# 17.0 ALTERNATIVES TO THE PROJECT

## 17.1 STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

The purpose of the EIR alternatives analysis is to describe a range of reasonable alternatives to the proposed Project that could feasibly obtain most of the basic objectives of the Project and to evaluate the comparative merits of the alternatives (State CEQA Guidelines, Section 15126.6[a]). An EIR need not consider every conceivable alternative to a project, nor is it required to consider alternatives that are infeasible. The State CEQA Guidelines require that the discussion be focused on those alternatives that are capable of avoiding or substantially lessening any significant effects of the project, even if they impede the attainment of the project objectives to some degree or would be more costly (CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6[b]).

CEQA requires an EIR to identify project alternatives and to indicate the manner in which a project's significant effects may be mitigated or avoided. However, it does not mandate that the EIR itself contain an analysis of the feasibility of the various project alternatives or mitigation measures that it identifies (Public Resources Code, Sections 21002.1, subd (a): 21100 and subd (b)4, 2004). As the lead agency, Placer County bears the responsibility for the decisions that have to be made before the project can go forward. These decisions include but are not limited to the determinations of feasibility and whether the benefits of the project outweigh its significant effects on the environment (Public Resources Code Sections 21002.1, subd (b) and (c); Section 21082).

According to the State CEQA Guidelines, an EIR need only examine in detail those alternatives that could feasibly meet most of the basic objectives of the project. When addressing feasibility, CEQA states that "among the factors that may be taken into account when addressing the feasibility of alternatives are site suitability, jurisdictional boundaries, and whether the applicant can reasonably acquire, control or otherwise have access to alternative sites" (State CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6). The State CEQA Guidelines also specify that the alternatives discussion should not be remote and speculative; however, they need not be presented in the same level of detail as the assessment of the proposed project.

The State CEQA Guidelines indicate that several factors need to be considered in determining the range of alternatives to be analyzed in an EIR and the level of analytical detail that should be provided for each alternative. These factors include: (1) the nature of the significant impacts of the proposed project; (2) the ability of alternatives to avoid or lessen the significant impacts associated with the project; (3) the ability of the alternatives to meet the objectives of the project; and (4) the feasibility of the alternatives. These factors should be unique for each project.

The significant environmental impacts of the proposed Project that the alternatives will seek to eliminate or reduce were determined and based upon the findings contained within each technical section evaluated in Sections 4.0 through 16.0 of this DEIR.

## 17.2 PROJECT OBJECTIVES

So that alternatives could be evaluated effectively, the Project objectives were used to determine the reasonableness and feasibility of each alternative. Objectives (as presented in Section 3.0) considered for the purpose of alternative formulation are as follows:

- Develop the Amazing Facts house of worship facility and offices to accommodate the multifaceted ministry that supports their local and worldwide mission;
- Develop a house of worship facility to serve the surrounding community;

- Provide development that exhibits architectural design consistent with the Granite Bay Community Plan and Placer County Design Guidelines;
- Create an efficient circulation pattern for vehicles, pedestrians, and bicyclists;
- Provide adequate infrastructure and public services to support the proposed development;
- Identify and incorporate natural resources into the proposed development area as feasible;
- Provide for the orderly and systematic development of the proposed Project in a method consistent with the Placer County Zoning Ordinance;
- Attain the goal of eventually building a 2,000-seat facility with supporting ministry space;
- Provide phasing of the Project that will address the possibility of future growth in the congregation; and
- Build and provide a worship facility that will accommodate the long-term growth and ultimate congregation size.

Alternatives are evaluated for their potential to eliminate significant impacts associated with the proposed project, reduce them to a level that is less than significant, increase their magnitude, or result in additional significant impacts beyond those associated with the proposed Project. The mitigation measures identified for proposed Project impacts would apply to the alternatives analyzed, where impacts are similar in nature and the mitigation measure would reduce the impact of an alternative to a less than significant level.

## 17.3 APPROACH TO ALTERNATIVES ANALYSIS

In accordance with the alternatives analysis requirement of CEQA, two alternative projects and a no project alternative were identified and analyzed. These alternatives represent viable options for development of the site, with varying types and degrees of development. Each alternative was chosen as a way to potentially reduce one or more environmental impacts, while still achieving some or all of the Project objectives. The rationale for the selection of these particular alternatives is explained in the following paragraphs.

For many projects, alternate sites for development are evaluated. However, for this Project, only alternatives located on the Project site were considered. An off-site alternative would be described as the construction of a house of worship and associated facilities comparable to the size, scale, and function of the proposed Project, but located at another site within the Granite Bay Community Plan area in Placer County. The objective of an off-site alternative would be to evaluate potential sites that would achieve the Project objectives of locating a house of worship within the Granite Bay community and providing improved infrastructure and circulation to support the proposed facility. However, upon review of potential sites within the Granite Bay community with Placer County staff, it was determined that there were no comparable sites that could accommodate a house of worship and its accessory uses similar to that of the Project. Therefore, an off-site alternative was not evaluated in this Draft EIR.

Other than the alternative site, there were no other alternatives considered by the County that were later rejected.

In accordance with the requirements of the CEQA Guidelines and relevant case law, the presentation and analysis of alternatives is not as detailed as that of the Project. The presentation and analysis of alternatives, however, is designed to provide enough information to the public and decision-makers to allow for a reasoned, meaningful discussion of the relative merits of the alternatives versus the Project. Normally, alternatives analyses in CEQA documents do not include any diagrammatic representation of alternatives. The illustrations in this section are intended to clarify the concepts presented in the alternatives and encourage a meaningful deliberation on the merits. The illustrations are *conceptual drawings* solely for the purposes of this analysis and do not represent an actual project. Though the analysis comparing the alternatives is sound and thorough enough for comparative purposes, additional information and analysis would be recommended before approving any of the alternatives as projects using this EIR. The alternative concepts, however, are feasible and, in general, could accommodate any relevant mitigation measures included within this EIR – perhaps in some slightly altered form.

The following section lists the design characteristics of each alternative and provides explanations of deviations from the original Project design. Impacts associated with each alternative, comparisons between alternatives, and a discussion of whether the alternative meets Project objectives are also provided.

## 17.4 IDENTIFICATION OF PROJECT ALTERNATIVES

## 17.4.1 No Project - Alternative 1

Alternative 1 is the "No Project" alternative for the Amazing Facts Ministry project. Evaluation of the No Project alternative is required by CEQA. By definition, the No Project alternative assumes that no development would occur on the Project site. None of the Project impacts would occur with implementation of the No Project alternative. The site is assumed to remain in its existing condition as a vacant parcel of undeveloped land.

Under the No Project alternative, environmental conditions on the site would remain unchanged. Impacts predicted to occur as a result of the proposed Project would not occur, including increased traffic on nearby roadways and intersections. Cumulative development would occur as described in this EIR, but the No Project alternative would not contribute to these effects. As shown in **Table 17-1**, the No Project alternative would not contribute to these effects and would cause the fewest environmental impacts of any alternative. However, this alternative would not achieve any of the objectives of the proposed Project.

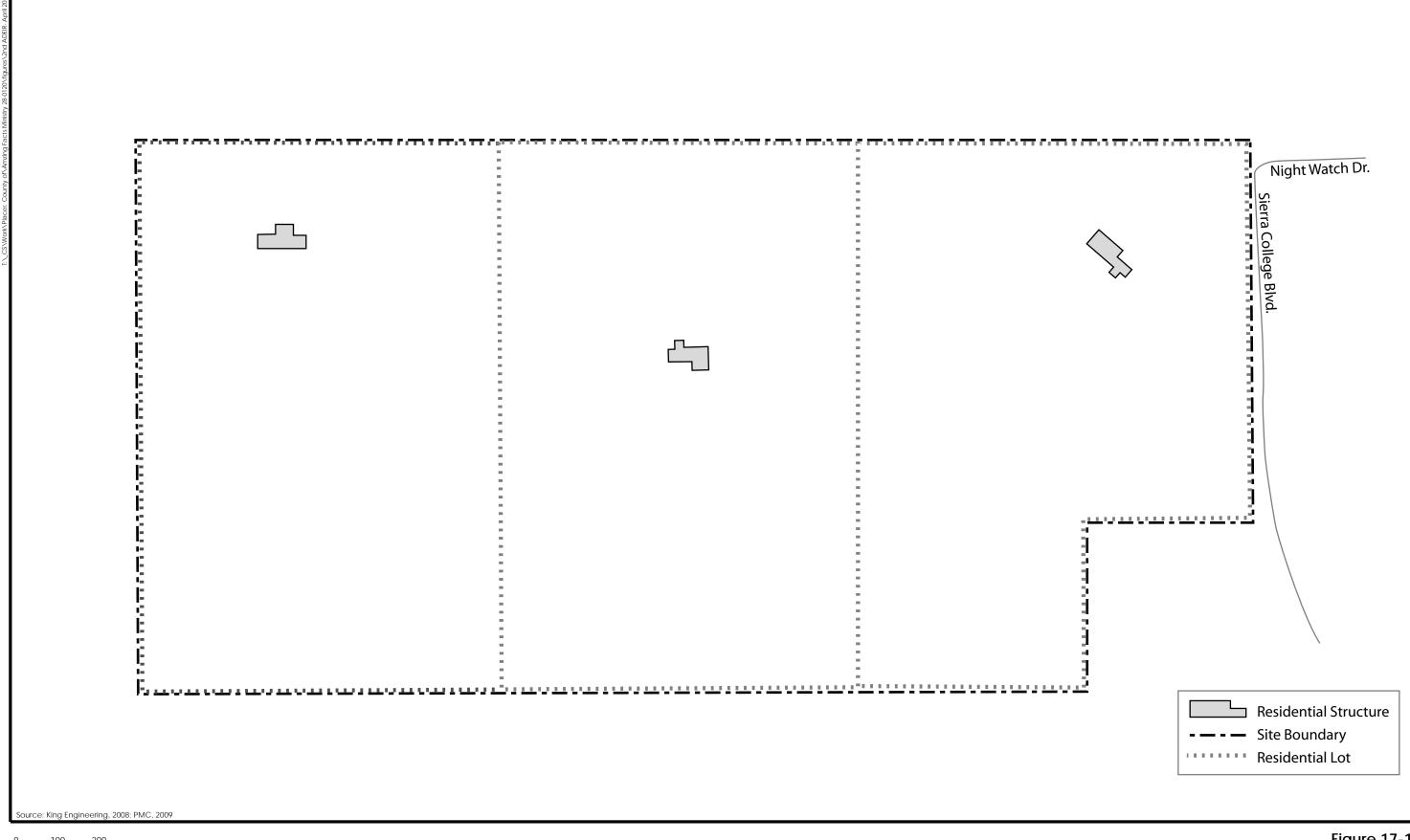
# 17.4.2 Development Under Existing Zoning – Alternative 2

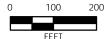
Alternative 2 would involve development of the Project site consistent with the existing General Plan and Community Plan land use designation of Rural Estate 4.6-acre to 20-acre minimum and zoning of F-B-X 20-acre minimum (farm, combining a minimum building site size of 20 acres). This current zoning allows creation of lots no smaller than 20 acres in size. Therefore, implementation of Alternative 2 would allow for the creation of three lots (minimum of 20 acres) with three residential units (**Figure 17-1**). Alternative 2 would not achieve any of the objectives of the proposed Project.

# 17.4.3 Reduced-Scale HOUSE OF WORSHIP - Alternative 3

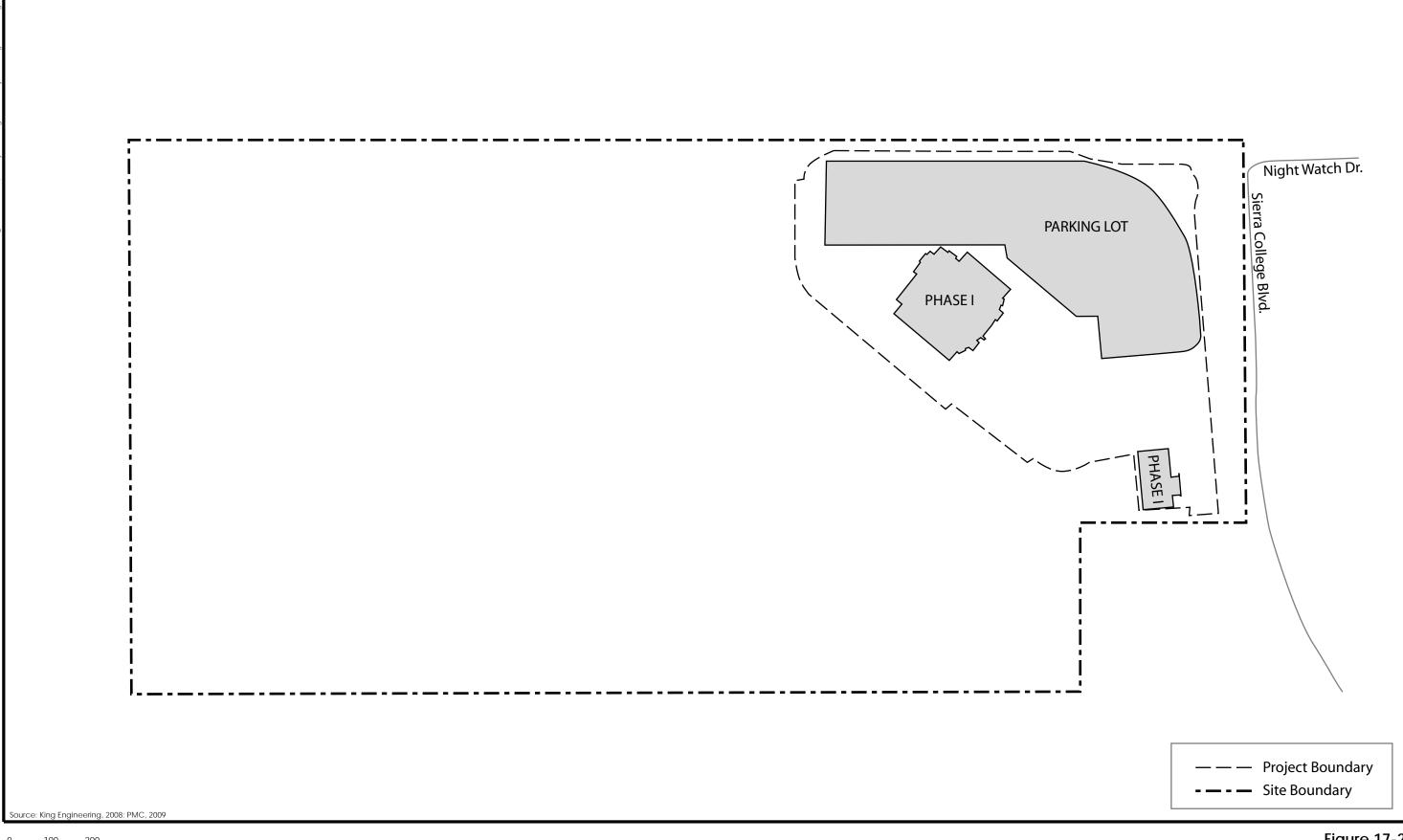
Alternative 3 would involve construction of just Phase I of the proposed Project. Phase I includes the 106,800-square-foot multi-use house of worship facility, an 11,220-square-foot resource

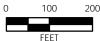
center building, and a total of 625 parking spaces (**Figure 17-2**). Access to the site is anticipated to remain the same for this alternative. Since Alternative 3 includes the largest portion of development proposed for the Project, it would meet the majority of the Project objectives.













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## 17.5 COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES

The following section provides a comparison of the environmental impacts associated with each of the Project alternatives. The impacts of each of the alternatives are compared among the various environmental topic areas (air quality, biological resources, etc.) associated with the proposed Project (discussed in Section 3.0, Project Description, of this DEIR). Significant effects that would be caused by the choice of an alternative are discussed to the extent that the effects are different from the Project as proposed. As previously mentioned, the significant environmental impacts of the proposed Project that the alternatives will seek to eliminate or reduce were determined and based upon the findings contained within each technical section evaluated in Sections 4.0 through 16.0 of this DEIR.

The section concludes with the designation of the environmentally superior alternative.

## 17.5.1 Alternative 1: No Project

#### **Characteristics of Alternative**

Under the No Project alternative, it is assumed that the Project site would remain vacant, with no improvements to the site or its surroundings. Existing habitat would be maintained and no substantial change to existing site conditions would occur.

## **Environmental Considerations**

Land Use and Agriculture: Alternative 1 would produce no changes on the Project site. The site would remain in its existing condition. There would be no conversion of existing land use designated Rural Estate to urban land uses. Compatibility of the Project site with adjacent uses would not change. Under this alternative, the proposed Project would not be built, and there would be no land use impacts. Land use impacts under Alternative 1 would be better than those under the proposed Project.

**Population, Housing, and Employment:** The proposed Project consists of the construction and operation of a house of worship facility with no residential uses and thus no population or housing growth. Similarly, Alternative 1 would produce no changes on the Project site and thus no growth in population and housing on the site. Therefore, population, housing, and employment impacts are similar under both Alternative 1 and the proposed Project.

**Biological Resources:** Implementation of the proposed Project would result in development on the Project site that would substantially and adversely impact, either directly or through habitat modifications, special-status plant and animal species. Alternative 1 would not result in any development or ground disturbance on the Project site. Therefore, existing biological communities on the Project site would be entirely preserved and disturbance and/or removal of special-status plant and animal species, jurisdictional waters including wetlands, protected trees, and sensitive biological communities would not occur. Therefore, impacts to biological resources would be better under Alternative 1 than under the proposed Project.

**Cultural Resources:** Neither Alternative 1 nor the proposed Project would affect any historical buildings or sites, as the Project site is vacant and none have been identified nearby. However, the proposed Project includes construction of a total combined building square footage of 208,020 square feet, a parking lot, and associated roadway improvements. The potential exists for previously undiscovered archaeological and paleontological resources to be uncovered during

construction activities. In comparison, Alternative 1 would not result in any development or ground disturbance on the Project site. Therefore, Alternative 1 would not result in the potential to adversely impact undiscovered archaeological and paleontological resources on the Project site during construction activities. Therefore, impacts to undiscovered archaeological and paleontological resources would be better under Alternative 1 than under the proposed Project.

**Visual Resources:** The Project site sits at the top of a hillside providing extensive views from the Project site of rural and open space areas below the Project site to the south and east. These views extend for many miles, generally include natural vegetation and scattered residential development, and are considered an important component of the area's visual character. Due to the proposed locations and heights of the buildings, construction of the proposed Project would partially block scenic views from the residential and office uses located north and west of the Project site as well as views from Sierra College Boulevard. Alternative 1 would produce no changes on the Project site. Therefore, existing views would be preserved and impacts to visual resources would be better under Alternative 1 than under the proposed Project.

**Traffic and Circulation:** Alternative 1 would have no impact on traffic as no development would be placed on the site. Site access would not be necessary and no increase in parking demand would occur since the site would remain in its existing, undeveloped state. In comparison, implementation of the proposed Project would generate additional vehicle trips resulting in unacceptable levels of service at multiple study area intersections. Furthermore, the proposed Project site plan and roadway improvements could result in traffic congestion at site access points, potentially resulting in unsafe conditions. Therefore, impacts to traffic and circulation would be better under Alternative 1 than under the proposed Project.

**Air Quality:** Alternative 1 would not result in any short-term construction emissions or long-term operational emissions associated with motor vehicles and stationary sources (i.e., heating, cooling) as no development would be placed on the site. Construction and operation of the proposed Project would result in increases in air pollutant emissions. These emissions could contribute to new exceedances of attainment pollutants or continued exceedances of ozone and  $PM_{10}$  standards. Therefore, impacts to air quality would be better under Alternative 1 than under the proposed Project.

**Noise:** Implementation of the proposed Project would generate noise associated with large HVAC units, parking lots and traffic, and construction activities. In comparison, Alternative 1 would produce no changes on the Project site and the site would remain in its existing condition. Therefore, existing noise conditions on the site would remain unchanged under Alternative 1, and noise impacts resulting from implementation of Alternative 1 would be better than under the proposed Project.

Geology, Soils, and Seismicity: Alternative 1 would not result in impacts relative to exposure to seismic impacts, unstable geologic units, and expansive soils as no changes would occur on the Project site and the site would remain in its existing condition. Similarly, Alternative 1 would result in no clearing, grading, and excavation activities that would remove vegetative cover from Project site soils and expose soils to erosion potential from wind, rain, and surface flow as a result of construction activities. The proposed Project includes construction of a total combined building square footage of 208,020 square feet, a parking lot, and associated roadway improvements that would involve significant ground disturbance and potential for erosion. Therefore, geology and soil impacts under Alternative 1 would be better than under the proposed Project.

**Hydrology and Water Quality:** Construction and operation of the proposed Project would increase impervious surfaces on the Project site and could introduce sediments and other contaminants into stormwater runoff, potentially resulting in the degradation of downstream surface water and groundwater quality. In addition, development of the proposed Project would increase stormwater runoff rates and volumes when compared with existing conditions due to the increase in impervious surfaces. Alternative 1 would not increase impervious surfaces on the site and would not result in any changes to water quality or drainage patterns. Therefore, impacts associated with hydrology and water quality are considered better under Alternative 1 than under the proposed Project.

**Public Services and Utilities:** Alternative 1 would produce no changes on the Project site. As no increase in population or housing would occur under Alternative 1, there would be no increase in demand for fire protection and emergency medical services, law enforcement, public schools, electrical, gas, cable, and telecommunication services, parks and recreation, solid waste service, water service, and wastewater service. Likewise, the proposed Project would not substantially impact public schools or parks and recreation services because the proposed Project does not include a residential component and would not generate students or park users. However, the proposed Project would increase demand for fire protection and emergency medical services, law enforcement, electrical, gas, cable, and telecommunication services, solid waste service, water service, and wastewater service. Therefore, overall impacts to public services and utilities resulting from implementation of Alternative 1 would be better than under the proposed Project.

**Hazardous Materials and Hazards:** Neither Alternative 1, which includes no development, nor the proposed Project, which includes a house of worship and parking facilities, would require the transport, use, or disposal of significant quantities of hazardous materials for its daily operation. In addition, the Project site is not located near any of the major routes for hazardous material transport through Placer County, and there are no recorded hazardous materials sites on or within 1 mile of the Project site. The Project site location, surrounding uses, and lack of ease of accessibility preclude the unwanted disposal of hazardous materials on the site. Therefore, impacts associated with hazards and hazardous materials would be similar for both Alternative 1 and the proposed Project.

Greenhouse Gas and Climate Change: The proposed Project has the potential to result in an increase in greenhouse gas (GHGs) emissions from construction activities, generation of vehicle traffic, energy use, and the use of gasoline-powered landscaping equipment. In comparison, GHGs and global climate change would not be impacted by Alternative 1 because no construction would occur and no increase in traffic or energy use would occur. Therefore, climate change impacts resulting from Alternative 1 would be better than under the proposed Project.

# 17.5.2 Alternative 2: Development Under Existing Zoning

#### **Characteristics of Alternative**

This alternative would allow the development of three rural residential units on three parcels (minimum of 20 acres each), consistent with the current zoning of the site (**Figure 17-1**).

Since this alternative does not include any of the components of the proposed Project, it would not meet any of the objectives of the proposed Project.

# **Environmental Considerations**

**Land Use and Agriculture:** Alternative 2 would result in conversion of vacant land to three lots (minimum of 20 acres each) with one rural residential unit on each lot. This intensity of development would be substantially less than the proposed Project, resulting in less potential for land use conflicts to occur. Therefore, impacts to land use would be better under Alternative 2 than the proposed Project.

**Population, Housing, and Employment:** The proposed Project consists of the construction and operation of a house of worship facility with no residential uses and thus no population or housing growth. In comparison, development of three lots (minimum of 20 acres each) with one rural residential unit on each lot, as would occur under Alternative 2, would result in a small amount of growth in population and housing on the site. The average household size in Placer County is 2.564 persons per household. Therefore, Alternative 2 would be expected to result in an increase of approximately 9 persons and three housing units on the Project site. This increase is negligible in the context of the County's overall 2009 population of 339,577. Therefore, population, housing, and employment impacts are similar under both Alternative 2 and the proposed Project.

**Biological Resources:** Alternative 2 would result in substantially less development and ground disturbance on the proposed Project site than the proposed Project (**see Figure 17-1**). A large portion of the Project site would remain vacant and undisturbed under Alternative 2, thus resulting in preservation of more of the existing biological resources (wetlands, trees and oak woodland). Depending on the placement of the residential structures and associated building pads, driveways, leach fields, and landscaping under Alternative 2, disturbance and/or removal of special-status plant species, jurisdictional waters including wetlands, protected trees, and sensitive biological communities could be avoided and impacts significantly reduced. Therefore, impacts to biological resources would be better under Alternative 2 than under the proposed Project.

**Cultural Resources:** Similar to the proposed Project, Alternative 2 would not affect any historical buildings or sites, as the Project site is vacant and none have been identified nearby. However, Alternative 2 would result in substantially less development and ground disturbance on the Project site than the proposed Project (**see Figure 17-1**) and therefore less potential to adversely impact undiscovered paleontologic resources on the Project site during construction activities. Therefore, impacts to undiscovered archaeological and paleontological resources would be better under Alternative 2 than under the proposed Project.

Visual Resources: The Project site sits at the top of a hillside providing extensive views from the Project site of rural and open space areas below the Project site to the south and east. These views extend for many miles, generally include natural vegetation and scattered residential development, and are considered an important component of the area's visual character. Due to the proposed locations and heights of the buildings, construction of the proposed Project would partially block scenic views from the residential and office uses located north and west of the Project site as well as views from Sierra College Boulevard. The three residential units that would be constructed under Alternative 2 would be substantially smaller in scale and reduced in height compared to the buildings included in the proposed Project. In addition, the residential units would result in significantly less daytime glare and nighttime lighting in comparison to the proposed Project as they would not require a parking lot or security lighting. Therefore, impacts to visual resources would be better under Alternative 2 than under the proposed Project.

**Traffic and Circulation:** Alternative 2 would have very little impact on traffic and circulation as only three residential units on three large lots (20-acre minimum) would be constructed on the site. According to the ITE Trip Generation Manual (7<sup>th</sup> Ed.), three single-family detached housing units would generate on average 27 vehicle trips on a Sunday, with only 3 of these trips occurring during the peak hour. Alternative 2 would not result in unacceptable levels of service at study area intersections or on study area roadways. In comparison, implementation of the proposed Project would generate additional vehicle trips resulting in unacceptable levels of service at multiple study area intersections requiring mitigation. Furthermore, the proposed site plan and roadway improvements could result in traffic congestion at site access points, potentially resulting in unsafe conditions. Therefore, impacts to traffic and circulation would be better under Alternative 2 than under the proposed Project. It should be noted that standard County frontage requirements would still be required under SPRTA (i.e., sixth northbound lane on Sierra College Boulevard) under Alternative 2.

Air Quality: Alternative 2 would result in short-term emissions associated with construction of the residential units. In addition, Alternative 2 would result in long-term emissions associated with motor vehicles and stationary sources (i.e., heating, cooling). This could contribute to new exceedances of attainment pollutants or continued exceedances of ozone and PM<sub>10</sub> standards. However, both long- and short-term emissions under Alternative 2 would be minimal considering the site would only be expected to develop with three residential units. Furthermore, emissions under Alternative 2 would be far less than would occur if the proposed Project were constructed as the proposed Project includes more and longer construction, more stationary sources (large HVAC units), and more traffic. Therefore, impacts to air quality would be better under Alternative 2 than under the proposed Project.

**Noise:** Implementation of Alternative 2 would generate some noise associated with construction of the three residential units on the Project site, as well as a minimal increase in traffic noise associated with motor vehicles traveling to and from the residences. However, noise associated with construction and operation of Alternative 2 would be substantially less than under the proposed Project as the proposed Project includes large HVAC units, substantial parking lot and traffic noise, and more substantial construction activities occurring for a longer duration. Therefore, noise impacts resulting from implementation of Alternative 2 would be better than under the proposed Project.

Geology, Soils, and Seismicity: Impacts relative to exposure to seismic impacts, unstable geologic units, and expansive soils would be similar for both Alternative 2 and the proposed Project because both would allow for development on the Project site and neither would allow for substantial population or housing growth. Furthermore, clearing, grading, and excavation activities under both the proposed Project and Alternative 2 would remove vegetative cover from Project site soils and expose soils to erosion potential from wind, rain, and surface flow as a result of construction activities associated with home construction and access roads. However, the proposed Project involves significantly more ground disturbance than Alternative 2, as the proposed Project would disturb approximately 17 acres while Alternative 2 would include construction of three rural residential units estimated to require the disturbance of fewer acres necessary to accommodate the footprint of the residential buildings. Therefore, erosion impacts under Alternative 2 would be better than under the proposed Project.

**Hydrology and Water Quality:** Construction and operation of the proposed Project would increase impervious surfaces on the Project site and could introduce sediments and other contaminants into stormwater runoff, potentially resulting in the degradation of downstream surface water and groundwater quality. In addition, development of the proposed Project would

increase stormwater runoff rates and volumes when compared with existing conditions due to the increase in impervious surfaces. Alternative 2 would also increase impervious surfaces on the site. However, Alternative 2 includes only construction of three rural residential units on large lots (20-acre minimum), while the proposed Project includes construction of a total combined building square footage of 208,020 square feet, a parking lot, and associated roadway improvements. Therefore, Alternative 2 would result in significantly less impervious surface area on the Project site than the proposed Project, and impacts associated with hydrology and water quality are considered better under Alternative 2 than under the proposed Project.

**Public Services and Utilities:** Alternative 2 would result in three residential units on the Project site, which would require fire protection and emergency medical services, law enforcement, public schools, electrical, gas, cable, and telecommunication services, parks and recreation, solid waste service, water service, and wastewater service. These public services would not be substantially impacted by Alternative 2 because only three residential units would be constructed. Likewise, the proposed Project would not substantially impact public schools or parks and recreation services because the proposed Project does not include a residential component and would not generate students or park users. However, the proposed Project would impact fire protection and emergency medical services, law enforcement, electrical, gas, cable, and telecommunication services, solid waste service, water service, and wastewater service to a greater degree than Alternative 2 as the proposed Project is significantly larger in scale. Therefore, overall impacts to public services resulting from implementation of Alternative 2 would be better than under the proposed Project.

**Hazardous Materials and Hazards:** Neither Alternative 2, which includes development of three residential units, nor the proposed Project, which includes a house of worship and parking facilities, would be expected to require the transport, use, or disposal of significant quantities of hazardous materials. In addition, the Project site is not located near any of the major routes for hazardous material transport through Placer County, and there are no recorded hazardous materials sites on or within 1 mile of the Project site. The Project site location, surrounding uses, and lack of ease of accessibility preclude the unwanted disposal of hazardous materials on the site. Therefore, impacts associated with hazards and hazardous materials would be similar for both Alternative 2 and the proposed Project.

Greenhouse Gas and Climate Change: The proposed Project has the potential to result in an increase in greenhouse gas (GHGs) emissions from construction activities, generation of vehicle traffic, energy use, and the use of gasoline-powered landscaping equipment. In comparison, GHGs and global climate change would be minimally impacted by Alternative 2 because it would result in construction and occupancy of only three residential units on large lots (20-acre minimum). Therefore, climate change impacts resulting from Alternative 2 would be better than under the proposed Project.

## 17.5.3 Alternative 3: Reduced-Scale HOUSE OF WORSHIP

#### **Characteristics of Alternative**

Alternative 3 would involve construction of just Phase I of the proposed Project. This phase includes the 106,800-square-foot multi-use house of worship facility, an 11,220-square-foot resource center building, and a total of 625 parking spaces (**Figure 17-2**).

# **Environmental Considerations**

Land Use and Agriculture: Alternative 3 would involve construction of just Phase I of the proposed Project (106,800-square-foot multi-use house of worship facility, an 11,220-square-foot resource center building, and a total of 625 parking spaces). Although this intensity of development would be less than the proposed Project, the conversion of existing land use designated Rural Estate to urban land uses would still occur. Therefore, land use impacts under Alternative 3 would be similar to those under the proposed Project.

**Population, Housing, and Employment:** Similar to the proposed Project, Alternative 3 would not generate an increase in population or housing as no new housing would be constructed. Therefore, population, housing, and employment impacts are similar under both Alternative 3 and the proposed Project.

**Biological Resources:** Alternative 3 would result in substantially less development and ground disturbance on the proposed Project site than the proposed Project (**see Figure 17-2**). Under Alternative 3, disturbance and/or removal of special-status plant species, jurisdictional waters including wetlands, protected trees, and sensitive biological communities could be avoided to a greater degree as more of the site would remain vacant and undisturbed. Therefore, impacts to biological resources would be better under Alternative 3 than under the proposed Project.

**Cultural Resources:** Similar to the proposed Project, Alternative 3 would not affect any historic buildings or sites, as the Project site is vacant and no historic buildings or sites have been identified nearby. However, Alternative 3 would result in substantially less development and ground disturbance on the Project site than the proposed Project (see **Figure 17-2**) and therefore less potential to adversely impact undiscovered paleontologic resources on the Project site during construction activities. Therefore, impacts to undiscovered archaeological and paleontological resources would be better under Alternative 3 than under the proposed Project.

Visual Resources: The Project site sits at the top of a hillside providing extensive views from the Project site of rural and open space areas below the Project site to the south and east. These views extend for many miles, generally include natural vegetation and scattered residential development, and are considered an important component of the area's visual character. Due to the proposed locations and heights of the buildings, construction of the proposed Project would partially block scenic views from the residential and office uses located north and west of the Project site as well as views from Sierra College Boulevard. Alternative 3 would include a two-to three-level, multi-use building consisting of approximately 106,800 square feet. Only the ground and upper levels would be visible from the surrounding properties. The lower level would be below grade and would only be visible from the southern portion of the Project site. Due to distance and existing vegetation, the lower level would not be visible from properties and roadways south of the site as shown in Figure 8-4d. These buildings would be clearly visible from the west and north, as well as from both west- and eastbound Sierra College Boulevard. In addition, Alternative 3 would require parking lot and security lighting. Therefore, impacts to visual resources would be similar under Alternative 3 and the proposed Project.

**Traffic and Circulation:** The addition of traffic associated with Alternative 3 would result in conditions within adopted minimum standards at most of the study intersections in Roseville and Rocklin, but LOS D conditions would occur at the Sierra College Boulevard/Rocklin Road intersection. In comparison, implementation of the proposed Project would result in unacceptable levels of service at multiple study area intersections. Therefore, traffic impacts would be worse under the proposed Project. Furthermore, the proposed Project site plan and roadway

improvements could result in traffic congestion at site access points, potentially resulting in unsafe conditions. This congestion would be reduced under Alternative 3 as less traffic would be generated. Therefore, impacts to traffic and circulation would be better under Alternative 3 than under the proposed Project.

**Air Quality:** Alternative 3 would result in short-term emissions associated with construction of the 106,800-square-foot multi-use house of worship facility, the 11,220-square-foot resource center building, and the 625 parking spaces. In addition, Alternative 3 would result in long-term emissions associated with motor vehicles and stationary sources (i.e., heating, cooling). This could contribute to new exceedances of attainment pollutants or continued exceedances of ozone and PM<sub>10</sub> standards. However, both long- and short-term emissions under Alternative 3 would be substantially less than those generated by the proposed Project as the proposed Project includes more and longer construction, more stationary sources (HVAC units), and more traffic. Therefore, impacts to air quality would be better under Alternative 3 than under the proposed Project.

**Noise:** Implementation of the proposed Project would generate noise associated with large HVAC units, parking lots and traffic, and construction activities. Construction and operation of Alternative 3 would generate similar noise; however, noises generated under Alternative 3 would be substantially less than under the proposed Project as Alternative 3 is reduced in scale in comparison to the proposed Project. Therefore, noise impacts resulting from implementation of Alternative 3 would be better than under the proposed Project.

Geology, Soils, and Seismicity: Impacts relative to exposure to seismic impacts, unstable geologic units, and expansive soils would be similar for both Alternative 3 and the proposed Project as both would allow for development in the same 17-acre developable portion of the site. Furthermore, clearing, grading, and excavation activities under both the proposed Project and Alternative 3 would remove vegetative cover from Project site soils and expose soils to erosion potential from wind, rain, and surface flow as a result of construction activities. However, the proposed Project involves more ground disturbance than Alternative 3 as the proposed Project includes construction of a total combined building square footage of 208,020 square feet, a parking lot, and associated roadway improvements while Alternative 3 would include construction of a 106,800-square-foot multi-use house of worship facility, an 11,220-square-foot resource center building, and only 625 parking spaces. Therefore, erosion impacts under Alternative 3 would be better than under the proposed Project.

**Hydrology and Water Quality:** Construction and operation of the proposed Project would increase impervious surfaces on the Project site and could introduce sediments and other contaminants into stormwater runoff, potentially resulting in the degradation of downstream surface water and groundwater quality. In addition, development of the proposed Project would increase stormwater runoff rates and volumes when compared with existing conditions due to the increase in impervious surfaces. Alternative 3 would also increase impervious surfaces on the site. However, Alternative 3 includes less construction and development on the site. Therefore, Alternative 3 would result in significantly less impervious surface area on the Project site than the proposed Project, and impacts associated with hydrology and water quality are considered better under Alternative 3 than under the proposed Project.

**Public Services and Utilities:** Alternative 3 would involve construction of just Phase I of the proposed Project (a 106,800-square-foot multi-use house of worship facility, an 11,220-square-foot resource center building, and a total of 625 parking spaces). Both Alternative 3 and the proposed Project would require fire protection and emergency medical services, law enforcement,

electrical, gas, cable, and telecommunication services, solid waste service, water service, and wastewater service. Likewise, neither Alternative 3 nor the proposed Project would substantially impact public schools or parks and recreation services because neither includes a residential component that would generate students or park users. However, the proposed Project would impact fire protection and emergency medical services, law enforcement, electrical, gas, cable, and telecommunication services, solid waste service, water service and wastewater service to a greater degree than Alternative 3 as the proposed Project is significantly larger in scale. Therefore, overall impacts to public services resulting from implementation of Alternative 3 would be better than under the proposed Project.

**Hazardous Materials and Hazards:** Neither Alternative 3, which includes just Phase I of the proposed Project, nor the proposed Project would be expected to require the transport, use, or disposal of significant quantities of hazardous materials. In addition, the Project site is not located near any of the major routes for hazardous material transport through Placer County, and there are no recorded hazardous materials sites on or within 1 mile of the Project site. The Project site location, surrounding uses, and lack of ease of accessibility preclude the unwanted disposal of hazardous materials on the site. Therefore, impacts associated with hazards and hazardous materials would be similar for both Alternative 3 and the proposed Project.

Greenhouse Gas and Climate Change: The proposed Project has the potential to result in an increase in greenhouse gas (GHGs) emissions from construction activities, generation of vehicle traffic, energy use, and the use of gasoline-powered landscaping equipment. Alternative 3 would also result in construction activities, generation of vehicle traffic, energy use, and the use of gasoline-powered landscaping equipment. However, Alternative 3 would be a reduced-scale project, and climate change impacts resulting from Alternative 3 would be better than under the proposed Project.

# 17.6 COMPARATIVE EVALUATION OF THE PROJECT AND ALTERNATIVES TO SATISFY PROPOSED PROJECT OBJECTIVES

This section examines how each of the alternatives selected for more detailed analysis meets the proposed Project's objectives.

- 1) Develop the Amazing Facts house of worship facility and offices to accommodate the multifaceted ministry that supports their local and worldwide mission: Neither Alternative 1, the No Project alternative, nor Alternative 2, the Development under Existing Zoning alternative, would satisfy this objective. Alternative 3, the Reduced-Scale House of Worship alternative, would achieve this objective in a comparable manner, although not all aspects of the ministry would be accommodated.
- 2) Develop a house of worship facility to serve the surrounding community: Neither Alternative 1, the No Project alternative, nor Alternative 2, the Development under Existing Zoning alternative, would satisfy this objective. Alternative 3 would be the only remaining alternative to satisfy this objective.
- 3) Provide development that exhibits architectural design consistent with the Placer County Design Guidelines: Alternative 2, the Development under Existing Zoning alternative, and Alternative 3, the Reduced-Scale House of Worship alternative, would satisfy this objective. This objective would not apply to Alternative 1, the No Project alternative, as no development would occur.

- 4) Create an efficient circulation pattern for vehicles, pedestrians, and bicyclists: Alternative 3, the Reduced-Scale House of Worship alternative, would satisfy this objective. However, Alternative 1 would leave the site undeveloped and therefore not result in any circulation pattern on the site. Alternative 2 would require site access by allowing for three residential units on the site but would not satisfy this objective as it would not provide for pedestrians or bicyclists.
- 5) Provide adequate infrastructure and public services to support the proposed development: Alternative 3, the Reduced-Scale House of Worship alternative, and Alternative 2, the Development under Existing Zoning alternative, would satisfy this objective as both would require the provision of adequate public services to the Project site. However, Alternative 1 would leave the site undeveloped and therefore not result in the provision of any public services on the site.
- 6) Identify and incorporate natural resources into the proposed development area as feasible: All three Alternatives would satisfy this objective. Alternative 1 would leave the site undeveloped and would not impact the existing natural resources. Alternative 2 would allow for only three rural residential homes on the site, which would not significantly impact the existing natural resources on the majority of the site. Alternative 3 would incorporate similar natural resource features as the proposed Project.
- 7) Provide for the orderly and systematic development of the proposed Project in a method consistent with the Placer County Zoning Ordinance: All three alternatives would satisfy this objective as all three alternatives would be consistent with the County General Plan and Zoning Ordinance as well as with the Granite Bay Community Plan.
- 8) Attain the goal of eventually building a 2,000-seat facility with supporting ministry space: None of the alternatives would satisfy this objective. Alternative 3, the Reduced-Scale House of Worship alternative, would provide capacity for only 1,300 people.
- 9) Provide phasing of the Project that will address the possibility of future growth in the congregation: None of the alternatives would satisfy this objective. Alternative 3, the Reduced-Scale House of Worship alternative, would provide capacity for only 1,300 people with no provisions for accommodating future growth in the congregation.
- 10) Build and provide a worship facility that will accommodate the long-term growth and ultimate congregation size: None of the alternatives would satisfy this objective. Alternative 3, the Reduced-Scale House of Worship alternative, would provide capacity for only 1,300 people with no provisions for accommodating future growth in the congregation.

## 17.7 COMPARATIVE ENVIRONMENTAL SUPERIORITY

To determine the environmentally superior alternative, all alternatives were evaluated with respect to their ability to avoid or substantially lessen significant environmental effects of the proposed Project. Both significant environmental effects that would be caused by each alternative and significant environmental effects that would be caused by the proposed Project were considered. CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(e) (2) indicates that an environmentally superior alternative must be identified in an EIR. State CEQA Guidelines Section 15126(d) (2) states that if the environmentally superior alternative is the No Project alternative, the EIR shall also identify an environmentally superior alternative from among the other alternatives.

Based on the summary of information presented in **Table 17-1**, the environmentally superior alternative to the proposed Project is Alternative 1, the No Project alternative. Alternative 1 generally has lesser adverse impacts on the environment than the proposed Project. As stated above, if the environmentally superior alternative is the No Project alternative, the EIR must also identify an environmentally superior alternative from among the other alternatives. After the No Project alternative (Alternative 1), Alternative 2 would be the environmentally superior alternative.

TABLE 17-1
COMPARISON OF PROJECT WITH ALTERNATIVE PLANS

Environmental Topic	Alternative 1 No Project	Alternative 2 Development Under Existing Zoning	Alternative 3 Reduced-Scale House of Worship
Land Use and Agriculture	В	В	S
Population, Housing, and Employment	S	S	S
Biological Resources	В	В	В
Cultural Resources	В	В	В
Visual Resources	В	В	S
Traffic and Circulation	В	В	В
Air Quality	В	В	В
Noise	В	В	В
Geology, Soils, and Seismicity	В	В	В
Hydrology and Water Quality	В	В	В
Public Services and Utilities	В	В	В
Hazardous Materials and Hazards	S	S	S
Greenhouse Gas and Climate Change	В	В	В

Note:  $B = Better\ Than;\ S = Same\ As$