

6.1 INTRODUCTION

CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(a) states that an EIR shall describe and analyze a range of reasonable alternatives to a project or to the location of the project. These alternatives should feasibly attain most of the basic objectives of the project while avoiding or substantially lessening one or more of the significant environmental impacts of the project. An EIR need not consider every conceivable alternative to a project, nor is it required to consider alternatives that are infeasible. The discussion of alternatives shall focus on those which are capable of avoiding or substantially lessening any significant effects of the project, even if they impede the attainment of the project objectives to some degree or would be more costly [CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(b)].

The alternatives to the proposed Sheldon/99 GPA and Rezone project ultimately selected for analysis in this EIR were developed with the aim of minimizing environmental impacts while still meeting the basic objectives of the project. The following objectives have been defined for the proposed project:

- Encourage increased commercial potential of site resulting from improved access and visibility associated with interchange improvements implemented as part of the Sheldon Road/SR 99 Interchange Improvement Project;
- Create a cohesive area available for future retail development;
- Designate commercial land uses within areas that are projected to be commercially viable for successful business.
- Increase the City's opportunities to provide commercial services in order to retain and increase sales tax revenue to benefit the General Fund;
- Provide commercial opportunities with visibility and access from the freeway;
- Allow for the development of freeway-serving uses;
- Provide land for high density uses in order to increase the variety of the City's housing stock; and
- Provide a buffer between future commercial uses and existing single family residential developments.

In accordance with the provisions of CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6, the following alternatives are evaluated at a qualitative level of detail:

- Alternative 1 – No Project Alternative
- Alternative 2 – Reduced Residential Density Alternative
- Alternative 3 – Open Space Alternative
- Alternative 4 – Reduced Commercial Alternative

The environmental effects of each of these alternatives are identified and compared with those resulting from the proposed project. A table at the end of this section provides a summary of the comparisons and, per CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6 (e)(2), an "environmentally superior" alternative is identified.

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6.2 ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED BUT NOT SELECTED FOR DETAILED ANALYSIS

An alternative that proposes a higher density of commercial development with no residential development on the project site was considered but rejected. While this alternative would meet most of the objectives of the proposed project, designating the site solely for commercial uses would not meet the stated objective of providing land for high density residential sites to increase the City's housing stock. Moreover, this alternative would not have any less adverse environmental impacts than the proposed project and would be anticipated to result in worse impacts to traffic and air quality. CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6 (b) states that the discussion of alternatives to the proposed project "shall focus on alternatives to the project or its location which are capable of avoiding or substantially lessening any significant effects of the project". Therefore, this alternative did not meet the criteria set forth in the CEQA Guidelines concerning alternatives to be analyzed in an EIR.

In August 2006, the Elk Grove City Council directed staff to initiate the Sheldon/99 GPA and Rezone Project in response to a city-wide office/retail analysis indicating that the realigned Sheldon Road/SR 99 interchange would provide increased commercial potential at the site. As the proposed project is being undertaken in response to the improvements being made to the Sheldon Road/SR 99 interchange, an alternate location for the project would not be consistent with the City's objective to provide uses that complement the interchange reconstruction and roadway realignment. Therefore, an alternative site was dismissed from further consideration in this analysis.

6.3 ALTERNATIVE 1 - NO PROJECT ALTERNATIVE

Alternative 1 is the No Project Alternative. CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(e)(1) states that a No Project Alternative shall be analyzed. The purpose of describing and analyzing a No Project Alternative is to allow decision makers to compare the impacts of approving a proposed project with the impacts of not approving the proposed project. The No Project Alternative analysis is not the baseline for determining whether the environmental impacts of a proposed project may be significant, unless the analysis is identical to the environmental setting analysis which does establish that baseline.

CHARACTERISTICS

Under the No Project Alternative, the proposed Sheldon/99 GPA and Rezone project and its associated General Plan Land Use Policy Map changes, Land Use Exhibit changes to the Calvine/Hwy 99 SPA, and rezones would not be adopted and the existing General Plan land use designations, existing Calvine/Hwy 99 SPA land uses, and existing zoning designations would remain in effect. Buildout of the proposed project site under the existing General Plan Land Use Policy Map designations could result in a maximum of 372 low and medium density residential units and 187,373 square feet of commercial uses (based on FAR of 0.35¹). This analysis of the No Project Alternative is consistent with the requirements of CEQA Guidelines 15126.6(e)(3)(A), which specifically identify that when the project under evaluation is the revision of an existing land use or regulatory plan, that the "no project" alternative will be the continuation of the existing plan.

¹ There are 43,560 square feet in 1 acre. Assuming a floor to area ratio (FAR) of .35, approximately 15,246 square feet (sf) of commercial development would result on each acre (43,560 sf in an acre x 0.35 FAR = 15,246 square feet of development per acre). Therefore, the 12.29 acres of land on the project site currently designated for commercial development would result in 187,373 sf of commercial development (12.29 acres x 15,246 sf of development per acre).

COMPARATIVE IMPACTS

Land Use

As noted in Section 4.1, Land Use, the proposed Sheldon/99 GPA and Rezone project would not result in any significant land use impacts. Under the No Project Alternative, no changes to the General Plan land use designations or zoning designations would occur and buildout of the site could occur consistent with current land use and zoning designations. Land uses and zoning designations associated with the No Project Alternative, particularly the low density residential, could be incompatible with the completed interchange project, which includes an urban interchange that will change the rural residential character of the area. Current land uses and land use designations could thus conflict with General Plan Land Use policies after improvements to the interchange are complete. Therefore, land use impacts under the No Project Alternative would be worse than those of the proposed project.

Population, Housing, and Employment

As discussed in Section 4.2 (Population, Housing, and Employment), the proposed Sheldon/99 GPA and Rezone project would not result in any significant impacts associated with population, housing, and employment. Under the No Project Alternative, no changes to the land use designations would occur and buildout of the site could occur consistent with current land use and zoning designations, resulting in greater population growth and a slight worsening of the jobs-housing ratio, as no jobs would be created on the project site to balance population growth. Current General Plan land use designations on the project site would allow a total of 372 housing units on the site, resulting in population growth of 1,154 persons (3.10 persons per household multiplied by 372 housing units). The proposed Sheldon/99 GPA and Rezone project would allow a total of 237 residential units on the project site, resulting in population growth of 735 persons (3.10 persons per household multiplied by 237 housing units). As the No Project Alternative would not result in any job-generating uses on the site and would therefore not improve the jobs-to-housing ratio in the City, impacts under the No Project Alternative would be worse in comparison to those of the proposed project.

Biological and Natural Resources

Section 4.3 (Biological and Natural Resources) indicates that implementation of the proposed project would not result in any significant impacts associated with biological and natural resources. Development resulting from the project would result in the loss or disturbance of approximately 22.3 acres of annual grassland and 21 acres of developed/ ruderal vegetation with urban landscaping, and could therefore adversely affect special-status species and habitat, mitigation measures identified for the project would reduce those impacts to a less than significant level. Future development projects under the No Project Alternative would be subject to the same or similar requirements and mitigation measures as the proposed project and impacts would remain less than significant. However, the intensity of development allowed on the project site would be less under the No Project Alternative and there would be more of an opportunity to retain existing sensitive habitats and reduce potential impacts to special-status species. Therefore, the No Project Alternative would be slightly better than the proposed Sheldon/99 GPA and Rezone regarding impacts relative to biological and natural resources.

Geology and Soils

Section 4.4 (Geology and Soils), identifies that the proposed Sheldon/99 GPA and Rezone project would not result in any significant impacts associated with geology and soils, noting that

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geotechnical reports required by the General Plan and applicable building codes would ensure that soils at future development sites would be capable of supporting the structures resulting from approval of the project. Similarly, under the No Project Alternative, future development of the site could occur consistent with current land use and zoning designations and would be subject to the same requirements. However, the intensity of development allowed would be less under the No Project Alternative and would expose less people and structures to risk of geology and soils impacts. Therefore, impacts under the No Project Alternative would be slightly better than those of the proposed project.

Traffic and Circulation

A comparison of the No Project Alternative and the proposed Sheldon/99 GPA and Rezone project and the No Project Alternative is provided below for each significant traffic impact identified in Section 4.5 (Traffic and Circulation).

Intersection Operations (Impact 4.5.1)

Impact 4.5.1 identifies that implementation of the proposed project would result in a decline in service at four intersections along Sheldon Road. Both the No Project Alternative and the proposed project could result in development of the project site and both scenarios would increase traffic levels in the vicinity of the site. Traffic volumes resulting from the No Project Alternative and the proposed project would differ based on the different land uses allowed under each scenario. Land uses allowed by the proposed project would result in higher traffic volumes than allowed by the No Project Alternative based on the increase in commercial acreage, as well as the increase in residential acreage proposed. Therefore, the decline in service that would occur at the intersections of Sheldon Road/Bruceville Road, Sheldon Road/Lewis Stein Road, Sheldon Road/East Stockton Boulevard, and Sheldon Road/Elk Grove-Florin Road would be to a lesser degree under the No Project Alternative than those under the proposed project. Thus, the impacts would be better under the No Project Alternative.

Cumulative Intersection Operations (Impact 4.5.3)

Impact 4.5.3 identifies that implementation of the proposed Sheldon Road/SR 99 project, in combination with other planned, approved and reasonably foreseeable projects, would result in a decline in LOS at nine intersections under cumulative conditions and would have a cumulatively considerable contribution to intersection operations. While intersection operations may not be improved to an acceptable LOS under the No Project Alternative, this alternative would result in fewer trips and would result in less of a decline in intersection operations. Therefore, cumulative intersection operation impacts would be better under the No Project Alternative.

Cumulative Roadway Segment Operations (Impact 4.5.4)

Impact 4.5.4 identifies that implementation of the proposed project in combination with other planned, approved and reasonably foreseeable projects would result in cumulatively significant impacts to levels of service along Sheldon Road between West Stockton Boulevard and East Stockton Boulevard, and Sheldon Road between East Stockton Boulevard and Elk Grove-Florin Road. Both the No Project Alternative and the proposed project could result in development of the project site and both scenarios would increase traffic levels in the vicinity of the site. Traffic volumes resulting from the No Project Alternative and the proposed project would differ based on the different land uses allowed under each scenario. Land uses allowed by the proposed project would result in higher traffic volumes than would occur under the No Project Alternative.

While roadway segments may also function unacceptably under the No Project Alternative, this alternative would reduce traffic volumes in comparison to the proposed project and would have less of an effect on affected roadway segments than the proposed project. Therefore, the No Project Alternative would result in better impacts to cumulative roadway segment operations.

Noise

Section 4.6 (Noise), identifies that the proposed Sheldon/99 GPA and Rezone project would not result in any significant noise impacts. Proposed mitigation measures would reduce construction noise impacts, impacts associated with exposure to noise levels exceeding the City's noise standards at noise-sensitive land uses, and impacts associated with exceeding the City's noise standards for land use compatibility to a less than significant level. The No Project Alternative would also result in development of the site, and would be subject to the same, or similar, requirements for noise mitigation. However, the No Project Alternative would allow for low and medium density residential development on the site while the proposed project would allow for commercial and high density residential development. Commercial and high density development would increase operating noises, as well as traffic noises, over those generated by low and medium density residential development. Construction noise impacts would be similar for both the proposed project and the No Project Alternative. On an overall level, noise impacts under the No Project Alternative would be better than those of the proposed project as there would be no increase in noise associated with commercial and high density residential development, and there would be less of an increase in traffic noise.

Air Quality

A comparison of the No Project Alternative and the proposed Sheldon/99 GPA and Rezone project is provided below for each significant air quality impact identified in Section 4.7 (Air Quality).

Long-term Increases of Criteria Air Pollutants (Impact 4.7.3)

Impact 4.7.3 identifies that land uses allowed under the proposed project would result in long-term increases in criteria air pollutants. Emissions of ROG and NO_x resulting from land uses allowed by the proposed project are anticipated to exceed the SMAQMD's recommended significance threshold of 65 lbs/day in both summer and winter months. It is likely that both the proposed project and the No Project Alternative would result in emissions exceeding SMAQMD Significance Thresholds for ROG and NO_x. The No Project Alternative would result in less air pollutant emissions than the proposed project, as land uses under this alternative would result in less traffic volumes than the proposed project. Consequently, there would be a reduction in air quality impacts associated with vehicular emissions. Air quality impacts associated with construction would occur under the No Project Alternative; however, there would be less intense development and presumably a shorter overall period of construction. On an overall level, criteria air pollutant impacts under the No Project Alternative would be better than those of the proposed project.

Regional Air Plan Impacts (Impact 4.7.4)

Impact 4.7.4 identifies that Implementation of the proposed project in combination with growth throughout the air basin would exacerbate existing regional problems with ozone and particulate matter. Implementation of the No Project Alternative would result in less regional air plan impacts as less intense development would be allowed to occur on the site. Therefore,

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regional air plan impacts are anticipated to be better for the No Project Alternative in comparison to the proposed project.

Potential Increase in Long-Term Atmospheric Greenhouse Gas Emissions (Impact 4.7.5)

Impact 4.7.5 identifies that implementation of the proposed project in addition to existing, approved, proposed and reasonably foreseeable development in the Sacramento Valley Air Basin, may contribute to an increase in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in the Earth's atmosphere, which has been linked to the phenomenon of climate change. Implementation of the No Project Alternative would result in less GHG emissions than the proposed project, as the No Project Alternative would result in less commercial development, less traffic, and less operational GHG emissions associated with the energy demands of the proposed commercial buildings. Therefore, as implementation of the No Project Alternative would result in less GHG emissions, impacts are anticipated to be better for the No Project Alternative in comparison to the proposed project.

Cumulative Effects of Global Climate Change on the City of Elk Grove (Impact 4.7.6)

Impact 4.7.6 identifies that the impacts of global climate change would cumulatively result in a potential decrease in water supply, increase in air pollutants, and increase in health hazards. As discussed under Impact 4.7.5 above, this alternative would contribute less to GHG emissions and thus have less of a contribution to potential climate change effects. However, the No Project Alternative would expose persons and structures to the same potential climate change effects to which the proposed project would be exposed. Therefore, this impact is comparable for the No Project Alternative and the proposed project.

Hydrology and Water Quality

Section 4.8 (Hydrology and Water Quality), identifies that the proposed Sheldon/99 GPA and Rezone project would not result in any significant impacts associated with hydrology and water quality as the proposed mitigation measures would reduce impacts resulting from increased surface runoff, increased constituents found in urban runoff, and increased water demand to a less than significant level. Under the No Project Alternative, no changes to the land use designations would occur and buildout of the site would be less intense and not involve commercial uses. While the residential uses under the No Project Alternative would also result in increased surface runoff, increased constituents found in urban runoff, and increased water demand, these impacts would be less than anticipated under the proposed project as there would be fewer urban pollutants associated with the anticipated scale of residential development in comparison to the residential and commercial uses associated with the project. There would also be less coverage of land area with impermeable surfaces, which would decrease potential impacts to water quality and drainage. Subsequent development projects under the No Project Alternative would be subject to the same or similar requirements and mitigation measures as the proposed project. Therefore, on an overall level, the No Project Alternative would result in better impacts associated with hydrology and water quality than the proposed Sheldon/99 GPA and Rezone project.

Cultural Resources

Section 4.9 (Cultural Resources) indicates that, while no significant impacts to cultural and paleontological resources would occur as a result of the proposed project, the potential exists for construction activities to uncover buried deposits or features from the archaeological, paleontological, and/or historical past. These may include artifacts, objects and locations

associated with an event or person of California or American history or prehistory which constitute resources of importance under CEQA and are eligible for the California Register or National Register. Although the proposed project would allow more intense land uses, implementation of the No Project Alternative would result in similar impacts as buildout of the site could occur consistent with current land use and zoning designations and construction activities would therefore still occur. Mitigation measures identified to protect cultural and paleontological resources would be similar for both the proposed project and under the No Project Alternative. Therefore, the No Project Alternative and the proposed project would result in similar impacts to cultural and paleontological resources.

Public Services and Utilities

A comparison of the No Project Alternative and the proposed Sheldon/99 GPA and Rezone project is provided below for each significant public services and utilities impact identified in Section 4.10 (Public Services and Utilities).

Fire Protection

The proposed Sheldon/99 GPA and Rezone project would not result in any significant impacts associated with fire protection. Development allowed under the proposed project would be more intense than development allowed under the No Project Alternative because the proposed project would allow for commercial and High Density. However, both scenarios would create the need for additional fire protection equipment and staffing. Fire Department funding increases with new development as a result of increased property taxes and all new development projects would be required to pay the fire protection development fee to fund additional facilities and equipment. In addition, mitigation measures related to the provision of adequate water pressure for fire fighting that are identified for the proposed project would also apply to development projects under the No Project Alternative. Therefore, impacts to the provision of fire and emergency medical services under the No Project Alternative would be similar to those of the proposed project.

Law Enforcement

The proposed Sheldon/99 GPA and Rezone project would not result in any significant impacts associated with law enforcement. The commercial and high density residential development allowed under the proposed project would be more intense than the Low and medium density residential development allowed under the No Project Alternative. However, both scenarios would create the need for additional law enforcement personnel and equipment. Future development projects under both the proposed project and the No Project Alternative would pay fair-share for police services through annexation into the Police Services CFD 2003-2, which would fund a portion of the public safety services required, including additional officers and administrative staff. In addition, future development projects under both the No Project Alternative and the proposed project would pay fair-share of funding for additional law enforcement facilities through the Capital Facilities Fee (CFF) which provides funding for police facilities. Therefore, impacts to the provision of law enforcement services under the No Project Alternative would be similar to those of the proposed project.

Public Schools

The proposed Sheldon/99 GPA and Rezone project would not result in any significant impacts to public schools. The project site would allow for a maximum of 371 single-family housing units under the No Project Alternative, which would generate 154 grade K-6 students, 45 grade 7-8

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students, and 85 grade 9-12 students. Therefore, future development on the project site under land use designations associated with the No Project Alternative would generate a total of 284 students to be absorbed by the EGUSD. The proposed Sheldon/99 GPA and Rezone project would generate approximately 273 students based on 237 multi-family units allowed. Therefore, the proposed project would generate 11 less students than the No Project Alternative. Impacts associated with the need for school facilities would be fully mitigated by the payment of development fees as discussed in Section 4.10 of this DEIR; therefore, the No Project Alternative would thus result in comparable impacts to public schools than the proposed project.

Water Service

Future development resulting from both the No Project Alternative and the proposed project would increase the demand for water. The land uses associated with the No Project Alternative would result in an approximate water demand of 168.07 AF/yr. The proposed project would result in an approximate water demand of 164.72 AF/yr, a decrease of 3.35 AF/yr. Future development of the site consistent with either the proposed project or the No Project Alternative would require transmission and distribution mains, the size and location of which would be contingent on the type and design of development proposed. As both projects would require infrastructure and the No Project Alternative would result in a greater water demand than the proposed project, water service impacts associated with the No Project Alternative would be slightly worse than those associated with the proposed project.

Wastewater Service

The proposed Sheldon/99 GPA and Rezone project would not result in any significant impacts to wastewater service. Land uses allowed by the Sheldon/99 GPA and Rezone project would increase allowed Equivalent Single Family Dwellings (ESDs) by 109 ESDs compared to the No Project Alternative. Based on the Sacramento Regional County Sanitation District standard of 310 gpd per ESD, future development resulting from the Sheldon/99 GPA and Rezone project could increase wastewater flows by 33,790 gpd (109 ESDs x 310 gpd per ESD). However, the expansion lines that would serve future development on the project site are currently complete and mitigation measure MM 4.10.5.1 would ensure that future development projects resulting from implementation of the proposed project would be required to provide sewer studies. Development allowed under the No Project Alternative would also increase the demand for wastewater service. The low and medium density residential developments allowed by the No Project Alternative would have wastewater flows of 138,173 gpd (445.72 ESDs x 310 gpd per ESD), which is 33,790 less gpd than the proposed project. However, as previously mentioned, the expansion lines that would serve future development on the project site under either scenario are currently complete. The proposed project would have a slightly higher demand for wastewater treatment. Therefore, wastewater service impacts associated with the No Project Alternative would be slightly worse than those associated with the proposed project.

Solid Waste

The proposed Sheldon/99 GPA and Rezone project would not result in any significant impacts to solid waste service. Future development resulting from the No Project Alternative would increase the demand for solid waste services. Sufficient capacity is available at the Kiefer Landfill and curbside pick-up service would be provided by Allied Waste. Implementation of the proposed Sheldon/99 GPA and Rezone project would increase solid waste generation and the demand for waste disposal. However, sufficient capacity is available at the Kiefer Landfill and curbside pick-up is negotiated through contracts with private haulers permitted by the City. Therefore, solid waste service impacts associated with the No Project Alternative would be similar to those under the proposed project.

Parks and Recreation

The No Project Alternative would result in a larger population than the proposed project due to the increased acreage designated for residential development. Increased population would increase the demand for and physical deterioration of parks in the vicinity of the project site. Future development of the project site consistent with the proposed land uses would increase the commercial development and decrease residential development in comparison to current land use designations. In this scenario, the physical deterioration of park facilities would not increase substantially. Furthermore, the Cosumnes Community Services District (CCSD) plans to locate a 10-acre park, Arcadian Village Park, adjacent to the proposed project site that would serve the needs of future multi-family residential developments on the proposed project site. The CCSD would not require additional facilities or staffing to accommodate the proposed project (CCSD Parks, 2008). Therefore, the No Project Alternative would result in comparable impacts to parks and recreation than the proposed project.

Electrical, Natural Gas, and Telephone Service

The proposed Sheldon/99 GPA and Rezone project would not result in any significant impacts to electrical, natural gas, and telephone services. Future development resulting from the both the proposed project and the No Project Alternative would increase the demand for electrical, natural gas, and telephone services. Future development under both the proposed project and the No Project Alternative would not significantly increase the demand for electric, telephone and natural gas services from that proposed by the existing General Plan. Therefore, impacts associated with the No Project Alternative would be similar to those under the proposed project.

Visual Resources/Aesthetics

A comparison of Alternative 4 and the proposed Sheldon/99 GPA and Rezone project is provided below for each significant visual resource impact identified in Section 4.11 (Visual Resources/Aesthetics).

Degrade Existing Visual Character (Impact 4.11.1)

Impact 4.11.1 identifies that future development resulting from implementation of the proposed project would convert the existing visual characteristic of the project site from rural residential land to developed urban uses and would substantially alter the current views of the site to travelers on the surrounding arterial roadways. Under the No Project Alternative, no changes to the General Plan land use or zoning designations would occur and buildout of the site could occur consistent with current land use and zoning designations. Under both the No Project Alternative and the Sheldon/99 GPA and Rezone project, vacant land would be developed with urban uses. The primary difference would be the type of use and the associated scale and massing that would occur. The Sheldon/99 GPA and Rezone project would allow for the development of more intense uses, such as multi-family housing and commercial development, than currently allowed. Multi-family housing could include apartment complexes that would have an increased height over single-family homes. In addition, commercial development would include signage, parking, and buildings of a greater mass than single-family homes. Development under either scenario would be subject to the City's Design Guidelines. On an overall level, the No Project Alternative would result in less of a change in comparison to the existing views. Therefore, this alternative would result in slightly better impacts in comparison to the proposed Sheldon/99 GPA and Rezone project.

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6.4 ALTERNATIVE 2 – REDUCED RESIDENTIAL DENSITY ALTERNATIVE

CHARACTERISTICS

Under Alternative 2, 11.85 acres of the project site would be designated for medium density residential (7.1 to 15.0 du/ac) land uses rather than the high density residential land use designation proposed by the project. The acreage of land designated for commercial land uses would remain unchanged from the proposed project (33.10 acres). Under Alternative 2, the intensity of development allowed on the project site would be less intensive and result in less multi-family housing. The amount of acreage devoted to residential uses would be unchanged, but the residential uses would be less dense. This would result in a reduction in population and housing, air quality, public services, traffic, and noise impacts than the proposed project.

COMPARATIVE IMPACTS

Land Use

As noted in Section 4.1 (Land Use), the proposed Sheldon/99 GPA and Rezone project would not result in any significant land use impacts. Under Alternative 2, 11.85 acres of land that would be designated as high density residential under the proposed project would be designated as medium density residential land uses. This would decrease the residential density allowed on the project site in comparison to the proposed project. Similar to the proposed project, Alternative 2 would allow for the development of land uses that are more intense than those previously anticipated by the Elk Grove General Plan and the Elk Grove Zoning Code. However, also similar to the proposed project, Alternative 2 would allow for land uses compatible with the interchange realignment. Furthermore, the Elk Grove General Plan does not restrict medium density residential, low density residential and commercial uses from being located adjacent to each other and locating these uses adjacent to each other is considered compatible, although buffering may need to be provided between the uses. Medium density residential developments would provide a buffer between the proposed commercial area and existing low density residential development surrounding the project site. Furthermore, Elk Grove Design Guidelines and Zoning Code requirements for commercial and residential developments would lessen the project's potential land use conflicts with the existing low-density residential development by ensuring that any development would be compatible with surrounding neighborhoods in regards to building setbacks, massing, height, parking, landscape, lighting, design, and screening/buffering from adjacent uses. Overall, impacts resulting from Alternative 2 relative to land use would be similar to those of the proposed project.

Population, Housing, and Employment

As discussed in Section 4.2 (Population, Housing, and Employment), the proposed Sheldon/99 GPA and Rezone project would not result in any significant impacts associated with population, housing, and employment. Alternative 2 would allow for 59 less units on the project site than the proposed project (see **Table 6.0-1**).

**TABLE 6.0-1
HOUSING UNITS ALLOWED
PROPOSED PROJECT VS. ALTERNATIVE 2**

| Parcel | Size (in acres) | Housing Units Allowed | |
|--------------|-----------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| | | Proposed GP Zoning (RD-20) | Alternative 2 Zoning (RD-15) |
| 115-0162-010 | 4.94 | 99 | 74 |
| 115-0162-011 | 1.58 | 32 | 24 |
| 115-0162-012 | 1.29 | 26 | 19 |
| 115-0150-064 | 2.17 | 43 | 33 |
| 115-0150-067 | 1.87 | 37 | 28 |
| | TOTALS | 237 | 178 |

Note: The following parcels had 0 housing units allowed under both Alternative 2 and the proposed project because they are zoned for commercial uses: 115-0162-010, 115-0162-012, 115-0162-013, 115-0162-014, 115-0162-015, 115-0150-057, 116-0030-069, 116-0030-045, 116-0030-007, and 116-0030-068.

Furthermore, both the proposed project and Alternative 2 would improve the jobs-housing ratio consistent with Policy LU-10 of the Elk Grove General Plan by providing more jobs in association with the commercially-zoned portion of the project site. Overall, Alternative 2 would result in 59 less housing units than the proposed project (237-178) and would therefore reduce environmental impacts associated with population and housing increases, such as increased traffic and noise, air quality impacts, demands on public services, etc. Population and housing impacts associated with Alternative 2 would be slightly better than those of the proposed project.

Biological and Natural Resources

Section 4.3 (Biological and Natural Resources) indicates that implementation of the proposed project would not result in any significant impacts associated with biological and natural resources. Under Alternative 2 the intensity of development allowed on the project site would be reduced. However, Alternative 2 would still allow development of the entire site with urban uses and the loss or disturbance of species and of habitat would still occur. While development resulting from the project would result in the loss or disturbance of approximately 22.3 acres of annual grassland and 21 acres of developed/ ruderal vegetation with urban landscaping and could therefore adversely affect special-status species and habitat, mitigation measures identified for the project would reduce those impacts to a less than significant level. Future development projects under Alternative 2 would be subject to the same or similar requirements and mitigation measures as the proposed project and impacts would remain less than significant. Therefore, on an overall level, Alternative 2 and the proposed Sheldon/99 GPA and Rezone project would result in similar impacts relative to biological and natural resources.

Geology and Soils

Section 4.4 (Geology and Soils), identifies that the proposed Sheldon/99 GPA and Rezone project would not result in any significant impacts associated with geology and soils, noting that geotechnical reports required by the General Plan and applicable building codes would ensure that soils at future development sites would be capable of supporting the structures resulting

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from approval of the project. Under Alternative 2, the residential density allowed on the project site would be decreased, therefore resulting in a decreased risk of exposure of people and structures to geology and soil impacts. However, geology and soils impacts would still occur as residential uses would still be allowed on the site. Future development would be subject to the same policies and codes as the proposed project. Therefore, geology and soils impacts under Alternative 2 would be similar to the proposed project.

Traffic and Circulation

A comparison of Alternative 2 and the proposed Sheldon/99 GPA and Rezone project is provided below for each significant traffic impact identified in Section 4.5 (Traffic and Circulation).

Intersection Operations (Impact 4.5.1)

Impact 4.5.1 identifies that implementation of the proposed project would result in a decline in service at four intersections along Sheldon Road. Both Alternative 2 and the proposed project could result in development of the project site and both scenarios would increase traffic levels in the vicinity of the site. Alternative 2 would allow for less residential units on the site, which would result in reduced traffic volumes in comparison to the proposed project. While the reduction of units in Alternative 2 is not anticipated to avoid impacts to intersection operations, traffic volumes would be decreased and the effect on intersection operations would be slightly lessened. Therefore, Alternative 2 would result in slightly better impacts associated with intersection operations in comparison to the proposed project.

Cumulative Intersection Operations (Impact 4.5.3)

Impact 4.5.3 identifies that implementation of the proposed Sheldon Road/SR 99 project, in combination with other planned, approved and reasonably foreseeable projects, would result in a decline in LOS at nine intersections under cumulative conditions and would have a cumulatively considerable contribution to intersection operations. As discussed under Impact 4.5.1 above, the decline in intersection operations would be reduced in association with Alternative 2, but intersection operations may not be improved to an acceptable LOS as the City will not be putting in a fixed timing for each intersection. However, traffic volumes would be decreased and the effect on intersection operations would be slightly lessened. Therefore, Alternative 2 would result in slightly better impacts associated with intersection operations in comparison to the proposed project.

Cumulative Roadway Segment Operations (Impact 4.5.4)

Impact 4.5.4 identifies that implementation of the proposed project in combination with other planned, approved and reasonably foreseeable projects would result in cumulatively significant impacts to levels of service along Sheldon Road between West Stockton Boulevard and East Stockton Boulevard, and Sheldon Road between East Stockton Boulevard and Elk Grove-Florin Road. Both the Alternative 2 and the proposed project could result in development of the project site and both scenarios would increase traffic levels in the vicinity of the site. Potential impacts associated with Alternative 2 would be slightly less than those associated with the proposed project as traffic volumes would be decreased commensurate with the reduction in the amount of housing. However, the affected segments of Sheldon Road operate at LOS E or worse at PM Peak Hour under cumulative conditions without the proposed project (with the exception of westbound Sheldon Road between West Stockton Boulevard and East Stockton Boulevard, which operates at LOS C). Furthermore, roadway improvements to improve traffic

flows along the two affected segments of Sheldon Road would not be feasible as they would require additional right of way and removal of existing development. Therefore, although traffic impacts are anticipated to remain significant and unavoidable, Alternative 2 would reduce traffic volumes in comparison to the proposed project and would be better than the proposed project in terms of contribution to cumulative impacts to roadway segment operations.

Noise

Section 4.6 (Noise), identifies that the proposed Sheldon/99 GPA and Rezone project would not result in any significant noise impacts. Proposed mitigation measures would reduce construction noise impacts, impacts associated with exposure to noise levels exceeding the City's noise standards at noise-sensitive land uses, and impacts associated with exceeding the City's noise standards for land use compatibility to a less than significant level. Both Alternative 2 and the proposed project would result in development of the project site and therefore both scenarios would increase noise levels. For example, both Alternative 2 and the proposed project would have similar construction noise impacts as the entire site could be developed under both scenarios. Alternative 2 would allow for medium density residential and commercial development on the site, while the proposed project would allow for commercial and high density residential development. Both the proposed project and Alternative 2 would result in similar noise impacts from the commercial development. However, the medium density residential development under Alternative 2 would result in less operating noise, as well as less traffic noise, than generated by high density residential allowed in the proposed project due to a decrease in housing units and therefore a decrease in population and traffic. Therefore, on an overall level, noise impacts under Alternative 2 would be better than those of the proposed project.

Air Quality

A comparison of Alternative 2 and the proposed Sheldon/99 GPA and Rezone project is provided below for each significant air quality impact identified in Section 4.7 (Air Quality).

Long-term Increases of Criteria Air Pollutants (Impact 4.7.3)

Impact 4.7.3 identifies that land uses allowed under the proposed project would result in long-term increases in criteria air pollutants. Emissions of ROG and NO_x resulting from land uses allowed by the proposed project are anticipated to exceed the SMAQMD's recommended significance threshold of 65 lbs/day in both summer and winter months. As discussed under Traffic and Circulation above, land uses allowed by the proposed project would result in higher traffic volumes than allowed by Alternative 3. As discussed under Traffic and Circulation above, land uses allowed by the proposed project would result in higher traffic volumes than allowed by Alternative 2. Consequently, the increased traffic volumes would also adversely affect air quality due to increased vehicular emissions. Air quality impacts associated with construction would be similar under the proposed project and the Alternative 2 as both scenarios would result in ultimate development of the site. However, on an overall level, criteria air pollutant impacts under Alternative 2 would be better than those of the proposed project because of the reduced volume of traffic allowed under Alternative 2.

Regional Air Plan Impacts (Impact 4.7.4)

Impact 4.7.4 identifies that Implementation of the proposed project in combination with growth throughout the air basin would exacerbate existing regional problems with ozone and particulate matter. Implementation of Alternative 2 would result in less regional air plan impacts

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as less residential development would be allowed to occur on the site. Therefore, regional air plan impacts are anticipated to be better for Alternative 2 in comparison to the proposed project.

Potential Increase in Long-Term Atmospheric Greenhouse Gas Emissions (Impact 4.7.5)

Impact 4.7.5 identifies that implementation of the proposed project in addition to existing, approved, proposed and reasonably foreseeable development in the Sacramento Valley Air Basin, may contribute to an increase in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in the Earth's atmosphere, which has been linked to the phenomenon of climate change. Alternative 2 and the proposed project would result in the same GHG emissions associated with commercial buildings on the site, as both would result in 33.10 acres of land designated for commercial land uses. However, as discussed under Population, Housing, and Employment above, Alternative 2 would allow for 59 less residential housing units on the project site than the proposed project. Consequently, Alternative 2 would result in less GHG emissions from residential buildings. Furthermore, land uses allowed by the proposed project would result in higher traffic volumes than allowed by Alternative 2. The reduced traffic volumes associated with Alternative 2 would also reduce GHG emissions associated with vehicles. Therefore, on an overall level, Alternative 2 would result in less GHG emissions and therefore better impacts in comparison to the proposed project.

Cumulative Effects of Global Climate Change on the City of Elk Grove (Impact 4.7.6)

Impact 4.7.6 identifies that the impacts of global climate change would cumulatively result in a potential decrease in water supply, increase in air pollutants, and increase in health hazards. As discussed under Impact 4.7.5 above, this alternative would contribute less to GHG emissions and thus have less of a contribution to potential climate change effects. However, Alternative 2 would expose persons and structures to the same potential climate change effects to which the proposed project would be exposed. Therefore, this impact is comparable for Alternative 2 and the proposed project.

Hydrology and Water Quality

Section 4.8 (Hydrology and Water Quality), identifies that the proposed Sheldon/99 GPA and Rezone project would not result in any significant impacts associated with hydrology and water quality as the proposed mitigation measures would reduce impacts resulting from increased surface runoff, increased constituents found in urban runoff, and increased water demand to a less than significant level. Under Alternative 2, buildout of the site would occur with less dense residential development. The medium density residential development allowed under Alternative 2 would be less dense than the high density residential included in the proposed project and would result in less impervious surfaces as single-family homes would include more lawn space than multi-family housing. However, increased surface runoff, increased constituents found in urban runoff, and increased water demand would still result from development allowed under Alternative 2. Subsequent development projects under Alternative 2 would be subject to the same or similar requirements and mitigation measures as the proposed project. Therefore, on an overall level, impacts under Alternative 2 would be similar to those of the proposed project relative to hydrology and water quality.

Cultural and Paleontological Resources

Section 4.9 (Cultural Resources) indicates that, while no significant impacts to cultural and paleontological resources would occur as a result of the proposed project, the potential exists

for construction activities to uncover buried deposits or features from the archaeological, paleontological, and/or historical past. These may include artifacts, objects and locations associated with an event or person of California or American history or prehistory which constitute resources of importance under CEQA and are eligible for the California Register or National Register. Although the proposed project would allow more intense land uses, implementation of Alternative 2 would result in similar impacts as construction activities would still occur. Mitigation measures identified to protect cultural and paleontological resources would be similar for both Alternative 2 and the proposed project. Therefore, Alternative 2 and the proposed project would result in similar impacts to cultural and paleontological resources.

Public Services and Utilities

A comparison of Alternative 2 and the proposed Sheldon/99 GPA and Rezone project is provided below for each significant public services and utilities impact identified in Section 4.10 (Public Services and Utilities).

Fire Protection

The proposed Sheldon/99 GPA and Rezone project would not result in any significant impacts associated with fire protection. Development allowed under the proposed project would be more intense than development allowed under Alternative 2. However, both scenarios would create the need for additional fire protection equipment and staffing. Fire Department funding increases with new development as a result of increased property taxes and all new development projects would be required to pay the fire protection development fee to fund additional facilities and equipment. In addition, development under Alternative 2 would be subject to the same mitigation measures related to the provision of adequate water pressure for fire fighting that are identified for the proposed project. Therefore, impacts to the provision of fire and emergency medical services under Alternative 2 would be similar to those of the proposed project.

Law Enforcement

The proposed Sheldon/99 GPA and Rezone project would not result in any significant impacts associated with law enforcement. Development allowed under the proposed project would be more intense than development allowed under Alternative 2. However, both scenarios would create the need for additional law enforcement personnel and equipment. Future development projects under both the proposed project and Alternative 2 would pay fair-share for police services through annexation into the Police Services CFD 2003-2, which would fund a portion of the public safety services required, including additional officers and administrative staff. In addition, future development projects under both the proposed project and Alternative 2 would pay fair-share of funding for additional law enforcement facilities through the Capital Facilities Fee (CFF) which provides funding for police facilities. Therefore, impacts to the provision of law enforcement services under Alternative 2 would be similar to those of the proposed project.

Public Schools

The proposed Sheldon/99 GPA and Rezone project would not result in any significant impacts to public schools. Implementation of Alternative 2 would result in the eventual development of residential uses on the proposed project site. As such, it would generate additional students to be adsorbed by the EGUSD. Alternative 3 would allow 178 single-family units and the project site and would thus generate 74 grade K-6 students, 22 grade 7-8 students, and 41 grade 9-12 students. Therefore, residential development under Alternative 2 would result in the generation

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of only 137 students in comparison to the 273 students that would be generated by land uses associated with the proposed project. Impacts associated with the need for school facilities would be fully mitigated by the payment of development fees as discussed in Section 4.10 of this DEIR; therefore, Alternative 2 would thus result in comparable impacts to public schools as proposed project.

Water Service

Future development resulting from both Alternative 2 and the proposed project would increase the demand for water. The land uses associated with Alternative 2 would result in an approximate water demand of 158.91 AF/yr. The proposed project would result in an annual water demand of approximately 164.72 AF/yr, an increase of 5.81 AF/yr. Future development of the site consistent with either the proposed project or the Alternative 2 would require Transmission and Distribution Mains, the size and location of which would be contingent on the type and design of development proposed. As both projects would require infrastructure and the Alternative 2 would result less water demand than the proposed project, water service impacts associated with the Alternative 2 would be better than those under the proposed project.

Wastewater Service

The proposed Sheldon/99 GPA and Rezone project would not result in any significant impacts to wastewater service. Land uses allowed by the Sheldon/99 GPA and Rezone project would increase ESDs by 109. Based on the Sacramento Regional County Sanitation District standard of 310 gpd per ESD, future development resulting from the Sheldon/99 GPA and Rezone project could increase wastewater flows by 33,790 gpd (109 ESDs x 310 gpd per ESD). However, the expansion lines that would serve future development on the project site are currently complete and mitigation measure MM 4.10.5.1 would ensure that future development projects resulting from implementation of the proposed project would be required to provide sewer studies and to meet requirements and implement mitigation measures identified in those studies. Although it would be to a lesser extent because of the reduced residential density, development under Alternative 2 would also increase the demand for wastewater service and would be required to provide adequate sewer studies. Therefore, wastewater service impacts associated with Alternative 2 would be similar to those under the proposed project.

Solid Waste

The proposed Sheldon/99 GPA and Rezone project would not result in any significant impacts to solid waste service. Future development resulting from Alternative 2 would increase the demand for solid waste services. Sufficient capacity is available at the Kiefer Landfill and curbside pick-up service would be provided private carriers permitted through the City. Similarly, implementation of the proposed Sheldon/99 GPA and Rezone project would increase solid waste generation and the demand for waste disposal. However, sufficient capacity is available at the Kiefer Landfill and curbside pick-up is negotiated through private carriers permitted through the City. Therefore, solid waste service impacts associated with Alternative 2 would be similar to those under the proposed project.

Parks and Recreation

Alternative 2 would result in less population than the proposed project due to the decreased residential density allowed on the site. Decreased population would decrease the demand for and physical deterioration of parks in the vicinity of the project site. Future development of the

project site consistent with the proposed land uses would increase the commercial development and decrease residential development in comparison to current land use designations. In this scenario, the physical deterioration of park facilities would not increase substantially. Furthermore, the Cosumnes Community Services District (CCSD) plans to locate a 10-acre park, Arcadian Village Park, adjacent to the proposed project site that would serve the needs of future multi-family residential developments on the proposed project site. The CCSD would not require additional facilities or staffing to accommodate the proposed project. However, Alternative 2 would result in better impacts to parks and recreation than the proposed project due to the decrease in the demand for and physical deterioration of parks in the vicinity of the project site associated with development under Alternative 2.

Electrical, Natural Gas, and Telephone Service

The proposed Sheldon/99 GPA and Rezone project would not result in any significant impacts to electrical, natural gas, and telephone services. Future development resulting from the both the proposed project and the Alternative 2 would increase the demand for electrical, natural gas, and telephone services. Future development under both the proposed project and the Alternative 2 would not significantly increase the demand for electric, telephone and natural gas services from that proposed by the existing General Plan, as the General Plan anticipated the extension of electrical, natural gas, and telephone service to the site. Therefore, impacts associated with Alternative 2 would be similar to those under the proposed project.

Visual Resources/Aesthetics

A comparison of Alternative 2 and the proposed Sheldon/99 GPA and Rezone project is provided below for each significant visual resource impact identified in Section 4.11 (Visual Resources/Aesthetics).

Degrade Existing Visual Character (Impact 4.11.1)

Impact 4.11.1 identifies that future development resulting from implementation of the proposed project would convert the existing visual characteristic of the project site from rural residential land to developed urban uses and would substantially alter the current views of the site to travelers on the surrounding arterial roadways. Under both Alternative 2 and the proposed project, commercial and residential development would be allowed on the project site. However, the density of residential development allowed under Alternative 2 would be reduced in comparison to the proposed project. The primary difference would be the scale and massing of residential development that would be allowed to occur. Specifically, Alternative 2 would allow for the development of single-family residential homes while the proposed project would allow for commercial and multi-family development. Commercial and multi-family developments have the potential, generally speaking, to be taller and more densely spaced than single-family homes on individual lots. Nevertheless, on an overall level, both Alternative 2 and the proposed Sheldon/99 GPA and Rezone project would result in similar impacts relative to degradation of existing visual character as both scenarios would result in ultimate development of the project site with urban residential and commercial uses.

6.5 ALTERNATIVE 3 – OPEN SPACE ALTERNATIVE

CHARACTERISTICS

Under Alternative 3, 7.81 acres of land northeast of the future East Stockton Boulevard would be designated as Open Space. The proposed project designates this land as high density

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residential land uses. The remainder of the project site would remain unchanged from the proposed project, which includes 33.10 acres of land designated for commercial land uses and 4.04 acres of land designated for high density residential land uses. Under Alternative 3, the number of housing units allowed on the project site would decrease by 157 units as compared to the proposed project and the amount of open space would increase, thus resulting in less impacts to Population/Housing/Employment, Biological and Natural Resources, Geology and Soils, Air Quality, Hydrology and Water Quality, Cultural Resources, Public Services, and Visual Resources. In addition, the open space would serve as a buffer between commercial uses to the south of the future East Stockton Boulevard. While the Sheldon/99 GPA and Rezone project proposes to increase the intensity of development on the entire project site, Alternative 3 would still allow for the development of land uses compatible with the realignment of East Stockton Boulevard and the Sheldon/99 interchange while off-setting the more intense development with an area designated as Open Space.

COMPARATIVE IMPACTS

Land Use

As noted in Section 4.1 (Land Use), the proposed Sheldon/99 GPA and Rezone project would not result in any significant land use impacts. Similar to the proposed project, Alternative 3 would allow for the development of some land uses that are more intense than those previously anticipated by the Elk Grove General Plan and the Elk Grove Zoning Code (commercial, high density residential). However, these land use designations would allow for land uses compatible with the interchange realignment. Alternative 3 would provide open space compatible with the proposed park to the east of the project site (Arcadian Village). This open space would serve future high density residential development on the project site, as well as existing low density residential development surrounding the project site. Furthermore, the Elk Grove General Plan does not restrict open space, high density residential, low density residential, and commercial uses from being located adjacent to each other and locating these uses adjacent to each other is not considered incompatible because commercial development serves the needs of those in the residential developments. Land designated as open space would buffer existing residential developments from the land designated as commercial land uses. Therefore, land use impacts associated with Alternative 3 would be similar to those of the proposed project.

Population, Housing, and Employment

As discussed in Section 4.2 (Population, Housing, and Employment), the proposed Sheldon/99 GPA and Rezone project would not result in any significant impacts associated with population, housing, and employment. Alternative 3 would decrease the number of housing units allowed on the project site by 157 units in comparison to the proposed project (see **Table 6.0-2**).

**TABLE 6.0-2
HOUSING UNITS ALLOWED
PROPOSED PROJECT VS. ALTERNATIVE 3**

| Parcel | Size (in acres) | Housing Units Allowed ¹ | |
|--------------|--------------------|------------------------------------|---------------|
| | | Proposed GP Land Use | Alternative 3 |
| 115-0162-010 | 4.94 | 99 | 0 |
| 115-0162-011 | 1.58 | 32 | 0 |
| 115-0162-012 | 1.29 | 26 | 0 |
| 115-0150-064 | 2.17 | 43 | 43 |
| 115-0150-067 | 1.87 | 37 | 37 |
| | TOTALS | 237 | 80 |

Note: ¹ The number of housing units was calculated based on worst-case scenarios using the maximum dwelling units allowed by the GP land use designations.

² The following parcels had 0 housing units allowed under both Alternative 3 and the proposed project because they are zoned for commercial uses: 115-0162-010, 115-0162-012, 115-0162-013, 115-0162-014, 115-0162-015, 115-0150-057, 116-0030-069, 116-0030-045, 116-0030-007, and 116-0030-068

Furthermore, both the proposed project and Alternative 3 would improve the jobs-housing ratio consistent with Policy LU-10 of the Elk Grove General Plan by providing more jobs in association with the commercially zoned portion of the project site. Overall, Alternative 3 would allow 157 less housing units than the proposed project (237-80) and would therefore reduce environmental impacts associated with population and housing increases, such as increased traffic and noise, air quality impacts, demands on public services, etc. Population and housing impacts associated with Alternative 3 would be better than those of the proposed project.

Biological and Natural Resources

Section 4.3 (Biological and Natural Resources) indicates that implementation of the proposed project would not result in any significant impacts associated with biological and natural resources. Under Alternative 3 the intensity of development allowed on the project site would be reduced. However, Alternative 3 would still allow development of the majority of the site with urban uses and the loss or disturbance of species and of habitat would still occur. While development resulting from the project would result in the loss or disturbance of approximately 22.3 acres of annual grassland and 21 acres of developed/ ruderal vegetation with urban landscaping and could therefore adversely affect special-status species and habitat, mitigation measures identified for the project would reduce those impacts to a less than significant level. Future development projects under Alternative 3 would be subject to the same or similar requirements and mitigation measures as the proposed project and impacts would remain less than significant. In addition, the 7.81 acres that would remain as Open Space were mapped as containing both vernal pools and seasonal wetlands. These biological resources would be preserved under Alternative 3. Although no CNDDDB occurrences of special-status plant and wildlife species were mapped on the acreage that would remain designated for Open Space, the wetlands and vernal pool features provide habitat for special-status species and this area would provide foraging habitat for raptors and migratory birds. Therefore, Alternative 3 would result in better impacts relative to biological and natural resources.

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Geology and Soils

Section 4.4 (Geology and Soils), identifies that the proposed Sheldon/99 GPA and Rezone project would not result in any significant impacts associated with geology and soils, noting that geotechnical reports required by the General Plan and applicable building codes would ensure that soils at future development sites would be capable of supporting the structures resulting from approval of the project. Under Alternative 3, less development would be allowed on the project site as 7.81 acres of land would be designated as open space, thereby resulting in a decreased risk of exposure of people and structures to geology and soil impacts. Although commercial and high density residential development would still be allowed on the remainder of the project site under Alternative 3, future development would be subject to the same General Plan policies and applicable building codes as the proposed project and the overall amount of development on the site would be decreased. Therefore overall geology and soil impacts would be better than the proposed project.

Traffic and Circulation

A comparison of Alternative 3 and the proposed Sheldon/99 GPA and Rezone project is provided below for each significant traffic impact identified in Section 4.5 (Traffic and Circulation).

Intersection Operations (Impact 4.5.1)

Impact 4.5.1 identifies that implementation of the proposed project would result in a decline in service at four intersections along Sheldon Road. Both Alternative 3 and the proposed project could result in development of the project site and both scenarios would increase traffic levels in the vicinity of the site. Traffic volumes resulting from Alternative 3 would be less than the proposed project due to the reduction in high density residential uses. While this alternative may not avoid impacts associated with the proposed project, the decline in service that would occur at the intersections of Sheldon Road/Bruceville Road, Sheldon Road/Lewis Stein Road, Sheldon Road/East Stockton Boulevard, and Sheldon Road/Elk Grove-Florin Road would be to a lesser degree under the Alternative 3 than those under the proposed project. Thus, the impacts would be better under Alternative 3.

Cumulative Intersection Operations (Impact 4.5.3)

Impact 4.5.3 identifies that implementation of the proposed Sheldon Road/SR 99 project, in combination with other planned, approved and reasonably foreseeable projects, would result in a decline in LOS at nine intersections under cumulative conditions and would have a cumulatively considerable contribution to intersection operations. While intersection operations may not be improved to an acceptable LOS under the Alternative, this alternative would result in fewer trips and would result in less of a decline in intersection operations. Therefore, cumulative intersection operation impacts would be better under the Alternative 3.

Cumulative Roadway Segment Operations (Impact 4.5.4)

Impact 4.5.4 identifies that implementation of the proposed project in combination with other planned, approved and reasonably foreseeable projects would result in cumulatively significant impacts to levels of service along Sheldon Road between West Stockton Boulevard and East Stockton Boulevard, and Sheldon Road between East Stockton Boulevard and Elk Grove-Florin Road. Both the No Project Alternative and the proposed project could result in development of the project site and both scenarios would increase traffic levels in the vicinity of the site. Traffic

volumes resulting from the No Project Alternative and the proposed project would differ based on the different land uses allowed under each scenario. Land uses allowed by the proposed project would result in higher traffic volumes than would occur under the No Project Alternative. While roadway segments may also function unacceptably under the No Project Alternative, this alternative would reduce traffic volumes in comparison to the proposed project and would have less of an effect on affected roadway segments than the proposed project. Therefore, Alternative 3 would result in better impacts to cumulative roadway segment operations.

Noise

Section 4.6 (Noise), identifies that the proposed Sheldon/99 GPA and Rezone project would not result in any significant noise impacts. Proposed mitigation measures would reduce construction noise impacts, impacts associated with exposure to noise levels exceeding the City's noise standards at noise-sensitive land uses, and impacts associated with exceeding the City's noise standards for land use compatibility to a less than significant level. Both Alternative 3 and the proposed project would result in commercial and high density residential development of the project site and therefore both scenarios would increase noise levels. Construction noise impacts would be similar for both Alternative 3 and the proposed project. However, Alternative 3 would result in less operating noise, as well as less traffic noise, than generated by the proposed project due to the 7.81 acres that would be Open Space. The Open Space designation reduces the number homes allowed on the site, and therefore reduces the noise associated with increased population and traffic volumes. Therefore, noise impacts under Alternative 3 would be better than those of the proposed project.

Air Quality

A comparison of Alternative 3 and the proposed Sheldon/99 GPA and Rezone project is provided below for each significant air quality impact identified in Section 4.7 (Air Quality).

Long-term Increases of Criteria Air Pollutants (Impact 4.7.3)

Impact 4.7.3 identifies that land uses allowed under the proposed project would result in long-term increases in criteria air pollutants. Emissions of ROG and NO_x resulting from land uses allowed by the proposed project are anticipated to exceed the SMAQMD's recommended significance threshold of 65 lbs/day in both summer and winter months. As discussed under Traffic and Circulation above, land uses allowed by the proposed project would result in higher traffic volumes than allowed by Alternative 3. Increased traffic volumes adversely affect air quality due to increased vehicular emissions. Therefore, Alternative 3 would adversely affect air quality to a lesser extent than the proposed project because less area would be developed and less traffic volumes would occur. Air quality impacts associated with construction would be similar under the proposed project and Alternative 3 as both scenarios would result in ultimate development of the site. However, on an overall level, air quality impacts under Alternative 3 would be better than those of the proposed project because of the reduced volume of traffic generated in association with the uses proposed as part of Alternative 3.

Regional Air Plan Impacts (Impact 4.7.4)

Impact 4.7.4 identifies that Implementation of the proposed project in combination with growth throughout the air basin would exacerbate existing regional problems with ozone and particulate matter. Implementation of Alternative 3 would result in less regional air plan impacts as less development would be allowed to occur on the site. Therefore, regional air plan impacts are anticipated to be better for Alternative 3 in comparison to the proposed project.

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Potential Increase in Long-Term Atmospheric Greenhouse Gas Emissions (Impact 4.7.5)

Impact 4.7.5 identifies that implementation of the proposed project in addition to existing, approved, proposed and reasonably foreseeable development in the Sacramento Valley Air Basin, may contribute to an increase in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in the Earth's atmosphere, which has been linked to the phenomenon of climate change. Alternative 3 and the proposed project would result in the same GHG emissions associated with commercial buildings on the site, as both would result in 33.10 acres of land designated for commercial land uses. However, as discussed under Population, Housing, and Employment above, Alternative 3 would allow for 157 less residential housing units on the project site than the proposed project. Consequently, Alternative 3 would result in less GHG emissions from residential buildings. Furthermore, land uses allowed by the proposed project would result in higher traffic volumes from the residential units than those associated with Alternative 3. The reduced traffic volumes associated with Alternative 3 would also reduce GHG emissions associated with vehicles. Therefore, on an overall level, Alternative 3 would result in less GHG emissions and therefore better impacts in comparison to the proposed project.

Cumulative Effects of Global Climate Change on the City of Elk Grove (Impact 4.7.6)

Impact 4.7.6 identifies that the impacts of global climate change would cumulatively result in a potential decrease in water supply, increase in air pollutants, and increase in health hazards. As discussed under Impact 4.7.5 above, this alternative would contribute less to GHG emissions and thus have less of a contribution to potential climate change effects. However, Alternative 3 would expose persons and structures to the same potential climate change effects to which the proposed project would be exposed. Therefore, this impact is comparable for Alternative 3 and the proposed project.

Hydrology and Water Quality

Section 4.8 (Hydrology and Water Quality), identifies that the proposed Sheldon/99 GPA and Rezone project would not result in any significant impacts associated with hydrology and water quality as the proposed mitigation measures would reduce impacts resulting from increased surface runoff, increased constituents found in urban runoff, and increased water demand to a less than significant level. Under Alternative 3, buildout of the site would occur with less residential development and the Open Space would result in less impervious surfaces on the project site. However, increased surface runoff, increased constituents found in urban runoff, and increased water demand would still result from development allowed under Alternative 3. Subsequent development projects under Alternative 3 would be subject to the same or similar requirements and mitigation measures as the proposed project and impacts would remain less than significant. Therefore, on an overall level, impacts under Alternative 3 would be better than those of the proposed project relative to hydrology and water quality due to the decrease in impervious surfaces.

Cultural Resources

Section 4.9 (Cultural Resources) indicates that, while no significant impacts to cultural and paleontological resources would occur as a result of the proposed project, the potential exists for construction activities to uncover buried deposits or features from the archaeological, paleontological, and/or historical past. These may include artifacts, objects and locations associated with an event or person of California or American history or prehistory which constitute resources of importance under CEQA and are eligible for the California Register or National Register. Implementation of Alternative 3 and the proposed project would result in

similar impacts as construction activities would occur in both scenarios. Mitigation measures identified to protect cultural and paleontological resources would be similar for both the proposed project and under Alternative 3. However, Alternative 3 would preserve open space on the project site, therefore resulting in less potential for disturbance of cultural resources. Therefore Alternative 3 would result in better impacts to cultural and paleontological resources than the proposed project.

Public Services and Utilities

A comparison of Alternative 3 and the proposed Sheldon/99 GPA and Rezone project is provided below for each significant public services and utilities impact identified in Section 4.10 (Public Services and Utilities).

Fire Protection

The proposed Sheldon/99 GPA and Rezone project would not result in any significant impacts associated with fire protection. Development allowed under the proposed project would be more intense than development allowed under Alternative 3. However, both scenarios would create the need for additional fire protection equipment and staffing. Fire Department funding increases with new development as a result of increased property taxes and all new development projects would be required to pay the fire protection development fee to fund additional facilities and equipment. In addition, mitigation measures related to the provision of adequate water pressure for fire fighting that are identified for the proposed project would also apply to development projects under Alternative 3. Therefore, impacts to the provision of fire and emergency medical services under Alternative 3 would be similar to those of the proposed project.

Law Enforcement

The proposed Sheldon/99 GPA and Rezone project would not result in any significant impacts associated with law enforcement. Development allowed under the proposed project would be more intense than development allowed under Alternative 3. However, both scenarios would create the need for additional law enforcement personnel and equipment. Future development projects under both Alternative 3 and the proposed project would pay fair-share for police services through annexation into the Police Services CFD 2003-2, which would fund a portion of the public safety services required, including additional officers and administrative staff. In addition, future development projects under both Alternative 3 and the proposed project would pay fair-share of funding for additional law enforcement facilities through the Capital Facilities Fee (CFF) which provides funding for police facilities. Therefore, impacts to the provision of law enforcement services under Alternative 3 would be similar to those of the proposed project.

Public Schools

The proposed Sheldon/99 GPA and Rezone project would not result in any significant impacts to public schools. Implementation of Alternative 3 would result in the eventual development of residential uses on the proposed project site. As such, it would generate additional students to be absorbed by the EGUSD. However, residential development under Alternative 3 would result in the generation of only 12 grade K-6 students, 4 grade 7-8 students, and 76 grade 9-12 students for a total of 92 students. The proposed project would generate a total of 273 students. Impacts associated with the need for school facilities would be fully mitigated by the payment of development fees as discussed in Section 4.10 of this DEIR; therefore, Alternative 3 would thus result in comparable impacts to public schools as the proposed project.

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Water Service

Future development resulting from both Alternative 3 and the proposed project would increase the demand for water. The land uses associated with Alternative 3 would result in an approximate water demand of 126.84 AF/yr. The proposed project would result in an annual water demand of approximately 164.72 AF/yr, an increase of 37.88 AF/yr. Future development of the site consistent with either the proposed project or the Alternative 3 would require Transmission and Distribution Mains, the size and location of which would be contingent on the type and design of development proposed. As both projects would require infrastructure and the Alternative 3 would result less water demand than the proposed project, water service impacts associated with the Alternative 3 would be better than those under the proposed project.

Wastewater Service

The proposed Sheldon/99 GPA and Rezone project would not result in any significant impacts to wastewater service. Land uses allowed by the Sheldon/99 GPA and Rezone project would increase allowed ESDs by 109 ESDs. Based on the Sacramento Regional County Sanitation District standard of 310 gpd per ESD, future development resulting from the Sheldon/99 GPA and Rezone project could increase wastewater flows by 33,790 gpd (109 ESDs x 310 gpd per ESD). However, the expansion lines that would serve future development on the project site are currently complete and mitigation measure MM 4.10.5.1 would ensure that future development projects resulting from implementation of the proposed project would be required to provide sewer studies and to meet the requirements and implement the mitigation measures identified in those studies. Development under Alternative 3 would also increase the demand for wastewater service as development would still be allowed to occur. However, Alternative 3 would result in less overall development due to the open space on the site. Therefore, wastewater service impacts associated with Alternative 3 would be better than those under the proposed project.

Solid Waste

The proposed Sheldon/99 GPA and Rezone project would not result in any significant impacts to solid waste service. Future development resulting from Alternative 3 would increase the demand for solid waste services. Sufficient capacity is available at the Kiefer Landfill and curbside pick-up service would be provided by Allied Waste. Similarly, implementation of the proposed Sheldon/99 GPA and Rezone project would increase solid waste generation and the demand for waste disposal. However, sufficient capacity is available at the Kiefer Landfill and curbside pick-up is negotiated through contracts with private haulers permitted through the City. However, solid waste service impacts associated with Alternative 3 would be better than those under the proposed project as less overall development would occur.

Parks and Recreation

Alternative 3 would result in less population than the proposed project due to the 7.81 acres of Open Space on the site. Decreased population would decrease the demand for and physical deterioration of parks in the vicinity of the project site. In addition, the Open Space area could serve as a recreation area for surrounding residents. Therefore, Alternative 3 would result in better impacts to parks and recreation than the proposed project.

Electrical, Natural Gas, and Telephone Service

The proposed Sheldon/99 GPA and Rezone project would not result in any significant impacts to electrical, natural gas, and telephone services. Future development resulting from the both the proposed project and the Alternative 3 would increase the demand for electrical, natural gas, and telephone services. Future development under both the proposed project and the Alternative 3 would not significantly increase the demand for electric, telephone and natural gas services from that proposed by the existing General Plan, as the General Plan anticipated the extension of electrical, natural gas, and telephone service to the site. Therefore, impacts associated with Alternative 3 would be similar to those under the proposed project.

Visual Resources/Aesthetics

A comparison of Alternative 3 and the proposed Sheldon/99 GPA and Rezone project is provided below for each significant visual resource impact identified in Section 4.11 (Visual Resources/Aesthetics).

Degrade Existing Visual Character (Impact 4.11.1)

Impact 4.11.1 identifies that future development resulting from implementation of the proposed project would convert the existing visual characteristics of the project site from rural residential land to developed urban uses and would substantially alter the current views of the site to travelers on the surrounding arterial roadways. Under Alternative 3, 7.81 acres of land northeast of the realigned East Stockton Boulevard would be designated as open space. This land would be adjacent to a planned park east of the project site (Arcadian Village). Therefore, Alternative 3 would result in less urban development and would provide a large open space view when considered with the adjacent to the park. Considering that less development would take place on the project site under Alternative 3, the visual character of the site would be altered to a lesser extent than would occur for the proposed project. Visual resources/aesthetic impacts would be better under Alternative 3 when compared to the proposed project.

6.6 ALTERNATIVE 4 – REDUCED COMMERCIAL ALTERNATIVE

CHARACTERISTICS

Alternative 4 contains all of the uses included as part of the proposed project with the exception that the amount of acreage designated for commercial uses would be reduced approximately 10% (4.79 acres of the total 44.95). Under Alternative 4, APN 116-0030-31 (2.40 acres) and APN 116-0030-014 (2.39 acres) would undergo a General Plan Amendment (GPA) and Rezone to designate them as High Density Residential uses rather than Commercial uses with zoning of AR-20 rather than A-5. These parcels are located the furthest east from the interchange along Sheldon Road. The land use designations of all other parcels as identified under the proposed project would remain unchanged for Alternative 4. The net effect of the GPA and Rezone would be a reduction in the amount of commercial uses on the project site (28.31 acres of commercial land uses and 16.64 acres of high density residential land uses) and an increase in the number of housing units allowed on the site to 332 (an increase of 95 units compared to the proposed project). While Alternative 4 would still allow for land designated for commercial development, the reduction of acreage devoted to commercial uses on the site would result less impacts associated with Traffic, Air Quality, Noise, and Hydrology and Water Quality.

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COMPARATIVE IMPACTS

Land Use

As noted in Section 4.1 (Land Use), the proposed Sheldon/99 GPA and Rezone project would not result in any significant land use impacts. Under Alternative 4, the acreage of commercial development would decrease, while the acreage of high density residential land uses would increase. Therefore, similar to the proposed project, Alternative 4 would allow for the development of land uses that would be more intense than those previously anticipated by the Elk Grove General Plan and the Elk Grove Zoning Code and more intense than the existing low density residential neighborhoods surrounding the project site. The Elk Grove General Plan does not restrict high density residential, low density residential and commercial uses from being located adjacent to each other. The high density residential developments allowed under both Alternative 4 and the proposed project would provide a buffer between the proposed commercial area and existing low density residential development surrounding the project site. Furthermore, the Elk Grove Design Guidelines and Zoning Code requirements for commercial and residential developments would lessen the project's potential land use conflicts with the existing low-density residential development by ensuring that any development would be compatible with surrounding neighborhoods in regards to building setbacks, massing, height, parking, landscape, lighting, design, and screening/buffering from adjacent uses. Furthermore, both projects would provide commercial opportunities consistent with the improved Sheldon Road/SR 99 interchange.

On an overall level, both Alternative 4 and the proposed project would allow for commercial and high density residential uses adjacent to the existing low density uses and adjacent to the improved Sheldon Road/SR 99 interchange. Therefore impacts resulting from Alternative 4 relative to land use would be similar to those of the proposed project.

Population, Housing, and Employment

As discussed in Section 4.2 (Population, Housing, and Employment), the proposed Sheldon/99 GPA and Rezone project would not result in any significant impacts associated with population, housing, and employment. Alternative 4 would increase in the number of housing units allowed on the site to 332, an increase of 95 units in comparison to the proposed project (see **Table 6.0-3**).

**TABLE 6.0-3
HOUSING UNITS ALLOWED
PROPOSED PROJECT VS. ALTERNATIVE 4**

| Parcel | Size (in acres) | Housing Units Allowed | |
|--------------|-----------------|----------------------------|------------------------------|
| | | Proposed GP Zoning (RD-20) | Alternative 4 Zoning (RD-20) |
| 115-0162-010 | 4.94 | 99 | 99 |
| 115-0162-011 | 1.58 | 32 | 32 |
| 115-0162-012 | 1.29 | 26 | 26 |
| 115-0150-064 | 2.17 | 43 | 43 |
| 115-0150-067 | 1.87 | 37 | 37 |

| Parcel | Size (in acres) | Housing Units Allowed | |
|--------------|-----------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| | | Proposed GP Zoning (RD-20) | Alternative 4 Zoning (RD-20) |
| 116-0030-031 | 2.40 | 0 | 48 |
| 116-0030-014 | 2.39 | 0 | 47 |
| | TOTALS | 237 | 332 |

Note: The following parcels had 0 housing units allowed under both Alternative 4 and the proposed project because they are zoned for commercial uses:

115-0162-010, 115-0162-012, 115-0162-013, 115-0162-014, 115-0162-015, 115-0150-057, 116-0030-069, 116-0030-045, 116-0030-007, and 116-0030-068.

Both the proposed project and Alternative 4 would improve the jobs-housing ratio consistent with Policy LU-10 of the Elk Grove General Plan by providing more jobs in association with the commercially-zoned portion of the project site, although Alternative 4 would provide fewer jobs than the proposed project because less commercial acreage is proposed. Overall, Alternative 4 would result in 95 (332-237) more housing units than the proposed project. Population and housing impacts associated with Alternative 4 would be slightly worse than those of the proposed project.

Biological and Natural Resources

Section 4.3 (Biological and Natural Resources) indicates that implementation of the proposed project would not result in any significant impacts associated with biological and natural resources. Likewise, Alternative 4 would allow development of the majority of the site with urban uses and the loss or disturbance of species and of habitat would still occur. While development resulting from the proposed project would result in the loss or disturbance of approximately 22.3 acres of annual grassland and 21 acres of developed/ruderal vegetation with urban landscaping and could therefore adversely affect special-status species and habitat, mitigation measures identified for the project would reduce those impacts to a less than significant level. Future development projects under Alternative 4 would be subject to the same or similar requirements and mitigation measures as the proposed project and impacts would remain less than significant. Therefore, Alternative 4 would result in similar impacts to the proposed project relative to biological and natural resources.

Geology and Soils

Section 4.4 (Geology and Soils), identifies that the proposed Sheldon/99 GPA and Rezone project would not result in any significant impacts associated with geology and soils, noting that geotechnical reports required by the General Plan and applicable building codes would ensure that soils at future development sites would be capable of supporting the structures resulting from approval of the project. Under Alternative 4, less commercial development and more high density residential uses would be allowed on the project site. Therefore urban development would still be allowed on the majority of the site, thereby resulting in a similar risk of exposure of people and structures to geology and soil impacts. Future development under Alternative 4 would be subject to the same General Plan policies and applicable building codes as the proposed project and the overall amount of urban development on the site would be similar to the proposed project. Therefore overall geology and soil impacts would be similar to the proposed project.

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Traffic and Circulation

A comparison of Alternative 4 and the proposed Sheldon/99 GPA and Rezone project is provided below for each significant traffic impact identified in Section 4.5 (Traffic and Circulation).

Intersection Operations (Impact 4.5.1)

Impact 4.5.1 identifies that implementation of the proposed project would result in a decline in service at four intersections along Sheldon Road. Both Alternative 4 and the proposed project could result in development of the project site and both scenarios would increase traffic levels in the vicinity of the site. Alternative 4 would allow for high density residential, rather than commercial development on two parcels of the project site, which would result in reduced traffic volumes in comparison to the proposed project as residential development would generate fewer vehicle trips than commercial development. The reduction of commercial development in Alternative 4 would be anticipated to reduce impacts to operations at study intersections identified in Section 4.5 (Traffic and Circulation). Therefore, impacts under Alternative 4 would be better in comparison to the proposed project.

Cumulative Intersection Operations (Impact 4.5.3)

Impact 4.5.3 identifies that implementation of the proposed Sheldon/99 project, in combination with other planned, approved and reasonably foreseeable projects, would result in a decline in LOS at nine intersections under cumulative conditions and would have a cumulatively considerable contribution to intersection operations. As discussed under Impact 4.5.1 above, the reduction of commercial development in Alternative 4 would be anticipated to reduce impacts to operations at study intersections identified in Section 4.5 (Traffic and Circulation). Therefore, cumulative intersection operation impacts would be better under Alternative 4 in comparison to the proposed project.

Cumulative Roadway Segment Operations (Impact 4.5.4)

Impact 4.5.4 identifies that implementation of the proposed project in combination with other planned, approved and reasonably foreseeable projects would result in cumulatively significant impacts to levels of service along Sheldon Road between West Stockton Boulevard and East Stockton Boulevard, and Sheldon Road between East Stockton Boulevard and Elk Grove-Florin Road. Both Alternative 4 and the proposed project could result in development of the project site and both scenarios would increase traffic levels in the vicinity of the site. Potential impacts associated with Alternative 4 would be similar to those associated with the proposed project, however, traffic volumes would be slightly decreased in association with replacing approximately 10 percent of the project's acreage with High Density Residential Uses rather than Commercial. However, the affected segments of Sheldon Road operate at LOS E or worse at PM Peak Hour under cumulative conditions without the proposed project (with the exception of westbound Sheldon Road between West Stockton Boulevard and East Stockton Boulevard, which operates at LOS C). Furthermore, roadway improvements to improve traffic flows along the two affected segments of Sheldon Road would not be feasible as they would require additional right of way and removal of existing development. Therefore, although Alternative 4 would slightly reduce traffic volumes in comparison to the proposed project, it is likely that the affected segments of Sheldon Road would still be impacted to a significant degree by the increased high density residential development allowed under Alternative 4. Therefore, Alternative 4 and the proposed project would have similar impacts to cumulative roadway segment operations.

Noise

Section 4.6 (Noise), identifies that the proposed Sheldon/99 GPA and Rezone project would not result in any significant noise impacts. Proposed mitigation measures would reduce construction noise impacts, impacts associated with exposure to noise levels exceeding the City's noise standards at noise-sensitive land uses, and impacts associated with exceeding the City's noise standards for land use compatibility to a less than significant level. Both Alternative 4 and the proposed project would result in commercial and high density residential development of the project site and therefore both scenarios would increase noise levels. Construction noise impacts would be similar for both Alternative 4 and the proposed project. Operational noise would be slightly less in association with the reduction in commercial development proposed under Alternative 4 as compared to the proposed project. Therefore, noise impacts under Alternative 4 would be better when compared to the proposed project.

Air Quality

A comparison of Alternative 4 and the proposed Sheldon/99 GPA and Rezone project is provided below for each significant air quality impact identified in Section 4.7 (Air Quality).

Long-term Increases of Criteria Air Pollutants (Impact 4.7.3)

Impact 4.7.3 identifies that land uses allowed under the proposed project would result in long-term increases in criteria air pollutants. Emissions of ROG and NO_x resulting from land uses allowed by the proposed project are anticipated to exceed the SMAQMD's recommended significance threshold of 65 lbs/day in both summer and winter months. As discussed under Traffic and Circulation above, land uses allowed by the proposed project would result in slightly higher traffic volumes than allowed by Alternative 4. Increased traffic volumes adversely affect air quality due to increased vehicular emissions. Therefore, Alternative 4 would adversely affect air quality to a lesser extent than the proposed project because less traffic volumes would occur. Air quality impacts associated with construction would be similar under the proposed project and Alternative 4 as both scenarios would result in ultimate development of the site. However, on an overall level, air quality impacts under Alternative 4 would be better than those of the proposed project because of the reduced volume of traffic generated in association with the reduced commercial development allowed under Alternative 4.

Regional Air Plan Impacts (Impact 4.7.4)

Impact 4.7.4 identifies that Implementation of the proposed project in combination with growth throughout the air basin would exacerbate existing regional problems with ozone and particulate matter. Implementation of Alternative 4 would result in less regional air plan impacts as less traffic volumes would occur in association with the reduction in commercial development proposed. Therefore, regional air plan impacts are anticipated to be better for Alternative 4 in comparison to the proposed project.

Potential Increase in Long-Term Atmospheric Greenhouse Gas Emissions (Impact 4.7.5)

Impact 4.7.5 identifies that implementation of the proposed project in addition to existing, approved, proposed and reasonably foreseeable development in the Sacramento Valley Air Basin, may contribute to an increase in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in the earth's atmosphere, which has been linked to the phenomenon of climate change. Alternative 4 would result in increased GHG emissions associated with residential buildings on the site, as Alternative 4 would increase the number of housing units allowed on the site by 95. However,

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Alternative 4 would allow for less commercial square footage on the project site than the proposed project. Consequently, Alternative 4 would result in a slight reduction in traffic volumes in comparison to the proposed project as the amount of Commercial acreage would be reduced by approximately 10 percent. The reduced traffic volumes associated with Alternative 4 would also slightly reduce GHG emissions associated with vehicle trips to and from the site. Therefore, on an overall level, Alternative 4 would result in similar GHG emissions and therefore similar impacts in comparison to the proposed project.

Cumulative Effects of Global Climate Change on the City of Elk Grove (Impact 4.7.6)

Impact 4.7.6 identifies that the impacts of global climate change would cumulatively result in a potential decrease in water supply, increase in air pollutants, and increase in health hazards. As discussed under Impact 4.7.5 above, Alternative 4 would contribute similar GHG impacts as the proposed project. As GHG emissions are thought to cause global climate change, cumulative climate change impacts under Alternative 4 would be similar to those of the proposed project.

Hydrology and Water Quality

Section 4.8 (Hydrology and Water Quality), identifies that the proposed Sheldon/99 GPA and Rezone project would not result in any significant impacts associated with hydrology and water quality as the proposed mitigation measures would reduce impacts resulting from increased surface runoff, increased constituents found in urban runoff, and increased water demand to a less than significant level. Under Alternative 4, buildout of the site would occur with less commercial development but increased high density residential development which would result in less impervious surfaces on the project site as residential development would likely incorporate grassed and landscaped areas which would allow for more infiltration and less impervious surfaces than a commercial use. Therefore, increased surface runoff, increased constituents found in urban runoff, and increased water demand would result to a lesser degree from development allowed under Alternative 4 than the proposed project. Subsequent development projects under Alternative 4 would be subject to the same or similar requirements and mitigation measures as the proposed project and impacts would remain less than significant. Therefore, on an overall level, impacts under Alternative 4 would be better than those of the proposed project relative to hydrology and water quality based on the increase in High Density Residential versus Commercial acreage.

Cultural Resources

Section 4.9 (Cultural Resources) indicates that, while no significant impacts to cultural and paleontological resources would occur as a result of the proposed project, the potential exists for construction activities to uncover buried deposits or features from the archaeological, paleontological, and/or historical past. These may include artifacts, objects and locations associated with an event or person of California or American history or prehistory which constitute resources of importance under CEQA and are eligible for the California Register or National Register. Implementation of Alternative 4 and the proposed project would result in similar impacts as construction and ground disturbing activities affecting the existing site would occur in both scenarios. Mitigation measures identified to protect cultural and paleontological resources would be similar for both the proposed project and Alternative 4. Therefore Alternative 4 would result in similar impacts to cultural and paleontological resources in comparison to the proposed project.

Public Services and Utilities

A comparison of Alternative 4 and the proposed Sheldon/99 GPA and Rezone project is provided below for each significant public services and utilities impact identified in Section 4.10 (Public Services and Utilities).

Fire Protection

The proposed Sheldon/99 GPA and Rezone project would not result in any significant impacts associated with fire protection. Alternative 4 would result in less commercial development and more high density residential development in comparison to the proposed project. However, both scenarios would create the need for additional fire protection equipment and staffing. Fire Department funding increases with new development as a result of increased property taxes and all new development projects would be required to pay the fire protection development fee to fund additional facilities and equipment. In addition, mitigation measures related to the provision of adequate water pressure for fire fighting that are identified for the proposed project would also apply to development projects under Alternative 4. Therefore, impacts to the provision of fire and emergency medical services under Alternative 4 would be similar to those of the proposed project.

Law Enforcement

The proposed Sheldon/99 GPA and Rezone project would not result in any significant impacts associated with law enforcement. Both Alternative 4 and the proposed project would create the need for additional law enforcement personnel and equipment as both scenarios would result in development of the entire project site with high density residential and commercial uses. Future development projects under both Alternative 4 and the proposed project would pay fair-share for police services through annexation into the Police Services CFD 2003-2, which would fund a portion of the public safety services required, including additional officers and administrative staff. In addition, future development projects under both Alternative 4 and the proposed project would pay fair-share of funding for additional law enforcement facilities through the Capital Facilities Fee (CFF) which provides funding for police facilities. Therefore, impacts to the provision of law enforcement services under Alternative 4 would be similar to those of the proposed project.

Public Schools

The proposed Sheldon/99 GPA and Rezone project would not result in any significant impacts to public schools. Implementation of Alternative 4 would result in the eventual development of both residential and commercial uses on the proposed project site. As such, it would generate additional students to be absorbed by the EGUSD. However, Alternative 4 would result in 95 more housing units than the proposed project and would therefore generate more students to be absorbed by the EGUSD. Therefore, Alternative 4 would have worse impacts to public schools in comparison to the proposed project.

Water Service

Future development resulting from both Alternative 4 and the proposed project would increase the demand for water. Future development of the site consistent with either the proposed project or Alternative 4 would require Transmission and Distribution Mains, the size and location of which would be contingent on the type and design of development proposed. As both

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scenarios would increase water demand and require infrastructure, water service impacts associated with Alternative 4 would be similar to those under the proposed project.

Wastewater Service

The proposed Sheldon/99 GPA and Rezone project would not result in any significant impacts to wastewater service. Land uses allowed by the Sheldon/99 GPA and Rezone project would increase allowed ESDs by 109. Based on the Sacramento Regional County Sanitation District standard of 310 gpd per ESD, future development resulting from the Sheldon/99 GPA and Rezone project could increase wastewater flows by 33,790 gpd (109 ESDs x 310 gpd per ESD). However, the expansion lines that would serve future development on the project site are currently complete and mitigation measure MM 4.10.5.1 would ensure that future development projects resulting from implementation of the proposed project would be required to provide sewer studies and to meet the requirements and implement the mitigation measures identified in those studies. Development under Alternative 4 would also increase the demand for wastewater service as development would still be allowed to occur. Future development under Alternative 4 would also be subject to mitigation measure MM 4.10.5.1. Therefore, wastewater service impacts associated with Alternative 4 would be similar to those under the proposed project.

Solid Waste

The proposed Sheldon/99 GPA and Rezone project would not result in any significant impacts to solid waste service. Future development resulting from Alternative 4 would increase the demand for solid waste services. Similarly, implementation of the proposed Sheldon/99 GPA and Rezone project would increase solid waste generation and the demand for waste disposal. However, sufficient capacity is available at the Kiefer Landfill and curbside pick-up is negotiated through contracts with private haulers permitted through the City. Therefore, solid waste service impacts associated with Alternative 4 would be similar to those under the proposed project.

Parks and Recreation

Alternative 4 would result in increased population in comparison to the proposed project as Alternative 4 would allow for 95 more housing units. Therefore, Alternative 4 would slightly increase the demand for, and physical deterioration of, parks in the vicinity of the project site in comparison to the proposed project. Therefore, Alternative 4 would result in worse impacts in comparison to the proposed project.

Electrical, Natural Gas, and Telephone Service

The proposed Sheldon/99 GPA and Rezone project would not result in any significant impacts to electrical, natural gas, and telephone services. Future development resulting from the both the proposed project and Alternative 4 would increase the demand for electrical, natural gas, and telephone services. Future development under both the proposed project and the Alternative 4 would not significantly increase the demand for electric, telephone and natural gas services from that proposed by the existing General Plan, as the General Plan anticipated the extension of electrical, natural gas, and telephone service to the site. Therefore, impacts associated with Alternative 4 would be similar to those under the proposed project.

Visual Resources/Aesthetics

A comparison of Alternative 4 and the proposed Sheldon/99 GPA and Rezone project is provided below for each significant visual resource impact identified in Section 4.11 (Visual Resources/Aesthetics).

Degrade Existing Visual Character (Impact 4.11.1)

Impact 4.11.1 identifies that future development resulting from implementation of the proposed project would convert the existing visual characteristic of the project site from rural residential land to developed urban uses and would substantially alter the current views of the site to travelers on the surrounding arterial roadways. Under both Alternative 4 and the proposed project, commercial and residential development would be allowed on the project site, though Alternative 4 would result in increased high density residential development on the project site while the proposed project would allow for more commercial development. On an overall level, both Alternative 4 and the proposed Sheldon/99 GPA and Rezone project would result in similar impacts relative to degradation of existing visual character as both scenarios would result in ultimate development of the project site with urban uses.

6.7 ENVIRONMENTALLY SUPERIOR ALTERNATIVE

Table 6.0-4, on the following page, provides a summary of the potential impacts of the alternatives evaluated in this section, as compared with the potential impacts of the proposed project.

**TABLE 6.0-4
COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES TO THE PROPOSED PROJECT**

| Issue | Alternative 1 (No Project/ Adopted General Plan and Zoning) | Alternative 2 | Alternative 3 | Alternative 4 |
|---|--|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| Land Use | W | S | S | S |
| Population/Housing/Employment | W | B | B | W |
| Biological and Natural Resources | B | S | B | S |
| Geology and Soils | B | S | B | S |
| Traffic and Circulation | | | | |
| Impact 4.5.1 | B | B | B | B |
| Impact 4.5.3 | B | B | B | B |
| Impact 4.5.4 | B | B | B | B |
| Noise | B | B | B | B |
| Air Quality | | | | |
| Impact 4.7.3 | B | B | B | B |
| Impact 4.7.4 | B | B | B | B |
| Impact 4.7.5 | B | B | B | S |
| Impact 4.7.6 | B | S | S | S |

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| Issue | Alternative 1 (No Project/ Adopted General Plan and Zoning) | Alternative 2 | Alternative 3 | Alternative 4 |
|---|--|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| Hydrology and Water Quality | B | S | B | B |
| Cultural Resources | S | S | B | S |
| Public Services/Utilities | | | | |
| Fire Protection | S | S | S | S |
| Law Enforcement | S | S | S | S |
| Public Schools | S | B | B | W |
| Water Service | W | B | B | S |
| Wastewater Service | B | B | B | S |
| Solid Waste | S | S | B | S |
| Parks and Recreation | S | B | B | W |
| Electrical, Natural Gas, and Telephone Services | S | S | S | S |
| Visual Impacts | | | | |
| Impact 4.11.1 | B | S | B | S |

B - Impacts better than those under proposed project

S - Impacts the same as those under proposed project, or no better or worse

W - Impacts worse than those under proposed project

Based upon the evaluation described in this section, the Open Space Alternative (Alternative 3) is considered to be the environmentally superior alternative. Alternative 3 was determined to have less adverse environmental impacts than the proposed project on most issues overall. Alternative 3 has no environmental impacts that are worse than those under the proposed project. However, Alternative 3 would not provide as much high density housing as the proposed project and would therefore not be as effective in meeting one of the key objectives of the proposed project to provide land for high density uses to increase the variety of the City's housing stock.

REFERENCES

Cosumnes Community Services District Parks and Recreation Department. January 22, 2008. Personal Communication (letter). Jessica Shalamunec, Special Project Manager, City of Elk Grove Development Services, Planning Department. Note: Reference in text as (CCSD Parks, 2008).