

## TECHNICAL MEMORANDUM

DATE April 27, 2017

TO City of Long Beach

ADDRESS 333 West Ocean Boulevard, 4th Floor, Long Beach, CA 90802

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SUBJECT **Southeast Area Specific Plan (SEASP) Environmental Impact Report (EIR) Reduced Intensity Alternative**

PROJECT NUMBER COLB-04

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City staff is recommending the Reduced Intensity Alternative to the proposed Project to better reflect multiple interests and community concerns. As stated in the staff report, the Reduced Intensity Alternative “best achieves the community goal of rebirth for the area within a feasible and achievable framework.” This memorandum documents the environmental analysis of this alternative and demonstrates that, for all environmental topic areas, impacts of the Reduced Intensity Alternative would be similar or lesser than those of the proposed Project.

As part of the Southeast Area Specific Plan process, the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) analyzed four alternatives, including the Reduced Intensity Alternative. Section 7, *Alternatives to the Proposed Project*, of the DEIR analyzed these alternatives, their potential environmental impacts, and their ability to achieve project objectives established for the proposed Project. The Reduced Intensity Alternative was analyzed to reduce environmental impacts related to air quality, greenhouse gas emissions, noise, and traffic. In order to make a significant reduction to traffic impacts within the Project area, the proposed Project would need to be reduced below existing conditions. Therefore, the Reduced Intensity Alternative would reduce residential development intensity by 30 percent and nonresidential development intensity by 10 percent. This alternative would reduce the number of hotel units to 375 rooms. This alternative would result in 85,964 daily trips, 4,008 in the AM Peak Hour, and 6,928 in the PM Peak Hour.

Since the Reduced Intensity Alternative has development intensity less than the proposed Project, the environmental impacts of the Reduced Intensity Alternative are generally less than the proposed Project. The DEIR determined that the proposed Project would result in significant and unavoidable impacts on air quality, cultural resources, GHG emissions, noise, and traffic. Section 7.6 of the DEIR further determined that the Reduced Intensity Alternative would reduce the proposed Project’s significant impacts and has the potential to eliminate two significant and unavoidable traffic impacts. Therefore, the Reduced Intensity Alternative would result in significant and unavoidable impacts on air quality, cultural resources, GHG emissions, noise, and traffic, and all of the mitigation measures that apply to the proposed Project would apply to the Reduced Intensity Alternative, with the potential exception of Mitigation Measure TRAF-4.

The Reduced Intensity Alternatives analysis in the EIR was expanded to further demonstrate that impacts associated with this alternative would be the same or reduced. Revisions to Section 7.6 are reproduced

below and will be incorporated into the Final EIR. Changes to the DEIR text are shown in underlined text for additions and ~~strikeout~~ for deletions.

## **REDUCED INTENSITY ALTERNATIVE**

The Reduced Intensity Alternative was analyzed to reduce environmental impacts related to air quality, greenhouse gas emissions, noise, and traffic. In order to make a significant reduction to traffic impacts within the Project area, the proposed Project would need to be reduced below existing conditions. Therefore, the Reduced Intensity Alternative would reduce residential development intensity by 30 percent and nonresidential development intensity by 10 percent. This alternative would reduce the number of hotel units to 375 rooms. This alternative would result in 85,964 daily trips, 4,008 in the AM Peak Hour, and 6,928 in the PM Peak Hour.

### **Aesthetics**

Impacts associated with the Reduced Intensity Alternative would be similar to the proposed Project because it would result in a similar development area and would require compliance with the provisions of the proposed Specific Plan. Although buildout intensity would be reduced, heights, setbacks, building forms, and other development standards and design guidelines would still apply.

Various visual improvements that would be introduced throughout the Project area under the proposed Specific Plan (e.g., enhanced views, landscaping, building form and architectural design, and view preservation) would still occur under this alternative. For example, creating a block structure in the Mixed Use – Community Core MU-CC would visually enhance the area by providing views to the wetlands and marina. Similar to the proposed Project, this alternative would create a plan that would provide a greater mix of uses, expand multimodal transportation, and create a sense of place. Therefore, impacts would be similar to the proposed Project and less than significant.

### **Agriculture and Forestry Resources**

Similar to the proposed Project, no impacts to agricultural and forestry resources would occur under the Reduced Intensity Alternative.

### **Air Quality**

The Reduced Intensity Alternative would modify the proposed land uses by reducing the residential units by 2,855 and nonresidential square footage by 266,505. A reduction in overall development would reduce short-term emissions related to Project construction activities. However, it would not eliminate significant long- and short-term criteria pollutant contributions of volatile organic compounds (VOC), nitrogen oxides (NO<sub>x</sub>), carbon monoxide (CO), sulfur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>), and coarse and fine particulate matter (PM<sub>10</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub>).

This alternative would have fewer vehicle trips, resulting in a reduction in mobile source emissions. However, similar to the proposed Project, this alternative would not be consistent with the air quality management plan because criteria pollutants thresholds would be exceeded, and it would cumulatively contribute to the SoCAB nonattainment designations for ozone (O<sub>3</sub>), PM<sub>10</sub>, and PM<sub>2.5</sub>. Implementation of the proposed Specific Plan was found to have significant and unavoidable impacts to long- and short-term air quality. This alternative would slightly reduce air quality impacts, but would not eliminate any significant unavoidable impacts.

### **Biological Impacts**

The Reduced Intensity Alternative would result in similar impacts to biological resources, since the development area would be the same and development would be directed away from the wetland areas

and toward urbanized areas of the plan. The reduction in development intensity would reduce the amount of fees that could be placed within the proposed wetland conservation and monitoring fund that would be established for the preservation, restoration, and maintenance of the wetlands. However, the reduction in building intensity would result in less population in the area, which could decrease indirect impacts, such as conflicts between the urban and wetland interface. Overall, biological resources impacts of this alternative would be similar to the proposed Project and would be less than significant after incorporation of mitigation measures.

### **Cultural Resources**

Similar to the proposed Project, implementation of the Reduced Intensity Alternative could uncover cultural resources during grading. This alternative would have the same development area. Ground-disturbing activities associated with buildout of the Reduced Intensity Alternative would continue to occur in order to accommodate new development and redevelopment. Consequently, the potential of encountering fossil-bearing soils and rock formations, destroying below-ground paleontological resources, and affecting archaeological sites and sites of tribal cultural significance would still occur, similar to the proposed Project. This alternative would be required to comply with the same mitigation measures to lessen or negate impacts. Therefore, implementation of this alternative would result in impacts similar to buildout of the proposed Project, which would be less than significant with mitigation for archaeological, paleontological, and tribal cultural resources.

Impacts related to historical resources would be the same as the proposed Project. Implementation of this alternative would occur over a number of years and buildings and structures may become historic during Specific Plan buildout. Additionally, if a future site-specific development project has met the requirements of Mitigation Measure CUL-2 and determines that retention or onsite relocation of the historical resource is not feasible and demolition is allowed to occur, a significant and unavoidable impact to historical resources would occur. Overall, impacts would be similar.

### **Geology and Soils**

The development area under the Reduced Intensity Alternative would be the same as the proposed Project, and geotechnical conditions would be the same. New development under the alternative and the proposed Project would be required to avoid placing structures within 50 feet of the Newport-Inglewood Fault Zone and meet CBC requirements to safeguard against major structural failures or loss of life caused by earthquakes and other geologic hazards. Both scenarios would be subject to similar soil conditions and hazards—such as liquefaction, subsidence, collapsible soils, or expansive soils. Impacts would be similar to the proposed Project and less than significant.

### **Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

As stated above, the Reduced Intensity Alternative would result in a reduction of residential dwelling units and nonresidential square footage and would decrease vehicle trips. Therefore, this alternative would result in a reduction in construction and operational GHG emissions. Impacts from this alternative would still be significant and unavoidable, since additional statewide measures would be necessary to reduce GHG emissions to meet the long-term GHG reduction goals under Executive Order S-03-05 (goal to reduce GHG emissions to 80 percent of 1990 levels by 2050) and Executive Order B-30-15 (identify goal to reduce GHG emissions for 2030). Currently, there is no plan past 2020 that achieves the long-term GHG reduction goal established under Executive Order S-03-05 or the new Executive Order B-30-15. As identified by the California Council on Science and Technology, the state cannot meet the 2050 goal without major advancements in technology (CCST 2012). Since no additional statewide measures are currently available, impacts would remain significant and unavoidable.

## Hazards and Hazardous Materials

Similar to the proposed Project, buildout of the Reduced Intensity Alternative would involve the use of hazardous materials during construction and could expose construction workers to hazardous materials during demolition from asbestos-containing materials or grading from contaminated soils. However, construction materials such as fuels, paints, and solvents would be used in limited quantities and would not pose a significant safety hazard. Any remediation and or demolition would be required to comply with the appropriate state standards, guidelines, and responsible agency (DTSC, RWQCB, Lbfd). As with the proposed Project, implementation of mitigation measures would reduce impacts to less than significant.

Similar to the proposed Project, new development is not expected to involve the use of large amounts of hazardous materials. Hazards to the public or the environment arising from the routine use, storage, transport, and disposal of hazardous materials during operation of this alternative would not occur. Impacts would be similar to the proposed Project.

## Hydrology and Water Quality

Under the Reduced Intensity Alternative, there would be a reduction in new development. New development replacing the existing urban uses would reduce impervious surfaces, but slightly less than the proposed Project. Similar to the proposed Project, this alternative would result in reduced impacts to the existing storm drain system as compared to the proposed Project, because the Project would decrease the amount of impervious surfaces and associated stormwater flow. Mitigation measures were incorporated into the Project that would also be applicable to this alternative to ensure that the planned drainage improvements are fully funded, requires site specific development studies, and incorporates low impact development best management practices.

Similar to the proposed Project, the Reduced Intensity Alternative would not result in new development or structures within a 100-year flood zone. Additionally, flood hazards due to seiche, mudflow, and tsunami flood hazards would be similar to the proposed Project and impacts would be reduced to less than significant with mitigation.

The Reduced Intensity Alternative would be required to implement water quality measures to reduce impacts during construction and operation. Under either scenario, compliance with water quality regulations would reduce water quality impacts to less than significant. The Reduced Intensity Alternative would result in similar impacts as the proposed Project, which were considered less than significant.

## Land Use and Planning

The Reduced Intensity Alternative would allow for a similar mix of land uses with less development intensity than the proposed Project. This alternative would require amendments to the City's General Plan, SEADIP, and LCP. Similar to the proposed Project, this alternative would be consistent with the goals and policies of the City's General Plan, LCP, and SCAG's 2016-2040 RTP/SCS and result in similar impacts as the proposed Project, which were considered less than significant.

## Mineral Resources

Similar to the proposed Project, the Reduced Intensity Alternative would allow for continued oil operation in the Project area. Impacts to mineral resources would be less than significant and similar to the proposed Project.

## **Noise**

The Reduced Intensity Alternative would slightly reduce short-term construction-related impacts associated with the proposed Project since there would be an reduction in dwelling units and square footage allowed at buildout. Additionally, the reduction of residential development and construction activities would also reduce potential short-term vibration impacts to sensitive receptors. However, due to the unknown number of construction activities that could occur at any one time, the proximity to sensitive receptors, longevity of activities, and specific equipment required, construction-related noise impacts may not be reduced to less than significant levels for some projects. Therefore, impacts would remain significant and unavoidable.

The Reduced Intensity Alternative would reduce daily vehicle trips compared to the proposed Project. This would slightly decrease long-term noise impacts from vehicle sources. However, no significant long-term noise impacts were identified with the proposed Project. Similar to the Project, impacts would be less than significant.

Overall, this alternative would result in a slight reduction of construction-related and long-term traffic-related noise impacts.

## **Population and Housing**

Under the Reduced Intensity Alternative, buildout would result in 411 fewer jobs and 4,540 fewer residents. Under this alternative, the population, housing, and employment at buildout would be consistent with the City's growth projections identified in SCAG's RTP/SCS. However, growth associated with the proposed Project was also within growth projections. The Reduced Intensity Alternative would provide fewer housing units and mixed-use opportunities near a regional employment and activity center in high quality transit areas. Overall, impacts to population and housing would remain less than significant with this alternative and similar to the proposed Project.

## **Public Services**

Under the Reduced Intensity Alternative, residential development would be reduced by 30 percent and nonresidential development would be reduced by 10 percent. This would result in a corresponding reduction in demands placed on public services, including fire protection, law enforcement, schools, and library services. Impacts would be less compared to the proposed Project since there would be less residential development and fewer residents at full buildout. As with the proposed Project, impacts would be less than significant.

## **Recreation**

Under the Reduced Intensity Alternative, the demands on existing recreational facilities would be reduced due to the reduction in overall population. Less parkland would be required to serve the projected population at buildout. As with the proposed Project, all new development would be required to pay the park and recreational facilities impact fees outlined in Chapter 18.18 (Park and Recreation Facilities Fee) of the City's Municipal Code, which would be placed into the City's park fee account and used solely and exclusively for the purpose of funding future park land acquisition and recreation improvements. Payment of the park and recreational facilities impact fees would help offset any impacts to existing park and recreational facilities. Impacts would remain less than significant, and this alternative would reduce impacts of the proposed Project.

## Transportation and Traffic

The Reduced Intensity Alternative would reduce impacts to the transportation system by reducing the number of vehicle trips. Vehicle trip generation would be reduced by approximately ~~1146~~ percent during the day, ~~1648~~ percent during the AM peak hour, and ~~116~~ percent during the PM peak hour, as compared to the proposed Project.<sup>1</sup> This alternative has the potential to ~~could~~ reduce the Project's impact at the intersection of #19. Seal Beach Boulevard & 2nd/Westminster Boulevard at Seal Beach Boulevard and #22. Pacific Coast Highway and Seal Beach Boulevard in the City of Seal Beach to less than significant dependent upon the change that would occur in the inbound and outbound vehicle splits. This has the potential to ~~would~~ eliminate ~~two~~one significant unavoidable adverse impact. However, all other identified impacts would likely remain under this alternative.

## Utilities and Service Systems

Under the Reduced Intensity Alternative, impacts to utilities and service systems would be reduced due to the reduction in residential and nonresidential intensity. This alternative would also reduce the generation of wastewater and solid waste. This alternative would require the extension of water and wastewater infrastructure into undeveloped areas. Similar to the proposed Project, water supply and water and wastewater treatment and delivery systems would be adequate to meet project requirements. Overall, impacts would be reduced and remain less than significant

## Conclusion

### Ability to Reduce Impacts

The Reduced Intensity Alternative would reduce impacts associated with air quality, greenhouse gas emissions, noise, public services, recreation, traffic, and utilities compared to the proposed Project. This alternative has the potential to ~~would~~ eliminate ~~two~~one significant and unavoidable traffic impacts. Impacts related to aesthetics, agriculture and forestry, biological resources, cultural resources, geology and soils, hazards and hazardous materials, hydrology and water quality, land use and planning, mineral resources, and population and housing would remain the same as the proposed Project since it would involve the same mix of land uses and development area. This alternative would not increase impacts for any environmental topical area.

### Ability to Achieve Project Objectives

Under the Reduced Intensity Alternative, most of the proposed Project's objectives would be achieved but to a lesser extent as compared to the proposed Project. For example, the reduction in development capacity under this alternative would not be consistent with the ideas and plans presented in the proposed Project, which were generated through close coordination with existing residents, businesses, property owners, and development communities to create a sustainable, feasible, and effective plan that equally considers social (community amenities), environmental, and economic benefits (Objective 1). This alternative would not provide a greater mix of uses to the same extent as the proposed Project (Objective 2). This alternative could meet Objectives 3 through 6 relating to guideline future development, expanding multimodal transportation, providing increased connectivity to open space, and identifying gateway and landmark locations to a lesser extent than the Project.

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<sup>1</sup> Trip generation was derived using EPA's mixed use trip generation methodology (see Chapter 4 of the Traffic Study in Appendix J1 of this DEIR).