

The primary intent of the alternatives evaluation in an Environmental Impact Report (EIR), as stated in Section 15126.6(a) of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines, is to “[...] describe a range of reasonable alternatives to the project, or to the location of the project, which would feasibly attain most of the basic objectives of the project but would avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects of the project, and evaluate the comparative merits of the alternatives.” Furthermore, Section 15126.6(f) states, “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 CEQA Guidelines provide the following guidance for discussing alternatives to a proposed project:

- An EIR shall describe a range of reasonable alternatives to the project, or to the location of the project, which would feasibly attain most of the basic objectives of the project, but would avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects of the project, and evaluate the comparative merits of the alternatives (CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6[a]).
- Because an EIR must identify ways to mitigate or avoid the significant effects that a project may have on the environment (Public Resources Code Section 21002.1), 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 (CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6[b]).
- The range of potential alternatives to the proposed project shall include those that could feasibly accomplish most of the basic objectives of the project and could avoid or substantially lessen one or more of the significant effects. The EIR should briefly describe the rationale for selecting the alternatives to be discussed. The EIR should also identify any alternatives that were considered by the lead agency but were rejected as infeasible during the scoping process and briefly explain the reasons underlying the lead agency’s determination [...] Among the factors that may be used to eliminate alternatives from detailed consideration in an EIR are: (i) failure to meet most of the basic project objectives, (ii) infeasibility, or (iii) inability to avoid significant environmental impacts (CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6[c]).
- The EIR shall include sufficient information about each alternative to allow meaningful evaluation, analysis, and comparison with the proposed project. A matrix displaying the major characteristics and significant environmental effects

of each alternative may be used to summarize the comparison (CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6[d]).

- The specific alternative of “no project” shall also be evaluated along with its impact. The purpose of describing and analyzing a no project alternative is to allow decisionmakers to compare the impacts of approving the proposed project with the impacts of not approving the proposed project. The no project alternative analysis is not the baseline for determining whether the proposed project’s environmental impacts may be significant, unless it is identical to the existing environmental setting analysis which does establish that baseline (CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6[e][1]).
- If the environmentally superior alternative is the “no project” alternative, the EIR shall also identify an environmentally superior alternative among the other alternatives (CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6[e][2]).

In addition, Section 15126.6(d) of the CEQA Guidelines states, “If an alternative would cause one or more significant effects in addition to those that would be caused by the project as proposed, the significant effects of the alternative shall be discussed, but in less detail than the significant effects of the project as proposed.”

## **17.1 PURPOSE OF ALTERNATIVES**

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The project alternatives need to feasibly attain most of the basic objectives of the project, but avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects of the project.

The following project objectives have been identified by the applicant:

1. Provide a retail project that will provide a variety of products to serve an unmet demand of consumers in Placer County.
2. Provide a retail development that will result in a fiscal benefit to Placer County providing new sales tax and property tax revenues.
3. Provide a retail development in close proximity that will result in reduced travel lengths for Placer County residents.
4. Provide a retail development that can readily be served by existing infrastructure and result in benefits to the County in the construction of new sewer lines.
5. Provide a retail development that will provide synergy with a new recently constructed retail project adjacent to the site.
6. Provide a retail development that will create new jobs.
7. Provide an infill retail project that will clean up a partially blighted site consisting of abandoned concrete slabs, pipes and retaining walls.

8. Implement the Placer County General Plan Land Use Policy, the Auburn/Bowman Community Plan Land Use Plan and the North Placer County Redevelopment Agency's Land Use Plan to develop a retail project on this property.
9. Design and construct a retail building that will provide a buffer between the residential neighborhoods to the north and east and more intensive commercial/industrial uses to the south and west, with the end goal of a retail project that is not only compatible on all fronts with its adjoining uses, but also contributes to an overall sense of community in the area.

Potentially significant environmental impacts of the Bohemia Retail project (proposed project) include:

- **Biological Resources.** Implementation of the proposed project would result in a loss of potential habitat including foraging and nesting grounds for raptors, migratory birds, reptiles and amphibians, and special-status plant species. The proposed project would also impact the Waters of the U.S. and State.
- **Cultural Resources.** Implementation of the proposed project could result in disturbance or destruction of previously unknown archaeological and/or paleontological resources on-site.
- **Transportation and Circulation.** Implementation of the proposed project would result in increased traffic congestion that would have significant adverse effects on intersections, one of which would be significant and unavoidable. Implementation of the proposed project would result in the lack of available storage length at several intersections. In addition, project construction activities could have a significant impact on circulation in the vicinity of the project site. Furthermore, the predicted reduction in LOS for two arterial roadway segments is a short-term potentially significant impact, and impacts to related to lane queuing under the Short Term Plus Project scenario would remain significant and unavoidable. The construction and operation of the proposed project is not anticipated to impact local pedestrian and bicycle facilities. However, if the proposed project does not meet the applicable standards (Americans with Disabilities Act [ADA] and the Auburn/Bowman Community Plan [ABCP]), a potentially significant impact would result in regard to on-site and off-site pedestrian and bicycle facilities.
- **Air Quality.** Implementation of the proposed project would result in significant impacts in regard to air quality. Construction activities associated with the proposed project would generate PM<sub>10</sub> emissions at a level that would exceed the Placer County Air Pollution Control District (PCAPCD) significance threshold of 82 pounds per day. In addition, the project would be located in an area of Placer County that potentially contains naturally occurring asbestos (NOA) and construction of the project could result in the release of NOA into the air. Construction emissions associated with buildout of the project would exceed the PCAPCD threshold of 82 pounds per day for NO<sub>x</sub>, which would create a significant impact. Mitigation measures would reduce short-term NO<sub>x</sub> emissions associated with construction of the proposed project; however, because

implementation of feasible mitigation would not reduce the project's short-term NO<sub>x</sub> emissions below the PCAPCD's significance threshold, the proposed project would result in a short-term significant and unavoidable impact. In addition, impacts related to Toxic Air Contaminants (TACs) associated with the proposed fueling station would be potentially significant, but would be reduced to a less-than-significant level with implementation of the required mitigation.

- **Noise.** Implementation of the proposed project would result in elevated noise levels due to both construction activities and operational activities. On-site operational activities that would potentially exceed County noise level standards and therefore result in a potentially significant impact include the following: truck circulation, loading dock activity, and parking lot sweeper activity. Per the County's Noise Ordinance, construction noise is exempted during certain hours; however, it should be noted that construction activities associated with the development of the proposed project would result in a temporary increase in noise levels at adjacent properties, which is considered a potentially significant impact.
- **Soils, Geology, and Seismicity.** Implementation of the proposed project could result in a potentially significant impact in regard to loss of soil due to erosion and sedimentation. In addition, due to the presence of expansive soils on-site, and the potential for liquefaction, a significant impact would result in regard to structural integrity.
- **Hydrology and Water Quality.** Implementation of the proposed project would alter existing drainage patterns on-site, resulting in a potentially significant impact. A potentially significant impact also exists related to groundwater quality. Water quality impacts would result during construction activities, and water quality from urban runoff would be impacted during operational activities.
- **Public Services and Utilities.** Water would be supplied for the proposed project by Placer County Water Agency (PCWA). The DEIR determined that because the project applicant has not received a water availability letter from PCWA ensuring that adequate water supply will be made available to serve the project, a potentially significant impact would result. Wastewater services would be supplied for the proposed project by Sewer Maintenance District #1. The DEIR determined that because the project applicant has not received a will-serve letter from Sewer Maintenance District #1 ensuring that adequate wastewater services will be made available to serve the project, a potentially significant impact would result. Fire protection services for the proposed project would be provided by Placer County Fire Department/CAL FIRE. The DEIR determined that because the Placer County Fire Department/CAL FIRE has not provided a will-serve letter stating that the existing fire protection services are adequate to serve the project site, a potentially significant impact would occur. Law enforcement services would be provided by the Placer County Sheriff. The DEIR determined that because the provision of adequate law enforcement services would be dependent upon the authorization of funding, a potentially significant impact would result.

- **Hazardous Materials and Hazards.** Due to the on-site fueling station, potential impacts could result from spills, overfilling, leaks, or rupture of the underground storage tanks. Furthermore, the quantity of such materials sold on-site and potential spills could expose the public to significant hazards.

## **17.2 ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED BUT DISMISSED FROM FURTHER CONSIDERATION**

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The following section describes the alternatives considered but dismissed from further analysis in this EIR. One alternative, the Off-Site Alternative, was considered but dismissed. The major characteristics of the Off-Site Alternative are summarized below.

### **Off-Site Alternative**

Section 15126.6(f)(2)(B) of the CEQA Guidelines states, “If the lead agency concludes that no feasible alternative locations exist, it must disclose the reasons for this conclusion, and should include the reason in the EIR.” A feasible location for the proposed project that would result in substantially reduced impacts does not exist.

The CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(b) requires that only locations that would avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects of the project need be considered for inclusion in the EIR. The Off-Site Alternative would involve the construction of the proposed project on an alternative location. The Off-Site Alternative would locate the proposed project on other lands located within the vicinity of the proposed project site. Because the project applicant does not own a comparable property, the Off-Site Alternative would be dismissed from further consideration.

In addition, the CEQA Guidelines state that, by definition, an alternative should avoid or substantially lessen one or more of the environmental effects of the project. Alternative locations within Placer County would generally contain characteristics similar to the proposed project site. Potential alternative properties were explored, such as sites that were comparable in size, without a wetland located on-site. However, an equal area would be graded and, therefore, similar impacts would occur related to land disturbance activities. In addition, the operation of a building that is equal in square feet would result in traffic impacts that would likely be very similar, or even potentially worse than the proposed project, depending on on-site accessibility. Therefore, development of the project at an alternative location in Placer County would be expected to result in the same, or worse, impacts as compared to the proposed project. As a result, an environmentally feasible off-site location that would meet the requirements of CEQA, as well as meet the basic objectives of the project, does not exist.

## **17.3 ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED IN THIS EIR**

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The following section evaluates the alternatives considered for the proposed project, which include:

- No Project Alternative;

- No Canal Street Access Alternative; and
- Mixed Use Alternative.

CEQA requires the evaluation of the comparative impacts of the “No Project” alternative (CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6[e]). Analysis of the No Project Alternative “... shall discuss [...] existing conditions [...] as well as what would be reasonably expected to occur in the foreseeable future if the project were not approved, based on current plans and consistent with available infrastructure and community services.” (*Id.*, subd. [e][2]) “If the project is other than a land use or regulatory plan, for example a development project on identifiable property, the ‘no project’ alternative is the circumstance under which the project does not proceed. Here the discussion would compare the environmental effects of the property remaining in the property’s existing state versus environmental effects that would occur if the project were approved. If disapproval of the project under consideration would result in predictable actions by others, such as the proposal of some other project, this ‘no project’ consequence should be discussed. In certain instances, the no project alternative means ‘no build,’ wherein the existing environmental setting is maintained. However, where failure to proceed with the project would not result in preservation of existing environmental conditions, the analysis should identify the practical result of the project’s non-approval and not create and analyze a set of artificial assumptions that would be required to preserve the existing physical environment.” (*Id.*, subd. [e][3][B])

Per CEQA Guideline requirements, the County has decided to evaluate a “no project” Alternative. Under the No Project Alternative, the project site would remain vacant, undeveloped land, which would not create and incompatibilities with surrounding land uses.

The County has also decided to evaluate a No Canal Street Access Alternative, in which the development of the project would generally remain unchanged, with the exception of the access location on Canal Street. The access would be constructed, but an emergency vehicle access gate would prohibit vehicular traffic from entering the site from Canal Street. The access would serve as an emergency vehicle access location only.

In addition, the County has decided to evaluate a Mixed Use Alternative, which would include the development of approximately 35 percent fewer square feet (s.f.) of retail building. The Mixed Use Alternative would include the construction of two retail buildings – one 64,300-square-foot building and one 35,700-square-foot building. The Mixed Use Alternative would eliminate the proposed fueling station in the southeastern portion of the property.

The major characteristics of each of the alternatives, as well as corresponding impact comparisons with the proposed project (including both the discount club store and discount superstore scenarios), are summarized below.

### **No Project Alternative**

The No Project Alternative is defined in this section as the continuation of the existing condition of the project site, which is currently vacant. The No Project Alternative would not meet any of the project objectives.

Under the No Project Alternative, land disturbance would not occur and therefore the majority of environmental impacts identified for the proposed project would not occur. Because many of the impacts of concern are directly related to land disturbances, if the No Project Alternative were selected, those impacts would not ensue. Furthermore, impacts not directly related to land disturbance activities would most likely not occur. Traffic and related concerns such as congestion, air quality, and noise issues related to construction and operational activities on the project site would not occur if the No Project Alternative were selected. If the proposed project were not developed, the public would not be potentially exposed to hazardous materials presented by the proposed fueling station. Proposed structures would not be subject to soil, geology, and seismicity impacts such as liquefaction and ground shaking because structures would not exist. The No Project Alternative would not increase demand for public services such as police and fire, because there would be no purpose for pedestrians to congregate at the project site. The site would not be irreversibly converted to an urban use under the No Project Alternative, thereby eliminating visual impacts, albeit the DEIR determined that such impacts would be less-than-significant for the proposed project. The proposed project is expected to be beneficial in regard to socio-economic impacts, and it should be noted that the No Project Alternative would not generate needed tax revenue and would, therefore, result in impacts to County proceeds.

Impacts related to land use would be decreased as compared to the proposed project, if the No Project Alternative were implemented. The implementation of the No Project Alternative would result in the site remaining vacant and, therefore, environmental impacts related to noise, transportation and circulation, air quality, and visual resources would not ensue. Therefore, implementation of the No Project Alternative would result in decreased impacts, as compared to the proposed project.

The following areas and would result in no impact if the No Project Alternative were selected:

- Biological Resources;
- Cultural Resources;
- Visual Resources;
- Transportation and Circulation;
- Air Quality;
- Noise;
- Soils, Geology, and Seismicity;
- Hydrology and Water Quality;
- Public Services and Utilities;
- Hazardous Materials and Hazards;
- Mineral Resources; and
- Socio-Economics.

### **No Canal Street Access Alternative**

The No Canal Street Access Alternative would include the same development components as the proposed project, with the exception of public access from Canal Street. The access would be

constructed, but utilized only for emergency vehicle purposes. The percentage of impervious area would remain unchanged from the proposed project.

### Land Use

Under the No Canal Street Access Alternative, land use impacts would be less than land use impacts created by the proposed project because vehicular traffic and associated noise would not increase on Canal Street, thereby eliminating potential incompatibilities with the adjacent neighborhood. In a very real sense, the lack of additional vehicles on Canal Street as a result of the project would serve to maintain the current dynamics of the neighborhood, thereby making the project less noticeable. The No Canal Street Access Alternative would achieve the land use objectives for the project site, such as generating tax revenue, creating new jobs, and meeting currently unmet demands of consumers. Therefore, overall, under the No Canal Street Access Alternative, land use impacts would be fewer.

### Biological Resources

Biological resource impacts with the No Canal Street Access Alternative would be similar to the proposed project. The No Canal Street Access Alternative would result in potentially significant impacts related to biological resources. Land disturbance would occur to the same extent as the proposed project. Therefore, a potentially significant impact would occur related to special-status plant species, raptors and migratory bird species, western burrowing owl, and special-status reptile and amphibian species. Mitigation measures would be necessary to bring the potentially significant impacts to a less-than-significant level. In addition, the No Canal Street Access Alternative would have a potentially significant impact on amphibians and reptiles, trees, and waters of the U.S. and State. Because biological resource impacts are directly related to land disturbance activities, this Alternative's impacts to biological resources would be the same as the proposed project.

### Cultural Resources

Cultural resource impacts resulting from the No Canal Street Access Alternative would be similar to the proposed project. Although the site does not contain any known historical resources, the No Canal Street Access Alternative could result in potential disturbance or destruction of previously unknown archaeological and paleontological resources on-site. Sedimentary rocks and volcanic rock are present throughout Placer County and could contain fossil remains of prehistoric animal and plant life. Therefore, paleontological resources could exist on the project site. With the No Canal Street Access Alternative, land disturbance would occur to the same extent as the proposed project. Because cultural resource impacts are directly related to land disturbance activities, impacts to cultural resources would be the same as the proposed project.

### Visual Resources

Visual resource impacts with the No Canal Street Access Alternative would be similar to the proposed project. The proposed project and the No Canal Street Access Alternative would result

in a less-than-significant impact in regard to changing the existing visual character of the site and the site's surroundings. The No Canal Street Access Alternative would result in increased sources of light and glare where none currently exist and the site would be irreversibly converted to an urban use. It should be noted that this alternative, like the proposed project, would include a lighting plan, which would indicate that the alternative would incorporate shielding on all outdoor light fixtures to prevent spill-over of new sources of light and glare onto adjacent sensitive receptors to the north and east. Because the No Canal Street Access Alternative generally includes construction activities and building design to the same extent as the proposed project, and visual resources are directly related to the construction of the proposed building, impacts to visual resources would be the same under both circumstances.

### Transportation and Circulation

Transportation and circulation impacts under the No Canal Street Access Alternative would vary slightly from the proposed project. Construction activities under the No Canal Street Access Alternative would include numerous disruptions to the transportation system in and around the project area, resulting in a potentially significant impact. Heavy equipment would regularly ingress and egress to and from the project site for purposes such as material delivery, grading, and excavating. Construction activities could temporarily impact the existing Class II and Class III bikeways in the proposed project vicinity. However, any bikeway impacts from construction activities would be temporary in nature and are considered to be less-than-significant.

Overall, the construction and operation of the proposed project is not anticipated to impact the local pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure; however, the proposed sidewalks would need to meet with ADA and ABCP standards. This alternative, like the proposed project, would have a less-than-significant impact in regard to pedestrian and bicycle facilities.

During operational phases, traffic would not be able to access the site from Canal Street, resulting in less traffic congestion on Canal Street and associated intersections such as the Bell Road/New Airport Road intersection. Traffic congestion would likely increase at the Primary Access location. The Traffic Impact Analysis Report, prepared by Omni Means in December 2009, indicates that approximately 15 percent of traffic associated with the proposed project would utilize the Canal Street Access, while the remaining 85 percent would use the project's Primary Access. Therefore, under the No Canal Street Access Alternative, the Primary Access location could expect a 15 percent increase in trips. The No Canal Street Access Alternative would not result in a reduction of total external traffic trips compared to the proposed project. The No Canal Street Access Alternative would not affect emergency vehicle access, as the Canal Street access would still be constructed, but for emergency vehicle use only. Response times to the project site would remain unchanged from the proposed project. Construction activities could temporarily impact the existing Class II and Class III bikeways in the project vicinity but, overall, impacts to pedestrian and bikeway access would remain unchanged from the proposed project. The proposed project is not expected to alter any existing transit route.

The No Canal Street Access Alternative would impact the following intersection: SR 49/Luther Road. Signalizing the intersection of Luther Road/Canal Street would be expected to provide adequate capacity, resulting in an acceptable LOS. The proposed project would potentially

impact the Bell Road/New Airport Road intersection. Because both this alternative and the proposed project would potentially impact one intersection, impacts related to transportation and circulation under this alternative would be similar, as compared to the proposed project.

### Air Quality

Implementation of the proposed project would result in significant impacts in regard to air quality. Construction emissions associated with buildout of the project would exceed the Placer County Air Pollution Control District (PCAPCD) threshold of 82 pounds per day for NO<sub>x</sub>, which would create a significant impact. Mitigation measures would reduce short-term NO<sub>x</sub> emissions associated with construction of the proposed project; however, because implementation of feasible mitigation would not reduce the project's short-term NO<sub>x</sub> emissions below the PCAPCD's significance threshold, the proposed project would result in a significant and unavoidable impact. Because the extent of construction and land disturbance activities associated with the No Canal Street Access Alternative are generally the same as the proposed project and construction emissions are directly related to construction and land disturbance activities, impacts would be similar as compared to the proposed project. Accordingly, this alternative would be expected to result in a short-term significant and unavoidable impact related to construction NO<sub>x</sub> emissions. Construction activities associated with the proposed project would generate PM<sub>10</sub> emissions at a level (121.72 pounds per day) that would exceed the PCAPCD's significance threshold of 82 pounds per day. Because the extent of construction activities are the same for this alternative and the proposed project, impacts related to PM<sub>10</sub> emissions would be the same, as compared to the proposed project.

Both the proposed project and the No Canal Street Access Alternative could result in the release of NOA into the air. If on-site rocks contain asbestos, grading and construction activities could release asbestos fibers into the environment, if not properly controlled. Because the release of NOA is directly related to the extent of land disturbance activities, and the land disturbance is the same with the No Canal Street Alternative and the proposed project, impacts related to NOA would be the same.

Under the No Canal Street Access Alternative, vehicle trips would not be reduced as compared to the proposed project, and congestion would be greater at the Primary Access. The increase of traffic congestion would result in more air pollutants being emitted by project-related traffic. In regard to the Bell Road/New Airport Road intersection, for which CALINE4 "hot-spot" modeling was performed, the proposed project's CO emissions are predicted to be 3.6 parts per million (ppm) for the 1-hour scenario, which is below the State and federal standards of 20.0 ppm and 35.0 ppm, respectively. In addition, the proposed project's CO emissions for the 8-hour scenario are predicted to be 3.6 ppm, which is also below the State and federal standards of 9.0 ppm. CO emissions with this alternative would be expected to increase very slightly, but would still remain within the allowable threshold. Therefore, the proposed project's impacts related to an increase in local CO concentrations would be less-than-significant. Because the No Canal Street Access Alternative is projected to increase traffic congestion at the Primary Access, and CO emissions are directly related to traffic congestion, the No Canal Street Access Alternative would have a greater impact as compared to the proposed project.

Operation of the proposed project would not result in total predicted emissions of ROG, NO<sub>x</sub>, PM<sub>10</sub>, and CO that would exceed the PCAPCD threshold of 82 pounds per day, and the impact would therefore be less-than-significant. Projected ROG and NO<sub>x</sub> emissions with the proposed project are 76.76 and 51.62, respectively. In addition, a projected PM<sub>10</sub> emission with the proposed project is 80.01 pounds per day, which is below the PCAPCD's PM<sub>10</sub> threshold. Furthermore, the proposed project's operation would result in the creation of 436.21 pounds per day of CO, which does not exceed PCAPCD's CO threshold of 550 pounds per day. Because operational activities with the No Canal Street Access Alternative would be generally the same as the proposed project, ROG, NO<sub>x</sub>, PM<sub>10</sub>, and CO emissions would be expected to remain the same under the No Canal Street Access Alternative, as compared to the proposed project.

The No Canal Street Access Alternative, like the proposed project, is expected to have a less-than-significant impact related to sensitive receptors to odors. Impacts related to odors would be directly related to the on-site fueling station, as activities associated with commercial activities generally do not generate odor impacts. However, the air quality chapter concluded that exposure of sensitive receptors to Toxic Air Contaminants (TACs) associated with the proposed fueling station would not exceed the Placer County Significant Risk Thresholds at the anticipated throughput of 9 million gallons per year. However, the PCAPCD requires a Health Risk Assessment (HRA) to be submitted and since an HRA has not been prepared for the project, impacts related to the proposed fueling station would be potentially significant. Because operational activities with the No Canal Street Access Alternative would be generally the same as the proposed project, TACs associated with the proposed fueling would be expected to remain the same under the No Canal Street Access Alternative, as compared to the proposed project.

Overall, because construction activities under the No Canal Street Access Alternative would remain generally unchanged from the proposed project conditions, the No Canal Street Access Alternative would have a similar impact in regard to air quality during construction activities as compared to the proposed project. However, because during operational activities the No Canal Street Access Alternative would result in higher traffic congestion at the Primary Access, thereby increasing emissions, the No Canal Street Access Alternative would result in a greater impact in regard to air quality than the proposed project during operational activities.

### Noise

Noise impacts with the No Canal Street Access Alternative would vary slightly from the proposed project. The No Canal Street Access Alternative would reduce the amount of vehicular traffic along Canal Street by 138 maximum peak hour trips, which would result in a reduction in the ambient noise level in the Canal Street area, as compared to the proposed project. The DEIR determined that during operational activities, the proposed project would have less-than-significant impacts associated with increased traffic noise affecting sensitive receptors located east and north of the site. Therefore, this Alternative would also have a less-than-significant impact to adjacent sensitive receptors due to an increase in traffic noise. Activities associated with the construction of the proposed project would result in elevated noise levels, with maximum noise levels ranging from 77 to 85 dB at a distance of 50 feet. Because construction activities associated with the No Canal Street Access Alternative would be the same as those of the proposed project, noise during construction activities would also be the same.

On-site operational activities resulting from the proposed project that have the potential to exceed Placer County noise standards include: truck circulation, loading dock activities, trash compactor, rooftop mechanical equipment, parking lot activities, and the outdoor home/garden center public address (PA) system. The DEIR concluded that impacts that are considered potentially significant in regard to operational noise for the proposed project include truck circulation, loading dock activities, parking lot sweeping activities. These impacts would be reduced to a less-than-significant level with the implementation of mitigation measures. The DEIR concluded that trash compactor noise, rooftop mechanical equipment, parking lot activity, and PA system in the Home/Garden Center would result in a less-than-significant impact during operational activities resulting from the proposed project. Because activities during the operation of the proposed project would be to the same extent as the No Canal Street Access Alternative, impacts would also be similar.

Although the findings with the proposed project were deemed less-than-significant, or would be brought to a less-than-significant level with implementation of mitigation measures, impacts related to noise would be reduced even further under the No Canal Street Access Alternative because of the location of sensitive receptors in relation to the one remaining access location. Overall, the No Canal Street Access Alternative would have fewer impacts in regard to noise than the proposed project.

#### Soils, Geology, and Seismicity

Soil, geology, and seismicity impacts with the No Canal Street Access Alternative would be similar to the proposed project. The total disturbance area would remain unchanged, resulting in a potentially significant impact in regard to erosion and sediment control. The project site is not located in a region of Placer County known for high seismic activity. In addition, the project could be exposed to underlying expansive soils, which would result in a potentially significant impact in regard to structural damage. Construction activities would result in the disturbance of on-site soils, as well as potentially increase soil-erosion processes. Because impacts related to soils, geology, and seismology are directly related to construction activities, and the extent of construction activities under the No Canal Street Access Alternative are generally the same as the proposed project, impacts would be equal.

#### Hydrology and Water Quality

Hydrology and water quality impacts resulting from the No Canal Street Access Alternative would be similar to the proposed project. For example, due to land disturbance from construction activities, short-term surface water quality impacts and alteration of the existing surface water runoff pattern would occur as a result of both the proposed project and this alternative. Similar to development of the No Canal Street Access Alternative would significantly increase the amount of impervious area, therefore altering infiltration and runoff rates, which is considered a potentially significant impact in the DEIR. In addition, the potential exists for urban runoff pollutants to enter and potentially pollute the local water systems. Because land disturbance with the No Canal Street Access Alternative would be the same as the proposed project, and hydrology and water quality impacts are directly related to land disturbance activities, impacts would generally be the same as the proposed project. Therefore, in regard to hydrology and

water quality, the No Canal Street Access Alternative impacts would be the same as the proposed project.

#### Public Services and Utilities

Public service and utility impacts with the No Canal Street Access Alternative would be similar to the proposed project. For example, both the proposed project and the No Canal Street Access Alternative would result in a potentially significant impact to law enforcement, fire protection, and emergency services. The elimination of one access location would not change the need for increased law enforcement and fire services. Because the number of consumers visiting the retail center would be the same as the proposed project, water delivery impacts would remain unchanged as well. The DEIR determined that with proper off-site improvements and minor variations in pipe velocity, fire flow and water conveyance for the project site would be sufficient. However, the project applicant has not received an official water availability letter from PCWA stating that they would have adequate water supply and system service capacity to serve the project site. In addition, because the proposed project would create increased demand for wastewater disposal and would require the construction of new wastewater infrastructure, a potentially significant impact would result. Therefore, the No Canal Street Access Alternative would result in the same public service and utility impacts as compared to the proposed project.

#### Hazardous Materials and Hazards

Hazardous materials and hazard impacts with the No Canal Street Access Alternative would be similar to the proposed project. Both the proposed project and the No Canal Street Access Alternative would include the fueling station in the southeastern portion of the project site. Fuel would be stored on-site in underground storage tanks, which would dispense fuels via nine multipurpose dispensers (18 fuel pumps). Construction activities would involve the short-term use and storage of on-site hazardous materials that are common to construction-sites (fuels, solvents, etc.). Operational activities would include the routine handling of hazardous materials during the transportation, storage, and retail activities associated with the on-site fueling station. Due to the proposed on-site fueling station, potential impacts could result from spills, overfilling, leaks, or rupture of the underground storage tanks. Furthermore, the quantity of such materials sold onsite and potential spills could expose the public to significant hazards. Buildout of both the proposed project and the No Canal Street Access Alternative would include the same building and associated operational impacts. Therefore, Under the No Canal Street Access Alternative, impacts related to hazards and hazardous materials would remain the same as the proposed project.

#### Mineral Resources

Mineral resource impacts with the No Canal Street Access Alternative would be similar to the proposed project. Like the proposed project, the No Canal Street Access Alternative would not result in a loss of mineral resources. The proposed project site is not located within or near known former or active mining operations. The project site is not within a State-designated Mineral Resources Zone (MRZ). In addition, the PCGP and ABCP have designated the site for

urbanization. Therefore, the Alternative would result in the same mineral resource impacts as the proposed project.

### Socio-Economic

The No Canal Street Access Alternative would not alter the proposed project's conditions related to socio-economic impacts on the project site. Although the No Canal Street Access Alternative would impact existing businesses, the impacts would not result in urban decay. Urban decay is a compounding effect that can result from extended vacancy, deferred maintenance, and abandonment. The urban decay process generally takes several years to materialize fully and is reinforced by declining economic conditions in the broader market area. Urban Decay is generally not the result of a single property standing vacant for a short time in an otherwise vibrant market. The No Canal Street Access Alternative total retail sales would represent a fraction of the total Trade Area retail sales and up to 23 percent of the new retail demand in 2020. The new retail demand would exceed the retail sales volumes for all scenarios in all retail categories except Furnishings & Appliances and Building Materials and Farm Equipment. Existing retailers unable to compete with the No Canal Street Access Alternative would close, creating retail opportunities for new tenants that could compete for the unmet retail demand in other retail categories. Under the No Canal Street Access Alternative, construction of the proposed building would include the same square footage as the proposed project. Similar to the proposed project, the No Canal Street Access Alternative would not result in urban decay or other significant socio-economic impacts. Therefore, the No Canal Street Access Alternative would result in the same impact related to socio-economic impacts as compared to the proposed project.

### **Mixed Use Alternative**

The Mixed Use Alternative would include an approximately 35 percent reduction in square footage associated with the proposed project. Furthermore, the Alternative includes two separate retail buildings, one 64,300-square-foot building and one 35,700-square-foot building, rather than one 155,000-square-foot building as proposed for the project. The Mixed Use Alternative would eliminate the proposed fueling station and relocate proposed parking areas. Parking areas would be relocated from the southeastern portion of the site to the northwestern portion of the site, west of the 64,300-square-foot building. This alternative would have the same primary and secondary access points as those proposed for the project.

### Land Use

The Mixed Use Alternative would develop the site as retail, which is consistent with the site's existing PCGP, ABCP, and County zoning designations. Like the proposed project, land use incompatibilities would be minimal with the Mixed Use Alternative; however, they would be further reduced for this alternative, as compared to the proposed project. The Mixed Use Alternative would achieve the land use objectives for the project site, such as generating tax revenue, creating new jobs, and meeting currently unmet demands of consumers. Under the Mixed Use Alternative, land use remains generally unchanged. Therefore, because the Mixed Use Alternative and the proposed project would both achieve the objectives identified for the

site's current land use designations, the proposed project would have the same impact as the Mixed Use Alternative.

### Biological Resources

Biological resource impacts resulting from the Mixed Use Alternative would be similar to the proposed project. Land disturbance would occur to the same extent as the proposed project. Therefore, a potentially significant impact would occur related to special-status plant species, raptors and migratory bird species, western burrowing owl, and special-status reptile and amphibian species. Mitigation measures would be necessary to bring the potentially significant impacts to a less-than-significant level. In addition, like the proposed project, the Mixed Use Alternative would have a potentially significant impact on trees and waters of the U.S. and the State. Because biological resource impacts are directly related to land disturbance activities, and land disturbance under the Mixed Use Alternative is generally the same as the proposed project, this alternative's impacts to biological resources would be equal.

### Cultural Resources

Cultural resource impacts resulting from the Mixed Use Alternative would be similar to the proposed project. Although the site does not contain any known historical resources, the Mixed Use Alternative, like the proposed project, could result in potential disturbance or destruction of previously unknown archaeological and paleontological resources on-site. Sedimentary rocks and volcanic rock are present throughout Placer County and could contain fossil remains of prehistoric animal and plant life. Therefore, paleontological resources could exist on the project site. With the Mixed Use Alternative, land disturbance would occur to the same extent as the proposed project. Because cultural resource impacts are directly related to land disturbance activities, impacts to cultural resources would be the same as the proposed project.

### Visual Resources

Visual resource impacts resulting from the Mixed Use Alternative would be similar to the proposed project. Both the proposed project and the Mixed Use Alternative would result in a less-than-significant impact in regard to the alteration of the existing visual character of the site and the site's surroundings. The Mixed Use Alternative, like the proposed project, would result in increased sources of light and glare where none currently exist. This alternative, like the proposed project, would include a lighting plan that indicates that the alternative would incorporate shielding of all exterior lighting to prevent spill-over of new sources of light and glare onto adjacent residential properties. However, under the Mixed Use Alternative, the total building floor area would be less than the proposed project, resulting in a smaller building design, and therefore, less light and glare. Furthermore, the elimination of the on-site fueling station under the Mixed Use Alternative would further reduce light and glare on the site. Therefore, because light and glare would be decreased under the Mixed Use Alternative, the Alternative would result in fewer impacts as compared to the proposed project.

## Transportation and Circulation

Transportation and circulation impacts with the Mixed Use Alternative would be similar as compared to the proposed project. Construction activities under the Mixed Use Alternative would include numerous disruptions to the transportation system in and around the project area resulting in a potentially significant impact. Heavy equipment would regularly ingress/egress to and from the project site for purposes such as material delivery, grading, excavating, etc. Construction activities could also temporarily impact the existing Class II and Class III bikeways in the project vicinity. However, any bikeway impacts from construction activities would be temporary in nature and are considered to be less-than-significant.

Overall, the construction and operation of the proposed project is not anticipated to impact the local pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure; however, the proposed sidewalks would need to meet ADA and ABCP standards. Impacts to pedestrian and bikeway access resulting from the Alternative would remain unchanged from the proposed project. Furthermore, the proposed project construction is not expected to alter any existing transit route.

During operational activities, traffic impacts associated with the Mixed Use Alternative would vary as compared to the proposed project. Trip generation data is based on square footage of the proposed building and, therefore, the approximately 35 percent decrease in square footage with the Mixed Use Alternative would result in fewer trips. Specifically, the Mixed Use Alternative would be expected to generate 4,482 daily trips, 102 of which would occur during the AM peak hour, and 420 of which would occur during the PM peak hour. When compared to the proposed project, the Mixed Use Alternative would be expected to generate 2,852 fewer daily trips, and 164 and 207 fewer AM and PM peak trips, respectively. The proposed project under the Discount Club would impact two intersections in the short-term plus project scenario and four intersections in the long-term scenario and the Discount Superstore would impact two intersections in the short-term plus project scenario and five intersections in the long-term scenario. Furthermore, the Mixed Use Alternative would potentially impact two intersections in the short-term scenario and four in the long-term scenario. Therefore, the Mixed Use Alternative would result in fewer intersection impacts as compared to the proposed Discount Superstore and the same for the proposed Discount Club. The impacted intersections would be expected to operate at an unacceptable LOS under the no project conditions. Like the proposed project, the addition of traffic resulting from the Mixed Use Alternative would further increase the delay at the above-mentioned intersections. Overall, impacts related to transportation and circulation would be less with the Mixed Use Alternative as compared to the proposed project.

## Air Quality

Implementation of the proposed project would result in significant impacts in regard to air quality. Construction emissions associated with buildout of the proposed project would exceed the PCAPCD threshold of 82 pounds per day for NO<sub>x</sub>, which would create a significant impact. Mitigation measures would reduce short-term NO<sub>x</sub> emissions associated with construction of the proposed project; however, because implementation of feasible mitigation would not reduce the project's short-term NO<sub>x</sub> emissions below the PCAPCD's significance threshold, the proposed project would result in a significant and unavoidable impact. The Mixed Use Alternative would

include construction and land disturbance activities to the same extent as the proposed project. Because air quality impacts are directly related to construction activities and land disturbance area, the Mixed Use Alternative would be expected to have a similar impact during construction operations, as compared to the proposed project.

Under the Mixed Use Alternative, vehicle trips would not be reduced as compared to the proposed project, and congestion would be generally the same at the two access locations. Construction activities associated with the proposed project would generate PM<sub>10</sub> emissions at a level (121.72 lbs/day) that would exceed the PCAPCD's significance threshold of 82 lbs/day. The Mixed Use Alternative would result in construction activities to the same extent as the proposed project and therefore, impacts in regard to PM<sub>10</sub> emissions during construction activities would remain generally unchanged.

Both the proposed project and the Mixed Use Alternative could result in the release of NOA into the air. If on-site rocks contain asbestos, grading and construction activities could release asbestos fibers into the environment, if not properly controlled. Because the release of NOA is directly related to the extent of land disturbance activities, and the land disturbance is the same with the Mixed Use Alternative and the proposed project, impacts related to NOA would also be the same.

According to the CALINE4 CO analysis for the proposed project, CO emissions at Bell Road and New Airport Road are predicted to be 3.6 ppm for the 1-hour scenario, which is below the State and federal standards of 20.0 ppm and 35.0 ppm, respectively. In addition, the proposed project's CO emissions for the 8-hour scenario are predicted to be 3.6 ppm, which is also below the State and federal standard of 9.0 ppm. CO emissions with the Alternative would be expected to increase very slightly, but would still remain within the allowable threshold. The proposed project's impacts related to an increase in local CO concentrations related to traffic would be less-than-significant. Because the Mixed Use Alternative would result in the same traffic impacts as the proposed project, and CO emissions are directly related to traffic, CO emissions would be similar under the Mixed Use Alternative as compared to the proposed project.

Operation of the proposed project would not result in total predicted emissions of ROG, NO<sub>x</sub>, PM<sub>10</sub>, and CO that would exceed the PCAPCD threshold of 82 pounds per day, and the impact would therefore be less-than-significant. Projected ROG and NO<sub>x</sub> emissions with the proposed project are 76.76 and 51.62, respectively. Projected ROG and NO<sub>x</sub> emissions for the Mixed Use Alternative are estimated at 24.17 and 29.57, respectively. In addition, a projected PM<sub>10</sub> emission with the proposed project is 80.01 pounds per day. Projected PM<sub>10</sub> emissions during operational activities with the Mixed Use Alternative would be 35.05 pounds per day, which is within the PCAPCD's allowable threshold of 82 pounds per day. The proposed project's operation would result in the creation of 436.21 pounds per day of CO. Projected CO emissions with the Mixed Use Alternative during operational activities are predicted to be 292.80 pounds per day, which is within the PCAPCD threshold of 550 pounds per day. Therefore, the Mixed Use Alternative would result in a lesser impact related to ROG, NO<sub>x</sub>, PM<sub>10</sub>, and CO emissions, as compared to the proposed project.

The Mixed Use Alternative, like the proposed project, is expected to have a less-than-significant impact related to sensitive receptors to odors. Impacts related to odors would be directly related to the on-site fueling station, as activities associated with commercial activities generally do not generate odor impacts. Because the Mixed Use Alternative includes the elimination of the fueling station, impacts related to exposure of sensitive receptors to odors would also be eliminated. Furthermore, the Mixed Use Alternative would not have impacts related to the creation of Toxic Air Contaminants (TACs) from an on-site fueling station.

Overall, because construction activities under the Mixed Use Alternative would remain generally unchanged from the proposed project conditions, the Mixed Use Alternative would have a similar impact in regard to air quality during construction activities as compared to the proposed project. However, during operational activities, emissions under the Mixed Use Alternative would be less than the proposed project. Therefore, the Mixed Use Alternative would result in fewer impacts as compared to the proposed project.

### Noise

Noise impacts resulting from the Mixed Use Alternative would be similar as compared to the proposed project. For example, both the proposed project and the Mixed Use Alternative would increase noise levels during construction and operational phases, where nearby sensitive receptors exist. The project site has sensitive receptors in residential areas to the north and east. Activities associated with the construction of the proposed project would result in elevated noise levels, with maximum noise levels ranging from 77 to 85 dB at a distance of 50 feet. Because construction activities associated with the Mixed Use Alternative would generally be the same as those of the proposed project, noise during construction activities would also be similar. During operational activities, the proposed project was determined to have less-than-significant impacts associated with increased traffic noise. Because the Mixed Use Alternative could include a decrease in square footage, and trip generation data is directly related to building area, the Mixed Use Alternative would generate fewer trips as compared to the proposed project. A decrease in trip generation would further decrease noise levels associated with traffic, thereby also resulting in a less-than-significant impact. Therefore, although the proposed project was determined to have less-than-significant impacts related to traffic noise during operational activities, the Mixed Use Alternative would result in less traffic noise as compared to the proposed project.

The following on-site operational activities resulting from the proposed project have the potential to exceed Placer County noise standards: truck circulation, loading dock activities, trash compactors, rooftop mechanical equipment, parking lot activities, and the outdoor home/garden center public address (PA) system. The DEIR concluded that the following impacts would be potentially significant for the proposed project: truck circulation, loading dock activities, and parking lot sweeping activities. These impacts would be reduced to a less-than-significant level with implementation of the mitigation measures in the DEIR. The DEIR concluded that noise related to trash compactors, rooftop mechanical equipment, parking lot activity, and the PA system would be less-than-significant. The Mixed Use Alternative would result in an increase in noise due to loading docks, as compared to the proposed project. The proposed project would include only one loading dock because only one building would be constructed; however, because the Mixed Use Alternative would include development of two buildings, two separate

loading docks would be necessary, thereby increasing noise levels. Although two loading docks would most likely increase noise levels, the reduction in square feet of building space would likely decrease the volume of deliveries to the buildings, thereby decrease noise levels. However, the additional retail building would be located towards the southern end of the site, near the PG&E substation, which is not considered a sensitive receptor site. Overall, because activities related to the operation of the proposed project would be approximately equal to activities related to the operation of the Mixed Use Alternative, impacts would also be similar.

### Soils, Geology, and Seismicity

Soil, geology, and seismicity impacts resulting from the Mixed Use Alternative would be similar to the proposed project. The total disturbance area would remain unchanged, resulting in a potentially significant impact in regard to erosion and sediment control. The project site and vicinity is not located in a region of Placer County known for high seismic activity. Furthermore, the project could be exposed to underlying expansive soils, which would result in a potentially significant impact in regard to structural damage. Construction activities would result in the disturbance of on-site soils, as well as potentially increase the soil-erosion processes. Because impacts related to soils, geology, and seismology are directly related to construction activities, and the extent of construction activities under the Mixed Use Alternative are the same as the proposed project, impacts would be equal.

### Hydrology and Water Quality

Hydrology and water quality impacts resulting from the Mixed Use Alternative would be similar to the proposed project. For example, due to land disturbance from construction activities, short-term surface water quality impacts, and alteration of the existing surface water runoff pattern would occur as a result of both the proposed project and this Alternative. Similar to development of the Mixed Use Alternative, like the proposed project, would significantly increase the amount of impervious area, therefore altering infiltration and runoff rates, which is considered a potentially significant impact in the DEIR. However, the Mixed Use Alternative would generally have the same impervious areas as the proposed project. In addition, the potential exists for urban runoff pollutants to enter and potentially pollute the local water systems. Because land disturbance with the Mixed Use Alternative would be the same as the proposed project, and hydrology and water quality impacts are directly related to land disturbance activities, impacts would generally be the same as the proposed project. Therefore, in regard to hydrology and water quality, the impacts associated with the Mixed Use Alternative would be the same as the proposed project.

### Public Services and Utilities

Public service and utility impacts resulting from the Mixed Use Alternative would vary slightly from the proposed project. For example, both the proposed project and the Mixed Use Alternative would result in a potentially significant impact to law enforcement, fire protection, and emergency services. The development of two buildings rather than one, and the decrease in building square footage, would not substantially change the need for increased law enforcement and fire services. However, the elimination of the fueling station could result in less demand for

fire services, as the public would not be exposed to potential fire hazards associated with the fueling station. In addition, the number of consumers visiting the retail center would be less than the proposed project because the fueling station would not exist to attract additional consumers. Furthermore, the proposed project would potentially impact water supply and delivery. The DEIR determined that with proper off-site improvements and minor variations in pipe velocity, fire flow and water conveyance for the project site would be sufficient. However, the project applicant has not received an official water availability letter from PCWA stating that they would have adequate water supply and system service capacity to serve the project site. Water supply and delivery impacts would remain unchanged. In addition, because the proposed project would create increased demand for wastewater disposal and would require the construction of new wastewater infrastructure, a potentially significant impact would result. Overall, the Mixed Use Alternative would result in fewer impacts as compared to the proposed project.

#### Hazardous Materials and Hazards

The Mixed Use Alternative would eliminate the fueling station in the southeastern portion of the project site. Therefore, hazards associated with the on-site fueling station, and potential impacts resulting from spills, overfilling, leaks, or rupture of the underground storage tanks would be eliminated as well. Furthermore, public exposure to significant hazards would not exist. Therefore, under the Mixed Use Alternative, potential impacts related to hazardous materials and hazards would be reduced as compared to the proposed project.

#### Mineral Resources

Impacts to mineral resources under the Mixed Use Alternative would be similar to the proposed project. The Mixed Use Alternative, like the proposed project, would not result in a loss of mineral resources. The proposed project site is not located within or near known former or active mining operations. The project site is not within a State-designated Mineral Resources Zone (MRZ). In addition, the PCGP and ABCP have designated the site for urbanization. Therefore, the Mixed Use Alternative would result in the same impact as the proposed project.

#### Socio-Economic

The Mixed Use Alternative would not considerably alter the proposed project's conditions related to socio-economic impacts on the project site. Urban decay is a compounding effect that can result from extended vacancy, deferred maintenance, and abandonment. The urban decay process generally takes several years to materialize fully and is reinforced by declining economic conditions in the broader market area. Urban Decay is generally not the result of a single property standing vacant for a short time in an otherwise vibrant market. The development of two retail buildings rather than one larger retail building would not significantly change the socio-economic impacts as compared to the proposed project. Fewer consumers would visit the site due the lack of the fueling station, but the decrease in consumers should not be sizeable enough to significantly change impacts related to socio-economic issues. The proposed project total retail sales would represent a fraction of the total Trade Area retail sales and up to 23 percent of the new retail demand in 2020. The new retail demand would exceed the retail sales

volumes for all scenarios in all retail categories except Furnishings and Appliances and Building Materials and Farm Equipment.

The 35 percent decrease in building square footage resulting under the Mixed Use Alternative would decrease retail sales volume, resulting in a lesser impact to socio-economics as compared to the proposed project. Existing retailers unable to compete with the Mixed Use Alternative would close, creating retail opportunities for new tenants that could compete for the unmet retail demand in other retail categories. Although similar to the proposed project, the Mixed Use Alternative would impact existing businesses, but the impacts would not result in urban decay. Furthermore, the proposed project was found to have a less-than-significant impact on socio-economic impacts. A 35 percent reduction of square-footage under the Mixed Use Alternative would further decrease impacts related to socio-economics. Therefore, the Mixed Use Alternative would result in a lesser impact related to socio-economic impacts as compared to the proposed project.

### Summary Table

Table 17-1 summarizes and compares impacts related to the project alternatives.

<b>Table 17-1 Environmental Impacts of the Proposed Project and Project Alternatives</b>				
<b>Impact</b>	<b>Proposed Project</b>	<b>No Project Alternative</b>	<b>No Canal Street Access Alternative</b>	<b>Mixed Use Alternative</b>
<b>Land Use</b>	Less-Than-Significant	Less	Less	Equal
<b>Biological Resources</b>	Potentially Significant Without Mitigation	Less	Equal	Equal
<b>Cultural Resources</b>	Potentially Significant Without Mitigation	Less	Equal	Equal
<b>Visual Resources</b>	Less-Than-Significant	Less	Equal	Less
<b>Transportation and Circulation</b>	Significant and Unavoidable	Less	Equal*	Less*
<b>Air Quality</b>	Significant and Unavoidable	Less	More*	Less*
<b>Noise</b>	Potentially Significant Without Mitigation	Less	Less	Equal
<b>Soils, Geology, and Seismicity</b>	Potentially Significant Without Mitigation	Less	Equal	Equal
<b>Hydrology and Water Quality</b>	Potentially Significant Without Mitigation	Less	Equal	Equal
<b>Public Services and Utilities</b>	Potentially Significant Without Mitigation	Less	Equal	Less
<b>Hazardous Materials and Hazards</b>	Potentially Significant Without Mitigation	Less	Equal	Less
<b>Mineral Resources</b>	Less-Than-Significant	Less	Equal	Equal
<b>Socio-Economics</b>	Less-Than-Significant	Less	Equal	Less
* Significant and Unavoidable impact would remain				
Less = Fewer impacts than proposed project Equal = Impacts equal to proposed project More = More impacts than proposed project				

## **17.4 ENVIRONMENTALLY SUPERIOR ALTERNATIVE**

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An EIR is required to identify the environmentally superior alternative from among the range of reasonable alternatives that are evaluated. Section 15126(e)(2) of the CEQA Guidelines requires that an environmentally superior alternative be designated and states, “If the environmentally superior alternative is the ‘no project’ alternative, the EIR shall also identify an environmentally superior alternative among the other alternatives.”

Designating a superior alternative depends in large part on what environmental effects one considers most important. The Draft EIR does not presume to make this determination; rather, the determinations of which impacts are more important, are left to the reader and the decisionmakers.

Finally, it should be noted that the environmental considerations are one portion of the factors that must be considered by the public and the decisionmakers in deliberations on the proposed project and the alternatives. Other factors of importance include urban design, economics, social factors, and fiscal considerations. In addition, the superior alternative would, ideally, still provide opportunities to achieve most of the stated project objectives. The proposed project objectives are as follows:

1. Provide a retail project that will provide a variety of products to serve an unmet demand of consumers in Placer County.
2. Provide a retail development that will result in a fiscal benefit to Placer County providing new sales tax and property tax revenues.
3. Provide a retail development in close proximity that will result in reduced travel lengths for Placer County residents.
4. Provide a retail development that can readily be served by existing infrastructure and result in benefits to the County in the construction of new sewer lines.
5. Provide a retail development that will provide synergy with a new recently constructed retail project adjacent to the site.
6. Provide a retail development that will create new jobs.
7. Provide an infill retail project that will clean up a partially blighted site consisting of abandoned concrete slabs, pipes and retaining walls.
8. Implement the PCGP Land Use Policy, the Auburn/Bowman Community Plan Land Use Plan and the North Placer County Redevelopment Agency’s Land Use Plan to develop a retail project on this property.
9. Design and construct a retail building that will provide a buffer between the residential neighborhoods to the north and east and more intensive commercial/industrial uses to the

south and west, with the end goal of a retail project that is not only compatible on all fronts with its adjoining uses, but also contributes to an overall sense of community in the area.

The Mixed Use Alternative would be the environmentally superior alternative to the proposed project because the Mixed Use Alternative would result in fewer impacts related to visual resources, air quality, public services and utilities, hazardous materials and hazards, and socio-economics. Furthermore, the Mixed Use Alternative would achieve all of the proposed project's objectives, as listed above.

In comparison to the Mixed Use Alternative, the No Canal Street Access Alternative would have reduced potential impacts to noise. Furthermore, the No Canal Street Access would increase impacts in regard to air quality. All other impacts would have been equal as compared to the proposed project.

Visual resource impacts for both the proposed project and the Mixed Use Alternative would be less-than-significant. However, under the Mixed Use Alternative, the total building floor area would be less than the proposed project, the fueling station would be eliminated, and glare would be reduced as compared to the proposed project.

Implementation of the proposed project would result in significant impacts in regard to air quality. Construction emissions associated with the proposed project would be the same as the Mixed Use Alternative, because air quality impacts during construction activities directly correlate to land disturbance activities, land disturbance activities would be the same under both scenarios. Because the Mixed Use Alternative includes the elimination of the fueling station, impacts related to exposure of sensitive receptors to odors and creation of Toxic Air Contaminants (TACs) would be eliminated. It should be noted that the impact related to NO<sub>x</sub> emissions would remain significant unavoidable with the implementation of the Mixed Use Alternative.

Public service and utility impacts with the Mixed Use Alternative would vary slightly from the proposed project. For example, both the proposed project and the Mixed Use Alternative would result in a potentially significant impact to law enforcement, fire protection, and emergency services. The elimination of the fueling station with the Mixed Use Alternative would result in less demand for fire services, as well as fewer consumers visiting the site and therefore decreasing potential exposure to hazardous materials. In addition, the proposed project would potentially impact water supply and delivery. Overall, the Mixed Use Alternative would result in fewer impacts as compared to the proposed project.

As mentioned above, the Mixed Use Alternative would eliminate the fueling station in the southeastern portion of the project site. Therefore, hazards associated with the on-site fueling station, and potential impacts resulting from spills, overfilling, leaks, or rupture of the underground storage tanks would be eliminated as well. Furthermore, public exposure to significant hazards would not exist. Therefore, under the Mixed Use Alternative, potential impacts related to hazardous materials and hazards would be less than the proposed project.

The development of two retail buildings rather than one larger retail building with the Mixed Use Alternative would not significantly change the socio-economic impacts as compared to the proposed project. Fewer consumers would visit the site due the lack of the fueling station, but the decrease in consumers would not be sizeable enough to significantly change impacts related to socio-economic issues. Although the Mixed Use Alternative would impact existing businesses, the impacts would not result in urban decay. Furthermore, the proposed project was found to have a less-than-significant impact on socio-economic impacts. A 35 percent reduction of square-footage under the Mixed Use Alternative would further decrease impacts related to socio-economics. Therefore, the Mixed Use Alternative would result in a lesser impact related to socio-economic impacts as compared to the proposed project.