

8.0 ALTERNATIVES TO THE PROPOSED PROJECT

CEQA requires projects to evaluate a reasonable range of alternatives to a project which will limit or reduce the significant impacts of a project. Specifically, Section 15126.6 (a) says that “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”.

The following discussion considers alternatives to implementation of the Project. The discussion examines the potential environmental impacts resulting from each alternative. Through comparisons of these alternatives to the Project, the relative advantage(s) of each can be weighed and analyzed.

8.1 Project Objectives

As stated in Section 3.4 of this Draft PEIR, the Project objectives include:¹

- Create a vibrant downtown.
- Pursue an infill strategy.
- Improve retail corridors.
- Expand housing choices.
- Protect the City’s historic resources.
- Expand and enhance employment opportunities.
- Improve fiscal performance of City.
- Improve infrastructure and keep pace with development.
- Improve health outcomes.
- Create a diverse and extensive open space network.
- Enhance opportunities for tourism.
- Ensure high level of public safety.

8.2 Significant Impacts from Project

Based on the analysis contained in Section 5.0 of this document, the following areas will have significant impacts that are unavoidable related to the implementation of the City’s General Plan Update:

- Air Quality
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Noise
- Transportation

8.3 Alternatives Rejected from Consideration

Alternatives that were considered but that were rejected need to also be considered in an EIR (Section 15126.6(c)).

¹ Refer to Section 3.4 for an fuller discussion of the Project Objectives.

8.3.1 Alternate Location

The CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(f)(2) requires that an alternate location to the project that will lessen or avoid significant impacts of a project. Since the project is the consideration of a General Plan, which is not inherently linked to a specific project location, and rather constitutes a policy document laying out land use implications within the project, an alternative location to the Project was considered but rejected for infeasibility.

8.3.2 General Plan Land Use Scenarios

In 2017, the City began working with their community of stakeholders to create the land use plan for the General Plan. Compilation of stakeholder input resulted in three land use “scenario’s” which were presented at a City of Beaumont City Council hearing on December 19, 2017. The three scenarios presented were as follows:

- Scenario 5.1 –Retail Intensive- included 3.3 million square feet of retail, 400,000 square feet of office space and 625,000 sf of industrial. Under this Scenario, 13,000 dwelling units could be built.
- Scenario 5.2 – Office Intensive - included 2.0 million sf of retail, 1.6 million sf of office, 1.9 million sf of industrial and 11,000 dwelling units.
- Scenario 5.3 – Balance of Jobs – included 2.5 million sf of retail, 500,000 sf of office, 1.3 million sf of industrial and 14,000 dwelling units.

The City evaluated these three scenarios at a high level. These alternatives were abandoned and instead a “Preferred Alternative” was presented to the City Council on February 6, 2018 which resulted in the proposed Project land use plan. None of these three alternatives/scenarios were explicitly chosen as the proposed Project.

8.4 Description of Alternatives

CEQA says that an EIR must evaluate a reasonable range of alternatives. Section 15126.6(c) says, the “range of potential alternatives to the proposed project shall include those that could feasibly accomplish most of the basic objectives of the project and could avoid or substantially lessen one or more of the significant effects. The following Project Alternatives were considered as ways to lessen potential significant impacts listed above in section 8.2.

8.4.1 Alternative 1 – No Project/Existing 2007 General Plan

CEQA mandates that an EIR analyses the No Project Alternative. Specifically, Section 15126.6(e)(3)(A) says, “when the project is a revision of an existing land use or regulatory plan, policy or ongoing operation, the “no project” alternative will be the continuation of the existing plan, policy or operation into the future.” Therefore, for this analysis, the No Project Alternative will be the continued land uses and implementation of the City of Beaumont’s March 2007 General Plan, see **Figure 8-1 Existing 2007 General Plan Land Use**.

Evaluation of Alternative 1- No Project/Existing 2007 General Plan

Under Alternative 1 the existing 2007 General Plan guides the future development of the City. The land uses in the 2007 General Plan are not much different than is being proposed by the Project, but there

would be less industrial land uses and less higher density residential units under the existing 2007 General Plan compared to the proposed Project as shown on **Figure 8-1**.

Table 8-A – Comparison of Alternative 1 to Proposed Project Land Uses

2007 General Plan Land Use Designation	Alternative 1 -No Project/Existing 2007 General Plan ¹ (acres)	Proposed General Plan Land Use Designation ²	Proposed Project ³ (acres)
		Rural Residential (1 DU per acre)	547
		Rural Residential (1 DU per 10 acres)	850
		Rural Residential (1 DU per 40 acres)	3,420
Rural Residential	10,946	Total Rural Residential	4,817
Single Family Residential	6,765	Single Family Residential	5,076
Multi-Family Residential	142	Traditional Neighborhood	574
		High Density Residential	323
Mixed Use	240	Downtown Mixed Use	386
6 th Street Overlay	211	TOD Overlay	173
Community Commercial	471	Neighborhood Commercial	46
General Commercial	84	General Commercial	321
Industrial	1,254	Industrial	1,336
Public Facilities	234	Public Facilities	350
Recreation/Conservation	9,849	Open Space	10,253
Beaumont Avenue Overlay	80		
Urban Village Overlay	684	Urban Village	408
		Urban Village South	237
		Employment District	179

1 = Table 2-1, Distribution of Land Uses within the Beaumont Planning Area (2007 General Plan)

2= Table 3-2 Potential Development in the City and its Sphere of Influence (2020 Public Draft General Plan)

3 = does not include 2,088 acres of streets

DU – dwelling unit

8.4.2 Alternative 2 – Increased Recreation

Under this Alternative, there would be a new Land Use Designation for “Recreation” which would include: “Low-impact development, including camping and ATV uses. Caretaker residential units. Residential uses that meet the Rural Residential 40 designation are permitted”. The area where this Recreational land use designation would occur is depicted below on **Figure 8-2 – Alternative 2-Increased Recreation**, which is in the very western edge of the Planning Area and south of SR 60. Under Alternative 2, there would be approximately 547 acres of a Recreation designation, which would replace approximately 547 acres of Rural Residential as proposed by the Project. The area affected by this Land Use designation change is within the County of Riverside and located within the City’s Sphere of Influence. The underlying County of Riverside Land Use Designation is Rural Residential. Under this Alternative, the County Land Use Designation would be inconsistent with the City’s proposed Project Land Use Designation of Recreation.

Evaluation of Alternative 2

Alternative 2 has one main distinct difference from the proposed Project; it keeps approximately 547 acres at the western edge of the Planning Area that is within the County of Riverside jurisdiction and in the City’s Sphere of Influence, and makes it Recreation. This use would allow for the construction/operation of recreational focused land uses such as an off-road vehicle park, campsites and other active recreational uses. Under this Alternative, there would be a reduction in the amount of Rural Residential land uses from what is in the proposed Project.

Remainder of page intentionally left blank

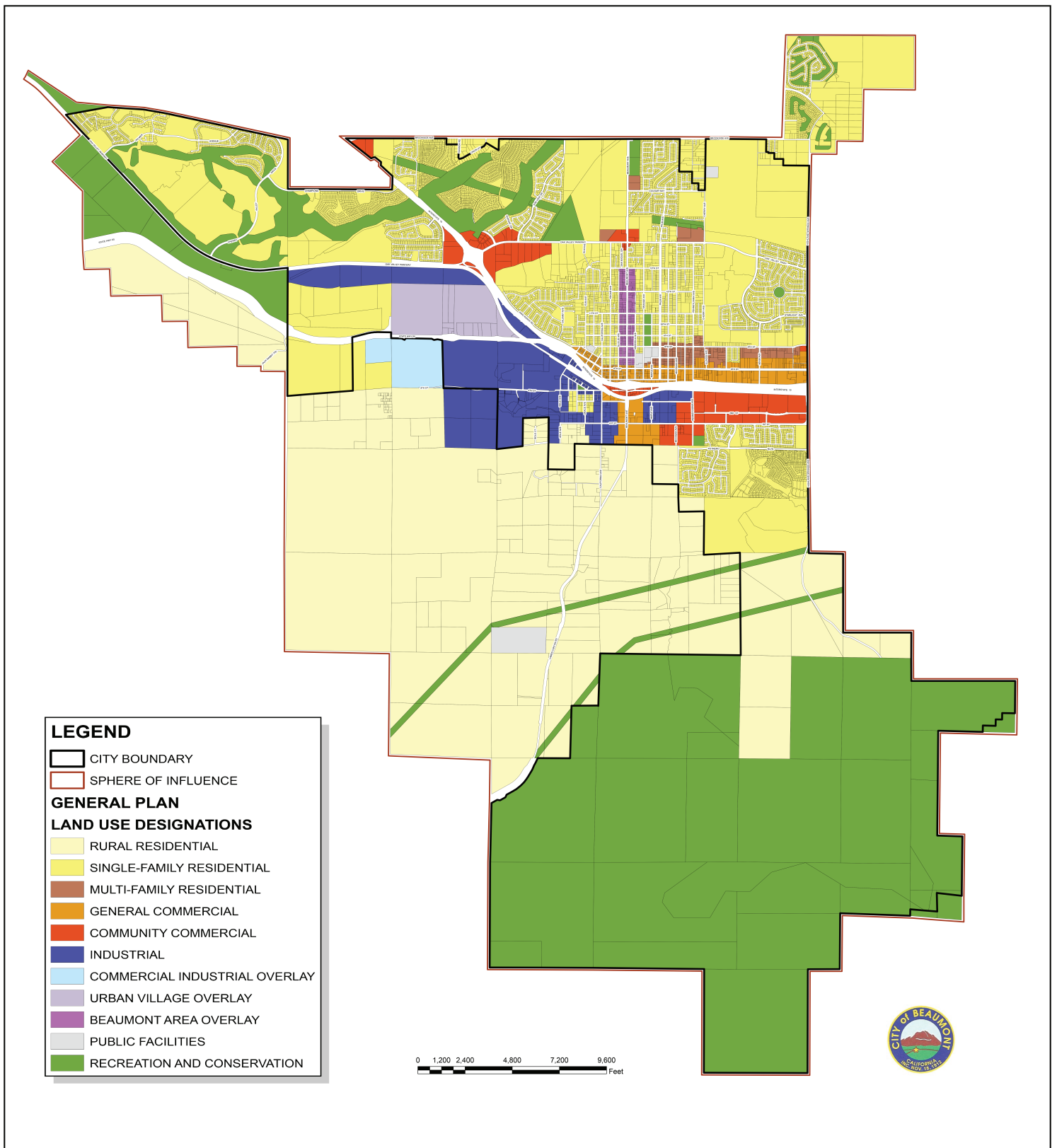


Figure 8-1 - Existing 2007 General Plan
City of Beaumont General Plan Update



Page intentionally left blank

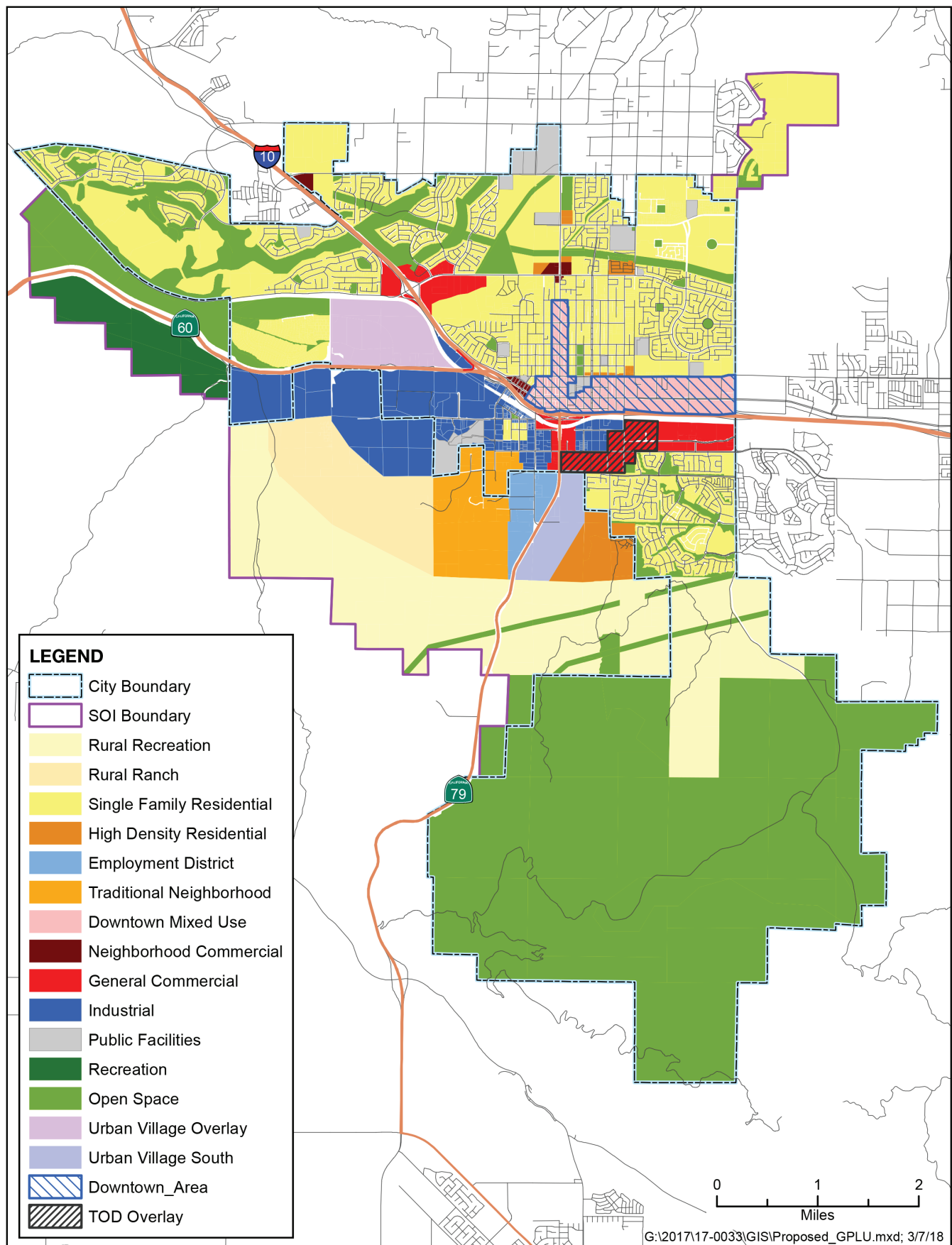


Figure 8-2 - Alternative 2 - Increased Recreation

City of Beaumont General Plan Update



Page intentionally left blank

8.5 Comparison of Alternatives

Table 8-B – Comparison of Alternatives Matrix, below, compares the potential environmental impacts of each alternative and ranks each alternative as **less**, **same**, or **greater** in comparison to the significance determinations that the proposed Project would have with respect to each issue area.

Table 8-B – Comparison of Alternatives Matrix

Environmental Issue – Project Significance	Proposed Project	Alternative 1 No Project/Existing 2007 General Plan	Alternative 2 Increased Recreation
Air Quality – Significant and Unavoidable	The Project would violate air quality standards or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation; would result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the Project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard (including releasing emissions which exceed quantitative thresholds for ozone precursors); and potentially expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations;	Greater – Although potentially less development than the Project, under the Existing General Plan, there would still be land use to generate air quality impacts related to increased traffic and the potential for TACs to be generated from non-residential projects in proximity to residential projects. Additionally, vehicle miles traveled (VMT) per service population from the 2007 General Plan would increase by 22.4 miles (see Table 5.16-B) compared to the Project which increases air emissions. Therefore, impacts would be greater than the Project.	Slightly Greater – Air quality impacts would be slightly less than that of the proposed Project due to the change in land use and associated reductions in daily vehicle trips from Rural Residential to Recreation. However, the Recreational uses under this Alternative would also create vehicle trips that would generate air quality emissions from people traveling to use the area and from the off road vehicles that would be using the site. The off road vehicles that could use the Recreational areas could potentially have worse air quality impacts than regular vehicles associated with a residential land use because they typically have less air quality emission prevention technologies and pollute more emissions than regular cars. Under this Alternative, the impacts associated from future uses and TAC exposure would most likely be the same as those encountered by the Project. Under this Alternative, impacts are significant and unavoidable.
Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions- Significant and Unavoidable	The Project would generate GHG emissions, either directly or indirectly, that significant impact on the environment; because GHG standards will be exceeded	Greater –GHG emissions would increase but under the 2007 General Plan there would be less intensity and units than proposed by the Project, thereby resulting in	Same – This Alternative would result in about the same GHG emissions since it would eliminate about 550 acres of Rural residential land uses, however, with this area being

Table 8-B – Comparison of Alternatives Matrix

Environmental Issue – Project Significance	Proposed Project	Alternative 1 No Project/Existing 2007 General Plan	Alternative 2 Increased Recreation
	by future growth.	less GHG emissions from new residential and nonresidential uses. However, VMT per service population from the 2007 General Plan would increase by 22.4 miles (see Table 5.16-B) compared to the Project, which would result in increased GHG emissions in comparison to the Project. Therefore, impacts would be greater than the Project.	designated for Recreation, it would generate trips from both inside the City and from other communities. Therefore, the overall GHG emissions most likely would not be much different from the proposed Project. Under this Alternative, impacts remain significant and unavoidable.
Noise – Significant and Unavoidable	The Project would contribute to permanent increased noise levels from roadways due to increased traffic and exceed threshold for noise levels resulting in significant and unavoidable impacts after mitigation.	Same – Most area roadways are already exceeding noise standards in close proximity to the roadway. Under the current 2007 General Plan, these noise levels would be expected to result in the same conditions. Impacts would remain significant and unavoidable.	Same – Most area roadways are already exceeding noise standards in close proximity to the roadway. Even with changing the approximately 550 acres from Rural Residential to Recreation under this Alternative, these noise levels would be expected to result in the same conditions as the Project and would remain significant and unavoidable.
Transportation – Significant and Unavoidable	The Project would generate 29.7 VMT per service population in the Planning Area. There are no feasible mitigations available to mitigate impacts to less than significant levels. Therefore Project-related Impacts would be significant and unavoidable.	Greater – The TIA prepared for the PEIR included a VMT per service population calculation for the 2007 General Plan (see Table 5.16-B) and determined that the 2007 General Plan would generate 52.1 VMT per service population in the Planning Area. This is more than the Beaumont 2040 Plan, which would generate 29.7 VMT per service population in the Planning Area. Impacts would be greater and significant and unavoidable.	Same – This Alternative would reduce residential units in the Planning Area, hence reducing service population. The recreational uses proposed under this alternative would decrease the daily trips in this traffic analysis zone; however, because there are a number of off-road vehicle (ORV) parks that operate within unincorporated Riverside County, it is assumed that this Alternative would not substantially change VMT within the WRCOG area (see Table 5.16-D). Therefore, the VMT impacts would be expected to result in similar conditions as the Project and

Table 8-B – Comparison of Alternatives Matrix

Environmental Issue – Project Significance	Proposed Project	Alternative 1 No Project/Existing 2007 General Plan	Alternative 2 Increased Recreation
			remain significant and unavoidable.
Environmentally Superior to Proposed Project?	Not applicable	No –Alternative 1 would have the same impacts as the Project related to noise. It would create more VMT and the resulting increases in air quality and GHG impacts than the proposed Project because the current 2007 General Plan does not include policies related to non-vehicular transportation priorities and has less dense land uses in the areas near commercial and office land uses. For this reason, the increase in VMT, this Alternative would not be environmentally superior to the Project.	No – Alternative 2 would not be considered Environmentally Superior to the Project because it will result in the same GHG, noise and transportation impacts as the Project. The reason why it is not environmentally superior is that it does slightly increase air quality impacts from the Project because it would introduce active recreational activities such as off-road vehicles which typically have less air quality emission prevention technologies and pollute more emissions than regular cars. .
Meets Project Objectives?	Yes	No – This Alternative would not meet the project objectives as it is an outdated vision for the City on the types of development patterns and goals for the future planning.	Yes – Changing the approximately 500-acre area from Rural Residential still result in most of the objectives for the rest of the General Plan to be met. This Alternative would solidly meet the Objective of providing a diverse network of open space.

8.6 Environmentally Superior Alternative

As stated above in **Table 8-B**, neither of the Alternatives would be considered environmentally superior to the Project. Alternative 1, the Existing 2007 General Plan/No Project Alternative would have the same and somewhat more impacts because it does not include the density concentrations near commercial/office land uses, nor the alternative transportation method policies that the Project has. Under the Existing 2007 General Plan, VMT and the associated air quality and GHG emissions would be higher. Additionally, none of the Project Objectives are met by Alternative 1.

Although Alternative 2 would meet almost all of the Project Objectives, the land use change of making approximately 550 acres Recreation instead of Rural Residential, would decrease the daily trips in this traffic analysis zone; however, there would be still be trips generated for recreational purposes . The

alternative would also increase active recreation uses such as off-road vehicles that could also create air quality emissions that would be worse than regular passenger cars.

The proposed Project is thus the Environmentally Superior Alternative in that it results in the lowest level of significant and unavoidable impacts and best achieves the Project Objectives relative to the other Alternatives considered.

Remainder of page intentionally left blank