
18. ALTERNATIVES TO THE PROPOSED PROJECT

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requires that EIRs contain an analysis of alternatives to the proposed project that would reduce or eliminate environmental impacts. Specifically, section 15126.6(a) of the CEQA Guidelines states that an EIR should *"...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."* Section 3.3 of this EIR (Basic Project Objectives) in chapter 3 (Project Description) identifies the basic project objectives envisioned for the proposed project. The primary identified objective is to help create and maintain *"an enhanced, traditional downtown, serving the community with a variety of destinations in a pedestrian-friendly environment."* Section 15126.6(b) of the CEQA Guidelines states that, because the EIR must identify ways to mitigate or avoid significant effects of the project on the environment, *"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."*

Pursuant to these CEQA requirements, a range of six alternatives to the proposed City of Sunnyvale Downtown Improvement Program Update has been selected for comparative evaluation. As recommended in CEQA Guidelines section 15126.6(d), this EIR chapter includes a comparative evaluation of the significant effects of each alternative which is less detailed than the discussions in EIR chapters 4 through 15 of the significant effects of the project as proposed.

The evaluation of alternatives to the proposed project presented in this chapter provides a basis for further understanding of the environmental effects of the proposed project and possible approaches to reducing identified significant impacts. The six identified alternatives are summarized below. The comparative development potential and building height characteristics of each identified alternative in comparison to the proposed project are summarized in Table 18.1.

- **Alternative 1: No Project (Existing Conditions/1993 Specific Plan).** The CEQA Guidelines require that the specific alternative of "no project" *"shall be evaluated along with its impact in order to allow decision-makers to compare the impacts of approving the proposed project with the impacts of not approving the proposed project."*¹ The CEQA

¹CEQA Guidelines, section 15126.6, subsection (e)(1).

Guidelines also stipulate that the "no project" analysis "shall discuss the existing conditions at the time the (EIR) notice of preparation is published...as well as what would reasonably be expected to occur in the foreseeable future if the project were not approved, based on current plans..."¹ Pursuant to these requirements, the Alternative 1 (No Project) evaluation in this chapter compares the effects of the proposed project with existing conditions and with downtown buildout under the existing adopted (1993) Downtown Specific Plan.

- **Alternative 2: Reduced Development Potential and Building Height.** Compared to the proposed project, this alternative incorporates reductions in allowable maximum height along Mathilda Avenue and Washington Avenue. These height reductions would result in associated decreases in residential and commercial development potential. Generally, the 100-foot allowable maximum height proposed for the eastern side of Mathilda under the proposed project (*Downtown Design Plan*) would be reduced under this alternative to 50-to-60 feet, and the 30- to 50-foot allowable maximum heights proposed for the western side of Mathilda would be reduced to a uniform 30 feet. In addition, the underground parking levels recommended under the proposed project for subdistrict 1a would be reduced or eliminated.
- **Alternative 3: Modified Land Uses and Building Heights.** Compared to the proposed project, this alternative includes a combination of reduced allowable maximum heights along the eastern side of Mathilda north of Iowa Avenue and in the Town and Country Village block, an increase in allowable maximum height along the eastern side of Mathilda south of Iowa Avenue (building height limitations on the western side of Mathilda would be the same as the proposed project--i.e., 4 stories), and a modified mix of land uses in these subareas, primarily involving a reduction in residential and office development potential. Under this alternative, the area along the eastern side of Mathilda south of Olive Avenue would remain in its present condition (i.e., the additional development permitted under the proposed Update is not assumed).
- **Alternative 4: Multi-Use and Reduced Building Height Alternative.** This "Multi-Use" alternative represents a downtown development concept suggested by a group of Sunnyvale citizens. The alternative would involve the restructuring and reconfiguration of a more limited 10-block area of downtown Sunnyvale (i.e., not the entire project area) to accommodate a "Town Plaza and Green," a performing arts center, and a "multi-use" land use designation whose particular mix of uses (e.g., combination of residential, retail, restaurant, office and other commercial uses) could be determined at future dates. The intent of the multi-use designation would be to facilitate and encourage more mixed use development in the central area. In addition, the allowable maximum building height

¹CEQA Guidelines, section 15126.6, subsection (e)(2).

within this alternative's planning area would be less than the proposed project, ranging from 30 to 46 feet, except for the stage block portion of a recommended performing arts center, which might be up to 100 feet in height.

- **Alternative 5: Modified Redevelopment Plan Activities (Modified Funding Allocation).** This alternative represents a variation on the Redevelopment Plan amendments component of the proposed project, with the same redevelopment project area boundaries, but with a modified allocation of redevelopment-generated tax increment revenues to various alternative redevelopment activities.
- **Alternative 6: Modified Improvement Program Boundaries/Redevelopment Plan Boundaries.** The possibility of alternative boundaries for the Downtown Improvement Program Update, and in particular, the Redevelopment Plan amendments component of the update have also been considered, as explained in section 18.6 of this EIR.

For purposes of comparison, the development capacity characteristics of the alternatives in comparison to the proposed project are summarized in Tables 18.1, 18.2, and 18.3. Table 18.1 provides summary comparisons of development capacity by land use. Table 18.2 describes the comparative differences among the alternatives in more detail, including comparison by those key subdistricts identified for substantial land use/development standard revisions in the August 2002 *Downtown Design Plan* (i.e., subdistricts 1a, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 13, 13a, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 18a, and 20). Table 18.3 provides a comparative estimate of the total building floor area associated with each alternative.

Table 18.1
ALTERNATIVES COMPARISON: DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL AND MAX. BLDG. HEIGHT

<u>Land Use/Max. Building Height</u>	<u>Existing Conditions</u>	<u>Proposed Project</u>	<u>Alt. 1: 1993 Specific Plan</u>	<u>Alt. 2: Reduced Development</u>	<u>Alt. 3: Modified Land Uses</u>	<u>Alt. 4: Multi-Use</u>
Residential (Units)	850	2,520	1,760	2,073	2,137	1,725
Office (sq. ft.) ¹	329,550	1,272,190	1,039,440	1,145,470	999,911	796,632
Retail (sq. ft.)	1,330,910	1,447,550	1,508,780	1,447,550	1,447,670	1,032,303
Theater (seats)	0	0	2,280	0	0	3,230
Hotel (rooms)	155	0	208	0	0	0
Multi-Use (sq. ft.)	0	0	0	0	0	635,600
Public Facility (sq. ft.)	0	12,240	12,240	12,240	12,240	12,240
Max. Bldg. Height (ft.) ²	30-50	30-100	30-50	30-75	30-75	30-46

SOURCE: City of Sunnyvale Community Development Department; Wagstaff and Associates

¹ The Mozart development (450,000 sq. ft. of office and 10,000 sq. ft. of retail/restaurant/entertainment) was under construction at the time preparation of this EIR commenced (Fall 2002). Since the potential environmental impacts of that development's long-term operation (e.g., project-generated traffic, noise and air emissions associated with project-generated traffic, public service and utility needs, etc.) have not yet become part of existing environmental conditions, the Mozart development has been included in "development potential" and not in "existing" conditions. The specific environmental impacts of the Mozart development were addressed in the Block 1 Office/Retail Project Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (February 2000).

² Max. bldg. height figures refer to all subdistricts except #1, the recently completed Mozart development, which includes buildings up to 106 feet tall (5 to 6 stories). For Alt. 4, max. building heights also exclude possible 100-foot tall stage block portion of the performing arts center.

Table 18.2
 ALTERNATIVES COMPARISON: CHANGES IN DEVELOPMENT TOTALS (INCL. EXISTING)

Subdistrict	Land Use/Max. Bldg. Height	Existing Conditions		Proposed Project		All. 1: Buildout Under Current Specific Plan		All. 2: Reduced Development/ Reduced Height		All. 3: Modified Land Uses and Bldg. Heights		All. 4: Multi-Use and Reduced Bldg. Heights	
		Total	Change vs. Project	Total	Change vs. Project	Total	Change vs. Project	Total	Change vs. Project	Total	Change vs. Project	Total	Change vs. Project
1a	Residential (units)	20	-490	510	118	-392	255	-255	255	-255	0	-510	
	Retail (sq. ft.)	125,622	+74,122	52,500	0	-52,500	52,500	0	52,500	0	0	-52,500	
	Multi-Use (sq. ft.)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+157,000	
	Theater (seats)	0	0	0	1,750	+1,750	0	0	0	0	0	+3,230	
	Hotel (rooms)	0	0	0	208	+208	0	0	0	0	0	0	
	Max. Bldg. Height (ft.)	125	+25	100	125	+25	50	-50	50	-50	46	-54	
2	Residential (units)	1	+1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
	Office (sq. ft.)	0	-80,000	80,000	80,000	0	80,000	0	80,000	0	80,000	0	
	Retail (sq. ft.)	170,891	0	170,891	146,500	-24,391	170,891	0	170,891	0	146,500	-24,391	
	Theater (seats)	0	0	0	330	+330	0	0	0	0	0	0	
		Max. Bldg. Height (ft.)	36	0	36	36	0	36	0	36	0	36	0
3	Residential (units)	0	0	0	157	+157	0	0	0	0	157	+157	
	Retail (sq. ft.)	28,117	-34,483	62,600	0	-62,600	62,600	0	62,600	0	0	-62,600	
	Hotel (rooms)	106	+106	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
		Max. Bldg. Height (ft.)	50	0	50	50	0	50	0	50	0	50	0
		Max. Bldg. Height (ft.)	162	-366	528	424	-104	528	0	528	0	405	-122
4, 5, 6	Retail (sq. ft.)	130,343	+130,343	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
		Max. Bldg. Height (ft.)	50	+10	40	50	+10	40	0	40	0	30-40	0-(-10)
	Residential (units)	100	0	100	100	0	100	0	100	0	100	0	
	Office (sq. ft.)	0	-36,000	36,000	80,000	44,000	36,000	36,000	0	36,000	0	36,000	0
		Max. Bldg. Height (ft.)	47,658	+33,658	14,000	14,000	0	14,000	0	14,000	0	14,000	0
7	Residential (units)	50	0	50	50	0	50	0	50	0	36	-14	
	Office (sq. ft.)	6	-134	140	0	-140	140	0	140	0	0	-140	
	Retail (sq. ft.)	88,449	-211,551	300,000	176,021	-123,979	300,000	0	176,021	-123,979	176,021	-123,979	
		Max. Bldg. Height (ft.)	50	+0-20	30-50	50	+0-20	30-50	0	20,120	+10,120	20,120	+10,120
		Max. Bldg. Height (ft.)	54	-511	565	320	+245	373	-192	565	0	373	-192
13, 13a	Residential (units)	51,302	+51,302	0	288,931	+288,931	0	0	0	0	0	0	
	Office (sq. ft.)	14,862	+14,862	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
	Retail (sq. ft.)	50	+0-20	30-50	50	+0-20	30	0-(-20)	30-50	0	30-50	0-(-10)	
		Max. Bldg. Height (ft.)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
		Max. Bldg. Height (ft.)	710,876	-287,000	997,876	997,876	0	997,876	0	997,876	0	617,000	-380,876
14, 15, 16, 17	Residential (units)	0	0	0	75	0	75	0	75	0	75	0	
	Retail (sq. ft.)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
	Multi-Use (sq. ft.)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
		Max. Bldg. Height (ft.)	75	0	7	75	0	75	0	75	0	120,600	+120,600
		Max. Bldg. Height (ft.)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	46	-24

Subdistrict	Land Use/Max. Bldg. Height	Existing Conditions		Proposed Project		Alt. 1: Buildout Under Current Specific Plan		Alt. 2: Reduced Development/ Height		Alt. 3: Modified Land Uses and Bldg. Heights		Alt. 4: Multi-Use and Reduced Bldg. Heights	
		Total	Change vs. Project	Buildout Total	Change vs. Project	Buildout Total	Change vs. Project	Buildout Total	Change vs. Project	Buildout Total	Change vs. Project	Buildout Total	Change vs. Project
18a	Residential (units)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Office (sq. ft.)	29,856	-278,144	308,000	-243,000	203,280	-104,720	203,280	-104,720	203,280	-104,720	115,000	-308,000
	Retail (sq. ft.)	0	-10,000	10,000	-10,000	10,000	0	10,000	0	10,000	0	115,000	+105,000
	Multi-Use (sq. ft.)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	358,000	+358,000
	Max. Bldg. Height (ft.)	30	-70	100	-70	30	-40	60	-40	60	-40	30-40	(-60)-(-70)
20	Residential (units)	12	+12	0	+168	168	0	0	0	12	+12	12	+12
	Office (sq. ft.)	21,121	-43,579	64,700	+65,550	42,700	-22,000	21,121	-43,579	21,121	-43,579	21,121	-43,579
	Retail (sq. ft.)	0	-10,000	10,000	-10,000	10,000	0	10,000	0	10,000	0	0	-10,000
	Max. Bldg. Height (ft.)	55	-45	100	-45	55	-40	60	-40	55	-45	55	-45
Remaining Areas	Residential (units)	129	-548	677	-204	473	0	677	0	677	0	677	0
	Office (sq. ft.)	102,822	-308,668	483,480	-274,252	483,480	0	483,490	0	483,490	0	483,490	0
	Retail (sq. ft.)	265,542	+145,859	119,683	+210,601	119,683	0	119,683	0	119,683	0	119,683	0
	Theater (seats)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Hotel (rooms)	49	+49	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Public Facility (sq. ft.)	0	-12,240	12,240	0	12,240	0	12,240	0	12,240	0	12,240	0
	Max. Bldg. Height (ft.)	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Total Project Area	Residential (units)	850	-1,670	2,520	-760	1,760	-447	2,073	-383	2,137	-383	1,725	-795
	Office (sq. ft.)	329,550	-942,640	1,272,190	-232,750	1,039,440	-126,720	1,145,470	-272,279	989,911	-272,279	796,632	-475,558
	Retail (sq. ft.)	1,330,910	-116,640	1,447,550	+61,230	1,447,550	0	1,447,670	+120	1,447,670	+120	1,032,303	-415,247
	Theater (seats)	0	0	0	+2,080	2,080	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Hotel (rooms)	155	+155	0	+208	208	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Multi-Use (sq. ft.)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	635,600	+635,600
	Public Facility (sq. ft.)	0	-12,240	12,240	0	12,240	0	12,240	0	12,240	0	12,240	0
	Max. Bldg. Height (ft.)	30-50	--	30-100	--	30-50	--	30-75	--	30-75	--	30-45	--

SOURCE: City of Sunnyvale Department of Community Development; Wagstaff and Associates.

Legend:

- sq. ft. = square feet
- ft. = feet
- st. = stories

Notes:

- (1) Max. building height figures are for all districts except district 1, the recently completed Mozart development, which includes buildings of 5- to 6-stories up to 125 feet high. For alt. 5, the building height range excludes a possible 100-foot tall stage block portion of the performing arts center.
- (2) For theater seats (subdistricts 1a and 2), consistent with the 1993 Specific Plan, the gross square footage of the proposed theater building has been divided by a factor of 52.6 square feet per seat to obtain the approximate total number of seats (e.g., 170,000 sq. ft. ÷ 52.6 sq. ft./seat = 3,250 seats--see Alt. 5).

Table 18.3

ALTERNATIVES COMPARISON: ESTIMATED TOTAL BUILDING FLOOR AREA

<u>Alternative</u>	<u>Residential Units</u>	<u>Residential Sq. Ft.⁽¹⁾</u>	<u>Office/Retail, Public Facility and Multi-Use Sq. Ft.⁽²⁾</u>	<u>Estimated Total Sq. Ft.</u>
Existing Conditions	850	935,000	1,660,460	2,595,460
Proposed Project	2,520	2,772,000	2,719,740	5,491,740
Alternative 1: 1993 Specific Plan	1,760	1,936,000	2,657,628 ⁽³⁾	4,593,628
Alternative 2: Reduced Development	2,073	2,280,300	2,593,020	4,873,320
Alternative 4: Modified Land Use	2,137	2,350,700	2,447,581	4,798,281
Alternative 4: Multi-Use	1,725	1,897,500	2,573,943	4,471,443

SOURCE: Wagstaff and Associates, March 2003.

Notes:

(1) Residential floor area total based on an assumed average per unit floor area total (gross) of 1,100 square feet, derived from comparable recent multifamily housing development projects in Peninsula central areas.

(2) Includes an assumed floor area of 52.6 sq. ft. per theater seat, based on the 1993 Specific Plan and comparable Bay Area theater projects.

(3) Includes buildout of subdistrict 20.

Table 18.4
ALTERNATIVES COMPARISON: TRIP GENERATION COMPARISON

<u>Project Alternative</u>	<u>Daily</u>	<u>Number of Trips</u>	
		<u>AM Peak Hour</u>	<u>PM Peak Hour</u>
Existing Conditions	67,770	4,547	5,825
Proposed Project	93,814	7,058	8,773
Alternative 1: 1993 Specific Plan	99,282	6,703	8,433
Alternative 2: Reduced Development	89,455	6,380	8,206
Alternative 3: Modified Land Uses	88,281	6,121	8,053
Alternative 4: Multi-Use ¹	71,096-92,751	4,316-5,631	6,623-8,640

SOURCE: Wagstaff and Associates and City of Sunnyvale Department of Community Development, with rates from Trip Generation (Institute of Transportation Engineers, Sixth Edition, 1997).

¹ The "multi-use" land use trip generation rates (from *Trip Generation*) were calculated by determining an established minimum and maximum daily trip rate for each parcel that was designated "multi-use." For all 635,600 square feet, the *maximum* possible daily trip rate is retail. For 358,000 square feet, the *minimum* possible use was considered to be office; for the remaining 277,600 square feet, the *minimum* possible land use was considered to be multi-family residential; residential square footage was converted into units by assuming 1,100 square feet per unit (i.e., 252 units).

18.1 ALTERNATIVE 1: NO PROJECT (EXISTING CONDITIONS/1993 SPECIFIC PLAN)

The CEQA Guidelines require that the specific alternative of "no project" *"shall be evaluated along with its impact in order to allow decision-makers to compare the impacts of approving the proposed project with the impacts of not approving the proposed project."*¹ The CEQA Guidelines also stipulate that the "no project" analysis *"shall discuss the existing conditions at the time the (EIR) notice of preparation is published...as well as what would reasonably be expected to occur in the foreseeable future if the project were not approved, based on current plans..."*²

Pursuant to these CEQA requirements, the Downtown Improvement Program Update would not be adopted under this alternative; instead, the effects of two "no project" scenarios are considered in comparison with the proposed project: *existing conditions* in the project area as they are today, and buildout of the project area under the existing adopted (1993) Downtown Specific Plan.

18.1.1 Existing Conditions Scenario: Principal Characteristics

Under this version of the "No Project" alternative, existing physical conditions in the project area would remain as they are today (see "Existing Conditions" column in Tables 18.1 through 18.5). Existing underutilized parcels would not be redeveloped, no new housing and commercial development would occur, and infrastructure and public amenities would not be improved or upgraded.

The "Existing Conditions" scenario would not meet the project objectives for creating and maintaining downtown Sunnyvale as a *"an enhanced traditional downtown serving the community with a variety of destinations in a pedestrian-friendly environment."*³

18.1.2 Existing Conditions Scenario: Comparative Impacts and Mitigating Effects

a. Land Use. Under this "Existing Conditions" scenario, land use relationships between downtown land uses and adjacent single-family development, especially along Charles Street and Taaffe Street, would remain unchanged. Specifically, potentials for adverse land use compatibility impacts associated with *Downtown Design Plan* recommended high-density residential development along the Mathilda corridor (subdistricts 14 through 17) near the Charles Street single-family neighborhood, and subdistricts 13 and 13a near the Taaffe Street single-family neighborhood, would not occur.

¹CEQA Guidelines, section 15126.6, subsection (e)(1).

²CEQA Guidelines, section 15126.6, subsection (e)(2).

³Antuzzi, Joseph; Chairman, Downtown Stakeholders Advisory Committee, Letter of Transmittal for *The City of Sunnyvale Downtown Design Plan*, March 26, 2002.

b. Aesthetics. The substantial downtown visual changes associated with buildout under the proposed *Downtown Design Plan* would not occur, nor would associated potentials for visual improvement or for introduction of additional adverse visual impacts (building height and scale incompatibilities and exterior lighting impacts).

c. Population, Housing, and Employment. Under the "Existing Conditions" scenario, the population and number of housing units and jobs in the project area would not increase over existing levels. This alternative would therefore have fewer traffic, noise, and other impacts, compared to the proposed project. However, the lack of development would mean that no new housing units or jobs would be created for existing Sunnyvale residents, and that the existing jobs/housing imbalance would not improve.

d. Transportation and Parking. Table 18.4 lists trip generation estimates for the proposed project and alternatives. Under the "Existing Conditions" scenario, which would result in the lowest daily and peak hour trip rates of all the alternatives (including the proposed project), all significant unavoidable traffic impacts identified for the proposed project would be avoided; however, some streets within the project area might experience unacceptable levels of service due to background growth elsewhere in Sunnyvale and the surrounding region. Circulation improvements proposed under the Downtown Improvement Program Update (e.g., street widenings, traffic signals, sidewalk widenings--see subsection 3.9.3.c herein) would not occur.

e. Public Services and Utilities. Proposed project-assisted facilities improvements (e.g., new public plaza east of Macy's and sanitary sewer improvements under Mathilda Avenue, etc.) would not occur. As a result, existing infrastructure and public services deficiencies would continue. On the other hand, this "Existing Conditions" scenario would result in less demand for increased public services since it would not facilitate new development in the project area.

f. Noise. Under the "Existing Conditions" scenario, Alternative, the construction-period noise impacts directly associated with development (e.g., roadway improvements, new building construction) in the project area would not occur. Potential long-term noise impacts due to land use changes and increased traffic that would be facilitated by the proposed project would also not occur.

g. Air Quality. The "Existing Conditions" scenario would have no short-term air quality impacts related to construction, and no long-term air quality impacts related to increases in traffic. Significant unavoidable impacts related to air quality and increases in emissions would be avoided.

h. Drainage and Water Quality. The "Existing Conditions" scenario would result in fewer drainage system capacity and water quality impacts compared with the proposed project. The beneficial effects of any project-facilitated storm drainage improvements would not occur.

i. Soils and Geology. The seismic hazards that may be present in the project area will continue to exist whether or not the project area is developed. However, fewer people and

less improved property would be subject to seismic and soils-related hazards identified in the project area. Also, the beneficial effects (related to seismic safety) of project-facilitated building rehabilitation, facade improvements, and demolition of dilapidated buildings would not occur.

j. Hazardous Materials. Since no new development would occur under this "Existing Conditions" scenario, no construction workers or new building occupants would be subject to hazardous materials exposure.

k. Biological Resources. No significant impacts on central area biological resources would occur under any of the identified alternatives.

l. Cultural and Historic Resources. Since the "Existing Conditions" scenario assumes no additional development in the project area, all potential impacts resulting from demolition or degradation of existing cultural resources or designated historic resources related to project-facilitated development would be avoided. However, historic resource renovations would also not occur.

18.1.3 1993 Specific Plan Buildout Scenario--Principal Characteristics

Under the 1993 Specific Plan Buildout scenario, the current (1993) Sunnyvale Downtown Specific Plan would remain in effect (i.e., the revisions to the Specific Plan proposed under the Downtown Design Plan would not be implemented) and downtown Sunnyvale would continue to develop consistent with its current General Plan and zoning (i.e., Specific Plan) land use designations. Tables 18.1 through 18.5 summarize the development capacity and environmental impact characteristics of this Specific Plan Buildout scenario compared to the proposed project. This 1993 Specific Plan scenario differs from the proposed project as described below:

- *Subdistrict 1a.* The 1993 Specific Plan does not divide subdistrict 1 into subdistricts 1 and 1a. The 1993 Specific Plan designates subdistrict 1 for "Mixed Use Hotel/Office/Theater/Restaurant" uses, including a 208-room¹ hotel and a 1,950-seat theater/performing arts center. Neither of these two facilities is included in the project (2002 *Design Plan*), which proposes land use modifications in subdistrict 1a to allow up to 510 residential units. The 1993 Specific Plan includes no residential units in subdistrict 1a.
- *Subdistrict 2.* As shown in Table 18.2, the 1993 Specific Plan includes a 330-seat theater (not in the project/2002 *Design Plan*) and approximately 24,390 square feet less retail floor area (146,500 vs. 170,890) in subdistrict 2 than the project (2002 *Design Plan*).

¹Mozart development program includes a reduction in the planned/allowable hotel room total in subdistrict 1 from 400 (1993 Specific Plan) to 208.

- *Subdistrict 3.* As shown in Table 18.2, the 1993 Specific Plan includes 157 residential units in subdistrict 3; the proposed project (2002 Design Plan) eliminates residential development allowances in subdistrict 3.
- *Subdistricts 4, 5, and 6.* As shown in Table 18.2, the 1993 Specific Plan includes 104 fewer residential units than the project (2002 Design Plan) (424 vs. 528) and an increased allowable maximum height from 40 feet to 50 feet in subdistricts 4, 5, and 6.
- *Subdistrict 7.* As shown in Table 18.2, the 1993 Specific Plan includes approximately 44,000 square feet more office floor area than the project (2002 Design Plan) (80,000 vs. 36,000) in subdistrict 7.
- *Subdistricts 13 and 13a.* As shown in Table 18.2, the 1993 Specific Plan includes 140 fewer residential units (0 vs. 140), approximately 124,000 square feet less office floor area (176,000 vs. 300,000), approximately 10,100 square feet more retail floor area (20,100 vs. 10,000), and an increased allowable maximum height from 30-to-50 feet to a uniform 50 feet, compared to the project (2002 Design Plan) in subdistricts 13 and 13a.
- *Subdistricts 14, 15, 16, and 17.* As shown in Table 18.2, the 1993 Specific Plan includes 245 fewer residential units (320 vs. 565) and approximately 299,000 square feet more office floor area (299,000 vs. 0) than the 2002 Plan in subdistricts 14 through 17. Also, the 1993 Specific Plan includes a uniform allowable maximum height of 50 feet, while the project (2002 Design Plan) proposes a range from 30 to 50 feet in these subdistricts.
- *Subdistrict 18a.* As shown in Table 18.2, the 1993 Specific Plan includes 243,000 square feet less office floor area (65,000 vs. 308,000), 10,000 square feet less retail floor area (0 vs. 10,000), and a decreased allowable maximum height from 100 feet to 30 feet, compared to the project (2002 Design Plan) in subdistrict 18a.
- *Subdistrict 20.* As shown in Table 18.2, the 1993 Specific Plan does not include subdistrict 20; however, development capacity under the subdistrict's current General Plan and zoning designations would permit approximately 168 residential units and 130,250 square feet of office floor area.

The Specific Plan Buildout scenario would meet the basic objectives of the proposed project and the overall City of Sunnyvale goal to create and maintain "*an enhanced, traditional downtown serving the community with a variety of destinations in a pedestrian-friendly environment*"¹; the proposed project (2002 Design Plan) is intended by the City of Sunnyvale to respond to the changing marketplace and to the City's experience in implementing the 1993 Specific Plan over the last approximately ten years.

¹Antuzzi.

18.1.4 1993 Specific Plan Buildout Scenario--Comparative Impacts and Mitigating Effects

a. Land Use. In comparison to the proposed project (the 2002 *Design Plan*), buildout under the current 1993 Specific Plan would result in less office and residential intensification along Mathilda and correspondingly less total office space in the overall project area (an approximately 232,750-square-foot or 18 percent reduction), with a correspondingly reduced potential for significant adverse land use compatibility impacts on the Charles Street single-family neighborhood.

Buildout under the 1993 Specific Plan would also include less emphasis on providing for higher density residential development in the downtown, with correspondingly fewer total residential units (an approximately 760-unit or 30 percent reduction from the proposed project) and less potential for significant adverse land use compatibility impacts on the Charles Street and Taaffe Street single-family neighborhoods.

The proposed project (2002 Design Plan) recommended change in land use designation in subdistrict 3 from high-density residential to retail (and garage) would not occur; the retained high-density residential buildout scenario in subdistrict 3 would be potentially less compatible with surrounding existing and planned commercial frontages to the west of Sunnyvale Avenue and south of Washington Avenue.

The proposed project (2002 Design Plan) recommended reduction in residential density in subdistricts 4, 6 and 17 to encourage more single-family townhome development and associated improvement in the compatibility of these two blocks at buildout with existing adjacent single-family development along Charles Street and south of Iowa Avenue would not occur. The 1993 Specific Plan buildout scenario would have greater potential for adverse land use compatibility impacts on single-family neighborhoods at these locations.

In summary (i.e., in the aggregate), the 1993 Specific Plan scenario would result in adverse land use impacts greater than the proposed project.

b. Aesthetics. The proposed project (2002 Design Plan) recommended increases in building envelope along the Mathilda Avenue corridor (subdistricts 1a, 18a, 13, 20, and 14 through 17) to accommodate more substantial intensification and a greater emphasis on high-density residential and office would not occur under the 1993 Specific Plan development allowances. As a result, the potential effect of project area buildout in creating a more distinctive, visually dramatic entrance effect along this important downtown and community gateway would be substantially reduced. On the other hand, associated potentials for adverse visual impacts on the character of the downtown, and adverse exterior lighting impacts, would also be reduced.

The proposed project (2002 Design Plan) recommended reduction in maximum permissible building height from 50 feet (4 stories) to 40 feet (3 stories) and 30 feet (2 stories) in

subdistricts 4, 5, and 6 would not occur. As a result, ultimate building heights in these subdistricts would have the potential for greater adverse visual impact on adjacent single-family edges to the east.

Buildout of the Town Center Mall subdistrict (subdistrict 18) under the 1993 Specific Plan would not necessarily include the proposed project (2002 Design Plan) recommended further design refinements to this subdistrict--i.e., would not require extension of Murphy Avenue into the mall and the recommended addition of retail frontages along Murphy, or enhancement of the existing mall outdoor gardens by removing public area roofs. As a result, buildout under the 1993 Specific Plan could have a less beneficial visual effect on the Town Center Mall district.

In summary (i.e., in the aggregate), the 1993 Specific Plan scenario would result in adverse aesthetic impacts greater than the proposed project.

c. Population, Housing, and Employment. The 1993 Specific Plan buildout scenario would result in less improvement to the existing jobs/housing imbalance, compared with the proposed project. This alternative would produce less population growth, but more employment growth compared to the growth rates expected with the project, resulting in a similar level of associated traffic, noise, and other impacts. However, the benefits of an increased residential population in downtown Sunnyvale (e.g., convenience to services and facilities) would be reduced.

d. Transportation and Parking. As indicated in Table 18.4, the 1993 Specific Plan buildout scenario would result in slightly lower AM and PM peak-hour trip generation compared to the proposed project, due to the 1993 Plan's different mix of land uses (including a hotel and a theater/performing arts center, which are not proposed under the 2002 Plan). Potentially significant freeway segment and intersection impacts very similar to those of the proposed project would result.

e. Public Services and Utilities. Proposed project-assisted public facilities improvements would be more limited in the project area under this scenario. On the other hand, this alternative would result in less demand for increased public services, since overall development potential in the project area would be reduced.

f. Noise. Under this scenario, the construction-period noise impacts directly associated with anticipated development (e.g., roadway improvements, new building construction) in the project area would be reduced. Potential noise impacts due to land use changes would also be reduced, compared to the proposed project.

g. Air Quality. This scenario would have construction-related air quality impacts similar to those of the proposed project, but the frequency and duration of these impacts would be less due to the reduced amount of construction that would occur. This alternative would have a slightly greater impact on overall local carbon monoxide concentrations due to higher total daily

trip generation total, which would exceed the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) thresholds of significance. Therefore, like the proposed project, this 1993 Specific Plan buildout scenario would still result in a significant unavoidable impact on regional air quality.

h. Drainage and Water Quality. Compared with the proposed project, this scenario would result in fewer drainage system capacity and water quality impacts due to the reduced overall amount of anticipated development. However, the beneficial effects of potential project-facilitated storm drainage improvements would also be reduced.

i. Soils and Geology. Potential benefits from retrofit and upgrade of existing buildings may be reduced due to the lower intensity and amount of development.

j. Hazardous Materials. Since less development would occur under this scenario, fewer construction workers and new building occupants would be subject to hazardous materials exposure.

k. Biological Resources. None of the alternatives would result in a significant biological resources impact.

l. Cultural and Historic Resources. Similar to the "Existing Conditions" scenario, some potential impacts resulting from demolition or degradation of existing cultural and historic resources related to project-facilitated development may be avoided with the Specific Plan buildout scenario. However, certain historic resource renovations that would potentially occur with the proposed project may not occur under this scenario.

18.2 ALTERNATIVE 2: REDUCED DEVELOPMENT AND HEIGHT

18.2.1 Reduced Development--Principal Characteristics

The Reduced Development and Height Alternative incorporates reductions in allowable maximum height along Mathilda Avenue and Washington Avenue, including subdistricts 1a, 14 through 17, 18a, and 20. These height reductions would result in associated decreases in residential and commercial development potential. Generally, the 100-foot allowable maximum height proposed for subdistricts 1a, 18a, and 20 under the proposed project would be reduced to 50-to-60 feet, and the 30- to 50-foot allowable maximum heights proposed for subdistricts 14 through 17 would be reduced to a uniform 30 feet. In addition, the underground parking levels recommended under the proposed project for Subdistrict 1a would be reduced or eliminated. Tables 18.1 through 18.5 summarize the development capacity and environmental impact characteristics of this alternative compared to the proposed project. This alternative differs from the proposed project as described below.

- *Subdistrict 1a.* The Reduced Development and Height Alternative would include one-half the residential units (255 vs. 510) and one-half the allowable maximum height (50 feet vs. 100 feet) in subdistrict 1a compared to the proposed project.
- *Subdistricts 14, 15, 16, and 17.* This alternative would include 192 fewer residential units (373 vs. 565) and a decreased allowable maximum height from 30-to-50 feet to a uniform 30 feet in subdistricts 14 through 17 compared to the proposed project.
- *Subdistrict 18a.* This alternative would include approximately 104,720 square feet less office floor area (203,280 vs. 308,000) and a decreased allowable maximum height from 100 feet to 60 feet in subdistrict 18a compared to the proposed project.
- *Subdistrict 20.* This alternative would include approximately 22,000 square feet less office floor area (42,700 vs. 64,700) and a decreased allowable maximum height from 100 feet to 60 feet in subdistrict 20 compared to the proposed project.

The Reduced Development and Height Alternative would meet the basic project objectives and the overall City of Sunnyvale goal to create and maintain “an enhanced, traditional downtown serving the community with a variety of destinations in a pedestrian-friendly environment.”¹⁴

18.2.2 Reduced Development--Comparative Impacts and Mitigating Effects

a. Land Use. Buildout under this scenario would result in less overall residential intensity (approximately 18 percent less than under the proposed project scenario) and slightly less employment-intensive (office) development (approximately 10 percent less). Assuming the future market demand for such lost development capacity would be met elsewhere in the community and region outside downtown areas, the comparative advantages associated with concentrating such growth near existing central area services and infrastructure (transit, etc.) would not be realized.

The reduction in residential intensity/density in subdistricts 14 through 17 on the west edge of the project area (approximately 34 percent fewer total units) and corresponding reductions in maximum building height would reduce potentials for adverse land use compatibility impacts on the single-family Charles Street edge.

In summary (i.e., in the aggregate), Alternative 3 would result in land use compatibility impacts slightly reduced from those of the proposed project.

b. Aesthetics. The level of office/residential building height and intensity allowances along the Mathilda corridor (subdistricts 14-17) would be substantially less under this alternative than under the proposed project (Design Plan) scenario. Associated changes in the character and

¹Ibid.

image of this important downtown and community gateway would also be substantially reduced due primarily to the reduced level of new office and high density residential development and reduced building height maximum of 50 rather than 100 feet. Associated potentials for adverse lighting impacts would also be eliminated.

The proposed project (Design Plan) recommended intensification of residential density along the subdistrict 1a edge of Washington would still occur, but to a substantially less intensive degree (half the density and half the building height), with a similar reduction in "gateway" effect.

In the aggregate, Alternative 3 would result in reduced aesthetic impacts in comparison to those of the proposed project.

c. Population, Housing, and Employment. The Reduced Development and Height Alternative would result in less improvement to the existing jobs/housing imbalance, compared with the proposed project. This alternative would produce less population and employment growth, compared to the growth rate expected with the project, resulting in a reduced level of associated traffic, noise, and other impacts. However, the benefits of increased employment would also be reduced.

Maximum anticipated buildout under this alternative would result in approximately 447 fewer housing units and approximately 126,720 square feet less of employment uses (commercial and retail) than would be created with buildout under the proposed project.

d. Transportation and Parking. As indicated in Table 18.4, Alternative 3, the Reduced Development and Height Alternative, would result in lower daily and peak-hour traffic generation compared to the proposed project. However, potentially significant freeway segment and local intersection impacts would still result.

e. Public Services and Utilities. Proposed project-assisted public facilities improvements would still occur under this alternative. This alternative would also result in less demand for increased public services, since new development in the project area would be reduced.

f. Noise. Under this alternative, the construction-period noise impacts directly associated with anticipated development (e.g., roadway improvements, new building construction) in the project area would be reduced. Potential noise impacts due to land use changes and increased traffic from new development would also be reduced, compared to the proposed project.

g. Air Quality. This alternative would have construction-related air quality impacts similar to those of the proposed project, but the frequency and duration of these impacts would be less due to the reduced amount of construction that would occur. This alternative would also have less impact on overall local carbon monoxide concentrations due to lower total trip generation. Regional air quality impacts would be less than those of the proposed project, but would still

exceed the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) thresholds of significance. Therefore, this alternative would still result in a significant unavoidable impact on regional air quality.

h. Drainage and Water Quality. Compared with the proposed project, this alternative would result in fewer drainage system capacity and water quality impacts due to the reduced amount of anticipated development.

i. Soils and Geology. Impacts related to soils and seismicity would be less severe than those described for the proposed project due to reduced intensity of development under this alternative. Also, the reduction or elimination of subgrade parking levels in subdistrict 1a under this alternative would result in less excavation-related potentials for encountering ground water and associated engineering costs.

j. Hazardous Materials. Since less development would occur under this alternative, fewer construction workers and new building occupants would be subject to hazardous materials exposure.

k. Biological Resources. None of the alternatives would have significant effects on biological resources.

l. Cultural and Historic Resources. Similar to the Specific Plan buildout scenario, some potential impacts resulting from demolition or degradation of existing cultural and historic resources related to project-facilitated development may be avoided with the Reduced Development and Height Alternative, especially as a result of the reduced or eliminated subgrade parking level construction.

18.3 ALTERNATIVE 3: MODIFIED LAND USES

18.3.1 Modified Land Uses--Principal Characteristics

The Modified Land Uses Alternative includes a combination of reduced allowable maximum heights in subdistricts 1a and 18a; an increase in allowable maximum height in subdistricts 13 and 13a; and a modified mix of land uses in these subdistricts (primarily a reduction in residential and office development potential). Under this alternative, subdistrict 20 would remain in its present condition (i.e., no additional development assumed). Tables 18.1 through 18.5 summarize the development capacity and environmental impact characteristics of this alternative compared to the proposed project. This alternative differs from the proposed project as described below.

- *Subdistrict 1a.* The Modified Land Uses Alternative would include one-half the residential units (255 vs. 510) and one-half the allowable maximum height (50 feet vs. 100 feet) in subdistrict 1a compared to the proposed project.

- *Subdistricts 13 and 13a.* This alternative would include 140 fewer residential units (0 vs. 140), approximately 124,000 square feet less office floor area (176,000 vs. 300,000), approximately 10,100 square feet more retail floor area (20,100 vs. 10,000), and an increased allowable maximum height from 30-to-50 feet to a uniform 50 feet, in subdistricts 13 and 13a compared to the proposed project.
- *Subdistrict 18a.* This alternative would include approximately 104,720 square feet less office floor area (203,280 vs. 308,000) and a decreased allowable maximum height from 100 feet to 60 feet in subdistrict 18a compared to the proposed project.

The Modified Land Uses Alternative would meet the basic project objectives and the overall City of Sunnyvale goal to create and maintain “*an enhanced, traditional downtown serving the community with a variety of destinations in a pedestrian-friendly environment.*”

18.3.2 Modified Land Uses--Comparative Impacts and Mitigating Effects

a. Land Use. Similar to Alternative 2 (the Reduced Development and Height Alternative), buildout under this "modified land use" scenario would result in less overall residential development (15 percent fewer total units) and less employment-intensive office development (22 percent less) in the downtown. Assuming the market demand for such development would be met elsewhere in the community and region outside downtown subdistricts, the comparative advantages associated with concentrating such growth near existing central area services and infrastructure would not be realized.

The changes under this alternative to the development allowances in subdistrict 13a (elimination of additional residential development and substantial reduction in office development capacity and building height maximums) would reduce potentials for adverse land use compatibility impacts between subdistrict 13a and the sensitive adjacent Taaffe Street single-family residential neighborhood.

In the aggregate, Alternative 3 would result in land use impacts slightly reduced from those of the proposed project.

b. Aesthetics. The most noticeable changes in aesthetic impact associated with Alternative 3 would occur in the Mathilda corridor (subdistricts 18a, 13, 20, and 14 through 17) where building height maximums, residential intensity, and office development capacities would be substantially reduced. The distinctive "gateway" effects associated with office and residential intensification along Mathilda and Washington would be substantially reduced. Conversely, potentials for adverse visual impacts on the overall character of the downtown area and adverse exterior lighting impacts associated with proposed project building height increases along Mathilda would not occur under this alternative. In the aggregate, Alternative 3 would result in aesthetic impacts similar to, but less than, those of the proposed project.

c. Population, Housing, and Employment. The Modified Land Uses Alternative would result in less improvement to the existing jobs/housing imbalance, compared with the proposed project. This alternative would produce less population and employment growth, compared to the growth rate expected with the project, resulting in a reduced level of associated traffic, noise, and other impacts. However, the benefits of increased employment would also be reduced.

Maximum anticipated buildout under this alternative would result in approximately 383 fewer housing units and approximately 272,160 square feet less of employment uses (commercial and retail) than would be created with buildout under the proposed project.

d. Transportation and Parking. As indicated in Table 18.4, the Modified Land Uses Alternative (Alternative 3) would result in lower daily and peak-hour traffic generation compared to the proposed project. However, potentially significant intersection impacts would still result, and significant unavoidable impacts on freeway segments would remain.

e. Public Services and Utilities. This alternative would result in less demand for increased public services, since new development in the project area would be reduced.

f. Noise. Under this alternative, the construction-period noise impacts directly associated with anticipated development (e.g., roadway improvements, new building construction) in the project area would be reduced. Potential noise impacts due to land use changes and increased traffic from new development would also be reduced, compared to the proposed project.

g. Air Quality. This alternative would have construction-related air quality impacts similar to those of the proposed project but the frequency and duration of these impacts would be less due to the reduced amount of construction that would occur. This alternative would also have less impact on overall local carbon monoxide concentrations due to lower total trip generation, although impacts at individual intersections could be greater in some cases. Regional air quality impacts would be less than those of the proposed project, but would still exceed the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) thresholds of significance. Therefore, this alternative would still result in a significant unavoidable impact on regional air quality.

h. Drainage and Water Quality. Compared with the proposed project, this alternative would result in fewer drainage system capacity and water quality impacts due to the reduced amount of anticipated development.

i. Soils and Geology. Impacts related to soils and seismicity would be less severe than those described for the proposed project due to reduced intensity of development under this alternative.

j. Hazardous Materials. Since less development would occur under this alternative, fewer construction workers and new building occupants would be subject to hazardous materials exposure.

k. Biological Resources. None of the alternatives would result in a significant biological resources impact.

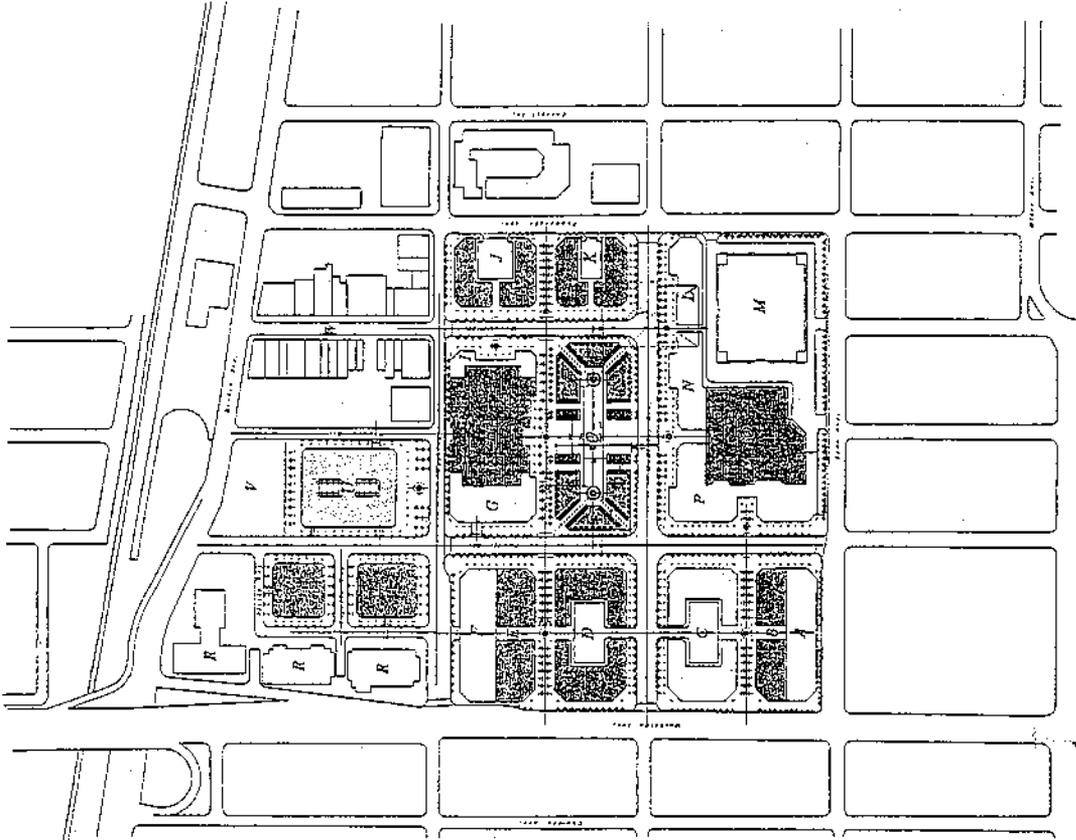
l. Cultural and Historic Resources. Similar to the Reduced Development and Height Alternative, some potential impacts resulting from demolition or degradation of existing cultural and historic resources related to project-facilitated development may be avoided with the Modified Land Uses Alternative. However, some historic resource renovations that would potentially occur with the proposed project may also not occur under the Modified Land Uses Alternative.

18.4 ALTERNATIVE 4: MULTI-USE ALTERNATIVE

18.4.1 Multi-Use Alternative--Principal Characteristics

The "Multi-Use" alternative represents a downtown development concept suggested by a group of Sunnyvale citizens. Figure 18.1 provides an illustration of the Multi-Use alternative prepared by the citizens group. As shown, this alternative would involve substantial reconstruction and reconfiguration of a 10-block area of downtown Sunnyvale (i.e., not the entire project area) to accommodate a "Town Plaza and Green," a theater/performing arts center, and "Multi-use" land use designation whose particular mix of uses (e.g., combination of residential, retail, restaurant, office and other commercial uses) would be determined at a future date, presumably as market conditions dictate. The allowable maximum heights in the alternative's project area would range from 30 to 46 feet, except for the stage block portion of the performing arts center, which might be up to 100 feet in height. Under this alternative, subdistrict 20 would remain in its present condition (i.e., no additional development is assumed). Tables 18.1 through 18.3 summarize the development capacity characteristics of this alternative compared to the proposed project; because this alternative proposes a site plan that does not align precisely with the City of Sunnyvale "subdistrict" boundaries, some of the development capacity data has been interpolated in order to provide meaningful comparisons by subdistrict. This alternative differs from the proposed project as described below.

- *Subdistrict 1a*. The Multi-Use Alternative would replace the residential (510 units) and retail uses (52,500 square feet) proposed under the project for subdistrict 1a with 157,000 square feet of multi-use floor area plus an approximately 3,230-seat (approximately 170,000 square-foot) theater/performing arts center. The allowable maximum building height in the subdistrict would be decreased from 100 feet to 46 feet, except for the stage block portion of the arts center, which might be up to 100 feet in height.



BUILDING OR AREA	NEW OR EXISTING	USE	BUILDING AREA (sq. ft.)	PARKING SPACES	STORIES	TOTL. BUILDING FLOOR FT.
A	New	Parking Garage	147,000	367	4	46
B	New	Multi-Use	98,000	NA	3	46
C	New	Retail	115,000	40	2	46
D	New	Multi-Use	162,000	40	3	46
E	New	Multi-Use	98,000	NA	3	46
F	New	Parking Garage	147,000	367	4	46
G	New	Retail	60,500	NA	2	46
H	Existing	MACYS	161,000	NA	2	46
I	New	Retail	22,500	NA	2	46
J	New	Multi-Use	62,000	28	2	35
K	New	Multi-Use	58,600	17	2	35
L	New	Retail	44,000	NA	2	35
M	Existing	Parking Garage	Unknown	970	3	Unknown
N	New	Retail	52,600	NA	2	35
O	Existing	TARGET	160,000	NA	2	46
P	New	Retail	117,000	NA	2	35
Q	New	Town Plaza & Green	170,000	NA		
R	Existing	Office	450,000	Unknown	5 & 6	125
S	New	Multi-Use	71,000	200	3	46
T	New	Multi-Use	83,600	225	3	46
U	New	Performing Arts Center	170,000	444	3	100
V	Existing	Mini-Park	74,000	250 to 570		
W	Existing	Historic Murphy St. JC Penney (adjacent to Building 3)	250,000	260	1 & 2	(approx.) 35
X	Existing		107,000	NA	NA	(approx.) 46

SOURCE: Andrew Maloney, Friends of Sunnyvale

Figure 18.1

ALTERNATIVE 4: MULTI-USE ALTERNATIVE

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Downtown Improvement Program Update EIR • City of Sunnyvale, CA

- *Subdistrict 2.* This alternative would include approximately 24,390 square feet less retail floor area (146,500 vs. 170,890) in subdistrict 2 compared to the proposed project.
- *Subdistrict 3.* This alternative would replace the 157 residential units proposed under the project for subdistrict 3 with approximately 62,600 square feet of retail floor area.
- *Subdistricts 4, 5, and 6.* This alternative would include up to 122 fewer residential units (406 vs. 528) in subdistricts 4, 5, and 6 compared to the proposed project. The allowable maximum height in the subdistrict would be decreased from 40 feet to 30-to-40 feet.
- *Subdistrict 7.* Compared to the proposed project, this alternative would decrease the allowable maximum height in subdistrict 7 from 50 feet to 36 feet, although the assumed residential, office, and retail development potential in the subdistrict would remain the same.
- *Subdistricts 13 and 13a.* This alternative would include up to 140 fewer residential units (0 vs. 140), approximately 124,000 square feet less office floor area (176,000 vs. 300,000), approximately 10,100 square feet more retail floor area (20,100 vs. 10,000), and a decreased allowable maximum height from 30-to-50 feet to a uniform 30 feet, in subdistricts 13 and 13a compared to the proposed project.
- *Subdistricts 14, 15, 16, and 17.* This alternative would include up to 192 fewer residential units (373 vs. 565) in these subdistricts compared to the proposed project, as well as a decrease in allowable maximum height from 30-to-50 feet to a uniform 30 feet.
- *Subdistrict 18.* This alternative would include approximately 380,880 square feet less retail floor area (617,000 vs. 997,880) in subdistrict 18 compared to the proposed project. This retail floor area would be replaced with approximately 120,600 square feet of multi-use floor area around an approximately four-acre "Town Plaza and Green." This restructuring would require extensive demolition of existing Town Center Mall buildings except Macy's and Target. Under this alternative, the allowable maximum height in the subdistrict would be decreased from 75 feet to 46 feet.
- *Subdistrict 18a.* This alternative would include approximately 308,000 square feet less office floor area (0 vs. 308,000), 105,000 square feet more retail floor area (115,000 vs. 10,000), and the addition of approximately 358,000 square feet of multi-use floor area, in subdistrict 18a, compared to the proposed project. Also, this alternative would decrease the 100-foot allowable maximum height in the subdistrict under the proposed project to 30-to-40 feet.

The Multi-Use Alternative would partially meet the basic objectives of the proposed project, including the City's overall goal to create and maintain "an enhanced, traditional downtown

...serving the community with a variety of destinations in a pedestrian-friendly environment.”¹ However, the alternative would retain a theater/performing arts center from the 1993 Specific Plan, which has been removed from the 2002 proposed project because such a use is no longer considered by the City to be a feasible option. Further discussion of the feasibility of this alternative is included in section 18.8 of this chapter.

18.4.2 Multi-Use Alternative--Comparative Impacts and Mitigating Effects

a. Land Use. The approximately 635,600 square feet of "multi-use" development capacity proposed under this alternative (the only alternative with this land use designation), would facilitate a greater central area emphasis on "mixed use." The "Multi-use" designation presumably would include allowances for an unspecified mix of residential, office, and retail development within the overall square footage envelope. Such a designation would foster development of such central area uses in convenient proximity to one another and to existing central area services and infrastructure with comparatively beneficial "smart growth" impacts.

In addition to the 1,725 total units specifically permissible under this alternative, this alternative would potentially allow more residential development within the proposed 635,600 square feet of permitted "Multi-use" floor area.

Table 18.3 shows comparative total building floor area estimates for the proposed project versus alternatives 1 through 4. As shown, buildout under Alternative 4 would result in the lowest overall downtown building floor area total, at approximately 4,471,443 square feet (18 to 19 percent less than the proposed project); followed by buildout under Alternative 1 (Specific Plan) at 4,593,628 square feet (16 percent less than the proposed project); followed by buildout under Alternative 3 (Modified Land Uses) at 4,798,281 square feet (13 percent less than the proposed project); followed by buildout under Alternative 2 (Reduced Development) at 4,873,320 square feet (11 percent less than the proposed project).

The land use compatibility impacts of this alternative on the adjacent Charles Street and Taaffe Street single-family edges would be similar to or worse than the proposed project (under this alternative, no specific mitigating treatments are proposed for these edges).

In summary (i.e., in the aggregate), however, Alternative 4 would result in substantially reduced land use compatibility impacts in comparison to the proposed project.

From a land use and visual standpoint, this alternative represents a fundamentally different urban design approach than the 1993 Specific Plan and proposed project (April 2002 Downtown Design Plan). The 1993 Specific Plan and proposed project (2002 Design Plan) build upon and refine the existing downtown development configuration. The Multi-Use site plan alternative appears to assume a fundamental redesign, renovation and reconstruction of

¹ibid.

various existing downtown blocks, with substantial demolition and replacement of existing downtown structures with all-new structures, to create a new downtown footprint, with chamfered corners on most blocks and open central quads with connecting pedestrian ways within many. The scope, objectives, and feasibility of this alternative are substantially different from the proposed project.

b. Aesthetics. The effects of Alternative 4 on the visual character of the downtown would be substantially different from those of the proposed project (*2002 Downtown Design Plan*). The project (2002 Design Plan)-recommended increases in building envelope along the east side of Mathilda Avenue with an increased emphasis on office to create a more distinctive, visually dramatic entrance effect at this important downtown and community gateway would be substantially reduced. The visually important corner of Mathilda and Washington, a Specific Plan designated primary gateway, would be developed with a large, 3-to-4 story parking garage, potentially defeating the "gateway" effect envisioned by the 1993 Specific Plan and proposed project (new *Downtown Design Plan*) for this location.

The Alternative 4 plan appears to propose dramatic modifications or total replacement of the existing Town Center Mall structure with a new "Town Plaza and Green" element, as well as a continuous pedestrian mall along McKinley which would traverse what is now the developed center of the Town Center Mall structure. Such downtown modification, including a central area plaza feature, if feasible, could of course represent a substantial improvement in the aesthetic character of the Town Center Mall district, creating an attractive new downtown core element and fundamentally changing the visual configuration of the downtown. The plan would create a new visual "core" in the downtown, shifting the emphasis of future visual enhancement from Mathilda and Washington to the new "Town Plaza and Green."

The proposed 46-foot (3 to 4 story) building height limitation would ensure that the character of the new 5- to 6-story Mozart development would not be replicated elsewhere in the central area.

In the aggregate, Alternative 4 would result in substantially reduced adverse aesthetic impacts in comparison to those described in this EIR for the proposed project.

c. Population, Housing, and Employment. The Multi-Use alternative would result in less improvement to the existing jobs/housing imbalance, compared with the proposed project. This alternative would produce less population and employment growth, compared to the growth rate expected with the project, resulting in a reduced level of associated traffic, noise, and other impacts. However, the benefits of increased employment would also be reduced.

Compared with the proposed project, maximum anticipated buildout under this alternative would result in up to approximately 795 fewer housing units, and approximately 890,805 square feet less of office/retail uses, replaced by approximately 635,600 square feet of multi-

use (residential, retail, and/or office) floor area (none proposed under the project), and the addition of an approximately 3,230-seat theater (none proposed under the project).

d. Transportation and Parking. As indicated in Table 18.4, the Multi-Use alternative would result in lower daily and peak-hour traffic generation compared to the proposed project. However, potentially significant intersection impacts would still result, and significant unavoidable impacts on freeway segments would remain.

e. Public Services and Utilities. This alternative would result in less demand for increased public services, since new development in the Specific Plan area would be reduced.

f. Noise. Under this alternative, the construction-period noise impacts directly associated with anticipated development (e.g., roadway improvements, new building construction) in the project area could be increased due to the extensive demolition and reconstruction required under this alternative. However, potential long-term noise impacts due to land use changes and increased traffic from new development would be reduced, compared to the proposed project.

g. Air Quality. This alternative could have greater construction-related air quality impacts than those of the proposed project due to the extensive demolition and reconstruction required under this alternative. However, this alternative would have less impact on overall, long-term local carbon monoxide concentrations due to lower total trip generation, although impacts at individual intersections could be greater in some cases. Regional air quality impacts would be less than those of the proposed project, but would still exceed the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) thresholds of significance. Therefore, this alternative would still result in a significant unavoidable impact on regional air quality.

h. Drainage and Water Quality. Compared with the proposed project, this alternative would result in fewer drainage system capacity and water quality impacts due to the overall reduced amount of anticipated development.

i. Soils and Geology. Impacts related to soils and seismicity would be less severe than those described for the proposed project due to reduced intensity of development under this alternative. The potential benefits from retrofit and upgrade of existing buildings may be increased due to the substantially greater level of demolition and reconstruction associated with this alternative.

j. Hazardous Materials. Since less overall development would occur under this alternative, fewer construction workers and new building occupants would be subject to hazardous materials exposure. However, the substantial demolition required under this alternative could result in additional construction-worker exposure to friable asbestos and/or PCBs.

k. Biological Resources. None of the alternatives would result in a significant biological resources impact.

l. Cultural and Historic Resources. The extensive fundamental reconstruction of downtown Sunnyvale that would be required under this alternative could result in the demolition or degradation of potential or as yet undiscovered cultural and historic resources. Also, some historic resource renovations that would potentially occur with the proposed project may not occur under Alternative 4.

18.5 ALTERNATIVE 5: MODIFIED REDEVELOPMENT PLAN ACTIVITIES (MODIFIED FUNDING ALLOCATION)

18.5.1 Modified Redevelopment Plan Activities--Principal Characteristics

This alternative would involve modifications to the Redevelopment Plan amendments component of the project. The alternative would include the same redevelopment project area boundary as the proposed project, but with a modified allocation of project-generated tax increment revenues to redevelopment activities within the redevelopment project area. For purposes of impact comparison, this modified allocation would increase the percentage of total project-related tax increment revenue for affordable housing from approximately 20 percent (as proposed under the project) to approximately 35 percent, with the 15 percent difference taken from the public infrastructure improvement, site assembly, and other components of the redevelopment program, as follows:

	<u>Proposed Project</u>	<u>Modified Allocation Scenario</u>
Affordable housing assistance	20%	35%
Public infrastructure, site assembly, etc.	60%	45%
Other	<u>20%</u>	<u>20%</u>
Total	100%	100%

18.5.2 Modified Redevelopment Activities--Comparative Impacts and Mitigating Effects

a. Land Use. This scenario could result in a reduced overall level of physical rehabilitation and blight elimination in the redevelopment area. The project's beneficial land use effects could also be reduced under this alternative.

b. Aesthetics. The potentially reduced level of physical rehabilitation and blight elimination under this scenario could also reduce the potential for beneficial visual effects.

c. Population, Housing, and Employment. The decreased public improvements and increased housing allocations would increase the amount of "affordable" housing that could be rehabilitated and constructed. On the other hand, this scenario could reduce the rate of market-rate housing development, and would reduce the rate of job growth by committing fewer resources to commercial and industrial improvements that would facilitate new local employment.

d. Transportation and Parking. The decreased public improvements scenario would be expected to reduce the extent of traffic impacts described in chapter 7 of this EIR, due to the reduced overall growth rate in the redevelopment area and associated decreases in traffic generation.

e. Public Services and Utilities. Although more tax increment revenue would be directed to housing assistance under this scenario, the net effect of the associated decrease in public improvements spending could be an overall net reduction in total project-facilitated commercial and residential growth, and a related net reduction in demands on water and sewer service, police service, fire protection and emergency medical services, schools, parks and recreation, and solid waste and recycling service.

f. Noise. The decreased public improvements scenario would reduce traffic-related noise impacts due to the decreased growth rates. It would also decrease potential project-related creation, intensification, or elimination of noise-incompatible land uses. In addition, this scenario would decrease construction-period noise due to the reduced level of development facilitated by the project.

g. Air Quality. The decreased public improvements scenario would result in a decrease in local and regional air quality impacts associated with project-facilitated development and associated vehicle trips. It would also decrease construction-related air quality impacts.

h. Storm Drainage and Water Quality. The decreased public improvements scenario may also result in less risk of reduced water quality and storm drainage capacity impacts; however, this beneficial effect could be outweighed by the lower level of funding available for storm drainage improvements.

i. Geology and Soils. The decreased public improvements scenario and associated overall decrease in project-facilitated economic investment and development in the project area would result in less risk of exposure of new, project-facilitated development to seismic-related hazards; however, this beneficial effect would be offset by the lower level of funding available for building rehabilitation and seismic retrofit assistance.

j. Hazardous Materials. The decreased public improvements scenario could reduce the amount of funding for hazardous materials cleanup. On the other hand, it could reduce the amount of new project area development that would be subject to hazardous materials exposure.

k. Biological Resources. The decreased public improvements scenario would decrease the level of project-facilitated development and associated potential impacts on biological resources.

l. Cultural and Historic Resources. The decreased public improvements scenario would reduce the potential for impacts on project area archaeological and historic sites, due to reductions in the amount of project-facilitated development activity. However, it may also reduce the likelihood of assistance being available for preservation and maintenance of project area historic resources.

18.6 ALTERNATIVE 6: MODIFIED IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM BOUNDARIES/ REDEVELOPMENT PLAN BOUNDARIES

An off-site or alternative location alternative was considered but rejected. CEQA requires that an alternative location be identified if any of the significant effects of a project could be avoided or substantially reduced by developing the project in another location. If the lead agency determines that no feasible alternative location exists, it must disclose the reasons for this conclusion.

The City of Sunnyvale, as the lead agency under CEQA, has determined that an off-site location for this project is not feasible and need not be discussed in this EIR because the project is inseparably tied to this downtown location. Adopting the land use and urban design concepts recommended in the April 2002 *Downtown Design Plan* for another location would not meet project objectives.

18.7 CONCLUSIONS

This EIR chapter has described a range of reasonable alternatives to the proposed action that could attain the basic objectives of the project, and has described the comparative environmental advantages and disadvantages of these alternatives. The descriptions and comparative evaluations were developed by the EIR authors based on the impact and mitigation findings in chapters 4 through 15 of this report.

18.7.1 Comparative Development Intensity

To compare and relate overall development intensity of the alternatives versus the proposed project, Table 18.3 shows comparative total building floor area estimates. As shown, buildout under Alternative 4 would result in the lowest overall downtown building floor area total, at approximately 4,471,443 square feet (18 to 19 percent less than the proposed project), followed by buildout under Alternative 1 (Specific Plan) at 4,593,628 square feet (16 percent less than the proposed project), followed by buildout under Alternative 3 (Modified Land Uses) at 4,798,281 square feet (13 percent less than the proposed project), followed by buildout

under Alternative 2 (Reduced Development) at 4,873,320 square feet (11 percent less than the proposed project).

18.7.2 Rule of Reason

Under the *CEQA Guidelines*, the range of alternatives required in an EIR is governed by a "rule of reason" that requires an EIR to set forth only those alternatives necessary to permit a reasoned choice. An EIR need not consider every conceivable alternative to a project. Rather, the alternatives must be limited to ones that meet the project objectives, are ostensibly feasible, and would avoid or substantially lessen at least one of the significant environmental effects of the project. Of those alternatives, the EIR need only examine in detail the ones that the Lead Agency determines could feasibly attain most of the basic objectives of the project. [CEQA Guidelines section 15126.6(e)(3)].

(a) Impact Reduction. The proposed project objectives are in chapter 3, Project Description, of this EIR. The primary identified objective is to help create and maintain *"an enhanced, traditional downtown, serving the community with a variety of destinations in a pedestrian-friendly environment."* All of the identified alternatives would, to varying degrees, achieve this objective while lessening one or more of the significant environmental effects of the project.

(b) Feasibility. In determining whether alternatives are feasible, Lead Agencies are guided by the general definition of feasibility found in CEQA: "capable of being accomplished in a successful manner within a reasonable period of time, taking into account economic, environmental, legal, social, and technological factors" (*CEQA Guidelines* section 15364).

All of the identified alternatives appear to be feasible except for Alternative 4 (Multi-Use). Alternative 4 has been considered and compared in this EIR at the request of the proponents; however, Alternative 4 appears to assume extensive, fundamental reconstruction within various downtown blocks, including demolition and replacement of portions or all of existing downtown blocks with heavily modified or all-new structures, to create a substantially reconfigured downtown footprint, with chamfered corners on all blocks, and open central quads with connecting pedestrian ways, within blocks which are currently fully developed.

In particular, the Alternative 4 involves extensive demolition and comprehensive reconfiguration of the Town Center Mall complex. The mall is now planned for substantial renovation program. Presumably, under Alternative, these previously approved renovations would be largely rejected and supplanted by an all-new reconstruction program to fundamentally reconfigure the mall complex. Although such fundamental modification may seem desirable from a purely aesthetic standpoint, the concept does not appear to meet the "rule of reason" test--i.e., does not appear to be feasible from an economic viability or implementation standpoint (property owners would be unable to justify such private reinvestment, and the City would not have the authority or control over the affected properties to the extent needed to mandate or otherwise carry out such extensive change). As a result, Alternative 4 is not considered feasible.

18.7.3 Environmentally Superior Alternative

CEQA Guidelines call for identification of the environmentally superior alternative among those selected as feasible, other than the No Project Alternative. Table 18.5 provides a summary matrix comparing the environmental implications of the various identified alternatives with the proposed project. The comparisons indicate that, of the alternatives identified as feasible, **Alternative 3--the Modified Land Uses Alternative**, would result in the least adverse combination of environmental impacts and would therefore be the "environmentally superior" alternative, based on the comparative analysis results described in sections 18.1 through 18.6 above.

Table 18.5
ALTERNATIVES COMPARISON: ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS IN COMPARISON TO THE PROPOSED PROJECT

<u>Impact</u>	<u>Proposed Project</u>	<u>Alt. 1: Current Specific Plan</u>	<u>Alt. 2: Reduced Development</u>	<u>Alt. 3: Modified Land Uses</u>	<u>Alt. 4: Multi-Use</u>
Land Use	No significant impacts	Greater adverse impacts	Reduced adverse impacts	Reduced adverse impacts	Reduced adverse impacts
Aesthetics	Significant bldg. scale and light/glare impacts	Reduced bldg. scale and light/glare impacts	Reduced bldg. scale and light/glare impacts	Similar bldg. scale and light/glare impacts	Reduced bldg. scale and light/glare impacts
Transportation and Parking ¹	Significant AM and PM intersection and freeway impacts	Less AM and greater PM impacts	Less AM and less PM impacts	Less AM and less PM impacts	Less AM and less PM impacts
Public Services and Utilities	No significant impact	Similar impacts	Less impact	Less impact	Less impact
Noise	Significant construction and long term impacts	Similar impacts	Similar impacts	Similar impacts	Similar impacts
Air Quality ¹	Significant construction and long term impacts	Similar impacts	Similar impacts	Similar impacts	Similar impacts
Drainage and Water Quality	Significant water quality impacts	Similar impacts	Similar impacts	Similar impacts	Similar impacts
Soils and Geology	Significant soil stability impacts	Similar impacts	Similar impacts	Similar impacts	Similar impacts
Hazards and Hazardous Materials	No significant impacts	No significant impacts	No significant impacts	No significant impacts	No significant impacts
Biological Resources	No significant impacts	No significant impacts	No significant impacts	No significant impacts	No significant impacts
Cultural and Historic Resources	Significant impacts	Similar impacts	Similar impacts	Similar impacts	Similar impacts

SOURCE: Wagstaff and Associates, 2003.

¹ The proposed project and all identified alternatives would result in significant unavoidable transportation and air quality impacts. For all other environmental categories, all potentially significant impacts can be reduced to less-than-significant levels by implementing the mitigation measures identified in this EIR.

NOTE: Alternatives 5 (Modified Redevelopment Activities) and 6 (Modified Improvement Program Boundaries/Redevelopment Plan Boundaries) involve fundamental revisions to the proposed project definition which preclude quantitative comparisons; therefore, these two alternatives are not included in the table.