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## VI. ALTERNATIVES TO THE PROPOSED PROJECT

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The CEQA Guidelines require that EIRs include the identification and evaluation of a reasonable range of alternatives that are designed to reduce the significant environmental impacts of the project, while still satisfying the project objectives. The CEQA Guidelines also set forth the intent and extent of alternatives analysis to be provided in an EIR.

### **Alternatives to the Proposed Project**

Section 15126.6(a) of the CEQA Guidelines states:

*An EIR shall describe a range of reasonable alternatives to the project, or to the location of the project, which would feasibly attain most of the basic objectives of the project but would avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects of the project, and evaluate the comparable merits of the alternatives. An EIR need not consider every conceivable alternative to a project. Rather it must consider a reasonable range of potentially feasible alternatives that will foster informed decisionmaking and public participation. An EIR is not required to consider alternatives which are infeasible. The lead agency is responsible for selecting a range of project alternatives for examination and must publicly disclose its reasoning for selecting those alternatives. There is no ironclad rule governing the nature or scope of the alternatives to be discussed other than the rule of reason.*

### **Purpose**

Section 15126.6(b) of the CEQA Guidelines states:

*Because an EIR must identify ways to mitigate or avoid the significant effects that a project may have on the environment, the discussion of alternatives shall focus on alternatives to the project or its location which are capable of avoiding or substantially lessening any significant effects of the project, even if these alternatives would impede to some degree the attainment of project objectives, or would be more costly.*

### **Selection of a Reasonable Range of Alternatives**

Section 15126.6(c) of the CEQA Guidelines states:

*The range of potential alternatives to the proposed project shall include those that could feasibly accomplish most of the basic objectives of the project and could avoid or substantially lessen one or more of the significant effects. The EIR should briefly describe the rationale for selecting the alternatives to be discussed. The EIR should also identify any alternatives that were considered by the lead agency but were rejected*

*as infeasible during the scoping process and briefly explain the reasons underlying the lead agency's determination. Additional information explaining the choice of alternatives may be included in the administrative record. Among the factors that may be used to eliminate alternatives from detailed consideration in an EIR are: (i) failure to meet most of the basic project objectives, (ii) infeasibility, or (iii) inability to avoid significant environmental impacts.*

### **Level of Detail**

The CEQA Guidelines do not require the same level of detail in the alternatives analysis as in the analysis of the proposed project. Section 15126.6(d) of the CEQA Guidelines states:

*The EIR shall include sufficient information about each alternative to allow meaningful evaluation, analysis, and comparison with the proposed project. A matrix displaying the major characteristics and significant environmental effects of each alternative may be used to summarize the comparison. If an alternative would cause one or more significant effects in addition to those that would be caused by the project as proposed, the significant effects of the alternative shall be discussed, but in less detail than the significant effects of the project as proposed.*

### **Project Objectives**

The project applicant's objectives for the proposed Canyon Hills project are as follows:

- To provide a substantial amount of high-quality housing for local and area residents to meet existing and future needs of those desiring to live in the northeast San Fernando Valley and to help alleviate the substantial housing shortage in the City.
- To provide greater regional housing opportunities for homebuyers and assist in satisfying the housing needs for the region.
- To invigorate the local economy by providing employment and business opportunities associated with the construction, use, and occupancy of the proposed project.
- To permanently preserve over 75 percent of the project site as open space.
- To provide ample equestrian and other recreational amenities, as well as significant passive open space and landscaping areas.
- To establish a low-density residential community that avoids the crowded appearance of a typical subdivision.

- To provide a peaceful, attractive residential development within the context of the surrounding man-made and natural environment, and separate and shield the development to maximize environmental and land use compatibility with surrounding uses.
- To locate the residential development in proximity to existing infrastructure and services where possible.
- To provide safe, efficient and aesthetically attractive streets in the residential development with convenient connections to adjoining arterials and freeways, while minimizing traffic impacts on existing residential neighborhoods.
- To minimize impacts to important natural landforms and significant natural resources.
- To develop a residential project on the project site that is financially viable and thereby permits (1) the donation or dedication of all of the project site located outside the Development Areas to an appropriate public agency or nonprofit entity and (2) the development of public and private equestrian and other recreational amenities on the project site.

### **Overview of Selected Alternatives**

The following alternatives were selected by the City for the proposed project. The alternatives to be analyzed in comparison to the proposed project include the following:

Alternative A: No Project Alternative

Alternative B: Development Area A Only, 280 Lots

Alternative C: Duke Property Alternative Access, 280 Lots (Access to Development Area A via the Duke Property)

Alternative D: Reduced Density, 87 Lots (87 single-family homes throughout the entire 887-acre project site)

Alternative E: Reduced Density, 210 Lots (25% reduction in density in Development Areas A and B).

### **Alternatives Rejected as Being Infeasible**

As described above, Section 15126.6(c) of the CEQA Guidelines requires EIRs to identify any alternatives that were considered by the lead agency but were rejected as infeasible during the scoping process, and briefly explain the reasons underlying the lead agency's determination. In addition to the five alternatives listed above, several other alternatives were considered and rejected by the project applicant.

An alternative involving both hillside residential development and commercial uses on the flat portions of the project site along La Tuna Canyon Road was considered and rejected because the project site is not zoned for commercial uses. Furthermore, the development of commercial uses would not satisfy any of the applicant's project objectives other than invigorating the local economy by providing employment and business opportunities associated with the construction, use and occupancy of the project site.

An alternative involving the development of 569 single-family homes on northern portion of the project site was considered and rejected for a variety of environmental considerations, including incompatibility with surrounding land uses, extensive grading, and impacts to biological and visual resources, traffic generation, and impacts to public services and utilities. This alternative was formulated by a prominent Southern California homebuilder several years ago after Whitebird acquired the project site.

Subsequently, the project applicant developed a proposal to construct approximately 375 single-family homes on the project site. This proposal was presented to the community and the former Councilmember for District 2. Based on comments received at that time, the project applicant revised the proposal to substantially reduce the project density to 280 single-family homes and preserve more than 75 percent of the project site as open space.

During the Notice of Preparation scoping period, a reduced-footprint alternative was suggested that limited all development to two clusters. The first cluster, located north of Interstate 210, would apparently include all lots shown on the project site plan north of the SCE transmission lines, together with the lots that border the southern boundary of the transmission lines. These homes would be accessed via Verdugo Crestline Drive. The second cluster, located south of Interstate 210, would include approximately 15 lots located on the western portion of Development Area B. These lots would have a single means of access from La Tuna Canyon Road via the westernmost bridge shown in the project site plan. This alternative was considered and rejected because it would substantially increase traffic in the residential neighborhood north of the project site, and would not be financially viable.

Alternative sites were not analyzed because the project applicant does not own or control other property within the City that satisfies the objectives for the proposed project.

With respect to Development Area A, an alternative was considered to provide secondary emergency access through Woodward Avenue, an existing 40-foot wide public right-of-way adjacent to the northerly boundary line of the project site and near the northwest boundary of Development Area A. Most of Woodward Avenue is currently unimproved, except for the portion of the road located near Foothill Boulevard that travels through an existing Sunland residential area.

As discussed in Section IV.I (Transportation/Traffic), access roads connecting to either Inspiration Way or Verdugo Crestline Drive would provide acceptable secondary access. However, Woodward Avenue

was considered and rejected for numerous reasons. First, the lengthy unimproved portion of Woodward Avenue that would have to be graded is located outside the mass grading envelope for Development Area A and would therefore expand the grading area, while grading and construction of access roads connecting to Inspiration Way or Verdugo Crestline Drive would be within or adjacent to the mass grading envelope for Development Area A. Second, the use of Woodward Avenue for emergency access would require an initial climb of approximately 400 feet. In contrast, the proposed access road to Inspiration Way would require a climb of only approximately 70 feet, while the use of Verdugo Crestline Drive would not require any increase in elevation.

Third, the improvement of Woodward Avenue for secondary access would provide little benefit for existing residents at the north end of the street because the neighborhood at the north end of Woodward Avenue is already fully developed in a grid pattern with many existing options for secondary emergency egress. On the other hand, the further improvement of Inspiration Way or Verdugo Crestline Drive would provide existing residents who live near Development Area A with secondary emergency access to the south, which does not currently exist.

Fourth, the improvement of Woodward Avenue would require approximately 2,100 feet of new construction (e.g., grading, asphalt, lighting fixtures, drainage improvements), while the access connection to Inspiration Way would require only approximately 1,100 feet of construction. The improvement of Verdugo Crestline Drive would require approximately 2,000 feet of new construction, but that construction would be much less expensive than for Woodward Avenue because the unimproved portion of Verdugo Crestline Drive is relatively flat and has been previously graded. Fifth, the access road to Inspiration Way would include standard horizontal curves, while the existing alignment of Woodward includes two severe switchback curves. The use of Verdugo Crestline Drive would also involve standard horizontal curves, although the turns would be somewhat tighter than for Inspiration Way.

### **Assumptions and Methodology**

The anticipated means for implementing the alternatives can influence the assessment and/or probability of impacts for those alternatives. For example, a project may have the potential to generate impacts, but considerations in project design may also afford the opportunity to avoid or reduce such impacts. The alternatives analysis is presented as a comparative analysis to the proposed project. Impacts associated with the alternatives are compared to project-related impacts and are classified as greater, less or essentially similar to (or comparable to) the level of impacts associated with the proposed project.

The following alternatives analysis compares the potential environmental impacts of five alternatives with those of the proposed project for each of the environmental topics analyzed in detail in Section IV (Environmental Impact Analysis) of this Draft EIR.

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## **VI. ALTERNATIVES TO THE PROPOSED PROJECT**

### **A. ALTERNATIVE A: NO PROJECT ALTERNATIVE**

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As required by CEQA, a No Project Alternative was analyzed. Under the No Project Alternative, the proposed project would not be constructed and the project site would remain undeveloped. The analysis of the No Project Alternative assumes the continuation of existing conditions as well as development of the related projects described in Section III.C (Related Projects). The potential environmental impacts associated with the No Project Alternative are described below and are compared to the potential environmental impacts associated with the proposed project.

Section 15126.6(e)(2) of the CEQA Guidelines states that the No Project Alternative “. . . analysis shall discuss the existing conditions at the time the notice of preparation is published . . . as well as what would be reasonably expected to occur in the foreseeable future if the project were not approved, based on current plans and consistent with available infrastructure and community services.” Furthermore, Section 15126.6(e)(3)(B) of the CEQA Guidelines states: “If disapproval of the project under consideration would result in predictable actions by others, such as the proposal of some other project, this ‘no project’ consequence should be discussed. In certain instances, the no project alternative means ‘no build’ wherein the existing environmental setting is maintained. However, where failure to proceed with the project will not result in preservation of existing environmental conditions, the analysis should identify the practical result of the project’s non-approval and not create and analyze a set of artificial assumptions that would be required to preserve the existing physical environment.”

#### **Geology and Soils**

Since no grading would take place under this alternative, grading impacts would be less than the proposed project. The proposed project’s potential impacts from rock fall, landslides, and cut slopes would not occur under this alternative. As no people or structures would be exposed to seismically induced rock fall, landslides or cut slopes under this alternative, geology and soils impacts associated with the No Project Alternative would be less than significant and less than those associated with the proposed project.

#### **Air Quality**

No grading or construction would be required under the No Project Alternative and no new vehicle trips would be generated. In addition, no air pollutant emissions (i.e., PM<sub>10</sub>, CO and NO<sub>x</sub>) related to grading, construction or mobile trips would be generated under this alternative. Air quality impacts from the No Project Alternative would be less than significant and less than those associated with the proposed project.

### **Hydrology and Water Quality**

New impermeable surfaces (e.g., homes and roads) would not be constructed and no grading would occur under this alternative. However, the 10 percent reduction in future peak runoff, as compared to undeveloped conditions, that would occur with the proposed project would not occur under this alternative and the potential for downstream erosion and sedimentation would not be decreased. Therefore, surface hydrology and water quality impacts associated with the No Project Alternative would be less than significant, although slightly greater than those associated with the proposed project.

### **Biological Resources**

The No Project Alternative would not involve any grading or disturb any biological resources on the project site. In comparison, the proposed project would result in impacts to biological resources. For example, under the proposed project, native trees and the following vegetation communities would be significantly impacted: southern coast live oak riparian forest, southern mixed riparian forest riparian habitat and southern willow scrub. However, no native trees or vegetation communities would be impacted under the No Project Alternative. Therefore, biological resources impacts would be less than significant and less than those associated with the proposed project.

### **Noise**

The No Project Alternative would not involve any grading, construction or haul trucks. Therefore, noise impacts that are typically associated with grading, construction and haul trucks would not occur under this alternative. Typically, noise generated by traffic would occur with the long-term occupancy of the new homes. No new sources of noise associated with increased traffic would be generated by the No Project Alternative. Likewise, since no new homes would be constructed under the No Project Alternative, there would be no increase in noise levels typically associated with the long-term occupancy of new homes. As such, noise impacts under the No Project Alternative would be less than significant and less than those associated with the proposed project.

### **Artificial Light and Glare**

The project site currently has no onsite night lighting. Under the No Project Alternative, no new sources or light or glare would be placed within or around the project site. Implementation of the proposed project would introduce new sources of night lighting to the project site that would be visible from Interstate 210, La Tuna Canyon Road and from the adjacent residential community to the north and northeast. These new light sources include streetlights on internal roadways and exterior residential lighting. Therefore, no light and glare impacts would occur with the No Project Alternative and, as such, would be less than the impacts associated with the proposed project.

**Land Use**

Under the No Project Alternative, the project site would remain undeveloped and would not conflict with general plan land use or zoning designations for the site. In contrast, the proposed project would require a General Plan amendment and zone change. Although the proposed project's land use impacts are considered to be less than significant, land use impacts under the No Project Alternative would be less than those associated with the proposed project.

**Population and Housing**

No new population or housing would be created at the project site under the No Project Alternative. The proposed project would develop 280 single-family homes with approximately 831 residents, which would result in a direct increase in population within the Sunland-Tujunga area. In comparison, the No Project Alternative would not result in any increase in population or housing in the Sunland-Tujunga area. Although the proposed project's increase in population and housing is considered to be less than significant, population and housing impacts associated with the No Project Alternative would be less than those associated with the proposed project.

**Transportation/Traffic**

The No Project Alternative would not generate any new vehicle trips because it does not involve any new development. Conversely, the proposed project would generate 212 trips during the AM peak hour and 284 trips during the PM peak hour. Without mitigation, one intersection would be significantly impacted with implementation of the proposed project. However, the Level of Service at the one significantly impacted intersection would be reduced to a less-than-significant level with mitigation. In any event, transportation/traffic impacts under this alternative would be less than significant and less than those associated with the proposed project.

**Public Services*****Fire Protection***

The No Project Alternative would not result in an increase in the demand for fire protection and emergency services provided by the Los Angeles Fire Department because no new homes or other buildings would be developed on the project site. Implementation of the proposed project would develop 280 homes at the project site that would increase existing demands for fire and emergency services provided by the Los Angeles Fire Department. Therefore, fire protection impacts under the No Project Alternative would be less than significant and less than those associated with the proposed project.

***Police Protection***

There would be no need for increased police services with implementation of the No Project Alternative because there would be no increase in the number of residents at the project site. The proposed project would develop 280 new homes. Although impacts would be less than significant, the new homes would increase existing demands for police protection services with the proposed project. As no construction would occur under the No Project Alternative, there would be no comparable increase in demand for police protection services. Therefore, police protection impacts under the No Project Alternative would be less than significant and less than those associated with the proposed project.

***Recreation and Parks***

There would be no increase in the demand for parks and recreational facilities under the No Project Alternative and therefore impacts would be less than significant. Notwithstanding the above, no new parks or recreational facilities would be developed under the No Project Alternative. Conversely, the proposed project would increase the demand for parks and recreational facilities, but would provide an equestrian park, other onsite recreational facilities, preservation of approximately 693 acres of open space, and possibly include the payment of Quimby fees, so that impacts on parks and recreational facilities under the proposed project would be less than significant.

***Libraries***

There would be no increase in the demand for library services under the No Project Alternative because there would be no increase in the number of residents at the project site. The proposed project would develop 280 new homes. Although impacts would be less than significant with the proposed project, the new homes would increase the demand for library services. Therefore, impacts on library services under the No Project Alternative would be less than significant and less than those associated with the proposed project.

***Schools***

There would be no increase in the demand for schools under the No Project Alternative because there would be no increase in the number of residents at the project site. The proposed project would develop 280 new homes. Although impacts would be less than significant with the proposed project, the new homes would increase the demand for schools. Therefore, impacts on schools under the No Project Alternative would be less than significant and less than those associated with the proposed project.

## **Energy Conservation**

### ***Electricity***

There would be no increase in electricity consumption under the No Project Alternative because no new development would occur. Currently, the proposed project site is undeveloped and does not consume electricity. Implementation of the proposed project would increase the existing demand for electricity service on the project site by 4,316 kilowatts per day. Furthermore, implementation of the No Project Alternative would not require new electricity supply facilities, distribution infrastructure or capacity-enhancing alterations to existing facilities. Since the No Project Alternative would not increase the demand for electricity, it is expected that this alternative would not conflict with adopted energy conservation plans. Consequently, electricity impacts from the No Project Alternative would be less than significant and less than those associated with the proposed project.

### ***Natural Gas***

There would be no increase in natural gas consumption under the No Project Alternative because no new development would occur. Currently, the project site is undeveloped and does not consume natural gas. Implementation of the proposed project would increase the existing demand for natural gas service on the project site to 62,207 cubic feet per day. Furthermore, implementation of the No Project Alternative would not require new supply facilities, distribution infrastructure or capacity enhancing alterations to existing natural gas facilities. Since the No Project Alternative would not increase the demand for natural gas, it is expected that this alternative would not conflict with adopted energy conservation plans. Consequently, natural gas impacts resulting from the No Project Alternative would be less than significant and less than those associated with the proposed project.

## **Utilities and Service Systems**

### ***Water***

The No Project Alternative would not include any new development. Currently, the project site is undeveloped and does not consume water or contain any water facilities. However, the proposed project would consume approximately 110,880 gallons of water per day and would require the construction of new water tanks and the extension to existing water lines. Impacts on water supplies and facilities would be less than significant with the implementation of the proposed project. Therefore, impacts resulting from No Project Alternative would be less than significant and less than those associated with the proposed project.

### *Sewer*

The No Project Alternative would not generate any sewage because no new development would occur on the project site. Currently, the project site is undeveloped and does not generate wastewater. However, implementation of proposed project would increase onsite sewage generation by approximately 92,400 gallons per day and would require extension to existing sewer lines. Impacts on sewer facilities would be less than significant with the implementation of the proposed project. As a result, sewer impacts under the No Project Alternative would be less than significant and less than those associated with the proposed project.

### *Solid Waste*

Currently, the proposed project site is undeveloped and does not generate solid waste. Under the No Project Alternative, there would be no increase in solid waste generation. However, the proposed project would produce a total of 3,424 pounds of solid waste per day and approximately 4,905,600 pounds of solid waste over the duration of project construction. This increase in solid waste would reduce the existing and future capacity of City landfills, resulting in a less-than-significant impact. Therefore, solid waste impacts from the No Project Alternative would be less than significant and less than those associated with the proposed project.

### **Hazards and Hazardous Materials**

#### *Environmental Site Assessment*

The No Project Alternative would not require the transport, use, disposal, accidental release or emission of potentially hazardous materials (e.g. paints, solvents, cleaning products, etc.). However, without a resident population to provide ongoing surveillance, the potential for illegal dumping on the project site is greater under the No Project Alternative than would be expected under the proposed project. Notwithstanding the above, with implementation of the No Project Alternative, there would be no impacts associated with hazardous materials. In comparison, the proposed project would result in less-than-significant impacts associated with the transport, use, disposal, accidental release or emission of potentially hazardous materials. Therefore, hazardous materials impacts associated with the No Project Alternative would be less than significant and less than those associated with the proposed project.

#### *Electromagnetic Field Emissions*

No new homes or residents would occupy the project site under the No Project Alternative. Since no residents would be exposed to EMF emissions with implementation of the No Project Alternative, there would be no impact. As discussed in Section IV.M.2 (Electromagnetic Field Emissions), the proposed project's impacts with respect to EMF exposure would be less than significant. However, impacts

associated with EMF exposure under the No Project Alternative would be less than those associated with the proposed project.

### **Aesthetics**

The project site is currently undeveloped. Under the No Project Alternative, views toward the project site would not be altered. In comparison, implementation of the proposed project would result in significant impacts on scenic vistas, scenic resources and the visual character of the project site (see Section IV.N (Aesthetics)). Therefore, impacts on aesthetics associated with the No Project Alternative would be less than significant and less than those associated with the proposed project.

### **Cultural Resources (Historic, Archaeological and Paleontological Resources)**

The project site is currently undeveloped. Under the No Project Alternative, the project site would remain undeveloped. As discussed in Section IV.O (Cultural Resources), there are no historic, archaeological or paleontological resources on the project site. With implementation of the proposed project, there would be no impacts to historic, archeological or paleontological resources. Similarly, the No Project Alternative would not result in any impacts to historic, archaeological or paleontological resources. Therefore, cultural resources impacts associated with the No Project Alternative would be similar to those associated with the proposed project.

### **Relationship to Project Objectives**

Although the No Project Alternative would avoid all of the significant environmental impacts associated with the proposed project, it would not satisfy most of the project objectives because no development would occur on the project site. Specifically, the No Project Alternative would not:

- Provide a substantial amount of high-quality housing for local and area residents to meet existing and future housing needs of those desiring to live in the northeast San Fernando Valley and help to alleviate the substantial housing shortage in the City.
- Provide greater regional housing opportunities for homebuyers and assist in satisfying the housing needs of the region.
- Invigorate the local economy by providing employment and business opportunities associated with the construction, use and occupancy of the proposed project.
- Permanently preserve over 75 percent of the project site as open space.
- Provide ample equestrian and other recreational amenities, as well as significant passive open space and landscaping areas.

- Establish a low-density residential community that avoids the crowded appearance of a typical subdivision.
- Provide a peaceful, attractive residential development within the context of the surrounding man-made and natural environment, and separate and shield the development to maximize environmental and land use compatibility with surrounding uses.
- Locate the residential development in proximity to existing infrastructure and services where possible.
- Provide safe, efficient and aesthetically attractive streets in the residential development with convenient connections to adjoining arterials and freeways, while minimizing traffic impacts on existing residential neighborhoods.
- Develop a residential project on the project site that is financially viable and thereby permits (1) the donation or dedication of all of the project site located outside the Development Areas to an appropriate public agency or nonprofit entity and (2) the development of public and private equestrian and other recreational amenities on the project site.

The No Project Alternative would only satisfy one project objective:

- Minimize impacts to important natural landforms and significant natural resources.

### **Reduction of Significant Project Impacts**

The proposed project would result in the following significant environmental impacts after mitigation: construction emissions, construction noise, artificial light, scenic vistas, scenic resources, visual character and short-term effects on coast live oak trees. Alternative A would reduce all of the significant environmental impacts associated with the proposed project to a less-than-significant level.

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**VI. ALTERNATIVES TO THE PROPOSED PROJECT**  
**B. ALTERNATIVE B: DEVELOPMENT AREA A ONLY, 280 LOTS**

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Alternative B would include the development of 280 homes (the same as the proposed project) on the north side of Interstate 210. No residential development on the south side of Interstate 210 would occur under this alternative. To the extent possible, Alternative B would be constructed within the area defined as Development Area A. However, the grading footprint for Alternative B and the proposed project would not be precisely the same. The most obvious difference between the two projects is that Alternative B would not include the southern portion of the roadway loop in Development Area A. As a consequence of this design change, Alternative B would include fewer homes and less grading in proximity to Interstate 210. The conceptual site plan for Alternative B is set forth in Figure VI-1.

Alternative B would utilize smaller building pads in order to cluster all of the 280 lots into Development Area A. The largest building pads under Alternative B would be approximately 8,050 square feet in area (70 feet x 115 feet). In contrast, the smallest building pads in the proposed project would be 8,050 square feet. Table VI-1 provides a comparison of minimum building pad sizes for homes under Alternative B and the proposed project. Because of the smaller building pads, new homes under Alternative B would also tend to be somewhat smaller. New homes under Alternative B would have an average size of approximately 3,700 square feet. In comparison, new homes in the proposed project would have an average size of approximately 4,000 square feet.

**Table VI-1**  
**Minimum Building Pad Size Comparison**  
**Alternative B and Proposed Project**

<b>Building Pad Size</b>	<b>Number of Lots</b>
<b>Alternative B</b>	
70 x 115 feet	43
60 x 115 feet	134
50 x 115 feet	92
Custom	11
<b>Proposed Project</b>	
90 x 115 feet	129
80 x 115 feet	69
70 x 115 feet	42
Custom	40

**Figure VI-1 Alternative B: Development Area A only, 280 Lots**

Grading for Alternative B would be conducted in two phases. Alternative B would require the excavation of approximately 3,021,900 cubic yards (plus approximately 20 percent additional remedial grading) and the fill emplacement of approximately 2,474,900 cubic yards. Grading would not balance onsite. Rather, approximately 547,000 cubic yards of excess fill would need to be removed from the project site. In comparison, grading for the proposed project would consist of approximately 4,600,000 cubic yards of excavation (plus 20 percent additional remedial grading) and would balance onsite.

The grading operation for Alternative B would result in the disturbance of approximately 152.79 acres. Of this total, approximately 12.07 acres would only be temporarily impacted by grading, after which that area would be restored with native vegetation. Consequently, the permanent impact from grading would be 140.73 acres. This is approximately 70.27 acres of permanent grading disturbance less than would be created by the proposed project (i.e., 211 acres of permanent grading disturbance). The decrease in area affected by grading is largely attributable to the clustering of all homes in the northern portion of the project site.

Beyond the “footprint” of required grading, Alternative B would require brush clearance/fuel modification on an additional area of approximately 65.37 acres. In total, Alternative B would permanently disturb an area of approximately 206.10 acres (combination of graded area and brush clearance/fuel modification). In comparison, the proposed project would permanently disturb an area of approximately 304.77 acres (combination of graded area and brush clearance/fuel modification). Again, the small area of disturbance under Alternative B is due to the elimination of development on the south side of Interstate 210 and the clustering of all homes on smaller lots in the northern portion of the project site.

Under Alternative B there would be a total area of 680.83 acres of natural open space (i.e., areas either not impacted or restored with native vegetation). Thus, Alternative B would preserve 98.67 more acres of natural open space than the proposed project (680.83 – 582.16).

## **Geology and Soils**

Because construction under Alternative B would generally be restricted to Development Area A, the analysis presented in Section IV.A (Geology and Soils) in this Draft EIR with respect to Development Area A generally applies with equal force to this alternative. Similar to the proposed project, it is anticipated that, without mitigation, this alternative could result in significant impacts in Development Area A due to the potential for rock fall, landslides and instability of cut slopes. As with the proposed project, implementation of the recommended mitigation measures would reduce those potentially significant impacts with respect to Development Area A to less-than-significant levels. However, no impacts with respect to Development Area B would occur under this alternative because no homes would be developed south of Interstate 210. Since impacts comparable to the proposed project are expected in Development Area A and no impacts are expected in Development Area B, overall geology

and soils impacts under Alternative B would be less than significant and less than those associated with the proposed project.

### **Air Quality**

Because Alternative B would decrease grading on the project site (e.g., approximately 70.27 acres of less grading disturbance than required for the proposed project and approximately 1,578,100 cubic yards (4,600,000 – 3,021,900) less earth movement), Alternative B would be expected to substantially decrease construction-related vehicle emissions and fugitive dust. Alternative B would not include any grading south of Interstate 210. Alternative B would require less grading north of Interstate 210 (i.e., 3,021,900 cubic yards of excavation) than the proposed project (i.e., 3,400,000 cubic yards of excavation). While, Alternative B would modestly reduce construction-related vehicle emissions and fugitive dust north of Interstate 210 by approximately 11 percent, this reduction would be offset to some extent by the increased vehicle emissions generated by the approximate 27,350 truck trips necessary to export approximately 547,000 cubic yards of excess fill from the project site. Overall construction-related air quality impacts under Alternative B would be significant, but less than those associated with the proposed project.

Upon full project occupancy, Alternative B and the proposed project would generate the same number of residents and vehicle trips, and operational air quality impacts would be comparable.

### **Hydrology and Water Quality**

Because the grading footprint for the north side of Interstate 210 under Alternative B is largely the same as for the proposed project, the storm drainage improvement plan for Alternative B and Development Area A in the proposed project would be similar. However, whereas the proposed project would also include the development of a portion of the south side of Interstate 210, no such development would occur under Alternative B. Consequently, existing conditions on the southern portion of the project site would remain unchanged following project development. Under Alternative B, there would be less impermeable surface area and therefore less surface water runoff. It is estimated that Alternative B would include approximately 33.75 acres of impermeable surface area. In comparison, the proposed project would include approximately 49.6 acres of impermeable surface area. Consequently, the net increase in runoff from the project site under Alternative B should be approximately 32 percent less than that produced by the proposed project. In any event, the design goal of the proposed project's storm drainage system is to reduce peak runoff flows during a 50-year storm to 90 percent of peak runoff from the undeveloped site. This would be achieved by sizing the detention basins accordingly. The exact same flows discharged into the La Tuna Canyon Wash could be achieved under Alternative B by adjusting the release of storm water flows from the detention basins. Hence, the resulting downstream impacts from Alternative B and the proposed project should be essentially the same.

Implementation of BMPs for both the construction and operational phases would ensure that the proposed project would not generate significant water quality impacts. Alternative B would provide the same water quality BMPs as the proposed project. Hence, the resulting water quality impacts from Alternative B and the proposed project would be essentially the same.

## Biological Resources

### *Flora and Fauna*

Under Alternative B, approximately 206.10 acres of the project site would be disturbed and potentially impact biological resources. Compared to the proposed project, Alternative B would reduce habitat disturbance by approximately 98.67 acres (304.77 – 206.10). The 206.10 acres consist of (1) approximately 140.73 acres affected by grading and not revegetated, (2) approximately 25.83 acres subject to brush clearance, and (3) approximately 39.55 acres that would be subject to 50 percent impact associated with brush thinning within the fuel modification zone. An additional 12.07 acres would be subject to remedial grading, but would be revegetated with native species following remedial grading and would be preserved as natural open space. Table VI-2 provides a comparison impacts to habitat under Alternative B and the proposed project.

**Table VI-2  
Comparison of Impacts to Habitat  
Alternative B and the Proposed Project**

	<b>Project Site Acres Permanently Impacted</b>	<b>Permanent Grading Impacts</b>	<b>Brush Clearance Zone (Acres)</b>	<b>Brush Thinning Zone (Acres)</b>
Alternative B	206.10	140.73	25.83	39.55
Proposed Project	304.77	211.0	46.43	47.34

As indicated in Table VI-2, Alternative B would substantially reduce impacts to native vegetation on the project site compared to the proposed project.

Regarding impacts to areas subject to Corps and CDFG jurisdiction and to non-jurisdictional riparian areas, a total of 1.00 acre of Corps jurisdiction, 1.10 acres of CDFG jurisdiction and 0.80 acre of non-jurisdictional riparian areas would be potentially impacted under Alternative B. In comparison, 2.06 acres of Corps jurisdiction, 2.45 acres of CDFG jurisdiction and 2.32 acres of non-jurisdictional areas would be impacted under the proposed project (see Section IV.D.1 (Flora and Fauna)). As a result, impacts to Corps and CDFG jurisdictional areas and non-jurisdictional riparian areas would be less under Alternative B compared to the proposed project.

### ***Native Trees***

Grading under Alternative B would require the removal of up to 77 (or approximately 6.2 percent) of the 1,247 surveyed and estimated coast live oaks on the project site. Grading under Alternative B would also require the removal of up to 9 (or approximately 6.7 percent) of the 133 surveyed and estimated western sycamore trees on the project site. In comparison, the proposed project would require the removal of up to 232 coast live oaks and 27 western sycamores. Thus, Alternative B would reduce impacts to native trees compared to the proposed project. Implementation of the recommended mitigation measures listed in Section IV.D.2 (Native Trees) of this Draft EIR would reduce the long-term impact to coast live oaks to a less-than-significant level, while the short-term impact on coast live oaks would remain significant after mitigation, but less than those associated with the proposed project.

### ***Wildlife Movement***

Impacts to wildlife movement under Alternative B would be the same as under the proposed project. Neither Alternative B nor the proposed project would affect regional wildlife movement. Neither Drainage 14, the open space in the western portion of Development Area B, nor La Tuna Canyon Wash would be affected by either Alternative B or the proposed project. With respect to local wildlife movement, neither Alternative B nor the proposed project would interrupt movement along Verdugo Crestline Drive or any other southeast to northwest movement.

### **Noise**

Alternative B and the proposed project would involve similar grading footprints in Development Area A. In Development Area A, peak construction noise impacts from grading activities on the existing residential community to the north and northeast would be comparable to the proposed project. However, the duration of home construction activities in Development Area A would be longer under Alternative B than the proposed project. Consequently, compared to the proposed project, construction noise impacts on the existing residential community to the north and northeast would be greater under Alternative B. Because there would be no grading in Development Area B, Alternative B would eliminate the proposed project's less-than-significant construction-related noise impacts to the few homes located along La Tuna Canyon Road west of the project site, and to visitors to La Tuna Canyon Park. Alternative B would increase noise impacts on existing roads in the areas surrounding the project site, primarily Interstate 210, due to increased truck traffic involved in the export of 547,000 cubic yards of earth materials from Development Area A. No blasting would be conducted in Development Area B, and the blasting-related sound levels in Development Area A (if localized blasting did occur) are expected to be comparable to those that may occur under the proposed project.

Because Alternative B would introduce more people and vehicles onto the northern portion of the project site, there is the potential that operational noise levels could be increased at the nearest existing homes to the north and northeast under this alternative. However, under the proposed project, the

maximum increase in ambient noise levels, due to operational activities, measured at existing nearby homes would be only 1 dBA, and thus would not cause a significant noise impact on the existing communities. Under Alternative B, new homes would be located approximately the same distance from existing homes and therefore residential noise impacts on the existing homes are expected to be comparable.

Noise impacts at offsite intersections would also be comparable for Alternative B and the proposed project. Under the proposed project, noise impacts at the study intersections would all be 1 dBA or less. By concentrating development on the northern side of Interstate 210 under Alternative B, noise impacts at many of the study intersections would slightly increase, but would remain less than significant.

Noise generated by traffic from Interstate 210 would affect fewer homes under Alternative B than under the proposed project. No homes would be constructed within Development Area B that might be impacted, and the elimination of the southern portion of the loop road in Development Area A would remove many of the closest homes to Interstate 210 that would occur under the proposed project.

### **Artificial Light and Glare**

By clustering 280 homes on the north side of Interstate 210, Alternate B would increase the number of night lighting sources in Development Area A. This increased density of lighting sources would be expected to increase significant impacts to the existing homes to the north and northeast. While Alternative B would increase the night “presence” of homes on the north side of Interstate 210, this alternative would reduce impacts to vehicles on Interstate 210 by eliminating all night lighting on the south side of Interstate 210, and by eliminating some of the most prominently visible sources of night lighting on the northern side (i.e., the elimination of the southern loop road segment closest to the freeway). Finally, as a result of the elimination of all development on the south side of Interstate 210, Alternative B would eliminate night lighting impacts on La Tuna Canyon Road. In contrast, the proposed project would have a significant night lighting impact on La Tuna Canyon Road.

### **Land Use**

Alternative B would include the development of 280 homes within the approximate grading limits of Development Area A, which would be permitted under zoning and land use designations roughly similar to those proposed for the northern portion of the project site as part of the proposed project. However, Alternative B would not require any modification of zoning or land use designations for the southern portion of the project site.

Since Alternative B proposes similar land uses within the project site as the proposed project, the land use consistency analysis presented in Section IV.G (Land Use) – which addresses the RCPG,

Community Plans, Draft Specific Plan, LAMC and Oak Tree Ordinance – would be similar under this alternative.

Regarding the potential for the project to physically divide an established community, Alternative B would be developed within the same grading footprint as Development Area A under the proposed project. The project site is currently undeveloped and does not contain any roads that are currently used by the surrounding community. Therefore, development of this alternative would not inhibit the existing community's access to nearby community services. Similar to the proposed project, implementation of this alternative would not physically divide an established community.

For all of the reasons described above, and similar to the proposed project, Alternative B would result in less-than-significant land use impacts.

### **Population and Housing**

Development under Alternative B would occur on the same project site as the proposed project. Currently, the project site is undeveloped and does not contain any homes or people. Similar to the proposed project, this alternative would not result in the displacement of any existing homes or people.

Similar to the proposed project, Alternative B would result in the development of 280 single-family homes with an estimated 831 residents on the project site. As indicated in Section IV.H (Population and Housing) of this Draft EIR, the increases in population and housing resulting from the proposed project are not expected to directly induce substantial population growth. Alternative B would result in the introduction of the same number residents and homes as the proposed project. Therefore, similar to the proposed project, population and housing impacts would be less than significant under Alternative B.

### **Transportation/Traffic**

Because both Alternative B and the proposed project would provide 280 homes, the traffic generation for these two projects would be the same – 2,680 vehicle trips per day. Peak hour traffic generation would also be the same. Similar to the proposed project, an equestrian park is included in Alternative B; consequently, an additional 14 vehicle trips would be generated from operation of the equestrian park.

With the exception of the traffic generated by the equestrian park, all traffic generated by Alternative B would use the Interstate 210 interchange with La Tuna Canyon Road for site ingress and egress. In contrast, under the proposed project, some traffic generated by Development Area B would be directed to and from the west along La Tuna Canyon Road and would not enter the Interstate 210 interchange with La Tuna Canyon Road. Consequently, Alternative B would increase traffic at the Interstate 210 interchange with La Tuna Canyon Road. Alternative B would generate approximately 211 vehicle trips

during the AM peak hour and 283 during the PM peak hour at this intersection. In comparison, the proposed project would only generate approximately 189 trips during the AM peak hour and 245 trips during the PM peak hour at this intersection. Under Alternative B, the V/C ratio would increase at this intersection by 0.105 (with LOS D) during the AM peak hour by 2009 without mitigation, which would exceed the City's significance threshold. However, as discussed in Section IV.I (Transportation/Traffic), the proposed project would increase the V/C ratio at this intersection by 0.087 (with LOS C) during the AM peak hour, which also exceeds the City's significance threshold and would result in a significant traffic prior to mitigation. With implementation of the mitigation measure that is recommended for the proposed project (i.e., installation of a traffic signal), the V/C ratio under Alternative B would decrease by 0.056 during the AM peak hour and the intersection would operate at LOS B. In comparison, implementation of the same mitigation measure under the proposed project would decrease the V/C ratio at this intersection by 0.070 during the AM peak hour and the intersection would also operate at LOS B. In both bases, the traffic impact at this intersection would be mitigated to a less-than-significant level.

None of the other eight intersections that were analyzed in this Draft EIR would be significantly impacted by Alternative B or the proposed project, and Alternative B and the proposed project would have a similar LOS at this intersection in the year 2009. Therefore, similar to the proposed project, impacts at those eight intersections would be less than significant under Alternative B.

## **Public Services**

### ***Fire Protection***

Similar to the proposed project, Alternative B would result in the development of 280 single-family homes on the project site. However, all 280 homes would be located within the approximate grading limits of Development Area A of the proposed project. The projected demand for fire protection services is based on the number of homes and other structures. Since this alternative would result in the development of the same number of homes as the proposed project, it would place a similar demand on the LAFD for fire protection services as the proposed project. Therefore, impacts on fire protection services would be less than significant under Alternative B. However, implementation of the recommended mitigation measures listed in Section IV.J.1 (Fire Protection) of this Draft EIR would further reduce these less-than-significant impacts.

### ***Police Protection***

Similar to the proposed project, Alternative B would result in the development of 280 single-family homes on the project site. However, all 280 homes would be located within the approximate grading limits of Development Area A of the proposed project. The projected demand for police protection services is based on the number of homes and population. Since this alternative would result in the

development of the same number of homes as the proposed project, it would place a similar demand on the LAPD for police protection services as the proposed project. Therefore, impacts on police protection services would be less than significant under Alternative B. However, implementation of the recommended mitigation measures listed in Section IV.J.2 (Police Protection) of this Draft EIR would further reduce these less-than-significant impacts.

### ***Recreation and Parks***

Similar to the proposed project, Alternative B would result in the development of 280 single-family homes on the project site. The projected demand for parks and recreational facilities is based on the number of homes and associated population. Since this alternative would result in the development of the same number of homes as the proposed project, it would generate a similar demand for parks and recreational facilities as the proposed project (i.e., 3.3 acres of parkland). To offset the demand for parks and recreational facilities, this alternative would include approximately 1.7 acres of recreational facilities within the approximate limits of Development Area A of the proposed project. Similar to the proposed project, this alternative includes a three-acre equestrian park at the southwestern portion of the project site. In addition, Alternative B includes more open space than the proposed project because Development Area B would be preserved as open space with implementation of this alternative.

If and to the extent that the proposed onsite recreational facilities, equestrian park and open space do not fully satisfy the requirements of the Quimby Act with respect to this alternative, the project developer would be required to pay Quimby fees to the City to satisfy the balance of its obligations under the Quimby Act. The provision of the onsite recreational facilities together with the payment of any required Quimby fees would satisfy the need for any new or physically altered parks or recreational facilities. Similar to the proposed project, impacts on parks and recreational facilities under Alternative B would be less than significant.

### ***Libraries***

Similar to the proposed project, Alternative B would result in the development of 280 single-family homes on the project site. However, all 280 homes would be located within the approximate grading limits of Development Area A of the proposed project. The projected demand for library services is based on the number of homes and associated population. Since this alternative would result in the development of the same number of homes as the proposed project, it would place a similar demand on the LAPL for library services as the proposed project. Therefore, similar to the proposed project, library impacts would be less than significant under Alternative B.

### ***Schools***

Similar to the proposed project, Alternative B would result in the development of 280 single-family homes on the project site. However, all 280 homes would be located within the approximate grading limits of Development Area A of the proposed project. The projected demand for schools is based on the number of homes and associated student population. Since this alternative would result in the development of the same number of homes and associated student population as the proposed project, it would place a similar demand on the LAUSD for schools as the proposed project. Furthermore, a school fee of \$3.55 per square foot of new residential development would be paid to LAUSD in compliance with SB 50, notwithstanding the less-than-significant impact on school facilities. Therefore, impacts on schools would be less than significant under Alternative B.

### **Energy Conservation**

#### ***Electricity***

Similar to the proposed project, Alternative B would result in the development of 280 single-family homes on the project site. However, all 280 homes would be located within the approximate grading limits of Development Area A of the proposed project. The projected demand for electricity and electricity supply facilities is based on the number of homes. Since this alternative would result in the development of the same number of homes as the proposed project, it would require a similar amount of electricity and electricity supply facilities. Similar to the proposed project, electricity impacts under this alternative would be less than significant. However, construction impacts under Alternative B would be reduced as compared to the proposed project since there would be no need to extend electricity lines to Development Area B. Implementation of the recommended mitigation measures listed in Section IV.K.1 (Electricity) of this Draft EIR would further reduce these less-than-significant impacts.

#### ***Natural Gas***

Similar to the proposed project, Alternative B would result in the development of 280 single-family homes on the project site. However, all 280 homes would be located within the approximate grading limits of Development Area A of the proposed project. The projected demand for natural gas and natural gas supply facilities is based on the number of homes. Since this alternative would result in the development of the same number of homes as the proposed project, it would require a similar amount of natural gas and natural gas supply facilities. Similar to the proposed project, natural gas impacts under this alternative would be less than significant. However, construction impacts under Alternative B would be reduced as compared to the proposed project since there would be no need to extend natural gas lines to Development Area B. Implementation of the recommended mitigation measures listed in Section IV.K.2 (Natural Gas) of this Draft EIR would further reduce these less-than-significant impacts.

## Utilities and Service Systems

### *Water*

Similar to the proposed project, Alternative B would result in the development of 280 single-family homes on the project site. However, all 280 homes would be located within the approximate grading limits of Development Area A of the proposed project. The projected demand for water and water supply facilities is based on the number of homes. Since this alternative would result in the development of the same number of homes as the proposed project, it would require a similar amount of water and water supply facilities. Similarly, impacts on water supply and facilities would be less than significant. However, construction impacts under Alternative B would be reduced as compared to the proposed project since there would be no need to extend water lines to Development Area B. Implementation of the recommended mitigation measures listed in Section IV.L.1 (Water) of this Draft EIR would further reduce these less-than-significant impacts.

### *Sewer*

Similar to the proposed project, Alternative B would result in the development of 280 single-family homes on the project site. However, all 280 homes would be located within the approximate grading limits of Development Area A of the proposed project. The projected generation of sewage and need for sewer supply facilities is based on the number of homes. Since this alternative would result in the development of the same number of homes as the proposed project, it would generate a similar amount of sewage and require similar sewer facilities. However, construction impacts under Alternative B would be reduced as compared to the proposed project since there would be no need to extend sewer lines to serve Development Area B. Similar to the proposed project, impacts to sewer facilities under Alternative B would be less than significant.

### *Solid Waste*

Similar to the proposed project, Alternative B would result in the development of 280 single-family homes on the project site. However, all 280 homes would be located within the approximate grading limits of Development Area A of the proposed project. The projected generation of solid waste is based on the number of homes. Since this alternative would result in the development of the same number of homes as the proposed project, it would generate a similar amount of solid waste. Similar to the proposed project, solid waste impacts under this alternative would be less than significant, and implementation of the recommended mitigation measures listed in Section IV.L.3 (Solid Waste and Disposal) of this Draft EIR would further reduce these less-than-significant impacts.

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## **Hazards and Hazardous Materials**

### *Environmental Site Assessment*

Similar to the proposed project, Alternative B would result in the development of 280 single-family homes on the same project site as the proposed project. The Phase I ESA that was conducted for the proposed project assessed the condition of the entire 887-acre project site. Since this alternative is located on the same project site as the proposed project, the Phase I ESA would equally apply to this alternative. In addition, the types of land uses proposed under this alternative (i.e., 280 single-family homes) are similar to that which is included in the proposed project. Therefore, the analysis contained in Section IV.M.1 (Environmental Site Assessment) of this Draft EIR with respect to the proposed project would equally apply to this alternative. As indicated therein, impacts would be less than significant with the implementation of the proposed project., and impacts under Alternative B would also be less than significant.

### *Electromagnetic Field Emissions*

As shown in Figure VI-1, more homes would be located in close proximity to the SCE transmission lines under Alternative B than with implementation of the proposed project. However, as discussed in Section IV.M.2 (Electromagnetic Field Emissions), there is insufficient scientific evidence to demonstrate any causal link between EMF exposure from transmission lines or any other source and adverse health effects. Similar to the proposed project, the impacts with respect to EMF exposure under this alternative would be considered less than significant. However, in the interest of full disclosure with respect to the scientific community's uncertainty of potential health risks associated with EMF exposure, the mitigation measure in Section IV.M.2 (Electromagnetic Field Emissions) would also apply with respect to this alternative.

### **Aesthetics**

By concentrating the construction of all 280 homes on the north side of Interstate 210, Alternative B eliminates all proposed project aesthetic/view impacts caused by the development of Development Area B. In contrast, views of Development Area B under the proposed project would create significant aesthetic impacts as viewed from Interstate 210 and La Tuna Canyon Road (designated scenic highways) and La Tuna Canyon Park. Alternative B also eliminates the southern portion of the loop roadway on the northern portion of the project site. As a result, some of the proposed project's most visually prominent homes, landform alteration, and brush clearance (as viewed from Interstate 210) would not occur under Alternative B. However, Alternative B would concentrate more homes on smaller lots at higher elevations within Development Area A. As a result, there would be less sense of open space within the development area. On balance, impacts to northerly views from Interstate 210 would be somewhat more significant under Alternative B than under the proposed project. However,

impacts to southerly views from Interstate 210 would be eliminated by Alternative B. Aesthetic/view impacts to existing adjacent residential areas would increase under Alternative B. As noted above, impacts to La Tuna Canyon Road and La Tuna Canyon Park would be virtually eliminated.

### **Cultural Resources (Historic, Archaeological and Paleontological Resources)**

The proposed project would have no adverse effects on known historic, archaeological or paleontological resources on the project site because there are no known such resources within the Development Areas. Development under this alternative would generally occur within the grading limits of Development Area A of the proposed project. Therefore, similar to the proposed project, development under Alternative B would not result in any impacts to known historic, archaeological or paleontological resources.

### **Relationship to Project Objectives**

Alternative B would not satisfy all of the project objectives because it would result in the development of a substantially denser residential community. Alternative B would increase the density in Development Area A by 33 percent. Similar to a typical subdivision, the homes proposed under this alternative would be built closer together and have smaller setbacks. As a result, the proposed lots would have to be designed in a more rigid geometric pattern that would not conform as well to the natural contours of the land. Therefore, in Development Area A, Alternative B would not:

- Establish a low-density residential community that avoids the crowded appearance of a typical subdivision.
- Minimize impacts to important natural landforms and significant natural resources.

Although the homes proposed under this alternative would be mostly shielded from views from Interstate 210, many homes would be visible from the existing homes to the north and northeast of the project site. Therefore, Alternative B would not:

- Provide a peaceful, attractive residential development within the context of the surrounding man-made and natural environment, and separate and shield the development to maximize environmental and land use compatibility with surrounding uses.

Alternative B would satisfy the following project objectives:

- Provide a substantial amount of high-quality housing for local and area residents to meet existing and future housing needs of those desiring to live in the northeast San Fernando Valley and help to alleviate the substantial housing shortage in the City.
- Provide greater regional housing opportunities for homebuyers and assist in satisfying the housing needs of the region.

- Invigorate the local economy by providing employment and business opportunities associated with the construction, use and occupancy of the proposed project.
- Permanently preserve over 75 percent of the project site as open space.
- Locate the residential development in proximity to existing infrastructure and services where possible.
- Provide safe, efficient and aesthetically attractive streets in the residential development with convenient connections to adjoining arterials and freeways, while minimizing traffic impacts on existing residential neighborhoods.
- Develop a residential project on the project site that is financially viable and thereby permits (1) the donation or dedication of all of the project site located outside the Development Areas to an appropriate public agency or nonprofit entity and (2) the development of public and private equestrian and other recreational amenities on the project site.

### **Reduction of Significant Project Impacts**

The proposed project would result in the following significant environmental impacts after mitigation: construction emissions, construction noise, artificial light, scenic vistas, scenic resources, visual character and short-term effects on coast live oak trees. Alternative B would reduce the following significant environmental impacts associated with the proposed project to a less-than-significant level:

- Artificial light impact on La Tuna Canyon Road; and
- Scenic vistas, scenic resources and visual character of Development Area B as viewed from Interstate 210 and La Tuna Canyon Road.

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**VI. ALTERNATIVES TO THE PROPOSED PROJECT**  
**C. ALTERNATIVE C: DUKE PROPERTY ALTERNATIVE ACCESS, 280**  
**LOTS**

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This alternative, which has previously been defined in this Draft EIR as the “Duke Access Alternative”, is identical to the proposed project, except that it includes an alternative access route into Development Area A. Under the proposed project, the access to Development Area A consists of a proposed roadway that forms a new fourth leg to the existing three-way La Tuna Canyon Road/Interstate 210 intersection. As proposed, this access road would be an elevated frontage road that parallels Interstate 210. The height of the proposed access road ranges from “at grade” where it intersects La Tuna Canyon Road to approximately 90 feet above the freeway (approximately 2,700 feet westerly of the La Tuna Canyon Road intersection).

Under Alternative C, access to Development Area A would be through the adjacent Duke Property located to the east. The alignment of the alternate access road into the Duke property would be almost identical to the access road that was as ultimately approved for the Duke Project, but would be extended to the eastern boundary of the project site on the north side of Interstate 210.

In contrast, the Duke Access Alternative begins as the new fourth leg in the existing three-way La Tuna Canyon Road/Interstate 210 intersection – similar to the proposed project. However, rather than paralleling the freeway, the alternate access road is aligned northwesterly directly into the Duke Property. Within the Duke Property, the proposed access road retains the alignment for the 10-lot tract eventually approved for the Duke Property. However, rather than terminating in a cul-de-sac within the Duke Property, the proposed access road would be extended into the project site to provide access to Development Area A (see Figure VI-2).

Other than some rearrangement of lots along the access road as it enters Development Area A, under this alternative Development Areas A and B would be developed essentially the same way as in the proposed project.

By realigning the access to Development Area A through the adjacent Duke Property, this alternative eliminates most of the access road that would parallel the freeway as part of the proposed project. As a consequence, most of the grading along the north side of the freeway (including several prominent cut slopes) would be eliminated. Street lighting along this portion of the project site would also be eliminated. However, the revised access through the Duke Property would descend into Development Area A along a topographic ridge identified by the Draft Specific Plan as a “Prominent Ridgeline”.

**Figure VI-2 Alternative C: 280 Lot Duke Property Entry Alternative Access**

## **Geology and Soils**

The analysis presented in Section IV.A (Geology and Soils) in this Draft EIR, with respect to Development Area A, generally applies with equal force to the Duke Property. Similar to the proposed project, it is anticipated that, without mitigation, this alternative could result in significant impacts due to the potential for rock fall, landslides and instability of cut slopes. Similar to the proposed project, implementation of the mitigation measures listed in Section IV.A (Geology and Soils) would reduce potentially significant impacts on geology and soils to a less-than-significant level. Therefore, impacts on geology and soils under this alternative would be similar to the proposed project.

## **Air Quality**

With the exception of the revised access to Development Area A, the same grading plan would be utilized for both Alternative C and the proposed project. Consequently, grading-related vehicle emissions and fugitive dust would be the essentially the same, so that peak daily and quarterly emissions of NO<sub>x</sub> and PM<sub>10</sub> would be significant for both. However, construction of the alternative access road through the Duke Property would require 358,600 cubic yards of excavation, which would be slightly less than the 383,600 cubic yards of excavation required for the access road to Development Area A under the proposed project. While most of the excavated material would be recompacted in the construction of the proposed project's access road, very little fill would be required with respect to the Duke Access Alternative. In fact, the construction of the Duke Access Alternative would result in approximately 320,700 cubic yards of excess fill that would either need to be utilized elsewhere onsite or exported for disposal. If exported from the project site, the additional truck trips would add substantially to the construction-related vehicle emissions, resulting in increased impacts compared to the proposed project.

Upon full project occupancy, Alternative C and the proposed project would generate the same number of residents and vehicle trips, and operational air quality impacts would be expected to be comparable.

## **Hydrology and Water Quality**

Because the grading plan and building pad design are essentially the same for both Alternative C and the proposed project, the same storm drainage improvement plan would also be utilized for both alternatives. The alternate access under Alternative C would create minor local differences in the drainage pattern, although the expected total volume of runoff for Alternative C and the proposed project would be virtually the same. Both Alternative C and the proposed project would result in less-than-significant hydrology and water quality impacts.

Implementation of BMPs for both the construction and operational phases would ensure that the proposed project would not generate significant water quality impacts. Alternative C would include the

same water quality BMPs as the proposed project. Hence, the resulting water quality impacts from Alternative C and the proposed project would be essentially the same.

## **Biological Resources**

### *Flora and Fauna*

Implementation of Alternative C would result in impacts to 5.5 acres of highly disturbed mixed chaparral that exhibits only limited signs of recovery since the fire that occurred there in the late 1990s. Impacts to 5.5 acres would not be significant for the reasons set forth in Section IV.D.1 (Flora and Fauna) of this Draft EIR.

Development of Alternative C would require filling portions of one unvegetated ephemeral drainage that accounts for approximately 0.04 acre of Corps and CDFG jurisdiction. This impact would be significant without mitigation. However, compared to the proposed project, Alternative C would avoid impacts to Drainages 6, 7 and 8 associated with the proposed project that total 0.07 acre of unvegetated drainage subject to Corps and CDFG jurisdiction. As a result, Alternative C would impact 0.03 acre less Corps and CDFG jurisdiction than the proposed project. With respect to non-jurisdictional riparian areas, no such areas would be impacted in addition to those identified under the proposed project because neither the development of the access road to Development Area A under the proposed project nor under Alternative C would impact any non-jurisdictional riparian areas. Therefore, impacts to the 2.32 acres of non-jurisdictional riparian areas that were identified under the proposed project (see Section IV.D.1 (Flora and Fauna)) would be equivalent under Alternative C.

### *Native Trees*

Table VI-3 summarizes the impacts by tree species for this alternative. An estimated 202 coast live oaks and 24 western sycamores would be impacted by implementation of Alternative C. Overall, a total of 226 trees would be impacted in the Study Area with implementation of this alternative. In comparison, Alternative C would impact 30 fewer coast live oaks and three fewer western sycamores than would the proposed project. In addition, the two coast live oaks that would be impacted on the Duke Property (see Table VI-3) were given an overall health rating of 2.4 because they were recently damaged by fire and are now recovering (i.e., displaying new growth).

Similar to the proposed project, implementation of the recommended mitigation measures listed in Section IV.D.2 (Native Trees) of this Draft EIR would reduce the long-term impact to coast live oaks to a less-than-significant level, while the short-term impact on coast live oaks would remain significant after mitigation.

**Table VI-3  
Alternative C Tree Impacts  
Canyon Hills Project**

Common Name	Canyon Hills Project Site		Duke Property		Total Proposed Impacted
	Within Grading Limits	Within 20' Wide Disturbance Area	Within Grading Limits	Within 20' Wide Disturbance Area	
Coast Live Oak	179	19	2	2	202
Western Sycamore	19	5	0	0	24
<b>Total</b>	<b>198</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>226</b>

### ***Wildlife Movement***

Similar to the proposed project, development of this alternative would not affect the limited local movement by animals across the Duke Property, nor would it affect any regional east-west movement through the Duke Property because no such movement occurs under existing conditions.

### **Noise**

Because the same basic grading plan would be utilized for both Alternative C and the proposed project, the construction-related noise generated during the grading phase would also be essentially the same. For both projects, there would be significant, albeit temporary, noise impacts on existing nearby homes when construction equipment is operating in close proximity. Because the existing residential areas to the north would not be as well shielded by intervening topography from the construction of the alternate access road, there is the potential that noise impacts from the construction of the access road would be somewhat greater under Alternative C in comparison to the proposed project. Construction-related noise impacts to La Tuna Canyon Park under Alternative C would be essentially the same as those under the proposed project.

As discussed in the Section IV.E (Noise), under the proposed project 20 proposed homes would be subject to noise levels of 67-dBA, or greater, which presents a potentially significant impact. Under Alternative C, the same 20 homes would be impacted. In order to meet Caltrans sound criterion at receptors R10 through R12, both the proposed site plan and Alternative C would have to be modified.

Existing homes to the north and east of Development Area A would be exposed to the same operational (i.e., non-vehicular residential activities and mechanical equipment) noise levels from both Alternative C and the proposed project. However, existing homes to the north of the alternate access road could be exposed to increased vehicular noise once the project has been fully occupied. The alternate access road would be constructed along a topographic ridge that would provide less shielding for existing residents than would the proposed access road. Consequently, Alternative C could also result in

increased, but non-significant, long-term noise impacts on existing residents located in the vicinity of Tranquil and Reverie Drives.

### **Artificial Light and Glare**

The night lighting impacts from the residential portion of Development Area A would be the same under Alternative C as the proposed project (i.e., significant as viewed from adjacent existing homes, but less than significant as viewed from Interstate 210). By eliminating the proposed project's access road that runs parallel along the Interstate 210 frontage, Alternative C would further reduce night lighting impacts as viewed from Interstate 210, as well as from La Tuna Canyon Road. However, by realigning the proposed access road to the north in closer proximity to the existing residential areas farther to the north, Alternative C has the potential to increase night lighting impacts to these homes. Night lighting impacts associated with Development Area B would be the same under Alternative C as the proposed project (i.e., significant as viewed from La Tuna Canyon Road, but less than significant as viewed from Interstate 210).

### **Land Use**

Within the project site, implementation of Alternative C would result in a similar pattern of development as the proposed project. The same land use and zoning designation amendments would be proposed under this alternative as the proposed project. The only difference with respect to potential land uses that would occur under this alternative when compared to the proposed project is the alternate access road through the Duke Property. The land use impact associated with Alternative C is potentially different with respect to the Draft Specific Plan because the alternative access road would cross a potential designated Prominent Ridgeline. However, Section 7C of the Draft Specific Plan provides that a public or private street is permitted to cross a Prominent Ridgeline Protection Area under circumstances that are applicable here.<sup>1</sup> Therefore, Alternative C is consistent with the Draft Specific Plan.

Regarding community division, Alternative C would be developed within the same grading footprint as the proposed project. Similar to the proposed project, implementation of this alternative would not physically divide an established community. Therefore, similar to the proposed project, no impacts would occur under this alternative with respect to community division.

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<sup>1</sup> Section 7C of the Draft Specific Plan states "Where the prohibitions of Section 7A (Prominent Ridgeline Protection) would substantially restrict access to a portion of a Site, create a land-locked Site, a Street or Private Street and related improvements shall be allowed to cross a Prominent Ridgeline Protection Area in accordance with the applicable regulations in the LAMC . . ."

## **Population and Housing**

With the exception of the alternate access road through the Duke Property, development under Alternative C would be similar to the proposed project. Similar to the proposed project, this alternative would result in the development of 280 single-family homes on the project site. Currently, the project site is undeveloped and does not contain any homes or people. Similar to the proposed project, this alternative would not result in the displacement of any existing homes or people.

As Alternative C would result in the development of the same number of homes as the proposed project, the same number of people would reside on the project site under this alternative as the proposed project. As indicated in Section IV.H (Population and Housing) of this Draft EIR, the increases in population and housing resulting from the proposed project are not expected to directly induce substantial population growth. Similarly, implementation of this alternative would also not be expected to directly induce substantial population growth. Alternative C would therefore result in the same less-than-significant population and housing impacts as the proposed project.

## **Transportation/Traffic**

While Alternative C would reconfigure the entry roadway for Development Area A, the point of access to Development Area A would remain at the intersection of Interstate 210 and La Tuna Canyon Road. There would be no change to the access for Development Area B. Consequently, the generation and distribution of vehicles trips would be precisely the same for Alternative C and the proposed project. Both projects would significantly impact the intersection of Interstate 210 and La Tuna Canyon Road, that impact would be mitigated in either case by the installation of a traffic signal at that intersection.

## **Public Services**

### ***Fire Protection***

The projected demand for fire protection services is based on the number of homes and other structures. Since this alternative would result in the development of the same number of homes with a development pattern similar to the proposed project, it would place a similar demand on the LAFD for fire protection services. Therefore, new fire protection facilities would not be required with implementation of Alternative C and impacts on fire protection services would be less than significant. Implementation of the recommended mitigation measures listed in Section IV.J.1 (Fire Protection) of this Draft EIR would further reduce these less-than-significant impacts.

### ***Police Protection***

The projected demand for police protection services is based on the number of homes and other structures. Since this alternative would result in the development of the same number of homes with a

development pattern similar to the proposed project, it would place a similar demand on the LAPD for police protection services. Therefore, impacts on police protection services and facilities under Alternative C would be less than significant. Implementation of the recommended mitigation measures listed in Section IV.J.2 (Police Protection) of this Draft EIR would further reduce these less-than-significant impacts.

### ***Recreation and Parks***

The projected demand for parks and recreational facilities is based on the number of homes and associated population. Since Alternative C would result in the development of the same number of homes as the proposed project, it would generate a similar demand for parks and recreational facilities as the proposed project (i.e., 3.3 acres of parkland).

Under both the proposed project and Alternative C, the recreational facilities in the Development Areas would provide approximately 1.7 acres of recreational opportunities for future project residents. The proposed three-acre public equestrian park and trail would also be available to all project residents. The equestrian park, in combination with the recreational facilities in the Development Areas, would provide approximately 4.7 acres of recreational opportunities for future project residents. While the future residents would increase the demand for parks and recreational facilities in the project area, this demand would be offset by the three-acre equestrian park, 1.7 acres of other onsite recreational facilities and several hundred acres of preserved open space.

Under both the proposed project and Alternative C, if and to the extent that the proposed onsite recreational facilities, equestrian park and open space do not fully satisfy the requirements of the Quimby Act with respect to this alternative, the project developer would be required to pay Quimby fees to the City to satisfy the balance of its obligations under the Quimby Act. The provision of the onsite recreational facilities, together with the payment of any required Quimby fees, would satisfy the need for any new or physically altered parks or recreational facilities. Similar to the proposed project, impacts on parks and recreational facilities under Alternative C would be less than significant.

### ***Libraries***

The projected demand for libraries is based on the number of homes and associated population. Since Alternative C would result in the development of the same number of homes as the proposed project, it would generate a similar demand for library facilities as the proposed project (i.e., 415.5 square feet of space and 1,662 volumes). As discussed in Section IV.J.4 (Libraries), the 415.5 square feet of additional space is the approximate equivalent of a 20 x 20 room, the construction of which would not be expected to result in any significant environmental impacts. Furthermore, it is anticipated that the proposed project's demand for library services would be partially met by the La Crescenta Library and/or the almost completed 12,500-square foot Sun Valley Branch Library, which are both located less

than four miles from the project site. Therefore, similar to the proposed project, Alternative C impacts with respect to libraries would be less than significant.

### ***Schools***

The projected student population and associated demand for schools is based on the number of homes. As Alternative C would result in the development of the same number of homes as the proposed project, it would generate the same number of students (i.e., 122 students). Under the proposed project, impacts on schools would be less than significant because the proposed project would not generate enough students to exceed the capacities of the schools serving the project site to necessitate the construction of new or physically altered school facilities (see Section IV.J.5 (Schools)). Similarly, Alternative C impacts on schools would be less than significant.

Furthermore, the project developer would be required to pay a school fee of \$3.55 per square foot of new residential development to the LAUSD in compliance with SB 50, notwithstanding the less-than-significant impact on school facilities. The payment of this fee would fully mitigate any potential school impacts.

### **Energy Conservation**

#### ***Electricity***

The projected demand for electricity and electricity supply facilities is based on the number of homes. Since this alternative would result in the development of the same number of homes with a similar development pattern as the proposed project, it would require a similar amount of electricity and electricity supply facilities. Similar to the proposed project, electricity impacts under Alternative C would be less than significant. Implementation of the recommended mitigation measures listed in Section IV.K.1 (Electricity) of this Draft EIR would further reduce these less-than-significant impacts.

#### ***Natural Gas***

The projected demand for natural gas and natural gas supply facilities is based on the number of homes. Since this alternative would result in the development of the same number of homes with a development pattern similar to the proposed project, it would require a similar amount of natural gas and natural gas supply facilities. Similarly, natural gas impacts under Alternative C would be less than significant. Implementation of the recommended mitigation measures listed in Section IV.K.2 (Natural Gas) of this Draft EIR would further reduce these less-than-significant impacts.

## **Utilities and Service Systems**

### ***Water***

The projected demand for water and water supply facilities is based on the number of homes. Since this alternative would result in the development of the same number of homes with a development pattern similar to the proposed project, it would require a similar amount of water and water supply facilities. Similarly, impacts on water supply and facilities under Alternative C would be less than significant. Implementation of the recommended mitigation measures listed in Section IV.L.1 (Water) of this Draft EIR would further reduce these less-than-significant impacts.

### ***Sewer***

The projected generation of sewage and need for sewer supply facilities is based on the number of homes. Since this alternative would result in the development of the same number of homes with a development pattern similar to the proposed project, it would generate a similar amount of sewage and require similar sewer facilities. Similarly, impacts on sewer facilities under Alternative C would be less than significant.

### ***Solid Waste***

The projected generation of solid waste during construction and operation is based on the number of homes. Since this alternative would result in the development of the same number of homes as the proposed project, it would generate a similar amount of solid waste. Similarly, construction-related and operational solid waste impacts under Alternative C would be less than significant. Implementation of the recommended mitigation measures listed in Section IV.L.3 (Solid Waste and Disposal) of this Draft EIR would further reduce these less-than-significant impacts.

## **Hazards and Hazardous Materials**

### ***Environmental Site Assessment***

The Phase I ESA that was conducted for the proposed project included hazardous materials database record searches for the areas surrounding the project site. Although the search radii varied depending on the database, the search radii ranged between 0.125 and one mile from the boundary of the project site. This range of radii includes all or a portion of the access route through the Duke Property that is associated with Alternative C. The database search revealed that the area in the vicinity of the alternate access road is not included on list of hazardous material sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5.

As discussed in the Section IV.M.1 (Environmental Site Assessment), the reconnaissance-level investigations performed for the proposed project included neighboring properties within one-quarter mile of the project site, which would include the portion of the Duke Property that would be used to access Development Area A under this alternative. As stated in Section IV.M.1 (Environmental Site Assessment) of this Draft EIR, there are no known properties within 1,000 feet of the project site with known or documented releases of potentially hazardous materials. Furthermore, no recognized environmental conditions associated with any offsite properties (i.e., within one-quarter mile of the project site) were observed during the site reconnaissance.

Similar to the proposed project, this alternative would result in the development of 280 single-family homes in the Development Areas. Minor amounts of hazardous materials may be used by future residents, including motor oil, grease, paints and solvents. Potential impacts associated with the use of such hazardous materials would be mitigated to less-than-significant levels through compliance with the California Health and Safety Code and the LAMC. Therefore, similar to the proposed project, development of this alternative would not result in the routine transport, use or disposal of hazardous materials or result in reasonably foreseeable conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment. Furthermore, this alternative would not emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous materials within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school because the closest school is located more than two miles from the project site.

### ***Electromagnetic Field Emissions***

As shown in Figure VI-2, the proposed homes under this alternative would be located in the same place relative to the SCE transmission lines as with implementation of the proposed project. However, as discussed in Section IV.M.2 (Electromagnetic Field Emissions) of this Draft EIR, there is insufficient scientific evidence to demonstrate any causal link between EMF exposure from transmission lines or any other source and adverse health effects. Similar to the proposed project, the impact with respect to EMF exposure under this alternative would be considered less than significant. However, in the interest of full disclosure with respect to the scientific community's uncertainty of potential health risks associated with EMF exposure, the mitigation measure in Section IV.M.2 (Electromagnetic Field Emissions) is recommended.

### **Aesthetics**

For the most part, Development Areas A and B would appear the same whether Alternative C or the proposed project were developed. The only material difference between the two is that the proposed project includes access to Development Area A along an elevated frontage road parallel to the freeway that extends for a distance of approximately 2,600 feet (measured west from the Interstate 210/La Tuna Canyon Road interchange), while under Alternative C, access to Development Area A travels across the Duke Property and a potential Prominent Ridgeline, as designated in the Draft Specific Plan. By

realigning the access to Development Area A, this alternative eliminates most of the access road that parallels the freeway. As a consequence, most of the grading along the north side of the freeway (including several prominent cut slopes) would be eliminated, which would provide a more aesthetically-pleasing view from Interstate 210. However, the alternate access through the Duke Property would descend into Development Area A across a topographic ridge identified in the Draft Specific Plan as a Prominent Ridgeline. This alternate access road would be more visible from the existing residential areas to the north than the access road for the proposed project, which would be hidden from view by intervening terrain. Thus, Alternative C would have a net aesthetic benefit with regard to views as seen from Interstate 210; however, it would increase impacts as viewed from the adjacent existing residential community. On balance, while a significant aesthetic impact would remain, Alternative C would somewhat reduce the aesthetic impact of the proposed project.

Other than the effects of the alternate access road discussed above, the aesthetic/view impacts of Development Area A to the existing adjacent residential areas to the north and northeast of the project site would be the same under Alternative C and the proposed project. Similarly, impacts to Interstate 210 and La Tuna Canyon Road created by Development Area B would be the same under Alternative C and the proposed project.

#### **Cultural Resources (Historic, Archaeological and Paleontological Resources)**

As stated in Section IV.O.1 (Historic Resources) and Section IV.O.2 (Archaeological Resources) of this Draft EIR, the cultural and archaeological resources records review for the proposed project included all areas within a one-half mile radius of the project site, which includes the Duke Property. The Cultural Resources Assessment (see Appendix J) for the proposed project indicated that no prehistoric archaeological resources have been recorded on or within a one-half mile radius of the project site. Furthermore, the National Register of Historic Places, the California State Historic Resources Inventory, the California Points of Historical Interest or the California Historical Landmarks do not list any historic resources within one-half mile of the project site. Based on the above discussion, similar to the proposed project, no impacts to historic or archaeological resources would occur with development of this alternative.

For the most part, the Duke Property consists of the same non-fossil bearing metamorphosed granitoid bedrock as the proposed project. Construction of the alternate access road through the bedrock would have no impact on paleontological resources. However, potential fossil bearing alluvial and colluvial soils are present on the slope flanks and locally in the canyon bottoms on the Duke Property. Should the access road be constructed within these deposits, there is a potential that paleontological resources could be adversely affected. If paleontological resources were encountered during the construction of the alternate access road, the mitigation identified in Section IV.O-3 would reduce impacts to a less than significant level.

### **Relationship to Project Objectives**

Alternative C satisfies all of the project objectives. However, the project applicant does not currently own or lease any portion of the Duke Property.

### **Reduction of Significant Project Impacts**

The proposed project would result in the following significant environmental impacts after mitigation: construction emissions, construction noise, artificial light, scenic vistas, scenic resources, visual character and short-term effects on coast live oak trees. Alternative C would not reduce any of the significant environmental impacts associated with the proposed project to a less-than-significant level.

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## **VI. ALTERNATIVES TO THE PROPOSED PROJECT**

### **D. ALTERNATIVE D: REDUCED DENSITY, 87 LOTS**

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Under this alternative, the entire 887-acre project site would be developed with 87 large single-family lots, or “ranchettes”. This is the maximum number of homes that can currently be developed on the project site under the current General Plan land use designations for the project site and the City’s slope density ordinance (see Section 17.05C of the LAMC). Lots under this design would range in size from 5 acres to 26.9 acres, and would average 10.2 acres. Building pads would range from 0.0 acres (for ungraded custom lots) to 1.31 acres in size, with an average size of 0.59 acre. Each lot would be large enough to accommodate horsekeeping. The average home size would be 6,000 square feet, as compared to 4,000 square feet for the proposed project. The conceptual site plan for Alternative D is shown on Figure VI-3.

In contrast to the proposed project, access to the northerly portion of Alternative D would not be provided by the access road shown on the site plan for the proposed project. Instead, Alternative D would include multiple access points to Development Area A, including two access points through the existing residential communities to the north and northeast. Primary access to Development Area A would be provided from Verdugo Crestline Road. Access would also be provided from Inspiration Way. Given that Alternative D would include only 40 homes on the north side of Interstate 210, it would not be economically viable to construct the lengthy and costly access road contemplated for the proposed project. On the southern portion of the project site, multiple access points would be provided along La Tuna Canyon Road.

Grading for Alternative D would be conducted in three phases on the north side of Interstate 210, and in three phases on the south side of Interstate 210. Grading for Alternative D would require the excavation of approximately 2,309,500 cubic yards (plus approximately 20 percent additional remedial grading) and the fill emplacement of approximately 1,569,500 cubic yards. Grading would not balance onsite. Approximately 740,000 cubic yards of excess fill would need to be removed from the project site. In comparison, grading for the proposed project would consist of approximately 4,600,000 cubic yards of excavation (plus 20 percent additional remedial grading) and would balance onsite.

The grading operation for Alternative D would result in the disturbance of approximately 239.7 acres. Of this total, approximately 14.09 acres would only be temporarily impacted by grading, after which that area would be restored with native vegetation. Consequently, the permanent impact from grading would be 225.61 acres. This is approximately 14.61 acres greater than the permanent grading disturbance with respect to the proposed project (i.e., 211 acres of permanent grading disturbance). The increase in area affected by grading is largely attributable to the greater dispersal of lots, which requires longer roads for internal circulation, and larger building pads, which requires larger cut and fill slopes. In addition, where building pads are located in closer proximity to each other, as in the

proposed project, there are economies of grading. For example, two or more building pads may be designed to take advantage of the same cut and/or fill slopes. However, where building pads are constructed in isolation, such as in Alternative D, no such economies of grading would occur.

Beyond the “footprint” of required grading, Alternative D would require brush clearance/fuel modification on an additional area of approximately 225.54 acres. In total, Alternative D would permanently disturb an area of approximately 450.02 acres (combination of graded area and brush clearance/fuel modification). In comparison, the proposed project would permanently disturb an area of approximately 304.77 acres (combination of graded area and brush clearance/fuel modification). Again, the greater area of disturbance under Alternative D is due to the greater dispersal of lots and larger building pads. Furthermore, under the proposed project, two or more lots may take advantage of overlapping areas of brush clearance and fuel modification. In contrast, the isolated nature of the building pads under Alternative D means that surrounding brush clearance/fuel modification areas frequently do not overlap. Figure VI-4 graphically displays the limits of grading under Alternative D and the areas disturbed by brush clearance/fuel modification.

Under Alternative D, there would be a total area up to 435.78 acres of natural open space (i.e., areas either not impacted or restored with native vegetation). This is 146.38 acres less than the 582.16 acres of natural open space not impacted or restored with native vegetation that would be preserved under the proposed project. It should be noted, however, that the private lot owners would have the legal right to alter the natural open space located on their lots in connection with the development of their properties.

Finally, under Alternative D, there would be no public dedication of open space. Instead, all of the open space would be incorporated into individual lots as private open space, which could be developed by the owners of those lots. In comparison, the proposed project clusters 280 single-family homes and would thereby permanently preserve approximately 693 acres of open space (approximately 78 percent of the project site). This open space includes both “modified open space” and “natural open space”. To ensure protection of the natural open space, it would be donated or dedicated to the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy or another qualified entity to further conservation efforts within the Verdugo Mountains. The modified open space areas would be owned and maintained by the homeowner association(s).

**Figure VI-3 Alternative D: Reduced Density, 87-Lots**

**Figure VI-4 Grading Limits, Brush Clearance, and Fuel Modification Zones for 87-Lot Alternative Plan**

## **Geology and Soils**

Alternative D and the proposed project would occupy the same 887-acre project site and would be exposed to the same general geotechnical conditions. Similar to the proposed project, it is anticipated that this alternative could result in significant impacts due to the potential for rock fall, landslides and cut slopes. In addition, since Alternative D would include the development of land that would otherwise be preserved as open space under the proposed project, it is conceivable that the development of Alternative D could involve unforeseen geotechnical conditions. However, if adverse geotechnical conditions are encountered, the layout of the large lots proposed under Alternative D could be refined to accommodate and/or rectify these conditions.

In addition, existing geotechnical conditions for the entire project site are evaluated and presented in Section IV.A (Geology and Soils) of this Draft EIR. As discussed in Section IV.A (Geology and Soils), 11 landslides were identified on the project site. While the proposed project would expose future homes to seven landslides, Alternative D would potentially expose future homes to all 11 landslides.

However, similar to the proposed project, implementation of the recommended mitigation measures (see Section IV.A (Geology and Soils)) would reduce potentially significant impacts from geology and soils to less-than-significant levels. Therefore, impacts from geology and soils under Alternative D would be similar to the proposed project. However, because of its reduced density, fewer people and structures would be exposed to geotechnical hazards under Alternative D than under the proposed project.

## **Air Quality**

Alternative D would involve approximately 50 percent of the excavation quantities required for the proposed project. Therefore, construction-related air quality impacts from Alternative D could be reduced by a similar ratio. However, this reduction in onsite vehicle emissions would be partially offset by the necessity to export approximately 740,000 cubic yards of excess fill from the project site.

Upon full project occupancy, Alternative D would generate less residents and vehicle trips, and thus operational air quality impacts would be expected to be less than the less-than-significant operational air quality impacts associated with the proposed project.

## **Hydrology and Water Quality**

Although Alternative D would only involve the construction of 87 homes (or 69 percent less than the proposed project), there would not be a comparable reduction in runoff generated during a 50-year storm. This is due to the fact that impermeable surface area is the major factor in generating increased runoff, not the number of homes. It is estimated that Alternative D would have approximately 43.17

acres of impermeable surface area (due primarily to more extensive internal roads, longer driveways, larger homes, and larger patios and other hardscape areas). This is approximately 6.43 acres (or 13 percent) less impermeable surface area than the proposed project (i.e., 49.6 acres). Consequently, the amount of runoff generated by Alternative D, above and beyond the undeveloped conditions peak flows, would be approximately 13 percent less than that generated by the proposed project. However, the design goal of the proposed project's storm drainage system is to reduce peak runoff flows during a 50-year storm to 90 percent of peak runoff from the undeveloped site. This would be achieved by sizing the detention basins accordingly. The same flow discharged into the La Tuna Canyon Wash could be achieved under Alternative D by adjusting the release of storm water flows from its detention basins. Hence, the resulting downstream impacts from Alternative D and the proposed project would be essentially the same.

Implementation of BMPs for both the construction and operational phases would ensure that the proposed project would not generate significant water quality impacts. Alternative D would provide comparable water quality BMPs as the proposed project. Hence, the resulting water quality impacts from Alternative D and the proposed project would be essentially the same.

## Biological Resources

### *Flora and Fauna*

Under Alternative D, approximately 450.02 acres of the project site would be disturbed and potentially impact biological resources. As set forth in Table VI-4, compared to the proposed project, Alternative D would increase habitat disturbance by approximately 145.25 acres (450.02 – 304.77). The 450.02 acres consist of (1) approximately 225.54 acres affected by grading and not revegetated, (2) approximately 82.81 acres subject to brush clearance, and (3) approximately 142.73 acres that would be subject to 50 percent impact associated with brush thinning within the fuel modification zone. An additional 14.09 acres would be subject to remedial grading, but would be revegetated with native species following remedial grading and would be preserved as natural open space.

**Table VI-4**  
**Comparison of Impacts to Habitat**  
**Alternative D and the Proposed Project**  
**Canyon Hills Project**

	Project Site Acres Permanently Impacts by Project	Permanent Grading Impacts	Brush Clearance Zone (Acres)	Fuel Modification Zone (Acres)
Alternative D	450.02	225.54	82.81	142.73
Proposed Project	304.77	211.0	46.43	47.34

As indicated in Table VI-4, Alternative D would have substantially greater impacts to native vegetation on the project site than the proposed project.

Regarding impacts to areas subject to Corps and CDFG jurisdiction and to non-jurisdictional riparian areas, all such areas, with the exception of Drainage 2 (La Tuna Canyon Wash), would be potentially impacted with implementation of Alternative D. A total of 0.95 acres of Corps jurisdiction, 1.50 acres of CDFG jurisdiction and 8.66 acres of non-jurisdictional riparian areas would be potentially impacted under Alternative D. Drainage 2 would not be impacted because it is shielded from the proposed lots by topography and ownership boundaries. In comparison, 2.06 acres of Corps jurisdiction, 2.45 acres of CDFG jurisdiction and 2.32 acres of non-jurisdictional areas would be impacted under the proposed project (see Section IV.D.1 (Flora and Fauna). Although impacts to Corps and CDFG jurisdictional areas would be less under Alternative D compared to the proposed project, there is a potential for the private owners of the proposed lots to disturb additional jurisdictional and non-jurisdictional areas on their properties. The impact to 8.66 acres of non-jurisdictional riparian areas under Alternative D substantially exceeds the impact to 2.32 acres of non-jurisdictional riparian areas under the proposed project.

### *Native Trees*

Grading under Alternative D would require the removal of up to 260 (or approximately 21 percent) of the 1,247 surveyed and estimated coast live oaks on the project site. Grading under Alternative D would require the removal of up to 30 (or approximately 22.5 percent) of the 133 surveyed and estimated western sycamores on the project site. In comparison, the proposed project would require the removal of up to 232 coast live oaks and 27 western sycamores. Thus, impacts to native trees would be greater under Alternative D than under the proposed project. However, similar to the proposed project, implementation of the recommended mitigation measures listed in Section IV.D.2 (Native Trees) of this Draft EIR would reduce the long-term impact to coast live oaks to a less-than significant level, while the short-term impact on coast live oaks would remain significant after mitigation.

### *Wildlife Movement*

Although Alternative D and the proposed project would occupy the same 887-acre project site, development under this alternative would extend across the entire project site, while the proposed project would be limited to the Development Areas. As discussed in Section IV.D.3 (Wildlife Movement), the proposed project does not affect potential regional wildlife movement between the Tujunga Wash and the main body of the Verdugo Mountains south of La Tuna Canyon Road because, if an animal can successfully navigate the "Missing Link" area south of Tujunga Wash and make its way to the northwestern portion of the project site, it can travel undisturbed through the western portion of

the project site to La Tuna Canyon Road. That route would likely include travel through Drainage 14, as discussed in Section IV.D.3.

However, Alternative D could potentially impact Drainage 14. In addition, many of the proposed homes in the western portion of the project site under Alternative D would likely be surrounded by fences. As a result, if and to the extent regional wildlife movement currently occurs via Tujunga Wash, the potential impacts to Drainage 14 and the potential fencing could, to some extent, restrict regional wildlife movement south of Interstate 210. However, given the relatively small number of homes proposed on the western portion of the project site south of Interstate 210, it is not anticipated that Alternative D would have a significant impact on such regional wildlife movement or have a materially greater impact on regional wildlife movement than the proposed project.

The only local wildlife movement corridor that would be potentially impacted by Alternative D would be Drainage 14, as discussed above. Therefore, impacts on local wildlife movement under Alternative D would be somewhat greater than those associated with the proposed project, but potential impacts to one of several local movement corridors currently available to animals would not be considered significant.

### *Noise*

Under Alternative D, grading would involve only half the volume of excavation as the proposed project, fewer homes would be constructed, and construction would be dispersed over the entire project site (rather than being clustered in the eastern portion of the property). Furthermore, north of Interstate 210, the majority of the construction that would occur under Alternative D would be located farther away from the existing residential community to the north and northeast than the proposed project. Therefore, Alternative D would be expected to have a reduced construction noise impact on the existing residential community to the north and northeast.

Alternative D would also reduce overall noise impacts south of Interstate 210. Grading volumes would be reduced, fewer homes would be constructed, and the construction would be dispersed over a larger area (see Figure VI-4). Therefore, Alternative D would be expected to have a reduced noise impact for visitors to La Tuna Canyon Park.

Compared to the proposed project, Alternative D would increase grading and construction noise audible at the existing homes located along La Tuna Canyon Road. However, the substantial distance and intervening terrain between the proposed grading and the existing homes would be expected to attenuate these noise impacts to less-than-significant levels.

Due to the necessity to export 740,000 cubic yards from the project site (approximately 37,000 two-way truck trips), Alternative D would generate substantial truck noise in the surrounding community

that would not occur under the proposed project. Although the noise impacts associated with potential blasting with respect to the proposed project is not expected to be significant, Alternative D would involve less total grading and would therefore further reduce the necessity for blasting and its resultant noise.

As discussed in the Section IV.E (Noise), under the proposed project, 20 homes would be subject to noise levels of 67 dBA or greater, which presents a potentially significant impact. Of these, noise impacts to all but three homes could be mitigated to less than significant levels. Under Alternative D, approximately 17 homes would be subject to noise levels of 67 dBA or greater. It is expected that impacts to a majority of these homes could be mitigated with sound walls and/or berms, similar to the proposed project. However, if some of these homes in Alternative D could not be protected in this manner, modification to the site plan could be required, similar to the proposed project.

While long-term operational noise levels under the proposed project would be less than significant, operational noise levels under Alternative D would be even lower due to the alternative's lower density and more dispersed design.

### **Artificial Light and Glare**

Alternative D would implement a lighting plan comparable to that proposed by the proposed project. As a result, Alternative D can be expected to result in fewer residential sources of night lighting on the project site. However, the larger homes that would be provided under the Alternative D would be expected to generate more light than the smaller homes under the proposed project. Furthermore, it is expected that low levels of street lighting would be provided on all internal circulation roadways for security and identification purposes. Because of the dispersed nature of this alternative and the more extensive internal roadway system, this alternative would generate low levels of night lighting throughout the 887-acre project site. In comparison, the proposed project would concentrate lighting (hence creating a brighter source) within the 194 acres of Development Area in the eastern portion of the project site. Because lighting under Alternative D would be more visible from Interstate 210, impacts would be considered significant and greater than for the proposed project. Impacts to La Tuna Canyon Road would also be significant and greater than for the proposed project. On the other hand, impacts to the existing residential community to the north and northeast would be reduced due to the lower density of development. Nevertheless, because major portions of the 887-acre project site would be subject to night lighting, night lighting impacts under Alternative D would be greater than for the proposed project.

### **Land Use**

Currently, approximately 748 acres (84 percent) of the project site has a Minimum Residential land use designation, as set forth in the Sunland-Tujunga and Sun Valley Community Plans (see Figure IV.G-1

in Section IV.G (Land Use)). The remaining 139 acres (16 percent) of the project site is designated as Open Space (nine acres), Very Low I Residential (120 acres) and Very Low II Residential (10 acres) land uses. The development of single-family homes on land with these land use designations are subject to the requirements of the City's slope density ordinance (see Section 17.05C of the LAMC).

As indicated in Figure IV.G-4 in Section IV.G (Land Use), approximately 860 acres (97 percent) of the project site is zoned A1-1 (Agricultural, Height District No. 1). The remaining 27 acres (three percent) of the project site is zoned A1-K-1 (Agricultural, Height District No. 1, Equinekeeping District) and RE-11 (Residential Estate, Height District No. 1).

The current land use and zoning designations for the project site and the City's slope density ordinance all limit the number of single-family homes that can currently be developed on the project site. The slope density ordinance imposes the most significant restriction and would permit a maximum of 87 single-family homes on the project site. In comparison to the proposed project, Alternative D does not include any proposed changes to the existing land use and zoning designations for the project site. Similar to the proposed project, Alternative D has been designed for consistency with the Draft Specific Plan.

As discussed above (see Biological Resources), Alternative D would result in impacts to a greater number of oak trees than the proposed project. Similar to the proposed project, compliance with the City's Oak Tree Ordinance would be required with implementation of this alternative.

Regarding community division, this alternative would be developed on the same project site as the proposed project. Similar to the proposed project, implementation of this alternative would not physically divide an established community (see Community Division discussion in Section IV.G (Land Use)).

For the reasons discussed above, implementation of Alternative E would further reduce the less-than-significant land use impacts resulting from the proposed project.

### **Population and Housing**

Development under this alternative would occur on the same project site as the proposed project. Currently, the project site is undeveloped and does not contain any homes or people. Similar to the proposed project, this alternative would not result in the displacement of any existing homes or people.

Based on the Sunland-Tujunga Community Plan estimate of 3.07 persons per Minimum single-family home,<sup>2</sup> approximately 267 people are expected to occupy 87 single-family homes upon completion of construction of this alternative. This is approximately 564 less people and 193 fewer homes than would occur with implementation of the proposed project. As indicated in Section IV.H (Population and Housing) of this Draft EIR, the increases in population and housing resulting from the proposed project are not expected to directly induce substantial population growth. As this alternative would result in the introduction of fewer residents and homes than the proposed project, the less-than-significant population and housing impacts associated with the proposed project would be reduced under this alternative.

### Transportation/Traffic

As with the proposed project, traffic volumes expected to be generated under Alternative D during the AM and PM peak hours, as well as on a daily basis, were estimated using rates published in the Institute of Transportation Engineers' (ITE) Trip Generation manual, 6th Edition, 1997. Traffic volumes expected to be generated by Alternative D, as with the proposed project, were forecast based on the number of single-family homes. As shown in Table IV-5, Alternative D is expected to generate 65 vehicle trips (16 inbound and 49 outbound) during the AM peak hour. During the PM peak hour, Alternative D is expected to generate 88 vehicle trips (56 inbound and 32 outbound). Over a 24-hour period, Alternative D is forecast to generate 833 daily trip ends during a typical weekday.

**Table VI-5**  
**Alternative D Trip Generation<sup>a</sup>**

Land Use	Size	Daily Trip Ends <sup>b</sup>	AM Peak Hour Volumes <sup>b</sup>			PM Peak Hour Volumes <sup>b</sup>		
			In	Out	Total	In	Out	Total
Single-Family Residential <sup>c</sup>	87 DU	833	16	49	65	56	32	88

<sup>a</sup> Source: ITE "Trip Generation", 6<sup>th</sup> Edition, 1997.  
<sup>b</sup> Trips are one-way traffic movements, entering or leaving.  
<sup>c</sup> ITE Land Use Code 210 (Single-Family Residential) trip generation average rates.

Alternative D is forecast to generate approximately 69 percent fewer daily, AM and PM peak hour vehicle trips when compared to the proposed project (the proposed project was forecast to generate 2,694 daily vehicle trips, 212 AM peak hour trips and 284 PM peak hour trips). Although fewer vehicle trips are anticipated to travel through the study intersections during the AM and PM peak hours with the development of Alternative D, the distribution of traffic through the study intersections would

<sup>2</sup> This varies from the factor of 2.97 persons per low-density single-family home used to calculate future population under the proposed project.

be different than the proposed project due to the significant changes in access to and from Development Areas A and B.

### *Determination of the "Gateway" Traffic Volumes*

As stated above, the access scheme associated with Alternative D varies significantly from the proposed project in that more access points are provided. In addition, the internal roadways on either portion of the project site in Alternative D do not provide access to all of the lots (i.e., an internal roadway may only provide access to two or three lots). Alternative D provides four access points with connections to the adjacent residential streets to the north. In comparison, the proposed project has no vehicular access to and from the adjacent residential streets north of Development Area A (except for emergency access). A summary of Alternative D gateway designations, the number of residential lots served by each gateway, and the estimated Alternative D vehicular trip generation at each gateway is provided in Table VI-6.

**Table VI-6**  
**Alternative D Summary of the Forecast Traffic Volumes by Gateway**

Gateway Designation (Access Point)	Number of Lots Served	Estimated Trip Generation		
		Daily Trips	AM Peak Hour	PM Peak Hour
A - Verdugo Crestline Drive (west)	13	124	9	13
B - Verdugo Crestline Drive (east)	23	220	17	23
C - Inspiration Way	2	19	1	2
D - Hillhaven Avenue	3	29	3	3
E - La Tuna Canyon Road	1	10	1	1
F - La Tuna Canyon Road	2	19	1	2
G - La Tuna Canyon Road	3	29	3	3
H - La Tuna Canyon Road	16	153	12	16
I - La Tuna Canyon Road	24	230	19	25
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>833</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>88</b>

The Gateway A access point ties into Verdugo Crestline Drive (which joins with Sherman Grove Avenue to access Foothill Boulevard) and would serve approximately 13 of the 87 lots. The Gateway B access point connects with Verdugo Crestline Drive (which joins Hillhaven Avenue and Alene Drive to access Foothill Boulevard) and would serve approximately 23 of the 87 lots. The Gateway C access point ties into Inspiration Way (which joins Alene Drive and Hillhaven Avenue to access Foothill Boulevard) and would serve approximately two of the 87 lots. The Gateway D access point ties into the adjacent residential area to the north near Hillhaven Avenue (which provides access to Foothill Boulevard) and would serve approximately three lots. The Gateway E access point ties into La Tuna

Canyon Road and would serve one of the 87 lots. The Gateway F, G, H and I access points tie into La Tuna Canyon Road and would serve approximately two, three, 16 and 24 lots, respectively.

It should be noted that the Gateway B, C and D access points all tie into roadways (i.e., Verdugo Crestline Drive and Inspiration Way) which join Alene Drive and Hillhaven Avenue prior to connecting with Foothill Boulevard. Therefore, Alternative D traffic associated with Gateways B, C, and D is expected to merge at some point between Foothill Boulevard and the gateway access points.

### ***Residential Street Segment Impact Analysis***

Based on a review of the proposed site access scheme, Alternative D would increase traffic on residential streets located adjacent to and north of Development Area A. In order to assess the potential for significant transportation impacts along these street segments, the traffic consultant used the residential street segment criteria contained in the Los Angeles Department of Transportation's (LADOT's) Traffic Study Policies and Procedures, approved in November, 1993. Those criteria are based on the projected increase in the average daily traffic (ADT) volumes due to the construction and occupancy of a proposed project (e.g., due to the development of Alternative D). The residential street segment criteria are summarized in Table VI-7, below.

**Table VI-7**  
**LADOT Residential Street Segment Significance Criteria**  
**Alternative D**

Projected Average Daily Traffic With Project (Final ADT)	Project-Related Increase in ADT
1,000 or more	12 percent or more of final ADT
2,000 or more	10 percent or more of final ADT
3,000 or more	8 percent or more of final ADT

Current 24-hour ADT counts are not available for any of the residential streets located north of Development Area A. However, based on a review of the existing characteristics of these residential areas, it is the traffic consultant's professional opinion that the existing residential streets (at certain points between Foothill Boulevard and the Alternative D Gateways A, B, C, and D) currently carry between 1,000 and 2,000 vehicles per day, although the adjacent residential streets carry fewer than 1,000 vehicles per day on those street segments nearest the Gateway access points (i.e., where only a small number of residential homes are served). The street segments located closer to Foothill Boulevard are likely to accommodate closer to 2,000 vehicles per day.

As shown in Table VI-7, a significant transportation impact is forecast for residential street segments which carry between 1,000 and 2,000 ADT when the project-related increase in ADT corresponds to 12

percent or more of the ADT. Thus, Alternative D is likely to result in significant transportation impacts on those residential street segments located north of Development Area A which carry 1,000 or more vehicles per day and where Alternative D would add 120 or more daily vehicle trips. The threshold of 120 daily vehicle trips corresponds to the development of 12 or more single-family residential lots. Based on a comparison of the above LADOT approved residential street segment significance criteria with the gateway traffic volumes summarized in Table IV-6, it is likely that at least two street segments between the Gateway A and B access points and Foothill Boulevard would be significantly impacted by Alternative D because the ADT counts for those street segments are 124 and 220, which exceed the 120 ADT threshold.

### ***Conclusions***

Based on the LADOT residential street segment impact criteria and Alternative D's daily vehicular trip generation forecast at each access point (i.e., "gateway"), it is concluded that at least two street segments between Gateways A and B and Foothill Boulevard could be expected to be significantly impacted by Alternative D.

With respect to La Tuna Canyon Road, Alternative D includes the development of 47 homes that would access La Tuna Canyon Road south of Interstate 210. In comparison, 69 homes would access La Tuna Canyon Road south of Interstate 210 under the proposed project. As discussed in Section IV.I (Transportation/Traffic), the traffic impact on La Tuna Canyon Road from homes in Development Area B would be less than significant. Therefore, the traffic impact on La Tuna Canyon Road south of Interstate 210 under Alternative D would also be less than significant because fewer homes would generate fewer trips (as compared to the proposed project).

### **Public Services**

#### ***Fire Protection***

By reducing the number of homes on the project site by 69 percent, Alternative D would theoretically decrease demand for fire protection and emergency services provided by the Los Angeles Fire Department by approximately 69 percent. However, fire hazards to homes and occupants in Alternative D would probably increase due to their greater isolation and distance from project site access points. Similar to the proposed project, Alternative D would include automatic fire sprinkler systems for all structures to compensate for excessive response distance impacts. However, response times to some homes under Alternative D would be substantially greater due to the dispersed nature of the subdivision. Evacuation from the project site under Alternative D would be more difficult and time consuming for the same reasons, even though there would be fewer people trying to evacuate the project site. Therefore, should a wildfire occur, homes developed under Alternative D would be subjected to greater fire hazards and demands on the Fire Department would be substantially increased.

### ***Police Protection***

While the proposed project (i.e., 280 homes) would not be expected to increase crime rates in the Foothill Area to the extent that a new or expanded police station or other facilities would be required, Alternative D would theoretically decrease the proposed project's demand for police protection services proportionate to the decrease in number of homes. However, while the proposed project includes significant crime prevention design features that substantially reduce demands for police protection services compared to a typical subdivision, the dispersed nature of Alternative D would make such design features less effective. For example, the clustering of homes under the proposed project permits mutual surveillance from adjoining homes while reducing opportunities for concealment by potential intruders. In comparison, the more isolated nature of the homes developed under Alternative D does not lend itself to mutual surveillance or assistance, and it increases the potential for unobserved criminal activities. In addition, the more extensive roadways under Alternative D would increase police response times. Consequently, the isolated character of the homes under Alternative D, in combination with less opportunity for community oriented crime prevention design features, can be expected to result in a development more susceptible to home-oriented crimes and somewhat increased demand for police protection services.

### ***Recreation and Parks***

Based on the preferred parkland per population ratio of four acres per 1,000 persons, Alternative D would require 1.0 acre of new parkland, compared to the 3.3 acres of new parkland required by the proposed project. The inclusion of the equestrian park and other onsite recreational facilities and preserved open space, together with the payment of any required Quimby fees, would satisfy the need for any new or physically altered parks or recreational facilities in order to maintain current service ratios. Therefore, the proposed project's impacts on parks and recreational facilities would be less than significant. In contrast, no community oriented recreational facilities would be provided by Alternative D. The homes under this alternative would have large lots (averaging 10.2 acres in size) and building pads (averaging 0.59 acre in size) with substantial opportunity for private recreational facilities, but any such private facilities would not compensate for this alternative's demand for public recreational facilities. However, payment of required Quimby fees would be expected to reduce Alternative D's impact on public recreational facilities to a less-than-significant level.

### ***Libraries***

Alternative D would reduce the proposed project's demand for library services and facilities by approximately 69 percent. More specifically, Alternative D would generate demand for approximately 129 square feet of additional library space and 517 additional volumes of permanent collection. In comparison, the proposed project would generate a demand for an additional 415.5 square feet of library space and 1,662 volumes of permanent collection. While the proposed project's impact on

library services and facilities would be less than significant, Alternative D would further reduce that less-than-significant impact by approximately 69 percent.

### ***Schools***

Alternative D would reduce the proposed project's demand for school services and facilities by approximately 69 percent. This alternative would generate a total of 37 students including 19 elementary school students, 9 middle school students, and 9 high school students. In comparison, the proposed project would generate a total of 122 students, including 61 elementary school students, 30 middle school students, and 31 high school students. Based on existing capacities and enrollments, along with the projected number of new students, the proposed project would not exceed the overall enrollment capacities at the elementary or middle schools serving the project locale, and its impacts on school facilities would be less than significant. Alternative D would further reduce that less-than-significant impact by 69 percent.

### **Energy Conservation**

#### ***Electricity***

Alternative D would reduce the proposed project's demand for electricity by approximately 69 percent. This alternative would consume approximately 1,341 kilowatt hours (kWh) per day. In comparison, the proposed project would consume approximately 4,316 kWh per day. The proposed project's impacts associated with the extension of electrical distribution facilities and its consumption of electricity would be less than significant. This less-than-significant impact would be reduced further under Alternative D.

#### ***Natural Gas***

Alternative D would reduce the proposed project's demand for natural gas by approximately 69 percent. This alternative would consume approximately 19,064 cubic feet of natural gas per day. In comparison, the proposed project would consume approximately 62,207 cubic feet per day. The proposed project's impact on natural gas services would be less than significant. This less-than-significant impact would be reduced further under Alternative D.

### **Utilities and Service Systems**

#### ***Water***

Alternative D would reduce the proposed project's water consumption by approximately 69 percent. This alternative would consume approximately 34,452 gallons of water per day (gpd). In comparison, the proposed project would consume approximately 110,880 gpd of water. The proposed project's

impact on water availability would be less than significant. Similarly, the proposed project's construction of water distribution facilities would not result in any significant impacts. These less-than-significant impacts would be reduced further under Alternative D.

### ***Sewer***

Alternative D would generate approximately 69 percent less sewage than the proposed project. This alternative would generate approximately 28,710 gallons of sewage per day (gpd). In comparison, the proposed project would generate approximately 92,400 gpd of sewage. Hence, Alternative D would further decrease the proposed project's less-than significant impacts to the Hyperion Sewage Treatment System. Both Alternative D and the proposed project would require the extension of existing sewer facilities to the project site. Therefore, off-site construction impacts would be the same for Alternative D and the proposed project. Alternative D would disperse development across the entire 887-acre project site. Therefore, Alternative D would require more on-site construction of sewer lines than the proposed project. However, since onsite sewer lines would be located within the new onsite access roads and would be constructed at the same time as the roads, no additional impacts from construction of the sewer lines would occur. Therefore, similar to the proposed project, impacts resulting from the expansion of sewer facilities would be less than significant.

### ***Solid Waste***

Alternative D would reduce the proposed project's generation of construction and household solid waste by approximately 69 percent. This alternative would generate approximately 1,064 pounds of solid waste daily. In comparison, the proposed project would generate approximately 3,424 pounds of solid waste daily. However, Alternative D is designed for horse keeping. Assuming, on average, that two horses would be stabled on each lot, an additional solid waste load of approximately 3,480 pounds of horse manure<sup>3</sup> would also be generated on a daily basis. Horse manure should not be disposed of in public landfills; rather it should be collected separately and hauled to an offsite facility for composting. When disposed of in this manner, the generation of horse manure would have no impact on landfill capacities. The proposed project's construction-related and operational impacts on landfill capacities would be less than significant. Under Alternative D, these less-than-significant impacts would be reduced further.

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<sup>3</sup> Two horses x 20 lbs of manure/day/horse x 87 lots = 3,480 lbs of manure/day.

## **Hazards and Hazardous Materials**

### *Environmental Site Assessment*

The Phase I ESA that was conducted for the proposed project assessed the condition of the entire project site. Since Alternative D is located on the same project site as the proposed project, the Phase I ESA would equally apply to this alternative. In addition, the type of land use proposed under this alternative (i.e., single-family homes) is identical to the proposed project. Therefore, the analysis contained in Section IV.M.1 (Environmental Site Assessment) of this Draft EIR with respect to the proposed project would equally apply to this alternative. As indicated therein, impacts would be less than significant with the implementation of the proposed project. Therefore, impacts under Alternative D would also be less than significant.

### *Electromagnetic Field Emissions*

As shown in Figure VI-3, fewer homes would be located in close proximity to the SCE transmission lines under Alternative D than with implementation of the proposed project. However, as discussed in Section IV.M.2 (Electromagnetic Field Emissions) of this Draft EIR, there is insufficient scientific evidence to demonstrate any causal link between EMF exposure from transmission lines or any other source and adverse health effects. Similar to the proposed project, the impact with respect to EMF exposure under Alternative D would be less than significant. However, in the interest of full disclosure with respect to the scientific community's uncertainty of potential health risks associated with EMF exposure, the mitigation measure in Section IV.M.2 (Electromagnetic Field Emissions) is recommended.

## **Aesthetics**

Alternative D includes low-density housing across the entire 887-acre project site (average lot size of 10.2 acres). The resulting aesthetic effect would be a sense of the loss of open space and the conversion of the project site to low-density housing. In addition to the proposed homes and the meandering internal circulation roadways, horse corals, fencing, vegetation removal and the like would further transform the appearance of the project site. In contrast with the proposed project, which would cluster development into the two Development Areas in the eastern portion of the project site, Alternative D would spread development out over the entire property. Under the proposed project, development would be concentrated in the Development Areas and thereby preserve large expanses of open space (i.e., approximately 693 acres). Under Alternative D, development would occur at a much lower density, but the contiguous open space would be lost. Both the proposed project and Alternative D would significantly impact Interstate 210 and La Tuna Canyon Road, the two scenic highways from which the project site can be viewed. However, Alternative D would transform the entire 887-acre project site, while development of the proposed project would largely be limited to the 194-acre

Development Areas and the three-acre equestrian park. Consequently, Alternative D would have a greater impact on the area's scenic vistas than would the proposed project and would more substantially degrade the existing visual character and quality of the project site and its surroundings.

### **Cultural Resources (Historic, Archaeological and Paleontological Resources)**

The proposed project would have no adverse effects on known historic, archaeological or paleontological resources on the project site because there are no known such resources with in the Development Areas. Development under Alternative D would occur on the same project site as the proposed project. Therefore, similar to the proposed project, this alternative would not result in impacts to any known historic, archaeological or paleontological resources.

### **Relationship to Project Objectives**

Alternative D would not satisfy all of the project objectives because it would result in the development of substantially fewer homes with fewer recreational facilities and no preservation of open space. Specifically, Alternative D would not:

- Provide a substantial amount of high-quality housing for local and area residents to meet existing and future housing needs of those desiring to live in the northeast San Fernando Valley and help to alleviate the substantial housing shortage in the City.
- Permanently preserve over 75 percent of the project site as open space.
- Provide ample equestrian and other recreational amenities, as well as significant passive open space and landscaping areas.
- Provide safe, efficient and aesthetically attractive streets in the residential development with convenient connections to adjoining arterials and freeways, while minimizing traffic impacts on existing residential neighborhoods.
- Minimize impacts to important natural landforms and significant natural resources.
- Develop a residential project on the project site that is financially viable and thereby permits (1) the donation or dedication of all of the project site located outside the Development Areas to an appropriate public agency or nonprofit entity and (2) the development of public and private equestrian and other recreational amenities on the project site.

Alternative D would involve the development of 87 new homes, which is a substantially smaller number of homes than would be developed under the proposed project. Therefore, Alternative D would satisfy the following project objectives, although to a lesser extent than the proposed project:

- Provide regional housing opportunities for homebuyers and assist in satisfying the housing needs of the region.

- Invigorate the local economy by providing employment and business opportunities associated with the construction, use and occupancy of the project site.

Alternative D would satisfy the following project objectives:

- Establish a low-density residential community that avoids the crowded appearance of a typical subdivision.
- Provide a peaceful, attractive residential development within the context of the surrounding man-made and natural environment, and separate and shield the development to maximize environmental and land use compatibility with surrounding uses.
- Locate the residential development in proximity to existing infrastructure and services where possible.

### **Reduction of Significant Project Impacts**

The proposed project would result in the following significant environmental impacts after mitigation: construction emissions, construction noise, artificial light, scenic vistas, scenic resources, visual character and short-term effects on coast live oak trees. Alternative D would reduce the following significant environmental impact associated with the proposed project to a less-than-significant level:

- Short-term construction noise impact on the existing residential community to the north and northeast.

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## **VI. ALTERNATIVES TO THE PROPOSED PROJECT**

### **E. ALTERNATIVE E: REDUCED DENSITY, 210 LOTS**

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Under this Reduced Density alternative, the density of development on the project site would be reduced by approximately 25 percent. This would result in the construction of 210 single-family homes on the project site, 70 single-family homes less than would be provided by the proposed project. In order to compensate for the potential loss of revenue resulting from the substantial reduction in the number of homes, Alternative E would include somewhat larger homes with an average size of approximately 4,400 square feet, as compared to an average home size of approximately 4,000 square feet for the proposed project. In addition, the lots and building pads for Alternative E would be approximately 25 percent larger than the lots and building pads for the proposed project. Other than the necessary adjustments for the fewer, but larger, lots, the grading footprint for Alternative E would be essentially the same as that of the proposed project.

Under Alternative E, 158 homes would be developed on 142 acres in Development Area A (53 homes less than under the proposed project) and 52 homes would be developed on 52 acres in Development Area B (17 homes less than under the proposed project). Access to the Development Areas and the equestrian park would be the same as provided under the proposed project.

Because Alternative E involves the same basic grading plan as the proposed project, both Alternative E and the proposed project would preserve approximately 693 acres of the project site as open space. Similar to the proposed project, Alternative E would include a three-acre equestrian park adjacent to La Tuna Canyon Road in the southwestern portion of the project site, which would be available for public use.

#### **Geology and Soils**

Because the grading footprint under Alternative E would be essentially the same as for the proposed project, the geotechnical conditions encountered would also be the same. Assuming the same level of mitigation and compliance with Building Code requirements, impacts related to geology and soils for both Alternative E and the proposed project would be comparably reduced to less-than-significant levels. However, because of its reduced density, fewer people and structures would be exposed to geotechnical hazards under Alternative E than under the proposed project.

## **Air Quality**

Because the same grading plan would be utilized for both Alternative E and the proposed project, the construction-related vehicle and dust emissions generated during the grading phase would also be essentially the same, so that peak daily and quarterly emissions of NO<sub>x</sub> and PM<sub>10</sub> would be significant for both. Upon full project occupancy, there would be approximately 25 percent less traffic generation under this alternative than under the proposed project. Consequently, vehicular emissions under Alternative E would be reduced by approximately 25 percent. While vehicular emissions under the proposed project would be less than significant, under Alternative E the less-than-significant vehicular emissions would be reduced further by approximately 25 percent.

## **Hydrology and Water Quality**

Because the grading plan, building pad design and roadways are essentially the same for both Alternative E and the proposed project, the same storm drainage improvement plan would also be utilized for both alternatives. However, under Alternative E, there would be slightly less impermeable surface area. It is estimated that Alternative E would have approximately 47.7 acres of impermeable surface area. In comparison, the proposed project would have approximately 49.6 acres of impermeable surface area. The reduction in impermeable surface area is not greater because the homes and related improvements are larger under Alternative E. Consequently, there would only be a very slight reduction in runoff under Alternative E. In any event, the design goal of the proposed project's storm drainage system is to reduce peak runoff flows during a 50-year storm to 90 percent of peak runoff from the undeveloped site. This would be achieved under Alternative E by sizing the detention basins accordingly. The same flows discharged into the La Tuna Canyon Wash could be achieved by Alternative E by adjusting the release of storm water flows from the detention basins. Hence, the resulting downstream impacts from Alternative E and the proposed project would be essentially the same.

Implementation of BMPs for both the construction and operational phases would ensure that the proposed project would not generate significant water quality impacts. Alternative E would provide the same water quality BMPs as the proposed project. Hence, the resulting water quality impacts from Alternative E and the proposed project would be essentially the same.

## **Biological Resources**

### ***Flora and Fauna***

Because the grading plan is essentially the same for both Alternative E and the proposed project, the area of disturbed habitat would be the same. Both Alternative E and the proposed project would significantly impact onsite communities of southern coast live oak riparian forest, southern mixed

riparian forest riparian habitat, and southern willow scrub prior to mitigation.

### ***Native Trees***

Because the grading plan is essentially the same for both Alternative E and the proposed project, the number of impacted native trees would be the same, so that both would cause the loss of up to 232 coast live oaks, which would constitute a significant impact prior to mitigation. Therefore, similar to the proposed project, implementation of the recommended mitigation measures listed in Section IV.D.2 (Native Trees) of this Draft EIR would reduce the long-term impact to coast live oaks to a less-than significant level, while the short-term impact on coast live oaks would remain significant after mitigation.

### ***Wildlife Movement***

Because the grading plan is essentially the same for both Alternative E and the proposed project, the area of disturbed habitat would be the same. Therefore, neither Alternative E or the proposed project would significantly impact regional or local wildlife movement.

### **Noise**

Because the same grading plan would be utilized for both Alternative E and the proposed project, the construction-related noise generated during the grading phase would be essentially the same. Development of either one would result in significant, albeit temporary, noise impacts on existing residential areas adjacent to Development Area A when construction equipment is operating in close proximity. However, because there would be fewer homes, there would be substantially less noise impact in subsequent phases of foundation and home construction under Alternative E. There would not be a significant noise impact expected due to construction truck traffic on existing roads in the areas surrounding the project site. Also, blasting (if it occurs) is expected to be infrequent and within safe limits with respect to both the proposed project and Alternative E, and the noise associated with any such blasting would not be significant.

Under the proposed project, the maximum increase in ambient noise levels due to operational activities, as measured at existing nearby homes, would not exceed 1 dBA, and thus would not cause a significant noise impact on the existing communities. Because Alternative E would introduce fewer homes, people and vehicles onto the project site, operational noise levels would be reduced further under this alternative. Therefore, operational noise impacts under Alternative E would be less than significant and lower than the expected operational noise levels under the proposed project.

Grading-related noise impacts to La Tuna Canyon Park would be comparable to the proposed project. However, because there would be fewer homes, there would be substantially less noise impact to La

Tuna Canyon Park in subsequent phases of foundation and home construction under Alternative E. Operational noise impacts to La Tuna Canyon Park would similarly be reduced under Alternative E.

### **Artificial Light and Glare**

Alternative E would implement a lighting plan comparable to that proposed by the proposed project. Under these circumstances, the reduced density can be expected to result in fewer sources of night lighting on the project site. However, the larger homes in Alternative E would be expected to generate more light than the smaller homes under the proposed project. On balance, lighting impacts under Alternative E would not be expected to be substantially different than those identified for the proposed project. Significant lighting impacts would still be expected for travelers on La Tuna Canyon Road and for the existing adjacent homes to the north and northeast of Development Area A.

### **Land Use**

The same land uses are proposed within the same Development Areas, although there would be fewer homes under this alternative as compared to the proposed project. The same land use and zoning designation would be proposed under this alternative as for the proposed project. Similar to the proposed project, a Low Residential land use designation in the Development Areas would be proposed under this alternative. As discussed in Section IV.G (Land Use) of this Draft EIR, the maximum density permitted under Low Residential is nine dwelling units per net acre. Based on the same Development Area as the proposed project (i.e., 158 acres), Alternative E would result in a density of approximately 1.3 dwelling units per net acre. This compares to a density of 1.8 dwelling units per net acre under the proposed project. Furthermore, development under this alternative would also be consistent with the proposed rezoning of the Development Areas to RE9 and RE11, just as the proposed project would be consistent with those zoning designations.

As Alternative E proposes similar land uses within the same Development Areas as the proposed project, the land use consistency analysis presented in Section IV.G (Land Use), which addresses the RCPG, Community Plans, Draft Specific Plan, LAMC and Oak Tree Ordinance, would be similar under this alternative.

Regarding community division, this alternative would be developed within the same grading footprint as the proposed project. Similar to the proposed project, implementation of this alternative would not physically divide an established community.

For all of the reasons described above, similar to the proposed project, Alternative E would result in less-than-significant land use impacts.

## **Population and Housing**

Development under Alternative E would occur on the same project site as the proposed project. Currently, the project site is undeveloped and does not contain any homes or people. Similar to the proposed project, this alternative would not result in the displacement of any existing homes or people.

Based on the Sunland-Tujunga Community Plan estimate of 2.97 persons per Low Density single-family home, approximately 624 people are expected to occupy 210 single-family homes upon completion of construction of this alternative. This is approximately 207 less people and 70 fewer homes than would occur with implementation of the proposed project. As indicated in Section IV.H (Population and Housing) of this Draft EIR, the increases in population and housing resulting from the proposed project are not expected to directly induce substantial population growth. As this alternative would result in the introduction of fewer residents and homes than the proposed project, the less-than-significant population and housing impacts associated with the proposed project would be reduced under this alternative.

## **Transportation/Traffic**

Alternative E would generate approximately 25 percent fewer average daily vehicle trips than the proposed project because it includes 70 fewer single-family homes. As such, traffic impacts to local roadway intersections and segments would be reduced under this alternative as compared to the proposed project. Nevertheless, a significant impact at the Development Area A Access/Interstate 210 Westbound Ramps and the La Tuna Canyon Road intersection would still occur. With implementation of the mitigation measure in Section IV.I (Transportation/Traffic) of this Draft EIR, transportation/traffic impacts at this intersection would be reduced to a less-than-significant level.

The access routes under Alternative E would be the same as the proposed project. Therefore, similar to the proposed project, transportation/traffic impacts related to access routes would be less than significant under this alternative.

## **Public Services**

### ***Fire Protection***

There would be less demand for fire protection services under Alternative E than the proposed project due to the fewer number of homes that would be developed. As this alternative would result in the introduction of fewer homes than the proposed project, the less-than-significant impacts on fire protection services associated with the proposed project would be reduced under this alternative. Implementation of the recommended mitigation measures listed in Section IV.J.1 (Fire Protection) of this Draft EIR would further reduce these less-than-significant impacts.

***Police Protection***

There would be less demand for police protection services under Alternative E than the proposed project due to the fewer number of homes that would be developed. As this alternative would result in the introduction of fewer homes than the proposed project, the less-than-significant impacts on police protection services associated with the proposed project would be reduced under this alternative. Implementation of the recommended mitigation measures listed in Section IV.J.2 (Police Protection) of this Draft EIR would further reduce these less-than-significant impacts.

***Recreation and Parks***

There would be less demand for parks and recreational facilities under this alternative than the proposed project due to the fewer number of homes and residents. Based on the preferred parkland per population ratio of four acres per 1,000 persons (see Section IV.J.3 (Recreation and Parks) of this Draft EIR), this alternative would create a demand for approximately 2.5 acres of parkland. This represents a decrease in demand for parkland of approximately 0.8 acre as compared to the proposed project. Alternative E would provide the same onsite recreational facilities as the proposed project. Both the proposed project and Alternative E would provide approximately 4.7 acres of parks and recreational facilities and preserve approximately 693 acres of open space. Therefore, the less-than-significant impact on parks and recreational facilities that would occur with the implementation of the proposed project would be reduced further under this alternative.

If and to the extent that the proposed onsite recreational facilities, equestrian park and open space do not fully satisfy the requirements of the Quimby Act with respect to this alternative, the project developer would be required to pay Quimby fees to the City to satisfy the balance of its obligations under the Quimby Act. The provision of the onsite recreational facilities together with the payment of any required Quimby fees would satisfy the need for any new or physically altered parks or recreational facilities.

***Libraries***

There would be less demand for libraries under Alternative E than under the proposed project due to the fewer number of homes and residents. Based on the library planning standards of 0.5 square feet of library facility space per resident and two volumes of permanent collection per resident (see Section IV.J.4 (Libraries) of this Draft EIR), this alternative would create a demand for approximately 312 square feet of library space and 1,248 volumes. This represents a decrease in demand for libraries of approximately 103.5 square feet of space and 414 volumes as compared to the proposed project. The 312 square feet of facility space is the approximate equivalent of an 18 x 18 foot room, the construction of which would not be anticipated to result in any significant environmental impacts. In comparison, the 415.5 square feet of additional library space associated with the proposed project is the approximate

equivalent of a 20 x 20 foot room. Therefore, the less-than-significant impact on libraries associated with the proposed project would be somewhat reduced under this alternative.

### ***Schools***

There would be less demand for schools under this alternative than the proposed project due to the fewer number of homes and residents that would be anticipated under this alternative. Based on LAUSD student generation rates, this alternative would generate approximately 90 new students. This represents a decrease of 32 students, including 16 elementary school students, eight middle school students and eight high school students, as compared to the proposed project. As discussed in Section IV.J.5 (Schools) of this Draft EIR, the proposed project's contribution of new students would not exceed overall enrollment capacities and school facilities impacts would be less than significant. As the estimated number of students that would be generated under this alternative are less than the number expected under the proposed project, the additional students under this alternative would also not exceed overall enrollment capacities and impacts on school facilities would be less than significant. Therefore, the less-than-significant impacts on schools associated with the proposed project would be somewhat reduced under this alternative when compared to the proposed project.

### **Energy Conservation**

#### ***Electricity***

There would be less demand for electricity under Alternative E than under the proposed project due to the fewer number of homes that would be developed. Based on the electricity consumption rate of 5,626.5 kWh per square foot per year (see Section IV.K.1 (Electricity) of this Draft EIR), the 210 homes under this alternative would consume approximately 3,237 kWh per day of electricity. This represents a decrease in electricity consumption of approximately 1,079 kWh per day compared to the proposed project. Therefore, the less-than-significant electricity supply impacts that would occur under the proposed project would be reduced further under Alternative E.

Regarding electricity supply facilities, the geographic extent of electricity facilities would be similar because Alternative E would be developed within the same grading footprint as the proposed project. With implementation of the proposed project, impacts associated with the installation of electrical lines would be less than significant. Implementation of the recommended mitigation measures listed in Section IV.K.1 (Electricity) would further reduce these less-than-significant impacts.

#### ***Natural Gas***

There would be less demand for natural gas under Alternative E than under the proposed project due to the fewer number of homes that would be developed. Based on the natural gas consumption rate of 6,665 cubic feet per square foot per month (see Section IV.K.2 (Natural Gas) of this Draft EIR), the

210 homes under this alternative would consume approximately 46,655 cubic feet per day of natural gas. This represents a decrease in natural gas consumption of approximately 15,552 cubic feet per day (25 percent) compared to the proposed project. Therefore, the less-than-significant natural gas supply impacts that would occur with the proposed project would be reduced further under Alternative E.

Regarding natural gas supply facilities, the geographic extent of natural gas facilities would be similar because Alternative E would be developed within the same grading footprint as the proposed project. With implementation of the proposed project, impacts associated with the installation of natural gas lines would be less than significant. Implementation of the recommended mitigation measures listed in Section IV.K.2 (Natural Gas) would further reduce these less-than-significant impacts.

## **Utilities and Service Systems**

### ***Water***

There would be less demand for water under Alternative E than under the proposed project due to the fewer number of homes that would be developed. Based on the water consumption rate of 396 gpd per home (see Section IV.L.1 (Water) of this Draft EIR), the 210 homes under this alternative would consume approximately 83,160 gpd of water. This represents a decrease of approximately 27,720 gpd (25 percent) compared to the proposed project. Implementation of the recommended mitigation measures listed in Section IV.L.1 (Water) would further reduce this less-than-significant impact.

Similar to the proposed project, Alternative E would require extension of existing water facilities to the project site. However, because this alternative would use the same grading footprint as the proposed project, the geographic extent of and physical impacts associated with installation of water facilities would be similar (see Section IV.L.1 (Water)). Therefore, similar to the proposed project, impacts resulting from the expansion of water facilities would be less than significant.

### ***Sewer***

There would be less generation of sewage under Alternative E than the proposed project due to the fewer number of homes that would be developed. Based on the sewage generation rate of 330 gpd per home (see Section IV.L.2 (Sewer) of this Draft EIR), the 210 homes under this alternative would generate approximately 69,300 gpd of sewage. This represents a decrease of approximately 23,100 gpd (25 percent) compared to the proposed project.

Similar to the proposed project, Alternative E would require the extension of existing sewer facilities to the project site. However, because this alternative would use the same grading footprint as the proposed project, the geographic extent of and physical impacts associated with installation of sewer facilities would be similar (see Section IV.L.2 (Sewer)). Therefore, similar to the proposed project, impacts resulting from the expansion of sewer facilities would be less than significant.

### ***Solid Waste***

There would be less generation of solid waste under Alternative E than the proposed project due to the fewer number of homes that would be developed. Based on the solid waste generation rate of 12.23 pounds per day per home (see Section IV.L.3 (Solid Waste and Disposal) of this Draft EIR), the 210 homes under this alternative would generate approximately 2,568 pounds of solid waste per day. This represents a decrease of approximately 856 pounds per day (25 percent) compared to the proposed project. As discussed in Section IV.L.3 (Solid Waste and Disposal), there is sufficient capacity in local landfills to accommodate the solid waste generated by the construction and operation of the proposed project. Therefore, there would be sufficient capacity at City landfills to accommodate the solid waste that would be generated under this alternative. Overall impacts associated with the generation of solid waste and the ability of local landfills to accommodate that waste resulting from this alternative would be less than the already less-than-significant impacts resulting from the proposed project. Implementation of the recommended mitigation measures listed in Section IV.L.3 (Solid Waste and Disposal) would further reduce these less-than-significant impacts.

### **Hazards and Hazardous Materials**

#### ***Environmental Site Assessment***

The Phase I ESA that was conducted for the proposed project assessed the condition of the entire project site. Since Alternative E is located on the same project site with the same grading footprint as the proposed project, the Phase I ESA would equally apply to this alternative. In addition, the types of land uses proposed under this alternative (i.e., single-family homes) are identical to the proposed project. Therefore, the analysis contained in Section IV.M.1 (Environmental Site Assessment) of this Draft EIR with respect to the proposed project would equally apply to this alternative. As indicated therein, impacts would be less than significant with the implementation of the proposed project. Therefore, impacts under Alternative E would also be less than significant.

#### ***Electromagnetic Field Emissions***

There would be fewer homes on the project site with implementation of Alternative E. Therefore, fewer future residents would live in close proximity to the SCE transmission lines. However, as discussed in Section IV.M.2 (Electromagnetic Field Emissions) of this Draft EIR, there is insufficient scientific evidence to demonstrate any causal link between EMF exposure from transmission lines or any other source and adverse health effects. Similar to the proposed project, impacts with respect to EMF exposure under this alternative would be considered less than significant. However, in the interest of full disclosure with respect to the scientific community's uncertainty of potential health risks associated with EMF exposure, the mitigation measure in Section IV.M.2 (Electromagnetic Field Emissions) is recommended.

## **Aesthetics**

Because they would both implement the same grading plan, landform alternations under Alternative E and the proposed project would be essentially the same. While the grading plan has been designed to minimize the visibility of the proposed homes, based on the close proximity of the Development Areas to two designated scenic highways, both Alternative E and the proposed project would have a significant impact on scenic vistas. While Alternative E would introduce fewer homes into the scenic vistas, the increased size of the homes would tend to balance this effect, resulting in no substantial decrease in impact.

Alternative E and the proposed project would involve the comparable removal or alteration of substantial existing scenic resources such as major landforms and undisturbed native vegetation. Therefore, similar to the proposed project, impacts to onsite scenic resources under Alternative E would be significant. .

While the grading plan has been designed to preserve the existing visual character and quality of the project site, the development of either Alternative E or the proposed project would transform undisturbed hillsides in the 194-acre Development Areas into a residential community, a change that would substantially affect the existing visual character and/or quality of approximately 28 percent of the project site. The introduction of fewer homes into the Development Areas would reduce the scenic impact of Alternative E. However, significant unavoidable impacts to the existing visual character and quality of the project site would still occur.

## **Cultural Resources (Historic, Archaeological and Paleontological Resources)**

The proposed project would have no adverse effects on known historic, archaeological or paleontological resources on the project site because there are no known such resources on the project site. Because Alternative E would utilize the same grading plan as the proposed project, impacts under Alternative E would be less than significant and comparable to the proposed project.

## **Relationship to Project Objectives**

Alternative E would involve the development of 210 new homes, which is a smaller number of homes than would be developed under the proposed project. Therefore, Alternative E would satisfy the following project objectives, although to a lesser extent than the proposed project:

- Provide a substantial amount of high-quality housing for local and area residents to meet existing and future housing needs of those desiring to live in the northeast San Fernando Valley and help to alleviate the substantial housing shortage in the City.

- Provide greater regional housing opportunities for homebuyers and assist in satisfying the housing needs of the region.
- Invigorate the local economy by providing employment and business opportunities associated with the construction, use and occupancy of the project site.

Alternative E would satisfy all of the other project objectives.

### **Reduction of Significant Project Impacts**

The proposed project would result in the following significant environmental impacts after mitigation: construction emissions, construction noise, artificial light, scenic vistas, scenic resources, visual character and short-term effects on coast live oak trees. Alternative E would not reduce any of the significant environmental impacts associated with the proposed project to a less-than-significant level.

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## **VI. ALTERNATIVES TO THE PROPOSED PROJECT**

### **F. ENVIRONMENTALLY SUPERIOR ALTERNATIVE**

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In addition to the discussion and comparison of impacts of a proposed project and the alternatives, Section 15126.6 of the CEQA Guidelines requires that an “environmentally superior” alternative be selected and the reasons for such a selection disclosed. In general, the environmentally superior alternative is the alternative that would be expected to generate the least amount of adverse impacts. In this case, the No Project Alternative would result in the least impacts on the existing environment. However, Section 15126.6(e)(2) of the CEQA Guidelines states if the No Project Alternative is the environmentally superior alternative, then the EIR shall also identify an environmentally superior alternative among the other alternatives. Based on the alternatives analysis provided above and the Alternatives Comparison Table (see Table VI-8), the Development Area A Only, 280 Lots Alternative (Alternative B) would result in the least adverse impacts and, therefore, is considered to be the environmentally superior alternative. Most important, Alternative B would eliminate all impacts on the portion of the project site south of Interstate 210, while all of the other alternatives (except for the No Project Alternative) would include development there. In addition, Alternative B would require less landform alteration and less disturbance to native habitat than the proposed project on the portion of the project site north of Interstate 210. Overall, Alternative B would preserve more open space than the proposed project and the other alternatives (except for the No Project Alternative), and it would reduce visual impacts from La Tuna Canyon Road. Impacts to public services and utilities under Alternative B would be comparable to the proposed project, although Alternative B would have somewhat greater impacts on public services and utilities than Alternatives D and E. However, as previously discussed, Alternative B would not satisfy all of the project objectives.

**Table VI-8  
Alternatives Comparison**

<b>Impact Area</b>	<b>Proposed Project Impact with Mitigation</b>	<b>Alternative A: No Project Alternative</b>	<b>Alternative B: Development Area A Only</b>	<b>Alternative C: Duke Property Alternative Access, 280 Lots</b>	<b>Alternative D: Reduced Density, 87 Lots</b>	<b>Alternative E: Reduced Density, 210 Lots</b>
Geology and Soils	Less Than Significant	Less	North - Greater South - Less	Similar	Less	Less
Air Quality	Significant (Construction Emissions Only)	Less	Less	Greater	Less	Less
Hydrology and Water Quality	Less Than Significant	Greater	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Biological Resources						
Flora and Fauna	Less Than Significant	Less	Less	Less	Greater	Similar
Native Trees	Significant	Less	Less	Less	Greater	Similar
Wildlife Movement	Less Than Significant	Less	Similar	Similar	Greater	Similar
Noise	Significant (Construction Noise Only)	Less	North - Greater South - Less	Greater	Greater	Similar
Artificial Light and Glare	Significant	Less	Less	Less	Greater	Similar
Land Use	Less Than Significant	Less	Similar	Similar	Less	Similar
Population and Housing	Less Than Significant	Less	Similar	Similar	Less	Less
Transportation/Traffic	Less Than Significant	Less	Greater	Similar	Less	Less
Public Services						
Fire Protection	Less Than Significant	Less	Similar	Similar	Less	Less
Police Protection	Less Than Significant	Less	Similar	Similar	Less	Less
Recreation and Parks	Less Than Significant	Less	Similar	Similar	Less	Less
Libraries	Less Than Significant	Less	Similar	Similar	Less	Less
Schools	Less Than Significant	Less	Similar	Similar	Less	Less

**Table VI-8 (continued)  
Alternatives Comparison**

<b>Impact Area</b>	<b>Proposed Project Impact with Mitigation</b>	<b>Alternative A: No Project Alternative</b>	<b>Alternative B: Development Area A Only</b>	<b>Alternative C: Duke Property Alternative Access, 280 Lots</b>	<b>Alternative D: Reduced Density, 87 Lots</b>	<b>Alternative E: Reduced Density, 210 Lots</b>
Energy Conservation Electricity Natural Gas	Less Than Significant Less Than Significant	Less Less	Similar Similar	Similar Similar	Less Less	Less Less
Utilities and Service Systems Water Sewer Solid Waste and Disposal	Less Than Significant Less Than Significant Less Than Significant	Less Less Less	Similar Similar Similar	Similar Similar Similar	Less Similar Less	Less Less Less
Hazards and Hazardous Materials Environmental Site Assessment Electromagnetic Field Emissions	Less Than Significant Less Than Significant	Less Less	Similar Greater	Similar Similar	Similar Less	Similar Less
Aesthetics	Significant	Less	North – Greater South - Less	Less	Greater	Similar
Cultural Resources Historic Resources Archaeological Resources Paleontologic Resources	No Impact No Impact No Impact	Similar Similar Similar	Similar Similar Similar	Similar Similar Similar	Similar Similar Similar	Similar Similar Similar
<p><i>Less: Impact of the alternative is less than the proposed project.</i>  <i>Similar: Impact of the alternative is similar to the proposed project.</i>  <i>Greater: Impact of the alternative is greater than the proposed project.</i></p>						