

## 6 ALTERNATIVES

As required by Section 15126.6 of the *CEQA Guidelines*, this SEIR examines a range of reasonable alternatives to the proposed project that would attain most of its basic objectives (stated in Section 2.5 of this SEIR) but would avoid or substantially lessen any of its significant effects.

The key objectives of the project are to:

- *Replace seismically deficient City Hall and Main Library in an expeditious manner.*
- *Reduce public safety hazards by eliminating the risk of fire, structural collapse, personal injury to trespassers, vandalism and crime, by demolishing the structurally unsound, abandoned, and deteriorated former Long Beach Courthouse building.*
- *Meet the long term goal of the Harbor Department to bring its headquarters downtown.*
- *Redevelop the Civic Center mega-block into a vibrant mix of public and private space, including a grand Civic Plaza, which asserts the value and importance of the public realm, and which functions as the City's center for governance, civic engagement and cultural and educational exchange.*
- *Consider opportunities to redevelop Old Courthouse site with public uses as part of the Civic Center mega-block redevelopment.*
- *Improve connections between the new Civic Center and greater Downtown through the reestablishment of the small block grid of the historic downtown street fabric and encouragement of a more pedestrian friendly environment.*
- *Redevelop the Main Library within Lincoln Park and ensure that future library space needs will be considered in the context of the changing role of the modern city library, and revolutionary change in media and technology that will influence the library of the future.*
- *Revitalize Lincoln Park into a destination park with amenities appropriate for visitors, residents and Downtown workers.*
- *Cap the City's ongoing maintenance costs, increase energy efficiency, and consolidate offsite City leases, when feasible.*
- *Consider private development elements and/or disposition of surplus property for private development, such as new housing, office, hotel and retail. If housing is proposed, 10 percent of all housing units must be affordable to moderate income persons.*
- *Design buildings to interface with the streets and draw pedestrians into the civic spaces. Proposed solutions must address the vision, guiding principles and design guidelines of the Downtown Plan 2012 (see Planned Development District Ordinance PD-30).*
- *Connect the Civic Center to surrounding business and residential uses. Be highly accessible to pedestrians and bicycles and include convenient automobile access. All private uses should complement the civic functions.*
- *Activate the perimeter streetscape, access points and all public components. Provide appropriate lighting and wayfinding signage for pedestrians, bicycles and automobiles.*

The guiding principles for downtown Long Beach from the Downtown Plan are as follows:

- *We promote the development of a distinctive downtown skyline, providing a vibrant, compact city core attracting cosmopolitan and creative people.*
- *Our lively Downtown acts as the heart of the city, connecting with the neighborhoods and coastline.*



- *We encourage an infrastructure to accommodate a future that is less dependent on fossil fuels and more focused on walking, bicycling, and public transportation.*
- *We invite and support new industries to invest in our future so that we can continue to diversify our economy and promote job growth while strengthening our existing backbone of convention, tourism, and port business.*
- *We endorse bold architecture, planning, and construction that utilize green building technology and incorporate sustainable energy.*
- *We demand quality in building practices in order to ultimately create historical masterpieces.*
- *We value our buildings of historic merit and seek to preserve or restore them through adaptive reuse.*

Included in this analysis are four alternatives, including the CEQA-required “no project” alternative, that involve changes to the project to help reduce its environmental impacts as identified in this SEIR. This section also identifies the Environmentally Superior Alternative.

The following alternatives are evaluated in this SEIR:

- *Alternative 1: No Project*
- *Alternative 2: Downtown Plan Buildout of Civic Center Area*
- *Alternative 3: Adaptive Reuse Alternative*
- *Alternative 4: Reduced Density*

The potential environmental impacts of each alternative are analyzed in Sections 6.1 through 6.4.

Table 6-1 provides a summary comparison of the development characteristics of the proposed project and each of the alternatives considered. A more detailed description of the alternatives is included in the impact analysis for each alternative.



**Table 6-1  
Comparison of Project Alternatives' Buildout Characteristics**

Characteristic	Alternatives				
	Proposed Project	No Project Alternative	Downtown Plan Buildout of Civic Center Area <sup>1</sup>	Adaptive Reuse Alternative	Reduced Density <sup>4</sup>
Number of Residential Units	780 DU	None	800 DU	780 DU	741 DU
Number of Hotel Rooms	200 rooms	None	None	200 rooms	190 rooms
Office Square Footage	510,000 GSF	283,000 GSF	460,000 GSF	510,000GSF <sup>2</sup>	484,500 GSF
Commercial Square Footage:		None			
Retail:	32,000 GSF		64,000 GSF	32,000 GSF	30,400 GSF
Restaurant:	8,000 GSF		16,000 GSF	8,000 GSF	7,600 GSF
Lincoln Park and Main Library					
Total Park Area:	4.8 ac	4.8 ac	4.8 ac	4.8 ac	4.8 ac
Open Space (ac):	3.17 ac	2.6 ac	2.6 ac	3.17 ac	3.17 ac
Library (ac/GSF):	1.63 ac / 92,000 GSF <sup>3</sup>	2.2 ac / 138,000 GSF <sup>3</sup>	2.2 ac / 138,000 GSF <sup>3</sup>	1.63 ac / 92,000 GSF <sup>3</sup>	1.63 ac / 87,400 GSF <sup>3</sup>
Vacant Square Footage (former Long Beach Courthouse)	None	277,000 GSF	None	None	None
Grading					
Import:	68,200 cy	None	11,200 cy	68,200 cy	68,200 cy
Export:	380,000 cy		350,000 cy	200,000 cy	380,000 cy
Construction Schedule	74 months	None	69 months <sup>6</sup>	74 months	71 months <sup>5</sup>

DU = dwelling units; ac = acres; GSF: gross square footage; cy = cubic yards

<sup>1</sup> Source: Iteris, Long Beach Downtown Community Plan EIR Traffic Impact Analysis, 2010. Assumes that the existing Lincoln Park and the Library would be retained.

<sup>2</sup> Although the entire Courthouse would be used as City Hall, only approximately 180,000 GSF of the Courthouse would be useable as office space (RRM Design Group, 2014; see Appendix H of the Long Beach Courthouse Demolition Project Draft EIR). Therefore, it is assumed that the Port Building would be approximately 330,000 GSF and would accommodate City Hall and Port Building uses to accommodate all uses proposed by the project.

<sup>3</sup> GSF for Library uses.

<sup>4</sup> Assumes five percent reduction in residential, commercial, and office/Library uses.

<sup>5</sup> Estimated by reducing the proposed project's building construction schedule by five percent. The Reduced Density Alternative would include the same demolition, grading, and paving schedule.

<sup>6</sup> Eliminated Phase 3, which includes Main Library demolition and park construction.

All of these alternatives are described and analyzed below. Following the analysis of these four alternatives is a discussion of alternatives that were considered for analysis, but rejected as infeasible. These include several alternatives suggested by the State Historic Preservation Officer of the Office of Historic Preservation, as part of the SEIR scoping process. In addition, this section includes a discussion of the "environmentally superior alternative" among the alternatives studied.

## 6.1 NO PROJECT ALTERNATIVE

This alternative assumes that the proposed project is not constructed on the site. It assumes that the site would continue in its current condition and that the existing City Hall, Main Library, Lincoln Park, vacant former Long Beach Courthouse, and associated parking structures and parking lots would remain. However, implementation of the no project alternative at this time



would not preclude development of the site at some point in the future. The No Project Alternative is required by CEQA and also suggested by the Office of Historic Preservation during the SEIR scoping process.

### 6.1.1 Impact Analysis

No change in environmental conditions would occur under this alternative because no development would occur and site conditions would not change. This alternative would avoid the proposed project's significant and unavoidable impacts related to operational air pollutant emissions; exposing sensitive receptors to toxic air contaminants from Port of Long Beach and offsite stationary sources; demolishing historic resources; construction noise and vibration; and cumulative air quality impacts. In addition, this alternative would avoid significant, but mitigable impacts related to construction air pollutant emissions, operational noise, and exposing sensitive receptors to excessive noise. No significant impacts would occur under this alternative and none of the mitigation measures recommended for the proposed project would apply.

This alternative would not include demolition or rehabilitation of the former Long Beach Courthouse. Consequently, the critical functional and physical deficiencies identified for the former Courthouse by the statewide Task Force on Court Facilities in 1997 and the Administrative Office of the Courts in 2001 would remain. These deficiencies are described in detail in Section 2.0, *Project Description*, but include Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessibility issues and seismic deficiencies. Despite a limited retrofit at an estimated cost of \$13.9 million by the County of Los Angeles, the Courthouse is expected to remain standing long enough to evacuate, but would not be capable of being re-occupied following a medium-sized earthquake. Under this alternative, the structurally unsound, abandoned, and deteriorated former Courthouse would remain a public safety hazard, vulnerable to risk of fire, structural collapse, personal injury to trespassers, and vandalism and crime.

Overall, this alternative's impacts would be less than those of the proposed project. However, the selection of the no project alternative would not preclude the future redevelopment of the Civic Center area. Furthermore, this alternative would not fulfill any of the project objectives, nor would it meet the Downtown Plan guiding principles for the Downtown Plan Area.

## 6.2 DOWNTOWN PLAN BUILDOUT OF CIVIC CENTER AREA ALTERNATIVE

The Downtown Plan EIR assumed development of up to 800 residential units, 460,000 gross square feet (GSF) of office/commercial floor area, 64,000 GSF of retail space and 16,000 GSF of restaurant uses for the Civic Center area in the Downtown Plan traffic analysis. This alternative assumes the existing Main Library and Lincoln Park would be retained and Lincoln Parking Garage would not be renovated. In addition, this alternative does not include the construction of a hotel. As the existing Library and Lincoln Park would be retained, grading would be reduced in comparison to the proposed project to 11,200 cy of import and 350,000 cy of export and the construction schedule would likely be reduced to 69 months. Similar to the proposed project, this alternative would include demolition of the former Courthouse and City Hall.



### 6.2.1 Aesthetics

Similar to the proposed project, the Downtown Plan Buildout of the Civic Center Area Alternative would introduce new high-rise structures and full-block complexes at locations within the Downtown Plan Area. The alternative would increase the number of residential units and the commercial area constructed on the project site, but would generally be similar in regards to the visual character of the proposed development. As this alternative would not include the hotel component, it would likely not increase the height of the two Center Block mixed-use buildings proposed by the project despite the additional residential and commercial area this alternative would accommodate and the site constraints caused by retaining the existing Main Library. The aesthetic impact to scenic vistas, scenic resources, and the site's visual character associated with this development would be similar to that of the proposed project and would be less than significant. Implementation of this alternative would result in a roughly similar significant, but mitigable aesthetic impact from construction when compared to the proposed project, as it would occur over the same period of time and in the same general locations as the proposed project. Therefore, Mitigation Measure AES-1 (Construction Screening) would be required to screen construction sites from public viewpoints. Shadows or shading could be generated by this alternative that would affect shadow-sensitive land uses; however, because this alternative does not include the hotel component, this alternative would not create new significant shading impacts to shadow-sensitive land uses. Overall, impacts from this alternative would be similar to those of the proposed project.

### 6.2.2 Air Quality

The Downtown Plan Buildout of Civic Center Area Alternative would not include a 200-room hotel component, but would increase the number of residential units and the commercial area constructed on the project site; therefore, this alternative would likely have similar operational emissions as the proposed project. As this alternative would retain the existing Main Library and Lincoln Park, soil import and export would be reduced by approximately seven percent in comparison to the proposed project. Therefore, this alternative would have slightly lower overall construction emissions than the proposed project.

Similar to the proposed project, this alternative would include demolition of existing buildings and would require implementation of Mitigation Measure AQ-2 (Air Quality Safety Plan). As this alternative would have similar operational emissions compared to the proposed project, it would also require implementation of Mitigation Measure AQ-3 (Low-VOC Paint). Nonetheless, similar to the proposed project, this alternative's operational and cumulative air quality impacts would remain significant and unavoidable. In addition, this alternative would place sensitive receptors in the Downtown Plan Area like the proposed project; therefore, impacts related to toxic air contaminants from Port of Long Beach and offsite stationary sources would remain significant and unavoidable.

### 6.2.3 Cultural Resources

Like the proposed project, the Downtown Plan Buildout of Civic Center Area Alternative would include the demolition of the former Courthouse and City Hall, but would retain the existing Main Library; therefore, this alternative's impact would be less than that of the proposed project, but would still be significant. As with the proposed project, Mitigation Measures CR-



1(a) (Historic Artifact Collection Program) and CR-1(b) (Building Documentation) would apply to this alternative, but would not reduce the impact to below a level of significance. This alternative's cultural resource impact would be less than that of the proposed project because it would retain the Main Library, but would be significant and unavoidable, as determined in the Downtown Plan EIR.

#### **6.2.4 Greenhouse Gas Emissions/Climate Change**

The Downtown Plan Buildout of Civic Center Area Alternative would not include a 200-room hotel component, but would increase the number of residential units and the commercial area constructed on the project site; therefore, this alternative would have similar operational greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions as the proposed project. Similar to the proposed project, this alternative's GHG emissions and climate change impacts would be less than significant. Similar to the proposed project, this alternative would be consistent with the Climate Action Team GHG reduction strategies, the SCAG Sustainable Communities Strategy, and Long Beach Sustainable City Action Plan Goals.

#### **6.2.5 Noise and Vibration**

The Downtown Plan Buildout of Civic Center Area Alternative would increase the number of residential units proposed by 20 units and the commercial area constructed on the project site by 40,000 GSF. Construction would likely occur over a shorter period of time (69 months) when compared to the proposed project. Nonetheless, due to the project site's proximity to sensitive receptors Mitigation Measure Noise-1 (Noise Control Plan) would be required. As with the proposed project, this alternative would have significant and unavoidable noise and vibration impacts due to the demolition of the former Long Beach Courthouse and City Hall. However, noise and vibration impacts would be slightly reduced because this alternative would not include demolition of the Main Library. Operational impacts associated with location of commercial uses in proximity to existing and planned residential uses would be similar to those of the proposed project and Mitigation Measures Noise-2(a) (Loading Areas) and Noise-2(b) (Sound-Rated Windows and Sliding Glass Doors Near Commercial Uses) would apply to this alternative.

As described in detail in Section 6.2.6, this alternative would generate an estimated 3,181 more daily trips, 39 more a.m. peak hour trips, and 288 more p.m. peak hour trips when compared to the proposed project. This represents an approximately 23 percent increase in daily traffic compared to the proposed project.

The proposed project's traffic noise impacts would not exceed the 3 dBA significance threshold at any receptor location. However, the 23 percent increase in traffic due to this alternative may result in an exceedance of the relevant thresholds at certain locations. The receptor located at Chestnut Avenue between Third Street and Broadway would experience a noise increase of 2.5 dBA as a result of the proposed project and this alternative would likely result in an exceedance of the 3 dBA significance threshold at this location.

The Downtown Plan Buildout of Civic Center Area Alternative's impacts related to construction-generated noise and vibration would be less than those of the proposed project,



however impacts related to traffic-generated noise would be greater. Overall, construction noise and vibration impacts would continue to be significant and unavoidable.

### 6.2.6 Transportation and Traffic

Table 6-2 shows the trip generation potential for the mix of uses assumed for buildout of the Civic Center. Buildout of the Downtown Plan Civic Center Area would generate an estimated 14,104 daily trips, with 710 trips (337 inbound, 373 outbound) produced in the a.m. peak hour, and 840 trips (439 inbound, 401 outbound) produced in the p.m. peak hour. A comparison of the trips generated by the proposed project to the trips generated by the mix of uses assumed in the Downtown Plan for the Civic Center area shows that that this alternative would result in 3,181 more daily trips, 39 more a.m. peak hour trips, and 288 more p.m. peak hour trips.

**Table 6-2  
 Trip Generation Forecast – Downtown Plan Civic Center Area**

ITE Reference	Average Daily Trips	A.M. Peak Hour			P.M. Peak Hour		
		Inbound	Outbound	Total	Inbound	Outbound	Total
LU Zone 8: Residential Condos	1,769	16	81	97	78	37	115
LU Zone 9: Residential Condos, Office, Shopping Center, Restaurant	15,229	607	332	939	411	606	1,017
<b>Total Downtown Plan Civic Center Area Trips</b>	<b>16,998</b>	<b>623</b>	<b>413</b>	<b>1,036</b>	<b>489</b>	<b>643</b>	<b>1,132</b>
<b>Existing City Hall Trips<sup>a</sup></b>	<b>2,894</b>	<b>286</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>326</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>242</b>	<b>292</b>
<b>Net Downtown Plan Civic Center Area Alternative Trips (Alternative – Existing)</b>	<b>14,104</b>	<b>337</b>	<b>373</b>	<b>710</b>	<b>439</b>	<b>401</b>	<b>840</b>

Source: Linscott, Law and Greenspan June 2015; see Appendix E for full TIA report.

<sup>a</sup> The Downtown Plan Buildout of the Civic Center Area Alternative would include demolition of City Hall.

The Downtown Plan EIR determined that traffic generated by buildout of the Downtown Plan would result in significant and unavoidable impacts to traffic and transportation. This alternative would contribute to this impact and impacts would be greater than those of the proposed project.

### 6.3 ADAPTIVE REUSE ALTERNATIVE

This alternative considers the potential impacts of rehabilitating the former Long Beach Courthouse to be adaptively reused primarily as City Hall and/or municipal offices. This alternative responds to requests from the California Office of Historic Preservation and others during the SEIR scoping process to consider an alternative that would preserve existing onsite historic resources. This alternative also considers the demolition of the City Hall-Library Complex to occur by means other than implosion.

The Adaptive Reuse Alternative assumes the former Courthouse building would be rehabilitated for a government office use in conformance with the Secretary of the Interior Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties. Rehabilitation of the building would be



conducted in accordance with the California Historic Building Code, which allows for more flexible application of building regulations when impacting a historic resource. It is assumed that all identified character-defining features of the Courthouse building interior would be repaired and maintained in-situ to the highest degree feasible and in accordance with the Secretary's Rehabilitation Standards and Guidelines. Nonetheless, the majority of these spaces would be altered to accommodate government office uses.

RRM Design Group conducted a conceptual feasibility study assessment to re-purpose the former Courthouse building for a government office use. That study is included in Appendix H of the Long Beach Courthouse Demolition Project Draft EIR. In summary, the assessment concludes that the building would require substantial upgrades to the building's structural, mechanical, plumbing, fire protection, lighting and electrical systems. All levels of the building's interior would require substantial modernization to comply with the California's building codes, energy efficiency regulations and disabled access for a government office use. Virtually all of the exterior glass panels and metal building skin would need to be replaced with dual glazed high efficiency glass to meet current energy regulations. Similarly, to meet disabled access regulations several upgrades to the building entries, lobby, circulation, parking, and restrooms would require substantial renovation. While the gross building area is approximately 277,000 square feet, the net useable area for office conversion would be much less. The estimated usable office area would be in the 60 to 70 percent range or approximately 180,000 square feet; therefore, it is assumed that the Port Building would be approximately 330,000 GSF (rather than 240,000 GSF proposed by the project) and would accommodate City Hall and Port Building uses. Therefore, this alternative would reduce new office square footage construction by approximately 35 percent, when compared to the proposed project.

The conceptual feasibility study determined that substantial investment would be required to modernize the existing building systems and to renovate interior finish materials. Renovation projects are labor intense for activities such as selective demolition and preservation of character defining features. The cost premium for a public sector renovation project may add upwards of 25 to 30 percent beyond the cost of new construction to account for prevailing wage requirements, which are not applicable to private sector projects. Renovation budget contingencies would also be much higher than new construction due to the likelihood of finding unknown deficiencies such as hazardous material abatement. Major cost factors include significant renovation of all major building systems. Seismic strengthening of the existing building structural systems is needed to remain habitable after a seismic event. According to the conceptual feasibility study, a renovation project of this size and complexity would cost far more than demolishing and replacing the existing building with entirely new construction; the study estimated that the cost for the rehabilitation of the former Courthouse and conversion to municipal office use would range from \$124,650,000 to \$138,500,000.

### 6.3.1 Aesthetics

The Adaptive Reuse Alternative would involve the same amount of residential and commercial space as the proposed project. This alternative would result in the reconstruction of the former Long Beach Courthouse to be used as 180,000 GSF of useable office space. This alternative would increase the size of the Port Building to 330,000 GSF to accommodate the office space needs of City Hall and the Harbor Department; therefore, the Port Building would be four stories taller than the proposed project and would be approximately 15 stories tall.



Adaptive reuse of the former Courthouse may contribute less to the visual character of the area than the proposed project, which would introduce new structures that are more visually consistent with the surrounding area and that would be visually compatible with one another. Overall, this alternative would result in a change in visual character similar to that of the proposed project and the aesthetic impact to scenic vistas, scenic resources, and the site's visual character associated with this development would also be less than significant. Implementation of this alternative would result in a roughly similar significant, but mitigable impact from construction when compared to the proposed project, as construction would occur over the same period of time and in the same general locations as under the proposed project. Therefore, Mitigation Measure AES-1 (Construction Screening) would be required to screen construction sites from public viewpoints. Construction impacts associated with the demolition of the former Long Beach Courthouse would not occur, but other construction impacts would occur throughout the project site. Although the Port Building would be four stories taller than the proposed project, shadows or shading generated by this alternative would not create new shadow impacts to shadow-sensitive land uses. Overall, impacts from this alternative would be similar to those of the proposed project.

### 6.3.2 Air Quality

The Adaptive Reuse Alternative would involve the same amount of residential and commercial space as the proposed project. This alternative would result in the reconstruction of the former Long Beach Courthouse to be used as 180,000 GSF of office space. This alternative would build 330,000 GSF of new office space to accommodate City Hall and the Harbor Department's office space needs. Therefore, this alternative would reduce new office square footage construction by approximately 35 percent, when compared to the proposed project.

Construction would occur over the same length of time as compared to the proposed project and in the same locations. This alternative would result in the same operational emissions compared to the proposed project due to the same amount of overall residential, commercial, and office uses. This alternative would have lower overall construction emissions because demolition of the former Long Beach Courthouse would not occur and the square footage of new office construction would be reduced by approximately 35 percent. Similar to the proposed project, construction-related air quality impacts would be less than significant with implementation of Mitigation Measure AQ-2 (Air Quality Safety Plan), which would mitigate impacts related to the demolition of the City Hall-Library Complex. Because this alternative would include the same overall residential, commercial, and office uses as the proposed project, implementation of Mitigation Measure AQ-3 (Low-VOC Paint) would also be required and the impact of operational air pollutant emissions would remain significant and unavoidable, similar to the proposed project. This alternative's air quality impacts would be similar to that of the proposed project; operational and cumulative air quality impacts would remain significant and unavoidable. Similar to the proposed project, this alternative would place sensitive receptors in the Downtown Plan Area; therefore, impacts related to toxic air contaminants from Port of Long Beach and offsite stationary sources would also remain significant and unavoidable.

### 6.3.3 Cultural Resources

The former Long Beach Courthouse building was found individually eligible for the California Register of Historic Resources and also eligible for City of Long Beach Landmark Designation.



This alternative would preserve this building and eliminate the significant and unavoidable impact resulting from demolition of the building. The adaptive reuse of the building, however, would require substantial alteration of interior and exterior features. The adaptive reuse would maintain the structure of the building, but its appearance and historic value may be diminished. Similar to the proposed project, the Adaptive Reuse Alternative would include demolition of the City Hall-Library Complex; therefore, similar to the proposed project, this alternative would have a significant impact to this resource and Mitigation Measures CR-1(a) (Historic Artifact Collection Program) and CR-1(b) (Building Documentation) would apply. This alternative's cultural resource impact would be less than that of the proposed project with respect to the former Long Beach Courthouse and equal to that of the proposed project with respect to the City Hall-Library Complex. Therefore, although the impact would be lower than that of the proposed project, the impact associated with demolition of the City Hall-Library Complex would remain significant and unavoidable.

#### **6.3.4 Greenhouse Gas Emissions/Climate Change**

The Adaptive Reuse Alternative would include the same amount of office, residential, and commercial uses on the project site; therefore, operational GHG emissions would be the same as the proposed project. This alternative would have ~~slightly~~ lower construction GHG emissions than the proposed project due to the adaptive reuse of the former Long Beach Courthouse, rather than the demolition of the building. This alternative's climate change impacts would be ~~slightly~~ less than those of the proposed project and, as with the proposed project, would ~~remain~~ be less than significant. Similar to the proposed project, this alternative would be consistent with the Climate Action Team GHG reduction strategies, the SCAG Sustainable Communities Strategy, and Long Beach Sustainable City Action Plan Goals.

#### **6.3.5 Noise and Vibration**

Construction would occur over the same length of time as compared to the proposed project and in the same locations. However, the significant and unavoidable impacts associated with noise and vibration generated by the demolition of the former Long Beach Courthouse would not occur under this alternative, nor would the significant and unavoidable impacts associated with noise and vibration generated by the potential demolition by implosion of the City Hall-Library Complex. The significant and unavoidable impact associated with noise generated by other construction activities, such as from the use of jackhammers, generators, and compactors, would, however, occur. Operational impacts associated with location of commercial uses in proximity to existing and planned residential uses would be similar to those of the proposed project and mitigation measures Noise-2(a) (Loading Areas) and Noise-2(b) (Sound-Rated Windows and Glass Doors Near Commercial Uses) would apply to this alternative.

As described in detail in Section 6.3.6, this alternative would have similar traffic volumes as the proposed project because it would not change the office, commercial, and residential square footages of the proposed project. Therefore, similar to the proposed project, traffic noise impacts would be less than significant.



### **6.3.6 Transportation and Traffic**

This alternative would have generally the same traffic volumes as the proposed project because it would not change the office, commercial, and residential square footages of the proposed project. Access to the project site would be similar to the proposed project, and would not include any hazardous design features. Similar to the proposed project, impacts to traffic would be less than significant.

## **6.4 REDUCED DENSITY**

This alternative involves reducing the amount of residential, commercial, and office/library uses proposed for the project site by five percent. Therefore, this alternative assumes the construction of 741 dwelling units, a 190 room hotel, 484,500 GSF of office uses, 30,400 GSF of retail uses, 7,600 GSF of restaurant uses, and 87,400 GSF of library uses. It is assumed that the footprint of proposed land uses would remain the same; therefore, this alternative would utilize 3.17 acres of Lincoln Park as open space and would have the same overall grading as the proposed project. The construction schedule would be shorter than the proposed project and would occur over approximately 71 months.

The intent of this alternative is to reduce any potentially significant impacts associated with the project that would result from its intensity, such as the potentially significant but mitigable impacts mentioned above. This alternative also has the potential to reduce other, less than significant impacts of the proposed project such as aesthetics, GHGs, traffic and roadway noise. This alternative would meet the objectives of the project, but to a lesser degree than the project, because it would not involve the same amount of housing or office/library and commercial space creation as the proposed project.

### **6.4.1 Aesthetics**

The Reduced Density Alternative would lead to a reduced amount of residential, office, and commercial space being built on the project site as compared to the proposed project. While this alternative would result in a change in visual character similar to that the proposed project since commercial, office, and residential uses would be developed throughout the area, buildings would be slightly smaller with slightly less visual impact. The aesthetic impact to scenic vistas, scenic resources, and the site's visual character associated with this development would be reduced when compared to the proposed project. Implementation of this alternative would result in a roughly similar, but slightly reduced significant but mitigable impact associated with construction when compared to the proposed project since it would occur in the same general locations as the proposed project over a shorter period of time. Mitigation Measure AES-1 (Construction Screening) would be required to screen construction sites from public viewpoints. Shadows or shading generated by this alternative would be slightly reduced compared to the proposed project because building heights would be lower. Similar to the proposed project, this alternative would have less than significant shadow impacts. Overall, impacts from this alternative would be slightly less than those of the proposed project and would be significant, but mitigable.



### 6.4.2 Air Quality

The Reduced Density Alternative involves a five percent reduction in overall development intensity as compared to the proposed project. This alternative would have slightly lower overall construction emissions than the proposed project due to the reduced number of units and square footage to be built, but grading emissions would not change substantially because this alternative would require the same grading as the proposed project. Because this alternative would include demolition of existing buildings, it would require implementation of Mitigation Measure AQ-2 (Air Quality Safety Plan). Table 6-3 shows that with implementation of Mitigation Measure AQ-3 (Low-VOC Paint), this alternative would result in operational emissions of reactive organic gases (ROG) that are less than SCAQMD's significance threshold. The proposed project had significant, but mitigable construction-related air quality impacts and significant and unavoidable operational air quality impacts. This alternative's operational and construction-related air quality impacts would be less than those of the proposed project and both impacts would be less than significant with mitigation. Similar to the proposed project, however, this alternative would place sensitive receptors in the Downtown Plan Area; therefore, impacts related to toxic air contaminants from Port of Long Beach and offsite stationary sources would remain significant and unavoidable.



**Table 6-3  
 Long-Term Operational Emissions (lbs/day) with  
 Mitigation Measure AQ-3**

Emission Source	ROG	NO <sub>x</sub>	CO	SO <sub>2</sub>	PM <sub>10</sub>	PM <sub>2.5</sub>
<b>Reduced Density Alternative Emissions</b>						
Area	<b>54.8</b>	0.7	61.2	<0.1	0.3	0.3
Energy	<b>0.7</b>	7.1	4.8	<0.1	0.6	0.6
Mobile	<b>50.5</b>	130.6	560.5	1.8	127	35.5
<b>Total Project Emissions</b>	<b>105.9</b>	<b>138.4</b>	<b>626.9</b>	<b>1.8</b>	<b>128.0</b>	<b>36.4</b>
<b>Existing Emissions</b>						
Area	18.2	<0.1	<0.1	<0.1	<0.1	<0.1
Energy	0.2	1.5	1.3	<0.1	0.1	0.1
Mobile	35.0	78.5	323.7	0.6	55.3	15.7
<b>Total Existing Emissions</b>	<b>53.4</b>	<b>80.1</b>	<b>325.1</b>	<b>0.6</b>	<b>55.4</b>	<b>15.8</b>
<b>Net Emissions (Project – Existing)</b>	<b>52.5</b>	<b>58.3</b>	<b>301.8</b>	<b>1.2</b>	<b>72.6</b>	<b>20.6</b>
SCAQMD Thresholds	55	55	550	150	150	55
Threshold Exceeded?	No	No	No	No	No	No

*Source: See Appendix B for CalEEMod calculations. Assumed compliance with SCAQMD's Healthy Hearths Initiative Rule 445 and Architectural Coating Rule 1113, and Downtown Plan EIR Mitigation Measure AQ-2 and GHG-2(b).  
 Note: Totals may not add up due to rounding.*

### 6.4.3 Cultural Resources

Like the proposed project, the Reduced Density Alternative would include the demolition of the former Courthouse and City Hall-Library Complex; therefore, this alternative's cultural resource impact would be similar to that of the proposed project and would be significant. Mitigation Measures CR-1(a) (Historic Artifact Collection Program) and CR-1(b) (Building Documentation) would apply to this alternative and would reduce impacts to the degree feasible. Nevertheless, as with the proposed project, the impact would remain significant and unavoidable due to the demolition of historic resources.

### 6.4.4 Greenhouse Gas Emissions/Climate Change

Because of the five percent reduction in the total development under the Reduced Density Alternative, this alternative would lead to a roughly five percent reduction in operational GHG emissions compared to the proposed project. A minor reduction in overall construction-related GHG emissions would also occur, although grading GHG emissions would not be substantially reduced because this alternative would require the same grading as the proposed project.



Similar to the proposed project, this alternative would be consistent with the Climate Action Team GHG reduction strategies, the SCAG Sustainable Communities Strategy, and Long Beach Sustainable City Action Plan Goals. The Reduced Density Alternative's GHG Emissions/Climate Change impacts would be less than the already less than significant impacts of the proposed project.

#### **6.4.5 Noise and Vibration**

The Reduced Density Alternative would reduce the amount of residential, office, and commercial space by five percent compared to the proposed project. Construction would occur over approximately 71 months, a three month reduction compared to the proposed project, thereby reducing the duration of the significant and unavoidable noise and vibration impacts generated near existing sensitive receptors. This alternative would have the same significant and unavoidable impacts related to noise and vibration due to the demolition of the former Long Beach Courthouse and City Hall-Library Complex and Mitigation Measure Noise-1 (Noise Control Plan) would be required. Operational impacts associated with the location of commercial uses in proximity to existing and planned residential uses would be similar to the proposed project and mitigation measures Noise-2(a) (Loading Areas) and Noise-2(b) (Sound-Rated Windows and Glass Doors Near Commercial Uses) would apply to this alternative. Similar to the proposed project, the operational noise impacts of this alternative would be less than significant.

As described in detail in Section 6.4.6, this alternative would result in a five percent reduction in traffic generation when compared to the proposed project. The impacts of project-related traffic noise would be less than significant and this alternative would result in less traffic-generated noise. Therefore, this alternative's impacts related to noise and vibration would be less than significant.

#### **6.4.6 Transportation and Traffic**

The Reduced Density Alternative would reduce project-generated traffic by five percent. The impacts of project-related traffic would be less than significant; therefore, because the Reduced Density Alternative would generate five percent fewer new trips, its impact would also be less than significant. Access to the project site would be similar to the proposed project, and would not include any hazardous design features; therefore, transportation impacts related to hazardous design features would also be less than significant.

### **6.5 ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED BUT REJECTED**

During the preparation of this SEIR, consideration was given to three alternatives that were suggested by the Office of Historic Preservation, as part of the SEIR scoping process, but were ultimately rejected. The three alternatives that were considered but rejected are an Alternate Site Alternative, an Infill Alternative, and an Alternative-Use Alternative. An Alternate Site Alternative and Infill Alternative would have located the entire proposed project or project components on one or more different sites within the Downtown Plan Area and an Alternative-Use Alternative would have placed different uses within the existing buildings on the project site. A fourth alternative, the Courthouse Adaptive Reuse and City Hall-Library Complex Rehabilitation Alternative, was considered, but rejected. This alternative would have adaptively



reused the Courthouse as office space (similar to that described in the Adaptive Reuse Alternative above) and rehabilitated the seismic deficiencies within the City Hall-Library Complex.

The project includes a new City Hall, a new Port Building for Harbor Department administration, a new and relocated Main Library, a redeveloped Lincoln Park, residential development, and commercial mixed use development. In total, the proposed project includes six new buildings, three new parking garages, related infrastructure and landscaping, and two new public street extensions of Chestnut Avenue and Cedar Avenue through the project site. Existing buildings that would be demolished include the former Long Beach Courthouse and the City Hall-Library Complex. Moving the project to another site, as would occur in the Alternate Site and Infill Alternatives, would not meet many of the key project objectives since it would not replace seismically deficient structures, reduce public safety hazards, or improve and revitalize the Civic Center Area. In addition, it would not be feasible to place different uses in existing buildings on the project site, as would occur in the Alternate-Use Alternative, since additional buildings would need to be constructed to house displaced civic uses. Displaced civic uses then would not be located within the Civic Center Area, as identified in the adopted Downtown Plan.

The Courthouse Adaptive Reuse and City Hall-Library Complex Rehabilitation Alternative was also considered, but rejected. This alternative would have adaptively reused the Courthouse as office space (similar to that described in Section 6.3, *Adaptive Reuse Alternative*) and rehabilitated the seismic deficiencies within the City Hall-Library Complex. Unlike the Adaptive Reuse Alternative described in Section 6.3, *Adaptive Reuse Alternative*, this alternative would have placed the Port Building within the former Courthouse and retained the City Hall and Library uses within the existing buildings. This alternative was rejected because, as discussed in Section 2.0, *Project Description*, there are critical functional and physical deficiencies identified for the former Courthouse by the statewide Task Force on Court Facilities in 1997 and the Administrative Office of the Courts in 2001 that would make rehabilitation of the former Courthouse, infeasible. RRM Design Group prepared an Adaptive Reuse Study for the former Long Beach Courthouse in September 2014 that determined adaptive reuse of the former Courthouse would require substantial upgrades to the building's structural, mechanical, plumbing, fire protection, lighting and electrical systems. All levels of the building's interior would require substantial modernization to comply with the California's building codes, energy efficiency regulations and disabled access for a government office use. The Study estimated that costs for rehabilitation of the former Courthouse and conversion to municipal office use would range from \$124,650,000 to \$138,500,000. City Hall has seismic deficiencies that would increase rehabilitation costs associated with the Courthouse. Moreover, the project site is largely built out; retaining the former Courthouse and the City Hall-Library Complex would restrict space available to achieve project objectives, such as redeveloping the site into a vibrant mix of public and private space with a grand Civic Plaza; improving connections with greater Downtown; reestablishing the small block grid of the historic downtown street fabric; private development of housing, office, hotel, and retail; and increasing affordable housing.

## 6.6 ENVIRONMENTALLY SUPERIOR ALTERNATIVE

The environmental analysis contained in the SEIR determined that the proposed project would result in several significant and unavoidable and potentially significant but mitigable



environmental impacts. Each of the alternatives considered would reduce or avoid one or more of the proposed project's significant and unavoidable or significant but mitigable impacts, as discussed below.

The No Project Alternative would avoid or reduce the proposed project's potential impacts in all environmental impact areas and would have no environmental impact. Consequently, the No Project Alternative is considered environmentally superior. However, this alternative would not meet any of the project objectives (stated in Section 2.0, *Project Description*) because it would not carry out the proposed project, nor would it meet the Downtown Plan guiding principles for the Downtown Plan Area.

Section 15126.6(e)(2) of the *CEQA Guidelines* requires that, if the environmentally superior alternative is the No Project Alternative, the SEIR must also identify an environmentally superior alternative among the other alternatives. Of the remaining three alternatives, the Reduced Density Alternative, which would reduce the proposed project's potential impacts in aesthetics, air quality, GHG emissions, noise and vibration, and traffic and transportation, is the environmentally superior alternative. The only environmental impact areas for which impacts would not be reduced is cultural resources, for which the Reduced Density Alternative would have impacts similar to those of the proposed project. This alternative would meet the basic objectives of the project because it would allow for replacement of seismically deficient buildings, reduce public safety hazards, locate the Harbor Department headquarters in the Downtown Plan Area, redevelop the Civic Center mega-block, redevelop the former Courthouse, improve connections between the new Civic Center and greater Downtown, redevelop the Main Library, revitalize Lincoln Park, cap the City's ongoing maintenance costs, increase energy efficiency, provide affordable housing, connect to surrounding businesses and residential uses, and activate the perimeter streetscape. However, because the Reduced Density Alternative would involve a reduction in the total amount of residential, office, and commercial uses developed, it would meet the project objectives to a proportionally lesser degree than the proposed project.

The Adaptive Reuse Alternative would reduce, but would not eliminate impacts to cultural resources and would also incrementally lessen impacts to GHG emissions, and noise and vibration. The Adaptive Reuse Alternative would not ~~fail to~~ meet the project's objective of redeveloping the Civic Center mega-block into a vibrant mix of public and private space, including a grand Civic Plaza. As discussed in Section 6.3, *Adaptive Reuse Alternative*, it would also require substantial renovation at an estimated cost ranging from \$124,650,000 to \$138,500,000

Table 6-4 indicates whether each alternative's environmental impact is greater than, less than, or similar to the proposed project.



**Table 6-4  
 Comparison of Environmental Impacts of Alternatives**

<b>Issue</b>	<b>No Project</b>	<b>Downtown Plan Buildout of Civic Center Area</b>	<b>Adaptive Reuse</b>	<b>Reduced Density</b>
Aesthetics	-	=	=	-
Air Quality	-	=	=	-
Cultural Resources	-	-	-	=
GHG Emissions/ Climate Change	-	=	-	-
Noise and Vibration	-	- / +	- / +	-
Transportation and Traffic	-	+	=	-
<b>Overall</b>	-	=	-	-

*+Impacts greater than those of the proposed project*  
*- Impacts less than those of the proposed project*  
*= Impacts similar impact to the proposed project*  
*- / + Impacts both greater and less than the proposed project*



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