

# CHAPTER 5 Alternatives

## 5.1 INTRODUCTION

CEQA requires that an EIR describe a range of reasonable alternatives to the project or to the location of the project that could feasibly avoid or lessen any significant environmental impacts while substantially attaining the basic objectives of the project. An EIR should also evaluate the comparative merits of the alternatives. This chapter sets forth potential alternatives to the proposed project and evaluates them, as required by CEQA.

Key provisions of the CEQA Guidelines (Section 15126.6) pertaining to the alternatives analysis are summarized below:

- The discussion of alternatives shall focus on alternatives to the project or its location that are capable of avoiding or substantially lessening any significant effects of the project, even if these alternatives would impede to some degree the attainment of the project objectives, which are identified in Chapter 3 (Project Description, Statement of Objectives) of this EIR, or would be more costly.
- The No Project alternative shall be evaluated along with its impact. The No Project analysis shall discuss the existing conditions at the time the notice of preparation is published.
- The range of alternatives required in an EIR is governed by a “rule of reason”; therefore, the EIR must evaluate only those alternatives necessary to permit a reasoned choice. The alternatives shall be limited to ones that would avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects of the project.
- For alternative locations, only locations that would avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects of the project need to be considered for inclusion in the EIR.
- An EIR need not consider an alternative whose effects cannot be reasonably ascertained and whose implementation is remote and speculative.

The range of feasible alternatives is selected and discussed in a manner to foster meaningful public participation and informed decision-making. Among the factors that may be taken into account when addressing the feasibility of alternatives (as described in CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6[f][1]) are environmental impacts, site suitability, economic viability, availability of infrastructure, general plan consistency, regulatory limitations, jurisdictional boundaries, and whether the proponent could reasonably acquire, control, or otherwise have access to the alternative site. An EIR need not consider an alternative whose effects could not be reasonably identified, whose implementation is remote or speculative, or one that would not achieve the basic project objectives. The alternatives analysis meets the requirements of CEQA Section 15126.6, which requires that a reasonable range of alternatives is identified in the EIR. The analysis includes sufficient information about each alternative to provide meaningful evaluation, analysis and comparison with the proposed project.

## 5.2 POTENTIAL FEASIBLE ALTERNATIVES

The alternatives identified below were selected for analysis.

- **Alternative 1: No Project/No Development**—With this alternative, development under the proposed General Plan Update would not occur. The Planning Area would remain developed with existing land uses and intensities.
- **Alternative 2: No Project/No Action (Existing General Plan)**—With this alternative, development under the proposed General Plan Update would not occur. Development would be guided by the existing General Plan.
- **Alternative 3: GPAC Recommendations**—With this alternative, development would be guided by a General Plan consisting of the land use recommendations formulated by the General Plan Advisory Committee (GPAC), which would generally result in less development.
- **Alternative 4: Subarea Only Minimum**—With this alternative, development would be guided by a General Plan consisting of land uses resulting in the lowest density of all the alternatives (except the existing General Plan) studied during the preparation of the General Plan Update. This alternative would result in the least amount of new development, when considered against the other action alternatives.

## 5.3 ALTERNATIVE 1: NO PROJECT/NO DEVELOPMENT ALTERNATIVE

### 5.3.1 Description

The No Project/No Development Alternative would prohibit all new development, restricting urban growth to its current extent. This alternative assumes that no additional development and growth within the Planning Area would occur. The population would remain at existing levels of approximately 83,120 residents, and no construction of additional dwelling units or non-residential building area would occur. No alterations to the City would occur (with the exception of previously-approved development) and all existing facilities including residential development and commercial and industrial uses would generally remain in their current condition. Some minor population growth could occur within the City, to the extent that existing residential units or units that have already been approved could accommodate additional residents. None of the impacts of the proposed General Plan Update would result. Future conditions within the City, except for the impacts of regional growth, would generally be the same as existing conditions, which were described in the environmental setting section for each environmental topic.

### 5.3.2 Impact Evaluation

No new physical environmental effects would directly result from implementation of this alternative. Since no ground disturbance or demolition activities would be required, impacts associated with biological resources, cultural resources, hazards, or hydrology would not occur. With no new development, the potential impacts from changes to visual character, land use compatibility issues, or loss of open space would not exist. There would also be less demand on utilities and public services with

less additional development in the City. Additionally, with less residents and development, traffic, air quality, and noise impacts, as well as exposure to geological hazards would be reduced. However, implementation of this alternative would not provide adequate housing supply required to meet the City's obligations to provide its fair share of affordable housing. In addition, development under this alternative would not expand mixed use development that would place residential units in proximity to employers and potentially reduce the number of commuters. Further, this alternative would not result in the construction of transportation improvements identified in the proposed project. However, regional traffic growth would still occur, resulting in the potential for traffic impacts that would otherwise be mitigated by the proposed project. Notwithstanding this effect, this alternative would result in less severe impacts than under the proposed project.

## 5.4 ALTERNATIVE 2: NO PROJECT/NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE (EXISTING GENERAL PLAN)

### 5.4.1 Description

Implementation of the No Project/No Action Alternative (Alternative 2) would result in development within the Planning Area that would not meet all of the project objectives established for the proposed General Plan Update for the City of Newport Beach. The No Project/No Action Alternative represents the continuation of the City's existing General Plan to guide future growth and development within the City. For this alternative, impacts would be analyzed under a maximum buildout scenario within the City with the allowed land uses and approved transportation improvements that are designated in the City's existing General Plan. Compared with the proposed project, the overall development potential in the City under this alternative would generally be reduced for some land use types, but would be increased for other types. Table 5-1 compares the buildout of each land use designation between the existing and the proposed General Plan Update for the City. The existing General Plan allows more square feet of office space, industrial and institutional land uses than the proposed General Plan Update, while the proposed General Plan Update would allow more residential, commercial, visitor-serving commercial (hotel/motel), and park land uses than the existing General Plan.

| <i>Land Use</i>                     | <i>Existing General Plan Land Use Designations</i> | <i>Proposed General Plan Update Land Use Designations</i> |
|-------------------------------------|--|---|
| Residential (du)                    |  |   |
| Multi-Family                        | 30,159   | 33,992  |
| Single-Family                       | 19,570   | 20,402  |
| Office (sf)                         | 14,576, 930  | 12,867,500  |
| Commercial (sf)                     | 7,412,132  | 7,685,030   |
| Visitor Serving (hotel-motel rooms) | 5,676  | 6,549   |
| Industrial (sf)                     | 2,234,242  | 1,163,460   |
| Institutional (sf)                  | 893,213  | 853,413   |
| Parks (acres)                       | <b>178.8</b>                                       | <b>254.7</b>  |

## 5.4.2 Impact Evaluation

### ■ Aesthetics

The types of impacts associated with degradation of scenic vistas, decreased visual quality, obstruction/alteration of scenic resources within a State- or locally-designated scenic highway, and increased light and glare would be similar to the proposed project under this alternative, as the overall character of General Plan buildout would be similar. Similar to the proposed General Plan Update, this alternative could result in obstruction of views of a scenic vista from places of public interest. Policies outlined in the proposed General Plan Update would still protect scenic vistas in the City, and this impact would be *less than significant*. Similar to the proposed project, because no scenic highways are currently designated within the City, implementation of this alternative would have *no impact* on scenic resources within a designated scenic highway. Development under the existing General Plan could result in changes to the visual character of the area, and the existing General Plan does not include the community character and neighborhood protection policies contained in the proposed General Plan Update. Impacts would remain *less than significant*, but would be greater than the proposed project. Development under the existing General Plan would be more likely to convert open space areas to urban uses on Banning Ranch. In addition, light and glare would also be expected to increase with full buildout of the existing General Plan, as described for the proposed project. Future projects would be subject to further environmental and design review, and impacts associated with these resources would be addressed, similar with the proposed project. Banning Ranch could be more intensely developed under this alternative, and the impact of nighttime lighting would be *significant and unavoidable*, similar to the proposed project.

### ■ Air Quality

The existing General Plan was considered in the preparation of the 2003 Air Quality Management Plan, and implementation of this alternative would be consistent with the Plan. This impact would be *less than significant*. The total emissions including objectionable odors, generated by construction of individual projects, which may have overlapping schedules, would be expected to remain in exceedance of SCAQMD thresholds. Construction impacts on air quality would remain *significant and unavoidable*. Although total air emissions may be less than the proposed project, operation of projects under the existing General Plan would be *significant and unavoidable*. The growth envisioned under this alternative would not generate CO concentrations exceeding national and State ambient air quality standards. Similar to the proposed project, the resulting air quality impacts would be *less than significant*.

### ■ Biological Resources

The existing General Plan does not include updated objectives and policies for protection of biological resources which reflect the current regulatory environment and sensitivity of habitats within the City. The existing General Plan permits more development on Banning Ranch than the General Plan Update,

with no priority for open space preservation. It does not impose the same restrictions on development and preservation of open space as the proposed General Plan Update.

There is potential for disturbance of sensitive species under the No Project/No Action Alternative, as new developments could destroy or disrupt important habitat. While the existing General Plan allows development in areas where sensitive species might occur, projects would be required to obtain approvals from regulatory agencies on a case-by-case basis in these areas. This would ensure that sufficient mitigation measures are built into each development plan in order to protect sensitive species, if they were present on-site, such that impacts would be *less than significant*.

Indirect impacts to riparian habitat could result from development of the Banning Ranch subarea as allowed under the existing General Plan. The placement of development next to riparian habitats would disturb wildlife that relies on these areas. Federal regulations do not address protection of riparian vegetation under the Section 404 permitting process, and in light of the fact that the CDFG Section 1600 SAA is a negotiated agreement, some unmitigated loss of riparian resources may occur. Therefore these regulations would not serve to fully protect and manage riparian habitat under future development. Similarly, the existing General Plan has no policies to reduce impacts on the movement of native, resident, or migratory wildlife species or corridors in Banning Ranch. Therefore, the impacts associated with riparian habitats within the Planning Area would be *significant*.

The California Wetlands Conservation Policy is intended to ensure that no net loss of wetlands would occur within the State. The existing General Plan does not contain policies providing protection to riparian areas and sensitive communities. However, the City would require strict adherence to the identified State and Federal laws and regulations and the “no net wetland loss” policy currently in place. This would ensure that impacts on jurisdictional waters and wetlands would be *less than significant*.

There are a number of policies and ordinances beyond the General Plan that regulate impacts to biological resources. The Orange County Central and Coastal NCCP is the applicable habitat conservation plan for the Planning Area, of which the City is a signatory agency. As development projects are implemented, they would be required to comply with the most stringent adopted policies, and there would be *no impact*.

## ■ Cultural Resources

Under this alternative, the overall development potential under the existing General Plan would be reduced for some land use types, but would be increased for other types. While the development potential for land use categories would differ from the proposed project under continuation of the existing General Plan, impacts to cultural resources would be expected to be substantially similar to those of the proposed project. Because development could still occur within the City (regardless of the type), the potential demolition of historic structures could still occur and would remain *significant and unavoidable*. In addition, ground-disturbing activities associated with buildout of the existing General Plan would continue to occur in order to accommodate new development. Consequently, the potential of encountering fossil-bearing soils and rock formations, destroying below-ground paleontological resources, affecting archaeological sites and sites of cultural significance to Native Americans would still

occur, similar to the proposed project. However, cultural resources are governed on a site-by-site basis and the probability of uncovering new resources or of disturbing known resources is considered in project-level environmental review. Mitigation measures are created for projects that have the potential to disturb cultural resources, to lessen or negate impacts. Therefore, implementation of the No Project/No Action Alternative would result in impacts similar to buildout of the proposed General Plan Update, which are considered to be *less than significant*.

## ■ Geology and Soils/Mineral Resources

Geologic hazards associated with seismic ground shaking would be of similar magnitude under the No Project/No Action Alternative, as compared to the proposed project because future development would still occur throughout the City. Other site-specific geological hazards associated with erosion, loss of topsoil, liquefaction, subsidence, landslides, and expansive soils would also be similar for this alternative relative to the proposed project. New developments under both projects would be expected to conform to the most recent California Building Codes, which include strict building specifications to ensure structural and foundational stability. In terms of geologic hazards, this alternative would have a *less-than-significant* impact.

Under this alternative, existing oil and gas wells would continue to operate in the West Newport and Newport production areas. However, the existing General Plan permits development on Banning Ranch but does not impose the same restrictions on development (as compared to the proposed project). Unlike the proposed project, the existing General Plan does not have any policies that would ensure that development would not lead to a loss of availability of these resources. Consequently, future development on Banning Ranch under the existing General Plan could lead to a greater impact on mineral resources, as compared to the proposed project. As the General Plan Update policies would not be adopted to ensure that impacts on the availability of mineral resources remain less than significant, future analysis and mitigation would be required at the time specific development is set forth. In the absence of policies protecting access to mineral resources, impacts would be *significant*.

## ■ Hazards and Hazardous Materials

This impact would be similar to the proposed project because, while the existing General Plan allows more industrial land uses, the proposed General Plan Update allows more commercial uses; both of these land uses have the potential to introduce hazardous materials into the environment. Consequently, impacts related to the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials, as well as those related to reasonably foreseeable upset conditions would all be substantially similar, and *less than significant*. In addition, development under the existing General Plan could expose people to hazardous substances that may be present in soil or groundwater, and demolition activities could expose workers and the environment to asbestos-containing materials and/or lead based paint and residues. However, development under both the proposed project and this alternative would be held to Federal, State and local policies protecting humans and the environment from exposure to hazards. Compliance with the provisions of hazardous material policies in the City's Municipal Code and implementation of the existing regulations related to hazardous materials would reduce this impact to a *less-than-significant*

level. For future developments located on a hazardous materials site, appropriate remediation activities would be required before construction activities would be permitted. Similar to the proposed project, impacts would be *less than significant*. In addition, impacts associated with the release of hazardous emissions within one-quarter mile of a school may also be similar to the proposed project as some school uses could be located in close proximity to areas that are designated for commercial and industrial uses. Impacts would remain *less than significant*. Under the existing General Plan, residential uses would not be permitted in the Airport Area, and as such, impacts related to a potential safety hazard of people residing within two miles of an airport would be less than the proposed project. **No impact** would result. Similar to the proposed project, implementation of this alternative would not significantly interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan. This impact would remain *less than significant*. Development under the existing General Plan could lead to an increase in residential or commercial development in areas that are susceptible to wildland fires. This impact would be similar to the proposed project, as similar numbers of uses are generally proposed in wildland areas under the existing General Plan. This impact would be *less than significant*.

## ■ Hydrology and Water Quality

Implementation of the No Project/No Action Alternative would have similar hydrology and water quality impacts to the proposed project. Although the total amount of development could differ from the proposed project under this alternative, similar alterations to drainage patterns and alterations to hydrological patterns would occur. However, under the existing General Plan, industrial uses would be allowed on Banning Ranch whereas no industrial uses are proposed for this subarea under the proposed General Plan Update. Thus, the discharge of pollutants could be greater than under the proposed General Plan Update. Similar to the proposed project, runoff would be subject to NPDES permit standards and provisions stipulated in the DAMP. If necessary, treatment would be employed to remove excess pollutants from runoff during the construction and operational phases of development. General Plan policies that offer additional protection from water quality impairment (such as protection of sensitive areas on Banning Ranch) would not be adopted, although runoff would be expected to be treated to the maximum extent practicable. In terms of water quality, this alternative would have a *less-than-significant* impact, similar to the proposed project. As the City does not include any significant recharge areas, depletion of groundwater and percolation of pollutants into groundwater aquifers would be *less than significant*, similar to the proposed project. This alternative would increase the impervious surface groundcover over existing conditions, and increase the quantity of runoff discharged into the City storm drain system, similar to the proposed project. General Plan policies adopted to minimize total site runoff would not be implemented. Projects would be subject to additional review in order to ensure that they do not exceed the capacity of the storm drain system. It is therefore expected that the net effect would be similar, and individual projects would not exceed the capacity of the storm drain system. These impacts would be *less than significant*, similar to the proposed project. Although fewer residences would be constructed under the existing General Plan, similar numbers of homes could be developed in low-lying areas that could be exposed to flooding in the event of a 100-year flood. Structures constructed in the floodplain would be required to adhere to floodproofing requirements contained in the City Municipal Code. This would ensure that impacts from flooding under this alternative would be *less than significant*, and impacts would be similar to the proposed project. This alternative would have *less-*

*than-significant* impacts resulting from exposure to flooding as a result of a levee or dam, or effects of seiche, tsunami, or mudflow, similar to the proposed project.

## ■ Land Use and Planning

The existing pattern of land uses would be retained under the General Plan. The improvements from aggregating similar uses in proximity to each other, particularly in West Newport Mesa would also not occur. While significant impacts would not result, this benefit of the project would not occur. Land use changes in the Airport Area would not occur under this alternative, and it would remain developed by commercial and light industrial uses. The preservation of existing patterns of use would not result in land use conflicts. Further, no land use development would occur that would physically divide an established community, and no conflicts with adopted plans and policies would occur. Impacts, would be less than the proposed General Plan Update, and would be *less than significant*.

Continued use of the existing General Plan under the No Project/No Action Alternative would be consistent with existing land use policies with the exception of the Local Coastal Plan (LCP). The existing General Plan is the umbrella document guiding most local land use policies; local land use plans and regulations were built using the General Plan as a framework. However the LCP, a California Coastal Commission mandated document, was shaped under State rather than local regulations, and as such, does not follow the same set of objectives as the General Plan. The most recent LCP incorporates new State laws and agency precedents governing coastal resources and is not consistent with the General Plan. For example, the existing General Plan allows a greater amount of industrial uses throughout the City, which the LCP no longer allows in certain areas. Industrial developers trying to obtain land use permits would not be allowed to build in areas where the existing General Plan allows industrial uses but where the LCP does not. The existing General Plan is constrained by the development restrictions laid out in the LCP. Although existing General Plan land use policies may permit certain uses, all new development occurring in the City under the existing General Plan would be also required to meet LCP standards. Although the LCP and the existing General Plan have areas of incompatibility, development under this alternative would be required to be consistent with all applicable policies. No development allowed under the existing General Plan but prohibited under the LCP would occur. In terms of implementation, therefore, impacts from policy inconsistencies are considered to be *less than significant*. However, implementation of this alternative would result in a decrease in certain types of development within the City when compared with the proposed project because of the incompatibility between the existing General Plan and the more recently revised LCP.

## ■ Noise

Under the No Project/No Action Alternative, continuation of the existing General Plan would not expose sensitive receptors in proximity to the John Wayne Airport to excessive noise levels because the land use pattern in the general vicinity would not change from current conditions. Consequently, the noise impacts to land uses in the vicinity of the airport would be less than the proposed project, and would remain *less than significant*. Similar to the proposed General Plan Update, construction activities under the No Project/No Action Alternative would be subject to the City's Municipal Code



standards, and unreasonably loud construction noise would be prohibited during specified hours. This impact would be *less than significant*, similar to the proposed project. Future development under the existing General Plan could expose persons to vibration levels generated during construction activities that would exceed the standards adopted by the City. There are no mitigation measures available that would ensure that the threshold would not be exceeded in all cases. Consequently, this would be a *significant and unavoidable* impact, similar to the proposed project. Future development under the No Project/No Action Alternative could generate or expose persons to noise levels in excess of City standards. Although developments would be required to comply with existing noise standards, noise effects on exiting noise-sensitive uses could remain. Consequently, this impact would be similar to the proposed project, and would be *significant and unavoidable*. Similar to the proposed General Plan Update, the No Project/No Action Alternative would result in substantial permanent increases in traffic-related ambient noise levels. Development would still increase, which would result in additional motor vehicles traveling throughout the City and other sources of ambient noise. Although the development pattern throughout the City would be different under the existing General Plan, it is anticipated that the increased traffic on local roads would still result in a *significant and unavoidable* impact, similar to the proposed project.

## ■ Population and Housing

Full buildout of the existing General Plan would allow an increase of approximately 9,550 additional residential units over 2002 conditions. At buildout, the City would have approximately 49,729 units. According to the Department of Finance, the 2002 population was approximately 72,622 residents. Using the City's existing persons per household (pph) rate of 2.19, the net increase of 9,550 residential units would result in a population increase of approximately 20,915 residents. Consequently, this increase would result in a total population of 93,537 persons at buildout of the existing General Plan. This would represent a 29 percent increase in population over 2002 conditions, which is considered to be less substantial than that projected under the proposed project (43 percent increase). Although the housing increases anticipated under the existing General Plan at buildout would exceed SCAG 2030 projections by approximately 15 percent, the existing General Plan would not exceed SCAG 2030 population projections. Growth under the existing General Plan was already accounted for in SCAG's projections, and the anticipated future growth would result in less than under the proposed General Plan Update. Consequently, because buildout of the existing General Plan would not exceed SCAG 2030 population projections, it is assumed that this impact would be less than the proposed project, and would constitute a *less-than-significant impact*. Similar to the proposed General Plan Update, the existing General Plan also does not propose uses that would displace substantial numbers of existing housing or people, and there would be *no impact*.

## ■ Public Services

Under the No Project/No Action Alternative, development would occur throughout the City as permitted by the existing General Plan. Under this alternative, impacts associated with fire protection, law enforcement, and library services could be slightly less compared to the proposed project, since there would be less residential development at full buildout. Demands for fire, police, and library services

would be updated as part of the City's annual budget process. Law enforcement needs can be measured by population increase, and the potential population increase of 20,915 under the existing General Plan would require 36 additional officers and 21 additional non-sworn employees to maintain the existing ratio of 1.7 officers per 1,000 population. As with the proposed project, the existing police facility cannot accommodate this increase in staff, and any future project to expand police facilities would require environmental review. Therefore, this alternative is considered to have a *less-than-significant* impact in terms of the provision of fire, police and library services, and its impacts would be similar to implementation of the proposed project.

Additional students would be generated that would impact school facilities within the Planning Area. There would be 832 fewer single family residences and 3,833 fewer multifamily residences, resulting in fewer new students when compared to the General Plan Update. In addition, as no residential units would be developed in the Airport Area under the existing General Plan, there would be no impact to the SAUSD. Impacts to school services would be *less than significant*, and since fewer students would be generated, impacts would be less than under the proposed project.

## ■ Recreation and Open Space

The overall amount of land designated for parks and active open space under the No Project/No Action Alternative would be less than the proposed project. The existing General Plan includes 178.8 acres of parks, while the proposed General Plan Update would include 254.7 acres, or more, if the acquisition of the Banning Ranch property for public open space was determined to be feasible. There would be less population increase under this alternative when compared to the proposed project, such that increased demands for parkland would be less. In particular, as no new residential uses would be developed in the Airport Area, there would be no demands for parkland in that area. However, population would continue to rise, placing increased pressure on open spaces within the City, which could potentially cause degradation of those recreational areas. The increase in need for park land (at the existing standard of five acres per 1,000 population) would be 105 acres versus 156 additional acres under the proposed General Plan Update. This impact would be less than significant under the proposed project, and, as even less parkland would be developed under this alternative, increased usage of parks and their subsequent degradation would also be greater than the proposed project. It is anticipated, however, that this impact would be *less than significant*. This impact would be greater than the proposed project. Some physical development in parks or recreational facilities could occur, for instance in Banning Ranch or Sunset Ridge. The provision of these facilities would not result in substantial adverse physical impacts. This impact would be similar to the proposed project, and would remain *less than significant*.

## ■ Transportation and Circulation

Growth under the existing General Plan would increase vehicle trips citywide by 26.9 percent over 2002 existing conditions (20.1 percent over 2005 existing conditions), compared to an increase of 30.9 percent in vehicle trips over 2002 existing conditions (23.9 percent over 2005 existing conditions) with implementation of the proposed project. In general, daily traffic volumes on most roadways in the Planning Area would be approximately 1,000 fewer vehicles per day under the existing General Plan than

under the proposed project. However, under the existing General Plan, more intersections would experience an unacceptable level of service than under the proposed project. Specifically, 18 intersections (13.16 percent of study intersections) would experience LOS E or F under the existing General Plan, while under the proposed project, five intersections (8.33 percent of study intersections) would experience LOS E or F. Excluding regional growth, only three intersections would experience LOS E or F under the proposed project. The existing General Plan does not contain a clear policy that the City’s intersection LOS standard is D, but refers to that standard as a “goal” and describes circumstances when the goal may not be met. The proposed General Plan Update includes a more specific policy on intersection LOS, stating clearly that the City’s standard is LOS D, but for a limited number of specifically-identified “exception intersections”. Because the existing General Plan would adversely affect more intersections than the proposed project, this impact would be greater than the proposed project, and would be *significant*.

Under this Alternative, increases in deficient freeway segments and ramps would be less than under the proposed project. The volumes on the SR-73 would still increase to the extent that all the studied segments would be failing upon implementation of this alternative. Even with the improvements identified by the County, several segments would continue to operate at a deficient level of service. Since development under this alternative is slightly lower than the proposed project, this impact would be less, but would remain *significant and unavoidable*. Fewer residential uses would occur under this Alternative, particularly in the Airport Area, where no residential development and fewer trips would occur. As a result, operations at JWA would not be significantly affected by implementation of this Alternative. Impacts related to air traffic would be less than under the proposed project, and would remain *less than significant*. Although development under this impact would be less than that of the proposed project, impacts related to the adequacy of emergency access would be similar, as all development is required to adhere to specific provisions in the City’s Municipal Code. This impact would, therefore, remain *less than significant*. Since development under this Alternative would be less than the proposed project, impacts to parking would be less than the proposed project, and would remain *less than significant*. Impacts associated with consistency of applicable regional transportation plans would be similar for this alternative when compared to the project, and *less-than-significant* impacts would occur.

## ■ Utilities and Service Systems

Implementation of the No Project/No Action Alternative would result in more office space, and industrial and institutional land uses and less residential, commercial, visitor-serving commercial (hotel/motel), and park land uses than the proposed project in the City. Impacts related to the construction of infrastructure associated with water, sewer, storm drains, and power lines would be similar compared to the proposed General Plan Update. If new or expanded infrastructure is required, the infrastructure project would undergo the City’s environmental review process, such that significant environmental effects from infrastructure improvements would be mitigated. Construction impacts related to infrastructure would be *less than significant*, similar to the proposed project.

Increases in population and additional high-water-use land uses under this alternative would put increased pressure on the water supply. However, the water service providers have indicated that

adequate water service would be provided to accommodate the increased population. This would result in a *less-than-significant* impact, similar to the proposed project.

As development occurs under the existing General Plan, increases in electricity, natural gas, wastewater flows, solid waste facilities and electricity demand would be expected to occur. Demands associated with these utilities are associated with population and total development. The population increase resulting from residential development would be less than the proposed project; however, and more square footage of commercial, office, and retail development would occur under this alternative. Thus, on balance, a similar level of demand would occur on utilities. Increased demands would be met by available infrastructure, similar to the proposed project. Current service projections for local utilities agencies are sufficient to cover new demand for services, and therefore, a *less-than-significant* impact would result, similar to the proposed project.

## 5.5 ALTERNATIVE 3: GPAC RECOMMENDATIONS

### 5.5.1 Description

Implementation of the GPAC Recommendations Alternative (Alternative 3) would result in development within the Planning Area that would generally meet the project objectives established for the proposed General Plan Update for the City of Newport Beach. This alternative would result in less development than the proposed General Plan Update. As shown in Table 5-2 below, there would be less development in the Airport Area and Banning Ranch subareas, including approximately 1,936 fewer residential units. In addition, mixed use along Old Newport Boulevard and Balboa Peninsula would be less than under the proposed General Plan Update, and there would also be a somewhat different mix of uses in Balboa Village. Outside the subareas, potential residential density would be reduced in Lido Isle, Balboa Island and West Newport. As compared to the proposed project, the mix of development permitted under this alternative would result in a reduction in average daily traffic (ADT) by approximately four percent. This alternative would still increase development citywide, when compared to existing conditions. Policies within the proposed General Plan Update would still be adopted, except those related to residential development in the Airport Area.

The amount of development that would be allowed citywide relative to allowable development under the proposed General Plan Update is specified according to land use type in Table 5-2, below.

### 5.5.2 Impact Evaluation

#### ■ Aesthetics

The types of impacts associated with degradation of scenic vistas, decreased visual quality, obstruction/alteration of scenic resources within a State- or locally-designated scenic highway, and increased light and glare would be similar to the proposed project under this alternative, as the overall character of General Plan buildout would be similar. This alternative could result in obstruction of views

**Table 5-2 City of Newport Beach General Plan Update and GPAC Recommendation (Alternative 3)**

|  |        | Subareas          |                |                                   |              |               |                |                  |                      |                       |
|--|--------|-------------------|----------------|-----------------------------------|--------------|---------------|----------------|------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|
|  |        | West Newport Mesa | Mariners' Mile | Newport Center/<br>Fashion Island | Airport Area | Banning Ranch | Balboa Village | Balboa Peninsula | West Newport Highway | Old Newport Boulevard |
| <b>Office (sf)</b>                         |        |                   |                |                                   |              |               |                |                  |                      |                       |
| Proposed GPU                               |        | 1,025,865         | 294,725        | 3,675,670                         | 4,911,197    |               | 12,000         | 80,656           |                      | 185,696               |
| Alternative 3                              |        | 1,025,865         | 294,725        | 3,675,670                         | 4,753,613    |               |                | 98,000           |                      | 167,310               |
| <b>Residential (du)</b>                    |        |                   |                |                                   |              |               |                |                  |                      |                       |
| Prop GPU                                   | MFR    | 3,542             | 625            | 845                               | 4,300        | 687           | 512            | 823              | 361                  | 244                   |
|  | SFR(A) | 98                | 837            |                                   |              | 688           | 1,196          | 291              |                      | 579                   |
| Alt 3                                      | MFR    | 3,492             | 625            | 845                               | 3,300        | 439           | 400            | 643              | 361                  | 153                   |
|  | SFR(A) | 98                | 837            |                                   |              | 436           | 1,188          | 291              |                      | 584                   |
| <b>Commercial (sf)</b>                     |        |                   |                |                                   |              |               |                |                  |                      |                       |
| Proposed GPU                               |        | 50,910            | 853,208        | 1,986,980                         | 880,620      | 75,000        | 192,503        | 745,320          | 57,935               | 92,848                |
| Alternative 3                              |        | 50,910            | 853,208        | 1,986,980                         | 768,395      | 35,000        | 203,624        | 809,154          | 57,935               | 68,370                |
| <b>Visitor Serving (hotel-motel rooms)</b> |        |                   |                |                                   |              |               |                |                  |                      |                       |
| Proposed GPU                               |        |                   | 204            | 1,175                             | 1,213        | 75            | 265            | 240              |                      | 53                    |
| Alternative 3                              |        |                   | 204            | 1,175                             | 984          | 75            | 265            | 328              |                      | 53                    |
| <b>Industrial (sf)</b>                     |        |                   |                |                                   |              |               |                |                  |                      |                       |
| Proposed                                   |        | 837,270           |                |                                   |              |               |                |                  |                      |                       |
| Alternative 3                              |        | 837,270           |                |                                   | 551,930      |               |                |                  |                      |                       |
| <b>Institutional (sf)</b>                  |        |                   |                |                                   |              |               |                |                  |                      |                       |
| Proposed GPU                               |        | 1,235,797         | 105,260        | 105,000                           | 96,996       |               |                | 96,710           |                      |                       |
| Alternative 3                              |        | 1,235,797         | 105,260        | 105,000                           |              |               | 13,470         | 16,650           |                      |                       |
| <b>Parks (acres)</b>                       |        |                   |                |                                   |              |               |                |                  |                      |                       |
| Proposed GPU                               |        | 1                 |                |                                   |              | 30            |                |                  |                      |                       |
| Alternative 3                              |        | 1                 |                |                                   |              | 30            |                |                  |                      |                       |

of a scenic vista from places of public interest, although this would occur in isolated instances and to a more limited extent than the proposed project. Policies outlined in the proposed General Plan Update would still protect scenic vistas in the City, and this impact would be *less than significant*. Similar to the proposed project, because no scenic highways are currently designated within the City, implementation of this alternative would have *no impact* on scenic resources within a designated scenic highway. Development intensification could result in changes to the visual character of the area, but the change would be less pronounced in the Airport Area and Banning Ranch, where no or fewer residential units would be built. While there would be fewer mixed use developments, General Plan policies would remain that would minimize impacts among incompatible uses in new development. Projects would be required to comply with design criteria that would ensure new development is consistent with the visual character of the area. Impacts to changes in the visual character would be *less than significant*, and

would be substantially similar to the proposed project. This alternative could also convert open space areas to urban uses on Banning Ranch if it is not acquired for open space, although there would be less development in the subarea. In addition, light and glare would also be expected to increase with full buildout of this alternative. Future projects would be subject to further environmental and design review, and impacts associated with these resources would be addressed, similar with the proposed project. Banning Ranch could be developed under this alternative, and the impact of nighttime lighting would be *significant and unavoidable*, similar to the proposed project.

## ■ Air Quality

Implementation of the GPAC Recommendations Alternative would result in less overall development than the proposed project in the City. However, future population levels would continue to exceed SCAG projections, such that the General Plan as a whole would not be consistent with the 2003 AQMP. Similar to the proposed project, this impact would be considered *significant and unavoidable*. The total amount of emissions generated, including criteria pollutants and objectionable odors, under this alternative would be less than that of the proposed project, as this alternative would result in a lesser amount of construction. However, the total emissions generated by construction of individual projects, which may have overlapping schedules would be expected to remain in exceedance of SCAQMD thresholds. Construction impacts on air quality would remain *significant and unavoidable*, although they would be less in magnitude than compared to the proposed project. Although total air emissions may be less than the proposed project, operation of projects under this alternative would remain *significant and unavoidable*. The growth envisioned under this alternative would not generate CO concentrations exceeding national and State ambient air quality standards if mitigation measures were implemented, and relative to the proposed project, this impact would be of a lesser magnitude due to the slight reduction in development envisioned under this alternative. The resulting air quality impacts would be *less than significant* with mitigation, and would be less than the proposed project.

## ■ Biological Resources

The types of impacts to biological resources from the GPAC Recommendations Alternative would be similar to the proposed project. The reduction in residential development in urbanized areas would not have a substantial effect on the magnitude of impacts to biological resources citywide. The reduction in potential development on Banning Ranch would reduce biological impacts in this area.

The effects of implementation of the proposed General Plan Update under this alternative would be minimized through General Plan policies and existing regulations governing protection of biological resources. Project effects, including disturbance to sensitive species, impacts on sensitive plant and wildlife species, direct and indirect impacts to riparian habitat, loss of wetlands, impacts to wildlife movement, and compliance with other policies and ordinances protecting would be *less than significant*. As less development would occur in the sensitive areas on and adjacent to Banning Ranch, impacts would be less than under the proposed project.

## ■ Cultural Resources

Under the GPAC Recommendations Alternative, construction activities would be reduced within the Planning Area. While the development potential for land use categories would differ from the proposed project under the GPAC recommendations, impacts to cultural resources would be expected to be substantially similar to those of the proposed project. Because development could still occur within the City (regardless of the type or extent), the potential demolition of historic structures could still occur and would remain ***significant and unavoidable***. Under this alternative, less disturbance of land that could potentially contain cultural resources, on or below the ground surface, would occur. Since the overall amount of development would be reduced, implementation of this alternative would have less potential than the proposed project to disturb archaeological sites or sites of cultural significance to Native Americans. The reduced intensity of development uses would also result in less ground-disturbing activities associated with buildout of this Alternative for potential fossil-bearing soils and rock formations. Thus, with the reduction in overall development, the potential impacts to paleontological resources would be less in magnitude than the proposed project. Therefore, impacts to archaeological and paleontological resources would also be ***less than significant***.

## ■ Geology and Soils

Slightly less development is proposed under the GPAC Recommendations Alternative, and thus, geologic hazards associated with seismic ground shaking would be of a lesser magnitude than the proposed project because less overall development would lessen the risk of exposure of structures to damage during ground shaking. Site-specific hazards associated with erosion, loss of topsoil, liquefaction, subsidence, landslides, and expansive soils would also be of a slightly lesser magnitude than the proposed project because less development would occur in the City under this alternative. As all future development under the GPAC Recommendations Alternative would be required to adhere to the most recent California Building Codes, which include strict building specifications to ensure structural and foundational stability, this alternative would have a ***less-than-significant*** impact.

Under this alternative, policies associated with consolidating oil and gas activities on Banning Ranch would still apply, as would policies that would ensure that a loss of availability would not occur by encouraging consolidation of oil operations. Consequently, future development on Banning Ranch under this alternative would have a similar impact on mineral resources, as compared to the proposed project. Impacts on the availability of mineral resources would be ***less than significant***.

## ■ Hazards and Hazardous Materials

Impacts associated with hazards and hazardous materials would be substantially similar to the proposed project. This alternative would result in more industrial and less commercial uses compared to the proposed General Plan Update. Consequently, impacts related to the routine transport, use, or disposal, as well as those related to reasonably foreseeable upset conditions would all be slightly greater than the proposed project, due to the more frequent use of hazardous substances. Impacts would, however, remain ***less than significant***. Although slightly less in magnitude than the proposed project (due to less

development), development under the GPAC Recommendations Alternative could expose people to hazardous substances that may be present in soil or groundwater, and demolition activities could expose workers and the environment to asbestos-containing materials and/or lead based paint and residues. Compliance with existing Federal, State, and local regulations, along with compliance with proposed General Plan Update policies, would reduce impacts to a *less-than-significant* level. For future developments located on a hazardous materials site, appropriate remediation activities would be required before construction activities would be permitted. Similar to the proposed project, impacts would be *less than significant*. In addition, impacts associated with the release of hazardous emissions within one-quarter mile of a school would also be similar to the proposed project. Impacts would remain *less than significant*. Fewer residential uses would be permitted in the Airport Area, and as such, impacts related to a potential safety hazard of people residing within two miles of an airport would be slightly reduced. However, compliance with existing regulations and proposed General Plan Update policies would minimize impacts associated with operation of the JWA on surrounding land uses. Nonetheless, this impact would remain *significant and unavoidable*. Implementation of this alternative would not significantly interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan, and this would occur to a slightly lesser extent than the proposed project because there would be less overall development, which would result in less congested traffic conditions in the Planning Area. This impact would remain *less than significant*. Similar to the proposed project, implementation of the GPAC Recommendations Alternative could lead to an increase in development in areas that are susceptible to wildland fires. However, General Plan policies would be implemented, and similar to the proposed project, impacts would be *less than significant*.

## ■ Hydrology and Water Quality

Implementation of the GPAC Recommendations Alternative would not result in significant impacts to hydrology or water quality. Less development on Banning Ranch would occur, thereby reducing hydrology and water quality impacts to this subarea. Although the total amount of development could differ from the proposed project under this alternative, similar alterations to drainage patterns, discharge of pollutants and alterations to hydrological patterns would occur. Runoff would be subject to NPDES permit standards and provisions stipulated in the DAMP. If necessary, treatment would be employed to remove excess pollutants from runoff during the construction and operational phases of development. General Plan policies would offer additional protection from water quality impairment. In terms of water quality, this alternative would have a *less-than-significant* impact, and, due to reduction of potential development on Banning Ranch, impacts would be less than the proposed project. As the City does not include any significant recharge areas, depletion of groundwater and percolation of pollutants into groundwater aquifers would be *less-than-significant*, similar to the proposed project. This alternative would increase the impervious surface groundcover over existing conditions, and increase the quantity of runoff discharged into the City storm drain system, although this would occur to a lesser extent than the proposed project. General Plan policies adopted to minimize total site runoff would be implemented. These impacts would be *less than significant*, and would be less than the proposed project. Fewer residences would be constructed under this alternative and fewer numbers of homes could be developed in low-lying areas that could be exposed to flooding in the event of a 100-year flood. Structures constructed in the floodplain would be required to adhere to floodproofing requirements contained in



the City Municipal Code. This would ensure that impacts from flooding under this alternative would be *less than significant*, and impacts would be similar to the proposed project. This alternative would have *less than significant* impacts resulting from exposure to flooding as a result of a levee or dam, or effects of seiche, tsunami, or mudflow, similar to the proposed project.

## ■ Land Use

Land Use changes would occur similar to the General Plan Update, although the allowed intensity of development would vary in several areas. In the Airport Area, 1,000 fewer residential units could be built. The overall use and land use character of this subarea would still change, although the magnitude of land use changes would be less. Development within the 65 dBA CNEL contour could still occur if City Council makes the necessary findings to override this restriction. While fewer residential units could be developed in this area, *significant and unavoidable* land use conflicts could still occur, similar to the proposed project. These changes would reduce the potential for conflicts of use to occur, when compared to the proposed project. Policies that establish distinct districts and neighborhood would be implemented as outlined in the General Plan Update. This alternative would not result in land use changes that would physically divide an established community. Further, conflicts could still occur with the AELUP. Therefore, impacts on land use would be *significant and unavoidable*, and would be similar to the proposed project.

## ■ Noise

Under the GPAC Recommendations Alternative, future development would expose sensitive receptors in proximity to the John Wayne Airport to excessive noise levels because residential uses could still be developed in the area. Consequently, the noise impacts to land uses in the vicinity of the airport would be similar to the proposed project, and would remain *significant and unavoidable*. Similar to the proposed General Plan Update, construction activities under the GPAC Recommendations Alternative would be subject to the City's Municipal Code standards, and unreasonably loud construction noise would be controlled. This impact would be *less than significant*, similar to the proposed project. Future development under this alternative could expose persons to vibration levels generated during construction activities. There are no mitigation measures available that would ensure that the threshold would not be exceeded in all cases. Consequently, this would be a *significant and unavoidable* impact, similar to the proposed project. Future development under the GPAC Recommendations Alternative could generate or expose persons to noise levels in excess of City standards. Although developments would be required to comply with existing noise standards, noise effects on existing noise-sensitive uses could remain. Consequently, this impact would be similar to the proposed project, and would be *significant and unavoidable*. Similar to the proposed General Plan Update, the GPAC Recommendations Alternative would result in substantial permanent increases in traffic-related ambient noise levels. Development would increase, although slightly less than the proposed project, which would result in additional motor vehicles traveling throughout the City and other sources of ambient noise. Because slightly less development would occur under this alternative, it is anticipated that the increased traffic on local roads would also be slightly less than the proposed project, but would still result in a *significant and unavoidable* impact.

## ■ Population and Housing

Full buildout of the GPAC Recommendations Alternative would result in similar impacts to population and housing. Reduced development potential would include approximately 1,936 fewer residential units, among other changes. The reduction in residential uses would also reduce the anticipated population by approximately 4,240 residents, for a total increase of approximately 26,891 persons and a buildout population of approximately 99,513 persons. While the estimated growth in population and housing is slightly less when compared to the proposed General Plan Update, the anticipated growth under the GPAC Recommendations Alternative would still represent a 37 percent increase in population over 2002 conditions, which is considered to be substantial. Similarly, future growth under this Alternative would continue to substantially exceed SCAG projections for population and housing. Therefore, while this impact would be less than the proposed project, this Alternative would still result in a *significant* impact to population and housing increases. Similar to the proposed General Plan Update, the GPAC Recommendations Alternative also does not propose uses that would displace substantial numbers of existing housing or people, and there would be *no impact*.

## ■ Public Services

Under the GPAC Recommendations Alternative, somewhat less development would occur throughout the City. Under this alternative, impacts associated with fire protection, law enforcement, and library services could be slightly less compared to the proposed project, since there would be less residential development at full buildout. Demands for fire, police, and library services would be updated as part of the City's annual budget process. Law enforcement needs can be measured by population increase, and the potential population increase of approximately 26,891 residents under the GPAC Recommendations Alternative would require 46 additional officers and 28 additional non-sworn employees to maintain the existing ratios of 1.7 officers per 1,000 residents. As with the proposed project, the existing police facility cannot accommodate this increase in staff, and any future project to expand police facilities would require environmental review. Therefore, this alternative is considered to have a *less-than-significant* impact in terms of the provision of fire, police, and library services and its impacts would be similar to implementation of the proposed project.

Additional students would be generated that would impact school facilities within the Planning Area. There would be approximately 1,936 fewer residential units, resulting in fewer new students when compared to the proposed General Plan Update. Impacts to school services would be *less than significant*, and since fewer students would be generated, impacts would be less than under the proposed project. In addition, impacts related to development of SAUSD facilities would be similar to proposed project, but slightly less under this Alternative due to the development of fewer residential units in Airport Area.

## ■ Recreation

The overall amount of land designated for parks and active open space under the GPAC Recommendations Alternative would be the same as under the proposed project. As the population rises,

increased pressure would be placed on parkland and open space areas within the City, which could potentially cause degradation of those recreational areas. Because this alternative would result in a slightly lower population increase than the proposed project, the increase in need for park land (at the existing standard of five acres per 1,000 population) would be 134 acres versus 156 additional acres under the proposed General Plan Update. Therefore, this impact would be slightly less in magnitude comparatively. As a result, this Alternative could result in more designated open space than under the proposed project. The increased usage of existing parks and their subsequent degradation would remain ***less than significant***. Similar to the proposed project, this alternative would provide additional parkland and open space, but the provision of these facilities would not result in substantial adverse physical impacts. This impact would be similar to the proposed project, and would remain ***less than significant***.

## ■ Transportation and Circulation

Implementation of the GPAC Recommendations Alternative would result in a reduction in development potential. In turn, a reduction in traffic volume would occur, which would result in improved traffic conditions in the Planning Area when compared to the proposed project. Specifically, the GPAC Recommendations Alternative would allow a mix of development that would result in four percent fewer trips citywide than would occur under the proposed project. The policy regarding the City's intersection level of service standard included in the General Plan Update would be adopted, and the traffic improvement measures that would be implemented under the proposed project would also be implemented under this Alternative. As such, impacts related to this alternative could also be reduced, and traffic impacts to intersections would be less than the proposed project. Impacts would be ***less than significant***.

Under this alternative, impacts to substantial increases in deficient freeway segments and ramps would be less than under the proposed project as development is slightly lower. The volumes on the SR-73 would still increase to the extent that all the studied segments would be failing upon implementation of this alternative. Even with the improvements identified by the County, several of the freeway segments and ramps would continue to operate at a deficient level of service. Since development under this alternative is slightly lower than the proposed project, this impact would be less, but would remain ***significant and unavoidable***. Fewer residential uses would occur under this Alternative, including in the Airport Area, where less residential development and fewer trips would occur. As such, operations at JWA would not be significantly affected by implementation of this Alternative. Impacts related to air traffic would be less than under the proposed project, and would remain ***less than significant***. Although development under this impact would be less than that of the proposed project, impacts related to the adequacy of emergency access would be similar as all development is required to adhere to specific provisions in the City's Municipal Code. This impact would, therefore, remain ***less than significant***. Since development under this Alternative would be less than the proposed project, impacts to parking would be less than the proposed project demands on parking in the Planning Area would be less. However, new development is required to adhere to the City's Municipal Code with regard to parking requirements. As such, impacts under this Alternative would be similar to that of the proposed project, but would remain ***less than significant***. Impacts associated with consistency of applicable regional transportation plans would be

similar for this alternative when compared to the project, and *less-than-significant* impacts would occur.

## ■ Utilities and Service Systems

Implementation of the GPAC Recommendations Alternative would reduce the number of new residential units. Construction of infrastructure associated with water, sewer, storm drains, and power lines could still be necessary. These impacts would be similar to those described for the proposed General Plan Update. If new or expanded infrastructure is required, the infrastructure project would undergo the City's environmental review process, such that significant environmental effects from infrastructure improvements would be mitigated. Construction impacts related to infrastructure would be *less than significant*, similar to the proposed project.

While population would be less than under the proposed project, it would still be greater than that which is currently projected for the City. Implementation of the proposed General Plan Update policies would reduce future water demand; this alternative would still require new or expanded water entitlements and would not be in compliance with the Urban Water Management Plan. As such, increases in population under this alternative would put increased pressure on the water supply. Water-service providers have indicated that adequate water supply would be available to accommodate the increased population. This would result in a *less-than-significant* impact, although this would be less in magnitude than the proposed project.

As development occurs under this alternative, increases in electricity, natural gas, wastewater flows, solid waste facilities, and electricity demand would be expected to occur. As demands associated with these utilities are linked to City population, and the population increase would be less than the proposed project under this alternative, somewhat less demand would occur on these utilities. Increased demands would be met by available infrastructure, similar to the proposed project. Current service projections for all local utilities agencies are sufficient to cover new demand for services, and therefore, a *less than significant* impact would result, and these impacts would be less in magnitude when compared to the proposed project.

## 5.6 ALTERNATIVE 4: SUBAREA ONLY MINIMUM

### 5.6.1 Description

Under the Subarea Only Minimum Alternative, new development would be less than the proposed General Plan Update. In addition, the amount of new development would be reduced when compared to development allowed under the existing General Plan and under Alternative 3, the GPAC Recommendations. Table 5-3 illustrates the land use under this Alternative compared to the proposed General Plan Update. Specifically, under this alternative, residential land uses would be less than the proposed project in the Airport Area, Balboa Peninsula, West Newport Mesa, Balboa Village, and Old Newport Boulevard. No residential development would occur in Banning Ranch. Development potential outside of the subareas would remain the same as under the proposed General Plan Update. Office uses

would be less in West Newport Mesa, Newport Center/Fashion Island, and Old Newport Boulevard (where no office uses are proposed). Commercial uses would be less in Newport Center/Fashion Island, Airport Area, Balboa Peninsula, West Newport Highway, Old Newport Boulevard, and Banning Ranch (where no commercial uses are proposed). Industrial uses are proposed in West Newport Mesa, but at a level significantly below the proposed project, while industrial uses in the Airport Area would be greater than under the proposed project. Finally, institutional uses would be the same or less under this alternative for all areas where such uses are proposed under the proposed project. The mix of development under this alternative would result in a trip generation that is approximately eight percent less than under the proposed General Plan Update. Policies within the proposed General Plan Update would still be adopted.

**Table 5-3 City of Newport Beach General Plan Update and Subarea Only Minimum Alternative (Alternative 4)**

|  |        | Subareas          |                |                               |              |               |                |                  |                      |                       |
|--|--------|-------------------|----------------|-------------------------------|--------------|---------------|----------------|------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|
|  |        | West Newport Mesa | Mariners' Mile | Newport Center/Fashion Island | Airport Area | Banning Ranch | Balboa Village | Balboa Peninsula | West Newport Highway | Old Newport Boulevard |
| <b>Office (sf)</b>                         |        |                   |                |                               |              |               |                |                  |                      |                       |
| Proposed GPU                               |        | 1,025,865         | 294,725        | 3,675,670                     | 4,911,197    |               | 12,000         | 80,656           |                      | 185,696               |
| Alternative 4                              |        | 850,950           | 363,557        | 3,635,570                     | 6,001,692    |               | 60,000         | 103,185          |                      |                       |
| <b>Residential (du)</b>                    |        |                   |                |                               |              |               |                |                  |                      |                       |
| Prop GPU                                   | MFR    | 3,542             | 625            | 845                           | 4,300        | 687           | 512            | 823              | 361                  | 244                   |
|  | SFR(A) | 98                | 837            |                               |              | 688           | 1,196          | 291              |                      | 579                   |
| Alt 4                                      | MFR    | 3,172             | 817            | 1,226                         | 1,950        | 14            | 242            | 638              | 273                  | 250                   |
|  | SFR(A) | 98                | 837            | 419                           |              |               | 1,190          | 254              | 462                  | 659                   |
| <b>Commercial (sf)</b>                     |        |                   |                |                               |              |               |                |                  |                      |                       |
| Proposed GPU                               |        | 50,910            | 853,208        | 1,986,980                     | 880,620      | 75,000        | 192,503        | 745,320          | 57,935               | 92,848                |
| Alternative 4                              |        | 72,170            | 916,110        | 1,936,820                     | 854,167      |               | 217,340        | 336,714          | 18,105               | 66,380                |
| <b>Visitor Serving (hotel-motel rooms)</b> |        |                   |                |                               |              |               |                |                  |                      |                       |
| Proposed GPU                               |        |                   | 204            | 1,175                         | 1,213        | 75            | 265            | 240              |                      | 53                    |
| Alternative 4                              |        |                   | 204            | 1,036                         | 1,431        |               | 34             | 186              | 145                  | 53                    |
| <b>Industrial (sf)</b>                     |        |                   |                |                               |              |               |                |                  |                      |                       |
| Proposed                                   |        | 837,270           |                |                               |              |               |                |                  |                      |                       |
| Alternative 4                              |        | 499,457           |                |                               | 606,370      |               |                |                  |                      |                       |
| <b>Institutional (sf)</b>                  |        |                   |                |                               |              |               |                |                  |                      |                       |
| Proposed GPU                               |        | 1,235,797         | 105,260        | 105,000                       | 96,996       |               |                | 96,710           |                      |                       |
| Alternative 4                              |        | 1,235,797         | 95,360         | 105,000                       | 10,900       |               | 13,470         | 6,000            |                      |                       |
| <b>Parks (acres)</b>                       |        |                   |                |                               |              |               |                |                  |                      |                       |
| Proposed GPU                               |        | 1                 |                |                               |              | 30            |                |                  |                      |                       |
| Alternative 4                              |        |                   | 0.4            |                               |              | 20            |                |                  |                      |                       |

## 5.6.2 Impact Evaluation

### ■ Aesthetics

The types of impacts associated with degradation of scenic vistas, decreased visual quality, obstruction/alteration of scenic resources within a state- or locally designated scenic highway, and increased light and glare would be similar to the proposed project under this alternative, as the overall character of General Plan buildout would be similar. This alternative could result in obstruction of views of a scenic vista from places of public interest, although this would occur in isolated instances and to a more limited extent than the proposed project. Policies outlined in the proposed General Plan Update would still protect scenic vistas in the City, and this impact would be *less than significant*. Similar to the proposed project, because no scenic highways are currently designated within the City, implementation of this alternative would have *no impact* on scenic resources within a designated scenic highway. Development intensification could result in changes to the visual character of the area, and the change would be less pronounced citywide, as less development than under the proposed project would occur. Banning Ranch, in particular, would not undergo visual changes, as development would be limited to an active park and the remainder of the area would remain as oil operations and open space. Projects would be required to comply with design criteria that would ensure new development is consistent with the visual character of the area. Impacts to changes in the visual character would be *less than significant*, and would be substantially similar to the proposed project. In addition, light and glare would also be expected to increase with full buildout of the existing General Plan. Future projects would be subject to further environmental and design review, and impacts associated with these resources would be addressed, similar with the proposed project. No residential development would occur on Banning Ranch under this Alternative; however, an active park site could be developed with nighttime lighting, which could impact adjacent land uses. Therefore, although the impact of residential nighttime lighting that would occur under the proposed project would be avoided, the impact of nighttime lighting of an active park could have the same effect. This impact would remain *significant and unavoidable*.

### ■ Air Quality

Implementation of the Subarea Minimum Alternative would result in less overall development than the proposed project in the City. However, future population levels would continue to exceed SCAG projections, such that the General Plan as a whole would not be consistent with the 2003 AQMP. Similar to the proposed project, this impact would be considered *significant and unavoidable*. The total amount of emissions generated under this alternative, including criteria pollutants and objectionable odors, would be less than that of the proposed project, as this alternative would result in a lesser amount of construction. However, the total emissions generated by construction of individual projects, which may have overlapping schedules, would be expected to remain in exceedance of SCAQMD thresholds. Construction impacts on air quality would remain *significant and unavoidable*, although they would be less in magnitude than compared to the proposed project. Although total air emissions may be less than the proposed project, operation of projects under this alternative would be *significant and unavoidable*. The growth envisioned under this alternative would not generate CO concentrations exceeding national and State ambient air quality standards if mitigation measures were implemented, and

relative to the proposed project, this impact would be of a lesser magnitude due to the reduction in development envisioned under this alternative. The resulting air quality impacts would be *less than significant* with mitigation, and would be less than the proposed project.

## ■ Biological Resources

Impacts to biological resources from the Subarea Minimum Alternative would be similar to, but less than, the proposed project. The elimination of development on the Banning Ranch property would eliminate biological impacts in this area, which includes a large proportion of the biological resources in the Planning Area. The reduction in development in largely urbanized areas would not have a substantial effect on the magnitude of impacts to biological resources.

The effects of implementation of this alternative would be minimized through General Plan policies and existing regulations governing protection of biological resources. Project effects on areas outside of Banning Ranch, including disturbance to sensitive species, impacts on sensitive plant and wildlife species, direct and indirect impacts to riparian habitat, loss of wetlands, impacts to wildlife movement, and compliance with other policies and ordinances protecting biological resources would occur and would be *less than significant*. As less park development would occur in the sensitive areas on and adjacent to Banning Ranch, impacts would be less than under the proposed project.

## ■ Cultural Resources

Under the Subarea Minimum Alternative, because less development would occur, construction activities would be reduced within the Planning Area. While the development potential for land use categories would differ from the proposed project under this alternative, impacts to cultural resources would be expected to be substantially similar as those of the proposed project. Because development could still occur within the City (regardless of the type or intensity), the potential demolition of historic structures could still occur and would remain *significant and unavoidable*. Under this alternative, less disturbance of land that could potentially contain cultural resources, on or below the ground surface, would occur. Since the overall amount of development would be reduced, implementation of this alternative would have less potential than the proposed project to disturb archaeological sites or sites of cultural significance to Native Americans. The reduced intensity of development would also result in less ground-disturbing activities associated with buildout of this Alternative for potential fossil-bearing soils and rock formations. Thus, with the reduction in overall development, the potential impacts to paleontological resources would be less in magnitude than the proposed project because the exposure of potential fossil-bearing soils and rock formations would be reduced. Therefore, impacts to archaeological and paleontological resources would also be *less than significant*.

## ■ Geology and Soils

Less overall development is proposed under the Subarea Minimum Alternative, and thus, geologic hazards associated with seismic ground shaking would be of a lesser magnitude than the proposed project because less overall development would lessen the risk of exposure of structures to damage

during ground shaking. Site-specific hazards associated with erosion, loss of topsoil, liquefaction, subsidence, landslides, and expansive soils would also be of a lesser magnitude than the proposed project because less development would occur in the City under this alternative. As all future development under the Subarea Minimum Alternative would be required to adhere to the most recent California Building Codes, which include strict building specifications to ensure structural and foundational stability, this alternative would have a *less-than-significant* impact.

Under the Subarea Minimum Alternative, existing oil and gas operations and open space would remain on Banning Ranch. Therefore, the availability of mineral resources would not be impacted, similar to the proposed project. *No impact* would occur.

## ■ Hazards and Hazardous Materials

Impact associated with hazards and hazardous materials would be less than the proposed project because the permitted amount of industrial and commercial uses would be less under this alternative. Consequently, impacts related to the routine transport, use, or disposal, as well as those related to reasonably foreseeable upset conditions would be less than the proposed project, and impacts would be *less than significant*. Although less in magnitude than the proposed project (due to less development), development under the Subarea Minimum Alternative could expose people to hazardous substances that may be present in soil or groundwater, and demolition activities could expose workers and the environment to asbestos-containing materials and/or lead-based paint and residues. Compliance with existing Federal, State, and local regulations, along with compliance of proposed General Plan Update policies, would reduce impacts to a *less-than-significant* level. For future developments located on a hazardous materials site, appropriate remediation activities would be required before construction activities would be permitted. Similar to the proposed project, impacts would be *less than significant*. In addition, impacts associated with the release of hazardous emissions within one-quarter mile of a school would also be less than the proposed project. Impacts would remain *less than significant*. Fewer residential uses would be permitted in the Airport Area, and as such, impacts related to a potential safety hazard of people residing within two miles of an airport would be reduced. However, compliance with existing regulations and proposed General Plan Update policies would minimize impacts associated with operation of the JWA on surrounding land uses. Nonetheless, this impact would remain *significant and unavoidable*. Implementation of this alternative would not significantly interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan, and this would occur to a lesser extent than the proposed project because the decrease in overall development would result in less congested traffic conditions in the Planning Area. This impact would remain *less than significant*. Similar to the proposed project, implementation of the Subarea Minimum Alternative could lead to an increase in residential or commercial development in areas that are susceptible to wildland fires. However, General Plan policies would be implemented and impacts would be *less than significant*, but would be lesser in magnitude than the proposed project.



## ■ Hydrology and Water Quality

Implementation of the Subarea Minimum Alternative would not result in significant impacts to hydrology or water quality. The only development on Banning Ranch would be for park uses, which would substantially lessen hydrology and water quality impacts to this subarea. Although the total amount of development could differ from the proposed project under this alternative, similar alterations to drainage patterns, discharge of pollutants and alterations to hydrological patterns would occur. Runoff would be subject to NPDES permit standards and provisions stipulated in the DAMP. If necessary, treatment would be employed to remove excess pollutants from runoff during the construction and operational phases of development. Proposed General Plan Update policies would offer additional protection from water quality impairment. In terms of water quality, this alternative would have a *less-than-significant* impact, and this impact would be less than the proposed project. As the City does not include any significant recharge areas, depletion of groundwater and percolation of pollutants into groundwater aquifers would be *less than significant*, similar to the proposed project. This alternative would increase the impervious surface groundcover over existing conditions, and increase the quantity of runoff discharged into the City storm drain system, similar to the proposed project. General Plan policies adopted to minimize total site runoff would be implemented. These impacts would be *less than significant*, similar to the proposed project. Although fewer residences would be constructed under this alternative, similar numbers of homes could be developed in low-lying areas that could be exposed to flooding in the event of a 100-year flood. Structures constructed in the floodplain would be required to adhere to floodproofing requirements contained in the City Municipal Code. This would ensure that impacts from flooding under this alternative would be *less than significant*, and impacts would be similar to the proposed project. This alternative would have *less-than-significant* impacts resulting from exposure to flooding as a result of a levee or dam, or effects of seiche, tsunami, or mudflow, similar to the proposed project.

## ■ Land Use

Land Use changes would occur throughout the City, although they would differ in magnitude when compared to the proposed project. Development throughout the City would result in fewer land use changes than proposed under the General Plan Update. The overall use and land use character of the Airport Area would still change, although the magnitude of land use changes would be less. Development within the 65 dBA CNEL contour could still occur if City Council makes the necessary findings to override airport area land use regulations/limitations. While fewer residential units could be developed in this area, *significant and unavoidable* land use conflicts could still occur, similar to the proposed project. In addition, no land use changes would occur on Banning Ranch. These changes would lessen the potential for conflicts of use to occur, compared to the proposed project. Policies that establish distinct districts and neighborhoods would be implemented as outlined in the General Plan Update. This alternative would not result in land use changes that would physically divide an established community. Further, conflicts could still occur with the AELUP. Therefore, impacts on land use would be *significant and unavoidable*, similar to the proposed project.

## ■ Noise

Under the Subarea Minimum Alternative, future development would expose sensitive receptors in proximity to the John Wayne Airport to excessive noise levels because residential uses could still be developed in the area. Fewer residential units could be developed in the area, although impacts would remain ***significant and unavoidable***. Similar to the proposed General Plan Update, construction activities under Alternative 4 would be subject to the City's Municipal Code standards, and unreasonably loud construction noise would be controlled. This impact would be ***less than significant***, similar to the proposed project. Future development under this alternative could still expose persons to vibration levels generated during construction activities. There are no mitigation measures available that would ensure that the threshold would not be exceeded in all cases. Consequently, this would be a ***significant and unavoidable*** impact, similar to the proposed project. Future development under this alternative could generate or expose persons to noise levels in excess of City standards. Although developments would be required to comply with existing noise standards, noise effects on existing noise-sensitive uses could remain. Consequently, this impact would be similar to the proposed project, and would be ***significant and unavoidable***. Similar to the proposed General Plan Update, this alternative would result in substantial permanent increases in traffic-related ambient noise levels. Development would increase, although less than the proposed project, which would result in additional motor vehicles traveling throughout the City and other sources of ambient noise. Because less development would occur under this alternative, it is anticipated that the increased traffic on local roads would also be less than the proposed project, but would still result in a ***significant and unavoidable*** impact.

## ■ Population and Housing

Full buildout of the Subarea Minimum Alternative would result in similar impacts to population and housing as the proposed project. Reduced development potential would include approximately 3,127 fewer residential units, among other changes. The reduction in residential uses would also reduce the anticipated population by approximately 6,848 residents, for a total increase of approximately 24,283 persons and a buildout population of approximately 96,905 persons over 2002 conditions. While the estimated growth in population and housing is less when compared to the proposed General Plan Update, the anticipated growth under the Subarea Minimum Alternative would still represent a 33 percent increase in population over 2002 conditions, which is considered to be substantial. Similarly, future growth under this Alternative would continue to exceed SCAG projections for population and housing. Therefore, while this impact would be less than the proposed project, this Alternative would still result in a ***significant*** impact to population and housing increases. Similar to the proposed General Plan Update, the Subarea Minimum Alternative also does not propose uses that would displace substantial numbers of existing housing or people, and there would be ***no impact***.

## ■ Public Services

Under the Subarea Minimum Alternative, less development would occur throughout the City. Under this alternative, impacts associated with fire protection, law enforcement, and library services could be slightly less compared to the proposed project, since there would be less residential development at full buildout.

Demands for fire, police, and library services would be updated as part of the City's annual budget process. Law enforcement needs can be measured by population increase, and the potential population increase of 24,283 under the Subarea Minimum Alternative would require 41 additional officers and 25 additional non-sworn employees to maintain the existing ratio of 1.7 officers per 1,000 residents. As with the proposed project, the existing police facility cannot accommodate this increase in staff, and any future project to expand police facilities would require environmental review. Therefore, this alternative is considered to have a *less-than-significant* impact in terms of the provision of fire, police and library services and its impacts would be similar to implementation of the proposed project.

Additional students would be generated that would impact school facilities within the Planning Area. There would be fewer new residences, resulting in fewer new students when compared to the General Plan Update. Impacts to school services would be *less than significant*, and since fewer students would be generated, impacts would be less than under the proposed project. In addition, impacts related to development of SAUSD facilities would be less than the proposed project due to the development of fewer residential units in Airport Area.

## ■ Recreation and Open Space

The overall amount of land designated for parks and active open space under the Subarea Minimum Alternative would be the same as or more than under the proposed project because Banning Ranch would be kept as open space. As described for the proposed project, as the population rises, increased pressure would be placed on parkland and open space areas within the City, which could potentially cause degradation of those recreational areas. Because this alternative would result in a lower population increase than the proposed project, the increase in need for park land (at the existing standard of 5 acres per 1,000 residents) would be 121 acres versus 156 additional acres under the proposed General Plan Update. As a result, this Alternative could result in greater designated open space areas than under the proposed project. Therefore, this impact would be less in magnitude comparatively. The increased usage of existing parks and their subsequent degradation would remain *less than significant*. Similar to the proposed project, this alternative would provide additional parkland and open space, but the provision of these facilities would not result in substantial adverse physical impacts. This impact would be similar to the proposed project, and would remain *less than significant*.

## ■ Transportation and Circulation

Under the Subarea Only Minimum Alternative, residential, office, and industrial land uses would in most areas be lower than with the proposed project. In turn, a lower increase in traffic volume would occur, which would result in improved traffic conditions in the Planning Area when compared to the proposed project. Specifically, the Subarea Only Minimum Alternative would result in a mix of development that would lead to approximately eight percent fewer trips citywide than would occur under the proposed project. The policy regarding the City's intersection level of service standard included in the General Plan Update would be adopted, and the transportation improvement measures that would be implemented under the proposed project would also be implemented under this Alternative. As such, impacts to intersections that would occur under this alternative would also be reduced, and traffic impacts to

intersections would be less than the proposed project, but would remain *less than significant*. Under this alternative, increases in deficient freeway segments and ramps would be less than under the proposed project as development would be lower than under the proposed project. The volumes on the SR-73 would still increase to the extent that all the studied segments would be failing upon implementation of this alternative. Even with the improvements identified by the County, several of the freeway segments and ramps would continue to operate at a deficient level of service. Since development under this alternative is lower than the proposed project, this impact would be less, but would remain *significant and unavoidable*. Less intense land uses would occur under this Alternative, including in the Airport Area, where less residential development and fewer trips would occur. As such, operations at JWA would not be significantly affected by implementation of this Alternative. Impacts related to air traffic would be less than under the proposed project, and would remain *less than significant*. Although development under this impact would be less intense than that of the proposed project, impacts related to the adequacy of emergency access would be similar as all development is required to adhere to specific provisions in the City's Municipal Code. This impact would, therefore, remain *less than significant*. Since development under this Alternative would be less than the proposed project, impacts to parking would be less than the proposed project demands on parking in the Planning Area would be less. However, new development is required to adhere to the City's Municipal Code with regard to parking requirements. As such, impacts under this Alternative would be similar to that of the proposed project, but would remain *less than significant*. Impacts associated with consistency of applicable regional transportation plans would be similar for this alternative when compared to the project, and *less-than-significant* impacts would occur.

## ■ Utilities and Service Systems

Implementation of the Subarea Only Minimum Alternative would reduce the number of new residential units. Construction of infrastructure associated with water, sewer, storm drains, and power lines could still be necessary. These impacts would be similar to those described for the proposed General Plan Update. If new or expanded infrastructure is required, the infrastructure project would undergo the City's environmental review process, such that significant environmental effects from infrastructure improvements would be mitigated. Construction impacts related to infrastructure would be *less than significant*, similar to the proposed project.

While population would be less than under the proposed project, it would still be greater than that currently projected for the City. Implementation of the General Plan Update policies would reduce future water demand; this alternative would still require new or expanded water entitlements and would not be in compliance with the Urban Water Management Plan. As such, increases in population under this alternative would put increased pressure on the water supply. Water-service providers have indicated that adequate water supply would be available to accommodate the increased population. This would result in a *less-than-significant* impact, although this would be less in magnitude than the proposed project.

As development occurs under this alternative, increases in electricity, natural gas, wastewater flows, solid waste facilities and electricity demand would be expected to occur. As demands associated with these utilities are linked to City population, and the population increase would be less than the proposed

project under this alternative, somewhat less demand would occur on these utilities. Increased demands would be met by available infrastructure, similar to the proposed project. Current service projections for all local utilities agencies are sufficient to cover new demand for services, and therefore, a *less than significant* impact would result, and these impacts would be less in magnitude when compared to the proposed project.

## 5.7 SUMMARY COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES

Table 5-4 below summarizes the relative magnitude of impacts from each alternative, when compared to the proposed project.

| <b>Table 5-4 Comparison of Alternatives to the Proposed Project</b> |                                  |                             |                             |                        |
|---|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------|
| <i>Environmental Issue Area</i>                                     | <i>No Project/No Development</i> | <i>No Project/No Action</i> | <i>GPAC Recommendations</i> | <i>Subarea Minimum</i> |
| Aesthetics  | -                                | +                           | =                           | -                      |
| Air Quality   | -                                | =                           | -                           | -                      |
| Biological Resources  | -                                | +                           | -                           | -                      |
| Cultural Resources  | -                                | =                           | -                           | -                      |
| Geology   | -                                | +                           | -                           | -                      |
| Hazards and Hazardous Materials                                     | -                                | =                           | +                           | -                      |
| Hydrology   | -                                | =                           | -                           | =                      |
| Land Use  | -                                | -                           | =                           | =                      |
| Noise   | -                                | -                           | =                           | -                      |
| Population  | -                                | -                           | =                           | -                      |
| Public Services   | -                                | -                           | -                           | -                      |
| Recreation and Open Space   | -                                | +                           | -                           | -                      |
| Transportation  | -                                | +                           | -                           | -                      |
| Utilities and Service Systems                                       | -                                | =                           | -                           | -                      |

(-) = Impacts considered to be less when compared with the proposed project.

(+) = Impacts considered to be greater when compared with the proposed project.

(=) = Impacts considered to be equal or similar to the proposed project.

## 5.8 ENVIRONMENTALLY SUPERIOR ALTERNATIVE

An EIR is required to identify the environmentally superior alternative from among the range of reasonable alternatives that are evaluated. This would ideally be the alternative that results in fewer (or no) significant and unavoidable impacts. CEQA Guidelines Section 15126(d)(2) states that if the environmentally superior alternative is the no project alternative, the EIR shall also identify an environmentally superior alternative from among the other alternatives.

The No Project/No Development Alternative would be environmentally superior to the proposed project on the basis of the minimization or avoidance of physical environmental impacts. Among the remaining alternatives, the Subarea Minimum Alternative would be environmentally superior to the proposed project because environmental impacts to aesthetics, air quality, biological resources, cultural resources, geology, hazards and hazardous materials, hydrology and water quality, noise, population and housing, public services, transportation, and utilities would be lesser in magnitude, since this alternative proposes the least amount of future development. Significant and unavoidable impacts to air quality, cultural resources, land use, noise, population and housing, recreation and open space, transportation and circulation, and utilities (water supply) would remain, although they would be reduced in magnitude. This alternative would reduce significant and unavoidable impacts related to aesthetics to less than significant levels. As such, the Subarea Only Minimum Alternative would represent the environmentally superior alternative.