

7. Alternatives to the Proposed Project

7.1 INTRODUCTION

7.1.1 Purpose and Scope

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requires that an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) include a discussion of reasonable project alternatives that would “feasibly attain most of the basic objectives of the project, but would avoid or substantially lessen any significant effects of the project, and evaluate the comparative merits of the alternatives” (CEQA Guidelines § 15126.6). This chapter identifies potential alternatives to the proposed project and evaluates them, as required by CEQA.

Key provisions of the CEQA Guidelines on alternatives (§§ 15126.6[a] through [f]) are summarized below to explain the foundation and legal requirements for the alternatives analysis in the EIR.

- “The discussion of alternatives shall focus on alternatives to the project or its location which are capable of avoiding or substantially lessening any significant effects of the project, even if these alternatives would impede to some degree the attainment of the project objectives, or would be more costly” (15126.6[b]).
- “The specific alternative of ‘no project’ shall also be evaluated along with its impact” (15126.6[e][1]).
- “The no project analysis shall discuss the existing conditions at the time the Notice of Preparation (NOP) is published, and at the time the environmental analysis is commenced, as well as what would reasonably be expected to occur in the foreseeable future if the project were not approved, based on current plans and consistent with available infrastructure and community services. If the environmentally superior alternative is the ‘no project’ alternative, the EIR shall also identify an environmentally superior alternative among the other alternatives” (15126.6[e][2]).
- “The range of alternatives required in an EIR is governed by a ‘rule of reason’ that requires the EIR to set forth 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” (15126.6[f]).
- “Among the factors that may be taken into account when addressing the feasibility of alternatives are site suitability, economic viability, availability of infrastructure, general plan consistency, other plans or regulatory limitations, jurisdictional boundaries, and whether the proponent can reasonably acquire, control or otherwise have access to the alternative site (or the site is already owned by the proponent)” (15126.6[f][1]).

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- “For alternative locations, “only locations that would avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects of the project need be considered for inclusion in the EIR” (15126.6[f][2][A]).
- “An EIR need not consider an alternative whose effect cannot be reasonably ascertained and whose implementation is remote and speculative” (15126.6[f][3]).

For each development alternative, this analysis:

- Describes the alternative,
- Analyzes the impact of the alternative as compared to the proposed project,
- Identifies the impacts of the project that would be avoided or lessened by the alternative,
- Assesses whether the alternative would meet most of the basic project objectives, and
- Evaluates the comparative merits of the alternative and the project.

Per the CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(d), additional significant effects of the alternatives are discussed in less detail than the significant effects of the project as proposed.

7.1.2 Project Objectives

As described in Section 3.2, the following objectives have been established for the proposed project and will aid decision makers in their review of the project, the project alternatives, and associated environmental impacts:

1. To develop a fully amenitized residential community with state-of-the-art facilities within walking distance of employment opportunities, public facilities, and recreational and commercial amenities, thereby reducing vehicle trips and furthering local, regional, and state mobility objectives.
2. To provide additional housing that meets the City’s growing population and housing needs.
3. To maximize the project’s view opportunities of the visual resources of the City of Newport Beach, including the Pacific Ocean and Newport Harbor.
4. To implement Newport Beach General Plan Policy LU 6.14.4 by developing a residential project that would reinforce the original design concept for Newport Center by concentrating the greatest building mass and height in the northeasterly section along San Joaquin Hills Road.
5. To create a landmark structure with architectural features and materials that is compatible and complementary with the project’s location.
6. To contribute significant property tax revenue to the City of Newport Beach.
7. To generate temporary employment in the construction industry.

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8. To improve the job-housing balance in Newport Beach by providing new housing within a major employment center.
9. To maximize onsite open space and provide a variety of onsite outdoor open space amenities.

7.1.3 Significant Impacts of the Project

As discussed above, a primary consideration in defining project alternatives is their potential to reduce or eliminate significant impacts compare to the proposed project. The CEQA requirement for consideration of alternatives is well settled—an EIR must describe a reasonable range of alternatives to the proposed project that would feasibly attain most of the basic objectives of the project and would also avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant impacts of the project, and must evaluate the comparative merits of the alternatives. CEQA requires a reasonable range of alternatives that would avoid or substantially lessen the significant impacts of the project to foster informed decision-making and public participation. As summarized in Chapter 6.0, *Significant Unavoidable Adverse Impacts*, upon implementation of recommended mitigation measures, the project would only result in one significant and unavoidable impact:

- **Impact 5.9-1:** Construction activities would result in significant temporary noise increases in the vicinity of the project site.

7.2 METHODOLOGY

As discussed above, CEQA requires consideration of a reasonable range of alternatives that would avoid or lessen the significant and unavoidable impacts of the proposed project. However, CEQA specifies that alternatives need not be analyzed with the same degree of specificity as the proposed project. Rather, an EIR must provide sufficient information about the project alternatives to allow for meaningful evaluation, analysis, and comparison with the proposed project. An EIR must consider the alternatives and evaluate the relative merits of the project and the alternatives. To comply with this standard, EIR alternative analysis generally also identifies whether an alternative would result in lesser, similar, or greater impacts than the project, even if the project's impacts would be less than significant.

7.3 ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED AND REJECTED DURING THE SCOPING/PROJECT PLANNING PROCESS

The following is a discussion of the two land use alternatives considered during the scoping and planning process and the reasons why they were not selected for further analysis in Section 7.3, *Alternatives Selected for Further Analysis*.

An EIR must include a short analysis of the alternatives that were found during the scoping phase to be potentially feasible. However, pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(c), an alternative may be eliminated from further discussion if it fails to meet most of the project objectives, is infeasible, or does not avoid any of the significant environmental effects.

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7.3.1 Alternative Project Location

CEQA requires that the discussion of alternatives focus on alternatives to the project or its location that are capable of avoiding or substantially lessening any significant effects of the project. The key question and first step in the analysis is whether any of the significant effects of the project would be avoided or substantially lessened by putting the project in another location. Only locations that would avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects of the project need be considered for inclusion in the EIR (Guidelines § 15126[5][B][1]). Key factors in evaluating the feasibility of potential offsite locations for EIR project alternatives include:

- if it is in the same jurisdiction
- whether development as proposed would require a General Plan Amendment, and;
- whether the project applicant could reasonably acquire, control, or otherwise have access to the alternative site (or the site is already owned by the proponent)

Since the project applicant does not own or control other property within the City, the evaluation of potential alternate sites focused on sites that could accommodate a development similar to the proposed project on properties that have been identified by the City as suitable for residential development.

It was assumed that the project would be developed based on the same plans detailed in Section 3.3.1, *Description of Project*. Table H32 of the Newport Beach 2014-2021 Housing Element includes an inventory of land suitable for residential development within Newport Beach. Based on the development limit and allowable density in the available areas, the proposed 100-unit condominium tower could be sited in Banning Ranch, John Wayne Airport Area, or Newport Center (Newport Beach 2013).

However, the Banning Ranch area is proposed as a planned community by Newport Banning Ranch, LLC and would accommodate 1,375 dwelling units, a 75-room resort inn and ancillary resort uses, 75,000 square feet of commercial uses, approximately 51.4 acres of parklands, and approximately 252.3 acres of permanent open space. Table H32 of the Housing Element states that there is a maximum development limit of 1,375 units; therefore, if the Banning Ranch project is approved as proposed, the Museum House project would not be able to relocate to this location.

Per the City's Housing Element, the John Wayne Airport Area can accommodate a realistic capacity of 2,061 units. There are several existing residential project applications in the Airport Area. As shown on Figure 4-3, *Cumulative Projects Location Map*, the following residential projects are proposed in the Airport Area—Koll Newport Residential (260 units) and Uptown Newport Mixed Use Development (1,244 units, approved)¹. In total, these cumulative projects would buildout 1,504 units of the 2,061 realistically allowed units, leaving 557 allowed units for future projects. Therefore, the proposed 100-unit condominium tower could potentially be built in the Airport Area.

¹ The Newport Place Residential project (384 units) was also a cumulative project proposed in the Airport Area but was denied by the Newport Beach City Council on July 26, 2016.

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As with the current project location, without mitigation, the development of the proposed residential tower within the Airport Area could be expected to result in significant construction-related noise, air quality and vibration impacts. Similarly, proposed excavation could result in significant cultural, paleontological, and geotechnical impacts. Development at this alternative location, therefore, would not be anticipated to eliminate or reduce any significant impacts. Moreover, additional constraints and impacts would be presented by the proximity to the John Wayne Airport (JWA). Most of the southwest portion of the Airport Area is located in the JWA Airport Environs Land Use Plan (AELUP) 65 dBA CNEL contour, which is unsuitable for residential and other noise-sensitive uses. The project would also require notice to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and Airport Land Use Commission (ALUC) because the proposed tower would be over 200 feet and within the obstruction imaginary surfaces area. An aeronautical analysis of the structure would be required to determine whether the tower causes a hazard to navigable airspace per Federal Aviation Regulations (FAR) Part 77. The project would also require approval by the ALUC. Therefore, there are restrictions to development of the proposed tower depending on where it is sited within the Airport Area.

Table H32 of the City's housing element identifies 608 additional units as the future development capacity for Newport Center, based on the existing General Plan. Figure 4-3, *Cumulative Projects Location Map*, shows the following residential cumulative projects in Newport Center—Villas at Fashion Island (524 units under construction) and the Meridian (Santa Barbara) Condominiums (79 units completed) that are included in the 608 total; only 5 units remain that are unbuilt. It should be also noted that a General Plan Amendment is proposed for 150 Newport Center (49 units) in Newport Center. In total, these cumulative projects would exceed the residential development capacity stated in the housing element. This supports the conclusion that there is a lack of alternative site locations in Newport Center that have the appropriate land use entitlements to support the proposed project.

Based on this review, there are no feasible alternative project sites within the City that would accommodate the proposed project and reduce or eliminate significant environmental impacts.

7.3.2 Reduced Height Alternative

The Reduced Height Alternative was designed and considered in response to scoping process comments and for its potential to reduce or eliminate significant impacts associated with the project as proposed. As with the proposed project, this alternative is assumed to include 100 units, so it is anticipated operational impacts (including traffic, public services, operational air quality and noise impacts, and utility needs) would be similar to the project as proposed.

The Reduced Height Alternative would decrease the proposed tower height from 295 feet to 65 feet (from podium to roof of last occupied space) to be consistent with the underlying zoning of the project site—San Joaquin Plaza Planned Community Development Plan (PCDP; PC-19). The building would be six stories of residential floors over two levels of parking (one level of ground parking and one underground level of parking). This height would be in keeping with the adjacent Villas at Fashion Place project and essentially extend the character of that development. Table 7-1 provides a development summary comparison of the proposed project to the Reduced Height Alternative. Buildout of 100 units would generate an estimated 224

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residents as with the proposed project. Figures 7-1, *Reduced Height Alternative Site Plan*, and 7-2, *Reduced Height Alternative Building Elevation*, illustrate the building design under this alternative.

Table 7-1 Proposed Project vs. Reduced Height Alternative Development Summary

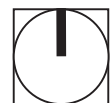
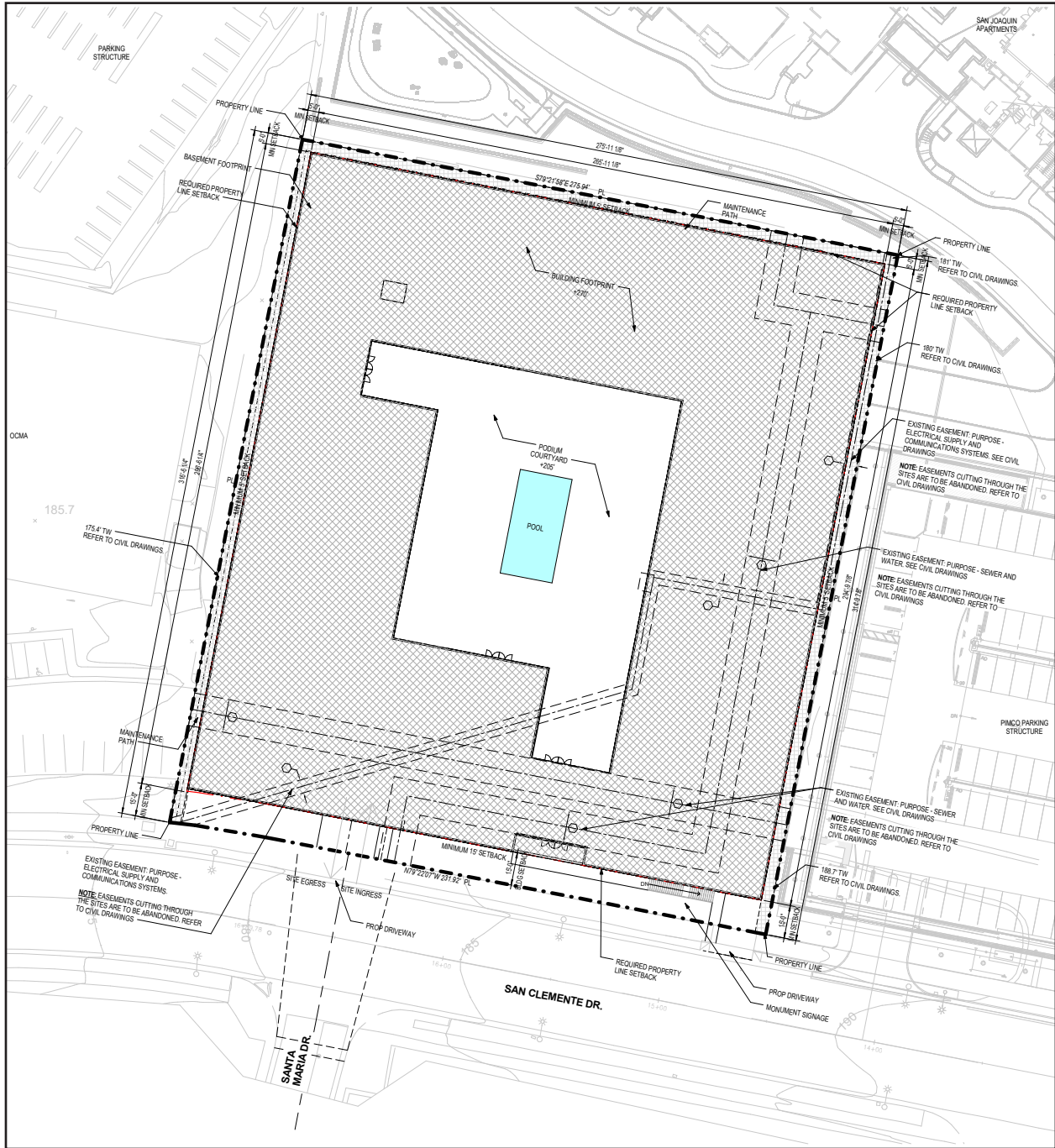
	Proposed Project	Reduced Height Alternative
Dwelling Units	100 units; 54 units 2 BR/3 BA, 46 units 3 BR/4 BA	100 units; 54 units 2 BR/3 BA, 46 units 3 BR/4 BA
Height	295 feet (25 stories); 482 feet amsl	65 feet (6 stories) ¹ ; 273 feet and 6 inches amsl
Building Area		
Residential Tower/Building	362,750 SF	364,764 SF
Parking Garage	115,828 SF	127,281 SF
Lot Coverage	25,753 SF (0.59 acres); 30%	78,426 SF (1.80 acres); 90%
Parking	250 spaces (200 residential/50 guest); Two-level subterranean garage	250 spaces (200 residential/50 guest); One ground level and one subterranean level
Setbacks		
San Clemente Drive	25 feet	15 feet
Side Yard	10 feet	5 feet
Rear Yard	10 feet	5 feet
Open Space		
Common Open Space	25,255 SF	19,680 SF
Common Indoor Space	20,855 SF	4,596 SF
Private Open Space	21,444 SF	1,500 SF

¹ Total building height = 65-foot residential levels + 18-foot first floor garage + 3-foot, 6 inches parapet = 86 feet and 6 inches

Similar to the proposed project, buildout of this alternative would provide 100 units (54 two-bedroom/3 baths and 46 three-bedroom/4 baths) and 250 parking spaces. The residential units would have an average size of approximately 2,750 square feet and could either be for-sale condominiums or rental apartments. Parking would be provided by a ground level garage (147 spaces) and one level of subterranean parking (103 spaces). Grading for this alternative would require approximately 28,400 cubic yards of soil export compared to 45,000 cubic yards of soil export for the proposed project.

Given the substantial decrease in height, the building footprint would be much larger and encompass 78,426 square feet, covering approximately 90 percent of the project site compared to 30 percent under the proposed project. The larger building footprint would also decrease the amount of open space amenities and circulation area on the ground level compared to the proposed project. Site access would be provided at a single entryway along San Clemente Drive for residents/visitors and delivery; thus, the fire access lane proposed along the eastern project boundary under the proposed project would not be developed under this alternative.

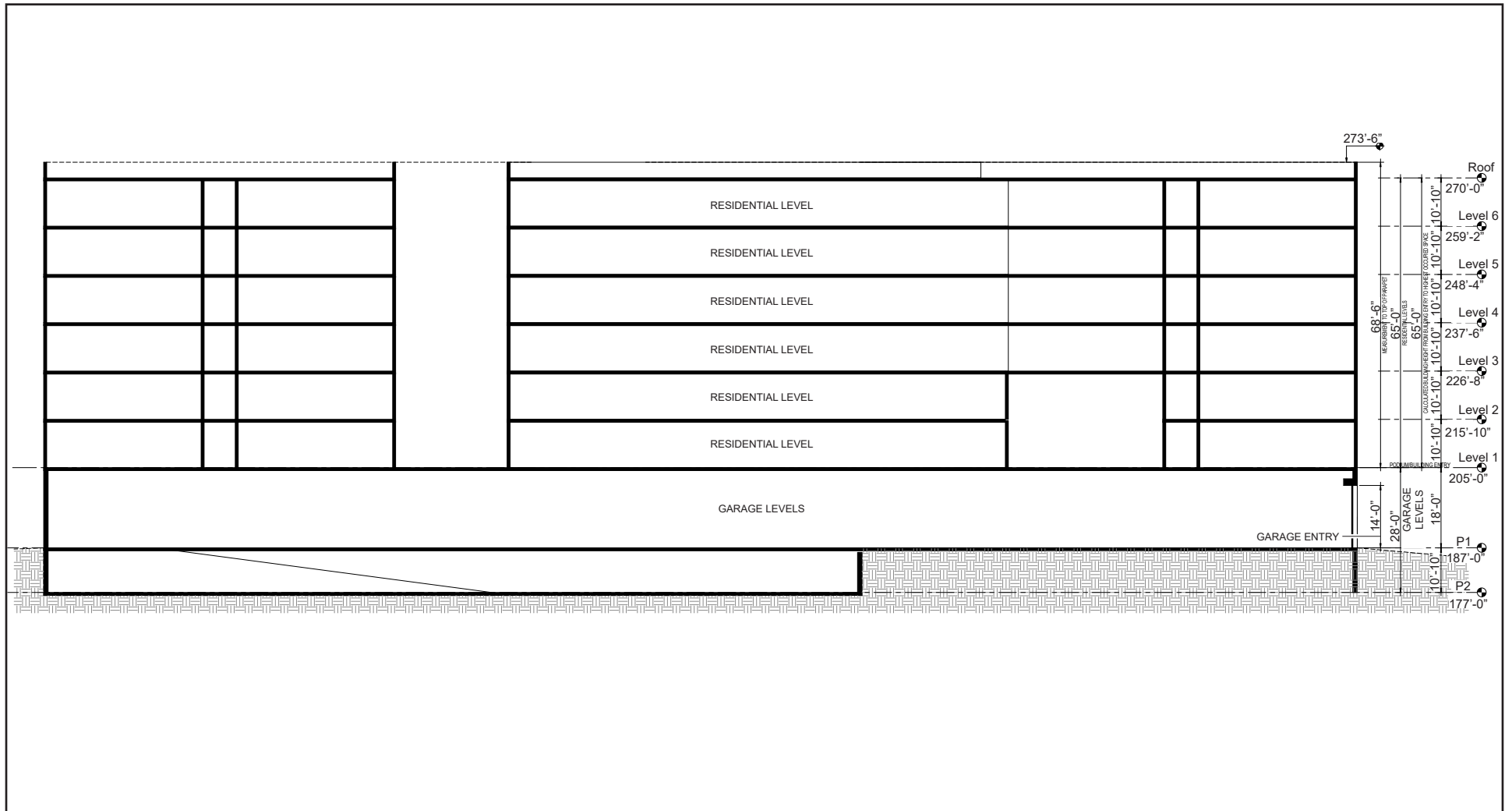
Figure 7-1 - Reduced Height Alternative Site Plan
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Figure 7-2 - Reduced Height Alternative Building Elevation
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Scale (Feet)

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7.3.2.1 AESTHETICS

Scenic Vistas

This alternative would reduce the building height from 295 feet to 65 feet. Therefore, compared to the proposed tower, the 65-foot building would not be seen from many of the scenic viewsheds in the Newport Center area, including those analyzed in the visual simulation analysis (see Figure 5.1-3, *Visual Simulation Photo Location Map*). For example, views from Avocado Avenue, Newport Center Drive, Castaways Park, and Big Canyon would not be able to see the 65-foot residential building because it is either too short or completely obstructed by trees, roofs, and/or other existing buildings (see Figures 5.1-4, and 5.1-7 through 5.1-9). Similar to the proposed project, views of the tower and 65-foot building from MacArthur Boulevard would be completely obstructed by trees (see Figure 5.1-6, *MacArthur Boulevard Visual Simulation*). And from Jamboree Road, a 65-foot residential building would be obstructed by the roofline of the Villas at Fashion Island planned 65-foot apartment buildings (see Figure 5.1-5, *Jamboree Road Visual Simulation*). Thus, the proposed project's less than significant impacts to scenic vistas would be further reduced under this alternative.

Visual Character

This alternative would integrate well with the visual character and quality of nearby multistory office and residential buildings. The Villas at Fashion Island to the north, The Colony to the southwest, and the adjacent office building to the west at 888 San Clemente Drive are all approximately 65 feet in height. Additionally, as shown in Figure 7-1, *Reduced Height Alternative Site Plan*, the building would be rectangular with an open courtyard and pool in the center, similar to the buildings currently under construction on the Villas at Fashion Island property. However, this alternative would include smaller setbacks and less open space than the proposed project, creating a more horizontally imposing building. Overall, as with the proposed project, this alternative would not substantially change the visual character or quality of the project area.

Light and Glare

Light and glare impacts associated with this alternative would be reduced compared to the proposed project. Although both scenarios would develop residential use onsite, a significant reduction in building height would also reduce indoor lighting illumination into the night skies at higher elevations like the proposed tower. Thus, adjacent residents in the Big Canyon and Harbor Cove communities would not see as much lighting coming from the project site. However, as discussed in Section 5.1, *Aesthetics*, lighting from residential units at the proposed project would not result in any significant lighting impacts because the project's containment of residential windows and compartmentalization of uses within a home (i.e., separate rooms for kitchen, dining, bedroom, bathroom, etc.) would reduce the light produced from residences. Additionally, eliminating most of the common outdoor amenities on the ground level (e.g., lawns, garden trellis, olive allee, fountain plaza, sculpture garden, podium garden, water feature, and dog run) would reduce the use of outdoor lighting for landscape highlighting or building illumination. In either case, the project would have to comply with General Plan Policy LU 5.6.2, which requires that outdoor lighting be located and designed to prevent spillover onto adjoining properties or significantly increase the overall ambient illumination of their location. Thus, this alternative would result in lesser lighting and glare impacts than the already less than significant impacts of the proposed project.

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Shade and Shadow

A shade and shadow analysis was prepared for the Reduced Height Alternative to determine whether a reduced building height would eliminate shadows cast on the Villas at Fashion Island apartment buildings to the north of the Museum House site. The shade/shadow analysis prepared for this alternative uses the same reference points and shade standard as that used for the proposed project (see Figure 5.1-10, *Villas at Fashion Island Shadow Coverage Reference Points*). The shade/shadow analysis is included in Appendix O.

Fall and Spring Equinox Impacts

As detailed in Table 7-2 and shown on pages O-3 through O-5 of Appendix O, this alternative would not cast any shadows on the Villas at Fashion Island site during the summer months all day until approximately 4:45 PM at Reference Point G for approximately 15 minutes.

Table 7-2 Fall and Spring Equinox Shadow Coverage Summary

Reference Point	Shadow Coverage (9:00 AM–5:00 PM Pacific Daylight Time)			
	Begins	Ends	Duration	No. of Units with Shadow Coverage Exceeding 4 Hours
A	N/A	N/A	0	0
B	N/A	N/A	0	0
C	N/A	N/A	0	0
D	N/A	N/A	0	0
E	N/A	N/A	0	0
F	N/A	N/A	0	0
G	4:45 PM	5:00 PM	15 minutes	0

Source: Shade and shadow analysis prepared by The Related Companies, July 2016 (see Appendix O).

Note: Pacific Daylight Time is used during fall and spring equinox months. Therefore, the shade analysis covers the hours of 9:00 AM and 5:00 PM Pacific Daylight Time.

Based on the shade standard for the North Newport Center Planned Community (PC-56), significant shadow impacts would occur if new development adds shade to residential areas beyond existing conditions for more than three hours between the hours of 9:00 AM and 3:00 PM Pacific Standard Time, or for more than four hours between the hours of 9:00 AM and 5:00 PM Pacific Daylight Time. The shadows cast at Reference Point G would only be cast on a small corner of the most southeast building, which does not have a residential dwelling unit at that particular corner. Therefore, no apartments would be impacted by shadows of the 65-foot building for more than 4 hours, and shadow impacts during fall and spring equinox months would be less than significant.

Winter Solstice Impacts

As previously stated, the shade standard detailed in PC-56 states that significant shadow impacts would occur if new development adds shade to residential areas beyond existing conditions for more than three hours between the hours of 9:00 AM and 3:00 PM Pacific Standard Time, or for more than four hours between the hours of 9:00 AM and 5:00 PM Pacific Daylight Time.

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As summarized in Table 7-3 and shown on pages O-7 through O-9 of Appendix O, this alternative would cast some shadows on the Villas at Fashion Island property at Reference Points D at 10:15 AM, E at 11:45 AM, and F at 2:00 PM until 3:00 PM. Shadow coverage would exceed 3 hours on 8 and 4 dwelling units at Reference Points D and E, respectively. Thus, shadow impacts of the Reduced Height Alternative during winter solstice months would be significant and unavoidable. Since shade/shadow impacts would be less than significant for the Museum House project as proposed, this alternative introduces a new, significant, unavoidable impact in comparison to the proposed project.

Table 7-3 Winter Solstice Shadow Coverage Summary

Reference Point	Shadow Coverage (9:00 AM–3:00 PM Pacific Standard Time)			No. of Units with Shadow Coverage Exceeding 3 Hours
	Begins	Ends	Duration	
A	N/A	N/A	0	0
B	N/A	N/A	0	0
C	N/A	N/A	0	0
D	10:15 AM	3:00 PM	4 hours, 45 minutes	8
E	11:45 AM	3:00 PM	3 hours, 15 minutes	4
F	2:00 PM	3:00 PM	1 hour	0
G	N/A	N/A	0	0

Source: Shade and shadow analysis prepared by The Related Companies, July 2016 (see Appendix O).

Note: Pacific Standard Time is used during winter solstice months. Therefore, the shade analysis covers the hours of 9:00 A.M. and 3:00 P.M. Pacific Standard Time.

7.3.2.2 AIR QUALITY

This alternative would require demolition activities associated with removal of the existing structure, including building and asphalt demolition and hauling, consistent with the proposed project. Also, although there is a possibility that the construction time and materials associated with this alternative would be marginally less due to the reduced height, the overall building plan (square footage of the residential building and parking garage) of this alternative would actually be slightly greater than the proposed project. Nevertheless, there are aspects of this alternative that would result in lesser construction air quality impacts. For example, this alternative would require 28,400 cubic yards of soil export compared to 45,000 cubic yards of soil export for the proposed project. This is due in part to the one-level subterranean parking garage proposed under this alternative compared to the two-level subterranean parking garage under the proposed project. Thus, this alternative would require fewer soil haul trips than the proposed project. Overall, the Reduced Height Alternative would result in similar (demolition activities) and lesser (site preparation and soil hauling) impacts than the proposed project. Therefore, this alternative would reduce the already less than significant construction air quality impacts of the proposed project.

Because the proposed project and the Reduced Height Alternative would result in the same number of residents, operational emissions would be similar to the proposed project. Vehicle trips generated under this alternative would be the same as the proposed project since both scenarios would develop 100 residential units and stationary source emissions (e.g., heating, ventilation, and air conditioning [HVAC] units and landscaping equipment for maintenance) would be similar.

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7.3.2.3 CULTURAL RESOURCES

This alternative and the proposed project both include subterranean parking requiring excavation. However, the Reduced Height Alternative proposes only one level of subterranean parking and would not require excavation to the same degree. Because this alternative would not require grading to the same depths as the proposed project, the potential to discover and impact previously undiscovered cultural resources, including archaeological, paleontological, and tribal cultural resources, would be reduced. However, since this alternative would, like the project, require excavation, there is still a potential to encounter archaeological or paleontological resources, and mitigation would be required.

7.3.2.4 GEOLOGY AND SOILS

Development of a Reduced Height Alternative would occur on the same project site as the proposed project. The geologic unit and soil conditions would be the same, and the potential for seismic ground shaking, fault rupture, liquefaction, or collapse would be similar, regardless of whether the proposed project or the Reduced Height Alternative would be constructed. Thus, as with the proposed project, this alternative would result in potentially significant impacts requiring mitigation. Moreover, as with the proposed project, development of the 65-foot building would also be required to comply with the California Building Code and applicable construction and operational BMPs (e.g., site design, source control, low impact development) to reduce impacts related to geologic hazards. Overall, impacts would be less than significant and similar to the proposed project.

7.3.2.5 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

Consistent with the proposed project, buildout of this alternative would consist of 100 residential units and a parking garage with 250 spaces. Therefore, this alternative would generate the same number of vehicle trips and associated GHG emissions as the proposed project. Also, the construction schedule, equipment, and timing would largely be consistent, with a few minor variations resulting in lesser construction emissions than the proposed project. Thus, as with the proposed project, the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) bright-line threshold of 3,000 million tons of CO₂-equivalence (MTCO_{2e}) per year would not be exceeded. This alternative would also be required to adhere to statewide GHG reduction measures associated with Assembly Bill 32 (AB 32). Overall, impacts would be similar to the proposed project and would be less than significant.

7.3.2.6 HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

This alternative would be developed within the same project boundary as the proposed project, which is not on a list of hazardous materials compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 nor is it designated as a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone. Development of a 65-foot residential building would also require the use of similar hazards and hazardous materials during construction and operations as the proposed project.

Development of this alternative would still be required to notify the Airport Land Use Commission (ALUC) since the project site is in the John Wayne Airport (JWA) notification area, but would not need to notify the

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Federal Aviation Authority (FAA) since, similar to the proposed project, site buildings would not exceed 200 feet. Similarly, the 65-foot residential building would be consistent with land use compatibility, noise, and air traffic safety standards detailed in the Airport Environs Land Use Plan (AELUP) for JWA. Overall, hazards and hazardous materials impacts would be similar to the less than significant impacts of the proposed project.

7.3.2.7 HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

Similar to the proposed project, this alternative would be required to prepare and implement a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) specifying construction best management practices (BMPs) to minimize water quality impacts from construction activities. A Water Quality Management Plan (WQMP) and associated BMPs related to site design, structural source control, nonstructural source control, and low impact development is also required to minimize runoff and reduce the potential for pollutants to enter runoff. This alternative would also be developed on the same site as the proposed project. Therefore, neither scenario would place housing nor structures in a 100-year flood hazard area, expose people to flooding from failure of dams or levees, or be subject to inundation by seiche, tsunami or mudflow.

However, this alternative would not develop modular wetland systems onsite to assist with biotreatment of runoff and retention of runoff during major storm events. The building footprint would cover approximately 90 percent of the site (compared to 30 percent under the proposed project), thus increasing impervious surfaces, and the required setbacks would prevent the development of landscaped modular wetland systems. Thus, this alternative would not have the beneficial impact of the proposed project's onsite water quality treatment and retention system. The project, however, would be subject to BMPs to achieve regulatory water quality standards. Overall, hydrology and water quality impacts would be greater, but, as with the proposed project, would be less than significant.

7.3.2.8 LAND USE AND PLANNING

The Reduced Height Alternative would develop a 65-foot residential building consistent with the underlying zoning—San Joaquin Plaza PCDP (PC-19). However, it would still require a General Plan Amendment to re-designate the site as Multiple Residential (RM) and amend Anomaly 49 to allow for 100 units, and an amendment to the San Joaquin Plaza PCDP to allow for 100 units on the two-acre eastern portion of PC-19.

Like the project, this alternative would be consistent with the 2016-2040 RTP/SCS because it would help facilitate achievement of the RTP/SCS's major themes by constructing a higher density, infill development that provides housing within close proximity to a major economic center of the region.

This alternative would also be consistent with the John Wayne Airport AELUP. This would be similar to the proposed project, aside from the fact that the project requires notification of the FAA due to the project's proposed height. However, neither the alternative nor the project would exceed the height limits of the AELUP or the FAA.

Thus, impacts to land use and planning would be similar to the less than significant impacts of the proposed project.

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7.3.2.9 NOISE

This alternative would have decreased construction noise impacts because the reduced building height and one-level subterranean parking garage would reduce required earthwork, construction duration and materials. This alternative would also require 16,600 fewer cubic yards of soil export. Thus, fewer soil haul trucks would be required and construction noise would be reduced. Additionally, the timing of construction vibration during excavation and grading activities would be reduced because only one level of subterranean parking would be required. The same equipment would be used, however, resulting in similar vibration impacts.

However, during the demolition, site preparation, and building construction phases, the Reduced Height Alternative would use similar construction equipment as the proposed project, including a concrete saw, excavator, trucks, and other equipment. As discussed above, the overall size of the proposed improvements—building and garage—would slightly increase under the Reduced Height Alternative. Thus, this alternative would, like the proposed project, result in a significant and unavoidable construction noise impact. Moreover, because the setbacks would be reduced under this alternative, construction would likely occur closer to sensitive receptors than the proposed project, thus increasing noise impacts. Overall, the Reduced Height Alternative would result in significant and unavoidable construction noise impacts, similar to the proposed project.

Operational noise impacts would be similar to the proposed project because the same number of daily vehicle trips would be generated under both scenarios. Additionally, similar stationary noise sources would be present (e.g., HVAC and landscaping equipment for maintenance).

Although construction duration would be reduced under this alternative, construction noise could marginally increase, while construction vibration and operational noise impacts would be similar to the proposed project. As with the proposed project, these impacts would be mitigated to less than significant.

7.3.2.10 POPULATION AND HOUSING

Similar to the proposed project, this alternative would introduce 100 units and approximately 224 residents. It is likely that this alternative would introduce a similar number of new jobs related to front desk reception, landscaping maintenance, and valet parking attendants. Therefore, impacts to population, housing, and jobs-housing balance would be similar to the proposed project and less than significant.

7.3.2.11 PUBLIC SERVICES

As previously stated, this alternative would introduce the same number of residents and housing. Therefore, the potential increased demand for fire, police, school and library services would be similar to the proposed project. Impacts would be less than significant.

7.3.2.12 RECREATION

Similar to the Museum House project, this alternative would introduce approximately 224 residents to Newport Center. Given the size of the project site (two acres), the proposed project and this alternative would not be able to feasibly provide enough parkland or recreational amenities to meet the City's parkland

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standard of 5 acres per 1,000 residents. Thus, as with the proposed project, payment of in-lieu development impact fees would be required to reduce impacts to less than significant levels.

However, this alternative would not include the common open space amenities proposed by the Museum House project on the ground floor because this alternative building footprint would cover 90 percent of the lot (compared to the proposed tower's 30 percent lot coverage). Common open space amenities for the proposed project include a swimming pool, buffered landscaping, lawns, garden trellis, olive alley, fountain plaza, sculpture garden, podium garden, water feature, and a dog run. Recreation amenities would be reduced under this alternative and impacts, therefore, would be greater than the proposed project. Impacts, however, would be less than significant.

7.3.2.13 TRANSPORTATION AND TRAFFIC

The Reduced Height Alternative would have the same residential units as the proposed project; therefore, the generated vehicle trips under both scenarios would be similar—approximately 418 trips with 34 trips at AM peak hours and 38 trips at PM peak hours. Similar to the proposed project, study area intersections and roadways would not be adversely impacted by this alternative and would all operate at acceptable levels of service.

Similarly, the project site would be accessed from a driveway at the frontage of San Clemente Drive and the Reduced Height Alternative would not modify any public road or introduce features that would affect vehicular, pedestrian, or bicycle circulation in the vicinity of the site. The driveway would provide access immediately into the ground level parking garage; thus, there would not be a guard station and gate or motor court providing access to a building lobby as designed under the proposed project. However, these changes to the onsite circulation would not generate an adverse impact. Overall, impacts to transportation and traffic would be similar to the proposed project.

7.3.2.14 UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEM

Given that the buildout of this alternative and the proposed project would be the same (100 units and 224 residents), demand for water, natural gas and electricity, and generation of wastewater and solid waste would also be similar. Given that the offsite sewer line in Santa Barbara at Jamboree Road is already 49.3 percent full (50 percent is considered maximum capacity), the proposed offsite sewer upsizing of this pipeline would also be required to accommodate wastewater flow generated by development of this alternative. Therefore, impacts to utilities and service systems would be the same under both scenarios and less than significant.

7.3.2.15 CONCLUSION

As discussed above, the Reduced Height Alternative would result in impacts marginally lesser or greater, or similar, to the less than significant impacts of the proposed project, depending on the resource area. For example, impacts to recreation and hydrology would be marginally greater than the proposed project, but still less than significant. The larger building footprint would also not allow the beneficial development of a modular wetland system within the ground level buffered landscaping area that the proposed project would provide. Further, the common indoor and outdoor amenities provided under the proposed project would be

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greatly reduced since the expanded building footprint would cover approximately 90 percent of the lot. Also, the proposed project's less than significant greenhouse gas and air quality impacts would be slightly less due to the likely reduction in construction schedule.

Importantly, however, this alternative would not avoid or lessen the proposed project's significant and unavoidable construction noise impact. As discussed above, the Reduced Height Alternative would require construction of a 65-foot residential building in closer proximity to nearby sensitive receptors than the proposed project. Moreover, although the overall height of the building would be reduced, the construction equipment necessary for development of the Reduced Height Alternative, including with respect to demolition, grading, and building construction, would be consistent with the proposed project. Thus, construction noise impacts would be similar and remain significant and unavoidable. Also, the Reduced Height Alternative would result in a new significant and unavoidable aesthetic (shade/shadow) impact that was not generated by the proposed project. Compared to the proposed 295-foot tower, a 65-foot residential building would cast shadows on more dwelling units for longer hours and would exceed the PC-56 shade standard, causing a new significant and unavoidable shading impact.

A majority of the project objectives of the Museum House project would also either not be achieved or achieved to a lesser degree. For example, compared to the 295-foot tower, development of a 65-foot residential building onsite would not provide a fully amenitized residential community with state-of-the-art facilities to the same degree (No. 1); maximize the project's view opportunities of the Pacific Ocean and Newport Harbor (No. 3); contribute significant property tax revenue to the same degree (No. 6); generate temporary construction employment to the same degree (No. 7); or maximize onsite open space and provide a variety of onsite outdoor open space amenities (No. 9).

Given the aforementioned reasons, particularly the creation of a significant and unavoidable shading impact and the failure of the Reduced Height Alternative to avoid the significant and unavoidable construction noise impact of the proposed project, this alternative was considered but rejected for further consideration.

7.4 ALTERNATIVES SELECTED FOR FURTHER ANALYSIS

Based on the criteria described above, the following three alternatives were determined to represent a reasonable range of alternatives that have the potential to feasibly attain most of the basic objectives of the project but may avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects of the project. These alternatives are summarized in Table 7-4 and analyzed in detail in following sections.

- No Project/No Development Alternative (as required by CEQA). This alternative assumes that the existing OCMA building would remain onsite and existing operations would continue. No new development would occur.
- Existing General Plan Alternative. This alternative assumes that the site would continue to be used for institutional uses as allowed by the General Plan. The existing OCMA would be expanded, however, to maximize the square footage allowed for the property.

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- **Reduced Density Alternative.** This alternative would develop 90 residential units (in comparison to the proposed project’s 100 units) and reduce the tower height by approximately 24 feet in comparison to the 295’ height of the proposed project tower.

An EIR must identify an “environmentally superior” alternative, and where the No Project Alternative is identified as environmentally superior, the EIR is required to identify as environmentally superior an alternative from among the others evaluated. Each alternative’s environmental impacts are compared to the proposed project and determined to be environmentally superior, neutral, or inferior (shown in topic headings as <, =, and >). Impacts found potentially significant are assessed in making the final determination of whether an alternative is environmentally superior or inferior to the proposed project. Section 7.7 summarizes the environmental impacts of each alternative, assesses its ability to achieve the project objectives (see Tables 7-6 and 7-7), and identifies the environmentally superior alternative.

As discussed in the methodology section above, an EIR must provide sufficient information about the project alternatives to allow for meaningful evaluation, analysis, and comparison with the proposed project. An EIR must consider the alternatives and evaluate the relative merits of the project and the alternatives. To comply with this standard, EIR alternatives analyses generally also identify whether an alternative would result in lesser, similar, or greater impacts than the project, even if the project’s impacts would be less than significant.

7.4.1 Alternatives Comparison

Table 7-4 summarizes general buildout projections of the proposed project and three alternatives. These statistics were developed as a tool to better convey the differences between the alternatives.

Table 7-4 Buildout Statistical Summary

	Proposed Project	No Project/No Development Alternative	Existing General Plan Alternative	Reduced Density Alternative
Dwelling Units	100	0	0	90
Nonresidential SF	0	23,632	31,538	0
Population	224	0	0	201
Employment	20	20	32 ¹	20
Jobs-to-Housing Ratio	0.2	0	NA	0.2

¹ An employment generation factor of 1,000 square feet per employee is used for the Private Institutions land use designation.

7.4.2 No Project/No Development Alternative

Under the No Project/No Development Alternative, no development would occur onsite and the existing OCMA building would remain in its existing condition. As shown in Table 7-4, buildout of the No Project/No Development Alternative would not introduce any new residential or nonresidential development nor any associated residents or employees. The OCMA building would remain in operation at its current location.

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7.4.2.1 AESTHETICS <

Since no development would occur and the OCMA building would remain as is, there would be no impacts to the visual character or quality of the project area. Existing scenic vistas toward the Pacific Ocean and Newport Bay would also be preserved. The existing OCMA building does not cast shadows on any areas outside of its property line; therefore, no shade or shadow impacts would occur. No new sources of light or glare would be produced either. Therefore, aesthetic impacts under this alternative would be reduced compared to the proposed project.

7.4.2.2 AIR QUALITY <

Air quality impacts would be reduced under the No Project/No Development Alternative. No construction activities would occur; therefore, no short-term construction emissions would be generated and no localized significance thresholds (LSTs) would be exceeded. Additionally, as detailed in Section 5.2, *Air Quality*, operational criteria air pollutants generated by the existing OCMA building is nominal—less than 3 pounds per day for volatile organic compounds, nitrogen oxides, carbon monoxide, sulfur dioxide, and fine particulate matter—and do not exceed the maximum daily regional operational emissions. Thus, air quality impacts would be reduced and would be less than significant.

7.4.2.3 CULTURAL RESOURCES <

This alternative would reduce impacts to cultural resources. No construction or grading activities would occur. Thus, the potential to discover and impact previously undisturbed cultural resources, including archaeological, paleontological, and tribal cultural resources, would not occur.

7.4.2.4 GEOLOGY AND SOILS <

No development would occur on the project site. Therefore, potential to expose people or structures to adverse effects of seismic groundshaking, ground failure, landslide, expansive soils, or other unstable geologic hazards would be reduced. No soil erosion or loss of topsoil would occur since the project site would remain in its existing condition. Overall, the less than significant impacts of the proposed project would be reduced.

7.4.2.5 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS <

As detailed in Section 5.5, *Greenhouse Gas Emissions*, the existing OCMA building generates approximately 292 MTCO_{2e} per year. Comparatively, the proposed project would generate 1,632 MTCO_{2e} per year. Both scenarios would not exceed the SCAQMD bright-line threshold of 3,000 MTCO_{2e} per year. Overall, impacts would be reduced and similarly less than significant.

7.4.2.6 HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS <

The existing OCMA building does not create a significant hazard to the public or environment through the use, transport, or disposal of any hazardous materials. The museum also does not generate any hazardous materials that could be accidentally released into the environment.

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Additionally, the one-story museum building does not create a safety hazard as it pertains to land use compatibility, noise safety, and air traffic patterns detailed in the AELUP for JWA.

Overall, the project's less than significant impacts related to hazards and hazardous materials under the No Project/No Development Alternative would be reduced.

7.4.2.7 HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY >

No development would occur on the project site under this alternative. Therefore, existing drainage pattern onsite and runoff quantities would remain the same. This alternative would not deplete groundwater supplies or interfere with groundwater recharge, and would not cause any water quality changes. Additionally, the site is not within a 100-year flood hazard area or near a levee or dam; thus, this alternative would not expose people or structures to flooding risks.

However, this alternative would not install the proposed onsite modular wetlands that would help with water retention, water quality treatment, and groundwater recharge. Thus, hydrology and water quality impacts would be greater but still less than significant.

7.4.2.8 LAND USE AND PLANNING <

Since no development would occur onsite, this alternative would not physically divide an established community. This alternative also would not require a General Plan amendment or amendment to the San Joaquin Plaza PCDP (PC-19), and would be consistent with the General Plan policies and PC-19 development standards. Impacts would be reduced in comparison to the proposed project.

7.4.2.9 NOISE <

No new sources of construction or operational noise would occur if no development occurs onsite. Thus, the No Project/No Development Alternative would avoid the project's significant and unavoidable construction noise impact. Also, although not significant, operational noise associated with the proposed project would also be eliminated—the existing noise environment would remain the same.

7.4.2.10 POPULATION AND HOUSING >

This alternative would maintain the site in its existing condition and would not develop new housing. Since the City of Newport Beach is characterized by a jobs-housing ratio (1.9) that is considered jobs rich, the proposed project and provision of 100 residential units would improve this ratio. Thus, population and housing impacts would be greater for this alternative.

7.4.2.11 PUBLIC SERVICES <

This alternative would not introduce any residential or nonresidential development to the project site. No increase in demand for police, fire, school, or library services would occur. Impacts would be reduced in comparison to the proposed project.

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7.4.2.12 RECREATION <

No development would occur onsite that would generate an increase in demand for parks or recreational facilities. Thus, impacts would be reduced and less than significant.

7.4.2.13 TRANSPORTATION AND TRAFFIC <

This alternative would maintain the site in its existing condition. Based on the traffic study, the existing OCMA building generates 108 daily trips with 4 AM peak hour trips and 5 PM peak hour trips. This is substantially less than the proposed project, which is expected to generate approximately 418 trips with 34 AM peak hour trips and 38 PM peak hour trips. Study area intersections would continue to operate at adequate levels of service under the No Project/No Development Alternative. Thus, the project's less than significant impacts would be further reduced under this alternative.

7.4.2.14 UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEM <

No development would occur on the project site and the museum would remain in operation. According to the Sewer Analysis Report (see Appendix M), the existing museum generates 0.003 cubic feet per second (cfs) of wastewater while the proposed project would generate 0.16 cfs of wastewater. Additionally, based on the Water Demand Report (see Appendix N), the existing museum has a peak hour water demand of 12.08 gallons per minute (gpm) while the proposed project has a peak hour water demand of 420.5 gpm. Thus, the No Project/No Development Alternative would substantially reduce impacts to wastewater generation and water demand. Similarly, demand for natural gas and electricity would also decrease under this alternative. Overall, impacts would be reduced and less than significant.

7.4.2.15 CONCLUSION

Ability to Reduce Environmental Impacts

The No Project/No Development Alternative would reduce the proposed project's significant and unavoidable construction noise impact. Also, because the alternative would not include any construction or new development, it would also reduce the project's less than significant impacts to the majority of environmental topical areas, including aesthetics, air quality, cultural resources, geology and soils, greenhouse gas emissions, hazards and hazardous materials, land use and planning, , public services, recreation, transportation and traffic, and utilities and service systems. Population and housing and hydrology and water quality impacts would be greater for this alternative.

Ability to Achieve Project Objectives

Most of the project objectives listed in Section 7.1.2 are related to providing a high quality residential development in the City. Objective No. 4 also provides a goal of implementing General Plan Policy LU 6.14.4 by developing a residential project that would reinforce the original design concept of Newport Center. The No Project/No Development Alternative would not achieve any of the objectives—develop a fully amenitized residential community with state-of-the-art facilities near major activity centers (No. 1); provide housing to meet the City's needs (No. 2); maximize view opportunities of the City, Pacific Ocean, and

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Newport Harbor (No. 3); develop a residential project in Newport Center per General Plan Policy LU 6.14.4 (No. 4); create a landmark structure (No. 5); contribute significant property tax revenue (No. 6); generate temporary construction employment (No. 7); improve job-housing balance in the City (No. 8); or maximize onsite open space amenities (No. 9).

7.4.3 Existing General Plan Alternative

The Existing General Plan Alternative would either 1) develop the site with an alternate, allowable use under the current Private Institutions (PI) land use designation, or 2) expand/rebuild the existing OCMA building within the development limits outlined in the City's General Plan.

According to the City's General Plan, the PI designation is intended to provide for privately owned facilities that serve the public, including places for religious assembly, private schools, healthcare, cultural institutions, museums, yacht clubs, congregate homes, and comparable facilities. The City's land use plan labels the site as Anomaly 49 with a development limit of 45,208 square feet. An adjacent PI-designated parcel is part of Anomaly 49 but not part of the project site. This adjacent parcel is built out with another OCMA-owned building of approximately 13,670 square feet. It is not within the project boundary and will not be demolished as part of the proposed project. Therefore, buildout of the project site under the existing General Plan would allow 31,538 square feet of Private Institutions use and approximately 32 jobs would be generated.

The second option under the Existing General Plan Alternative is to expand or rebuild the existing OCMA building to the maximum buildout potential. As stated above, the site's development limit is 31,538 square feet. Thus, the existing museum building (23,632 square feet) could be expanded by 7,906 square feet to the maximum allowed square footage, or the site can be redeveloped with a new museum building at a maximum size of 31,538 square feet. Buildout of this option would similarly generate approximately 32 jobs.

Given the existence of the current OCMA building onsite, the logical project design feature under this alternative is an expansion of the building to its full buildout potential—approximately 7,906 additional square feet. Therefore, the following analysis assumes buildout of this alternative to be an expanded museum.

7.4.3.1 AESTHETICS <

Expansion of the museum building would likely remain similar in character to the existing OCMA building (i.e., similar architectural features, building materials, and massing). Given the lowered height limit and smaller building square footage allowed under this alternative, an expanded museum building would be partially or completely obstructed from views along City-designated coastal view roads or from nearby residential communities (e.g., Harbor Cove and Big Canyon). The reduced allowable building height would also largely eliminate the potential for an expanded museum building to impact scenic vistas towards the Pacific Ocean and Newport Bay. Similar to existing conditions, it would operate during the day and would not require substantial lighting compared to the proposed residential tower. Thus, the project's less than significant lighting and glare impacts would also be reduced.

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Expanding the existing museum by 7,906 square feet either by developing a second floor or expanded the one-story building would not cast shadows on sensitive residential areas outside of the property line for more than 4 hours during summer months (fall/spring equinox) or more than 3 hours during winter months (winter solstice) per the North Newport Center Planned Community shade standard. The decrease in building square footage and height and appropriate site design would ensure no shadows are cast on adjacent sensitive residential areas, including the Villas at Fashion Island apartments.

Overall, the visual character of an expanded museum would be substantially different than the proposed residential tower, given the height and massing differences. Whether or not aesthetic impacts would be reduced based on character is largely subjective, especially with respect to whether the project would degrade the existing environment. But given the reduced profile and impacts to viewsheds, development under this alternative is concluded to result in reduced aesthetic impacts in comparison to the less than significant impacts of the proposed project.

7.4.3.2 AIR QUALITY <

Development of an expanded museum building would generate fewer construction and operation emissions than the proposed project since the development would be significantly smaller and require less time to build.

Similar to the proposed project, construction emissions would not exceed SCAQMD's emissions thresholds and would not require mitigation to reduce construction emissions impacts to sensitive receptors. However, mitigation requiring the use of paint with no volatile organic compounds (VOCs) would not be required under this alternative because the expanded museum would use far less paint than required for the proposed project.

Operational air quality impacts associated with vehicle trips and stationary sources would also be reduced given the substantially lower development intensity and fewer trips generated by an expanded museum. Stationary emission sources, including HVAC units and landscaping equipment for site maintenance, are also assumed to be reduced under this alternative because the square footage limitation would significantly constrain the size and scope of development. Overall, air quality impacts would be reduced and less than significant.

7.4.3.3 CULTURAL RESOURCES <

Development of this alternative would occur within the same project boundary as the proposed project. Therefore, similar to the proposed project, no historic resources would be impacted. Development within the same project boundary would also have similar potential to uncover previously undiscovered archaeological and paleontological resources. However, the proposed project would include significant excavation to accommodate a two-level subterranean garage for project residents and guests. An expanded museum alternative would not require any grading for subterranean parking. Therefore, the potential to uncover cultural resources below grade would be reduced under this alternative. Impacts would remain less than significant with mitigation measures incorporated.

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7.4.3.4 GEOLOGY AND SOILS =

Development of this alternative would occur within the same project boundary as the proposed project. Therefore, existing soil and geologic unit conditions would be similar. There are no fault lines within the vicinity of the project site that could cause fault rupture hazards. Additionally, both scenarios would be subject to similar seismic ground shaking associated with southern California. The site soils are not subject to liquefaction, and there are no slopes near the site that could cause earthquake-induced landslides. Similarly, development of this alternative would require compliance with construction BMPs related to soil and erosion control and site design to reduce or eliminate post-development runoff. Overall, geology and soil impacts would be similar and less than significant.

7.4.3.5 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS <

The proposed project would develop the site with a 295-foot tower (362,750 square feet) and a two-level parking garage (115,828 square feet), resulting in a net increase of 1,340 MTCO_{2e} per year. The generated GHG emissions would not exceed the SCAQMD's bright-line threshold of 3,000 MTCO_{2e}.

Development of an expanded OCMA building is anticipated to generate substantially less GHG emissions than the proposed project because the museum would generate far fewer construction trips and operational vehicle trips than the proposed tower; therefore, this alternative would also not exceed the SCAQMD's bright-line threshold. Development of an expanded museum would also be required to adhere to statewide GHG reduction measures associated with AB 32. Overall, impacts would be reduced and less than significant under this alternative.

7.4.3.6 HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS =

This alternative would be developed within the same project boundary as the proposed project. The site is listed on Haznet for hazardous materials shipments in 1996 and 2000; however, the listings are related to one-time cleanup operations and are not significant hazardous concerns. The project site is also not designated as a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone.

Development of an expanded museum building under this alternative would also not require the routine use, transport, or disposal of significant amounts of hazardous materials, nor would it emit hazardous materials or substances to sensitive uses nearby. The museum would also be required to adhere to federal, state, and local regulations related to hazardous materials.

Overall, hazards and hazardous materials impacts would be similar and less than significant.

7.4.3.7 HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY >

The expanded museum would be developed within the same project boundary as the proposed project. Therefore, this alternative would not substantially deplete groundwater supplies or recharge abilities; place housing or structures within a 100-year flood hazard zone; expose people or structures to dam failure; or be subject to inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow. Similarly, development under both scenarios would require compliance with a project water quality management plan and related construction and operation best

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management practices (BMPs) to minimize runoff, erosion, and stormwater pollution. However, the onsite modular wetlands under the proposed project would not be developed and would not contribute towards water retention, groundwater recharge, and surface runoff treatment. Thus, impacts would be marginally greater, although still less than significant.

7.4.3.8 LAND USE AND PLANNING <

Development in accordance with the site's existing General Plan designation would be consistent with the City's General Plan policies, land use plan, and zoning. It would not require a general plan amendment or zone change, which the proposed project would require. Thus, by virtue of no general plan or zoning amendment being required, land use and planning impacts would be reduced in comparison to the proposed project.

7.4.3.9 NOISE <

Construction and operational noise associated with an expanded museum consistent with the General Plan would be significantly less than the proposed project. Construction of this alternative would not require substantial grading for subterranean parking and would take less time than the proposed tower, thereby reducing construction noise and vibration impacts. It is also likely that the significant and unavoidable construction noise associated with the proposed project would not occur under this alternative since an expanded museum building footprint would not be located at the closest edge of the project boundary to the Villas at Fashion Island, would not require extensive grading, and would have a reduced construction schedule compared to the proposed project.

Traffic noise generated from an expanded museum would also reduce traffic noise in the project area. For example, the existing OCMA building generates approximately 108 vehicle trips per day and the proposed project would generate approximately 418 vehicle trips per day. Thus, an expansion of the museum by 7,906 square feet would not generate a significant number of vehicle trips that would exceed the project's 418 generated vehicle trips per day. Thus, traffic noise would also be reduced.

Stationary noise sources such as HVAC units would be reduced since the site would not be developed with 100 residential units like the proposed project. Operational noise sources from landscaping maintenance would also decrease because less landscaped and common open space areas would be developed onsite compared to the proposed project. Overall, noise impacts would be less than significant and reduced compared to the proposed project.

7.4.3.10 POPULATION AND HOUSING >

The Existing General Plan Alternative would generate approximately 32 jobs²; however, it would not introduce any permanent residents or housing. Since the City is job rich, the provision of housing would improve the jobs/housing balance. Since housing would not be provided under this alternative, population and housing impacts would be increased relative to the proposed project. These impacts, however, would remain less than significant.

² An employment generation factor of 1,000 square feet per employee is used for the Private Institutions land use designation.

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7.4.3.11 PUBLIC SERVICES <

Residential uses like the proposed project typically have higher demands for fire and police services. An expanded museum alternative would introduce only 32 employees compared to the project's 224 residents and 20 employees. Therefore, this alternative would generally result in a decrease in calls for fire and police services. Additionally, development in accordance with the existing General Plan would not introduce permanent residents that could impact school and library services provided by the Newport-Mesa Unified School District and Newport Beach Public Library. Thus, overall public service impacts would be reduced under this alternative and remain less than significant.

7.4.3.12 RECREATION <

No permanent residents would be introduced under this alternative. Thus, demand for additional parks and recreational facilities would decrease compared to the proposed project. Impacts would remain less than significant.

7.4.3.13 TRANSPORTATION AND TRAFFIC <

The proposed project would generate approximately 418 daily trips, including 34 AM peak hour trips and 38 PM peak hour trips. Comparatively, the current OCMA building of 23,632 square feet generates approximately 108 daily trips, including 4 AM peak hour trips and 5 PM peak hour trips. An expanded museum—by 7,906 additional square feet—would generate substantially fewer daily vehicle trips than the proposed tower. Similarly, no roadway or intersection improvements would be required to maintain adequate levels of service on surrounding roadways, including state highway intersections.

Therefore, overall transportation and traffic impacts would be reduced and less than significant.

7.4.3.14 UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS <

This alternative would develop the site at a much lower density than the proposed project; therefore, water and dry utility demands and wastewater generation would decrease substantially.

Using the same water demand rate in the project's Water Demand Report (see Appendix N), expanding the museum building by 7,906 square feet would generate an additional net water demand of 2,372 gpd or 2.66 afy compared to the proposed tower which would generate a net water demand of 43,385 gpd or 48 afy.

If the existing OCMA building is expanded, it would also generate much less wastewater and water demand. Using the same wastewater generate rates and peaking factors in the project's Sewer Analysis Report (see Appendix M), an expanded museum building would generate approximately 2,365 gpd or 0.004 cfs of peak wastewater flow. Comparatively, the proposed tower would generate approximately 106,920 gpd or 0.165 cfs.

Overall, impacts to utilities and service systems would be reduced and less than significant.

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7.4.3.15 CONCLUSION

Ability to Reduce Environmental Impacts

The Existing General Plan Alternative would reduce impacts to the following environmental areas: aesthetics, air quality, cultural resources, greenhouse gas emissions, land use and planning, noise, public services, recreation, transportation and traffic, and utilities and service systems. Impacts to geology and soils and hazards and hazardous materials would be similar and impacts to population and housing and hydrology and water quality would be greater. Overall, impacts would be reduced in comparison to the proposed project.

Ability to Achieve Project Objectives

Most of the project objectives are related to providing a high quality residential community within Newport Beach; therefore, development of the Existing General Plan Alternative would not achieve most of the project objectives. This alternative would not develop a fully amenitized residential community in the Newport Center area (No. 1); provide additional housing to meet the City’s growing population and housing needs (No. 2); develop a residential project per Newport Beach General Plan Policy LU 6.14.4 (No. 4); contribute significant property tax revenue to the City (No. 6); or improve the jobs-housing balance in Newport Beach (No. 8). This alternative also would not maximize the project’s view opportunities of the Pacific Ocean and Newport Harbor (No. 3) or generate temporary employment in the construction industry (No. 7) to the same degree as the proposed project. However, an expanded museum would still be able to create a landmark structure with architectural features and materials that complement the project’s location (No. 5) and maximize onsite open space by providing outdoor open space amenities (No. 9)..

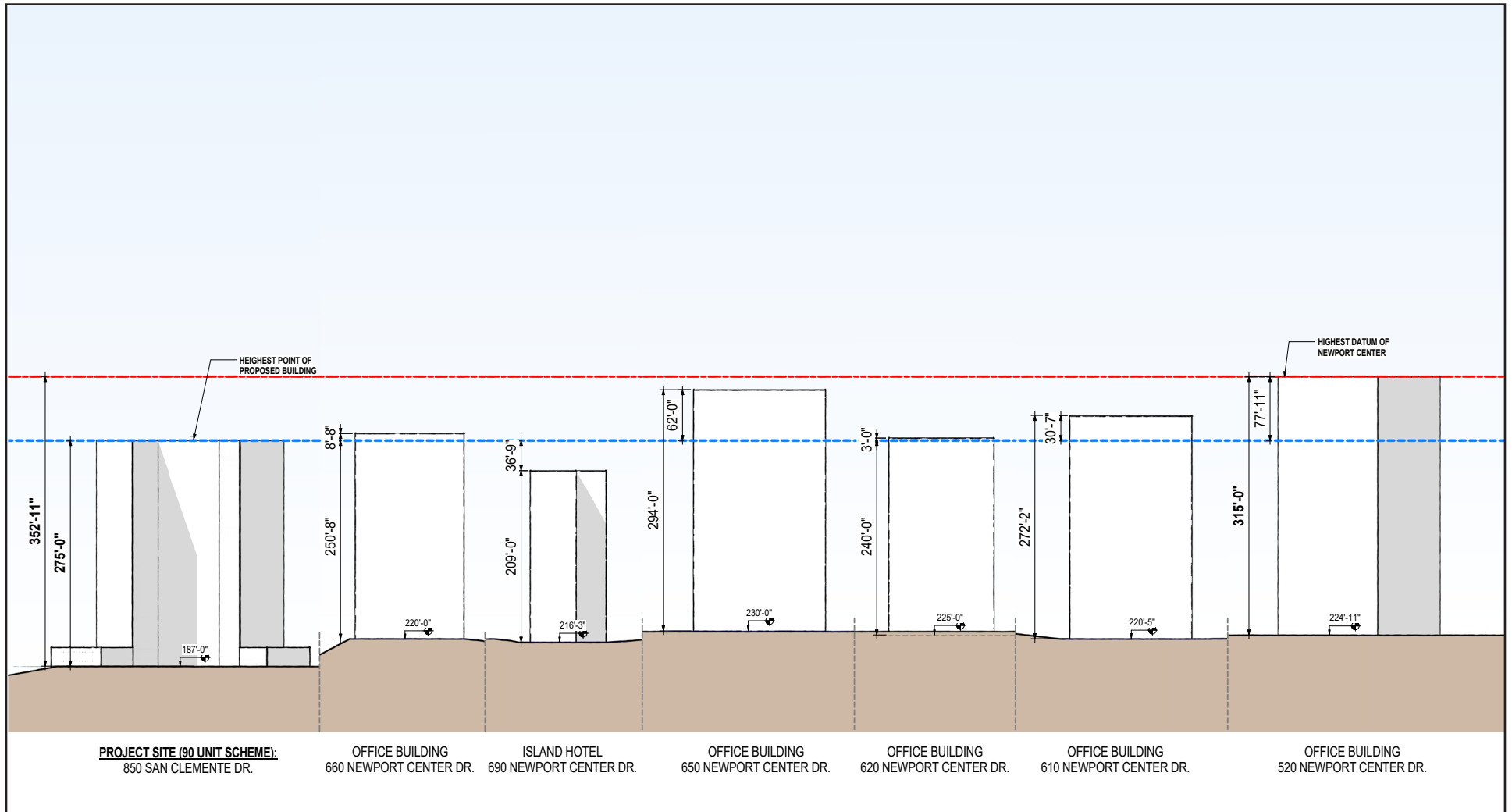
7.4.4 Reduced Density Alternative

The Reduced Density Alternative would allow development of a 90-unit residential tower (10 fewer units) at a reduced height of 23 stories (271 feet, 6 inches). Table 7-5 provides a development summary comparison of the proposed project to this alternative. The building footprint and provided setbacks would remain the same. Buildout of this alternative would introduce approximately 201 residents and 20 jobs.

Table 7-5 Proposed Project vs. Reduced Density Alternative Development Summary

	Proposed Project	Reduced Density Alternative
Dwelling Units	100 units	90 units
Height	295 feet (25 stories)	271 feet and 6 inches (23 stories)
Building Area		
Tower	391,158 SF	359,167 SF
Parking Garage	115,828 SF	115,828 SF
Parking	250 spaces (200 residential/50 guest)	225 spaces (180 residential/45 guest)
Open Space		
Common Open Space	52,523 SF	52,523 SF
Common Indoor Space	20,855 SF	20,855 SF
Private Open Space	21,444 SF	19,302 SF

Figure 7-3 - Reduced Density Alternative Height Comparison
7. Alternatives



0 200
Scale (Feet)

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7.4.4.1 AESTHETICS <

The Reduced Density Alternative would reduce buildout by 10 condominium units and reduce overall building height by approximately 24 feet (2 stories); the remaining architectural features and massing details, lighting plan, hardscape and landscaping improvements, amenities, and parking garage square footage would remain the same. Reducing the building height would slightly reduce aesthetic impacts compared to the proposed 295-foot tower. For example, Figure 7-3, *Reduced Density Alternative Tower Height Comparison*, shows the Reduced Density Alternative tower compared to other high rise buildings in northern Newport Center. Since the project site already sits at a lower elevation, the tower would visually look like one of the shorter high rise buildings in Newport Center, second to the Island Hotel. Comparatively, the proposed 295-foot tower would be taller than the Island Hotel and the office buildings at 620 and 660 Newport Center Drive. Therefore, aesthetic impacts related to building height would be slightly reduced; although, it should be noted that a 24-foot reduction in height is not a significant change that can be accurately noticed by pedestrians or drivers near the project area (e.g., from the various viewsheds illustrated in Figures 5.1-4, *Avocado Avenue Visual Simulation*, through 5.1-9, *Big Canyon Visual Simulation*). Given a 24-foot reduction in height and the fact that the remainder of the building would be largely the same (i.e., orientation, design, etc.), impacts associated with lighting and glare are anticipated to be the same as the proposed project.

A 24-foot reduction in height would also slightly reduce shade and shadow impacts of the proposed tower on adjacent sensitive land uses (i.e., the Villas at Fashion Island apartment buildings). The tower would still cast a shadow on the adjacent property, but the shading would occur on a smaller portion of the property for a shorter period of time, beginning later in the morning and ending earlier in the evening. Overall, aesthetic impacts would be slightly reduced and remain less than significant.

7.4.4.2 AIR QUALITY =

This alternative would nominally reduce air quality impacts associated with construction and operational activities. Construction activities would not require as long of time to build the 90-unit tower at approximately 271 feet compared to the proposed 100-unit tower at 295 feet. Therefore, there may be fewer vehicle trips generated during construction activities. However, the building footprint would be the same and the subterranean parking garage would also require the same amount of grading. Thus, air quality emissions associated with construction activities would not decrease by a significant amount. Operational emissions associated with this alternative would also nominally decrease. For example, a 10-unit decrease in development would result in a proportional decrease in the number of residents. However, this proportional decrease would not significantly reduce vehicle trips generated, nor would it significantly reduce stationary emission sources from HVAC units and landscaping equipment for site maintenance. Thus, air quality impacts under both scenarios would be similar.

7.4.4.3 CULTURAL RESOURCES =

Impacts to cultural resources would be similar under the proposed project and this alternative. The Reduced Density Alternative would construct the tower on the same building footprint and develop the subterranean parking garage to the same square footage. Therefore, grading activities associated with both scenarios would

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be similar and would not increase or reduce potential impacts to previously undiscovered cultural resources, including archaeological, paleontological, and tribal cultural resources.

7.4.4.4 GEOLOGY AND SOILS =

Geology and soil impacts would be similar to the proposed project because it would be developed within the same building footprint under the same geologic unit and soil conditions. Therefore, potential for seismic ground shaking, fault rupture, liquefaction, or collapse would be similar. Development under this alternative would also be required to comply with California Building Code standards and applicable construction and operational BMPs to reduce impacts related to geologic hazards. Overall, impacts would be less than significant and similar to the proposed project.

7.4.4.5 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS =

This alternative would develop 10 fewer condominium units than the proposed project, which would result in 42 fewer daily trips than the proposed project. This is a nominal decrease that would not significantly reduce vehicle trips and associated emissions. Similar to the proposed project, the Reduced Density Alternative would also not exceed the SCAQMD's bright-line threshold of 3,000 MTCO₂e and would be required to adhere to statewide GHG reduction measures associated with AB 32. Overall, impacts would be similar and less than significant under this alternative.

7.4.4.6 HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS =

Impacts related to hazards and hazardous materials would be similar to the proposed project. The project site is not on the Cortese list of hazardous materials sites and is not located in a designated fire hazard zone by the City or the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection.

According to the Airport Land Use Commission, the transitional imaginary surface elevations at the project site are in the 970 to 1,020 feet above mean sea level (amsl) range. Therefore, projects that exceed 970 amsl would require an aeronautical study to determine whether the proposed structure would pose a hazard to air navigation. The tower would decrease in height by approximately 24 feet compared to the proposed project, making it approximately 458 feet above mean sea level (amsl). Both towers under the proposed project and the Reduced Density Alternative would not obstruct imaginary surfaces for JWA. Additionally, this alternative would have the same proposed land use (i.e., Multiple Residential) as the proposed project and would be consistent with the noise and safety standards detailed in the AELUP for JWA. Overall, impacts would be similar and less than significant under both scenarios.

7.4.4.7 HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY =

Similar to the proposed project, this alternative would develop the two acre site with the proposed tower (25,753 square feet) and hardscape improvements (e.g., the motor court, common open space areas, and surface guest parking spaces). Overall, development in accordance with both scenarios would decrease the amount of impervious area onsite from 85 to 74 percent. Construction and operational BMPs, including low impact development and hydromodification BMPs, detailed in the project's preliminary water quality

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management plan would also be implemented under this alternative to reduce or eliminate runoff and water quality impacts. Thus, impacts would be similar and less than significant.

7.4.4.8 LAND USE AND PLANNING =

Both the proposed project and Reduced Density Alternative would not physically divide any established communities in the Newport Center area. Development of this alternative would also require similar discretionary approvals as the proposed project—a General Plan Amendment to redesignate the site from Private Institutions to Multiple Residential and to update Anomaly 49 to allow for 90 residential units, and an amendment to the San Joaquin Plaza PCDP (PC-19) to allow for 90 residential units on the eastern portion of PC-19. Similarly, the reduced density tower would be consistent with the City’s General Plan policies. Land use and planning impacts would be similar under both scenarios and less than significant.

7.4.4.9 NOISE =

The Reduced Density Alternative would be marginally less than the project in terms of construction activities, but it would still require demolition of the existing structure, excavation and site preparation to the same depths, and construction of the Reduced Density Alternative building. Although this alternative would reduce development by 10 units, construction of 10 fewer units and a tower approximately 24 feet lower would not substantially decrease construction noise impacts. Further, this alternative would still require construction of a two-level subterranean garage, which would cause similar construction vibration impacts from excavation and grading activities. Therefore, the Reduced Density Alternative would not reduce the significant and unavoidable construction noise impact associated with the proposed project.

Moreover, the Reduced Density Alternative would be similar to the proposed project in terms of operational characteristics, less 10 units.

Operational noise sources from vehicle trips or stationary sources (e.g., HVAC units and landscaping equipment) would not be significantly reduced under this alternative given the nominal decrease in density. Thus, noise impacts would be similar under both scenarios.

7.4.4.10 POPULATION AND HOUSING >

This alternative would introduce approximately 23 fewer residents and 10 fewer units to the project site, but would generate a similar number of employment opportunities as the proposed project (approximately 20 jobs). Therefore, although minimal, since fewer housing units would be provided, population and housing impacts would marginally increase over the less than significant impacts of the proposed project.

7.4.4.11 PUBLIC SERVICES <

Decreasing development by 10 condominium units would reduce demand for public services, including fire and emergency, police, school, and library services. Approximately 23 fewer residents would live at the project site and would slightly decrease potential calls for fire and emergency, and police services, and would also decrease demand for library services provided by the Newport Beach Public Library.

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A decrease in residential population would also result in fewer future students attending schools within the Newport Mesa Unified School District (NMUSD). Based on NMUSD's student generation factors, a decrease in 23 residents under this alternative would generate four fewer student residents. This is a nominal decrease in student population.

Overall, impacts to public services would slightly decrease compared to the proposed project.

7.4.4.12 RECREATION =

The City's parkland standard requires 5 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents. This alternative would introduce approximately 201 residents, which requires approximately one acre of parkland. Similar to the proposed project, this alternative would provide a number of small park and open space amenities within the two-acre site, including a podium garden, lawn, garden trellis, olive alley, fountain plaza, and sculpture garden, on the ground level in back of the hotel building in the north and northeastern areas of the site. Additional amenities on the upper floors include a pool, cabana and dining area trellis, and outdoor living spaces. In total, both the proposed project and alternative would provide 52,523 square feet (1.21 acres) of common open space (see Table 7-5). Additionally, the Newport Center Park Service Area has an existing surplus of 1.4 acres. Thus, impacts would be similar to the proposed project and less than significant.

7.4.4.13 TRANSPORTATION AND TRAFFIC <

The Reduced Density Alternative would reduce development by 10 condominium units, which would nominally decrease vehicle trips generated. Using the same trip generation rate as the proposed project (4.18 trips for high-rise condominium), this alternative would reduce trips by approximately 42 daily vehicle trips, a 10 percent decrease.

The proposed project does not impact any roadways or intersections; therefore, a decrease in vehicle trips generated under this alternative would further reduce the project's less than significant impacts to study area intersections and roadways. This alternative also does not change any proposed pedestrian walkways or access roads, including the main entry way and the fire lane along San Clemente Drive; therefore, impacts related to traffic safety and access would be similar. Overall, impacts would be less than significant.

7.4.4.14 UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS <

Development of the Reduced Density Alternative would generally reduce impacts to utilities and service systems. The alternative would develop 10 fewer condominium units. Therefore, this alternative would introduce 201 residents rather than 224 residents under the proposed project. Based on a wastewater generation rate of 285 gpd per dwelling unit and a peaking factor of 3.65 for the condominium use, this alternative would generate approximately 93,622 gpd or 0.145 cfs of peak wastewater flow. The proposed project would generate approximately 106,920 gpd or 0.165 cfs; therefore, this alternative would reduce peak wastewater flow by approximately 13,298 gpd or 0.021 cfs; however, the offsite sewer pipe improvement in Santa Barbara Drive at Jamboree Road would still be required to accommodate wastewater flows.

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Using a water demand rate of 1,000 gpd per capita, a maximum day demand factor of 1.31 and a maximum hour demand factor of 1.85, this alternative would generate a peak water demand of 487,124 gpd or 545.65 afy compared to the proposed project's peak water demand of 605,875 gpd or 678.67 afy.

Impacts to the storm drainage system would likely be similar to the proposed project because no changes would be made to the landscaping and hardscaping improvements on the ground level. Further, demand for dry utilities, including natural gas and electricity, would be reduced with fewer residents occupying the condominium tower. Overall, impacts to utilities and service systems would be reduced and less than significant.

7.4.4.15 CONCLUSION

Ability to Reduce Environmental Impacts

The Reduced Density Alternative would reduce impacts to the following environmental areas: aesthetics, population and housing, public services, transportation and traffic, and utilities and service systems. Impacts to air quality, cultural resources, geology and soils, greenhouse gas emissions, hazards and hazardous materials, hydrology and water quality, land use and planning, noise, and recreation would be similar.

Ability to Achieve Project Objectives

This alternative is able to achieve all the objectives of the proposed project. Although slightly reduced in density and height, the 90-unit condominium tower and associated amenities would provide a fully amenitized residential community with state-of-the-art facilities within walking distance of employment opportunities, public facilities, and recreational and commercial amenities (No. 1); provide additional housing to meet the City's growing needs (No. 2); maximize the project's view opportunities (No. 3); develop a residential project that reinforces the design concept for Newport Center per General Plan Policy LU 6.14.4 (No. 4); create a landmark structure with compatible and complementary architectural features and materials (No. 5); contribute significant property tax revenue (No. 6); generate temporary construction related employment (No. 7); improve the job-housing balance in the City by providing housing within a major employment center (No. 8); and maximize onsite open space by providing outdoor open space amenities (No. 9).

7.5 ENVIRONMENTALLY SUPERIOR ALTERNATIVE

Table 7-6 summarizes the environmental impacts of each alternative compared to the proposed project, and Table 7-7 summarizes each alternative's ability to achieve the project objectives.

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Table 7-6 Summary of Proposed Project and Alternatives Impacts

Topic	Proposed Project	No Project/No Development Alternative	Existing General Plan Alternative	Reduced Density Alternative
Aesthetics	LTS	<	<	<
Air Quality				
<i>Construction</i>	LTS/M	<	<	=
<i>Operation</i>	LTS	<	<	=
Cultural Resources	LTS/M	<	<	=
Geology and Soils	LTS/M	<	=	=
Greenhouse Gas Emissions	LTS	<	<	=
Hazards and Hazardous Materials	LTS	<	=	=
Hydrology and Water Quality	LTS	>	>	=
Land Use and Planning	LTS	<	<	=
Noise				
<i>Construction</i>	S/U	<*	<*	=
<i>Operation</i>	LTS	<	<	=
Population and Housing	LTS	>	>	>
Public Services	LTS	<	<	<
Recreation	LTS	<	<	=
Transportation and Traffic	LTS	<	<	<
Utilities and Service Systems	LTS	<	<	<

Notes: LTS: Less than Significant; LTS/M: Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated; S/U: Significant and Unavoidable

(-) The alternative would result in less of an impact than the proposed project.

(+) The alternative would result in greater impacts than the proposed project.

(=) The alternative would result in the same/similar impacts as the proposed project.

* The alternative would reduce a significant and unavoidable impact.

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Table 7-7 Ability of Each Alternative to Meet the Project Objectives

Objective	Proposed Project	No Project/No Development Alternative	Existing General Plan Alternative	Reduced Density Alternative
1. To develop a fully amenitized residential community with state-of-the-art facilities within walking distance of employment opportunities, public facilities, and recreational and commercial amenities, thereby reducing vehicle trips and furthering local, regional, and State mobility objectives.	Yes	No	No	Yes
2. To provide additional housing that meets the City's growing population and housing needs.	Yes	No	No	Yes
3. To maximize the project's view opportunities of the visual resources of the City of Newport Beach, including the Pacific Ocean and Newport Harbor.	Yes	No	No	Yes
4. To implement Newport Beach General Plan Policy LU 6.14.4 by developing a residential project that would reinforce the original design concept for Newport Center by concentrating the greatest building mass and height in the northeasterly section along San Joaquin Hills Road.	Yes	No	No	Yes
5. To create a landmark structure with architectural features and materials that are compatible and complementary with the project's location.	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
6. To contribute significant property tax revenue to the City of Newport Beach.	Yes	No	No	Yes
7. To generate temporary employment in the construction industry.	Yes	No	Yes, to a substantially lesser degree	Yes
8. To improve the job-housing balance in Newport Beach by providing new housing within a major employment center.	Yes	No	No	Yes
9. To maximize onsite open space and provide a variety of onsite outdoor open space amenities	Yes	No	Yes	Yes

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CEQA requires a lead agency to identify the “environmentally superior alternative” and, in cases where the “No Project” Alternative is environmentally superior to the proposed project, the environmentally superior development alternative must be identified. In this case, the No Project/No Development Alternative is the environmentally superior alternative; therefore, the Existing General Plan Alternative is identified as “environmentally superior” to the proposed project.

As shown in Table 7-6, the Existing General Plan Alternative would reduce impacts to the following environmental areas: aesthetics, air quality, cultural resources, greenhouse gas emissions, land use and planning, noise, population and housing, public services, recreation, transportation and traffic, and utilities and service systems. Impacts to geology and soils, hazards and hazardous materials, and hydrology and water quality would be similar.

7.6 REFERENCES

Newport Beach, City of. 2013, September 24. City of Newport Beach General Plan Housing Element. http://www.newportbeachca.gov/PLN/General_Plan/06_Ch5_Housing_web.pdf.