for both study roadway segments and intersections (refer to Appendix C for the detailed traffic impact analysis). Using the Scenario B daily traffic volumes and the maximum daily roadway capacity values, daily volume-to-capacity ratios have been determined.

Roadway Segments

Under the Scenario B Alternative, several roadway segments are projected to operate at an unacceptable level of service (LOS D, E, or F) per the City of Murrieta's LOS standards; refer to Appendix C, Figure 20. The roadway segments generally include, but are not limited to:



Level of Service D

- Portions of Washington Avenue, Jefferson Avenue, Kalmia Street, Whitewood Road, Hancock Road, and Menifee Road.

Level of Service E

- Portions of Jefferson Avenue, California Oaks Road, Murrieta Hot Springs Road, Meadowlark Lane/Menifee Road, and Winchester Road.

Level of Service F

- Portions of Jefferson Avenue, Murrieta Hot Springs Road, Los Alamos Road, Winchester Road, and Clinton Keith Road.

Intersections

All future study intersections are projected to operate at LOS D or better with the exception of the following 18 locations:

- Menifee Road/Scott Road
- Winchester Road - SR-79/Scott Road
- Antelope Road/Keller Road
- Antelope Road/Golden City Drive – Baxter Road
- Whitewood-Meadowlark/Golden City Drive – Baxter Road
- California Oaks Road/Clinton Keith Road
- I-215 NB Off-Ramp/Clinton Keith Road
- Meadowlark – Whitewood Road/Clinton Keith Road
- Winchester Road - SR-79/Clinton Keith Road - Benton Road
- Jefferson Avenue/Murrieta Hot Springs Road
- Madison Avenue/Murrieta Hot Springs Road
- Jefferson Avenue/Kalmia Street
- Winchester Road (SR-79) / Murrieta Hot Springs Road
- Hancock Ave/Los Alamos Road
- I-215 SB Ramps/Los Alamos Road
- Whitewood Road Murrieta Hot Springs Road
- Nutmeg Street/Clinton Keith Road
- Mitchell Road/Clinton Keith Road

As indicated in [Section 5.4, Traffic and Circulation](#), 18 study intersections would operate at an unacceptable LOS under the proposed General Plan 2035. With intersection improvements, 16 intersections would continue to operate at an unacceptable LOS based upon the City's performance criteria under the proposed General Plan 2035. Since many of the same intersections would operate at an unacceptable LOS under both the Scenario B Alternative and the proposed General Plan 2035, it is assumed that with intersection improvements identified for the proposed General Plan 2035, similar impacts would remain under the Scenario B Alternative.



As with the proposed General Plan 2035, the Scenario B Alternative encourages new and/or improved transit operations within the City, as well as accessibility between major uses and users. Other alternative modes of transportation, including walking and biking are also encouraged. The Circulation Element identifies the provision of a multi-modal circulation system with accessibility to all users as a key goal. The Scenario B Alternative proposes policies that would support and encourage the use of alternative transportation and ensure that adequate alternative transportation is available to serve demand. The Scenario B Alternative is considered neither environmentally superior nor inferior to the proposed General Plan 2035 in this regard.

AIR QUALITY

The Scenario B Alternative would allow for new development on existing vacant land or through redevelopment of currently developed land, similar to the proposed General Plan 2035. Development under either the Scenario B Alternative or the proposed General Plan 2035 would result in significant unavoidable impacts related to construction-related emissions, regional operational emissions, AQMP consistency, and cumulative construction and operational impacts. All other air quality impacts associated with the proposed General Plan 2035 and Scenario B Alternative can be mitigated to less than significant levels. Thus, the Scenario B Alternative is considered neither environmentally superior nor inferior to the proposed General Plan 2035 in this regard.

GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

In accordance with AB 32, the City would be required to reduce GHG emissions to 1990 levels by 2020. Development pursuant to the Scenario B Alternative would result in additional GHG emissions with future development, similar to the proposed General Plan 2035. The City has prepared a Climate Action Plan (CAP) as part of the proposed General Plan 2035 to address GHG emissions reduction within the City, which would also be applicable to this Alternative. The strategies identified in the CAP contain emission reduction measures from municipal and non-municipal operations. These measures are consistent with and build upon the goals and policies within the proposed General Plan 2035. The strategies identified in the CAP would achieve the desired reduction target of 15 percent below baseline levels by 2020. Therefore, similar to the proposed General Plan 2035, the Scenario B Alternative would be consistent with the reduction targets of AB 32, resulting in a less than significant impact. Thus, the Scenario B Alternative is considered neither environmentally superior nor inferior to the proposed General Plan 2035 in this regard.

NOISE

The Scenario B Alternative would allow for new development on existing vacant land or through redevelopment of currently developed land, similar to the proposed General Plan 2035. Development under either the Scenario B Alternative or the proposed General Plan 2035 would result in additional noise from construction activities and the resulting increase in traffic



associated with future development. Similar to the proposed General Plan 2035, cumulative long-term operational noise impacts would be significant and unavoidable with the Scenario B Alternative due to the redistribution of traffic on City streets due to the change in land uses and anticipated City growth, along with cumulative growth in the Sphere of Influence and outside the City. All other noise impacts can be mitigated to less than significant levels. Thus, the Scenario B Alternative is considered neither environmentally superior nor inferior to the proposed General Plan 2035 in this regard.

GEOLOGY AND SEISMIC HAZARDS

Development under the Scenario B Alternative or the proposed General Plan 2035 would result in new development (i.e., new residential and non-residential land uses), thereby resulting in an increase in population. Potential new development would be located throughout the City and would result in a larger number of structures/people potentially exposed to substantial adverse effects associated with severe ground shaking or ground failure. However, compliance with building codes and standards would reduce impacts to a less than significant level. Although the Scenario B Alternative would allow for development of more residential units when compared to the proposed General Plan 2035, it would allow for less non-residential development. Therefore, the potential impacts associated with the number of people or structures potentially exposed to seismic hazards would be similar with this Alternative. Therefore, the Scenario B Alternative would be considered neither environmentally superior nor inferior to the proposed General Plan 2035 in this regard.

CULTURAL RESOURCES

The Scenario B Alternative and proposed General Plan 2035 would allow for new development on existing vacant land. Therefore, potential impacts to known or unknown/undiscovered historical, archaeological, or paleontological resources would be similar under the Scenario B Alternative or the proposed General Plan 2035. However, impacts related to cultural resources associated with either the Scenario B Alternative or the proposed General Plan 2035 would be less than significant by adherence to and/or compliance with the goals and policies of the proposed General Plan 2035 and mitigation measures. Therefore, the Scenario B Alternative is considered neither environmentally superior nor inferior to the proposed General Plan 2035 in this regard.

BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

The Scenario B Alternative and proposed General Plan 2035 would allow for new development of vacant land or through redevelopment of currently developed land that may contain biological resources. Therefore, potential impacts to habitat modifications of any species identified as sensitive or special status species, riparian habitat, sensitive natural communities, federally protected wetlands, movement of native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species would be similar under the Scenario B Alternative or the proposed General Plan 2035. It is anticipated



that impacts related to biological resources associated with either the Scenario B Alternative or the proposed General Plan 2035 would be less than significant by adherence to and/or compliance with the current regulatory requirements and the goals and policies of the proposed General Plan 2035. Therefore, the Scenario B Alternative is considered neither environmentally superior nor inferior to the proposed General Plan 2035 in this regard.

AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES

Future development under the Scenario B Alternative and proposed General Plan 2035 may involve parcels of land currently operating for agricultural purposes or identified for agricultural production. Therefore, potential impacts to prime farmland, unique farmland, farmland of statewide importance, or Williams Act contracts would be similar under the Scenario B Alternative or the proposed General Plan 2035. It is anticipated that impacts related to agricultural resources associated with either the Scenario B Alternative or the proposed General Plan 2035 would be less than significant by adherence to and/or compliance with goals and policies of the proposed General Plan 2035. Therefore, the Scenario B Alternative is considered neither environmentally superior nor inferior to the proposed General Plan 2035 in this regard.

MINERAL RESOURCES

Future development under the Scenario B Alternative and proposed General Plan 2035 may involve lands that contain unknown mineral resources. Therefore, potential impacts to mineral resources would be similar under the Scenario B Alternative or the proposed General Plan 2035. It is anticipated that impacts related to mineral resources associated with either the Scenario B Alternative or the proposed General Plan 2035 would be less than significant by adherence to and/or compliance with goals and policies of the proposed General Plan 2035. Therefore, the Scenario B Alternative is considered neither environmentally superior nor inferior to the proposed General Plan 2035 in this regard.

HYDROLOGY, DRAINAGE, AND WATER QUALITY

The Scenario B Alternative and proposed General Plan 2035 would allow for new development on existing vacant land, resulting in increased population and development that could result in hydrology, drainage, or water quality impacts. The Conservation Element includes goals and policies that address stormwater management and water quality to ensure that potential impacts would be reduced, which would be applicable to this Alternative. Additionally, the proposed General Plan 2035 provides updated and current information regarding stormwater and water quality requirements. Since the Scenario B Alternative and the proposed General Plan 2035 would provide for increased development Citywide and within the Focus Areas that would potentially impact hydrology, drainage, and water quality, the Scenario B Alternative is considered neither environmentally superior nor inferior to the proposed General Plan 2035 in this regard.



HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Implementation of the Scenario B Alternative or the proposed General Plan 2035 would result in the expansion or development of facilities that could impact the health and safety of Murrieta residents and employees. Both the Scenario B Alternative and the General Plan 2035 would provide for a mixed-use land use designation that could potentially allow for mixed-use development in the future, including the placement of residential and non-residential uses in proximity to each other. These non-residential uses may involve the storage and/or use of hazardous materials. Implementation of goals and policies would minimize risk under both the Scenario B Alternative and the General Plan 2035. Therefore, the Scenario B Alternative is considered neither environmentally superior nor inferior to the proposed General Plan 2035 in this regard.

PUBLIC SERVICES AND UTILITIES

Similar to the General Plan 2035, implementation of the Scenario B Alternative would provide a comprehensive inventory of existing public services and utilities and the levels of service provided to the City. Growth associated with both the Scenario B Alternative and proposed General Plan 2035 would result in increased demand for public services and utilities beyond existing conditions. With the exception of parks and recreational facilities, goals and policies in the proposed General Plan 2035 would reduce potential impacts to a less than significant level. Impacts to parks and recreational facilities would be significant and unavoidable with the Scenario B Alternative and the proposed General Plan 2035. However, Scenario B would allow for the development of 7,489 additional dwelling units when compared to the proposed General Plan 2035. This would result in a greater demand on parks and recreational facilities due to the population growth associated with the residential units. Although both the Scenario B Alternative and General Plan 2035 would result in a significant and unavoidable impact to parks and recreational facilities, the deficiency would be greater under the Scenario B Alternative. Thus, the Scenario B Alternative is considered environmentally inferior to the proposed General Plan 2035 in this regard.

CONCLUSION

The Scenario B Alternative would result in similar environmental impacts as the proposed General Plan 2035 for land use, aesthetics, traffic and circulation, air quality, greenhouse gas emissions, noise, geology and seismic hazards, cultural resources, biological resources, agricultural resources, mineral resources, hydrology, drainage, and water quality, and hazards and hazardous materials. However, this Alternative may generate higher impacts than the proposed General Plan 2035 with respect to population, housing, and employment and public services and utilities. It is the intent of the proposed General Plan 2035 to provide new information based on current conditions within the City and to provide goals and policies that address current conditions. The Scenario B Alternative would provide updated environmental data and goals and policies that address current and future conditions, similar to the proposed



General Plan 2035. The Scenario B Alternative would provide updated environmental data and goals and policies that address current and future conditions, similar to the proposed General Plan 2035. The Scenario B Alternative would provide the land use plan and policy direction to achieve the core economic development objectives of the General Plan 2035, which focuses on guiding the development of vacant land, specifically focusing on opportunities for economic development within key Focus Areas. To achieve this vision, the City seeks to encourage private sector investment in the creation of higher paying jobs, income, and wealth through economic diversification. The City is focusing its efforts to attract a variety of businesses and industries, higher educational institutions, and health care facilities. A full range of quality new development would be part of this effort, including retail centers, corporate/technology parks, hotels, and upscale restaurants that would be supported by this Alternative. However, this Alternative would allow for fewer employment opportunities within the City when compared to the proposed General Plan 2035. Thus, this Alternative would not meet the economic development objectives to the same extent as the General Plan 2035.

6.5 ENVIRONMENTALLY SUPERIOR ALTERNATIVE

CEQA requires that an “Environmentally Superior Alternative” be identified among those considered; that is an alternative that would result in the fewest or least significant environmental impacts. As noted above, the determination of an environmentally superior alternative is based on the consideration of how the alternative fulfills the project objectives and how the alternative either reduces significant, unavoidable impacts or substantially reduces the impacts to the surrounding environment.

NO PROJECT/EXISTING GENERAL PLAN ALTERNATIVE

As it is the intent of the proposed General Plan 2035 to provide new information based on current conditions within the City, the existing General Plan evaluated under the No Project/Existing General Plan Alternative would not serve the City as adequately as the proposed General Plan 2035. Overall, the No Project/Existing General Plan Alternative and the proposed General Plan 2035 would result in similar environmental impacts, with the exception of impacts related to land use, population, housing, and employment, aesthetics, air quality, greenhouse gas emissions, agricultural resources and hazards and hazardous materials, which would generate higher impacts and geology and seismic hazards, hydrology, drainage, and water quality, and hazards and hazardous materials, which would generate less impacts. The No Project/Existing General Plan Alternative would not reduce the severity of the significant unavoidable impacts associated with the proposed General Plan 2035. Thus, the No Project/Existing General Plan Alternative is not selected as the environmentally superior alternative to the proposed General Plan 2035.



The No Project/Existing General Plan Alternative would not meet the economic development priorities established by the City to the extent of the proposed General Plan 2035. The proposed General Plan 2035 focuses economic development as a key priority in order to improve the jobs/housing balance, reduce vehicle miles traveled, improve air quality, and contribute to a healthy and sustainable community. To achieve this vision, the City seeks to encourage private sector investment in the creation of higher paying jobs, income, and wealth through economic diversification. The City is focusing its efforts to attract a variety of businesses and industries, higher educational institutions, and health care facilities. A full range of quality new development would be part of this effort, including retail centers, corporate/technology parks, hotels, and upscale restaurants, which would not be supported with this Alternative as compared to the proposed General Plan 2035. Buildout under the No Project/Existing General Plan Alternative would not provide opportunities for residents to live and work within the City to the extent of the proposed General Plan 2035. Thus, this Alternative would not achieve a housing balance that improves regional mobility (traffic), reduces vehicle miles traveled, and improves air quality to the extent of the proposed General Plan 2035. Further this Alternative would not provide updated development projections for the year 2035, nor provide a land use plan and policy direction that addresses future development and growth anticipated by the City and SCAG.

SCENARIO A ALTERNATIVE

The Scenario A Alternative would meet the stated objectives of the General Plan 2035 and EIR, as the Scenario A Alternative would provide new and updated information based on current conditions and would provide updated goals and policies to direct future growth within the City. Although it would generally meet the growth objectives identified by the General Plan 2035, this Alternative would provide for greater residential development and less non-residential development. Therefore, the economic development objectives, including providing an improved jobs/housing ratio would not be achieved to the same extent as the General Plan 2035. The Scenario A Alternative would result in similar environmental impacts when compared to the proposed General Plan 2035 with the exception of population, housing, and employment and public services and utilities, which would be greater. The Scenario A Alternative would not reduce any of the significant unavoidable impacts identified for traffic and circulation, air quality, noise, or parks and recreation facilities. Although both the Scenario A Alternative and General Plan 2035 would result in a significant and unavoidable impact to parks and recreational facilities, the deficiency would be greater under the Scenario A Alternative. However, since the Scenario A Alternative allows for greater non-residential development in support of the City's economic development goals and would meet the project objectives, Alternative A is selected as the environmentally superior alternative.



SCENARIO B ALTERNATIVE

The Scenario B Alternative would meet the stated objectives of the General Plan 2035 and EIR, as the Scenario B Alternative would provide new and updated information based on current conditions and would provide updated goals and policies to direct future growth within the City. Although it would generally meet the growth objectives identified by the General Plan 2035, this Alternative would provide for greater residential development and less non-residential development. Therefore, the economic development objectives, including providing an improved jobs/housing ratio would not be achieved to the same extent as the General Plan 2035. The Scenario B Alternative would result in similar environmental impacts when compared to the proposed General Plan 2035 with the exception of population, housing, and employment and public services and utilities, which would be greater. The Scenario B Alternative would not reduce any of the significant unavoidable impacts identified for traffic and circulation, air quality, noise, or parks and recreation facilities. Although both the Scenario B Alternative and General Plan 2035 would result in a significant and unavoidable impact to parks and recreational facilities, the deficiency would be greater under the Scenario B Alternative. The Scenario B Alternative is considered environmentally inferior to the proposed General Plan 2035, and is not selected as the environmentally superior alternative.

Alternatives



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