

# 5 ALTERNATIVES

## 5.1 INTRODUCTION

State CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(a) requires EIRs to describe:

a range of reasonable alternatives to the project, or to the location of the project, which would feasibly attain most of the basic objectives of the project but would avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects of the project, and evaluate the comparative merits of the alternatives. An EIR need not consider every conceivable alternative to a project. Rather it must consider a reasonable range of potentially feasible alternatives that will foster informed decision making and public participation. An EIR is not required to consider alternatives which are infeasible... There is no ironclad rule governing the nature or scope of the alternatives to be discussed other than the rule of reason.

This section of the State CEQA Guidelines also provides guidance regarding what the alternatives analysis should consider. Subsection (b) further states that the purpose of the alternatives analysis is as follows:

Because an EIR must identify ways to mitigate or avoid the significant effects that a project may have on the environment (Public Resources Code Section 21002.1), the discussion of alternatives shall focus on alternatives to the project or its location which are capable of avoiding or substantially lessening any significant effects of the project, even if these alternatives would impede to some degree the attainment of the project objectives, or would be more costly.

The State CEQA Guidelines require that the EIR include information about each alternative sufficient to allow meaningful evaluation, analysis, and comparison with the proposed project. If an alternative would cause one or more significant effects in addition to those that would be caused by the project as proposed, the significant effects of the alternative must be discussed, but in less detail than the significant effects of the project as proposed (Section 15126.6[d]).

The State CEQA Guidelines further require that the “no project” alternative be considered (Section 15126.6[e]). 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. If the no project alternative is the environmentally superior alternative, CEQA requires that the EIR “shall also identify an environmentally superior alternative among the other alternatives” (Section 15126[e][2]).

In defining “feasibility” (e.g., “feasibly attain most of the basic objectives of the project”), State CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(f)(1) states, in part:

Among the factors that may be taken into account when addressing the feasibility of alternatives are site suitability, economic viability, availability of infrastructure, general plan consistency, other plans or regulatory limitations, jurisdictional boundaries (projects with a regionally significant impact should consider the regional context), and whether the proponent can reasonably acquire, control or otherwise have access to the alternative site (or the site is already owned by the proponent). No one of these factors establishes a fixed limit on the scope of reasonable alternatives.

In determining what alternatives should be considered in the EIR, it is important to consider the objectives of the project, the project’s significant effects, and unique project considerations. These factors are crucial to the development of alternatives that meet the criteria specified in Section 15126.6(a). Although, as noted above, EIRs must contain a discussion of “potentially feasible” alternatives, the ultimate determination as to whether an alternative is feasible or infeasible is made by the lead agency’s decision-making body—here, El Dorado County. (See CEQA Sections 21081.5, 21081[a][3].)

## 5.2 CONSIDERATIONS FOR SELECTION OF ALTERNATIVES

### 5.2.1 Attainment of Project Objectives

As described above, one factor that must be considered in selection of alternatives is the ability of a specific alternative to attain most of the basic objectives of the project (State CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6[a]). Chapter 2, "Project Description," articulates the following project objectives:

- ▶ Implement the County's General Plan by directing urban/suburban growth within the El Dorado Hills Community Region located adjacent to existing residential development in order to ensure the preservation of large expanses of open space and agricultural lands within the County.
- ▶ Establish a land use pattern that maintains and enhances the character of existing rural and urban communities, emphasizing both the natural setting and built design elements.
- ▶ Develop a thoughtful design that focuses higher density residential lots toward the center of the parcel and includes large residential lots, open space, and parks throughout the project as an amenity but especially the exterior to provide significant buffers between existing residential communities.
- ▶ Provide a range of residential densities and product type to meet the needs of the changing demographics of the County, including families, empty nesters, and active adults.
- ▶ Create a residential community containing open space and a range of passive and active recreational amenities for its residents and the community.
- ▶ Establish an economically viable project that provides a fair-share contribution of infrastructure to the community through the payment of fees and/or construction of off-site transportation improvements in accordance with the County's General Plan.
- ▶ Improve emergency access and evacuation routes in the project area.
- ▶ Provide a comprehensively planned project that is sensitive to environmental issues including wetland and tree preservation.

### 5.2.2 Environmental Impacts of the Generations at Green Valley Project

Sections 3.1 through 3.17 and Chapter 4 of this Draft EIR address the environmental impacts of implementation of the proposed project. Potentially feasible alternatives were developed with consideration of avoiding or lessening the significant, and potentially significant, adverse impacts of the project, as identified in Chapters 3 and 4 of this Draft EIR and summarized below. If an environmental issue area analyzed in this Draft EIR is not addressed below, it is because no significant impacts were identified for that issue area.

## AESTHETICS

## AIR QUALITY

- ▶ The project includes a proposed General Plan Amendment, would exceed short-term construction and operational thresholds, and is not consistent with vehicle miles traveled (VMT)-reduction objectives of the applicable air quality attainment plan (AQAP) that is the Sacramento Regional 8-Hour Ozone Attainment and Reasonable Further Progress Plan. Mitigation (Mitigation Measures 3.2-1a, 3.2-1b, 3.2-1c, and 3.14-2) has been identified to reduce this impact to **less than significant** under project and cumulative conditions (see Impacts 3.2-1 and 4-3).
- ▶ Construction of the project (including off-site roadway and infrastructure improvements) would result in air pollutant emissions that would exceed daily El Dorado County Air Quality Management District (EDCAQMD)

thresholds. Mitigation (Mitigation Measures 3.2-1a and 3.2-1b) has been identified to reduce this impact to **less than significant** under project and cumulative conditions (see Impacts 3.2-2 and 4-4).

- ▶ Based on the health risk assessment prepared for the project, construction would produce substantial diesel particulate matter such that EDCAQMD's threshold for toxic air contaminant (TAC) cancer risk exposure of 10 in one million would be exceeded. The project could also result in exposure to naturally occurring asbestos from dust generation as part of project construction activities. Mitigation (Mitigation Measures 3.2-1a and 3.2-1c) has been identified to reduce this impact to **less than significant** under project and cumulative conditions (see Impacts 3.2-4 and 4-6).

## CULTURAL RESOURCES

- ▶ Project-related ground-disturbing activities could result in damage to known and other yet-undiscovered archaeological resources as defined in State CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5. Mitigation (Mitigation Measures 3.3-1a through 3.3-1c) has been identified to reduce this impact to **less than significant** under project and cumulative conditions (see Impacts 3.3-1 and 4-7).

## BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

- ▶ Development of the project site, including ground disturbance associated with construction of residences, other buildings, roads, parking areas, and off-site improvement infrastructure (e.g., pipeline, conduit, cable), could result in direct removal of special-status plants or damage that results in the eventual loss of special-status plants if they are present on the project site. Mitigation (Mitigation Measure 3.4-1) has been identified to reduce this impact to **less than significant** under project and cumulative conditions (see Impacts 3.4-1 and 4-8).
- ▶ Project implementation would include land use conversion and development activities, including ground disturbance, vegetation removal, and overall conversion of wildlife habitat, which could result in disturbance to, injury to, or mortality of several special-status wildlife species if present, reduced breeding productivity of these species, and loss of species habitat. Mitigation (Mitigation Measures 3.4-2a through 3.4-2i) has been identified to reduce this impact to **less than significant** under project and cumulative conditions (see Impacts 3.4-2 and 4-8).
- ▶ Project implementation would result in ground disturbance, vegetation removal, and land development, which also would result in removal of riparian habitat and sensitive natural communities. Mitigation (Mitigation Measures 3.4-3a and 3.4-3b) has been identified to reduce this impact to **less than significant** under project and cumulative conditions (see Impacts 3.4-3 and 4-8).
- ▶ Project implementation would result in ground disturbance, vegetation removal, and land development, which would result in removal (fill) of state and federally protected wetlands. Mitigation (Mitigation Measure 3.4-4) has been identified to reduce this impact to **less than significant** under project and cumulative conditions (see Impacts 3.4-4 and 4-8).
- ▶ Project implementation would result in removal of oak trees and oak woodlands and development in a rare plant mitigation area established by the County, which could result in conflict with the El Dorado County Oak Resources Management Plan. Mitigation (Mitigation Measures 3.4-6a and 3.4-6b) has been identified to reduce this impact to **less than significant** under project and cumulative conditions (see Impacts 3.4-6 and 4-8).
- ▶ The project would contribute to the cumulative loss of oak woodland habitat due to the anticipated removal of approximately 56 acres of oak woodland habitat. Thus, the project's contribution to cumulative oak woodland loss identified in the Biological Resources Policy Update and ORMP Final EIR would be **cumulatively considerable and significant and unavoidable** (see Impact 4-8).

## ENERGY

- ▶ Construction activities associated with the project would be temporary and would not increase long-term energy or fuel demand. Regarding operation, the project does not include any features that would reduce energy consumption or increase the use of renewable energy sources above what would be required by the California Building Code. Mitigation (Mitigation Measures 3.7-1a, 3.7-1b, and 3.14-2) has been identified to reduce this impact to **less than significant** under project and cumulative conditions (see Impacts 3.5-1 and 4-9).
- ▶ Because natural gas is assumed to be included in the design and operation of the project, the project would conflict with the building decarbonization and fossil fuel reduction goals of both the 2022 Scoping Plan for Achieving Carbon Neutrality and the Energy Efficiency Action Plan and obstruct the implementation of these plans to achieve the state's goals of reducing fossil fuel consumption and increasing energy efficiency. Mitigation (Mitigation Measures 3.2-1d, 3.7-1a, 3.7-1b, and 3.14-2) has been identified to reduce this impact to **less than significant** under project and cumulative conditions (see Impacts 3.5-2 and 4-9).

## GEOLOGY, SOILS, AND PALEONTOLOGICAL RESOURCES

- ▶ A total of 7 five-acre lots proposed under the project would have on-site wastewater disposal systems. A on-site septic system analysis has been prepared for the project and the project would be subject to County Code of Ordinances Chapter 110.32 and the County's OWTS Manual, both of which provide performance standards for OWTS to protect the environment and public health. Nevertheless, the Septic Study recommended that additional testing be completed to confirm the suitability of proposed wastewater disposal systems onsite. Mitigation (Mitigation Measure 3.6-4) has been identified to reduce this impact to **less than significant** under project conditions (see Impacts 3.6-4).
- ▶ Although it is anticipated that the project site does not contain unique paleontological resources, the potential to discover paleontological resources on-site still exists. Mitigation (Mitigation Measures 3.6-5a and 3.6-5b) has been identified to reduce this impact to **less than significant** under project and cumulative conditions (see Impacts 3.6-5 and 4-10).

## GREENHOUSE GASES AND CLIMATE CHANGE

- ▶ The project would result in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions during both construction and operation. Although mitigation (Mitigation Measures 3.7-1a, 3.7-1b, and 3.14-2) has been identified to address this impact, the project would result in a **significant and unavoidable impact** under project and cumulative conditions (see Impacts 3.7-1 and 4-11).

## HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

- ▶ The project would require demolition of existing structures on the site and other construction activities that may contain asbestos building materials, lead paint, and other hazardous materials. Mitigation (Mitigation Measure 3.8-1a and 3.8-1b) has been identified to reduce this impact to **less than significant** under project and cumulative conditions (see Impacts 3.8-1 and 4-12).

## NOISE AND VIBRATION

- ▶ Short-term construction-generated noise levels associated with the project off-site improvements would expose nearby noise-sensitive receptors to excessive noise levels. Although mitigation (Mitigation Measure 3.11-1) has been identified to address this impact, the project would result in a **significant and unavoidable impact** under project conditions (see Impact 3.11-1). This impact would not result in a significant cumulative impact (Impact 4-16).
- ▶ The use of heavy-duty construction equipment can generate various increased vibration levels. Based on modeling conducted, vibration levels from the use of a vibratory roller could exceed the threshold of significance of 0.2 inch per second peak particle velocity for structural damage within 26 feet and 80 vibration decibels for

human annoyance within 73 feet of any vibratory roller activities. Because project features are directly adjacent to residential uses, it cannot be guaranteed that construction would not occur within 73 feet of those sensitive receptors. Mitigation (Mitigation Measure 3.11-2) has been identified to reduce this impact to **less than significant** under project and cumulative conditions (see Impacts 3.11-2 and 4-16).

- ▶ Project-related stationary noise would consist of recreational activities and heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) mechanical equipment. Depending on the proximity of future HVAC equipment to neighboring sensitive receptors, HVAC noise levels could potentially result in a 3- to 5-dB increase over the County's noise standard of 55 dB  $L_{eq}$  and 70 dB  $L_{max}$  (maximum sound level) for stationary noise sources. Mitigation (Mitigation Measure 3.11-3) has been identified to reduce this impact to **less than significant** under project conditions (see Impact 3.11-3). No significant cumulative stationary noise impact would occur (Impact 4-18).

## TRANSPORTATION

- ▶ Implementation of the project would exceed the significance threshold of 19.1 VMT per capita for residential uses (i.e., 15 percent below the existing county VMT per capita) as identified in County Resolution 141-2020. Although mitigation (Mitigation Measure 3.14-2) has been identified to address this impact, the project would result in a **significant and unavoidable impact** under project and cumulative conditions (see Impacts 3.14-2 and 4-25).
- ▶ The project could increase transportation hazards during construction and operation. Mitigation (Mitigation Measure 3.14-3) has been identified to reduce this impact to **less than significant** under project and cumulative conditions (see Impacts 3.14-3 and 4-26).

## TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

- ▶ Ground-disturbing activities during project construction could uncover previously unknown tribal cultural resources. These activities could damage or destroy tribal cultural resources. Mitigation (Mitigation Measure 3.16-1a and 3.16-1b) has been identified to reduce this impact to **less than significant** under project and cumulative conditions (see Impacts 3.16-1 and 4-31).

## WILDFIRE AND EVACUATION

- ▶ The project could impact evacuation efforts in the project area. Mitigation (Mitigation Measure 3.17-1) has been identified to reduce this impact to **less than significant** under project and cumulative conditions (see Impacts 3.17-1 and 4-32).

## 5.3 ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED BUT NOT EVALUATED FURTHER

As described above, State CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(c) provides that the range of potential alternatives for the project shall include those that could feasibly accomplish most of the basic objectives of the project and could avoid or substantially lessen one or more of the significant effects. Alternatives that fail to meet the fundamental project purpose need not be addressed in detail in an EIR (*In re Bay-Delta Programmatic Environmental Impact Report Coordinated Proceedings* [2008] 43 Cal.4th 1143, 1165–1167).

In determining which alternatives should be considered in an EIR, it is important to acknowledge the objectives of the project, the project's significant effects, and unique project considerations. These factors are crucial to the development of alternatives that meet the criteria specified in State CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(a). Although, as noted above, EIRs must contain a discussion of "potentially feasible" alternatives, the ultimate determination as to whether an alternative is feasible or infeasible is made by lead agency decision maker(s). (See CEQA Section 21081[a][3].) At the time of action on the proposed project, the decision maker(s) may consider evidence beyond that found in this EIR in addressing such determinations. The decision maker(s), for example, may conclude that a particular alternative is infeasible (i.e., undesirable) from a policy standpoint and may reject an alternative on that

basis provided that the decision maker(s) adopt a finding, supported by substantial evidence, to that effect and provided that such a finding reflects a reasonable balancing of the relevant economic, environmental, social, and other considerations supported by substantial evidence (*City of Del Mar v. City of San Diego* [1982] 133 Cal.App.3d 401, 417; *California Native Plant Society v. City of Santa Cruz* [2009] 177 Cal.App.4th 957, 998).

The EIR should also identify any alternatives that were considered by the lead agency but were rejected during the planning or scoping process and briefly explain the reasons underlying the lead agency's determination.

### 5.3.1 Off-Site Alternative

Based on review of satellite imagery of the El Dorado Hills Community Region, a majority of the area has been developed. Remaining large land areas that have yet to fully developed with residential uses are located within entitled projects that include the Promontory Specific Plan, El Dorado Hills Specific Plan, Bass Lake Hills Specific Plan, Valley View Specific Plan, and the Carson Creek Specific Plan. There are no undeveloped or unentitled land areas available within the El Dorado Hills Community Region boundary that are of adequate size (280 acres) that can accommodate the project. As identified in the project objectives above, the basic objectives of the project are to provide a range of residential densities and land use patterns that maintains and enhances the character of the existing rural and urban community consistent with the El Dorado County General Plan policy provisions of directing urban/suburban growth within community regions (Objective 2.1.1 and associated Policy 2.1.1.2). While there are adequately sized land areas available outside of the El Dorado Hills Community Region boundary that could accommodate the project, this would be inconsistent with the basic project objectives. Thus, this alternative would be eliminated from further consideration.

## 5.4 ALTERNATIVES SELECTED FOR DETAILED ANALYSIS

The following alternatives are evaluated in this Draft EIR.

- ▶ **Alternative 1: No Project–No Development Alternative** – This alternative assumes no development of the site. The project site would remain in its current condition.
- ▶ **Alternative 2: No Project/Development Consistent with the General Plan Alternative** – The project site would be developed consistent with the site's current General Plan land use designation of Low Density Residential. This would result in on-site roadway improvements with three emergency vehicle access points and a subdivision with 56 residential lots (5-acre lots). Water and wastewater would consist of on-site wastewater disposal systems and wells. Off-site improvements would be limited to access improvements to Green Valley Road.
- ▶ **Alternative 3: Mixed Use Development Alternative** – This alternative would modify the proposed project site plan to provide mixed land uses in the eastern portion of the project site that would consist of 350 multifamily residential units for extremely low-, very low-, low-, and moderate-income households as defined by the 2021–2029 Housing Element and 30,000 square feet of commercial uses. This alternative would also designate proposed lots 2–4 as open space. All other aspects of the proposed project would be retained.
- ▶ **Alternative 4: Reduced Build Alternative** – This alternative would redesignate the project site as Medium Density Residential and Open Space under the General Plan but would retain the existing on-site residence on a 5-acre lot. This would allow the development of 155 residential lots (1-acre lots).
- ▶ **Alternative 5: Dixon Ranch Alternative** – This alternative would consist of the previously proposed Dixon Ranch Residential Project (Dixon Ranch), which was denied by the Board of Supervisors on February 14, 2017. The Dixon Ranch project proposed to subdivide the site to create 605 single-family residential lots (containing 604 new single-family detached residential units and the retention of the existing Dixon residence). Approximately 160 of these units would be age restricted. Dixon Ranch also proposed open space areas, including parks, trails, landscaped lots, and native open spaces.

Further details on these alternatives, and an evaluation of environmental effects relative to the proposed project, are provided below.

## 5.4.1 Alternative 1: No Project-No Development Alternative

Under Alternative 1, the No Project–No Development Alternative, no actions would be taken by El Dorado County, and the project site would remain unchanged from current conditions. The project site would remain vacant and in its current condition. The No Project–No Development Alternative would not meet the project objectives. However, as identified in State CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(e)(1), the analysis of a no project alternative is to allow decision makers to compare the impacts of approving the proposed project with the impacts of not approving the proposed project.

For purposes of comparison with this alternative, conclusions for each technical area are characterized as “impacts” that are greater, similar, or less to describe conditions that are worse than, similar to, or less than those of the proposed project. The analysis below is based on the impact analysis provided in this Draft EIR.

### AESTHETICS

As identified in Section 3.1, “Aesthetics,” the project would not result in significant aesthetic impacts associated with scenic vistas, scenic highways, visual character, or light and glare. Under this alternative, there would be no alteration of the visual character or quality of the project site. Views of the project site from Green Valley Road would not change, and no new sources of light and glare would be created, as would occur with the proposed project. Thus, impacts under the No Project–No Development Alternative would be less than those that would occur with the project. (*Less*)

### AIR QUALITY

As identified above, the project would result in significant but mitigable air quality impacts associated with compliance with the AQAP, construction emissions, TACs, and exposure to naturally occurring asbestos. Because the No Project–No Development Alternative would involve no construction disturbance and no new vehicular trip generation, this alternative would not generate construction- or operation-related air emissions and TACs (including naturally occurring asbestos). Thus, impacts under the No Project–No Development Alternative would be less than those that would occur with the project. (*Less*)

### ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

As identified above, the project would result in significant but mitigable archaeological resource impacts. The No Project–No Development Alternative would not involve any earthmoving activities, thereby avoiding impacts related to the disturbance, destruction, or alteration of any known or as-yet-undiscovered/unrecorded archaeological resources or human remains. Thus, impacts under the No Project–No Development Alternative would be less than those that would occur with the project. (*Less*)

### BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

The project would result in significant but mitigable biological resource impacts (with the exception of cumulative impacts to oak woodlands) associated with special-status plant species, special-status wildlife species, loss of riparian and sensitive habitat communities, wetlands, and compliance with local regulations that protect biological resources. The No Project–No Development Alternative would not result in any new ground disturbance on the project site or in the off-site improvement areas. Thus, impacts under the No Project–No Development Alternative would be less than those that would occur with the project. (*Less*)

### ENERGY

As identified above, the project would result in significant but mitigable energy use impacts. Under the No Project–No Development Alternative, no demolition or construction activities would occur, and no new sources of energy use

would be developed. Thus, impacts under the No Project–No Development Alternative would be less than those that would occur with the project. (*Less*)

## **GEOLOGY, SOILS, AND PALEONTOLOGICAL RESOURCES**

The project would result in significant but mitigable geologic and soil impacts and impacts associated with on-site wastewater disposal systems and paleontological resources. Under this alternative, no ground disturbance or earthmoving activities would occur; therefore, no impacts on geologic and soil stability, on-site wastewater disposal systems, or on previously undiscovered paleontological resources would occur. Thus, impacts under the No Project–No Development Alternative would be less than those that would occur with the project. (*Less*)

## **GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS AND CLIMATE CHANGE**

As identified above, the project would result in significant and unavoidable GHG impacts. Under the No Project–No Development Alternative, the project site would remain in its current condition. Project construction- and operation-related emissions of GHGs would not occur. This alternative would avoid the project's significant and unavoidable GHG impact. Thus, impacts under the No Project–No Development Alternative would be less than those that would occur with the project. (*Less*)

## **HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS**

The project would result in significant but mitigable hazard impacts related to construction and demolition activities associated with existing structures. Under this alternative, no construction or demolition activities that could release contamination would occur. Thus, impacts under the No Project–No Development Alternative would be less than those that would occur with the project. (*Less*)

## **HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY**

As identified in Section 3.9, "Hydrology and Water Quality," the project would result in less-than-significant hydrology and water quality impacts associated with groundwater resources, water quality, drainage, and flooding. Under the No Project–No Development Alternative, there would be no potential for construction-related or operational releases of sediment and contaminants into surface waters; no changes in current groundwater conditions; and no changes in stormwater generation, drainage patterns, or flood conditions. Thus, impacts under the No Project–No Development Alternative would be less than those that would occur with the project. (*Less*)

## **LAND USE, PLANNING, AND AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY RESOURCES**

As identified in Section 3.10, "Land Use, Planning, and Agriculture and Forestry Resources," the project would not result in significant impacts on agriculture and forestry resources, result in the physical division of an established community, or conflict with land use policy provisions that address environmental effects. This alternative would not divide an established community, nor would it conflict with plans adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating a significant effect. Because the No Project–No Development Alternative would not require any General Plan amendments or rezoning, impacts under this alternative would be less than would occur under the Project. (*Less*)

## **NOISE AND VIBRATION**

As identified above, the project would result in significant but mitigable noise and vibration impacts associated with construction vibration and stationary sources; however, construction noise impacts would be significant and unavoidable. No significant traffic noise impacts were identified for the project. Under this alternative, no project-related construction activities would take place, and there would be no increases in short-term construction-related noise at nearby sensitive receptors. No increase in project traffic noise, as well as new noise sources and new noise-



generating activities, would occur. This alternative would avoid project-related significant and unavoidable noise impacts associated with construction noise. Thus, impacts under the No Project–No Development Alternative would be less than those that would occur with the project. (*Less*)

## POPULATION AND HOUSING

As identified in Section 3.12, “Population and Housing,” the project would not result in significant impacts associated with the displacement of substantial numbers of people or housing or induce substantial unplanned growth. The No Project–No Development Alternative would also not result in the displacement of substantial numbers of people or housing or induce substantial unplanned growth, because it would not generate any new housing in El Dorado County. Thus, impacts under the No Project–No Development Alternative would be less than those that would occur with the project. (*Less*)

## PUBLIC SERVICES AND RECREATION

As identified in Section 3.13, “Public Services and Recreation,” the project would not result in significant impacts associated with fire protection services, law enforcement services, public schools, or park and recreation services that would trigger the need for facilities that would create impacts on the physical environment. The No Project–No Development Alternative would result in no site development and would not create any new public service demand. Thus, impacts under the No Project–No Development Alternative would be less than those that would occur with the project. (*Less*)

## TRANSPORTATION

As identified above, the project would result in significant but mitigable transportation impacts associated with transportation hazards, with the exception of VMT impacts, which would be significant and unavoidable. Implementing the No Project–No Development Alternative would not result in an increase in vehicular trips. Therefore, it would not result in a change in existing VMT conditions or an increase in the demand for transit, bicycle, or pedestrian services and facilities. Additionally, the No Project–No Development Alternative would not result in any change to the existing transportation network; thus, it would not result in impacts on transportation safety or emergency access or conflict with transportation plans, guidelines, policies, or standards. Thus, impacts under the No Project–No Development Alternative would be less than those that would occur with the project. (*Less*)

## UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

As identified in Section 3.15, “Utilities and Service Systems,” the project would result in less-than-significant impacts associated with water supply service, wastewater service, and solid waste service. The No Project–No Development Alternative would not result in any new demand for water, wastewater treatment, or solid waste service, nor would it result in the need for new infrastructure. Thus, impacts under the No Project–No Development Alternative would be less than those that would occur with the project. (*Less*)

## TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

The project would result in significant but mitigable impacts associated with the accidental discovery of tribal cultural resources. The No Project–No Development Alternative would not involve any earthmoving activities, thereby avoiding impacts related to the disturbance, destruction, or alteration of tribal cultural resources. Thus, impacts under the No Project–No Development Alternative would be less than those that would occur with the project. (*Less*)

## WILDFIRE AND EVACUATION

The project would result in significant but mitigable impacts related to evacuation during a wildfire event. The No Project–No Development Alternative would not involve site development and therefore would not create additional wildfire hazards or affect evacuation during emergencies. Thus, impacts under the No Project–No Development Alternative would be less than those that would occur with the project. (*Less*)

### 5.4.2 Alternative 2: No Project/Development Consistent with the General Plan Alternative

Under this alternative, the project site would be developed consistent with the site’s current General Plan land use designation of Low Density Residential. This would result in on-site roadway improvements with three emergency vehicle access points along the site boundary, at Marden Drive, Lima Way, and East Green Springs Road. The Low Density Residential land use designation is assumed to result in a subdivision with 56 residential lots (5-acre lots) and an associated population of 159 residents. Water and wastewater would consist of on-site wastewater disposal systems and wells given the rural large lot design of this alternative. Off-site improvements would be limited to access improvements to Green Valley Road. This variation of the no project alternative is consistent with State CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(e)(2) that requires the consideration of what would be reasonably expected to occur in the foreseeable future if the project is not approved, based on current plans and consistent with available infrastructure and community services.

For purposes of comparison with this alternative, conclusions for each technical area are characterized as “impacts” that are greater, similar, or less to describe conditions that are worse than, similar to, or less than those of the proposed project. The analysis below is based on the impact analysis provided in this Draft EIR.

## AESTHETICS

As identified in Section 3.1, “Aesthetics,” the project would not result in significant aesthetic impacts associated with scenic vistas, scenic highways, visual character, or light and glare. Under this alternative, the visual character of the site as viewed from Green Valley Road would be similar to that under the project because of the placement of 5-acre lots along the Green Valley Road corridor. The visual character of public views from Lima Road under this alternative would appear similar to existing conditions due to the 5-acre lot sizes. The No Project/Development Consistent with the General Plan Alternative would also have reduced light sources as compared to the project. Thus, impacts under the No Project/Development Consistent with the General Plan Alternative would be less than those that would occur with the project. (*Less*)

## AIR QUALITY

As identified above, the project would result in significant but mitigable air quality impacts associated with compliance with the AQAP, construction emissions, TACs, and exposure to naturally occurring asbestos. The No Project/Development Consistent with the General Plan Alternative would result in reduced construction- and operation-related air emissions and TACs (including naturally occurring asbestos) due to the reduced extent of site development. Thus, impacts under the No Project/Development Consistent with the General Plan Alternative would be less than those that would occur with the project. (*Less*)

## ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

As identified above, the project would result in significant but mitigable archaeological resource impacts. The No Project/Development Consistent with the General Plan Alternative would involve reduced earthmoving activities compared to the project, thereby further minimizing impacts related to the disturbance, destruction, or alteration of any known or as-yet-undiscovered/unrecorded archaeological resources or human remains. Thus, impacts under the

No Project/Development Consistent with the General Plan Alternative would be less than those that would occur with the project. (*Less*)

## BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

The project would result in significant but mitigable biological resource impacts (with the exception of cumulative impacts to oak woodlands) associated with special-status plant species, special-status wildlife species, loss of riparian and sensitive habitat communities, wetlands, and compliance with local regulations that protect biological resources. The No Project/Development Consistent with the General Plan Alternative would result in reduced ground disturbance on the project site and would avoid the need for off-site infrastructure improvements. Thus, impacts under the No Project/Development Consistent with the General Plan Alternative would be less than those that would occur with the project. (*Less*)

## ENERGY

As identified above, the project would result in significant but mitigable energy use impacts. Under the No Project/Development Consistent with the General Plan Alternative, energy use from construction and operation would be reduced as compared to the project. Thus, impacts under the No Project/Development Consistent with the General Plan Alternative would be less than those that would occur with the project. (*Less*)

## GEOLOGY, SOILS, AND PALEONTOLOGICAL RESOURCES

The project would result in significant but mitigable geologic and soil impacts and impacts associated with on-site wastewater disposal systems and paleontological resources. Under this alternative, ground disturbance and earthmoving activities would be reduced as compared to the project, which would minimize impacts on geologic and soil stability and on previously undiscovered paleontological resources. This alternative would involve the expansion of the use of on-site wastewater treatment systems as compared to the project and would be subject to County Code of Ordinances Chapter 110.32, which establishes standards for the siting, design, installation, operation, and maintenance of on-site wastewater treatment systems in the county to protect the environment and public health. Thus, impacts under the No Project/Development Consistent with the General Plan Alternative would be less than those that would occur with the project. (*Less*)

## GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS AND CLIMATE CHANGE

As identified above, the project would result in significant and unavoidable GHG impacts. Under the No Project/Development Consistent with the General Plan Alternative, site development would be reduced, which would result in reduced construction- and operation-related emissions of GHGs as compared to the project. Thus, impacts under the No Project/Development Consistent with the General Plan Alternative would be less than those that would occur with the project. (*Less*)

## HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

The project would result in significant but mitigable hazard impacts related to construction and demolition activities associated with existing structures. Under this alternative, construction and demolition activities that could release contamination may occur. Thus, impacts under the No Project/Development Consistent with the General Plan Alternative would be similar to those that would occur with the project. (*Similar*)

## HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

As identified in Section 3.9, "Hydrology and Water Quality," the project would result in less-than-significant hydrology and water quality impacts associated with groundwater resources, water quality, drainage, and flooding. Under the No

Project/Development Consistent with the General Plan Alternative, there would be potential for construction-related or operational releases of sediment and contaminants into surface waters, although the extent of this impact would be reduced. This alternative would involve the expanded use of on-site groundwater but would result in a reduced impervious area and associated changes in drainage conditions and flooding as compared to the project. As identified in Section 3.9, Hydrology and Water Quality, the project site consists of native soil and fills underlain by fractured metasedimentary bedrock with fractured bedrock aquifer conditions. Because fractures in bedrock are often interconnected, the installation and operation of new wells into a fractured bedrock aquifer can affect groundwater levels in the vicinity and potentially affect the production in nearby wells. Thus, impacts under the No Project/Development Consistent with the General Plan Alternative could be greater than those that would occur with the project related to groundwater use. (*Worse*)

## LAND USE, PLANNING, AND AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY RESOURCES

As identified in Section 3.10, "Land Use, Planning, and Agriculture and Forestry Resources," the project would not result in significant impacts on agriculture and forestry resources, result in the physical division of an established community, or conflict with land use policy provisions that address environmental effects. This alternative would not divide an established community, nor would it conflict with plans adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating a significant effect. Because the No Project/Development Consistent with the General Plan Alternative would not require any General Plan amendments or rezoning, impacts under this alternative would be less than would occur under the Project. (*Less*)

## NOISE AND VIBRATION

As identified above, the project would result in significant but mitigable noise and vibration impacts associated with construction vibration and stationary sources; however, construction noise impacts would be significant and unavoidable. No significant traffic noise impacts were identified for the project. Under this alternative, project-related construction activities would be reduced and would not involve the construction noise impacts associated with off-site infrastructure improvements identified for the project. This alternative would result in reductions in new noise sources and new noise-generating activities as compared to the project. Thus, impacts under the No Project/Development Consistent with the General Plan Alternative would be less than those that would occur with the project. (*Less*)

## POPULATION AND HOUSING

As identified in Section 3.12, "Population and Housing," the project would not result in significant impacts associated with the displacement of substantial numbers of people or housing or induce substantial unplanned growth. The No Project/Development Consistent with the General Plan Alternative would also not result in the displacement of substantial numbers of people or housing or induce substantial unplanned growth, because it would generate 56 new residential units and a project population of 159 residents in El Dorado County as compared to the project's 379 residential units and population of 854 to 1,077 residents. Thus, impacts under No Project/Development Consistent with the General Plan Alternative would be less than those that would occur with the project. (*Less*)

## PUBLIC SERVICES AND RECREATION

As identified in Section 3.13, "Public Services and Recreation," the project would not result in significant impacts associated with fire protection services, law enforcement services, public schools, or park and recreation services that would trigger the need for facilities that would create impacts on the physical environment. The No Project/Development Consistent with the General Plan Alternative would result in reduced residential development of the site and would have minimal public service demands. Thus, impacts under the No Project/Development Consistent with the General Plan Alternative would be less than those that would occur with the project. (*Less*)

## TRANSPORTATION

As identified above, the project would result in significant but mitigable transportation impacts associated with transportation hazards, with the exception of VMT impacts, which would be significant and unavoidable. Implementing the No Project/Development Consistent with the General Plan Alternative is anticipated to result in a VMT impact similar to that of the project because the impact and threshold is based on VMT per capita, but this alternative would generate less total VMT as compared the project. Similar to the project, this alternative could create transportation hazards during construction of access connections to Green Valley Road; however, the No Project/Development Consistent with the General Plan Alternative would not affect emergency access or conflict with transportation plans, guidelines, policies, or standards. Thus, impacts under the No Project/Development Consistent with the General Plan Alternative would be less to those that would occur with the project. (*Less*)

## UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

As identified in Section 3.15, "Utilities and Service Systems," the project would result in less-than-significant impacts associated with water supply service, wastewater service, and solid waste service. The No Project/Development Consistent with the General Plan Alternative would obtain water and wastewater service on-site and would not require public water, wastewater, and solid waste services or off-site infrastructure services. Thus, impacts under the No Project/Development Consistent with the General Plan Alternative would be less than those that would occur with the project. (*Less*)

## TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

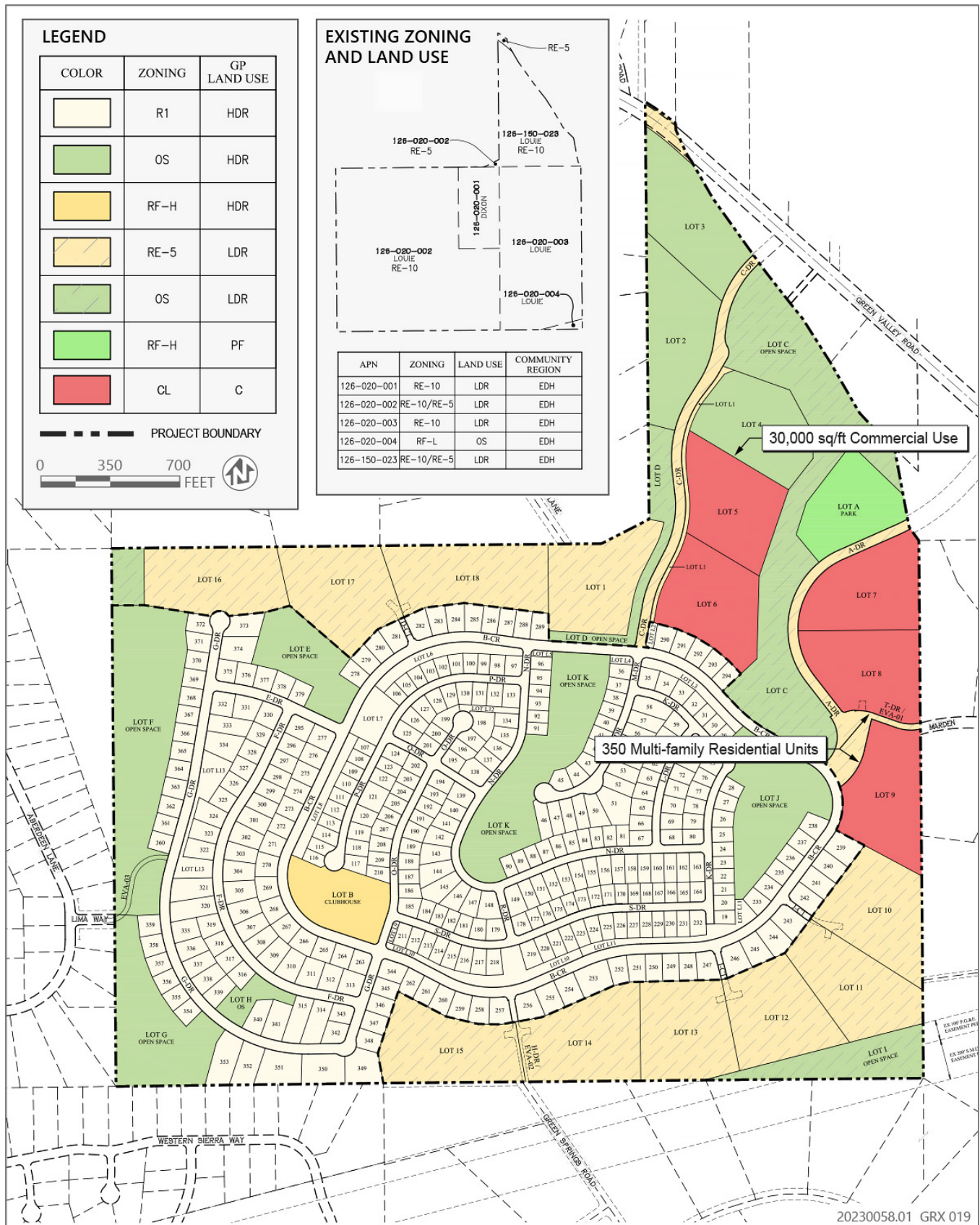
The project would result in significant but mitigable impacts associated with the accidental discovery of tribal cultural resources. The No Project/Development Consistent with the General Plan Alternative would involve reduced earthmoving activities, thereby further minimizing impacts related to the disturbance, destruction, or alteration of any known or as-yet-undiscovered/unrecorded tribal cultural resources as compared to the project. Thus, impacts under the No Project/Development Consistent with the General Plan Alternative could be less than those that would occur with the project. (*Less*)

## WILDFIRE AND EVACUATION

The project would result in significant but mitigable impacts related to evacuation during a wildfire event. The No Project/Development Consistent with the General Plan Alternative would have reduced development and associated population on-site that could create a fire event or would be involved with an evacuation event that would reduce the length of time required to evacuate the project area as compared to the project. This alternative would be subject to applicable fire protection standards including CCR Title 14, Sections 1270 through 1276 (Fire Safe Regulations), CCR Title 24, Part 9, Section 4903 (Plans), El Dorado County Fire Protection Standard W-002 (Wildland Interface Fire Protection Plans), and El Dorado County General Plan Policy 6.2.2.2. Thus, impacts under the No Project/Development Consistent with the General Plan Alternative could be less than those that would occur with the project. (*Less*)

### 5.4.3 Alternative 3: Mixed Use Development Alternative

As shown in Figure 5-1, this alternative would modify the proposed project site plan to provide mixed land uses in the eastern portion of the project site, which would consist of 350 multifamily residential units in buildings up to four stories in height for extremely low-, very low-, low-, and moderate-income households as defined by the 2021–2029 Housing Element and 30,000 square feet of commercial uses on 25 acres that would be designated Commercial and zoned Limited Commercial (CL). Mixed uses are allowed in the CL zone as provided in County Code of Ordinances Section 130.40.180. While this alternative would consist of a mixed use component, it would still be consistent with project objectives of directing growth within the El Dorado Hills Community Region and the provision of residential uses at a range of densities.



Source: Image produced and provided by cta Engineering & Survey in 2024, adapted by Ascent in 2024.

Figure 5-1 Alternative 3: Mixed Use Development Alternative

This alternative would also designate proposed lots 2–4 as open space to protect natural resources on-site. All other aspects of the proposed project (remaining land use plan, off-site infrastructure and roadway improvements, and emergency access points) would be retained. Total site development would be 721 residential units, project population of up to 2,048 residents and 30,000 square feet of commercial uses.

For purposes of comparison with this alternative, conclusions for each technical area are characterized as “impacts” that are greater, similar, or less to describe conditions that are worse than, similar to, or less than those of the proposed project. The analysis below is based on the impact analysis provided in this Draft EIR.

## AESTHETICS

As identified in Section 3.1, “Aesthetics,” the project would not result in significant aesthetic impacts associated with scenic vistas, scenic highways, visual character, or light and glare. Under this alternative, the visual character of the site from public views from Green Valley Road would be altered with the 350 multifamily residential units in buildings that could be four stories in height and 30,000 square feet of commercial uses, which would conflict with the rural character of this portion of the Green Valley Road corridor. In addition, this alternative would create new sources of lighting and glare that would be visible from Green Valley Road. Thus, impacts under the Mixed Use Development Alternative would be worse than those that would occur with the project. (*Worse*)

## AIR QUALITY

As identified above, the project would result in significant but mitigable air quality impacts associated with compliance with the AQAP, construction emissions, TACs, and exposure to naturally occurring asbestos. The Mixed Use Development Alternative is anticipated to result in increased construction- and operation-related air emissions due to the intensity of site development in the eastern portion of the site. Thus, impacts under the Mixed Use Development Alternative would be worse than those that would occur with the project. (*Worse*)

## ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

As identified above, the project would result in significant but mitigable archaeological resource impacts. The Mixed Use Development Alternative would have an overall similar extent of earthmoving activities on the site compared to the project, which could create impacts related to the disturbance, destruction, or alteration of any known or as-yet-undiscovered/unrecorded archaeological resources or human remains. Thus, impacts under the Mixed Use Development Alternative would be similar to those that would occur with the project. (*Similar*)

## BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

The project would result in significant but mitigable biological resource impacts (with the exception of cumulative impacts to oak woodlands) associated with special-status plant species, special-status wildlife species, loss of riparian and sensitive habitat communities, wetlands, and compliance with local regulations that protect biological resources. The Mixed Use Development Alternative would retain project-proposed lots 2–4 as open space, which would avoid impacts on wetlands and oak woodlands in this area of the project. Thus, impacts under the Mixed Use Development Alternative would be less than those that would occur with the project. (*Less*)

## ENERGY

As identified above, the project would result in significant but mitigable energy use impacts. Under the Mixed Use Development Alternative, energy use from construction and operation would be increased as compared to the project due to the increased development on the site. Thus, impacts under the Mixed Use Development Alternative would be worse than those that would occur with the project. (*Worse*)

## GEOLOGY, SOILS, AND PALEONTOLOGICAL RESOURCES

The project would result in significant but mitigable geologic and soil impacts and impacts associated with on-site wastewater disposal systems and paleontological resources. The Mixed Use Development Alternative would have an overall similar extent of earthmoving activities as compared to the project and would have similar impacts on geologic and soil stability, on-site wastewater disposal systems and on previously undiscovered paleontological resources. Thus, impacts under the Mixed Use Development Alternative would be similar to those that would occur with the project. (*Similar*)

## GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS AND CLIMATE CHANGE

As identified above, the project would result in significant and unavoidable GHG impacts. Under the Mixed Use Development Alternative, site development would be increased and would result in additional construction- and operation-related emissions of GHGs as compared to the project. Thus, impacts under the Mixed Use Development Alternative would be worse than those that would occur with the project. (*Worse*)

## HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

The project would result in significant but mitigable hazard impacts related to construction and demolition activities associated with existing structures. Under this alternative, construction and demolition activities that could release contamination may occur. Thus, impacts under the Mixed Use Development Alternative would be similar to those that would occur with the project. (*Similar*)

## HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

As identified in Section 3.9, "Hydrology and Water Quality," the project would result in less-than-significant hydrology and water quality impacts associated with groundwater resources, water quality, drainage, and flooding. Under the Mixed Use Development Alternative, there would be a similar potential for construction-related or operational releases of sediment and contaminants into surface waters and associated changes in drainage conditions and flooding as compared to the project. Thus, impacts under the Mixed Use Development Alternative would be similar to those that would occur with the project. (*Similar*)

## LAND USE, PLANNING, AND AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY RESOURCES

As identified in Section 3.10, "Land Use, Planning, and Agriculture and Forestry Resources," the project would not result in significant impacts on agriculture and forestry resources, result in the physical division of an established community, or conflict with land use policy provisions that address environmental effects. This alternative would not divide an established community, nor would it conflict with plans adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating a significant effect. Thus, impacts under the Mixed Use Development Alternative would be similar to those that would occur with the project. (*Similar*)

## NOISE AND VIBRATION

As identified above, the project would result in significant but mitigable noise and vibration impacts associated with construction vibration and stationary sources; however, construction noise impacts would be significant and unavoidable. No significant traffic noise impacts were identified for the project. Under this alternative, project-related construction activities would be similar to those identified for the project. This alternative would result in increased potential for significant stationary noise sources associated with the operation of the commercial uses (e.g., delivery truck activities and building equipment) and traffic noise as compared to the project. Thus, impacts under the Mixed Use Development Alternative would be worse than those that would occur with the project. (*Worse*)



## POPULATION AND HOUSING

As identified in Section 3.12, "Population and Housing," the project would not result in significant impacts associated with the displacement of substantial numbers of people or housing or induce substantial unplanned growth. The Mixed Use Development Alternative would also not result in the displacement of substantial numbers of people or housing or induce substantial unplanned growth. However, it would increase the residential development potential of the site by 342 residential units and an additional 971 residents compared to the proposed project maximum anticipated residential unit and population at build out. Thus, impacts under Mixed Use Development Alternative would be worse than those that would occur with the project. (*Worse*)

## PUBLIC SERVICES AND RECREATION

As identified in Section 3.13, "Public Services and Recreation," the project would not result in significant impacts associated with fire protection services, law enforcement services, public schools, or park and recreation services that would trigger the need for facilities that would create impacts on the physical environment. The Mixed Use Development Alternative would result in additional residential and commercial development on the site and would have increased public service demands as compared to the project. Thus, impacts under the Mixed Use Development Alternative would be worse than those that would occur with the project. (*Worse*)

## TRANSPORTATION

As identified above, the project would result in significant but mitigable transportation impacts associated with transportation hazards, with the exception of VMT impacts, which would be significant and unavoidable. Implementing the Mixed Use Development Alternative would provide higher-density residential and locally serving residential uses that provide VMT benefits as compared to the project. It should be noted, though, that the most significant reduction in VMT with the Mixed Use Development Alternative results from the inclusion of 100 percent affordable housing component for 350 of the residential units. In its Technical Advisory on Evaluation Transportation Impacts in CEQA, the state Office of Planning and Research ("OPR") concluded, that "[e]vidence supports a presumption of less than significant impact for a 100 percent affordable residential development (or the residential component of a mixed-use development) in *infill* locations." OPR also explained that "low-wage workers in particular would be more likely to choose a residential location close to their workplace, if one is available." El Dorado County adopted this presumption of a less than significant impact to VMT for 100 percent affordable residential projects in Resolution 141-2020 establishing VMT thresholds. Development of affordable housing in infill locations is also consistent with state goals and policies aimed at increasing development, including affordable housing, closer to transit opportunities. Given the location of the project, including the lack of diverse employment opportunities and the lack of comprehensive public transit, the presumption of a less than significant impact to VMT based on the affordability of the units may not be appropriate. Similar to the project, this alternative could create transportation hazards during construction of access connections to Green Valley Road; however, the Mixed Use Development Alternative would not affect emergency access or conflict with transportation plans, guidelines, policies, or standards, similar to the project. Thus, impacts under the Mixed Use Development Alternative would be less than those that would occur with the project. (*Less*)

## UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

As identified in Section 3.15, "Utilities and Service Systems," the project would result in less-than-significant impacts associated with water supply service, wastewater service, and solid waste service. The Mixed Use Development Alternative would result in higher water supply, wastewater service, and solid waste service demands as compared to the project due to the additional 342 residential units and 30,000 square feet of commercial uses. Specifically, the alternative would increase water demand by up to 239.4 acre-feet annually, wastewater service demand by 88,080 gallons per day, and 6,506 pounds per day of solid waste per day based on demand factors in Section 3.15, "Utilities and Service Systems." Thus, impacts under the Mixed Use Development Alternative would be worse than those that would occur with the project. (*Worse*)

## TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

The project would result in significant but mitigable impacts associated with the accidental discovery of tribal cultural resources. The Mixed Use Development Alternative would have an overall similar extent of earthmoving activities on the site compared with the project, which could create similar impacts related to the disturbance, destruction, or alteration of any known or as-yet-undiscovered/unrecorded tribal cultural resources. Thus, impacts under the Mixed Use Development Alternative would be similar to those that would occur with the project. (*Similar*)

## WILDFIRE AND EVACUATION

The project would result in significant but mitigable impacts related to evacuation during a wildfire event. The Mixed Use Development Alternative would have larger extent of development and associated population on-site that could create a fire event or would be involved with an evacuation event that could increase the length of time required to evacuate the project area as compared to the project. This alternative would be subject to applicable fire protection standards including CCR Title 14, Sections 1270 through 1276 (Fire Safe Regulations), CCR Title 24, Part 9, Section 4903 (Plans), El Dorado County Fire Protection Standard W-002 (Wildland Interface Fire Protection Plans), and El Dorado County General Plan Policy 6.2.2.2. Thus, impacts under the Mixed Use Development Alternative could be greater than those that would occur with the project. (*Worse*)

### 5.4.4 Alternative 4: Reduced Build Alternative

As shown in Figure 5-2, this alternative would redesignate the project site as Medium Density Residential under the General Plan but would retain the existing on-site residence on a 5-acre lot. This would allow the development of 155 residential lots (1-acre lots) and 440 residents. Approximately 122 acres of the site would be retained as open space. This alternative would include the two proposed roadway access points to Green Valley Road and on-site roadway improvements with three emergency vehicle access points along the site boundary, at Marden Drive, Lima Way, and East Green Springs Road. This alternative would also include the same off-site infrastructure and roadway improvements identified for the proposed project. While this alternative would reduce development potential as compared to the project, it would still be consistent with project objectives of directing growth within the El Dorado Hills Community Region and the provision of residential uses at a range of densities.

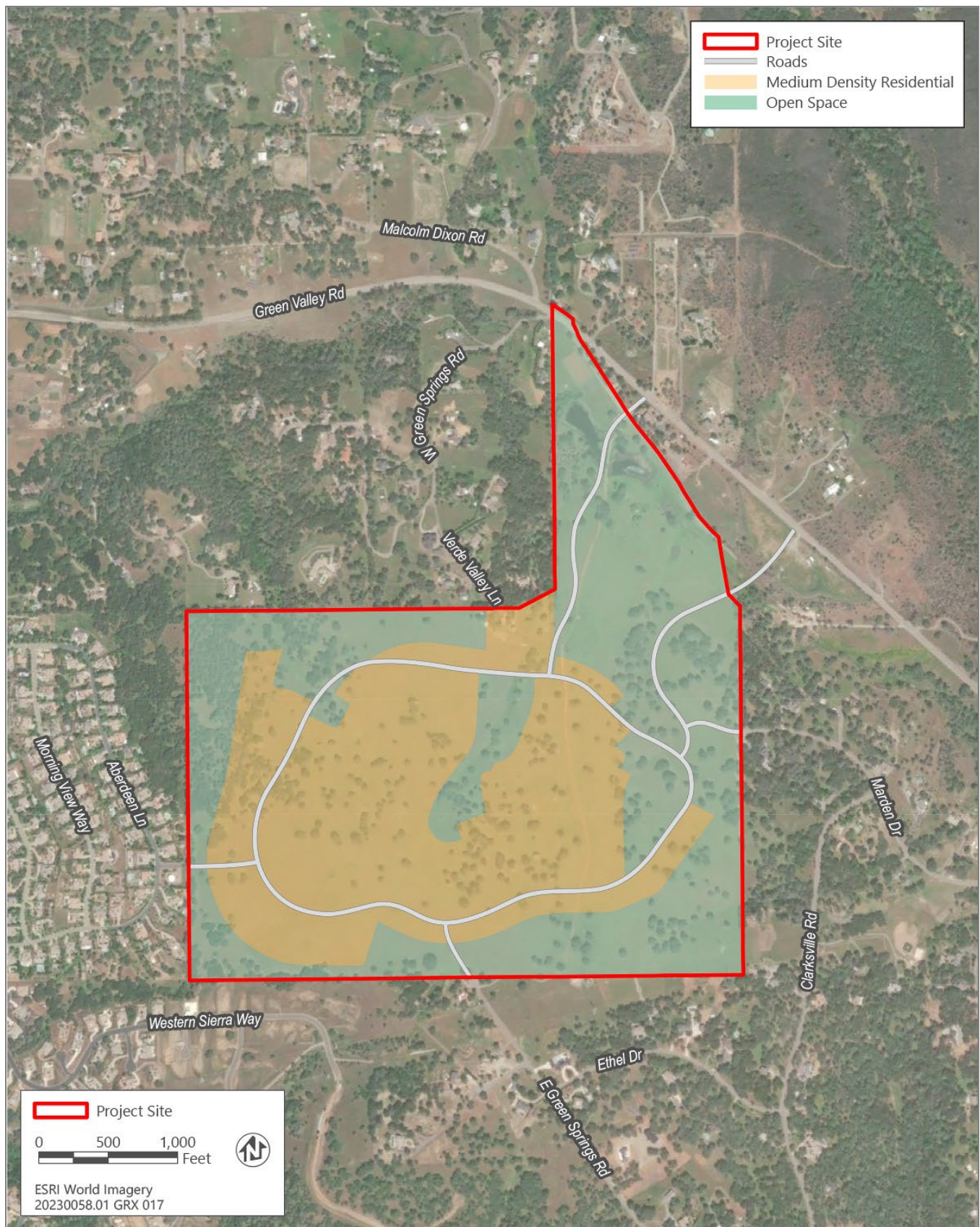
For purposes of comparison with this alternative, conclusions for each technical area are characterized as “impacts” that are greater, similar, or less to describe conditions that are worse than, similar to, or less than those of the proposed project. The analysis below is based on the impact analysis provided in this Draft EIR.

## AESTHETICS

As identified in Section 3.1, “Aesthetics,” the project would not result in significant aesthetic impacts associated with scenic vistas, scenic highways, visual character, or light and glare. Under this alternative, the visual character of the site visible from public views on Green Valley Road would consist of open space similar to existing conditions, as well as the roadway improvements. In addition, this alternative would have reduced sources of lighting and glare that would be visible from Green Valley Road as compared to the project. Thus, impacts under the Reduced Build Alternative would be less than those that would occur with the project. (*Less*)

## AIR QUALITY

As identified above, the project would result in significant but mitigable air quality impacts associated with compliance with the AQAP, construction emissions, TACs, and exposure to naturally occurring asbestos. The Reduced Build Alternative would result in reduced construction- and operation-related air emissions due to the reduced extent of site development as compared to the project. Thus, impacts under the Reduced Build Alternative would be less than those that would occur with the project. (*Less*)



Source: adapted by Ascent in 2023.

Figure 5-2 Alternative 4: Reduced Build Alternative

## ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

As identified above, the project would result in significant but mitigable archaeological resource impacts. The Reduced Build Alternative would have a smaller extent of earthmoving activities on the site compared with the project, which could create impacts related to the disturbance, destruction, or alteration of any known or as-yet-undiscovered/unrecorded archaeological resources or human remains. Thus, impacts under the Reduced Build Alternative would be less than those that would occur with the project. (*Less*)

## BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

The project would result in significant but mitigable biological resource impacts (with the exception of cumulative impacts to oak woodlands) associated with special-status plant species, special-status wildlife species, loss of riparian and sensitive habitat communities, wetlands, and compliance with local regulations that protect biological resources. The Reduced Build Alternative would retain larger areas of open space that would minimize impacts on special-status plant species, special-status wildlife species, loss of riparian and sensitive habitat communities, wetlands, and compliance with local regulations that protect biological resources as compared to the project. Thus, impacts under the Reduced Build Alternative would be less than those that would occur with the project. (*Less*)

## ENERGY

As identified above, the project would result in significant but mitigable energy use impacts. Under the Reduced Build Alternative, energy use from construction and operation would be reduced as compared to the project. Thus, impacts under the Reduced Build Alternative would be less than those that would occur with the project. (*Less*)

## GEOLOGY, SOILS, AND PALEONTOLOGICAL RESOURCES

The project would result in significant but mitigable geologic and soil impacts and impacts associated with on-site wastewater disposal systems and paleontological resources. The Reduced Build Alternative would have a smaller extent of earthmoving activities as compared to the project and would have reduced impacts on geologic and soil stability and on previously undiscovered paleontological resources. Thus, impacts under the Reduced Build Alternative would be less than those that would occur with the project. (*Less*)

## GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS AND CLIMATE CHANGE

As identified above, the project would result in significant and unavoidable GHG impacts. Under the Reduced Build Alternative, site development would be reduced, which would result in decreases in construction- and operation-related emissions of GHGs as compared to the project. Thus, impacts under the Reduced Build Alternative would be less than those that would occur with the project. (*Less*)

## HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

The project would result in significant but mitigable hazard impacts related to construction and demolition activities associated with existing structures. Under this alternative, construction and demolition activities that could release contamination may occur. Thus, impacts under the Reduced Build Alternative would be similar to those that would occur with the project. (*Similar*)

## HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

As identified in Section 3.9, "Hydrology and Water Quality," the project would result in less-than-significant hydrology and water quality impacts associated with groundwater resources, water quality, drainage, and flooding. Under the Reduced Build Alternative, there would be a reduced potential for construction-related or operational releases of

sediment and contaminants into surface waters and associated changes in drainage conditions and flooding as compared to the project. Thus, impacts under the Reduced Build Alternative would be less than those that would occur with the project. (*Less*)

## LAND USE, PLANNING, AND AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY RESOURCES

As identified in Section 3.10, "Land Use, Planning, and Agriculture and Forestry Resources," the project would not result in significant impacts on agriculture and forestry resources, result in the physical division of an established community, or conflict with land use policy provisions that address environmental effects. This alternative would not divide an established community, nor would it conflict with plans adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating a significant effect. Thus, impacts under the Reduced Build Alternative would be similar to those that would occur with the project. (*Similar*)

## NOISE AND VIBRATION

As identified above, the project would result in significant but mitigable noise and vibration impacts associated with construction vibration and stationary sources; however, construction noise impacts would be significant and unavoidable. No significant traffic noise impacts were identified for the project. Under this alternative, project-related construction activities associated with off-site improvements would be similar to those identified for the project, whereas the extent of on-site construction activity would be reduced. This alternative would result in reduced potential for significant stationary noise sources associated with the reduction in site development as compared to the project. Thus, impacts under the Reduced Build Alternative would be less than those that would occur with the project. (*Less*)

## POPULATION AND HOUSING

As identified in Section 3.12, "Population and Housing," the project would not result in significant impacts associated with the displacement of substantial numbers of people or housing or induce substantial unplanned growth. The Reduced Build Alternative would also not result in the displacement of substantial numbers of people or housing or induce substantial unplanned growth. It would decrease the residential development potential of the site by 224 units and 636 residents as compared to the proposed project maximum anticipated residential unit and population at build out. Thus, impacts under Reduced Build Alternative would be less than those that would occur with the project. (*Less*)

## PUBLIC SERVICES AND RECREATION

As identified in Section 3.13, "Public Services and Recreation," the project would not result in significant impacts associated with fire protection services, law enforcement services, public schools, or park and recreation services that would trigger the need for facilities that would create impacts on the physical environment. The Reduced Build Alternative would result in reduced residential development of the site and would have decreased public service demands as compared to the project. Thus, impacts under the Reduced Build Alternative would be less than those that would occur with the project. (*Less*)

## TRANSPORTATION

As identified above, the project would result in significant but mitigable transportation impacts associated with transportation hazards, with the exception of VMT impacts, which would be significant and unavoidable. Implementing the Reduced Build Alternative is anticipated to result in a VMT impact similar to that of the project because the impact and threshold are based on VMT per capita, but total VMT would be reduced as compared to the project. Similar to the project, this alternative could create transportation hazards during construction of access

connections to Green Valley Roads. Thus, impacts under the Reduced Build Alternative would be less to those that would occur with the project. *(Less)*

## UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

As identified in Section 3.15, "Utilities and Service Systems," the project would result in less-than-significant impacts associated with water supply service, wastewater service, and solid waste service. The Reduced Build Alternative would result in reduced water supply, wastewater service, and solid waste service demands as compared to the project due to the reduced development potential. Specifically, the alternative would decrease water demand by 156.8 acre-feet annually, wastewater service demand by 53,760 gallons per day, and 1,501 pounds per day of solid waste per day based on demand factors in Section 3.15, "Utilities and Service Systems." Thus, impacts under the Reduced Build Alternative would be less than those that would occur with the project. *(Less)*

## TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

The project would result in significant but mitigable impacts associated with the accidental discovery of tribal cultural resources. The Reduced Build Alternative would have a smaller extent of earthmoving activities on the site compared with the project, which could create reduced impacts related to the disturbance, destruction, or alteration of any known or as-yet-undiscovered/unrecorded archaeological resources or human remains. Thus, impacts under the Reduced Build Alternative could be less than those that would occur with the project. *(Less)*

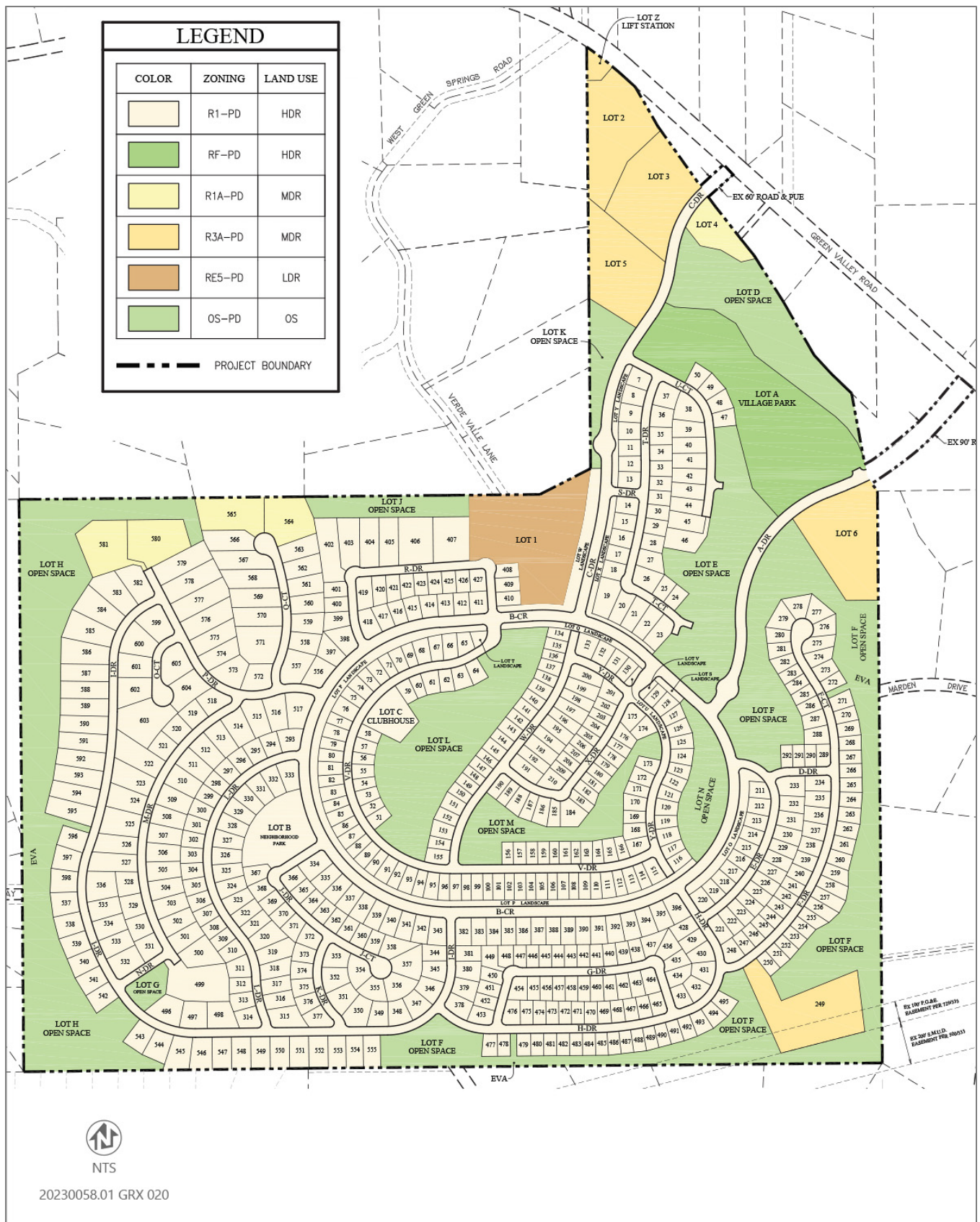
## WILDFIRE AND EVACUATION

The project would result in significant but mitigable impacts related to evacuation during a wildfire event. The Reduced Build Alternative would have smaller extent of development and associated population on-site that could create a fire event or would be involved with an evacuation event that would reduce the length of time required to evacuate the project area as compared to the project. This alternative would be subject to applicable fire protection standards including CCR Title 14, Sections 1270 through 1276 (Fire Safe Regulations), CCR Title 24, Part 9, Section 4903 (Plans), El Dorado County Fire Protection Standard W-002 (Wildland Interface Fire Protection Plans), and El Dorado County General Plan Policy 6.2.2.2. Thus, impacts under the Reduced Build Alternative could be less than those that would occur with the project. *(Less)*

### 5.4.5 Alternative 5: Dixon Ranch Alternative

Several comments received on the notice of preparation (NOP) requested a comparative analysis of the current proposed project and the previously proposed Dixon Ranch Residential Project (Dixon Ranch), which was denied by the Board of Supervisors on February 14, 2017 (see Appendix A for NOP comments). The Dixon Ranch project proposed to subdivide the site to create 605 single-family residential lots and an assumed population of 1,718 residents (containing 604 new single-family detached residential units and the retention of the existing Dixon residence). Approximately 160 of these units would be age restricted. Dixon Ranch also proposed open space areas, including parks, trails, landscaped lots, and native open spaces (Figure 5-3). Dixon Ranch would amend the site's General Plan land uses to High Density Residential (186.26 acres), Medium Density Residential (21.40 acres), Low Density Residential (5.02 acres), and Open Space (67.59 acres). Proposed rezoning of the site would be Residential, Single-Unit Planned Development (177.04 acres); Residential, One-Acre Planned Development (5.52 acres); Residential, Three-Acre Planned Development (15.88 acres); Residential Estate, Five-Acre Planned Development (5.02 acres); Recreational Facilities Planned Development (9.22 acres); and Open Space Planned Development (67.59 acres).

Dixon Ranch would create two improved roadway access points along Green Valley Road, as well as improvements to driveways for adjoining residential lots along Green Valley Road. Similar to the proposed project, Dixon Ranch would have three emergency vehicle access points along the site boundary, at Marden Drive, Lima Way, and East Green Springs Road.



Source: Image produced and provided by cta Engineering & Survey in 2024, adapted by Ascent in 2024.

Figure 5-3 Alternative 5: Dixon Ranch Alternative

Dixon Ranch infrastructure improvements would consist of the following:

- ▶ Drainage: There would be two on-site detention basins.
- ▶ Water Supply: There would be a connection to an existing 8-inch water distribution pipeline within Lima Way, a new water distribution pipeline from the site's southern boundary to an existing 10-inch pipeline located in Greenview Drive, and a new water distribution pipeline from the site's eastern boundary along Green Valley Road to an existing 12-inch pipeline west of Pleasant Grove Middle School.
- ▶ Wastewater: Three alternative off-site improvement options were identified:
  - Off-site Alternative 1: When the existing capacity of Highland Hill Lift Station (HHLS) has been reached, it would be necessary to improve the existing facility in order to serve the project. In addition to HHLS improvements, a new force main would be constructed. The proposed force main alignment would start at HHLS and traverse the Highland Hills subdivision within existing streets to Silva Valley Parkway. It would then continue south along Silva Valley Parkway until reaching the Sacramento Municipal Utility District (SMUD) corridor, where it would head west along the Stone Gate subdivision boundary, ultimately making a connection to an existing 15-inch gravity pipeline. After HHLS reaches capacity, approximately 1,600 lateral feet of existing gravity sewer line within the access road downstream of the HHLS would be upsized to accommodate proposed flows.
  - Off-site Alternative 2: When capacity is reached at HHLS, a new lift station would be constructed on Assessor's Parcel Number (APN) 126-360-18. This site currently houses an existing water pump. To accommodate the new sewer lift station, site improvements would be made. In addition, gravity sewer improvements would be made in Aberdeen Lane in the vicinity of the new station to route the flows to the new lift station. From there, a new force main would be constructed down the sewer access road and along Appian Way to Silva Valley Parkway. After it reaches the SMUD corridor, the force main would then head west along the Stone Gate subdivision boundary, ultimately making a connection to the existing 15-inch gravity pipeline.
  - Off-site Alternative 3: When capacity at HHLS is reached, a new lift station would be constructed on APN 126-390-22. A new force main would also be constructed. Two potential force main alignments have been identified:
    - Alternative A would extend to Loch Way, through the Highland Hills subdivision, within the existing streets to Silva Valley Parkway. It would then continue south along Silva Valley Parkway until it reaches the SMUD corridor, where it would then head west along the Stone Gate subdivision boundary, ultimately making a connection to an existing 15-inch gravity line.
    - Alternative B would extend back up the existing sewer access road, along Appian Way to Silva Valley Parkway, until it reaches the SMUD corridor, where it would then head west along the Stone Gate subdivision boundary, ultimately connecting to an existing 15-inch gravity pipeline.

Upon reaching capacity, approximately 1,050 lateral feet of existing gravity sewer line within the access road downstream of the HHLS would be upsized to accommodate proposed flows.
- ▶ Natural Gas: There would be a connection to the existing natural gas pipeline in Lima Way.
- ▶ Electricity: A new cable would be installed through the existing conduit on Sangiovese Drive; new trenching would occur for installation of a 6-inch conduit and cable on a portion of Appian Way; and cable in an existing conduit along portions of Lima Way, Aberdeen Lane, and Appian Way would be removed and replaced. Additionally, improvements would be made to an overhead electrical wire along the eastern portion of the site to the western edge of the Travois subdivision in Cameron Park. These improvements may include the addition or replacement of poles, wires, and overhead switches or fusing; tree trimming; and the perfection of the right-of-way.

This alternative would be consistent with project objectives of directing growth within the El Dorado Hills Community Region and the provision of residential uses at a range of densities.



For purposes of comparison with this alternative, conclusions for each technical area are characterized as “impacts” that are greater, similar, or less to describe conditions that are worse than, similar to, or less than those of the proposed project. The analysis below is based on the impact analysis provided in this Draft EIR, as well as the Dixon Ranch EIR and CEQA Findings.

## AESTHETICS

As identified in Section 3.1, “Aesthetics,” the project would not result in significant aesthetic impacts associated with scenic vistas, scenic highways, visual character, or light and glare. The Dixon Ranch CEQA Findings also stated that no significant aesthetic impacts would occur associated with scenic vistas, scenic highways, visual character, or light and glare (El Dorado County 2015: 26–27). However, the Dixon Ranch Alternative includes dense residential development closer to the site’s boundaries along proposed C-Drive that could be visible from Green Valley Road. The proposed project proposes 5-acre residential lots in this area, which is more reflective of the visual character of this portion of the Green Valley Road corridor. Thus, impacts under the Dixon Ranch Alternative would be greater than those that would occur with the project. (*Worse*)

## AIR QUALITY

As identified above, the project would result in significant but mitigable air quality impacts associated with compliance with the AQAP, construction emissions, TACs, and exposure to naturally occurring asbestos. The Dixon Ranch CEQA Findings identified significant but mitigable air quality impacts associated with exposure to naturally occurring asbestos, and significant and unavoidable air quality impacts associated with construction and operation air pollutant emissions of the alternative. The Dixon Ranch Draft EIR identified no significant impacts associated with compliance with the AQAP or TAC exposure (El Dorado County 2014: 171–179). The Dixon Ranch Alternative would generate greater air pollutant emissions (El Dorado County 2014: Tables IV.D-5 and IV.D-8) and result in more severe air quality impacts as compared to the project (Draft EIR Tables 3.2-4 and 3.2-5) due to a larger extent of development. Thus, impacts under the Dixon Ranch Alternative would be greater than those that would occur with the project. (*Worse*)

## ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

As identified above, the project would result in significant but mitigable archaeological resource impacts. The Dixon Ranch CEQA Findings also identified significant but mitigable archaeological impacts (El Dorado County 2015: 13–16). The Dixon Ranch Alternative would result in site grading and development similar in extent those of the project and the associated potential to affect archaeological resources. Thus, impacts under the Dixon Ranch Alternative would be similar to those that would occur with the project. (*Similar*)

## BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

The project would result in significant but mitigable biological resource impacts (with the exception of cumulative impacts to oak woodlands) associated with special-status plant species, special-status wildlife species, loss of riparian and sensitive habitat communities, wetlands, and compliance with local regulations that protect biological resources. The Dixon Ranch CEQA Findings identified significant but mitigable biological resource impacts associated with special-status wildlife species and compliance with local regulations that protect biological resources. The Dixon Ranch Draft EIR identified no significant impacts associated with special-status plant species (no special-status plant species were identified in site surveys) or wetland and riparian habitat loss (impacts would be addressed through project buffers and wetland permitting) (El Dorado County 2014: 218–227). Since completion of the Dixon Ranch Draft EIR, additional special-status species have been identified. The proposed project includes substantial modifications to the on-site ponds that were not proposed by the Dixon Ranch project. In addition, the proposed project and the Dixon Ranch Alternative would result in similar impacts to oak woodland resources. Thus, impacts under the Dixon Ranch Alternative would be similar to those that would occur with the project. (*Similar*)

## ENERGY

As identified above, the project would result in significant but mitigable energy use impacts. The Dixon Ranch Draft EIR also identified significant but mitigable energy impacts (El Dorado County 2014: 325–326). The Dixon Ranch Alternative would generate greater energy demand as compared to the project due to a larger extent of development and associated increased vehicle energy use. Thus, impacts under the Dixon Ranch Alternative would be greater than those that would occur with the project. (*Worse*)

## GEOLOGY, SOILS, AND PALEONTOLOGICAL RESOURCES

The project would result in significant but mitigable geologic and soil impacts and impacts associated with on-site wastewater disposal systems and paleontological resources. The Dixon Ranch CEQA Findings also identified significant but mitigable geologic and soil impacts, on-site wastewater disposal systems, and impacts on paleontological resources (El Dorado County 2015: 16–17). The Dixon Ranch Alternative would result in site grading and development similar in extent to those of the project and the associated potential to affect these resources. Thus, impacts under the Dixon Ranch Alternative would be similar to those that would occur with the project. (*Similar*)

## GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS AND CLIMATE CHANGE

As identified above, the project would result in significant and unavoidable GHG impacts. The Dixon Ranch CEQA Findings also identified significant and unavoidable GHG impacts (El Dorado County 2015: 32–34). The Dixon Ranch Alternative would generate greater GHG emissions (9,094.6 metric tons per year [El Dorado County 2014: 195]) as compared to the project (4,389 metric tons per year [Draft EIR Table 3.7-3]) due to a larger extent of development and associated increased vehicle use. Thus, impacts under the Dixon Ranch Alternative would be greater than those that would occur with the project. (*Worse*)

## HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

The project would result in significant but mitigable hazard impacts associated with construction and demolition activities associated with existing structures. The Dixon Ranch CEQA Findings also identified significant but mitigable hazard impacts associated with construction and demolition activities associated with existing structures (El Dorado County 2015: 19). The Dixon Ranch Alternative would result in construction and demolition activities similar to those of the project. Thus, impacts under the Dixon Ranch Alternative would be similar to those that would occur with the project. (*Similar*)

## HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

As identified in Section 3.9, “Hydrology and Water Quality,” the project would result in less-than-significant hydrology and water quality impacts associated with groundwater resources, water quality, drainage, and flooding. The Dixon Ranch CEQA Findings identified significant but mitigable hydrology and water quality impacts. This Dixon Ranch impact was mitigated through required compliance with state and El Dorado County water quality requirements. The Dixon Ranch Alternative would result site grading and development similar in extent to those of the project and the associated potential to affect hydrologic and water quality conditions of the site. Thus, impacts under the Dixon Ranch Alternative would be similar to those that would occur with the project. (*Similar*)

## LAND USE, PLANNING, AND AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY RESOURCES

As identified in Section 3.10, “Land Use, Planning, and Agriculture and Forestry Resources,” the project would not result in significant impacts on agriculture and forestry resources, result in the physical division of an established community, or conflict with land use policy provisions that address environmental effects. The Dixon Ranch CEQA Findings also stated that no significant impacts would occur associated with land use and agriculture (El Dorado

County 2015: 23). Forestry resource issues were not addressed in the Dixon Ranch EIR. The Dixon Ranch Alternative would result in development and residential densities similar to those of the project. Thus, impacts under the Dixon Ranch Alternative would be similar to those that would occur with the project. (*Similar*)

## NOISE AND VIBRATION

As identified above, the project would result in significant but mitigable noise and vibration impacts associated with construction vibration and stationary sources; however, construction noise impacts would be significant and unavoidable. No significant traffic noise impacts were identified for the project. The Dixon Ranch CEQA Findings identified significant but mitigable noise impacts associated with on-site traffic noise levels and significant and unavoidable construction noise impacts. The Dixon Ranch Draft EIR identified no significant impacts associated with construction vibration or on-site stationary noise sources (El Dorado County 2014: 207–212). The Dixon Ranch Alternative would result in development and construction noise activities similar to those of the project. Thus, impacts under the Dixon Ranch Alternative would be similar to those that would occur with the project. (*Similar*)

## POPULATION AND HOUSING

As identified in Section 3.12, “Population and Housing,” the project would not result in significant impacts associated with the displacement of substantial numbers of people or housing or induce substantial unplanned growth. The Dixon Ranch CEQA Findings also stated that no significant impacts associated with population and housing would occur (El Dorado County 2015: 24). The Dixon Ranch Alternative would result in development and associated population growth (1,718 new residents) in the El Dorado Hills Community Region similar (though higher) to that anticipated under the proposed project (854 to 1,077 residents), consistent with the El Dorado County General Plan provisions for urban growth in community regions, as well as with the Sacramento Area Council of Governments’ 2020 Metropolitan Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy. Thus, impacts under the Dixon Ranch Alternative would be similar to those that would occur with the project. (*Similar*)

## PUBLIC SERVICES AND RECREATION

As identified in Section 3.13, “Public Services and Recreation,” the project would not result in significant impacts associated with fire protection services, law enforcement services, public schools, or park and recreation services that would trigger the need for facilities that would create impacts on the physical environment. The Dixon Ranch CEQA Findings also identified no significant impacts associated with fire protection services, law enforcement services, public schools, or park and recreation services (El Dorado County 2015: 25–26). The Dixon Ranch Alternative would result in development increased extent of residential development and associated public service demands to that of the project. Thus, impacts under the Dixon Ranch Alternative would be worse to those that would occur with the project. (*Worse*)

## TRANSPORTATION

As identified above, the project would result in significant but mitigable transportation impacts associated with transportation hazards, with the exception of VMT impacts, which would be significant and unavoidable. The Dixon Ranch CEQA Findings identified significant but mitigable transportation impacts related to level of service at study intersections, with the exception of the Green Valley Road/El Dorado Hills Boulevard/Salmon Falls Road intersection and additional queue lengths at the Green Valley Road/Salmon Falls Road intersection and the El Dorado Hills Boulevard/Francisco Drive intersection (El Dorado County 2015: 28–30). The Dixon Ranch EIR did not address VMT impacts because the associated changes to the analysis of transportation impacts in the State CEQA Guidelines went into effect in 2020. The Dixon Ranch Alternative would consist of more residential units and generate more vehicle trips than the project. Thus, impacts under the Dixon Ranch Alternative would be worse than those that would occur with the project. (*Worse*)

## UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

As identified in Section 3.15, “Utilities and Service Systems,” the project would result in less-than-significant impacts associated with water supply service, wastewater service, and solid waste service. The Dixon Ranch CEQA Findings identified significant but mitigable water supply and wastewater service impacts (El Dorado County 2015: 20–22). The Dixon Ranch Draft EIR did not identify any significant solid waste service impacts (El Dorado County 2014: 320). The Dixon Ranch Alternative would consist of more residential units and generate more water supply and wastewater service demand than the project. Specifically, the alternative would increase water demand by 158.2 acre-feet annually, wastewater service demand by 54,240 gallons per day, and 4,301 pounds per day of solid waste per day based on demand factors in Section 3.15, “Utilities and Service Systems.” Thus, impacts under the Dixon Ranch Alternative would be worse than those that would occur with the project. (*Worse*)

## TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

The project would result in significant but mitigable impacts associated with the accidental discovery of tribal cultural resources. The Dixon Ranch Draft EIR did not address tribal cultural resources. The Dixon Ranch Alternative would result in site grading and development similar in extent those of the project and the associated potential to affect tribal cultural resources. Thus, impacts under the Mixed Use Development Alternative could be similar to those that would occur with the project. (*Similar*)

## WILDFIRE AND EVACUATION

The project would result in significant but mitigable impacts related to evacuation during a wildfire event. The Dixon Ranch Draft EIR did not identify a fire safe plan and concluded that there would no significant wildfire or evacuation impacts (El Dorado County 2014: 287-288). It is important to note that the State CEQA Guidelines were updated after completion of this EIR and includes expanded direction on the consideration of wildfire and evacuation impacts (State CEQA Guidelines Appendix G, Section XX, Wildfire) than what existed in 2014. The Dixon Ranch Alternative would have a larger extent of development and associated population on-site that could create a fire event or would be involved with an evacuation event that could increase the length of time the length of time required to evacuate the project area. This alternative would be subject to applicable fire protection standards including CCR Title 14, Sections 1270 through 1276 (Fire Safe Regulations), CCR Title 24, Part 9, Section 4903 (Plans), El Dorado County Fire Protection Standard W-002 (Wildland Interface Fire Protection Plans), and El Dorado County General Plan Policy 6.2.2.2. Thus, impacts under the Dixon Ranch Alternative could be greater than those that would occur with the project. (*Worse*)

## 5.5 ENVIRONMENTALLY SUPERIOR ALTERNATIVE

Because the No Project–No Development Alternative would avoid all adverse impacts resulting from construction and operation of the project analyzed in Chapter 3, it is the environmentally superior alternative. However, the No Project–No Development Alternative would not meet the objectives the project as presented above in Section 5.2.

When the environmentally superior alternative is the No Project Alternative, the State CEQA Guidelines (Section 15126[d][2]) require selection of an environmentally superior alternative from among the other action alternatives evaluated. As illustrated in Table 5-1, the No Project/Development Consistent with the General Plan Alternative would be the environmentally superior action alternative because the environmental impacts would be less than those of the proposed project. However, this alternative would not meet the basic objectives of the project to provide a range of residential densities and land use patterns that maintains and enhances the character of the existing rural and urban community consistent with the El Dorado County General Plan policy provisions of directing urban/suburban growth within community regions (Objective 2.1.1 and associated Policy 2.1.1.2).

**Table 5-1 Summary of Environmental Effects of the Alternatives Relative to Those of the Proposed Project**

Environmental Topic	Proposed Project Impact Summary	Alternative 1: No Project – No Development Alternative	Alternative 2: No Project/Development Consistent with the General Plan Alternative	Alternative 3: Mixed Use Development Alternative	Alternative 4: Reduced Build Alternative	Alternative 5: Dixon Ranch Alternative
Aesthetics	Less than significant	Less	Less	Worse	Less	Worse
Air Quality	Less than significant (with mitigation)	Less	Less	Worse	Less	Worse
Archaeological and Historical Cultural Resources	Less than significant (with mitigation)	Less	Less	Similar	Less	Similar
Biological Resources	Significant and unavoidable (cumulative oak woodland impacts only)	Less	Less	Less	Less	Similar
Energy	Less than significant (with mitigation)	Less	Less	Worse	Less	Worse
Geology, Soils, and Paleontological Resources	Less than significant (with mitigation)	Less	Less	Similar	Less	Similar
Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Climate Change	Significant and unavoidable	Less	Less	Worse	Less	Worse
Hazards and Hazardous Materials	Less than significant (with mitigation)	Less	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Hydrology and Water Quality	Less than significant	Less	Worse	Similar	Less	Similar
Land Use, Planning, and Agriculture and Forestry Resources	Less than significant	Less	Less	Similar	Similar	Similar
Noise and Vibration	Significant and unavoidable (construction noise impacts only)	Less	Less	Worse	Less	Similar
Population and Housing	Less than significant	Less	Less	Worse	Less	Similar
Public Services and Recreation	Less than significant	Less	Less	Worse	Less	Worse
Transportation	Significant and unavoidable (VMT impacts only)	Less	Less	Less	Less	Worse
Utilities and Service Systems	Less than significant	Less	Less	Worse	Less	Worse
Tribal Cultural Resources	Less than significant (with mitigation)	Less	Less	Similar	Less	Similar
Wildfire and Evacuation	Less than significant (with mitigation)	Less	Less	Worse	Less	Worse

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