

Section 6.0
**ALTERNATIVES TO THE
PROPOSED PROJECT**





6.0 ALTERNATIVES TO THE PROPOSED PROJECT

In accordance with *CEQA Guidelines* Section 15126.6, the following section describes a range of reasonable alternatives to the proposed project, which could feasibly attain most of the basic objectives of the proposed project but would avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects of the proposed project. The evaluation considers the comparative merits of each alternative. The analysis focuses on alternatives capable of avoiding significant environmental effects or reducing them to less than significant levels, even if these alternatives would impede, to some degree, the attainment of the proposed project objectives. Potential environmental impacts associated with four separate alternatives are compared to impacts from the proposed project.

A Draft Environmental Impact Report was prepared and circulated for public review from November 14, 2005 through December 29, 2005. Since the issuance of the original Notice of Preparation and release of the Draft Environmental Impact Report in 2004 and 2005, respectively, the project applicant has since changed the project description to respond to comments raised by the Planning Commission and the community. The alternatives analyzed in the November 2005 Draft EIR included:

- ◆ No Project/No Development Alternative;
- ◆ Alternative One (Reduced Development); and
- ◆ Alternative Two (Reduced Height Western Edge).

As noted above, the project applicant has revised the project description, which is analyzed in this EIR. As a result of those changes, Alternative Two in the November 2005 Draft EIR is no longer a feasible alternative and a new Alternative Two has been developed for this Draft EIR. The No Project/No Development Alternative and Alternative One (Reduced Development) are still feasible alternatives.

The alternatives include:

- ◆ No Project/No Development Alternative;
- ◆ Alternative One (Reduced Development); and
- ◆ Alternative Two (Reduced Height McBean Parkway).

A comparison of the proposed project with the alternatives is provided in *Table 6-1, Comparison of Proposed Project and Alternatives*.



**Table 6-1
Comparison of Proposed Project and Alternatives**

	Proposed Project	No Project/No Development	Alternative One	Alternative Two
Medical Office Building (s.f.)	357,861	97,081	227,471	292,666
Hospital Patient and Administrative Facilities (s.f.)	558,750	235,911	397,331	558,750
Hospital Beds	470	230	350	470
Rooftop Heliport	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Floor Area Ratio (FAR)	0.69	0.25	0.47	0.64
Total Hospital Facilities (s.f.)	916,611	332,992	624,802	851,416

Throughout the following analysis, impacts of alternatives are examined for each of the issue areas examined in Section 5.0 of this EIR. In this manner, each alternative can be compared to the proposed project on an issue-by-issue basis. Each alternative's impacts are compared to the proposed project. Table 6-2, Comparison of Alternatives, at the end of this section, provides an overview of the alternatives analyzed and a comparison of each alternative's impact in relation to the proposed project.

Only those impacts found significant and unavoidable are relevant in making the final determination of whether an alternative is environmentally superior or inferior to the proposed project. The proposed project would result in significant and unavoidable impacts in four environmental issue areas:

- ◆ Aesthetics, Light, and Glare
 - Long-Term Aesthetics Impacts
- ◆ Traffic and Circulation
 - Long-Term Project-Related Impacts
 - Long-Term Cumulative Impacts
 - Parking capacity impacts.
- ◆ Air Quality
 - Short-Term Construction Impacts (ROC, NO_x, and PM₁₀ emissions)
 - Conflicts with Adopted Air Quality Plans
- ◆ Solid Waste
 - Short-Term (Construction)
 - Long-term (Operational)
 - Cumulative Impacts

At the conclusion of the alternative analysis is the selection of the “environmentally superior” alternative, which is required by *CEQA*.



6.1 ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED BUT REJECTED FROM ANALYSIS

Alternatives to the proposed project that were considered but rejected included the (1) relocation of the existing hospital campus to a new hospital facility developed elsewhere in the Santa Clarita Valley, and (2) the acquisition of adjacent property to allow for expanded development.

Development of a new hospital elsewhere in the Santa Clarita Valley was determined not to be feasible because the HMNMH has significant investment in its current location, and this location is well suited to serve the Santa Clarita Valley's buildout. The hospital's current location sits on land dedicated for the facility more than 30 years ago. As such, the relocation of the hospital to a new location would require the abandonment of 30 years of investment in the existing hospital campus, and would require a substantial new investment in land and infrastructure for the new site. Additionally, HMNMH cannot consider a new location at the same time it is committed to providing necessary services at the Santa Clarita Valley's only hospital and 24-hour emergency room. Given the prohibitive costs associated with relocating the hospital to a new facility, this option was not considered a feasible alternative.

Acquisition of properties adjacent to the HMNMH medical campus was not further explored because the surrounding properties are currently developed with either single-family residential neighborhoods or medical office facilities. It is impractical to expand the current property ownership of the medical campus into residential neighborhoods, as this would result in the displacement of residents. This option would also not serve the purposes of providing efficient medical services should HMNMH consider expanding the campus, as the added property acquisition costs would limit the feasible expansion potential of hospital facilities to meet the growing needs of the Santa Clarita Valley. Additionally, this expansion of the campus into adjacent properties would not measurably reduce the impacts on aesthetics and views associated with the proposed Master Plan.

6.2 NO PROJECT/NO DEVELOPMENT ALTERNATIVE

6.2.1 DESCRIPTION OF ALTERNATIVE

The No Project/No Development Alternative assumes the Henry Mayo Newhall Memorial Hospital Master Plan would not be implemented and the proposed land uses and other improvements would not be constructed. The project site would remain unaltered and it is anticipated that the existing hospital and medical office facilities would continue to operate within their current capacity.

6.2.2 IMPACT COMPARISON TO THE PROPOSED PROJECT

LAND USE

The No Project/No Development Alternative does not involve any development proposals that would affect land use plans or policies of the City of Santa Clarita or other local and regional



agencies. The project site would retain its existing City *General Plan* land use and zoning designations for residential uses, and the existing Conditional Use Permit (CUP) for the facility would continue to be required for hospital and medical office uses within a residential zone and for building heights in excess of 35 feet. This Alternative would not create any potential inconsistencies with City or SCAG land use policies, nor would it create any new land use compatibility conflicts. Although land use impacts associated with the proposed project can be reduced to a level considered less than significant, the impacts associated with the No Project/No Development Alternative would be less in comparison. Therefore, the No Project/No Development Alternative would be considered environmentally superior to the proposed project in this regard.

POPULATION, EMPLOYMENT, AND HOUSING

The No Project/No Development Alternative would not result in development of an additional 260,780 square feet of medical office uses and 322,839 square feet of hospital uses on the project site. Without development of the additional medical office and hospital uses on-site, the population would not increase by 688 persons. Therefore, population impacts under this Alternative would be reduced. However, it should be noted that population impacts would be less than significant under the proposed project. This Alternative would not provide 890 additional employment opportunities, resulting in greater employment impacts. This Alternative would result in reduced housing impacts compared to the proposed project, as it would reduce the amount of residential units required for the anticipated increase in population in the region. Thus, the No Project/No Development Alternative would be considered environmentally superior to the proposed project due to the reduced population and housing impacts.

AESTHETICS AND VISUAL RESOURCES

The No Project/No Development Alternative would maintain the current views across the project site from off-site vantage points. The No Project/No Development Alternative would not further obstruct views of and across the project site with development of proposed uses. However, aesthetic improvements to the project site resulting from project implementation would not occur. Under the No Project/No Development Alternative no new light sources would be created. The No Project/No Development Alternative would be considered environmentally superior to the proposed project, since significant long-term aesthetics impacts would not occur, no views would be further obstructed, and there would be no new light and glare impacts.

TRAFFIC AND CIRCULATION

Existing morning and evening peak hour operating conditions were evaluated. The results of the analysis indicate that all of the study intersections are operating at an acceptable Level of Service (LOS). It is anticipated that this existing condition would continue with the No Project/No Development Alternative. The projected increase in average daily traffic (ADT) that is expected to occur with buildout of the proposed project (12,329 ADT) would not occur with this Alternative. Thus, because significant unavoidable traffic impacts would not occur, the No Project/No Development Alternative would be considered environmentally superior to the proposed project in this regard.



AIR QUALITY

Grading and construction activities associated with the proposed project would not occur with this Alternative. Emissions associated with construction equipment, which have been concluded to exceed SCAQMD construction thresholds for ROC, NO_x, and PM₁₀, would not occur, and operational emissions associated with the proposed Master Plan would also not occur. Implementation of the No Project/No Development Alternative would be consistent with the regional air quality plan, as it would not increase the intensity of land use at the project site beyond that anticipated in the City's *General Plan*, and would not result in significant cumulative air quality impacts. Therefore, the No Project/No Development Alternative would be considered environmentally superior to the proposed project since no construction or additional operational air emissions would occur.

NOISE

Under the No Project/No Development Alternative, no additional land uses would be developed within the project site. Nearby sensitive receptors would not be subjected to noise associated with construction activities, additional vehicular activity, or increased heliport operations. New stationary and mobile noise sources would not occur and ambient noise levels would not increase. Thus, the No Project/No Development Alternative would be considered environmentally superior to the proposed project in this regard.

GEOLOGY, SOILS, AND SEISMICITY

Implementation of the No Project/No Development Alternative would not expose additional people and structures to potential adverse effects associated with seismic activity, adverse soils or geologic conditions. As this Alternative would not involve any construction activities, potential soil erosion impacts would not occur. The No Project/No Development Alternative would be considered environmentally superior to the proposed project in this regard.

HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

The No Project/No Development Alternative would not increase the risks to on-site personnel and patients associated with hazardous materials use, handling, transport, or disposal, and would not relocate the existing heliport to a rooftop location. The current hazardous materials practices and programs implemented to minimize associated risks would not be modified, and the volume of associated materials and wastes would not notably change. The hazardous materials conditions at the hospital under the proposed project would remain essentially the same as under current conditions, based on cost trends and ever-improving programs intended to minimize the amount of hazardous materials and wastes produced on-site. As such, this Alternative would not result in a substantial reduction in risks associated with hazardous materials compared to the proposed project. Furthermore, the permanent relocation of the existing heliport would not occur under this Alternative, which would result in greater heliport-related hazards than the proposed project. As such, the No Project/No Development Alternative would be considered environmentally inferior with regard to hazards and hazardous materials.



HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

The No Project/No Development Alternative would not result in short-term impacts to water quality associated with demolition, grading, excavation, construction activities, and project operation since development of the proposed additional hospital and medical office uses would not occur. The existing quality and quantity of storm water and urban runoff would not change, since the project site would not be altered from its current condition. Thus, the No Project/No Development Alternative would be considered environmentally superior to the proposed project in this regard.

PUBLIC SERVICES AND UTILITIES

An increased demand for public services and utilities would not occur with the No Project/No Development Alternative, as no additional land uses would be developed within the project site. The significant impact from the creation of additional solid waste under the proposed project would not occur with this Alternative. The No Project/No Development Alternative would be considered environmentally superior to the proposed project in this regard.

ABILITY TO MEET PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The No Project/No Development Alternative would not implement the overall objective of the proposed project, which is to provide adequate hospital and medical office facilities to meet projected future demands within the Santa Clarita Valley and the remainder of the hospital's 680-square-mile service area. Under this Alternative, the proposed additional hospital and medical office uses would not be developed. Therefore, none of the project objectives identified Section 3.3, Project Objectives, would be met under the No Project/No Development Alternative.

6.3 ALTERNATIVE ONE (REDUCED DEVELOPMENT)

6.3.1 DESCRIPTION OF ALTERNATIVE

Alternative One (Reduced Development) would be similar to the proposed project in terms of land use types, but would reduce the additional medical office and associated hospital uses by 50 percent. The reduction in medical office uses requires a proportionate reduction in hospital uses, per hospital policy, because all physicians with offices on-site must also be resident physicians at the hospital. The decrease in medical office and hospital uses would be accomplished by either a reduction in proposed building heights or footprints, or elimination of one or more proposed structures. Consequently, this Alternative would result in a total of 227,471 square feet of medical office uses and 397,331 square feet of hospital uses, which yields approximately 350 hospital beds, for a total development buildout of 624,802 square feet. The on-site heliport would be relocated to the roof of one of the proposed patient towers, and a new central plant would also be constructed to serve the additional hospital and medical office uses. This Alternative would reduce hospital and medical office uses by 291,810 square feet relative to the proposed project, which is a 32-percent overall reduction in project development, and would result in a floor-area ratio (FAR) of 0.47 on-site.



6.3.2 IMPACT COMPARISON TO THE PROPOSED PROJECT

LAND USE

The Alternative One would develop the project site with a similar mix of land uses as the proposed project, but would be reduced in terms of overall density. Similar the proposed project, this Alternative would also require a CUP for hospital and medical office uses within a residential zone, as well as for building heights in excess of the 35-foot maximum. Given the mix of land uses and the reduction in overall intensity of development, this Alternative would be consistent with applicable goals and policies of the City's *General Plan* and *Unified Development Code*, similar to the proposed project. Alternative One would also be consistent with the SCAG *Regional Comprehensive Plan and Guide* policies and *Compass Growth Visioning Program* strategies. In terms of land use and planning impacts, Alternative One would be considered neither environmentally superior nor inferior to the proposed project.

POPULATION, EMPLOYMENT, AND HOUSING

Alternative One would result in the addition of a total of 130,390 square feet of medical office uses and 161,420 square feet of hospital uses to the existing medical campus. Development of this Alternative would result in an increase of 432 employees (331 from medical office uses and 101 from hospital uses). Assuming that one-quarter of the employees relocate to the City, the increase in employees would yield a total of project-related population increase of 333 persons under this Alternative.¹ Alternative One would result in approximately 340 fewer persons compared to the proposed project as a result of 438 fewer employment positions being created. While this Alternative would result in fewer employment positions, it would slightly reduce the number of people relocating to the City and thus, reduce the population increase and demand on housing. Thus, Alternative One would be considered neither environmentally superior nor inferior to the proposed project in this regard.

AESTHETICS AND VISUAL RESOURCES

Alternative One would result in either greater open space acreage or lower building heights relative to the proposed project, which would allow for greater retention of views of and across the project site. The short-term impacts associated with construction activities would be reduced under this Alternative, as it would result in less intensity of construction activities and associated equipment, and possibly a reduced construction schedule. Architectural design, landscaping, and other visual relief features of the project would still be provided, as required by City standards, although a significant unavoidable long-term aesthetic impact would still occur. Because the obstruction of views of and across the site would be reduced relative to the proposed project, Alternative One would be considered environmentally superior to the proposed project in this regard.

¹ This assumes that one-quarter of the 432 employees would be relocated to the City, resulting in a demand of 108 residential units. Assuming a household size of 3.087, this would result in a population increase of 333 persons.



TRAFFIC AND CIRCULATION

Development under this Alternative would be similar to that of the proposed project, but proposed additional hospital and medical office uses would be reduced by 50 percent, which would yield a reduction of 130,390 square feet of medical office uses and 161,420 square feet of hospital uses. As such, Alternative One would result in 4,711 fewer medical office-related and 2,836 fewer hospital-related vehicle trips than the proposed project. However, mitigation measures would still be required to reduce impacts to the extent feasible, as with the proposed project, but significant unavoidable impacts would still occur at the eastbound approach to the McBean Parkway/Orchard Village Road intersection and the eastbound and westbound approaches to the Magic Mountain Parkway/Valencia Boulevard intersection due to right-of-way constraints. Additionally, significant parking capacity impacts could still occur under this Alternative, but would be reduced compared to the proposed project. Impacts to the public transit system would also be reduced under this Alternative, due to the lower intensity of development on-site. Thus, Alternative One would be considered environmentally superior to the proposed project in this regard.

AIR QUALITY

Short-term construction impacts would be reduced under this Alternative with development of 50 percent less hospital and medical office uses. However, ROC, NO_x, and PM₁₀ emissions would still exceed SCAQMD daily emissions thresholds during construction activities, resulting in significant short-term air quality impacts. Operational mobile-source (vehicular) emissions would be substantially reduced under this Alternative relative to the proposed project, and impacts would remain less than significant. As with the proposed project, this Alternative would result in less than significant impacts in regards to CO "hot spot" impacts. Despite the reduction in development intensity relative to the proposed project, this Alternative would not be consistent with the regional air quality management plan, since any growth beyond what currently exists on-site has not been accounted for in the City's *General Plan*. However, this Alternative, similar to the proposed project, would not result in significant cumulative air quality impacts. Although significant and unavoidable air quality impacts would occur under this Alternative, Alternative One would be considered environmentally superior to the proposed project in this regard, due to the reduced construction activities and vehicle trips.

NOISE

Development of this Alternative would result in a reduction of the length of the construction period due to the reduction in additional hospital and medical office uses. However, mitigation measures would still be required to reduce construction noise impacts to less than significant levels. Similarly, although this Alternative would result in a reduction of mobile-source noise levels compared to the proposed project, mitigation measures would be required to reduce mobile noise impacts to less than significant. Heliport-related noise impacts would be less than significant and similar to those of the proposed project, although the ultimate intensity of heliport operations would be expected to be reduced under this Alternative, given the reduction in overall development (and associated patient capacity). As with the proposed project, stationary noise impacts would be considered less than significant. Alternative One would be considered environmentally superior to the proposed project in this regard.



GEOLOGY, SOILS, AND SEISMICITY

Implementation of Alternative One would not expose people and/or structures to subsurface fault rupture or seismic groundshaking as no known active or potentially active faults exists within, or project onto, the project site. Development of this Alternative would reduce risks to on-site employees and patients with respect to ground failure, expansive soils, and corrosive soils but would still require mitigation measures to reduce impacts to less than significant. All other geology and soils impacts would remain less than significant under Alternative One, although the overall reduction in intensity of land use on-site would present a lower risk than the proposed project. Thus, Alternative One would be considered environmentally superior to the proposed project in this regard.

HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Alternative One would not increase risks to personnel and patients associated with hazardous materials use, handling, transport, or disposal. The current hazardous materials practices and programs implemented to minimize associated risks would not be modified under this Alternative, and the volume of associated materials and wastes would not notably change, despite the reduction in proposed development. The hazardous materials conditions at the hospital under the proposed project would remain essentially the same as under current conditions, based on cost trends and ever-improving programs intended to minimize the amount of hazardous materials and wastes produced on-site. As such, this Alternative would not result in a substantial reduction in risks associated with hazardous materials compared to the proposed project. Furthermore, the relocation of the existing heliport would also occur under this Alternative, which would result in comparable heliport-related hazards than the proposed project. As such, Alternative One would be considered neither environmentally superior nor inferior to the proposed project with regard to hazards and hazardous materials.

HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

Despite the reduced development under this Alternative, impacts regarding drainage, hydrology, floodplain, and water quality would be only slightly reduced, if at all, compared to the proposed project. As with the proposed project, hydrology and drainage impacts would be less than significant, but mitigation measures would still be required to reduce water quality impacts to a less than significant level. As such, given the similarity in impervious surface area and required water quality control measures, Alternative One would be considered neither environmentally superior nor inferior to the proposed project.

PUBLIC SERVICES AND UTILITIES

This Alternative would result in an incremental reduction in demand for water, fire protection and sheriff services, school facilities, electricity and natural gas, and would reduce the amount of solid waste requiring disposal at local and regional landfills. Impacts related to electricity and natural gas would be reduced under Alternative One, and would be less than significant, similar to the proposed project. As is the case with the proposed project, impacts related to water supply, fire protection and sheriff services, and schools would be less than significant with implementation of applicable mitigation measures, including payment of fees to affected agencies, although the impacts would be reduced given the overall reduction in development. Impacts to solid waste facilities under this



Alternative would remain significant and unavoidable with implementation of mitigation measures, like the proposed project, although the reduction in development intensity would result in an incremental reduction in solid waste generation. Given that this Alternative would create fewer demands for public services and utilities, it would be considered environmentally superior to the proposed project.

6.3.3 ABILITY TO MEET PROJECT OBJECTIVES

Alternative One would implement the overall objective of the proposed project, which is to provide adequate hospital and medical office facilities to meet projected future demands within the Santa Clarita Valley and the remainder of the hospital's 680-square-mile service area. Under this Alternative, additional hospital and medical office uses would be developed, which would serve to meet growing regional demand for health care services, but it would not address long-term growth to the same extent as the proposed project. Although this Alternative would meet the basic objectives of the proposed project, it would not achieve the required long-term patient capacity through the year 2030, as does the proposed project. Therefore, all but one of the project objectives identified Section 3.3, Project Objectives, would be met under Alternative One.

6.4 ALTERNATIVE TWO (REDUCED HEIGHT MCBEAN PARKWAY)

6.4.1 DESCRIPTION OF ALTERNATIVE

Alternative Two (Reduced Height McBean Parkway) would be similar to the proposed project in terms of land use types, but would reduce building heights of the proposed medical office buildings and parking structures along the McBean Parkway corridor to a maximum of 35 feet and reduce the overall square footage of proposed medical office uses by 25 percent. Although not consistent with hospital policy, as discussed under Alternative One, the reduction in medical office uses would not be accompanied by a reduction in hospital-related uses. As such, along the McBean Parkway frontage, medical office buildings would be a maximum of two stories and parking structures would be a maximum of three levels above ground. The overall reduction of medical office uses and associated parking would correspond to the reduction in structural heights along the McBean Parkway frontage, therefore the height and footprints of other proposed structures would not be changed relative to the proposed project. As such, all other structures within the interior of the site would not be increased in height or footprint, and would continue to be a maximum of 85 feet in height, as is the case with the proposed project. Consequently, this Alternative would result in a total of 292,666 square feet of medical office uses and 558,750 square feet of hospital uses, which yields approximately 470 hospital beds, for a total development buildout of 851,416 square feet. The on-site heliport would be relocated to the roof of the proposed patient tower (Patient Building A), and a new central plant addition would also be constructed to serve the additional hospital and medical office uses. This Alternative would reduce medical office uses by 65,195 square feet relative to the proposed project, which is an 11 percent overall reduction in new project-related development, and would result in a floor-area ratio (FAR) of 0.64 on-site.



6.4.2 IMPACT COMPARISON TO THE PROPOSED PROJECT

LAND USE

Under Alternative Two, the project would still require a CUP for hospital and medical office uses within a residential zone, as well as for building heights in excess of the 35-foot maximum. This Alternative would result in the same type of development at the site as the proposed project, although the focus of development would be at the center and rear of the site (relative to the front of the site along McBean Parkway). Given the same overall amount and type of development on-site, it is anticipated that this Alternative would be consistent with applicable goals and policies of the City's *General Plan* and *Unified Development Code*, as well as applicable SCAG regional policies and strategies. Implementation of this Alternative would result in similar land use and planning impacts compared to the proposed project, since the CUP would still be required for hospital and medical office uses and building heights. Because land use impacts would be similar under this Alternative, Alternative Two would be considered neither environmentally superior nor inferior to the proposed project in this regard.

POPULATION, EMPLOYMENT, AND HOUSING

As is the case with the proposed project, Alternative Two would result in development of an additional 195,585 square feet of medical office uses and 322,839 square feet of hospital uses on the project site. Development of the additional medical office and hospital uses on-site would result in a population increase of 543 persons, would provide 704 additional employment opportunities (496 from medical office uses and 208 from hospital uses), and would create a demand for an additional 176 housing units. This Alternative would result in slight reduction in the population increase and associated need for housing, but would have increased employment impacts compared to the proposed project, as this alternative would provide fewer medical office-related employment opportunities. However, the City and region are able to support an increase in population, provide housing for the residents, and support an increase in employment opportunities. Therefore, Alternative Two would be considered neither environmentally superior nor inferior to the proposed project in this regard.

AESTHETICS AND VISUAL RESOURCES

Alternative Two would result in reduced overall intensity of development at the project site, and would reduce the development intensity along the McBean Parkway corridor. Building heights and footprint areas at the center and rear of the site would be maintained, but heights of medical office and parking structures along the site frontage would be reduced to below 35 feet, which would serve to provide visual relief for properties to the south and east of the project site. The short-term impacts associated with construction activities would be reduced relative to the proposed project under this Alternative, as it would result in less overall intensity and duration of development. The decrease in building heights along the site frontage on McBean Parkway would reduce the visual impact of the development compared to the proposed project, as it would reduce the obstruction of views of the project site's interior. Development of this Alternative would provide hospital and medical office uses on the site at a floor-area ratio of 0.64:1, which would be less than that of the proposed project, and would provide for an increase in unobstructed views of and across the site from the residential neighborhoods across McBean Parkway, although impacts to views of and



across the project site would remain significant and unavoidable. However, Alternative Two would be considered environmentally superior to the proposed project in this regard.

TRAFFIC AND CIRCULATION

Development of an additional 195,585 square feet of medical office uses and 322,839 square feet of hospital uses would result in a reduction of 2,356 medical office-related vehicle trips (hospital-related trips would be the same as under the proposed project). Impacts to local roadways, the Los Angeles County Congestion Management Program, and public transit system would be incrementally reduced relative to the proposed project under this Alternative, and impacts would be less than significant with mitigation. Mitigation measures would still be required to reduce impacts to intersections to the extent feasible, as with the proposed project, but significant unavoidable impacts would still occur at the eastbound approach to the McBean Parkway/Orchard Village Road intersection and the eastbound and westbound approaches to the Magic Mountain Parkway/Valencia Boulevard intersection due to right-of-way constraints. These impacts would occur under both the proposed project and Alternative Two, due to right-of-way constraints on the south side of McBean Parkway west of Orchard Village Road, and on both sides of Magic Mountain Parkway at Valencia Boulevard. Additionally, significant parking capacity impacts would still occur under this Alternative, but would be reduced compared to the proposed project. However, Alternative Two would be considered environmentally superior to the proposed project in this regard.

AIR QUALITY

Given the reduction in intensity of development, short-term construction and long-term operational emissions would be incrementally reduced under this Alternative as compared the proposed project. Alternative Two would not be consistent with the regional air quality management plan, as is the case with the proposed project, based on the growth anticipated in the City's *General Plan*. Although the proposed project and this Alternative would both result in significant short-term air pollutant emissions impacts, and conflicts with the regional air quality management plan, Alternative Two would be considered environmentally superior to the proposed project in this regard.

NOISE

Development of this Alternative would result in a reduced level of development intensity and length of construction period compared to the proposed project. Mitigation measures would still be required to reduce construction noise impacts to less than significant. This Alternative would result in a reduced level of traffic-related mobile-source noise levels compared to the proposed project, though mitigation measures would still be required to reduce mobile-source noise impacts to less than significant. Heliport-related noise would be less than significant, as is the case with the proposed project. Stationary-source noise impacts would also remain less than significant under this Alternative. Overall, this Alternative would result in reduced noise impacts when compared to the proposed project, and therefore Alternative Two would be considered environmentally superior to the proposed project in this regard.



GEOLOGY, SOILS, AND SEISMICITY

Implementation of Alternative Two would not expose people and/or structures to subsurface fault rupture or seismic groundshaking as no known active or potentially active faults exist within, or project onto, the project site. Development of this Alternative would present incrementally lower risks to on-site employees and patients (given the reduced development and associated numbers of employees and patients on-site at any given time) with respect to ground failure, expansive soils, and corrosive soils, but would still require mitigation measures to reduce impacts to less than significant. All other geology and soils impacts would remain less than significant under Alternative Two. Thus, Alternative Two would be considered environmentally superior to the proposed project in this regard.

HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Alternative Two would not increase risks to personnel and patients associated with hazardous materials use, handling, transport, or disposal. The current hazardous materials practices and programs implemented to minimize associated risks would not be modified under this Alternative, similar to the proposed project, and the volume of associated materials and wastes would not be notably reduced, based on the same type and intensity of proposed development. The hazardous materials conditions at the hospital under the proposed project would remain essentially the same as under current conditions, based on cost trends and ever-improving programs intended to minimize the amount of hazardous materials and wastes produced on-site. As such, this Alternative would result in comparable risks associated with hazardous materials compared to the proposed project. Furthermore, the relocation of the existing heliport would also occur under this Alternative, which would result in similar heliport-related hazards than the proposed project. As such, Alternative Two would be considered neither environmentally superior nor inferior to the proposed project with regard to hazards and hazardous materials.

HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

Despite the reduced overall development intensity of this Alternative, the impervious surface area would not change compared to the proposed project, since building heights would be reduced but footprints would remain the same. As such, impacts regarding drainage, hydrology, floodplains, and water quality are anticipated to be comparable to the proposed project. Therefore, hydrology and drainage impacts would remain less than significant, as under the proposed project, while mitigation measures would still be required to reduce water quality impacts to a less than significant level, in compliance with NPDES permit requirements. Thus, Alternative Two would be considered neither environmentally superior nor inferior to the proposed project in this regard.

PUBLIC SERVICES AND UTILITIES

Relative to the proposed project, this Alternative would result in an incrementally reduced demand for water, fire protection and sheriff services, school facilities, electricity and natural gas, and the amount of solid waste requiring disposal at local and regional landfills. Impacts related to electricity and natural gas would also be reduced compared to those for the proposed project, and would also be less than significant. As is the case with the proposed project, impacts related to water supply, fire protection and sheriff services, and schools would be less than significant with implementation of applicable mitigation measures, including payment of fees to affected agencies. Impacts to solid



waste facilities under this Alternative would remain significant and unavoidable with implementation of mitigation measures, like the proposed project. However, given that this Alternative would create lower demands for public services and utilities, it would be considered environmentally superior to the proposed project in this regard.

ABILITY TO MEET PROJECT OBJECTIVES

Alternative Two would implement the overall objective of the proposed project, which is to provide adequate hospital and medical office facilities to meet projected future demands within the Santa Clarita Valley and the remainder of the hospital's 680-square-mile service area. However, under this Alternative, the additional medical office uses would be developed with less intensity than under the proposed project. As such, while the development under Alternative Two would meet the projected long-term hospital-related demands for the Santa Clarita Valley, it would not meet the projected on-site medical office-related demands, based on projected regional growth trends. This Alternative would generally meet the objectives of the proposed project, but it would not address long-term growth to the same extent as the proposed project. Therefore, nearly all of the project objectives identified Section 3.3, Project Objectives, would be met under Alternative Two.

6.5 ENVIRONMENTALLY SUPERIOR ALTERNATIVE

CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6 indicates that if the No Project Alternative is the Environmentally Superior Alternative, then the EIR shall also identify an environmentally superior alternative among the other alternatives.

The context of an environmentally superior alternative for this EIR is based on the consideration of several factors including the project's objectives, as described in Section 3.3, Project Objectives, and the alternative's ability to fulfill the objectives with minimal impacts to the surrounding environment.

6.5.1 NO PROJECT/NO DEVELOPMENT ALTERNATIVE

The No Project/No Development Alternative results in fewer impacts to land use; population, housing, and employment; aesthetics, light, and glare; traffic and circulation; air quality; noise; geology and soils; hydrology and water quality, and public services and utilities. However, this Alternative would result in an increase in impacts regarding hazards and hazardous materials.

The No Project/No Development Alternative would not implement the overall objective of the proposed project, which is to provide adequate hospital and medical office facilities to meet projected future demands within the Santa Clarita Valley and the remainder of the hospital's 680-square-mile service area. Under this Alternative, the proposed additional hospital and medical office uses would not be developed. Therefore, none of the project objectives identified Section 3.3, Project Objectives, would be met under the No Project/No Development Alternative.



6.5.2 ALTERNATIVE ONE (REDUCED DEVELOPMENT)

Alternative One would reduce impacts to aesthetics/light and glare; traffic and circulation; air quality, noise; geology and soils; and public services and utilities. However, this Alternative would result in comparable impacts to land use; population, housing, and employment; hazards and hazardous materials; and hydrology and water quality. Significant and unavoidable impacts would still occur with respect to aesthetics/light and glare; traffic and circulation; air quality; and public services and utilities.

Alternative One would implement the overall objective of the proposed project, which is to provide adequate hospital and medical office facilities to meet projected future demands within the Santa Clarita Valley and the remainder of the hospital's 680-square-mile service area. Under this Alternative, the additional hospital and medical office uses would be developed, which would serve to meet growing regional demand for health care services, but it would not address long-term growth to the same extent as the proposed project. Although this Alternative would meet the basic objectives of the proposed project, it would not achieve the required long-term patient capacity through the year 2030, as does the proposed project. Therefore, all but one of the project objectives identified Section 3.3, Project Objectives, would be met under Alternative One.

6.5.3 ALTERNATIVE TWO (REDUCED HEIGHT MCBEAN PARKWAY)

Alternative Two would result in comparable impacts to land use, hazards and hazardous materials, and hydrology and water quality. Significant and unavoidable impacts would still occur with respect to aesthetics, light, and glare; traffic and circulation; air quality; and public services and utilities.

Alternative Two would implement the overall objective of the proposed project, which is to provide adequate hospital and medical office facilities to meet projected future demands within the Santa Clarita Valley and the remainder of the hospital's 680-square-mile service area. However, under this Alternative, the additional medical office uses would be developed with less intensity than under the proposed project. As such, while the development under Alternative Two would meet the projected long-term hospital-related demands for the Santa Clarita Valley, it would not meet the projected on-site medical office-related demands, based on projected regional growth trends. This Alternative would generally meet the objectives of the proposed project, but it would not address long-term growth to the same extent as the proposed project. Therefore, nearly all of the project objectives identified Section 3.3, Project Objectives, would be met under Alternative Two.

6.5.4 ENVIRONMENTALLY SUPERIOR ALTERNATIVE

As noted above, the determination of an environmentally superior alternative is based on the consideration of how the alternative fulfills the project objectives and how the alternative either reduces significant, unavoidable impacts or substantially reduces the impacts to the surrounding environment. In consideration of these factors, Alternative Two is selected as the Environmentally Superior Alternative to the proposed project.



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Alternative Two results in less development and reduces building heights along the project site frontage, and thus reduces the significant aesthetics, light, and glare; traffic and circulation; air quality; and public services and utilities impacts, though these impacts would remain significant and unavoidable. Furthermore, Alternative Two meets nearly all of the project objectives, as it provides expanded hospital and medical office facilities to meet projected future demands within the Santa Clarita Valley and the remainder of the hospital's 680-square-mile service area, though not to the 2030 growth horizon.

**Table 6-2
Comparison of Alternatives**

	No Project/No Development	Alternative One	Alternative Two
Land Use	▲	=	=
Population, Housing, Employment	▲	=	=
Aesthetics/Light and Glare	▲	▲	▲
Traffic and Circulation	▲	▲	▲
Air Quality	▲	▲	▲
Noise	▲	▲	▲
Geology, Soils, and Seismicity	▲	▲	▲
Hazards and Hazardous Materials	▼	=	=
Hydrology and Water Quality	▲	=	=
Public Services and Utilities	▲	▲	▲
= Indicates an impact that is equal to the proposed projects (neither environmentally superior or inferior). ▼ Indicates an impact that is greater than the proposed projects (environmentally inferior). ▲ Indicates an impact that is less than the proposed projects (environmentally superior).			