

SECTION 5: ALTERNATIVES TO THE PROPOSED PROJECT

5.1 - Introduction

In accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6, this Environmental Impact Report (EIR) contains a comparative impact assessment of alternatives to the Project. The primary purpose of this section is to provide decision makers and the general public with a reasonable number of potentially feasible Project alternatives, while avoiding or reducing any of the Project's significant adverse environmental effects. Important considerations for these alternatives analyses are noted below (as stated in CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6).

- An EIR need not consider every conceivable alternative to a project;
- An EIR should identify alternatives that were considered by the lead agency, but rejected as infeasible during the scoping process;
- Reasons for rejecting an alternative include:
 - Failure to meet most of the basic project objectives;
 - Infeasibility; and
 - Inability to avoid significant environmental effects.

5.1.1 - Significant Unavoidable Impacts

The Project would result in the following significant unavoidable impacts:

- **Adopted Air Quality Plan Consistency:** Given that the Project would not achieve the per capita annual GHG emissions threshold of 4.6 MTCO₂e/SP/yr established by BAAQMD even after the application of all feasible mitigation measures, the Project would result in a significant and unavoidable impact with respect to conflicts with the GHG Reduction Goal of BAAQMD's Clean Air Plan. Mitigation is proposed requiring the implementation of feasible emissions reduction measures; however, these measures would not reduce emissions to less than significant levels. Therefore, this impact remains significant and unavoidable.
- **Greenhouse Gas Operational Emission Threshold:** The Project would exceed the Bay Area Air Quality Management District's threshold of 4.6 metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalents per service population for operational emissions for the reasons set forth in Section 3.3 (Air Quality/Greenhouse Gas Emissions). Mitigation is proposed requiring the implementation of feasible emissions reduction measures; however, these measures would not reduce emissions to less than significant levels. Therefore, this impact remains significant and unavoidable.
- **Existing Plus Project Freeway Operations:** The Project would contribute vehicle trips to certain freeway segments that would operate at unacceptable LOS under Existing Plus Project Conditions, as described in Section 3.12, Transportation and Traffic. Mitigation is proposed; however, it would not fully reduce Project impacts to a level of less than significant. Therefore, the residual significance is significant and unavoidable.

- **Near-Term Plus Project Freeway Operations:** The Project would contribute vehicle trips to certain freeway segments and one intersection that would operate at unacceptable LOS under Near-Term Plus Project Conditions, as described in Section 3.12, Transportation and Traffic. Mitigation is proposed; however, it would not fully reduce Project impacts to a level of less than significant. Therefore, the residual significance is significant and unavoidable.
- **Cumulative Plus Project Freeway Operations:** The Project would contribute vehicle trips to certain freeway segments and intersections that would operate at unacceptable levels under Cumulative Plus Project Conditions, as described in Section 3.12, Transportation and Traffic. Mitigation is proposed; however, it would not fully reduce Project impacts to a level of less than significant. Therefore, the residual significance is significant and unavoidable.
- **Congestion Management Plan:** The Project would contribute vehicle trips to certain Congestion Management Plan facilities that would operate at unacceptable levels, as described in Section 3.12, Transportation and Traffic. Mitigation is proposed; however, it would not fully reduce Project impacts to a level of less than significant. Therefore, the residual significance is significant and unavoidable.

5.1.2 - Alternatives to the Proposed Project

The two alternatives to the Project analyzed in this section are as follows:

- **No Project Alternative:** Under this alternative, the Project would not be implemented. The 125 residential units would not be constructed, and an Urban Limit Line (ULL) adjustment, rezoning, or General Plan amendment would not be implemented. Land would not be offered to the East Bay Regional Park District (EBRPD) or San Ramon Valley Fire Protection District (SRVFPD), and no acreage would be permanently protected for park, recreation, open space, agricultural, scenic, wetlands, and habitat mitigation uses. The Project Site would stay in its existing condition and under existing uses for the foreseeable future. This alternative would not meet any of the Project objectives.
- **Reduced Intensity Alternative:** Under this alternative, only the southwestern portion of the Residential Development Area would be developed with a total of 65 units and associated improvements.¹ Non-urban infrastructure (water detention basin, grading, etc.) located adjacent, but outside of the Residential Development Area would be similarly downsized. The Preservation Area on the remainder of the Northern Site only would be constructed (consisting of staging areas and trail heads) and permanently preserved for parks, recreation, open space, agriculture (i.e., grazing), scenic, and wetlands preservation similar to the Project. In addition, similar to the Project, this Alternative would provide the circulation and parking improvements on the adjacent elementary school. However, while the Potential Future Fire District Parcel would still be contingently offered to SRVFPD, no land on the Southern Site would be transferred to EBRPD for permanent protection and preservation for park, recreational, open space, and other non-urban uses. Similar to the Project, this alternative would also require a ULL adjustment, rezoning, and General Plan Amendment. This alternative would not meet the majority of the Project objectives, since it would not efficiently

¹ The Reduced Intensity Alternative's 65 unit size was chosen to reduce impacts related to greenhouse gas emissions.

utilize the entire 30-acre development envelope; it would not permanently protect agriculture, open space, wetlands, and other non-urban characteristics on the Southern Site; it would not create a “green wall” to enhance the ULL’s fundamental purpose; and it would not preserve opportunities for ongoing agriculture uses on the Southern Site.

5.2 - Project Objectives

As stated in Section 2, Project Description, the objectives of the Project are to:

- Serve as a buffer and transition zone between existing urban and non-urban uses.
- Strengthen the ULL’s fundamental purpose by establishing a “green wall” of permanent physical and legal constraints to additional development in the Tassajara Valley.
- Permanently protect and preserve agricultural, open space, scenic wetlands, and other non-urban characteristics of the vast majority of the Project Site.
- Provide substantial and contiguous amounts of publicly accessible open space that would be protected and preserved in perpetuity for park, recreational, open space, scenic, agriculture, grazing, wetland preservation and creation, and habitat mitigation purposes.
- Preserve opportunities for ongoing agricultural uses (i.e., grazing) on the Southern Site.
- Contribute to the supply of high-quality housing in the County that is close to existing transportation corridors and utility infrastructure, and that is compatible with existing adjacent land uses.
- Efficiently utilize the compact 30-acre development envelope (rather than traditional “ranchettes”), while ensuring consistency with surrounding residential uses and taking into account the topographical constraints of the Project Site.
- Minimize grading, as feasible, by developing all residential uses on the least topographically constrained portions of the Project Site.
- Provide circulation and parking improvements to Tassajara Hills Elementary School to help remedy existing deficiencies and to enhance ease of use and safety of drop off and pick up of students.

5.3 - No Project Alternative

CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(e) requires EIRs to evaluate a “No Project Alternative,” which is defined as the “circumstance under which the project does not proceed.” Because the Project Site has never supported urban development and is not currently entitled in a manner that would allow another use to be pursued in the event the Project does not advance, the No Project Alternative consists of the Project Site remaining undeveloped for the foreseeable future.

5.3.1 - Impact Analysis

Under the No Project Alternative, the Project would not advance and the Project Site would remain undeveloped for the foreseeable future. Accordingly, this alternative would avoid all of the Project's significant impacts (including significant and unavoidable impacts), as well as the need to implement any mitigation measures.

5.3.2 - Conclusion

The No Project Alternative would avoid the Project's significant and unavoidable impacts and would have fewer impacts on all environmental topical areas. However, this alternative would not advance any of the Project objectives.

5.4 - Reduced Intensity Alternative

The Reduced Intensity Alternative would result in 65 single-family homes with accompanying infrastructure, and preservation area on the Northern Site only, adjustment of the ULL, rezoning, and General Plan Amendment.

5.4.1 - Impact Analysis

Aesthetics, Light, and Glare

This alternative would consist of developing 65 single-family homes on the Northern Site, which represents a reduction of 60 single-family homes (or 48 percent) relative to the Project. The residential structures would employ similar architecture and design elements and would be located within the southwest portion of the Residential Development Area, thereby resulting in a similar, albeit somewhat reduced, change in existing visual character. A reduced amount of exterior lighting and glare would occur, but similar to the Project, this alternative would be required to abide by County Ordinance Code 76-4.612 to avoid light trespass onto adjoining properties and impacts to nighttime lighting and thus would be less than significant in any event. Areas outside of the reduced Residential Development Area on the Northern Site would remain undeveloped. Similar to the Project, the Reduced Density Alternative would result in less than significant aesthetic impacts. This alternative would have fewer overall impacts, in some respects, on aesthetics, light, and glare than the Project, due to the reduction in residential units and the reduction of developed area. However, the benefits associated with the preservation of the Southern Preservation Area from an aesthetic perspective (as a result of the permanent protection of these lands for park, recreation, open space, scenic, and other non-urban uses) would not occur under this Alternative.

Agricultural Resources

Similar to the Project, this alternative would not be located on Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, or Williamson Act-contracted lands. Because of the reduced development footprint of this alternative, the potential preservation of existing lands on the Northern Site for future agricultural use would be slightly greater than that of the Project. As such, this alternative would have fewer impacts on agricultural resources than the Project, which are due to the reduction in residential units and the reduction of developed area. However, under both the

Project and this Alternative, impacts to agricultural resources would be less than significant since neither scenario would result in the conversion of Important Farmlands.

Air Quality/Greenhouse Gas Emissions

This alternative would develop 60 fewer residential units than the Project, and therefore would result in fewer construction emissions. Although the Project's construction emissions impacts can be mitigated to a level of less than significant, the reduction in emissions under this alternative would be more than the Project. This Alternative would generate 730 fewer daily vehicle trips than the Project and therefore would reduce operational emissions of criteria pollutants, toxic air contaminants, and greenhouse gas emissions. The substantial reduction in daily trip generation would lessen the severity of the Project's air quality and greenhouse gas emissions impacts, and because this alternative's emissions would be below the 1,100 MTCO₂e BAAQMD threshold, it would avoid the significant unavoidable impacts related to operational greenhouse gas emissions and air quality impacts (as a result of inconsistency with the Clean Air Plan) that would occur under the Project. Therefore, this alternative would result in fewer air quality/greenhouse gas emissions than the Project.

Biological Resources

This alternative would result in reduced ground-disturbing activities as a result of the reduction in residential development. While impacts to protected wetlands and on-site special status species would still occur and require mitigation, the level of impact would be reduced as a function of the reduced development footprint. Wetlands impacted would likely be those designated as W5 and a portion of W1, as shown on Exhibit 3.4-8 of this EIR. Total impacted wetland area would be approximately 3,183 square feet instead of the Project's impact to approximately 16,593 square feet. Overall ground disturbance would be reduced because the retention basin and landslide grading areas would be redesigned as necessary for the reduced residential area. Therefore, while impacts under both the Project and this alternative would be less than significant with mitigation, this alternative would have slightly fewer biological resources impacts than the Project, due to the reduction in residential units and the reduction of developed area.

Cultural Resources

This alternative would result in reduced ground-disturbing activities; however, mitigation regarding construction monitoring for historical, archeological, paleontological resources, and burial sites would still be required, similar to the Project. Overall, this alternative would have the potential to result in fewer potential impacts on previously undiscovered cultural resources than the Project, due to the reduction in ground-disturbing activities, although impacts would be less than significant with the incorporation of mitigation under both scenarios.

Geology, Soils, and Seismicity

This alternative would result in reduced ground-disturbing activities and exposure of residents to groundshaking due to the reduction in residential development. While impacts related to groundshaking, liquefaction, landslides, unstable soils, and expansive soils would have the potential to be reduced in the sense that fewer residents would occupy the Project and be exposed to such risks, the same general impacts would occur under both scenarios; thus, mitigation similar to the

Project would still be required. Overall, this alternative would have slightly fewer geology, soils, and seismicity impacts than the Project, due to the reduction in residential units and the reduction of developed area, although impacts would be less than significant with the incorporation of mitigation under both scenarios.

Hazards and Hazardous Materials

As with the Project, this alternative would not create a significant hazard to the public or environment, emit hazardous emissions, or be located on a site containing hazardous materials. Similar to the Project, this alternative would require the implementation of mitigation requiring the abatement of on-site asbestos or lead containing materials should permanent structures near the Future Equestrian Staging Area be altered or removed. Therefore, this alternative would have hazards and hazardous materials impacts similar to the Project; impacts would be less than significant with the incorporation of mitigation under both scenarios.

Hydrology and Water Quality

Under this alternative, development activities would require mitigation similar to the Project for water quality impacts during construction, although the overall impacts to water quality would be reduced as a result of the reduction in ground-disturbance and residential development. Therefore, this alternative would have fewer hydrology and water quality impacts than the Project; however, impacts would be less than significant with the incorporation of mitigation under both scenarios.

Land Use, Population, and Housing

This alternative would require the same entitlements as the Project (including the ULL amendment), albeit for a smaller development area. The uses developed under this alternative would have physical characteristics and end uses similar to the Project, and therefore would yield a similar conclusion of consistency with the General Plan and Zoning Code. Similar to the Project, this alternative would not conflict with regional growth projections or result in substantial population growth. Therefore, this alternative would have land use impacts similar to the Project; impacts would be less than significant under both scenarios.

Noise

The residential buildout potential of this alternative would be less than the Project, and therefore, construction noise impacts would be marginally less severe because of reduced construction duration and extent. Similar to the Project, mitigation would be required to ensure such impacts are less than significant. This alternative would generate 730 fewer daily vehicle trips than the Project and would therefore result in reduced traffic noise. However, similar to the Project, mitigation would still be needed to reduce on-site traffic noise impacts from Camino Tassajara. Similar to the Project, this alternative would not result in significant vibration or ambient noise level increases, although the overall construction vibration and ambient noise increase would be somewhat less than that of the Project. Overall, this alternative would have fewer noise impacts than the Project, although impacts would be less than significant with the incorporation of mitigation under both scenarios.

Public Services and Recreation

Under this alternative, end uses would be similar to the Project, albeit with a reduced on-site population and corresponding reduction in need for public services and recreation facilities. From a public services perspective, this alternative would result in reduced demand for fire protection, police protection, library services, park and recreational facilities, and school facilities, due to the reduced on-site population. Therefore, this alternative would have fewer public services and recreation impacts than the Project, although impacts would be less than significant under both scenarios. This Alternative would not result in the park and recreational opportunities that are proposed by the Project, since the land dedication of the Southern Preservation Area to EBRPD would not occur.

Transportation

This alternative would result in the development of 60 fewer residential units than the Project. As a result, this alternative would result in a reduction in residential daily trips, 730 fewer than the Project (refer to Table 5-1). As such, this alternative would result in 902 daily trips (inclusive of the Staging Area’s 110 daily trips), whereas the Project would result in 1,632 trips. The substantial reduction in peak-hour trips would avoid or lessen the severity of significant impacts at several study intersections. However, similar to the Project, this alternative would contribute to freeway segments already operating at unacceptable LOS and therefore would result in similar significant and unavoidable impacts. Overall, this alternative would have fewer transportation impacts than the Project, due to the reduction in vehicle trips, although significant and unavoidable impacts would occur under both scenarios.

Table 5-1: Reduced Density Alternative Residential Trip Generation

Alternative	Unit (Residences or Parking Spaces)	Residential Trip Generation		
		Daily	AM Peak	PM Peak
Project				
Residential	125 (R)	1,522	175	128
Pedestrian Staging Area	30 (PS)*	60	4	8
Future Equestrian Staging Area	25 (PS)*	50	25	25
Total		1,632	204	161
Reduced Intensity Alternative				
Residential	65 (R)	792	91	67
Pedestrian Staging Area	30 (PS)*	60	4	8
Finely Road Staging Area	25 (PS)*	50	25	25
Total		902	120	100
Difference		(730)	(84)	(61)
Notes: Trip generation rates are based on those used in the Traffic Impact Study. * Parking spaces at the Staging Areas are conservatively overstated consistent with the Traffic Impact Study. Source: FCS 2015				

Utilities and Service Systems

Under this alternative, end uses would be similar to the Project, albeit with a reduced on-site population and corresponding reduction in the need for utility services. Similar to the Project, this alternative’s residential uses would be served by, and subject to, East Bay Municipal Utility District and Central Contra Costa Sanitary District standards and regulations. This alternative would result in reduced demand for water and energy, and reduced generation of wastewater and solid waste in proportion to the reduction in on-site residences. Therefore, this alternative would have fewer utility and service system impacts than the Project, although impacts would be less than significant with the incorporation of mitigation under both scenarios.

5.4.2 - Conclusion

The Reduced Intensity Alternative would avoid the Project’s significant unavoidable impacts related to operational greenhouse gas emissions, but would still result in significant unavoidable impacts related to freeway segments. This alternative would reduce the intensity of aesthetic, agricultural, air quality, greenhouse gas, biologic, cultural, geologic, hydrologic, noise, public services and recreation, transportation, and utility-related impacts to a certain extent, although under both this Alternative and the Project, the identified impacts would be less than significant with the incorporation of mitigation. This alternative would meet some of the Project objectives to a certain degree, but it would not efficiently use the 30-acre development envelope; it would not enhance the ULL’s fundamental purpose by creating a “green wall”; it would not permanently protect agriculture, open space, wetlands, and other non-urban characteristics on the Southern Site; and it would not preserve opportunities for ongoing agriculture uses on the Southern Site.

5.5 - Environmentally Superior Alternative

The qualitative environmental effects of each alternative in relation to the Project are summarized in Table 5-2.

Table 5-2: Summary of Alternatives

Environmental Topic Area	No Project Alternative	Reduced Intensity Alternative
Aesthetics, Light, and Glare	Less impact	Less impact
Agricultural Resources	Less impact	Less impact
Air Quality/Greenhouse Gas Emissions	Less impact	Less impact
Biological Resources	Less impact	Less impact
Cultural Resources	Less impact	Less impact
Geology, Soils, and Seismicity	Less impact	Less impact
Hazards and Hazardous Materials	Less impact	Similar
Hydrology and Water Quality	Less impact	Less impact
Land Use, Population, and Housing	Less impact	Similar
Noise	Less impact	Less impact

Table 5-2 (cont.): Summary of Alternatives

Environmental Topic Area	No Project Alternative	Reduced Intensity Alternative
Public Services and Recreation	Less impact	Less impact
Transportation	Less impact	Less impact
Utility and Service Systems	Less impact	Less impact
Source: FirstCarbon Solutions, 2013.		

As shown in Table 5-1, both the No Project Alternative would result in fewer impacts in all environmental topic areas. The No Project Alternative would result the greatest reduction in impacts, as this alternative would leave the Project Site undeveloped for the foreseeable future, thereby avoiding all of the Project’s significant impacts (including significant and unavoidable impacts), as well as the need to implement any mitigation measures. Therefore, the No Project Alternative is identified as the environmentally superior alternative.

CEQA Guidelines Section 15126(e)(2) requires an EIR to identify an environmentally superior alternative. If the No Project Alternative is the environmentally superior alternative, the EIR must also identify an environmentally superior alternative from among the other alternatives. As such, the remaining Reduced Intensity Alternative—which would reduce impacts in all environmental topic areas with the exception of hazards and land use, and which would eliminate the significant and unavoidable impact related to operational greenhouse gas emissions—would be the environmentally superior alternative.

5.6 - Alternatives Rejected From Further Consideration

The following alternatives were initially considered, but rejected from further consideration for the reasons described below.

5.6.1 - Modified Development Footprint

Under this alternative, six residential lots in the northeastern corner of the Residential Development Area on the Northern Site would not be developed, and would instead become a part of the Northern Preservation Area. The Non-Urban Development Area, trail, and trail heads would be constructed as would occur under the Project. Similar to the Project, this alternative would require a ULL adjustment, rezoning, and General Plan amendment.

The Modified Development Footprint would avoid approximately 4,312 square feet of a wetland feature, resulting in an approximately 27 percent reduction in wetland feature impacts compared with the Project. However, because of this avoidance, the creation of high-quality wetlands at a minimum 2:1 ratio would not occur under this Alternative to the same extent. The reduction in total housing units (from 125 to 119) would also result in small decreases in air quality and greenhouse gas emissions, required public service and utility needs, and total grading area. This alternative would meet all of the Project objectives, although to a somewhat lesser extent than the Project since it would develop six fewer residential lots. Furthermore, under both this Alternative and the Project,

impacts to wetlands would be less than significant in any event. Because this alternative is substantially similar to the Project and would result in similar impact levels, it was rejected from more detailed analysis and further consideration.

5.6.2 - Alternative Location

CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(f)(2) sets forth considerations to be used in evaluating an alternative location. The section states that the “key question” is whether any of the significant effects of the Project would be avoided or substantially lessened by relocating the Project. The CEQA Guidelines identify the following factors that may be taken into account when addressing the feasibility of an alternative location:

- 1) Site suitability
- 2) Economic viability
- 3) Availability of infrastructure
- 4) General Plan consistency
- 5) Other plans or regulatory limitations
- 6) Jurisdictional boundaries
- 7) Whether the project applicant can reasonably acquire, control, or otherwise have access to the alternative site.

The CEQA Guidelines establish that only those locations that can avoid or substantially lessen the Project’s significant impacts should be considered.

To preface the discussion of potential alternative sites, it should be acknowledged that only sites located within or directly adjacent to the ULL in the San Ramon, Danville, Blackhawk area that are currently designated for agricultural uses were considered, in order to facilitate an equitable comparison of the Project to an alternative project location, and because of the provisions of Contra Costa County Measure C-1990, which established the County’s ULL, beyond which no urban land use can be established. As is the case with the Project, changes to the ULL are allowable under certain conditions; therefore, alternative sites adjacent to the ULL were considered.

For sites within the existing ULL, the primary constraint is that the applicant does not own, control, or otherwise have access to any other sites. Undeveloped properties may be available for purchase within the ULL, and could conceivably be acquired; however, it is unlikely that any alternative site within the ULL would be large enough to be able to commit to dedicate and permanently preserve lands to the same extent proposed by the Project. Furthermore, dedication of open space areas within the ULL may not provide the same biological benefit as those outside the ULL with respect to connectivity to other open space and preserved lands, and would not serve to create a “green wall” to prevent future urban development beyond the approved ULL. However, because the residential portion of the Project Site could theoretically be developed on an alternative site within the ULL without the accompanying dedication of lands, two alternative sites were considered, as discussed below.

Similarly, for sites directly adjacent to but entirely outside of the ULL, the primary constraint is that the applicant does not own, control, or otherwise have access to any other sites. Further, obtaining

approval for adjustment of the ULL is dependent upon meeting one of the seven specified findings by the Board of Supervisors, contained in Chapter 82-1 of the Contra Costa County Ordinance Code. Alternative sites outside of the ULL may not qualify under County Ordinance Section 82-1.018 for inclusion in the ULL. Therefore, sites entirely outside of the ULL were not considered for alternative Project locations.

Two sites, located in the unincorporated San Ramon area and partially within the ULL, have been identified by the County as potentially obtainable, and are considered and discussed separately below.

Norris Canyon Alternative Site

Two parcels (Assessor's Parcel Numbers [APN] 211-210-017 and 211-210-029) totaling 147 acres located on Norris Canyon Road, west of the City of San Ramon, could conceivably be available for purchase by the Project applicant for Project development. The site is currently vacant and is designated as a mixture of Single Family Residential and Agricultural Land under the General Plan. The site is zoned as A-4 (Agricultural Preserve). The Single Family Residential designated area is located completely within the ULL and totals approximately 90 acres. This location would require rezoning to allow residential development in the Single Family Residential designated area. Unlike the Project, this alternative site would not require adjustment of the ULL. Surrounding areas consist primarily of open space or agricultural uses; however, some areas of clustered large lot residential uses are located to the east of this site. The portion of this site outside the ULL could be dedicated to EBRPD. However, it is unlikely that this would occur, as such an action is not needed to facilitate a ULL adjustment, and it is uncertain if the EBRPD would accept this land. Regardless, the potential land for dedication would be substantially less than the 700 plus acres that would be permanently preserved under the Project (only 117 acres (at most) if 30 of the 90 acres of Single Family Residential area is developed).

Because both the Project Site and the Norris Canyon Alternative site are currently vacant and undeveloped, certain environmental impacts would arise from development on either site, due to the need to grade and develop structures and supporting infrastructure on previously undisturbed land. Similar to the Project Site, this alternative site may also contain biological resources, such as wetlands, special status species, and wildlife habitat, which may be impacted by development and would require mitigation measures similar to the Project. Similar potential impacts and mitigation would also likely be required for aesthetic, geologic, cultural, and hydrological impacts. Similar to the Project, residential development on this site would likely create significant traffic impacts requiring mitigation. Norris Canyon road is a two-lane road, and the majority of Project traffic would likely utilize the Bollinger Canyon Road and Norris Canyon Road intersection, which is currently a four-way, stop-controlled intersection and may need to be signalized to accommodate increased traffic. Further, development on this parcel could potentially be implemented at a greater intensity because approximately 90 acres of the site is within the ULL. This would result in incrementally greater traffic, air quality, and greenhouse gas impacts. As such, it is unlikely that any of the significant effects of the Project would be avoided or substantially lessened by relocating the Project to this site, which would involve a similar or greater amount of ground disturbance, development intensity, vehicle trips and emissions. Furthermore, the Project applicant does not own, control, or otherwise have access to this site, and the ability of the applicant to gain ownership of this site is speculative; therefore, this alternative was rejected from further consideration.

Chapparral Court Alternative Site

Two parcels (APNs 211-010-035 and 211-010-042) totaling 117 acres located east of the City of San Ramon at the end of Chapparral Court could conceivably be available for purchase for development. The site is currently vacant and is designated as Agricultural Land under the General Plan and is zoned as mixture of A-4 (Agricultural Preserve) and A-2 (General Agricultural). This location would require both a General Plan Amendment and Rezoning to allow for the development of single-family homes. The majority of this site is within the ULL. Development of 125 residences on 30 acres of this site would be consistent with adjacent existing residential development. A portion of this site is adjacent to the Bishop Ranch Regional Open Space, and undeveloped areas could be dedicated as open space, thereby increasing the overall size of the Bishop Ranch Regional Open Space area. However, it is unlikely that this would occur as such an action is not needed to adjust the ULL, and it is uncertain if the EBRPD would accept this land. Regardless, the potential land for dedication would be substantially less than the 700 plus acres that would be permanently preserved under the Project.

Because both the Project Site and the Chapparral Court Alternative site are currently vacant and undeveloped, certain environmental impacts would arise from development on either site, due to the need to grade and develop structures and supporting infrastructure on previously undisturbed land. This alternative site may also contain biological resources such as wetlands, special status species, and wildlife habitat that may be impacted by development and would require mitigation measures similar to the Project. Similar potential impacts and mitigation would also likely be required for aesthetic, geologic, cultural, and hydrological impacts. Similar to the Project, residential development on this site would likely create significant traffic impacts requiring mitigation, particularly on San Ramon Valley Boulevard. Further, development on this parcel could potentially be implemented at a greater intensity because the majority of the site is within the ULL, resulting in incrementally greater traffic, air quality, and greenhouse gas impacts. As such, it is unlikely that any of the significant effects of the Project would be avoided or substantially lessened by relocating the Project to this site, which would involve a similar amount of ground disturbance, development intensity, vehicle trips, and emissions. Furthermore, the Project Applicant does not own, control, or otherwise have access to this site, and the ability of the applicant to gain ownership of this site is speculative; therefore, this alternative site was rejected from further consideration.

Other Alternative Sites

Further searches were conducted for sites readily available on the real estate market that could potentially accommodate the Project. The majority of available, undeveloped sites in the San Ramon, Danville, and Blackhawk area are not large enough to accommodate the entirety of the Project. The two largest for-sale sites that were identified are located at 5611 Johnston Road in Danville (23 acres) and 2735 Corey Place in San Ramon (40 acres). The 5611 Johnston Road location is located east of the Southern Site of the Project and is outside of the ULL; therefore, it is an unlikely candidate for the development of 125 homes because it would not likely satisfy any of the findings to change the ULL. Similarly, the 2735 Corey Place location is located east of San Ramon and outside of the ULL; therefore, it is an unlikely candidate for the development of 125 homes because it would not likely satisfy any of the findings to change the ULL. Therefore, these alternative sites were determined to be infeasible and were rejected from further consideration.