

6.0 ALTERNATIVES

INTRODUCTION

This section of the environmental impact report (EIR) provides a comparative analysis of the impacts of alternatives to the proposed project pursuant to Section 15126.6 of the *California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines*, as amended. It identifies potentially feasible ways to avoid or substantially lessen the potentially significant impacts of implementing the proposed General Plan. According to the *State CEQA Guidelines*, an EIR needs to examine a reasonable range of alternatives to a project, or its location, which would feasibly meet most of the basic objectives of the project while avoiding or substantially lessening significant impacts. When addressing feasibility, the *State CEQA Guidelines* Section 15126.6 states that "...[a]mong the factors that may be taken into account when addressing the feasibility of alternatives are site suitability, economic viability, availability of infrastructure, general plan consistency, other plans or regulatory limitations, jurisdictional boundaries (projects with a regionally significant impact should consider the regional context), and whether the applicant can reasonably acquire, control or otherwise have access to the alternative site (or the site is already owned by the proponent)." Pursuant to the *State CEQA Guidelines*, 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 substantially 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. Each alternative selected for evaluation in this EIR is described below and followed by a comparative analysis.

Described throughout the following alternatives analysis are references to the County's Planning Area. This is due to those resource areas (land use, air quality, global climate change, traffic and circulation, and noise) that would potentially impact the One Valley One Vision (OVOV) Planning Area, not just the City's Planning Area.

RANGE OF REASONABLE ALTERNATIVES

According to the *State CEQA Guidelines*, the alternatives discussion should focus on alternatives to a project or its location that can feasibly avoid or substantially lessen one or more of the significant effects of the project. The alternatives discussion should provide decision makers with an understanding of the comparative merits of the alternatives in relation to the proposed project (i.e., proposed General Plan).

Section 3.0, Environmental Impact Analysis, of this EIR concludes that implementation of the proposed General Plan would result in significant and unavoidable environmental impacts with respect to the following:

- **Agricultural Resources** – loss of Important Farmland to urban use
- **Biological Resources** – loss of open space from the impact of development
- **Utilities and Infrastructure, Solid Waste** – inadequate landfill space for solid waste
- **Noise** – short-term construction noise impacts are unavoidably significant for the duration of the construction activities and short-term noise and vibration impacts from the pile driving would be unavoidably significant for the duration of the pile driving. Operational noise (mainly from automobiles) would also be significant
- **Air Quality** – both construction thresholds would be exceeded for South Coast Air Quality Management District's (SCAQMD's) construction thresholds for VOC, NO_x, CO, PM₁₀, and PM_{2.5} and operational thresholds for VOCs, SO_x, PM₁₀, and PM_{2.5} would be exceeded
- **Global Warming and Climate Change** – implementation of the proposed General Plan and Area Plan would increase GHG emissions over existing conditions

In response to these significant impacts, the City developed and considered several alternatives to the project. These alternatives include:

- Alternative 1 – No Project/Existing General Plan
- Alternative 2 – General Plan with Mixed Use Eliminated on Vacant Parcels
- Alternative 3 – Downgrade Vacant Urban Residential Parcels by One Land Use Category

Project Objectives

The alternatives to the proposed General Plan ultimately selected for analysis in this EIR were developed to avoid or substantially lessen one or more of the significant environmental impacts associated with the proposed General Plan, while still meeting many of its objectives. The City has provided the following objectives for the proposed General Plan:

Management of Growth

1. Growth in the Santa Clarita Valley (Valley) shall account for the visions and objectives for each community and must be consistent with principles, as subsequently defined in this document, for the protection of the Valley's significant environmental resources. It must also be based on the availability of or ability to provide adequate infrastructure, schools, and public services, and must be carefully planned to benefit the community's economy, lifestyles, and needs.

2. Growth shall occur within and on the periphery of previously developed areas, rather than as “leapfrog” development or in areas of critical environmental habitat or natural hazards, and taking into consideration accessibility to infrastructure and public services.
3. Development shall be prioritized in areas for infill and redevelopment sites within currently developed areas consistent with community character objectives and those for which the City and County have approved entitlements. Commitments for new development outside of these areas shall be made in accordance with the other principles defined in this document.
4. Higher density development, including multi-family housing and mixed use projects that integrate housing with commercial uses, shall be targeted in areas adjacent to existing and planned transit corridors, stations and key activity centers, such as the Valencia Town Center and portions of Newhall and Soledad Canyon Road.

Environmental Resources

5. The natural buffer area surrounding the entire Valley, which includes the Angeles National Forest, Santa Susana, San Gabriel, Sierra Pelona, and Del Sur mountains, shall be preserved as a regional recreational, ecological, and aesthetic resource.
6. The Santa Clara River corridor and its major tributaries shall be preserved as open space to accommodate storm water flows and protect critical plant and animal species (riparian vegetation, fish, etc.).
 - a. Uses and improvements within the corridor shall be limited to those that benefit the community’s use of the river in its natural state.
 - b. Development on properties adjacent to, but outside of the defined primary river corridor, shall be
 - located and designed to protect the river’s water quality, plants, and animal habitats, controlling the type and density of uses, drainage runoff (water treatment), and other relevant elements; and
 - designed to maximize the full range of river amenities, including views and recreational access, while minimizing adverse impacts to the River.
7. The Santa Clarita Valley’s prominent ridgelines shall be preserved and hillside development shall be limited to protect their valuable aesthetic and visual qualities intrinsic to the Valley landscape.
8. Development shall be located and designed to minimize the impact on the Valley topography, emphasizing the use of grading techniques for development pads that mimic the natural topography in lieu of repetitive flat pads to the extent feasible and consistent with a community’s open space objectives.
9. Development shall be located and designed to protect oak, sycamore, and other significant indigenous woodlands.
10. Biological resources in the designated Significant Ecological Areas (SEAs) shall be protected through the siting and design of development to account for and be highly compatible with their resources.

Specific development standards shall be identified to control the types of land use, density, building location and size, roadways and other infrastructure, landscape, drainage, and other elements to assure the protection of the critical and important plant and animal habitats of each SEA. In general, the principle shall be to minimize the intrusion and impacts of development in these areas with sufficient setbacks, or buffers, to adequately protect the resources.

11. New development shall be designed to improve energy efficiency, reducing energy and natural resource consumption by such techniques as the use of solar generators, recycling of treated wastewater, capture of storm runoff on-site, and use of recycled materials in building construction, native and drought-tolerant landscape, and energy and water efficient appliances and systems.

Land Uses

12. The Santa Clarita Valley shall contain a diversity of land uses that support the needs of current and future residents including housing, schools, libraries, parks, retail, business and industry, civic institutions, medical and social services, cultural, entertainment, open spaces, and comparable uses.
13. The type and density of land uses in the Santa Clarita Valley shall be varied to reflect the special characteristics, life styles, and opportunities that differentiate its communities. A choice of urban, suburban, and rural environments will be provided.
14. Valley communities shall contain a mix of uses that support the basic needs of residents—places to live, shop, recreate, meet/socialize, and enjoy the environmental setting—that are appropriate and consistent with their community character. Regionally oriented uses that serve residents of the entire Valley or export goods and services may be concentrated in key business centers rather than uniformly dispersed throughout the Valley communities.
15. Development in the Valley shall be guided by a common set of land use designations and standards for comparable uses in comparable locations. These standards, however, may be varied to reflect the unique intentions for the quality and character of the distinct communities that comprise the Valley.

Residential Neighborhoods

16. The Valley shall contain a mix of housing types that meet the diverse needs of residents, and offer choices for the Valley's population and lifestyles (ages, education, income, etc.) that are appropriate and consistent with their community character. This shall include a combination of single- and multi-family, owner occupied and rental units within *each* community, and mixed-use (i.e., integrated housing with commercial or office uses) development in key activity centers.
17. The Valley is committed to providing affordable work force housing to meet the needs of individuals employed in the Santa Clarita Valley.
18. Multi-family housing developments shall contain adequate recreational and open space amenities on-site and be designed to ensure a high quality living environment. Their architectural treatment and building massing shall complement the characteristics of surrounding single-family residential neighborhoods.

19. Neighborhood scale development shall be encouraged by promoting mixed density of housing units consistent with community character objectives and limiting the number and acreage of multi-family units that can be developed in any single location.
20. Housing developments located in the more urbanized communities of the Valley shall be designed to create a sense of neighborhood by:
 - a. promoting walkability and containing places that serve as centers of activity and identity (schools, multi-purpose facilities, parks, convenience services, neighborhood commercial centers, etc.);
 - b. containing a mix of housing types, densities, and parcel sizes, avoiding large areas and an over-concentration of homogeneous density units;
 - c. minimizing the dependence on, prominence, and area dedicated to the automobile;
 - d. featuring architectural design treatments along all frontages of new housing to promote continuity of architectural scale and rhythm and avoid blank walls; and,
 - e. including pedestrian linkages, landscaped parkways and green corridors, and separated trails (pedestrian, bicycle or equestrian) where appropriate and feasible.

Vital Economy

21. Commercial and retail uses will be expanded and new centers developed to meet the needs of the Valley's residents, as supportable by the market, minimize the need to travel outside of the Valley, complement (and do not adversely compete with) existing uses, and contribute to a balanced Valley economy.
22. New "clean" industries and businesses that provide job opportunities for local residents and enhance the economy shall be encouraged within and adjacent to existing and planned business centers/parks, and adjacent to transportation corridors.
23. Older commercial areas and corridors that are economically and/or physically obsolete or deteriorated, such as portions of Castaic, Val Verde, Newhall, Lyons Avenue, Sierra Highway, Main Street, Newhall Avenue, and Soledad Canyon Road, shall be redeveloped for commercial, mixed use, residential or other appropriate uses that complement and serve adjoining land uses and can be adequately supported by the market. Where appropriate, redeveloped uses and buildings shall reflect the area's important architectural and cultural history.

Mobility

24. A unified and well-maintained network of highways, streets, truck routes, bikeways, and pedestrian paths will provide access among Valley communities and to regional centers outside of the Valley.
25. Santa Clarita Valley's streets and highways shall be developed and maintained according to common standards for right-of-way, paving and other improvements, landscape, signage, lighting, and curb

cuts for “like” street categories. These standards shall take into consideration of objectives for the character of the Valley’s communities consistent with public health and safety.

26. A continuous bikeway network shall provide circulation within each community, connect the various Santa Clarita Valley communities, and provide access to surrounding open spaces.
27. An integrated transit system shall serve the Valley (rail, bus, shuttle, other) offering convenient alternatives to the automobile, minimizing congestion and providing access to regional transportation systems, such as Metrolink.

Infrastructure

28. The location and timing of development shall be coordinated with the provision of adequate water, wastewater treatment, storm drainage, telecommunications, energy, roads, and other infrastructure.
29. Public infrastructure shall be improved, maintained, and expanded as needed to meet the needs of projected population and employment growth and contribute to the Valley’s quality of life.
30. Common standards for providing utility infrastructure (flood control channels, energy transmission, telecommunications, and so on) shall be developed and applied throughout the Valley, in consideration of the character of each community.

Schools and Public Services

31. The City and County shall work in partnership with the Santa Clarita Valley school districts and the State of California to ensure the development of adequate facilities and programs to serve the needs and achieve a high level of academic excellence for local students.
32. While the City and County do not have direct authority over the development of public schools, they shall continue to coordinate with the school districts on issues of mutual interest such as transportation services, shared facilities, and long range planning for Valley schools.
33. Public services (police, fire, health care, youth, seniors, homeless, and other) shall be expanded to support community needs and population growth.

Recreation

34. The City and County shall recognize that trails are an important recreational asset that, when integrated with transportation systems, contribute to mobility throughout the Santa Clarita Valley.
35. A continuous and unified hiking and equestrian trail network for a variety of users and developed according to common standards shall connect and unify Santa Clarita Valley communities and be interconnected with the regional and statewide system (e.g., Pacific Crest Trail).

36. New parklands will be developed throughout the Santa Clarita Valley, with priority on locations that are not now adequately served. These shall encompass a diversity of park types and functions, including passive and active areas, in consideration of the recreational needs of the residents to be served:
 - a. Common park standards shall be developed and applied throughout the Valley, consistent with community character objectives; and,
 - b. A range of parkland types, sizes and uses shall be provided to accommodate recreational and leisure activities.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS OF ALTERNATIVES

Alternative 1 – No Project

Section 15126(2)(4) of the *State CEQA Guidelines* requires evaluation of the No Project Alternative. As described in the *State CEQA Guidelines*, the purpose of describing and analyzing the No Project Alternative is to allow decision makers to compare the impacts of approving the proposed project with the impacts of not approving the proposed project. Therefore, as required by the *State CEQA Guidelines*, the analysis must examine the impacts that might reasonably be expected to occur on the project site in the foreseeable future if the proposed project was not approved. When the project is the revision of an existing land use plan, *State CEQA Guidelines* Section 15126.6(e)(3)(A) states that “the No Project Alternative will be the continuation of the existing plan ... into the future.” Under the No Project Alternative, the proposed General Plan would not be adopted or implemented, and buildout within the City and its adopted SOI would continue to occur under the existing General Plan (adopted in 1991) and subsequent amendments, and adopted Specific Plans. The Housing Element would continue to be updated per California Government Code 65583 and is a legally required element for a general plan.

This alternative does not represent a “no build” scenario in which no future development would occur. The number of dwelling units at buildout of the existing General Plan would be an additional 6,941 and the residential population would be 266,312 in the City’s Planning Area.

The No Project analysis will discuss the existing conditions at the time the NOP was prepared as well as what would be reasonably expected to occur in the foreseeable future if the OVOV General Plan (proposed project) was not approved. Since the existing General Plan was adopted in 1991, many of the policies would not reflect changes to the population, economy, or the environment. Buildout of the existing General Plan circulation map is assumed. The No Project Alternative also assumes that the County component of the One Valley One Vision planning effort would not occur and the County’s existing areawide plan for the unincorporated portions of the Santa Clarita Valley would remain.

Land Use

Buildout conditions under Alternative 1 would follow the policies of the existing General Plan. The existing General Plan would continue to implement land use policy that designates land anywhere from 0.5 dwelling unit per acre (du/ac) to 32 du/ac. The proposed General Plan would designate land anywhere from 1.0 du/20 ac to 30 du/ac. A major difference between the existing and proposed General Plans is the incorporation of the Mixed-Use (MX) Designation and Overlay development designation. (Currently, the City's Unified Development Code contains a limited mixed-use overlay provision.) A goal of the proposed General Plan is to provide a mix of land uses to accommodate growth, supported by adequate resources and maintaining community assets. As described in **Table 6.0-1, Existing General Plan and Proposed General Plan Land Use Designations**, there would be changes in land use designations and in the acreage of those land uses.

Table 6.0-1
Existing General Plan and Proposed General Plan Land Use Designations

Land Use Categories	Existing City Land Use Acres ¹	Proposed City Land Use Acres ¹	Change in Acres (existing to proposed)	Existing SOI Land Use Acres ²	Proposed SOI Land Use Acres ²	Change in SOI Acres (existing to proposed)
Residential	22,009.63	17,852.66	-4,156.97	6,343.99	16,782.43	+10,438.44
Commercial	1,556.72	1,633.41	+79.69	52.12	320.72	+268.60
Industrial	4,108.06	3,526.80	-581.26	56.46	220.47	+164.01
Public/Institutional	0.0	1,330.95	+1,330.95	104.26	172.05	+67.79
Transportation	0.0	706.31	+706.31	116.32	157.84	+41.52
Mixed Use	0.0	561.16	+561.16	0.0	0.0	0.0
Private Education	145.93	0.0	-145.93	0.0	0.0	0.0
Floodway/Floodplain	0.0	0.0	0.0	1,214.86	0.0	-1,214.86
Hillside Management	0.0	0.0	0.0	10,574.18	0.0	-10,574.18
Open Space	3,013.62	5,574.99	+2,561.37	345.94	1,152.45	+806.51
Specific Plan	2,490.43	2,527.27	+36.84	103.04	103.19	+0.15
Other	392.33	0.0	-392.33	0.0	0.0	0.0
TOTAL	33,713	33,713	0	18,907	18,907	0

Notes:

¹ This area includes only the land that is located within the existing incorporated boundaries of the City of Santa Clarita.

² This area includes existing land that designated as the adopted SOI.

Source: City of Santa Clarita, September 2009.

Existing Area Wide Plan land use designations including Hillside Management and Floodway will be included in other OVOV land use categories. Therefore, approximately 10,574 acres of Los Angeles' hillside management acreage would be reclassified to residential under the proposed General Plan. Under the proposed General Plan, residential land use would decrease by approximately 4,156 acres in the City and would increase by approximately 10,438 acres in the SOI. Commercial land use designations would increase by approximately 335 acres in the City and would increase by approximately 269 acres in the SOI. Industrial land uses in the City would decrease approximately 645 acres while industrial land uses in the SOI would increase by approximately 141 acres due to the creation of a new Public/Institutional land use to accommodate existing utility facilities and properties. Public/institutional land use designations are not designated in the City per the existing General Plan, whereas the proposed General Plan's Land Use Policy Map designates approximately 1,331 acres of public/institutional land use in the City. Transportation land use designations in the City would be approximately 706 acres. Transportation land use designations within the SOI would be approximately 42 acres. Private education land uses within the City would now be part of the public/institutional category. Open space lands would increase in both the City and SOI by approximately 2,561 acres and 807 acres, respectively.

The existing General Plan policies and the proposed General Plan policies are consistent with SCAG policies. However, the proposed General Plan policies would provide guidance for more sustainable and "green" planning within the City's Planning Area.

The proposed General Plan provides opportunities for coordinated development of urban village corridors that offer a diverse range of complementary land uses served by public transit and in proximity to supportive uses and services. Mixed use development is strongly supported by SCAG, which guides land use and growth in the Southern California region, including the City of Santa Clarita. A number of policies under SCAG's Compass/Growth Visioning Principles either directly or indirectly promote mixed use development. Since Alternative 1 would not include the Mixed Use designation to facilitate mixed use development within the City's Planning Area, Alternative 1 would not be consistent with SCAG's growth policies to the same extent as the City's proposed General Plan. Therefore, land use impacts would be greater under Alternative 1.

Transportation and Circulation

Transportation and circulation is defined in terms of roadway capacities, Level of Service (LOS), total number of average daily trips (ADT), and the miles traveled. As defined in the proposed General Plan the LOS ranges from A (least amount of congestion) to F. Overall, the intersection capacity utilization (ICU) values at each intersection under either buildout scenario would be comparable. The average ICU value during the AM peak hour would decrease slightly from 0.80 to 0.78 (LOS C) and the average ICU value

during the PM peak hour would decrease slightly from 0.90 to 0.88 (LOS D) with the proposed plans as compared to the existing plans.

The ADT would be approximately 1 percent higher under Alternative 1 than with buildout of the proposed General Plan and proposed Area Plan. The total vehicle miles traveled (VMT) is approximately 15 percent higher for Alternative 1 than with the proposed plans. Additionally, the average trip length is higher by approximately 1.9 miles for an increase of 14 percent under Alternative 1 when compared to buildout of the proposed General Plan.

Operating conditions along CMP roadways would improve with buildout of the proposed General Plan versus the existing General Plan. Since the proposed General Plan would incrementally improve rather than worsen traffic conditions, impacts on CMP roadways would be less than significant. The proposed General Plan goals, objectives, and policies address the deficiencies in the existing alternative transportation system, and provide direction for the expansion and improvement of alternative transportation throughout the Santa Clarita Valley. This would promote denser, transit-oriented development in areas where transit use is already high. Emphasis is also placed on introducing mixed-use development in order to allow residents to reach services in ways that are not exclusively automobile-dependent, such as by walking, biking and transit. Grouping mixed uses together also reduces the need for residents to make multiple vehicle trips to obtain services and reach employment centers, resulting in a net reduction in the number of vehicles on the roadway. Other transportation improvements would include the construction of more roadways, such as east/west connectors, by establishing the joint City/County Intelligent Transportation Management System (ITMS) impact fee for new development that is unable to otherwise mitigate its impacts on the roadway system through implementation of the adopted Highway Plan. Therefore, impacts on transportation and circulation would be greater under Alternative 1 than proposed with the City's proposed General Plan.

Air Quality

The estimated daily construction emissions (which would consist of volatile organic compounds [VOC], oxides of nitrogen [NO_x], carbon monoxide [CO], sulfur oxides [SO_x], particulate matter less than 10 microns in diameter [PM₁₀], and particulate matter less than 2.5 microns in diameter [PM_{2.5}]) would be similar for both the existing General Plan and Area Plan and the proposed General Plan and Area Plan.

With respect to SCAQMD's threshold to determine cumulative air quality impacts, the projected rate of population growth from **Section 3.19, Population and Housing**, was compared to the rate of ADT growth using information from the project traffic study (**Appendix 3.2**). Population growth under Alternative 1 is projected to increase to 266,312 in the City's Planning Area. The existing (2004) number of ADTs is expected to increase from 1,487,994 in the OVOV Planning Area to 3,207,093 in the OVOV Planning Area under buildout of the existing General Plan and Area Plan (an ADT growth rate of 1.16

[0.88 for the proposed General Plan]). Since the rate of ADT growth is greater than the rate of population growth, buildout of the existing General Plan and Area Plan would result in a significant cumulative air quality impact.

Alternative 1 would potentially produce operational emissions consisting of VOC, NO_x, CO, SO_x, PM₁₀, and PM_{2.5} for both summertime and wintertime (in pounds per day). The net increase in emissions, when compared to existing summertime operational emission conditions, would increase 103 percent for VOC and NO_x, 105 percent for CO and SO_x, and 106 percent for PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5}. The net increase for wintertime emissions under buildout of the existing General Plan would be 104 percent for NO_x and SO_x, 106 percent for VOC, CO, and PM₁₀; and 107 percent for PM_{2.5}.

Buildout under the proposed General Plan would potentially increase some summertime and wintertime operational emissions. This increase is based on the existing condition for operational emissions. The summertime increases at buildout for the proposed General Plan would have a net increase of 104 percent for VOC and CO, a 102 percent increase in NO_x and PM_{2.5}, a 105 percent increase in SO_x, and a 99 percent increase in PM₁₀. The wintertime emissions in pounds per day for the buildout of the proposed General Plan would potentially have a net increase of 103 percent for VOC, NO_x, and PM₁₀, a 106 percent increase in CO, a 104 percent increase in PM_{2.5}, and a 100 percent increase in SO_x. Air quality impacts under Alternative 1 would be greater than those resulting from buildout of the proposed General Plan because there would be greater Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) when compared to the City's proposed General Plan. Nonetheless, the proposed project would result in significant and unavoidable air quality impacts and would require a Statement of Overriding Considerations.

Global Warming and Climate Change

Buildout under the existing General Plan would potentially increase greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. The GHG emissions potentially produced would amount to approximately 3,221,900 metric tons equivalent carbon dioxide (CO₂E)/year. The net increase in GHG emissions after buildout under the proposed General Plan and Area Plan would be approximately 1,848,400 metric tons CO₂E/year.

Based on the analysis provided in **Section 3.4, Global Warming and Climate Change**, the proposed General Plan and Area Plan contains numerous policies and project features that would reduce GHG emissions from "business as usual" conditions. The existing General Plan does not include many of these policies and would likely not result in GHG reductions on the same order of magnitude as the proposed General Plan and Area Plan. The proposed General Plan and Area Plan would not impede or conflict with the state's goal of meeting AB 32. Buildout under the proposed General Plan and Area Plan would be consistent with project design features and mitigation measures recommended by California Air Resources Board (CARB), Office of Planning and Research (OPR), the California Climate Action Team, and the Office of the Attorney General; they would achieve reductions in GHG emissions from business

as usual conditions so as to not impede the state's ability to meet AB 32. Because Alternative 1 would not incorporate many of the proposed General Plan and Area Plan policies and features that would reduce GHG emissions, and because Alternative 1 would result in increased GHG emissions compared to the proposed General Plan and Area Plan, Alternative 1 would result in greater climate change impacts. It should be noted that the proposed project would result in significant and unavoidable impacts and would require a Statement of Overriding Considerations.

Agricultural Resources

Buildout conditions under Alternative 1 would differ from those under the proposed General Plan, as seen in **Table 6.0-1**. Some agricultural land would be designated as urban land use designations under both Alternative 1 and the proposed General Plan. Since Alternative 1 and the proposed General Plan would designate farmland with similar densities, impacts on agricultural resources under Alternative 1 would be comparable to those associated with the proposed General Plan. The EIR has determined that Agricultural Resources impacts (Loss of Important Farmland) would be significant and unavoidable under Alternative 1 and the City's proposed General Plan.

Aesthetics

Alternative 1 would maintain the City Planning Area's rural character and ensure visual consistency and continuity with the existing natural and built environment. As described in the existing General Plan policies, light and glare generation would be limited by establishing techniques for light screening and shielding, restricting the use of unnecessary light during non-business nighttime hours, restricting the use of decorative lighting, and protecting open space. Implementation of Alternative 1 would continue to follow codes and ordinances pertaining to light and glare, landscaping, and aesthetic ridgelines and canyons. There are no state scenic highways in the City's Planning Area.

If unregulated, new development under buildout of the proposed General Plan has the potential to degrade the quality of existing scenic vistas and scenic resources. The proposed General Plan, with its in excess of 3,000 acres of increased open space, would provide for the permanent preservation or restoration of important natural and built scenic resources and conservation of scenic vistas; buildout under the City's proposed General Plan would have fewer aesthetic impacts compared with buildout under Alternative 1.

Biological Resources

Under Alternative 1, 3,013 acres of land within the City limits would remain designated as open space land and 346 acres within the SOI would remain as open space acres. The Santa Clara River, San Francisquito Creek, and the Valley Oaks Savannah are currently the only designated SEAs within the

City's Planning Area, as described in the existing General Plan.¹ Alternative 1 would maintain the existing SEAs by preserving and enhancing these areas. As seen in **Figure 3.7-2, Current and Proposed Significant Ecological Areas**, the proposed General Plan would maintain the existing SEAs and would promote and include additional areas to be designated for SEAs. These areas are located along the Santa Clara River and its tributaries; and would include areas such as the Cruzan Mesa Vernal Pools, all of the Santa Clara River, and large portions of the Santa Susana and San Gabriel Mountains (**Figure 3.7-2, Current and Proposed Significant Ecological Areas**). Alternative 1 would maintain less open space while the proposed General Plan would include additional areas as SEAs. Impacts on biological resources under Alternative 1 would therefore be greater to those impacts under the proposed General Plan. The EIR has determined that Biological Resources impacts (loss of open space) would be significant and unavoidable under Alternative 1 and the City's proposed General Plan.

Cultural Resources

Buildout conditions under Alternative 1 would not increase or decrease the potential to harm a historical, archaeological, or paleontological resource relative to the proposed General Plan. Alternative 1 would continue to buildout those areas designated for development. Each project would require environmental review to determine if there are potential archeological, historical, or paleontological resources. The proposed General Plan provides for mitigation to paleontological and unique geotechnical resources, and the existing General Plan does not.

The proposed General Plan would utilize the same process for determining potential impacts on cultural resources. However the proposed General Plan provides for mitigation to address potential resource occurrence. Impacts to this resource would be greater under the existing General Plan when compared to the proposed Plan.

Geology, Soils, Seismicity

Buildout under Alternative 1 would be subject to the same geologic conditions and hazards as the proposed General Plan. As described above in **Table 6.0-1** and in the Alternative 1 description, existing land use designations, and development of dwelling units differ between the existing and proposed General Plan. However, any potential development for either Alternative 1 or the proposed General Plan would comply with the latest California Building Code (CBC) designs and codes for structural development. Land uses within the proximity of an Alquist-Priolo earthquake fault zone would conform to state regulations (maintain a 50-foot clearance from a known fault). The proposed General Plan provides for mitigation to undiscovered geotechnical resources, site specific-shaking, liquefaction, landslides, soil erosion/loss of topsoil, subsidence and grading and the existing General Plan does not.

¹ City of Santa Clarita, "Open Space and Conservation Element Amendment," *General Plan*, (1999) OS-5.

Mineral Resources

The identification of significant mineral resources that are available for extraction has been identified on **Figure 3.10-1**. The extraction and processing of mineral resources would be approved on a project by project basis under either the existing or proposed General Plan. The existing General Plan policy would guide the management and protection of important mineral resources by a long range approach toward mineral resource utilization. The proposed General Plan contains policies that state to identify, preserve from encroachment, and conserve and maintain the significant MRZ-2 lands.² Potential impacts on mineral resources would be comparable under Alternative 1 and the City's proposed General Plan.

Hazards and Hazardous Materials

Alternative 1 would not substantially increase or decrease the transport, use, or disposal of hazardous substances relative to the proposed General Plan. As required by state law, both the City and County have adopted the Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS) for managing response to multi-agency and multi-jurisdictional emergencies, and to facilitate communications and coordination among all levels of government and affected agencies. The City's 2003 SEMS Multihazard Functional Plan addresses planned response to emergencies associated with natural disasters and technological incidents, including both peacetime and wartime nuclear defense operations. As the emergency response plans are developed and adopted independently of the General Plan and Area Plan processes, impacts on emergency preparedness and response would be comparable for Alternative 1 and the proposed General Plan. Alternative 1 would support programs related to wildland fire; fire hazard impacts would be comparable to the City's proposed General Plan.

Hydrology and Water Quality

As the City's Planning Area reaches buildout, the amount of pervious surface area would decrease with increased development and additional impervious surface area would increase due to more paved surfaces such as parking lots, streets, and sidewalks. As described in **Section 3.12, Hydrology and Water**

² Surface Mining and Reclamation Act (SMARA) of 1975. SMARA Chapter 9, Division 2 of the Public Resources Code, requires the State Mining and Geology Board to adopt state policy for the reclamation of mined lands and conservation of natural resources. Mineral Resource Zone (MRZ-2a) is defined as areas underlain by mineral deposits where geologic data indicate that significant measured or indicated resources are present. Areas classified MRZ-2a contain discovered mineral deposits as determined by such evidence as drilling records, sample analysis, surface exposure, and mine information. Land included in the MRZ-2a category is of prime importance because it contains known economic mineral deposits. MRZ-2b: Areas underlain by mineral deposits where geologic information indicates that significant inferred resources are present. Areas classified MRZ-2b contain discovered mineral deposits that are either inferred reserves as determined by limited sample analysis, exposure, and past mining history or are deposits that presently are sub-economic. Further exploration and/or changes in technology or economics could result in upgrading areas classified MRZ-2b to MRZ-2a.

Quality, existing and proposed development is subject to state and federal guidelines which regulate surface water quality and discharge, either through point sources or non-point sources.

The re-designation of land uses would have the greatest potential to affect water quality and hydrology. The greatest change in land use designations between the existing and proposed General Plans would occur in the City's SOI. The existing land uses would change from Los Angeles' Hillside Management designations [maximum [max] of 1 du/2 acres (ac)] to Rural Residential uses (max 1 du/ac), and Urban Residential Land uses (max 30 du/ac) under the proposed General Plan. Under Alternative 1, the amount of unpaved surface area would be potentially greater promoting more water infiltration and reduced impacts on surface water quality. Nonetheless, the existing General Plan does not solely address the impacts associated with the existing stormwater drainage systems or reduce the amount of polluted runoff to the extent of the proposed General Plan, with mitigation. Buildout under Alternative 1 would potentially have greater impacts on hydrology and water quality when compared to the City's proposed General Plan.

Water Service

The buildout population under Alternative 1 was considered under the cumulative analysis within **Section 3.13, Water Service**, of the proposed General Plan. It was found that there would be a surplus of 21,337 acre-feet (af) during multiple dry years for the Santa Clarita Valley in 2030. Therefore, impacts on water service under Alternative 1 would be less to those associated with the City's proposed General Plan because of fewer dwelling units.

Community Services

Seniors and Youth

As the population of the City's Planning Area reaches buildout under the existing General Plan, the number of senior citizens and youth would be expected to increase. The City would need to work with childcare facilities and providers to ensure adequate services. Park resources would need to meet the future demands of youth programs and youth sports. Impacts on youth and senior services under the existing General Plan would be similar as with the City's proposed General Plan due to the similar demand on services as the population ages.

Cultural Amenities

As build out of the City's Planning Area increases, the demand on different cultural amenities will also increase. This increase would require more meeting space to accommodate the increase in population. As the population projections for the existing General Plan is less than the City's proposed General Plan;

impacts on cultural amenities would be less under Alternative 1 when compared to those of the City's proposed General Plan.

Homelessness and Emergency Shelters

Services such as the provision of emergency shelters and housing for the disadvantaged population are established under the City of Santa Clarita Housing Element. Alternative 1 follows the policies and programs for homeless and emergency shelters identified in the Housing Element. Buildout under the proposed General Plan would also follow the City's proposed Housing Element and land use designations that allow uses for emergency shelters and housing. Therefore, impacts on homelessness and emergency shelters would be comparable under Alternative 1 and the City's proposed General Plan.

Public Services

Libraries

To adequately service the projected buildout population capacity of 266,312, under Alternative 1 there would need to be 732,358 library items and 133,156 square feet (sf) of library capacity. The libraries have 560,314 available library items and 45,172 square feet of library space within the OVOV Planning Area. As the projected populations for the existing is less than the proposed General Plan, impacts on library service would be reduced under Alternative 1.

Health and Social Services

The projected buildout population capacity of 266,312 is less than the proposed General Plan; therefore, the City's health and social services needs at buildout under Alternative 1 would be less than that of the City's proposed General Plan. Every age group of the projected population would require adequate health care within the City's Planning Area, not just newborns and the elderly. Therefore, impacts on health services would be less under Alternative 1.

Education

The City's Planning Area currently has six school districts and, as of 2008, educates 49,669 students from kindergarten to grade 12. The school districts design capacity is 54,844 students. No school districts are over capacity; however there are five schools over capacity. Implementation of Alternative 1, as well as the proposed General Plan, would potentially increase the number of new students within the City's Planning Area. The number of projected students is determined using a student generation rate, which is based on the number and type of dwelling units (i.e., single-family detached). As the proposed General Plan would have an increase in the number of dwelling units there would be a potentially greater

increase in the number of students. Therefore, impacts from implementation of Alternative 1 could be less than those of the City's proposed General Plan.

Fire Protection

The buildout population under the existing General Plan would be less than that of the buildout population under the proposed General Plan, the City's fire protection needs at General Plan buildout would be similar. As population increases the number of emergency calls and the emergency response times would potentially increase. There would be a greater increase in the number of dwelling units with the implementation of the proposed General Plan resulting in a greater increase in the number of calls. Therefore, impacts on fire protection under Alternative 1 would be less than those of the City's proposed General Plan.

Police Protection

As described in **Section 3.16, Public Services**, the Sheriff's Department uses a standard guideline of providing at least 1 sworn officer per 1,000 residents. The current number of sworn officers within the OVOV Planning Area, which would include the City's Planning Area, is 171 which provides one officer per 439 residents. With buildout under Alternative 1, the number of officers required to maintain a standard of one officer per 1,000 residents would need to be 266 for the projected population capacity of 266,312 residents, or an additional 95 sworn officers. The proposed General Plan buildout population would be 275,000 residents and would therefore require 275 sworn officers to maintain standards. However, the proposed General Plan would potentially have the capacity for 1,930 more dwelling units than Alternative 1, which would potentially require more patrols and officers. Therefore, potential impacts on police protection under Alternative 1 would be less than the City's proposed General Plan.

Parks and Recreation

The City's 246 acres of existing parkland falls 639 acres short of the General Plan goal of 5 acres per 1,000 residents and 285 acres short of the Quimby Act standard of 3 acres of parkland per 1,000 people. The projected estimated population for the City's Planning Area is 275,000. Based on population projections and the General Plan goal for parkland acreage of 5 acres per 1,000 people, the City would be deficit in its parkland acreage by 916 acres and deficit by 366 acres per the Quimby Act standard of 3 acres of parkland per 1,000 people under the proposed General Plan. However, the proposed General Plan has more definitive strategies (OSAP) to acquire and develop parkland when compared the existing General Plan. Consequently, there are fewer impacts to parklands associated with the proposed General Plan, when compared to the existing General Plan.

Utilities and Infrastructure

Wastewater

The City's wastewater generation and treatment needs at General Plan buildout would need to be evaluated on a project-by-project basis for their potential impact on the capacity and effectiveness of the wastewater treatment system to treat the potential additional sources of wastewater. Due to the potential for more dwelling units to be built under the City's proposed General Plan, the demand on wastewater treatment facilities would be less under Alternative 1. Consequently, potential impacts on wastewater would be less when compared to the City's proposed General Plan.

Solid Waste

Since the buildout population under Alternative 1 would be similar to the buildout population under the proposed General Plan, the solid waste generation and disposal needs at buildout under Alternative 1 would potentially be less. Solid waste generation for the City's Planning Area is analyzed using the solid waste generation numbers from **Section 3.17, Utilities and Infrastructure**. The amount of waste disposed (2007) by the City's Planning Area was 163,000 tons.

The City's Planning Area buildout population under Alternative 1 would be 266,312 residents. Using the same per capita waste generation in the impact analysis, the projected amount of waste disposed at buildout under the existing General Plan would be 254,450.6 tons per year. Waste generated under the proposed General Plan would be greater than Alternative 1. Due to the nearby landfills approaching full capacity for waste disposal and the projected amount of landfill capacity needed for the City's Planning Area for buildout under either the existing or proposed General Plans, there would be a shortfall of capacity by 2021. Since the buildout population under the Alternative 1 would be less than the City's proposed General Plan, impacts on solid waste would be fewer. This EIR has determined that solid waste impacts are significant and unavoidable.

Electricity, Natural Gas and Telecommunications

The City's electricity, natural gas, and telecommunications needs at buildout would be less under the existing General Plan. The City's proposed General Plan would potentially have a greater increase in the capacity of the number of dwelling units (1,930). Consequently, impacts on electricity, natural gas, and telecommunications would potentially be greater from the City's proposed General Plan when compared to Alternative 1.

Noise

As described in **Section 3.2, Transportation and Circulation**, buildout of the existing General Plan would potentially increase the number of trip ends. Although there may be some noise impacts under the proposed General Plan due to increased development potential, these impacts are likely to be reduced due to the reduction in vehicle miles travelled and alternatives to vehicular transportation. Therefore, potential noise impacts from Alternative 1 would be comparable to those from the proposed General Plan. Under this Alternative, noise impacts would reflect the construction impacts associated with the proposed General Plan. The EIR has determined that Noise impacts (short-term construction noise and pile driving) would be significant and unavoidable under Alternative 1 and the City's proposed General Plan and would require a Statement of Overriding Considerations.

Population and Housing

The buildout population for the City's Planning Area is estimated to have a capacity for 275,000 under the proposed General Plan and 266,312 under the existing General Plan. The potential increase in population would result from the annexation of existing units currently located in the City's SOI as well as the construction of new units. This housing projection assumes buildout of the maximum number of dwelling units per acre for each residential land use category designated on the proposed Land Use Policy Map (see **Figure 3.1-2, Proposed Land Use Policy Map**).

Alternative 1 would increase the capacity of the number of dwelling units over current totals of existing and entitled units by 6,941 while the proposed General Plan would potentially have an increase of 8,871 dwelling units. Implementation of Alternative 1 would not result in the displacement of substantial numbers of housing or people since several proposed policies promote growth and development within urban infill areas of the City's Planning Area while discouraging new uses on remote and undeveloped land. Implementation of Alternative 1 would have reduced impacts on population and housing when compared to the City's proposed General Plan.

Economic Development

Economic Development under Alternative 1 will continue to follow the existing General Plan. The number of dwelling units at buildout of the existing General Plan would be an additional 6,941 and the residential population would be 266,312. Additionally, under the existing General Plan, there would be approximately 1,962 acres commercial and 4,112 acres industrial development within the City. The proposed General Plan buildout is expected to generate a population of approximately 275,000 residents. However, the proposed General Plan is expected to provide approximately 1,626 acres of land for commercial and 3,466 acres industrial development within the City while also increasing these acreages

in the City's SOI (refer to **Table 6.0-1**). Overall, there would be approximately 2,691 more acres of commercial and industrial development with the City's proposed General Plan than under Alternative 1.

The existing General Plan projects that many of the new jobs expected to be created within the region will occur just outside of the City's present jurisdiction. Under the existing General Plan, if the pattern of new job formation continues to occur outside of the City boundaries without benefit of annexation, the demand and impacts upon City facilities and services may have serious impacts upon the City's ability to achieve fiscal stability. Under the City's proposed General Plan the City of Santa Clarita would seek to enhance the quality of life enjoyed by residents by maintaining a achieving a 1.5:1 jobs-to-housing balance which would allow residents to work closer to home. These areas will also include business attraction to support the resident population. Under the City's proposed General Plan, the City will focus on attracting the kind of companies that are suited for the Santa Clarita Valley's workforce, which includes industries such as aerospace, technology, biomedical, and film/entertainment. Since the City's proposed General Plan is expected to increase the amount of land available for commercial and industrial development, the proposed General Plan would have fewer economic development impacts compared to Alternative 1.

Conclusion

As discussed above, under Alternative 1, the existing General Plan would continue to be implemented and used for the guidance of growth throughout the City's Planning Area. Therefore, implementation of Alternative 1 would partially achieve the following project objective to the same degree as the proposed General Plan.

16. The Valley shall contain a mix of housing types that meet the diverse needs of residents, and offer choices for the Valley's population and lifestyles (ages, education, income, etc.) that are appropriate and consistent with their community character. This shall include a combination of single- and multi-family, owner occupied and rental units within *each* community, and mixed-use (i.e., integrated housing with commercial or office uses) development in key activity centers.

Alternative 1 does not contain the land use designation for mixed-uses. Therefore, Alternative 1 partially meets Objective 16.

Impacts associated with implementation of Alternative 1 would potentially result in impacts that would be less than, comparable to, or greater than the City's proposed General Plan. Impacts under Alternative 1 that were found to be less than those of the proposed General Plan are: aesthetics, water service, public services (libraries, health services, education, fire protection, police protection), utilities (wastewater, solid waste, and energy/natural gas/telecommunications), population and housing. Those impacts that were found to be similar to the City's proposed General Plan are: agricultural resources, mineral

resources, hazards and hazardous materials, and community services-seniors/youth and homelessness/emergency shelters and noise. With the implementation of Alternative 1, the following impacts were found to be greater than those of the proposed General Plan: air quality, cultural resources, geology and soils, community services-cultural amenities, hydrology and water quality, land use, transportation and circulation, global warming and climate change, parks and recreation, biological resources and economic development. Impacts on agricultural resources, air quality, global warming and climate change, biological resources, solid waste, and noise sources would remain significant and unavoidable.

Alternative 2 – General Plan with Mixed Use Eliminated

Under this alternative, the mixed use land use designation (MXC, “Mixed Use – Corridor” or MXN, “Mixed Use – Neighborhood”) would be eliminated from the proposed General Plan Land Use Policy Map on vacant parcels. With elimination of these land use categories, mixed use projects that integrate housing with commercial uses would not be developed in the City’s Planning Area. Under the proposed General Plan, the mixed use designation is applied to those areas adjacent to existing and planned transit corridors such as Railroad Avenue, transit stations, and key activity centers such as the Valencia Town Center. The development density in MXC districts would range from 11 to 30 du/ac, while the density in MXN districts would range from 6 to 18 du/ac. The proposed General Plan designates approximately 325 acres as MXC and 236 acres as MXN within the City’s Planning Area. Therefore, Alternative 2 would result in a decrease of 897 future unentitled units when compared to the City’s proposed General Plan.

Under Alternative 2, land designated as mixed use under the proposed General Plan would instead be designated as CC, “Community Commercial.” Since up to 897 dwelling units could be developed under the mixed use designation on vacant land, but no dwelling units are permitted under the commercial land use designation, the number of new units that could be developed within the City’s Planning Area at General Plan buildout under Alternative 2 would be 7,974; a reduction of 897 new units. The buildout population of the City’s Planning Area under Alternative 2 could have the capacity for up to 270,751 residents.³

Land Use

Buildout conditions under Alternative 2 would be similar to those under the proposed General Plan, except the proposed mixed use land use designation would be replaced with a strictly Commercial

³ The buildout population was determined by multiplying the decrease in dwelling units (8,000 du) by a factor of 3.08 (determined by City staff) for a decrease of 24,640 residents.

designation, and no mixed use development would be implemented within the City's Planning Area as seen in **Table 6.0-2, Alternative 2 Land Use Summary**.

The mixed use designation provides opportunities for the coordinated development of urban village corridors that offer a diverse range of complementary land uses served by public transit and in proximity to supportive uses and services. Mixed use development is strongly supported by the SCAG, which guides land use and growth in the Southern California region, including the City of Santa Clarita. A number of policies under SCAG's Compass/Growth Visioning Principles either directly or indirectly promote mixed use development. Since Alternative 2 would not include the Mixed Use designation to facilitate mixed use development within the City's Planning Area, Alternative 2 would not be consistent with SCAG's growth policies to the same extent as the proposed General Plan. Therefore, land use impacts would be greater under Alternative 2.

Transportation and Circulation

Under this alternative, traffic and circulation impacts would be greater than those of the proposed General Plan. As described above Alternative 2 would re-designate land uses from mixed uses to commercial uses. The proposed General Plan and Area Plan would generate a total of 1,860,000 ADTs at buildout. Under the proposed General Plan, the mixed uses would generate 4,032 ADTs. Alternative 2 would generate 2,002,810 ADTs, approximately 142,810 more ADTs when compared to the City's proposed General Plan and Area Plan. Buildout under Alternative 2 would generate approximately 8 percent more ADTs than the proposed General Plan and Area Plan. The projected amount of vehicle miles traveled is based on the average trip length (11.6 miles) and the average number of trips. The total vehicle miles traveled for Alternative 2 would be approximately 23,232,596 miles which would be 1,700,596 more miles traveled than the proposed General Plan and Area Plan (21,532,000 miles traveled). Alternative 2 would increase the amount of vehicle miles traveled for the City's Planning Area; consequently, potential impacts on traffic and circulation would be greater under this alternative.

Air Quality

Since buildout under Alternative 2 would increase commercial land uses within the City's Planning Area, there would be the potential for more vehicle emissions and operational emissions as compared to the buildout under the proposed General Plan. As described above there would be an additional 142,810 ADTs which would translate into 23,232,596 additional vehicle miles traveled (11.6 miles; average trip length) or approximately 1,700,596 total vehicle miles traveled (an approximate 8 percent increase over the proposed General Plan and Area Plan). Therefore, impacts on air quality would be greater under Alternative 2. Furthermore, due to the substantial increase in vehicle miles traveled and associated

emissions, Alternative 2 would likely result in emissions that are significant and unavoidable. Compared to the proposed General Plan, Alternative 2 would result in increased emissions of approximately 3,410 pounds per day (lbs/day) of VOC; 2,960 lbs/day of NO_x, 32,940 lbs/day of CO, 110 lbs/day of SO_x, 17,430 lbs/day of PM₁₀, and 3,390 lbs/day of PM_{2.5} during the summertime. Alternative 2 would result in increased emissions of approximately 4,070 lbs/day of VOC; 3,520 lbs/day of NO_x, 31,840 pounds per day of CO, 90 lbs/day of SO_x, 17,430 lbs/day of PM₁₀, and 3,390 lbs/day of PM_{2.5} during the wintertime. The increase in emissions is primarily the result of the additional vehicle miles traveled associated with Alternative 2.

This EIR has determined that air quality impacts are significant and unavoidable and would require a Statement of Overriding Considerations.

Global Warming and Climate Change

Since buildout under Alternative 2 would increase commercial land uses within the City's Planning Area there would be potential for more vehicle emissions and operational emissions. Impacts on global climate change would be greater than the proposed General Plan. Furthermore, due to the substantial increase in vehicle miles traveled and associated GHG emissions, Alternative 2 would likely result in GHG emissions that are significant unless measures were specifically incorporated to reduce the commercial-related vehicle trips associated with Alternative 2. Compared to the proposed General Plan, Alternative 2 would result in additional direct GHG emissions of approximately 1,814,140 metric tons of CO₂E per year. The increase in GHG emissions is primarily the result of the additional vehicle miles traveled associated with Alternative 2. Indirect emissions, while not quantified below, would likely exhibit proportionately similar differences as shown for area sources. Under Alternative 2, GHG emissions would not be greater than those produced with buildout of the proposed General Plan and Area Plan. The proposed project would nonetheless have significant and unavoidable impacts and would require a Statement of Overriding Considerations.

Agricultural Resources

Buildout conditions under Alternative 2 would be similar to those under the proposed General Plan, except mixed use development would be replaced with exclusively commercial development; the overall acreage and distribution of developed land within the City's Planning Area would not be altered. Since Alternative 2 and the General Plan would result in the removal of the same acreage of farmland, impacts on agricultural resources under Alternative 2 would be comparable to those associated with the proposed General Plan. The EIR has determined that Agricultural Resources impacts (Loss of Important Farmland) would be significant and unavoidable under Alternative 2 and OVOV.

Aesthetics

Buildout conditions under Alternative 2 would be similar to those under the proposed General Plan, except mixed use development would be replaced with exclusively commercial development; the overall acreage and distribution of developed land within the City's Planning Area would not be altered. Since mixed use and strictly commercial development projects do not possess substantially different visual qualities, impacts on aesthetics, views, and nighttime illumination under Alternative 2 would be comparable to those associated with the proposed General Plan.

Biological Resources

Although land use designations would differ between the proposed General Plan and Alternative 2, the overall acreage and distribution of developed land within the City's Planning Area would not be altered. Alternative 2 and the proposed General Plan would result in the removal of the same acreage of natural open space. The buildout population of Alternative 2 would be 270,751 in comparison to the proposed General Plan buildout capacity of 275,000. Therefore, impacts on biological resources within the City's Planning Area would be similar to that of the proposed General Plan. The EIR has determined that Biological Resources impacts (loss of open space) would be significant and unavoidable under Alternative 2 and OVOV.

Cultural Resources

Buildout conditions under Alternative 2 would be similar to those under the proposed General Plan, except for the changes in land uses from mixed use to commercial use. Alternative 2 would be comparable for the potential to damage a historical, archaeological, or paleontological resource relative to the proposed General Plan because the proposed land use changes would require similar amounts of construction. Impacts on cultural resources would potentially be similar to those associated with the proposed General Plan. However, cultural resource surveys would be conducted on a project by project basis and projects would be subject to CEQA review.

Geology, Soils, Seismicity

Buildout conditions under Alternative 2 would be similar to those under the proposed General Plan, except mixed use development would be replaced with exclusively commercial development; the overall acreage and distribution of developed land within the City's Planning Area would not be altered. Alternative 2 would be subject to the same geologic conditions and hazards as the proposed General Plan, and would not require additional grading or excavation. New construction would have to conform

to the latest California Building Code standards. Therefore, geology, soils and seismicity impacts under Alternative 2 would be comparable to those associated with the City's proposed General Plan.

Mineral Resources

The identification of significant mineral resources that are available for extraction has been identified on **Figure 3.10-1**. The proposed General Plan contains policies that state to identify, preserve from encroachment, and conserve and maintain the significant MRZ-2 lands. Alternative 2 would designate the MXC and MXN land uses for commercial land uses. As Alternative 2 would potentially have similar amounts of construction to that of the City's proposed General Plan, impacts on mineral resources would be comparable to the City's proposed General Plan.

Hazards and Hazardous Materials

Alternative 2 would not substantially increase or decrease the transport, use, or disposal of hazardous substances relative to the proposed General Plan. Emergency response plans are developed and adopted independently of the General Plan process. Compliance with the current SEMS would minimize impacts on emergency preparedness and response for Alternative 2 and the proposed General Plan. Alternative 2 would support programs related to wildland fire and fire hazard impacts. Therefore, Alternative 2 impacts on hazardous and hazardous materials would be comparable to the City's proposed General Plan.

Hydrology and Water Quality

As the City's Planning Area reaches buildout, the amount of unpaved surface area would decrease with increased development and additional impervious surface area would increase due to the construction of more paved surfaces such as parking lots, streets, and sidewalks. As described in **Section 3.12, Hydrology and Water Quality**, existing and proposed development is subject to state and federal guidelines which regulate surface water quality and discharge, either through point sources or non-point sources. Although land uses under Alternative 2 would change from mixed uses to commercial land uses, the amount of potential hardscaped areas would remain essentially the same. Therefore, impacts on hydrology and water quality under Alternative 2 would be similar to those of the City's proposed General Plan.

Water Service

Since the buildout population under Alternative 2 would be less than the buildout population under the proposed General Plan, the City's water supply needs at buildout would be less. Therefore, impacts on

water service under Alternative 2 would be less than those associated with the City's proposed General Plan. Impacts on water resources within the CLWA service area and East Subbasin, including impacts associated with the adequacy of water supplies, groundwater recharge, and perchlorate contamination would be less than significant and no additional mitigation measures are required. Impacts associated with the adequacy of water supplies outside the CLWA service area and East Subbasin would be unavoidably significant after the implementation of mitigation measures. Impacts associated with groundwater recharge and perchlorate contamination would be less than significant and no additional mitigation measures are required.

Community Services

Seniors and Youth

As the population of the City's Planning Area reaches buildout, the number of senior citizens would be expected to increase for both Alternative 2 and the City's proposed General Plan. Alternative 2 would have a smaller population at buildout (270,751) and therefore potentially fewer seniors. The City would need to work with childcare facilities and providers to provide adequate services as the City's Planning Area reaches buildout. Park resources would need to meet the future demands of youth programs and youth sports. Potential impacts on youth and senior services under Alternative 2 would be less than those of the City's proposed General Plan due to the potentially smaller demand on services resulting from the reduced number of dwelling units.

Cultural Amenities

Alternative 2 cultural amenities would be similar to the proposed General Plan. As there would be a potential decrease in the land use density with Alternative 2, there would potentially be a decrease in the buildout population. However, Alternative 2 would have a smaller buildout population (270,751) than the proposed General Plan (275,000). As the Alternative 2 buildout population would be less than the proposed General Plan, impacts on cultural amenities would be less than the City's proposed General Plan.

Homelessness and Emergency Shelters

Services such as the provision of emergency shelters and housing for the disadvantaged population would be established under both Alternative 2 and the City's proposed General Plan. Alternative 2 would have a smaller buildout population than the proposed General Plan buildout population. Therefore, impacts on community services would be less than the City's proposed General Plan.

Public Services

Libraries

The buildout population for Alternative 2 could have the capacity for 270,751 persons. The proposed General Plan buildout population is projected to be 275,000. With a smaller buildout population, Alternative 2 would have fewer demands on library items and library space than the proposed General Plan. As seen in **Table 6.0-2, Alternative 2 vs. Proposed General Plan Library Resources**, Alternative 2 would require 11,685 less library items to meet the 2.75 library items per resident guideline; and would have an additional surplus of 2,124 square feet of library space when compared to the City's proposed General Plan.

The City's proposed General Plan would also have a deficit of library items and surplus of library space; however the potential impacts on libraries and library service under Alternative 2 would be fewer than those of the City's proposed General Plan.

**Table 6.0-2
Alternative 2 vs. Proposed General Plan Library Resources**

Population	Guidelines		Existing Resources		Surplus or Deficit (-)	
	Library Items	Square Feet	Library Items	Square Feet	Library Items	Square Feet
City's Proposed General Plan						
275,000	756,250	137,500	560,314 ¹	182,672 ²	(-) 195,936 ³	45,172
Alternative 2						
270,751	744,565	135,376	560,314 ¹	182,672 ²	(-) 184,251 ³	47,296
Difference					11,685⁴	2,124⁴

¹ This is the existing amount of library items (Table 3.15-3 in Section 3.15 of this EIR).

² Total of the existing amount of square feet from Table 3.15-2 and planned construction from Table 3.15-3 in Section 3.15 of this EIR.

³ This is the amount of library items needed to meet the goal of 688,490 items based on the existing number of library items (560,314).

⁴ Alternative 2 would require less library items to meet library guidelines and would have an additional surplus of square feet.

Health Services

Under Alternative 2, the buildout population (270,751 residents) would be less than the capacity of the proposed General Plan buildout population (275,000). As of 2007, 8.0 percent of the population consisted

of the age group 65 or older. Alternative 2 would total 40,613 people age 65 and over. Every age group of the projected population would require adequate health care within the City's Planning Area, not just newborns and the elderly. Therefore, impacts on health services would be less for Alternative 2 than the City's proposed General Plan.

Education

Education needs would be less for Alternative 2 than the City's proposed General Plan due to the smaller buildout population projection (270,751). Alternative 2 would provide fewer new dwelling units than the proposed General Plan and the potential impacts on education could be less than that of the City's proposed General Plan. Therefore, impacts on education would be potentially less under Alternative 2.

Fire Protection

The City's fire protection needs with buildout of Alternative 2 would be less than the proposed General Plan due to the potentially fewer number of dwelling units at buildout. Impacts on fire protection would potentially be less with buildout of Alternative 2.

Police Protection

As described in **Section 3.15, Public Services**, the Sheriff's Department uses a standard guideline of providing at least 1 sworn officer per 1,000 residents. The current number of sworn officers within the OVOV Planning Area, which would include the City's Planning Area, is 171 which provides one officer per 439 residents. With buildout under Alternative 2, the number of officers required to maintain a standard of one officer per 1,000 residents would be 271 for the projected population of 270,751 residents, or an additional 100 sworn officers. The proposed General Plan buildout population would be 275,000 residents and would therefore require an additional 104 sworn officers to maintain standards. Therefore, Alternative 2 would have fewer impacts on police protection than with the City's proposed General Plan.

Parks and Recreation

Buildout conditions under Alternative 2 would be similar to those under the proposed General Plan, except mixed use development would be replaced with exclusively commercial development. No change in the provision of recreational resources such as parkland and hiking trails would result in comparison to the proposed General Plan. The City is currently deficit in its parkland acreage by 639 acres per the existing General Plan goal of 5 acres of parkland per 1,000 people and deficit by 285 acres per the Quimby Act standard of 3 acres of parkland per 1,000 people. The projected population of Alternative 2 would be 270,751 and would be 275,000 under the proposed General Plan. As seen in **Table 6.0-3, Comparison of**

Parkland Acreage Goal and Quantities, Alternative 2 would require 21 less acres for the General Plan goal of 5 acres of parkland per 1,000 people and 13 less acres per the Quimby Act standard of 3 acres of parkland per 1,000 people.

Furthermore, since the buildout population under Alternative 2 would be less than the buildout population under the proposed General Plan, the City's recreational needs at General Plan buildout would be less under Alternative 2. Therefore, impacts on recreation would be less than those associated with the City's proposed General Plan.

**Table 6.0-3
Comparison of Parkland Acreage Goal and Quantities**

	Population	Acres Demanded (Based on 5 Ac/1000)	Existing and Proposed Parkland (Ac) ³	Surplus or (-) Deficit
Proposed General Plan	275,000**	1,375 ¹	459	-916
	Population	Acres Demanded (Based on 3 Ac/1000)	Existing and Proposed Parkland (Ac)	Surplus or (-) Deficit
Proposed General Plan	275,000**	825 ²	459	-366
	Population	Acres Demanded (Based on 5 Ac/1000)	Existing and Proposed Parkland (Ac)	Surplus or (-) Deficit
Alternative 2	270,751	1,354 ¹	459	-895
	Population	Acres Demanded (Based on 3 Ac/1000)	Existing and Proposed Parkland (Ac)	Surplus or (-) Deficit
Alternative 2	270,751	812 ²	459	-353

* Approximate

** Approximate anticipated build out population per the City's General Plan

¹Based on the goal of 5 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents.

²Based on the goal of 3 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents.

³ Based on total from Tables 3.16 -1 and 3.16-3 in section 3.16 of this EIR.

Utilities and Infrastructure

Wastewater

The City's wastewater generation and treatment needs at General Plan buildout would need to be evaluated on a project-by-project basis for their potential impact on the capacity and effectiveness of the wastewater treatment system to treat the potential additional sources of wastewater. Due to the potential

for less demand under Alternative 2 on the wastewater treatment facility; impacts on wastewater would be less than those associated with the City's proposed General Plan.

Solid Waste

Since the buildout population under Alternative 2 would be less than the buildout population under the proposed General Plan, the City's solid waste generation and disposal needs at buildout would be less. With the projected buildout of the City's proposed General Plan (275,000) the estimated amount of waste disposed, that would be generated by the City's Planning Area, would be 254,450.6 tons per year. Under Alternative 2 (270,751) the estimated amount of waste disposed, based on the 5.07 pounds per capita per day generation rate, would be 250,519 tons per year. Under Alternative 2 the amount of projected solid waste disposed of would be 3,932 less tons per year. Therefore, impacts on solid waste under Alternative 2 would be less than those associated with the City's proposed General Plan. This EIR has determined that solid waste impacts are significant and unavoidable.

Electricity, Natural Gas and Telecommunications

Since the buildout population under Alternative 2 would be less than the buildout population under the City's proposed General Plan, the City's electricity, natural gas and telecommunications needs at buildout would be fewer. Therefore, potential impacts on electricity, natural gas and telecommunications would be less under Alternative 2 than those associated with the City's proposed General Plan.

Noise

Under this alternative, noise impacts would reflect the construction impacts associated with the City's proposed General Plan. Alternative 2 would replace the mixed use land uses with commercial land uses. This change in land uses would have the potential for similar amounts of noise generating sources. Under Alternative 2, the change in land use would potentially change in the amount of average daily trips and vehicle miles traveled. As Alternative 2 would potentially create 142,810 more ADTs there would be an increase in noise from vehicles along major transportation routes. Noise impacts would be greater under Alternative 2, than with the proposed General Plan. The EIR has determined that Noise impacts (short-term construction noise and pile driving and operational) would be significant and unavoidable under Alternative 2 and the City's proposed General Plan and a Statement of Overriding Considerations would be required.

Population and Housing

Under Alternative 2, the total number of new housing units developed within the City's Planning Area at General Plan buildout would decrease by 897. Furthermore, no mixed use housing would be

incorporated, thereby reducing the Planning Area's multi-family housing supply and limiting opportunities for transit oriented development, revitalization of commercial corridors, and walkable business districts. Additionally, Alternative 2 could interfere with the City's ability to meet its Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA). The City is required by state law to provide an inventory of land suitable for residential development, including vacant sites and sites having the potential for redevelopment. This inventory is used to identify sites that can be feasibly developed for housing within the current planning period in order to meet the City's RHNA.

Under the City's proposed General Plan, nine of the 25 suitable sites identified in the Housing Element for the current planning period (2006 to 2014) include housing within mixed use development. Together, these sites account for a portion of the present RHNA dwelling units. Since Alternative 2 would eliminate the mixed use land use designations, these sites would no longer be available for housing and the City would have to identify alternative sites in its planning area to meet the RHNA. The City would likely experience greater difficulty in identifying alternative sites with supporting infrastructure already in place if mixed use development is not allowed. Additionally, since mixed use, multi-family housing offers opportunities for the development of affordable dwelling units, the City's ability to identify adequate affordable housing sites would be restricted. This alternative could also limit the City's ability to meet RHNAs for future planning periods due to the loss of up to 897 dwelling units on mixed use vacant land. For these reasons, impacts on population and housing would be greater under Alternative 2, when compared to the proposed General Plan.

Economic Development

Economic development under Alternative 2 would be similar to the proposed General Plan. The City would target the aerospace, technology, biomedical, and film/entertainment industries. Under Alternative 2, the mixed use designation would be eliminated from the Land Use Map which would reduce 897 dwelling units upon buildout when compared to the proposed General Plan. This would, in turn, reduce the expected buildout population from 275,000 residents to 270,751 residents, as described above.

Under both the City's proposed General Plan and Alternative 2, the City of Santa Clarita would seek to enhance the quality of life enjoyed by residents by maintaining a minimum of 1.5:1 jobs to housing balance while aggressively working to achieve a jobs/housing balance of 2:1.

Alternative 2 would provide more commercial acreage and fewer housing units with a project population buildout capacity of 270,751. Impacts on economic development would be less under Alternative 2 as

more people would need to live outside the City's Planning Area for housing increasing the City's ability to achieve the 1.5:1 jobs to housing balance within the City's Planning Area.

Conclusion

As discussed above, under Alternative 2, a general plan similar to the proposed General Plan would be implemented, except the mixed use designation would be eliminated and land designated for mixed use development would instead be designated for commercial uses. As a result, 897 fewer new dwelling units on vacant land would be developed within the City's Planning Area at General Plan buildout. Implementation of Alternative 2 would not achieve the following project objectives to the same degree as the proposed General Plan.

4. Higher density development, including multi-family housing and mixed use projects that integrate housing with commercial uses, shall be targeted in areas adjacent to existing and planned transit corridors, stations and key activity centers, such as the Valencia Town Center and portions of Newhall and Soledad Canyon Road.

Alternative 2 would not include a mixed use land use designation on the Land Use Policy Map designated in the Land Use Element. The mixed use designation would encourage new housing and innovative retail that is less automobile dependent, and would help to create pedestrian-oriented neighborhoods where local residents have services, shops, jobs and access to transit within walking distance of their homes. Alternative 2 would designate these areas as commercial land uses, which tend to produce more travel by automobiles.

16. The Valley shall contain a mix of housing types that meet the diverse needs of residents, and offer choices for the Valley's population and lifestyles (ages, education, income, etc.) that are appropriate and consistent with their community character. This shall include a combination of single- and multi-family, owner occupied and rental units within *each* community, and mixed-use (i.e., integrated housing with commercial or office uses) development in key activity centers.

As described above, Alternative 2 would replace the mixed use land use designation with commercial land uses. This would limit the opportunities for the Valley's population to choose to live near key activity centers.

23. Older commercial areas and corridors that are economically and/or physically obsolete or deteriorated, such as portions of Castaic, Val Verde, Newhall, Lyons Avenue, Sierra Highway, Main Street, Newhall Avenue, and Soledad Canyon Road, shall be redeveloped for commercial, mixed use, residential or other appropriate uses that complement and serve adjoining land uses and can be adequately supported by the market. Where appropriate, redeveloped uses and buildings shall reflect the area's important architectural and cultural history.

Alternative 2 would maintain older commercial areas as commercial land uses. The opportunity to provide housing units consistent and compatible next to these areas would be small. Mixed-use land uses near commercial land uses provide the Valley's residents opportunities to choose to use alternate means of transportation when living close to these centers.

Impacts associated with implementation of Alternative 2 would potentially result in impacts that would be less than, comparable to, or greater than the proposed General Plan. Impacts found to be less than those of the proposed General Plan include: water service, community services-seniors/youth, cultural amenities and homelessness/emergency shelters, public services-libraries, health services, education, fire protection, police protection, parks and recreation, and utilities -wastewater, solid waste, energy/natural gas/telecommunications and economic development. Those impacts that were found to be similar to the proposed General Plan are: global warming and climate change, agricultural resources, aesthetics, biological resources, cultural resources, geology and soils, mineral resources, hazards and hazardous materials, and hydrology and water quality. With the implementation of Alternative 2, the following impacts were found to be greater than those of the proposed General Plan: land use, transportation and circulation, air quality, noise, and population and housing. Impacts on agricultural resources, biological resources, global warming climate change, air quality, water service, solid waste, and noise sources would remain significant and unavoidable and a Statement of Overriding Considerations would be required.

Alternative 3 – Downgrade Vacant Urban Residential Parcels by One Land Use Category

Under this alternative, vacant parcels that are designated Urban Residential (UR1, UR2, UR3, UR4 or UR5) and are not presently entitled would be downgraded in density by one land use designation. For example, a vacant, not entitled parcel designated UR3 (11.0 du/ac) by the proposed General Plan would instead be designated UR2 (5.0 du/ac) under this alternative. The UR1 designation (2.0 du/ac) would be downgraded to NU5, "Rural Residential/Non-Urban 5" (1.0 du/ac). As shown in **Table 6.0-4, Alternative 3 Summary**, this downward shift in land use designation would affect approximately 1,980 acres of the City's Planning Area. It would result in the development of approximately 3,569 fewer new dwelling units within the City's Planning Area when compared to the City's proposed General Plan. The estimated Alternative 3 buildout population would be 10,993 less than the proposed General Plan buildout population of 275,000 residents.⁴ Although there would be a reduction of residential housing with the

⁴ The buildout population was determined by multiplying the decrease in dwelling units (3,569 du) by a factor of 3.08 (determined by City staff) for a decrease of 10,993 residents.

implementation of Alternative 3, this reduction would not affect the number of acres proposed for mixed use under Alternative 3.

Alternative 3 would eliminate the UR5 designation from the Land Use Policy Map of the proposed General Plan. The UR5 designation provides for medium to high density multi-family housing, such as apartment and condominium complexes, in areas easily accessible to transportation, employment, retail, and other urban services. Allowed uses include multi-family housing at a minimum density of 18 du/ac and a maximum density of 30 du/ac, configured in buildings of two to three stories in height. Alternative 3 would still allow the development of medium to high density multi-family housing of up to 30 dwelling units per acre under the mixed use designation. The overall development of new medium to high-density housing would be reduced with elimination of the UR5 designation.

Table 6.0-4
Alternative 3 Summary

Acreage*	City's Proposed General Plan		Alternative 3	
	Land Use Designation	Maximum Density (du/acre)	Land Use Designation	Maximum Density (du/acre)
729.10	UR1	2.0	NU5	1.0
635.91	UR2	5.0	UR1	2.0
365.95	UR3	11.0	UR2	5.0
43.60	UR4	18.0	UR3	11.0
204.99	UR5	30.0	UR4	18.0
Total				

*City and SOI Vacant Acreage

du = dwelling unit

Source: City of Santa Clarita, 2009.

Land Use

Buildout conditions under Alternative 3 would be similar to those under the proposed General Plan, except vacant parcels that are designated urban residential (UR 1, UR 2, UR 3, UR 4, or UR 5) and are not presently entitled would be downgraded in density by one land use designation. The urban residential designations accommodate development densities ranging from two dwelling units per acre to 30 dwelling units per acre. Within urban residential zones, supportive commercial uses serving the local area, such as stores, restaurants, personal services, limited medical services, and retail sales of specialty goods appropriate to the surrounding neighborhood may be allowed within approved activity areas without requiring a General Plan Amendment. Live-work units may be allowed subject to the requirements of the underlying zone.

The urban residential designations, especially UR 3, UR 4 and UR 5, allow for denser residential development than the Rural Residential designations, and are appropriate designations for residential development in and near the urban areas of the City's Planning Area that are in close proximity to existing services, utilities, transit and jobs. Further, unlike other designations, UR 3, UR 4, and UR 5 allow development of attached single-family housing, smaller-scale multi-family residences such as duplexes and triplexes, and larger-scale multi-family residences. Therefore, by downgrading density within the urban residential zones and by not designating any vacant land as UR 5, this alternative would reduce growth through urban infill.

SCAG strongly supports urban infill as a development strategy. A number of policies under SCAG's Compass/Growth Visioning Principles either directly or indirectly promote urban infill, including the following: Locate new housing near existing jobs and new jobs near existing housing (**Policy 1.2**); encourage transit-oriented development (**Policy 1.3**); promote infill development and redevelopment to revitalize existing communities (**Policy 2.1**); focus development in urban centers and existing cities (**Policy 4.2**); and develop strategies to accommodate growth that uses resources efficiently, eliminate pollution and significantly reduce waste (**Policy 4.3**). Although Alternative 3 would still include the Mixed Use designation to facilitate urban infill within the City's Planning Area, the development density on vacant urban residential land would be substantially reduced. Therefore, Alternative 3 would not be consistent with SCAG's growth policies to the same degree as the proposed General Plan. Therefore, impacts on land use impacts would be greater under Alternative 3.

Transportation and Circulation

Under this alternative, traffic and circulation impacts would be less than those of the proposed General Plan because there would be a potential reduction in the number of ADTs from the decrease in density. As described above, this alternative would designate land uses that would reduce the residential density within the City's Planning Area by one land use designation. **Table 6.0-5, Alternative 3 Trip Generation Summary**, describes the difference in ADTs between the proposed General Plan and Alternative 3.

The City's proposed General Plan and Area Plan would generate a total of 1,860,000 ADTs at buildout. Alternative 3 would generate 34,155 fewer ADTs when compared to the City's proposed General Plan. This Alternative would reduce the number of vehicle miles traveled for the City's Planning Area. Impacts on traffic and circulation would be less under Alternative 3 when compared with the City's proposed General Plan.

**Table 6.0-5
Alternative 3 Trip Generation Summary**

	Land Use	Units	ADT¹
Proposed General Plan	Residential	8,871	84,895
Alternative 3	Residential	5,302	50,740
Difference		(3,569)	(34,155)

Note:

¹ A conservative analysis was done to determine ADTs using the average number of trips (9.57), for the residential land use, multiplied by the number of units.

Source: Institute of Transportation Engineers, Trip Generation 7th Edition, 2003.

Air Quality

Since buildout under Alternative 3 would reduce density within the City's Planning Area, there would be the potential for less vehicle emissions and operational emissions as compared to the buildout under the proposed General Plan. As described above there would be 34,155 fewer ADTs for residential land uses, which would therefore translate into fewer vehicle miles traveled. Therefore, impacts on air quality would be less for Alternative 3 and would result in a less than significant impact after the implementation of applicable mitigation measures as described in **Section 3.3, Air Quality**. Compared to the proposed General Plan, Alternative 3 would result in decreased emissions of approximately 330 lbs/day of VOC; 160 lbs/day of NO_x, 1,160 lbs/day of CO, 3 lbs/day of SO_x, 520 lbs/day of PM₁₀, and 100 lbs/day of PM_{2.5} during the summertime. Alternative 3 would result in decreased emissions of approximately 310 lbs/day of VOC; 200 lbs/day of NO_x, 960 lbs/day of CO, 3 lbs/day of SO_x, 520 lbs/day of PM₁₀, and 100 lbs/day of PM_{2.5} during the wintertime. The decrease in emissions is primarily the result of fewer vehicle miles traveled associated with Alternative 3.

Nonetheless, this EIR has determined that air quality impacts are significant and unavoidable and would require a Statement of Overriding Considerations.

Global Warming and Climate Change

Since buildout under Alternative 3 would reduce density within the City's Planning Area there would be potential for fewer vehicle emissions and operational emissions. Impacts on global climate change would be less than the proposed General Plan and would result in a less than significant impact after the implementation of applicable policies and mitigation measures as described in **Section 3.4, Global Warming and Climate Change**. Compared to the proposed General Plan, Alternative 3 would result in

fewer direct GHG emissions of approximately 70,010 metric tons of CO₂E per year. This reduction in GHG emissions is primarily the result of the reduced vehicle miles traveled associated with Alternative 3.

Nonetheless, this EIR has determined that the impacts are significant and unavoidable and would require a Statement of Overriding Considerations.

Agricultural Resources

Buildout conditions under Alternative 3 would be similar to those under the proposed General Plan, except vacant parcels that are designated urban residential and are not presently entitled would be downgraded in density by one land use designation. Since Alternative 3 and the proposed General Plan would result in the removal of the same acreage of farmland, impacts on agricultural resources under Alternative 3 would be comparable to those associated with the proposed General Plan. The EIR has determined that Agricultural Resources impacts (Loss of Important Farmland) would be significant and unavoidable under Alternative 3 and OVOV.

Aesthetics

Under Alternative 3, development density would be reduced on vacant parcels designated as urban residential by the proposed General Plan. Fewer units per acre would be constructed on these parcels, potentially yielding wider view corridors, increased setbacks, more open space between buildings and fewer sources of nighttime light. As a result, impacts on aesthetics, views, and nighttime illumination under Alternative 3 would be less than those associated with the proposed General Plan.

Biological Resources

Although development density on vacant urban residential parcels would differ between the proposed General Plan and Alternative 3, the overall acreage and distribution of developed land within the City's Planning Area would not be altered. As a result of the downgrade in land use density, there would be 3,569 less new dwelling units in the City's Planning Area and the buildout population would be 260,201 for the City's Planning Area. Despite the change in density, Alternative 3 and the proposed General Plan would result in the removal of the same acreage of natural open space. Therefore, impacts on biological resources under Alternative 3 would be similar to those associated with the proposed General Plan. The EIR has determined that Biological Resources impacts (loss of open space) would be significant and unavoidable under Alternative 3 and OVOV.

Cultural Resources

Although development density on vacant urban residential parcels would differ between the proposed General Plan and Alternative 3, the overall acreage and distribution of developed land within the City's

Planning Area would not be altered. Alternative 3 would not increase or decrease the potential to damage a historical, archaeological or paleontological resource relative to the proposed General Plan. Potential impacts on cultural resources under Alternative 3 would be comparable to those associated with the proposed General Plan.

Geology, Soils, Seismicity

Buildout under Alternative 3 would be similar to that under the proposed General Plan, except for the density reduction in the City's Planning Area. As seen in **Figure 3.9-3, Faults Within or Adjacent to the OVOV Planning Area**, the City's Planning Area is located within or near known earthquake faults and would be subject to the same geologic conditions and hazards as the proposed General Plan. Alternative 3 would not allow as much development, consequently reducing grading or excavation within those land use areas that have been downgraded. As the alternative would reduce density within the City's Planning Area, the potential to injury of people from earthquake hazards would be less than that of the proposed General Plan. As Alternative 3 would allow less development, soils, geology, and seismic impacts would potentially be less than those associated with the proposed General Plan.

Mineral Resources

The identification of significant mineral resources that are available for extraction has been identified on **Figure 3.10-1**. The proposed General Plan contains policies that state to identify, preserve from encroachment, and conserve and maintain the significant MRZ-2 lands. Although development density on vacant urban residential parcels would differ between the proposed General Plan and Alternative 3, the overall acreage and distribution of developed land within the City's Planning Area would not be altered. Since Alternative 3 would not increase or decrease the extraction of mineral resources relative to the proposed General Plan, impacts on mineral resources under Alternative 3 would be comparable to those associated with the proposed General Plan.

Hazards and Hazardous Materials

Alternative 3 would not substantially increase or decrease the transport, use, or disposal of hazardous substances relative to the proposed General Plan. Emergency response plans are developed and adopted independently of the General Plan process. Compliance with the current SEMS would minimize impacts on emergency preparedness and response for Alternative 3 and the proposed General Plan. Alternative 3 would support programs related to wildland fire and fire hazard impacts. Therefore, Alternative 3 impacts on hazardous and hazardous materials would be comparable to the proposed General Plan.

Hydrology and Water Quality

As the City's Planning Area reaches buildout, the amount of unpaved surface area would decrease with increased development and additional impervious surface area would increase due to the construction of more paved surfaces such as parking lots, streets, and sidewalks. As described in **Section 3.12, Hydrology and Water Quality**, existing and proposed development is subject to state and federal guidelines which regulate surface water quality and discharge, either through point sources or non-point sources. As the land uses in the City's Planning Area would decrease in density under Alternative 3, the amount of potential hardscaped areas would decrease. The decrease in hardscaped areas and increase in open space areas would potentially have fewer impacts on hydrology. Alternative 3 impacts on hydrology and water quality would be less than the proposed General Plan.

Water Service

Buildout under Alternative 3 would have the potential for less development within the City's Planning Area. This alternative would therefore have a potential for less demand on the area's water supply. The buildout population for Alternative 3 would be 260,201 which would be less than the City's proposed General Plan's buildout population of 275,000. Potential impacts on water service would be less under Alternative 3. As described in the cumulative impacts subsection of **Section 3.13, Water Service**, there would be enough water during multiple dry years (supply would be 156,027 acre-feet per year [afy] with demand at 137,900 afy). Therefore, impacts on water service would be less than those associated with the City's proposed General Plan. Impacts on water resources within the CLWA service area and East Subbasin, including impacts associated with the adequacy of water supplies, groundwater recharge, and perchlorate contamination, would be less than significant and no additional mitigation measures are required. Impacts associated with the adequacy of water supplies outside the CLWA service area and East Subbasin would be unavoidably significant after the implementation of mitigation measures. Impacts associated with groundwater recharge and perchlorate contamination would be less than significant and no additional mitigation measures are required.

Community Services

Seniors and Youth

As the population of the City's Planning Area reaches buildout, the number of senior citizens would be expected to increase for both Alternative 3 and the proposed General Plan. Alternative 3 would have a smaller population at buildout and potentially fewer seniors. The City would need to work with childcare facilities and providers to provide adequate services as the City's Planning Area reaches buildout. Park resources would need to meet the future demands of youth programs and youth sports.

Impacts on youth and senior services under Alternative 3 would be potentially less than those of the City's proposed General Plan due to the potentially reduced demand for services from the smaller population projection at buildout.

Cultural Amenities

The proposed buildout population would be 260,201 for Alternative 3 while the City's proposed General Plan would be 275,000. However, the pattern of land use designations would be similar to the proposed General Plan because Alternative 3 would downgrade vacant urban residential parcels by one land use category. Due to the smaller buildout population, impacts on cultural amenities would be fewer for Alternative 3 than that of the proposed General Plan.

Homelessness and Emergency Shelters

Services such as the provision of emergency shelters and housing for the disadvantaged population would be established under both the proposed General Plan and Alternative 3. Alternative 3 buildout population is projected at 260,201 residents which would be smaller than the buildout population of the proposed General Plan. Therefore, impacts on community services would be less than the proposed General Plan.

Public Services

Libraries

The buildout population for Alternative 3 would be 260,201. The City's proposed General Plan buildout population is projected to be 275,000.

As seen in **Table 6.0-6, Alternative 3 vs. Proposed General Plan Library Resources**, Alternative 3 would require 40,697 less library items to meet the 2.75 library items per resident guideline; and would have an additional surplus of 7,399 square feet of library space when compared to the proposed General Plan.

Buildout of the proposed General Plan would have a surplus of library items and library space at buildout. Since Alternative 3's buildout population would be smaller than the proposed General Plan buildout population, impacts on libraries and library service would be less than those associated with the proposed General Plan.

Table 6.0-6
Alternative 3 vs. Proposed General Plan Library Resources

Population	Guidelines		Existing Resources		Surplus or Deficit (-)	
	Library Items	Square Feet	Library Items	Square Feet	Library Items	Square Feet
Proposed General Plan						
275,000	756,250	137,500	560,314 ¹	182,672 ²	(-) 195,936 ³	45,172
Alternative 3						
260,201	715,553	130,101	560,314 ¹	182,672 ²	(-) 155,239 ³	52,571
Alternative Difference					40,697⁴	7,399⁴

¹ This is the existing amount of library items (**Table 3.15-3** in **Section 3.15** of this EIR).

² Total of the existing amount of square feet from **Table 3.15-2** and planned construction from **Table 3.15-3** in **Section 3.15** of this EIR.

³ This is the amount of library items needed to meet the goal of 677,479 items based on the existing number of library items (560,314).

⁴ Alternative 3 would require less library items to meet library guidelines and would have an additional surplus of square feet.

Health Services

The buildout population under the City's proposed General Plan would be 275,000 and the buildout population under Alternative 3 would be 260,201. As of 2007, 8.0 percent of the population consisted of the age group 65 or older. If trends stay the same, then, at buildout, 42,350 people, or 15.4 percent, of the projected 275,000 residents would be age 65 or older. Alternative 3 would total 20,816 people age 65 and over. Every age group of the projected population would require adequate health care within the City's Planning Area, not just newborns and the elderly. As the buildout population for Alternative 3 is smaller than that of the City's proposed General Plan; potential impacts on health services would be less under Alternative 3.

Education

The buildout population under Alternative 3 would be less than the buildout population of the proposed General Plan. Alternative 3 would have 3,569 less new dwelling units within the City's Planning Area. Student generation rates are determined by the number of residential units within a school district's boundary. Consequently, potential impacts on education could be less than that of the City's proposed General Plan due to the fewer residential dwelling units. Therefore, impacts on education would be potentially less under Alternative 3.

Fire Protection

The City's fire protection needs under Alternative 3 would be less than the City's proposed General Plan due to the potentially fewer number of dwelling units at buildout. Impacts on fire protection would potentially be less under Alternative 3 than compared with the City's proposed General Plan.

Police Protection

As described in **Section 3.16, Public Services**, the Sheriff's Department uses a standard guideline of providing at least 1 sworn officer per 1,000 residents. The current number of sworn officers within the OVOV Planning Area is 171. With buildout under Alternative 3, the number of officers required to maintain a standard of one officer per 1,000 residents would need to be 260 for the projected population of 260,201 residents, or an additional 89 sworn officers. The City's proposed General Plan buildout population would require an additional 104 sworn officers to maintain standards. Therefore, Alternative 3 would have fewer impacts on police protection than with the City's proposed General Plan.

Parks and Recreation

Buildout conditions under Alternative 3 would be similar to those under the proposed General Plan, except Urban Residential land uses would be downgraded by one land use designation. As described previously the population at buildout of Alternative 3 would be 260,201 and population at buildout for the City's proposed General Plan would be 275,000. The City is currently deficit in its parkland acreage by 639 acres per the existing General Plan goal of 5 acres of parkland per 1,000 people and deficit by 285 acres per the Quimby Act standard of 3 acres of parkland per 1,000 people. As seen in **Table 6.0-7, Comparison of Parkland Acreage Goal and Quantities**, Alternative 3 would require 74 less acres for the General Plan goal of 5 acres of parkland per 1,000 people and 44 less acres per the Quimby Act standard of 3 acres of parkland per 1,000 people.

This would mean that Alternative 3 would require a less amount of parkland to satisfy the Quimby Act guideline of 3 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents. Therefore, potential impacts on recreation under Alternative 3 would be less when compared with the City's proposed General Plan because there would be less demand on parks from the smaller buildout population.

Table 6.0-7
Comparison of Parkland Acreage Goal and Quantities

	Population	Acres Demanded (Based on 5 Ac/1000)	Existing and Proposed Parkland (Ac) ³	Surplus or (-) Deficit
Proposed General Plan	275,000**	1,375 ¹	459	-916
	Population	Acres Demanded (Based on 3 Ac/1000)	Existing and Proposed Parkland (Ac)	Surplus or (-) Deficit
Proposed General Plan	275,000**	825 ²	459	-366
	Population	Acres Demanded (Based on 5 Ac/1000)	Existing and Proposed Parkland (Ac)	Surplus or (-) Deficit
Alternative 3	260,201	1,301 ¹	459	-842
	Population	Acres Demanded (Based on 3 Ac/1000)	Existing and Proposed Parkland (Ac)	Surplus or (-) Deficit
Alternative 3	260,201	781 ²	459	-322

* Approximate

** Approximate anticipated build out population per the City's General Plan.

¹ Based on the goal of 5 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents.

² Based on the goal of 3 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents.

³ Based on total from Tables 3.16-1 and 3.16-3.

Utilities and Infrastructure

Wastewater

The City's wastewater generation and treatment needs at General Plan buildout would need to be evaluated on a project-by-project basis for their potential impact on the capacity and effectiveness of the wastewater treatment system to treat the potential additional sources of wastewater. Due to the potential for less demand under Alternative 3 on the wastewater treatment facility; impacts on wastewater would be less than those associated with the proposed General Plan.

Solid Waste

With the projected buildout of the proposed General Plan (275,000) the estimated amount of waste disposed, that would be generated by the City's Planning Area, would be 254,450.6 tons per year. Under Alternative 3 (260,201) the estimated amount of waste disposed, based on the 5.07 pounds per capita per day generation rate, would be 240,758 tons per year. Under Alternative 3 the amount of projected solid waste disposed of would be 13,693 less tons per year. Since the buildout population under Alternative 3 would be reduced in comparison to smaller the proposed General Plan population, the potential impacts on solid waste would be less than those associated with the proposed General Plan. However, this EIR

has determined that solid waste impacts are significant and unavoidable under both Alternative 3 and the proposed project.

Electricity, Natural Gas and Telecommunications

Since the buildout population under Alternative 3 would be less than the buildout population under the proposed General Plan, the City's electricity, natural gas and telecommunications needs would be less under Alternative 3. Furthermore, new dwelling units under Alternative 3 would be reduced by 3,569 when compared to the City's proposed General Plan. Therefore, potential impacts on electricity, natural gas and telecommunications would be less than those associated with the proposed General Plan.

Noise

Under this Alternative 3, noise impacts would reflect construction impacts associated with the proposed General Plan. Alternative 3 would downgrade the proposed Urban Residential land use designations by one land use designation. This change in land uses would have the potential for potentially fewer noise generating sources from the reduction in ADTs and vehicle miles traveled. Under Alternative 3, the number of ADTs would be reduced by 34,155 from the change in residential land use designations. There would also be a decrease in the noise from vehicles along major transportation routes. Noise impacts would be less under Alternative 3 when compared to the proposed General Plan. The EIR has determined that Noise impacts (short-term construction noise and pile driving and operational) would be significant and unavoidable under Alternative 3 and the City's proposed General Plan and would require a Statement of Overriding Considerations.

Population and Housing

Under Alternative 3, the total number of new housing units developed within the City's Planning Area at General Plan buildout would decrease by 3,569. By limiting growth on land specifically designated as Urban Residential, this alternative would restrict housing growth within the denser, more developed portions of the City's Planning Area that are in closer proximity to services, utilities, transit and jobs.

Furthermore, by not designating vacant parcels as UR5, this alternative would eliminate the potential for new multi-family units that could be developed by the proposed General Plan at buildout. Therefore, this alternative would reduce the City Planning Area's supply of multi-family housing, which conflicts with several policies of the Housing Element and SCAG policies that would provide a variety of housing types. Additionally, since multi-family housing offers opportunities for the development of affordable dwelling units, the City's ability to identify adequate affordable housing sites as required by State

Housing and Community Development (HCD) would also be restricted. For these reasons, impacts on population and housing would be greater under Alternative 3.

Economic Development

Economic development under Alternative 3 will be similar to the proposed General Plan Under Alternative 3, vacant parcels that are designated Urban Residential (UR1, UR2, UR3, UR4, or UR5) and are not presently entitled would be downgraded in density by one land use designation. For example, a vacant, not entitled parcel designated UR3 (11.0 du/acre) by the proposed General Plan would instead be designated UR2 (5.0 du/acre) under this alternative. Alternative 3 would result in the development of approximately 3,569 fewer new dwelling units within the City's Planning Area. The estimated Alternative 3 buildout population would be 260,201 residents.

Under both the proposed General Plan and Alternative 3, the City of Santa Clarita will seek to enhance the quality of life enjoyed by residents by using an aggressive goal to achieve a jobs/housing balance of 1.5:1, which will allow residents to work closer to home. Furthermore, the City will continue to liaise with the County of Los Angeles to monitor the approval of housing developments just outside the City limits in unincorporated Los Angeles County.

Both Alternative 3 and the proposed General Plan are similar in that both are reaching to attain goals of a balanced jobs/housing ratio for the City of Santa Clarita. However, Alternative 3 reduces the number of residential units that will be developed upon buildout, thus reducing the population within the City and the City's SOI. Compared to the proposed General Plan, Alternative 3 would reduce the jobs/housing ratio so that it is closer to the ultimate goal of a 2:1 jobs/housing ratio. Since Alternative 3 would reduce the number of residential units and thus the population of the City upon buildout, it is expected that fewer economic development impacts would occur compared to implementation of the proposed General Plan. Therefore, Alternative 3 would have less of an impact on economic development than the proposed General Plan.

Conclusion

As discussed above, under Alternative 3, a general plan similar to the proposed General Plan would be implemented, except development density would be reduced on vacant parcels designated as Urban Residential by the proposed General Plan. As a result, 3,569 fewer new housing units would be developed within the City's Planning Area at General Plan buildout. Therefore, implementation of Alternative 3 would not achieve the following project objectives to the same degree as the proposed General Plan.

16. The Valley shall contain a mix of housing types that meet the diverse needs of residents, and offer choices for the Valley's population and lifestyles (ages, education, income, etc.) that are appropriate and consistent with their community character. This shall include a combination of single- and multi-family, owner occupied and rental units within *each* community, and mixed-use (i.e., integrated housing with commercial or office uses) development in key activity centers.

Alternative 3 would downgrade vacant urban residential parcels by one land use category. This would eliminate the UR5 land use designation. The mix and diversity of housing options would therefore be limited and this alternative would not meet this objective.

17. The Valley is committed to providing affordable work force housing to meet the needs of individuals employed in the Santa Clarita Valley.

The downgrade of vacant urban residential parcels would eliminate UR5 land use. This land use would provide multi-family housing opportunities which could potentially be used for the development of affordable dwelling units. This alternative would limit the City's ability to identify adequate affordable housing sites and would not meet this objective.

19. Neighborhood scale development shall be encouraged by promoting mixed density of housing units consistent with community character objectives and limiting the number and acreage of multi-family units that can be developed in any single location.

As described above, the limit in the different residential land uses would limit the number of multi-family housing locations and dwelling units. As there would be one less land use designation there would be fewer opportunities to promote mixed density of housing units. Therefore, this alternative would not be consistent with this objective.

Implementation of Alternative 3 would potentially result in impacts that would be less than, comparable to, or greater than the proposed General Plan. Impacts found to be less than those of the proposed General Plan are: transportation and circulation, air quality, global warming and climate change, aesthetics, geology and soils, hydrology and water quality, water service, community services (seniors/youth, cultural amenities, homelessness/emergency shelters), public services (libraries, health services, education, fire protection, police protection), parks and recreation, utilities (wastewater, solid waste, energy/natural gas/telecommunications), noise, and economic development. Those impacts that were found to be similar to the proposed General Plan are: agricultural resources, biological resources, cultural resources, mineral resources, and hazards and hazardous materials. With the implementation of Alternative 3, the following impacts were found to be greater than those of the proposed General Plan: land use and population and housing. Impacts on agricultural resources, biological resources, global warming and climate change, air quality, water service, solid waste, and noise sources would remain significant and unavoidable.

SUMMARY OF ANALYSIS

Table 6.0-8, Alternatives Analysis Comparison Summary, provides a comparison of the impacts associated with each project alternative relative to the proposed General Plan. Where the project alternative would be environmentally superior (result in fewer impacts) to the proposed General Plan, a less than (<) sign is shown; where the project alternative would result in impacts greater than those associated with the proposed General Plan, a plus (+) sign is shown. For the instances when impacts are comparable (similar) for both the proposed General Plan and the project alternative, an equals sign (=) is shown. **Table 6.0-8, Descriptive Summary of Alternatives**, is provided at the end of this section and provides a brief text comparison summarizing the quantitative and qualitative differences between the alternatives and the proposed General Plan.

**Table 6.0-8
Alternatives Analysis Comparison Summary**

Environmental Issue Area	Proposed General Plan Impact (After Mitigation)	Alt. 1 – No Project	Alt. 2 – No Mixed Use	Alt. 3 – Reduced Residential Density
Land Use	Less than Significant	+	+	+
Transportation and Circulation	Less than Significant	+	+	<
Air Quality	Less than Significant	+	+	<
Global Warming and Climate Change	Less than Significant	+	=	<
Agricultural Resources	Significant and Unavoidable	=	=	=
Aesthetics	Less than Significant	<	=	<
Biological Resources	Significant and Unavoidable	+	=	=
Cultural Resources	Less than Significant	+	=	=
Geology and Soils	Less than Significant	+	=	<
Mineral Resources	Less than Significant	=	=	=
Hazards and Hazardous Materials	Less than Significant	=	=	=
Hydrology and Water Quality	Less than Significant	+	=	<
Water Service	Less than Significant	<	<	<
Community Services – Seniors/Youth	Less than Significant	=	<	<
Community Services – Cultural Amenities	Less than Significant	+	<	<

Environmental Issue Area	Proposed General Plan Impact (After Mitigation)	Alt. 1 – No Project	Alt. 2 – No Mixed Use	Alt. 3 – Reduced Residential Density
Community Services – Homelessness/Emergency Shelters	Less than Significant	=	<	<
Public Services – Libraries	Less than Significant	<	<	<
Public Services – Health Services	Less than Significant	<	<	<
Public Services – Education	Less than Significant	<	<	<
Public Services - Fire Protection	Less than Significant	<	<	<
Public Services – Police Protection	Less than Significant	<	<	<
Parks and Recreation	Less than Significant	+	<	<
Utilities – Wastewater	Less than Significant	<	<	<
Utilities - Solid Waste	Significant and Unavoidable	<	<	<
Utilities – Energy/Natural Gas/Telecommunications	Less than Significant	<	<	<
Noise	Significant and Unavoidable	=	+	<
Population and Housing	Less than Significant	<	+	+
Economic Development	Less than Significant	+	<	<

ENVIRONMENTALLY SUPERIOR ALTERNATIVE

Section 15126.6(e)(2) of the *State CEQA Guidelines* indicates that an analysis of alternatives to the proposed General Plan shall identify one alternative as the environmentally superior alternative. Furthermore, if the environmentally superior alternative is the No Project Alternative, the EIR shall also identify an environmentally superior alternative from among the other alternatives. For the OVOV project, based on the analysis included herein, the Downgrade Vacant Urban Residential Parcels by One Land Use Category Alternative would be considered environmentally superior to the proposed General Plan because it would avoid and/or substantially reduce the severity of significant impacts associated with implementing the proposed General Plan. Alternative 3 would be consistent with the proposed SEAs within the City's Planning Area. However, Alternative 3 does not meet certain objectives of the proposed General Plan and would not meet the State housing law requirements of the City's Housing Element.