

7.0 ALTERNATIVES

INTRODUCTION

This section of the EIR provides a comparative analysis of the merits of alternatives to the Project pursuant to Section 15126.6 of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines, as amended. The purpose of the alternatives analysis is to explain potentially feasible ways to avoid or minimize significant effects of the Project. According to the CEQA Guidelines, an EIR need only examine in detail those alternatives that could feasibly meet most of the basic objectives of the Project. When addressing feasibility, CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6 states that “among the factors that may be taken into account when addressing the feasibility of alternatives are site suitability, economic viability, availability of infrastructure, general plan consistency, jurisdictional boundaries, and whether the applicant can reasonably acquire, control or otherwise have access to alternative sites.” The CEQA Guidelines also specify that the alternatives discussion should not be remote or speculative, and need not be presented in the same level of detail as the assessment of the Project.

Therefore, based on the CEQA Guidelines, several factors need to be considered in determining the range of alternatives to be analyzed in an EIR and potential level of analytical detail that should be provided for each alternative. These factors include (1) the nature of the significant impacts identified for the Project; (2) the ability of alternatives to avoid or lessen these impacts; (3) the ability of the alternatives to meet the objectives of the Project; and (4) the feasibility of the alternatives. These factors are unique for each project.

SELECTION OF ALTERNATIVES FOR ANALYSIS

According to the *CEQA Guidelines*, the discussion of alternatives should focus on alternatives to a project or its location, which can feasibly avoid or substantially lessen the significant effects of the project. The *CEQA Guidelines* indicate that the range of alternatives included in this discussion should be sufficient to allow decision-makers a reasoned choice. The alternative discussion should provide decision makers with an understanding of the merits and disadvantages of these alternatives.

Section 4.0, Environmental Impact Analysis, of this EIR, concludes that Project implementation would result in some significant and unavoidable environmental impacts. These impacts include Project and cumulative short-term noise impacts during construction, Project and cumulative recreation impacts due to an increase in use of existing park facilities, cumulative population impacts as population growth projections for the City would be exceeded, and cumulative solid waste impacts as current permitted landfill capacity can not accommodate future increases in solid waste beyond 15 years. In response to these impacts, this section provides an evaluation of several alternatives to the Project.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED BUT NOT EVALUATED IN DETAIL

Section 15126.6(c) of the *CEQA Guidelines* states that an EIR should briefly describe the rationale for selecting the alternatives to be discussed and the reasons for eliminating alternatives from detailed consideration in an EIR. Among the factors that may be used to eliminate alternatives from detailed consideration in an EIR is the failure of the alternative to meet most of the basic Project objectives, infeasibility, and/or the inability to avoid significant environmental impacts. Provided below are the reasons for not providing detailed evaluation of an alternative initially developed by the Agency.

Off-Site Alternative

This alternative considers development of the Project at a different location. Given that neither the Project applicant nor the Agency owns or controls any other property in the vicinity of the site not already proposed for development, the ability of the applicant to find and purchase an alternative site to develop the Project is considered speculative. In addition, the development of an alternative site would not be able to meet the basic Project objectives, particularly the objective to renovate the existing office building for re-occupancy and the objective to convert the existing alley on the site to a public open space pedestrian passageway. Lastly, the development of the same uses at a different location would result in similar Project and cumulative short-term-term noise impacts during construction, Project and cumulative recreation impacts due to an increase in use of existing park facilities, cumulative population impacts due to exceeding population projections, and cumulative solid waste impacts. Thus, the selection of an alternative site would not avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant impacts of the Project. Therefore, this alternative was eliminated from detailed consideration in this EIR.

ALTERNATIVES EVALUATED IN DETAIL

The alternatives to the Project selected for analysis in this EIR were developed with the aim of minimizing environmental impacts while still, where possible, meeting the basic objectives of the Project. The Agency has defined the following objectives for the Project:

- Support the objectives of the Redevelopment Plan to eliminate blight and revitalize the Central Glendale Redevelopment Project Area;
- Increase property tax base in the Central Glendale Redevelopment Project Area;
- Create a diversity of residential and urban uses to activate and strengthen the vitality of downtown Glendale;
- Provide housing opportunities, pursuant to the Glendale Redevelopment Agency's policy, in an urban setting in close proximity to employment opportunities, public transportation, public facilities, and goods and services;

- Utilize architectural design, lighting, and landscape materials within the residential component to give the Project site a distinctive and pleasing appearance that is visually compatible with the Hollywood Production Center building;
- Enhance the pedestrian environment in downtown Glendale by providing a landscaped public open space pedestrian passageway linking residential neighborhoods to the east of the Project site with the commercial district adjacent to the Project site to the west;
- Increase demand for local retail services;
- Enhance revenue at City-owned parking garages and utilize existing public parking resources in the City;
- Purchase the vacant office building from the Agency and renovate it for continued use as an office building in downtown Glendale consistent with the Agency's redevelopment plan; and
- Provide employment opportunities for City residents through the use of local contractors during Project construction and operation of the Hollywood Production Center.

The following is a list of the alternatives selected for evaluation in this analysis:

- Alternative 1 – No Project/No Development
- Alternative 2 – Hollywood Production Center without Condominium Building
- Alternative 3 – Reduced Density Alternatives; and
- Alternative 4 – DSP Zoning without Maximum Incentives Alternative.

ANALYSIS OF PROJECT ALTERNATIVES

Alternative 1 – No Project/No Development Alternative

The No Project/No Development Alternative is required to be evaluated by Section 15126(2)(4) of the *CEQA Guidelines*. As required by the *CEQA Guidelines*, the analysis must examine the impacts which might occur if the site is left in its present condition, as well as what may reasonably be expected to occur in the foreseeable future if the Project were not approved, based on current plans and consistent with available infrastructure and community services.

Under the No Project/No Development Alternative, the site would not be redeveloped and the vacant office building, alley, 16-unit apartment building, and surface parking lot would remain in its present condition. None of the impacts associated with the Project during construction and after buildout would occur if the No Project/No Development Alternative were selected. Project and cumulative short-term noise impacts during construction, Project and cumulative recreation impacts due to an increase in use of existing park facilities, cumulative population impacts due to exceeding population projections,

and cumulative solid waste impacts due to insufficient permitted landfill capacity to accommodate future increases in solid waste would not occur under the No Project/No Development Alternative. As such, this alternative is environmentally superior to the Project.

Relationship of Alternative to Project Objectives

This alternative would not attain the following objectives of the Project.

- Support the objectives of the Redevelopment Plan to eliminate blight and revitalize the Central Glendale Redevelopment Project Area;
- Increase property tax base in the Central Glendale Redevelopment Project Area;
- Create a diversity of residential and urban uses to activate and strengthen the vitality of downtown Glendale;
- Provide housing opportunities, pursuant to the Glendale Redevelopment Agency's policy, in an urban setting in close proximity to employment opportunities, public transportation, public facilities, and goods and services;
- Utilize architectural design, lighting, and landscape materials within the residential component to give the Project site a distinctive and pleasing appearance that is visually compatible with the Hollywood Production Center building;
- Enhance the pedestrian environment in downtown Glendale by providing a landscaped public open space pedestrian passageway linking residential neighborhoods to the east of the Project site with the commercial district adjacent to the Project site to the west;
- Increase demand for local retail services;
- Enhance revenue at City-owned parking garages and utilize existing public parking resources in the City;
- Purchase the vacant office building from the Agency and renovate it for continued use as an office building in downtown Glendale consistent with the Agency's redevelopment plan; and
- Provide employment opportunities for City residents through the use of local contractors during Project construction and operation of the Hollywood Production Center.

Alternative 2 – Hollywood Production Center without Condominium Building

This alternative includes renovation of the existing on-site office building for use as the Hollywood Production Center with the remainder of the Project site remaining in the existing condition. Under this alternative, the existing parking lot in the northernmost portion of the Project site would provide parking to meet the demand of the Hollywood Production Center office use and the existing 16-unit apartment

building would remain in its existing condition. This alternative would include converting the existing alley into a public open space pedestrian passageway.

Project and cumulative short-term noise impacts during construction would be substantially reduced because the primary noise generating activities are associated with the residential building, which would not be constructed under this alternative. Project and cumulative recreation impacts would be substantially reduced as employees and patrons of the proposed Hollywood Production Center offices may occasionally use City parks but are expected to place a negligible demand on those facilities. Cumulative population impacts would also be substantially reduced because while the office use may result in indirect population growth associated with the employment opportunities, there would be no direct increase in the residential population of the City. Finally, as solid waste generation under this alternative would not be substantially reduced, the cumulative solid waste impact would be incrementally but not substantially reduced or avoided.

Relationship of Alternative to Project Objectives

This alternative would not attain the following objectives of the Project.

- Increase property tax base in the Central Glendale Redevelopment Project Area because condominium units would not be constructed and sold, generating property tax revenue;
- Create a diversity of residential and urban uses to activate and strengthen the vitality of downtown Glendale because residential uses would not be constructed;
- Provide housing opportunities, pursuant to the Glendale Redevelopment Agency's policy, in an urban setting in close proximity to employment opportunities, public transportation, public facilities, and goods and services because residential uses would not be constructed;
- Utilize architectural design, lighting, and landscape materials within the residential component to give the Project site a distinctive and pleasing appearance that is visually compatible with the Hollywood Production Center building because the residential building would not be constructed and the existing apartment building is not visually compatible with the office building;
- Enhance revenue at City-owned parking garages and utilize existing public parking resources in the City because parking would be provided on the northernmost portion of the Project site;

This alternative would attain the following objectives of the Project.

- Support the objectives of the Redevelopment Plan to eliminate blight and revitalize the Central Glendale Redevelopment Project Area because the existing on-site office building would be renovated as proposed;

- Enhance the pedestrian environment in downtown Glendale by providing a landscaped public open space pedestrian passageway linking residential neighborhoods to the east of the Project site with the commercial district adjacent to the Project site to the west because this Project component would remain as proposed;
- Increase demand for local retail services because employees and patrons of the proposed office use would use local retail services, particularly given the downtown location of the Project site;
- Purchase the vacant office building from the Agency and renovate it for continued use as an office building in downtown Glendale consistent with the Agency's redevelopment plan because the existing office building would be renovated as proposed; and
- Provide employment opportunities for City residents through the use of local contractors during Project construction and operation of the Hollywood Production Center because the existing office building would be renovated as proposed.

While some of the Project objectives would be met under this alternative, without the revenue generated by the new condominium building, renovation of the existing on-site office building and construction of the public open space pedestrian passageway would not be economically feasible.

Alternative 3 – Reduced Density Alternatives

The applicant and the Agency considered two Reduced Density Alternatives consisting of a reduction in development intensity of 25 percent and 50 percent. Under this alternative, a reduction in development intensity of 25 percent is defined as a residential building containing 47 condominium units and renovation of the vacant office building as proposed. A reduction in development intensity by 50 percent would include a residential building containing 32 condominium units without the renovation of the vacant office building. Both reduced density alternatives would include the proposed public open space pedestrian passageway.

Project and cumulative noise impacts during construction would not be avoided or substantially lessened because construction activity would generally take place over the same period and would generate noise levels above City standards. Further, as construction of the residential building would represent the primary noise source during Project construction, development reduction by 50 percent, which would exclude renovation of the office building, would result in similar noise impacts when compared to the Project as proposed. With a development reduction of 25 percent, the total direct population growth in the City would be 87. Under the 50 percent reduction alternative, 45 new residents would be directly added to the Glendale population as opposed to 132 under the Project. As the direct population generated by the reduced density alternatives would be only slightly reduced when compared to the Project as proposed, Project and cumulative recreation impacts would not be avoided or substantially lessened due to a similar demand on those facilities. Similarly, cumulative population and solid waste

impacts would not be avoided or substantially lessened under the reduced density alternatives. No identified significant impacts would be avoided or substantially lessened under these alternatives.

Relationship of Alternative to Project Objectives

This alternative would not attain or only partially meet the following objectives of the Project.

- Support the objectives of the Redevelopment Plan to eliminate blight and revitalize the Central Glendale Redevelopment Project Area because under the 50 percent reduction scenario the existing on-site office building would not be renovated;
- Increase property tax base in the Central Glendale Redevelopment Project Area because fewer condominiums would be constructed and sold, generating less property tax revenue;
- Create a diversity of residential and urban uses to activate and strengthen the vitality of downtown Glendale because under the 50 percent reduction scenario the existing on-site office building would not be renovated;
- Provide housing opportunities, pursuant to the Glendale Redevelopment Agency's policy, in an urban setting in close proximity to employment opportunities, public transportation, public facilities, and goods and services because fewer condominiums would be constructed;
- Utilize architectural design, lighting, and landscape materials within the residential component to give the Project site a distinctive and pleasing appearance that is visually compatible with the Hollywood Production Center building because under the 50 percent reduction scenario the existing on-site office building would not be renovated;
- Increase demand for local retail services because fewer condominiums would be constructed under both scenarios and the office use would not be included under the 50 percent reduction scenario;
- Enhance revenue at City-owned parking garages and utilize existing public parking resources in the City because under the 50 percent reduction scenario parking in City-owned lots would not be needed;
- Purchase the vacant office building from the Agency and renovate it for continued use as an office building in downtown Glendale consistent with the Agency's redevelopment plan because under the 50 percent reduction scenario the existing office building would not be renovated ; and
- Provide employment opportunities for City residents through the use of local contractors during Project construction and operation of the Hollywood Production Center because under the 50 percent reduction scenario the existing office building would not be renovated.

This alternative would attain the following objective of the Project.

- Enhance the pedestrian environment in downtown Glendale by providing a landscaped public open space pedestrian passageway linking residential neighborhoods to the east of the Project

site with the commercial district adjacent to the Project site to the west because this Project component would remain as proposed.

The development of either of these alternatives would satisfy one of the Project objectives, but would not be economically viable because of the substantial reduction in the amount of development on the site coupled with the cost of land. Additionally, the provision of the public open space pedestrian passageway would not be economically feasible under either reduced density alternative.

Alternative 4 – DSP Zoning without Maximum Incentives Alternative

The current Glendale General Plan land use and zoning designations for the Project site is Downtown Specific Plan (DSP). This designation provides for an array of commercial uses (i.e., retail, service, office, entertainment), in addition to very high density, urban housing and mixed-use developments. The DSP also provides incentives, in the form of height/story and density bonuses, to encourage desirable uses and benefits in the downtown area. As the Project would maximize height/story and maximum FAR incentives offered under the DSP, development under this alternative would be limited to maximum height and FAR permitted by right, which is four stories or 65 feet in height and a maximum FAR of 2.5. Based on an average of 10 units per floor, the residential building would provide 40 units while the office building renovation would remain as proposed. The public open space pedestrian passageway would be excluded from this alternative.

Under this alternative, Project and cumulative noise impacts during construction would not be avoided or substantially lessened because construction activity would generally take place over the same period and would generate noise levels above City standards. The Project under this alternative would result in 308 new residents in the City. As the population generated under this alternative would be only slightly reduced when compared to the Project as proposed, Project and cumulative recreation impacts and cumulative population impacts would not be avoided or substantially lessened. Cumulative solid waste impacts would not be substantially lessened or avoided because the reduction in development intensity of 23 condominium units would not substantially reduce the volume of solid waste generated by the Project.

Relationship of Alternative to Project Objectives

This alternative would not attain or only partially meet the following objectives of the Project.

- Increase property tax base in the Central Glendale Redevelopment Project Area because fewer condominiums would be constructed and sold, generating less property tax revenue;

- Provide housing opportunities, pursuant to the Glendale Redevelopment Agency's policy, in an urban setting in close proximity to employment opportunities, public transportation, public facilities, and goods and services because fewer condominiums would be constructed;
- Increase demand for local retail services because fewer condominiums would be constructed; and
- Enhance the pedestrian environment in downtown Glendale by providing a landscaped public open space pedestrian passageway linking residential neighborhoods to the east of the Project site with the commercial district adjacent to the Project site to the west because this Project component would not be constructed.

This alternative would attain the following objective of the Project.

- Support the objectives of the Redevelopment Plan to eliminate blight and revitalize the Central Glendale Redevelopment Project Area because the existing on-site office building would be renovated and the remainder of the Project site would be redeveloped;
- Utilize architectural design, lighting, and landscape materials within the residential component to give the Project site a distinctive and pleasing appearance that is visually compatible with the Hollywood Production Center building because the smaller condominium building could be redesigned accordingly;
- Enhance revenue at City-owned parking garages and utilize existing public parking resources in the City because the office component would remain as proposed;
- Purchase the vacant office building from the Agency and renovate it for continued use as an office building in downtown Glendale consistent with the Agency's redevelopment plan because the existing office building would be renovated as proposed; and
- Provide employment opportunities for City residents through the use of local contractors during Project construction and operation of the Hollywood Production Center because the existing office building would be renovated as proposed.

The reduction in condominium units under this alternative would satisfy some of the Project objectives but would not be economically viable because of the substantial reduction in the amount of development on the site coupled with the cost of land. Additionally, this alternative would not include the public benefit of the public open space pedestrian passageway.

Environmentally Superior Alternative

CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(e)(2) requires an EIR to identify an environmentally superior alternative. Of the alternatives considered in this section, the No Project/No Development Alternative is environmentally superior to the other alternatives because all identified significant impacts would be avoided. According to *CEQA Guidelines* if the No Project/No Development Alternative is identified as the

environmentally superior alternative, “the EIR shall also identify an environmentally superior alternative among the other alternatives.”

The Hollywood Production Center without Condominium Building Alternative is considered environmentally superior because identified noise and recreation impacts would be substantially reduced when compared to the Project. However, without the revenue generated by the development of the new condominium building, renovation of the existing on-site office building and construction of the public open space pedestrian passageway would not be economically feasible for the project proponent because of the purchase price of the property and cost of renovating the existing building.