



Nissan of Santa Cruz Project

RECIRCULATED PARTIAL DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

State Clearinghouse #2017072002

Prepared by:

**County of Santa Cruz
Planning Department**

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July 2019

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Recirculated
Partial Draft Environmental Impact Report

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With Assistance From

DUDEK

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ADT	Average Daily Trips
AMBAG	Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments
APN	Assessor Parcel Number
Caltrans	California Department of Transportation
C-C	Community Commercial General Plan Designation
CCR	California Code of Regulations
CEQA	California Environmental Quality Act
C-N	Neighborhood Commercial General Plan Designation
C-O	Administrative Office General Plan Designation
C-S	Service Commercial General Plan Designation
dB	Decibels
dBA	Decibels using the A-weighted sound pressure level
DTSC	Department of Toxic Substance Control
GHG	Greenhouse Gas
HCM	Highway Capacity Manual
LOS	Level of Service
MOEs	Measures of Effectiveness
NOP	Notice of Preparation
O-U	Open Space Urban General Plan Designation
PRC	California Public Resources Code
SSCCP	Sustainable Santa Cruz County Plan
TIA	Traffic Impact Assessment
VMT	Vehicle Miles Traveled



1.1 BACKGROUND

An Environmental Impact Report (EIR) was prepared by the County of Santa Cruz (hereinafter “County”) for the proposed Nissan of Santa Cruz Project (hereinafter “Project”). The Project consists of construction of a new 22,547 square foot Nissan automobile dealership on an approximate 2.5-acre site located at the southwest corner of the intersection of Soquel Drive and 41st Avenue in the unincorporated community of Soquel in Santa Cruz County. An overview of the Project is provided in subsection 1.4. (See Figures 1 and 2 at the end of this section for Project location maps.)

The County of Santa Cruz is the lead agency for the Project. A Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) was prepared and circulated for a 45-day public review period between December 27, 2017 and February 12, 2018, which was later extended to February 20, 2018. After the close of the public review period, a Final EIR consisting of responses to comments and changes to the Draft EIR was completed and was released to the public on April 13, 2018. The Planning Commission held a public hearing on April 25, 2018 and recommended certification of the EIR and Project approval to the Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors. The Board of Supervisors held a public hearing on May 22, 2018 at which time it certified the EIR and approved the Project.

Subsequent to the certification of the EIR by the County, a lawsuit was filed challenging the adequacy of the EIR and its certification. On March 8, 2019, the Superior Court of the State of California for the County of Santa Cruz (hereinafter “Court”) ruled that the EIR adequately discussed and analyzed the Project’s impacts on traffic and noise; that the methodology and baseline used to analyze traffic impacts is supported by substantial evidence; that the EIR was not required to respond to the comments cited by the Petitioner as they did not include facts or expert opinion and therefore did not raise a significant environmental effect; that the EIR was not legally required to analyze the Project’s consistency with the Sustainable Santa Cruz County Plan (SSCCP); that with augmentation of the Administrative Record and the lodging of a certified addendum to the Administrative Record, the Administrative Record is sufficiently complete; and that the Petitioner’s argument that staff was “working behind the scene” to facilitate approval of the Project was not properly before the court.

The Court did find that the EIR failed to discuss and analyze a reasonable range of feasible alternatives that could avoid or lessen the Project’s significant environmental impact on traffic. The Court found that the EIR failed to satisfy the informational purpose of CEQA, and that the County as Respondent committed a prejudicial abuse of discretion by certifying an EIR that fails to comply with 14 CCR 15126.6(a) and (f).

On March 25, 2019, the Court issued a stipulation and peremptory writ of mandate in which the County was commanded to vacate and set aside approval of Resolution 129-2018 certifying the Final EIR and related Project approvals until the County “has complied with CEQA by analyzing a



reasonable range of feasible alternatives to the Project which could avoid or lessen one or more of the Project's identified significant impacts (i.e. impacts on traffic)".

On April 23, 2019, the County Board of Supervisors took action to set aside, invalidate and void Board approvals of Application 171179, Resolution 129-2018 and Ordinance 5274, pursuant to the directive of the writ issued by the Court. This action directed the County to rescind all final approvals related to the Project, to set aside the certification of the EIR, and to take corrective action as necessary to address the CEQA violation identified by the Court. The County has undertaken revisions to the EIR in response to the Court's mandate.

1.2 REVISIONS TO EIR

This document revises the Alternatives section of the Draft EIR (Section 5.0) in accordance with the Court order. The conclusion of impact significance with implementation of Mitigation Measure TR-1 has been revised to reflect new information that has been provided since 2018. Specifically, the County has established a schedule and funding method for signalization of the Soquel Drive/Robertson Street intersection (County of Santa Cruz Department of Public Works, July 2019). Minor revisions are made in other sections of the EIR document to reflect the revisions to Alternatives and Mitigation Measure TR-1. All other sections of the Draft EIR, dated December 2017 and Final EIR, dated April 2018 remain unchanged.

1.3 ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW AND PROJECT APPROVAL PROCESS

1.3.1 Recirculation of an EIR

State CEQA Guidelines section 15088.5 requires a lead agency to recirculate an EIR when significant new information is included. As used in this section of the CEQA Guidelines, the term "information" can include changes in the project or environmental setting as well as additional data or other information. New information added to an EIR is not "significant" unless the EIR is changed in a way that deprives the public of a meaningful opportunity to comment upon a substantial adverse environmental effect of the project or a feasible way to mitigate or avoid such an effect. "Significant new information" requiring recirculation includes, for example, a disclosure showing that:

- (1) A new significant environmental impact would result from the project or from a new mitigation measure proposed to be implemented.
- (2) A substantial increase in the severity of an environmental impact would result unless mitigation measures are adopted that reduce the impact to a level of insignificance.
- (3) A feasible project alternative or mitigation measure considerably different from others previously analyzed would clearly lessen the environmental impacts of the project, but the project's proponents decline to adopt it.
- (4) The draft EIR was so fundamentally and basically inadequate and conclusory in nature that meaningful public review and comment were precluded.



In the present case, a Court order has been issued to revise the Alternatives section, which could potentially result in identifying feasible project alternatives which may or not be adopted by the Project proponent. There have been no changes to the proposed Project or other conditions that would warrant revisions to other sections of the EIR, except for the characterization of the significance of Impact TR-1 with Mitigation Measure TR-1 as indicated above.

Section 15088.5 also allows the lead agency to recirculate only the chapters or portions of the Draft EIR that have been revised. The lead agency may request that reviewers limit their comments to the revised sections, and the agency need only respond to comments received during the recirculation period that relate to the revised Draft EIR sections. The County of Santa Cruz used this approach to recirculation for the revised sections of the EIR.

1.3.2 Public Review of the Recirculated Partial Draft EIR

In accordance with State CEQA Guidelines, this document will be available for public review for 45 days from July 29, 2019 through September 11, 2019. During this period, reviewers may submit written comments on the Recirculated Partial Draft EIR related only to the revised EIR sections included in this document. All other sections of the Draft EIR, dated December 2017 and Final EIR, dated August 2018, remain unchanged and are not subject to recirculation or additional public comment.

When an EIR is revised only in part and the lead agency is recirculating only the revised chapters or portions of the EIR, the lead agency may request that reviewers limit their comments to the revised chapters or portions of the recirculated EIR. The lead agency need only respond to (i) comments received during the initial circulation period that relate to chapters or portions of the document that were not revised and recirculated, and (ii) comments received during the recirculation period that relate to the chapters or portions of the earlier EIR that were revised and recirculated. Therefore, the County of Santa Cruz, as the lead agency, requests that reviewers limit the scope of their comments to the revised sections in this document, which are revisions to conclusions of Impact TR-1 with implementation of Mitigation Measure TR-1 and the revised alternatives analyses. The County will only respond to comments provided on the Recirculated Partial Draft EIR sections.

1.3.3 Final EIR / Project Approval

Upon completion of the public review period for the Recirculated Partial Draft EIR, a second volume to the Final EIR document will be completed that includes responses to comments received on the recirculated sections of the EIR. The Final EIR, Part II, will include written responses to any significant environmental issues raised in comments received during the public review period of the recirculated EIR sections in accordance with State CEQA Guidelines section 15088. The Final EIR also will include text changes and additions to the Recirculated Partial EIR that become necessary after consideration of public comments.



Thus, the Project EIR includes four volumes: 1) the Draft EIR (December 2017); the Final EIR (April 2018); the Recirculated Partial Draft EIR (July 2019); and the Final EIR, Part II, with responses to comments on the recirculated EIR sections. The EIR will be presented to the Board of Supervisors for independent review and consideration of certification. The Board of Supervisors must ultimately certify that it has reviewed and considered the information in the EIR, that the EIR has been completed in conformity with the requirements of CEQA, and that the document reflects the County's independent judgment. The Board of Supervisors also will make the final decision on the proposed General Plan amendment, rezoning and development permit application requests. Changes to the proposed Project, whether proposed by the Project proponent or upon direction of the Board of Supervisors, may be required to be referred to the Planning Commission for recommendation.

Pursuant to sections 21002, 21002.1, and 21081 of CEQA and sections 15091 and 15093 of the State CEQA Guidelines, no public agency shall approve or carry out a project for which an EIR has been certified which identifies one or more significant effects unless both of the following occur:

- (a) The public agency makes one or more of the following findings with respect to each significant effect:
 - 1) Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project which avoid or substantially lessen the significant environmental effects on the environment.
 - 2) Those changes or alterations are within the responsibility and jurisdiction of another public agency and have been, or can and should be, adopted by such other agency.
 - 3) Specific economic, legal, social, technological, or other considerations, including considerations for the provision of employment opportunities for highly trained workers, make infeasible the mitigation measures or alternatives identified in the environmental impact report.
- (b) With respect to significant effects which were subject to a finding under paragraph (3) of subdivision (a), the public agency finds that specific overriding economic, legal, social, technological, or other benefits of the project outweigh the significant effects on the environment.

Although these determinations (especially regarding feasibility) are made by the public agency's final decision-making body based on the entirety of the agency's administrative record as it exists after completion of a final EIR, the draft EIR must provide information regarding the significant effects of the proposed project and must identify the potentially feasible mitigation measures and alternatives to be considered by that decision-making body.

1.3.4 Adoption of Mitigation Monitoring & Reporting Program

CEQA requires that a program to monitor and report on mitigation measures be adopted by a lead agency as part of the project approval process. CEQA requires that such a program be adopted at the



time the agency approves a project or determines to carry out a project for which an EIR has been prepared to ensure that mitigation measures identified in the EIR are implemented. The Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program will be included in the Final EIR, although it is not required to be included in the EIR.

1.4 PROJECT OVERVIEW

The approximate 2.5-acre Project site is located within an existing developed area at the southwest corner of the intersection of Soquel Drive and 41st Avenue in the unincorporated community of Soquel in Santa Cruz County (see Figures 1 and 2). The site consists of seven parcels that were developed¹ at the time of the permit application was filed and one undeveloped parcel (APN 030-121-06, 07, 08, 12, 13, 27, 53, and 57). The site is bordered by Soquel Drive/commercial uses on the north, 41st Avenue/commercial uses on the east, a micro-brewery and car wash on the south, and a lumber yard on the west. The Project site is relatively flat, with a mix of residential and commercial development, and some of the buildings are not in current use or have been demolished. Existing commercial development in the Project vicinity includes Home Depot, Best Buy, Safeway supermarket, gas station, and other retail and commercial services east of the site and 41st Avenue. The Ocean Honda dealership and other commercial uses are located across Soquel Drive to the northwest of the Project site.

All of the Project properties are designated C-C (Community Commercial) in the County's General Plan and are zoned C-2 (Community Commercial). The project site is located in the Upper 41st Avenue area, which was one of the "Focus Areas" studied within the Sustainable Santa Cruz County (SSCC) Plan (County of Santa Cruz, 2014). It is noted that the Ocean Honda site across the street from the Project site is designated C-S (Service Commercial) in the County's General Plan.

The proposed Project consists of construction of a new 22,547 square foot automobile dealership with a 12,551 square foot automobile dealership and a 9,996 square foot automobile service building. The Project site plan is shown on Figure 3. The site would provide 129 parking spaces to accommodate inventory as well as visitor and auto service parking. Discretionary approvals include a General Plan Amendment, Rezoning, Commercial Development Permit, Grading Permit and Sign Exception. A General Plan amendment is required to change the Land Use Designation from C-C to Service Commercial (C-S) to allow the auto sales and service use, which is not an allowed use in the C-C designation. A zoning amendment also would be required to change the existing Community Commercial (C-2) zoning to Service Commercial (C-4).

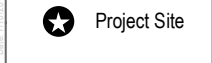
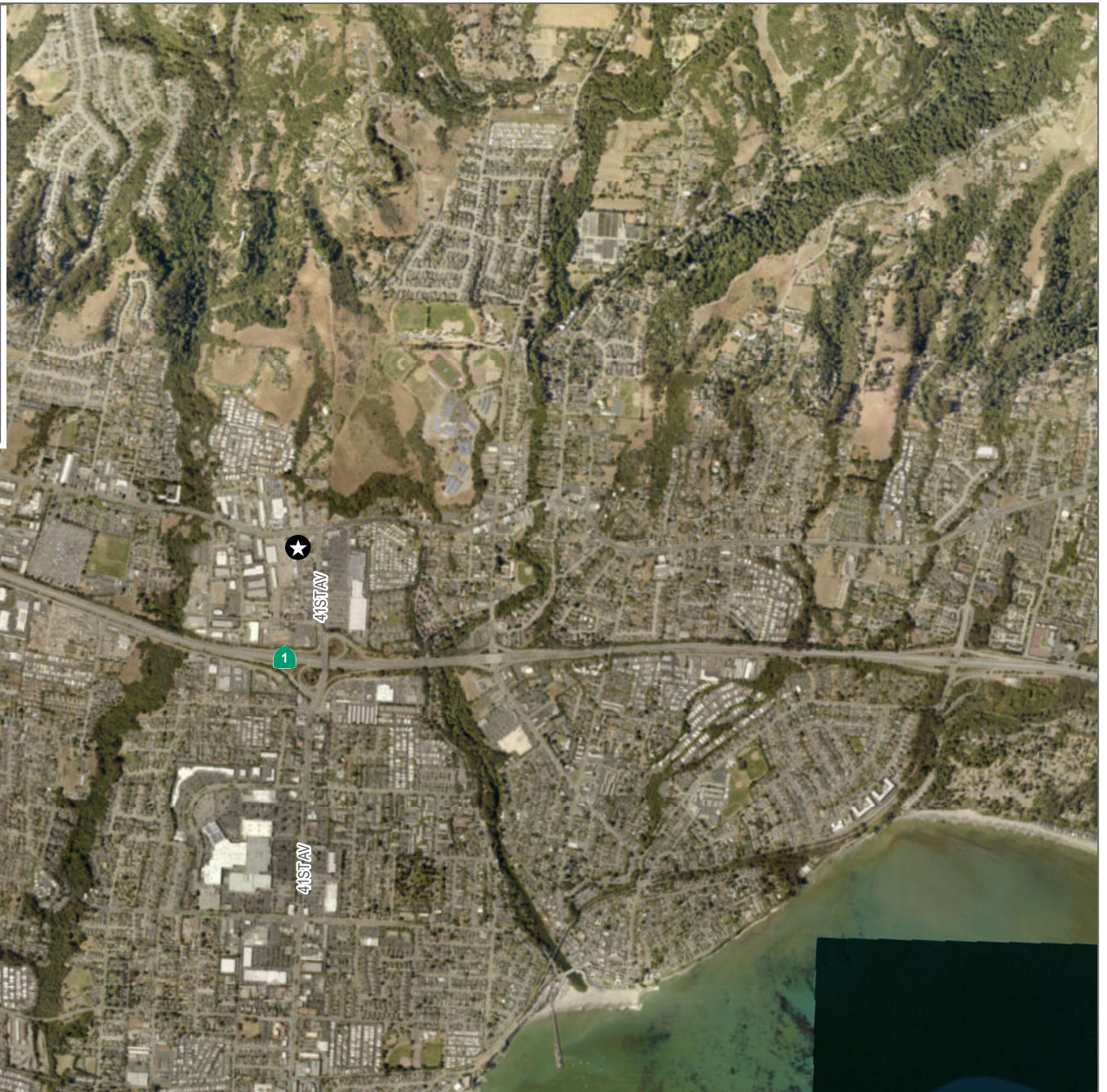
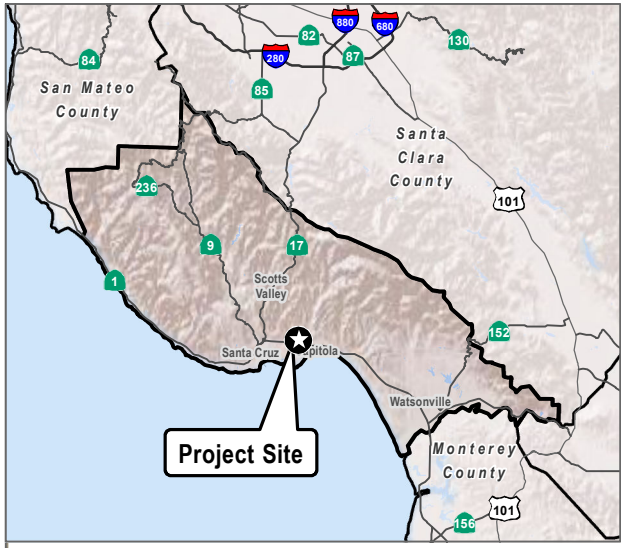
¹ Four houses that existed at the time the application was filed were subsequently demolished pursuant to a County order to abate a public nuisance.



1.5 ORGANIZATION OF EIR

This Recirculated Partial Draft EIR is organized into the following chapters:

- **Section 1, Introduction**, provides background and history of the Project; explains the CEQA process regarding recirculation or partial recirculation of a Draft EIR; describes the scope and purpose of the Recirculated Partial Draft EIR; provides information on the environmental review and approval process for the Project; and outlines the organization of this document.
- **Section 2, Revisions to Draft EIR**, presents revisions to Draft EIR sections to reflect revisions to the discussion of impact conclusions with implementation of Mitigation Measure TR-1 and revisions to the Alternatives section (Section 5). As a result of these revisions, changes are made to the following EIR sections:
 - Draft EIR Executive Summary
 - Draft EIR Section 3.8, Transportation / Traffic
 - Draft EIR Section 4.0, Significant Unavoidable Impacts
 - Draft EIR Section 5.0, Project Alternatives
- **Chapter 3, References and EIR Preparation**, identifies agencies contacted during the preparation of the Recirculated Partial Draft EIR, references, and individuals who were involved in preparing this document.
- **Appendices** contain additional technical information used in preparation of the Recirculated Partial Draft EIR to include information provided by the County on Mitigation Measure TR-1 and evaluation of alternative project sites. A new Appendix R is included in this document that includes this new information.



SOURCE: County of Santa Cruz 2016

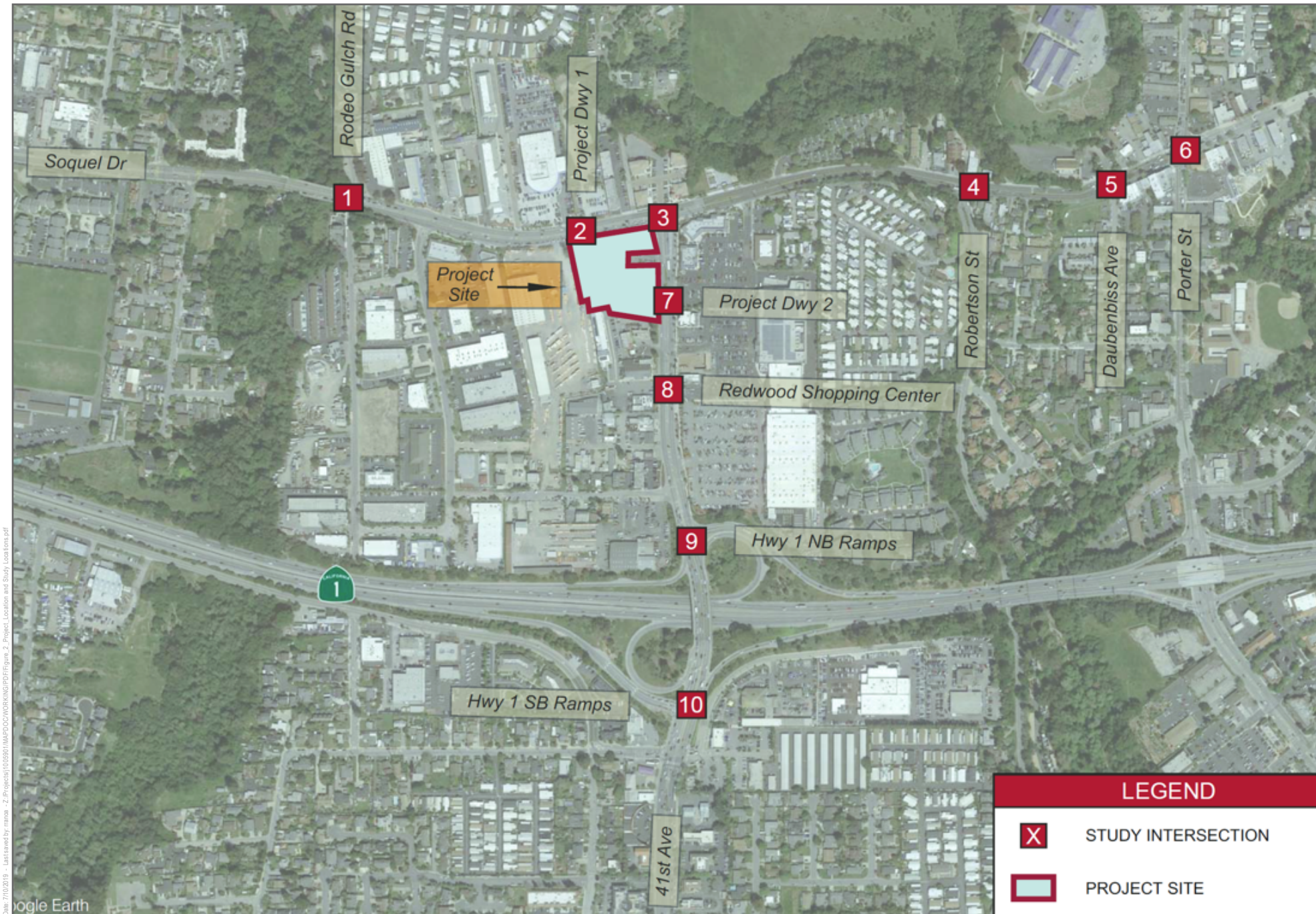


FIGURE 1

Project Location



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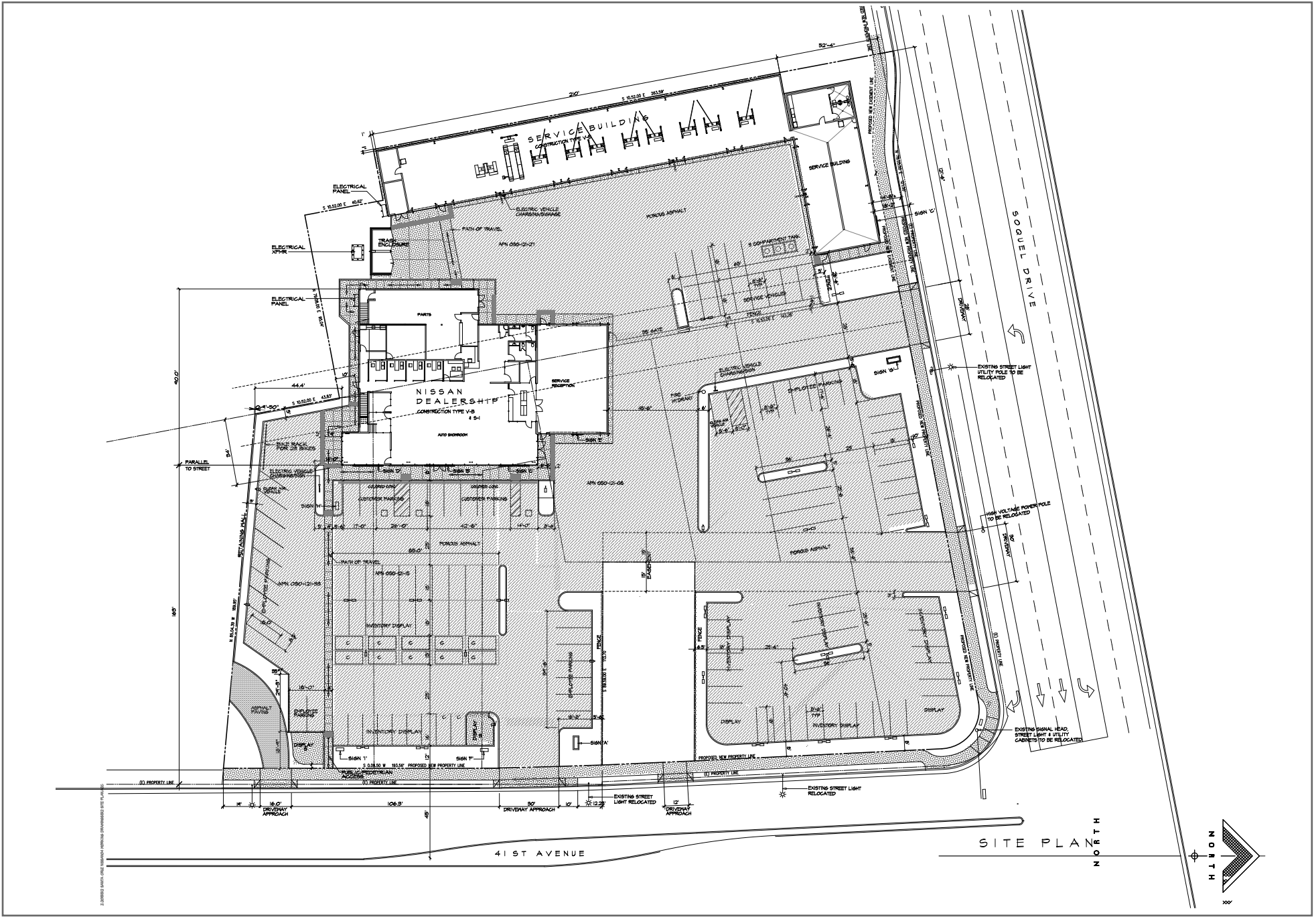
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FIGURE 2
Project Vicinity Location and Study Intersections



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Source: Scott & Associates



FIGURE 3
Project Site Plan

Nissan of Santa Cruz Project Recirculated Partial Draft EIR



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2.1 INTRODUCTION

This document revises the Alternatives section of the Draft EIR (Section 5.0) in accordance with the Santa Cruz County Superior Court order. The conclusion of impact significance with implementation of Mitigation Measure TR-1 has been revised to reflect new information regarding feasibility that has been provided since 2018. As a result of these revisions, this section shows the changes/revisions to the following EIR sections:

- Draft EIR Executive Summary
- Draft EIR Section 3.8, Transportation / Traffic
- Draft EIR Section 4.0, Significant Unavoidable Impacts
- Draft EIR Section 5.0, Project Alternatives

All other sections of the Draft EIR, dated December 2017 and THE Final EIR, dated April 2018, remain unchanged. Except for the Project Alternatives section, all revisions are shown in ~~striketrough~~ typeface for deletions and underline typeface for additions. The Project Alternatives section is a complete revision and is not shown with strikeout or underline typeface.

2.2 REVISIONS TO EIR

2.2.1 Revisions to Draft EIR Executive Summary

Page ES-4 Revise the “Project Alternatives” subsection to read:

Three alternatives to the proposed Project were selected for analysis as follows:

- Alternative 1: No Project (Required by CEQA)
 - 1A: No Project / No Development
 - 1B: No Project / Future Commercial Development
 - 1C: No Project / Future Mixed-Use Development
- Alternative 2: Reduced Project
- Alternative 3: Alternative Project Site Location

Page ES-5-7 Revise Table ES-1, Summary of Environmental Impacts and Mitigation Measures, as related to Impact TRA-1 and Mitigation Measure TRA-1 as shown on the following pages.



Table ES-1 Summary of Environmental Impacts and Mitigation Measures		
Impact	Mitigation Measure	Significance after Mitigation
LAND USE AND PLANNING		
<p>Impact LU-2 If approved by the County the Proposed Project would be substantially consistent with applicable land use policies of the County of Santa Cruz 1994 General Plan, and would not conflict with land use policies that are in effect to avoid or mitigate environmental effects on environmental and natural resources. Therefore, impacts would be Class III, <i>less than significant</i>.</p>	<p>The proposed project would be consistent with the relevant policies of the 1994 General Plan and the 1990 Soquel Village Plan with the implementation of required mitigation measures, with the exception of Transportation/Traffic in that trips generated by the project that use Highway 1 would contribute to existing unacceptable levels of service and no mitigation has been defined or adopted that would mitigate cumulative impacts on Highway 1 and thus this cumulative transportation impact would be significant and unavoidable.</p> <p>In addition, trips generated by the proposed Project that impact the intersections of Soquel Drive and Robertson Street, and Soquel Drive and Porter Street would result in significant impacts to those intersections. With the implementation of Mitigation Measures TRA-1 and TRA-2, the Soquel Drive/Robertson Street intersection and Soquel Drive Porter Street intersection would improve to acceptable levels of service for both the Existing Plus Project and Near-term Plus Project scenarios. <u>The improvement is partially funded, and the County has confirmed that the improvement is feasible and will be implemented.</u> However, the complete cost to signalize the intersection of Soquel Drive at Robertson Street is estimated at \$373,612 in the 2017/2018 County of Santa Cruz Capital Improvement Program (CIP), and updated cost estimates by the County of Santa Cruz Department of Public Works have placed the cost of the signalization closer to \$500,000. Because this signalization project is listed in the 2017/2018 CIP as unprogrammed, no funding for design or construction is currently available. The only available funding would be the project's fair share contribution of \$14,200 or 2.84% of the total unfunded improvement costs. Therefore, it is uncertain as to whether proposed Mitigation Measure TRA-1 could be implemented within the next five years. For this reason, the addition of project generated traffic trips to the intersection at Soquel Drive/Robertson Street (Intersection #4) in the PM peak hour under the Existing Plus Project and Near-term Plus Project conditions would be considered significant and unavoidable. Transportation/Traffic impacts (i.e., not Land Use and Planning impacts).</p>	<p>With implementation of the mitigation measures identified in Section 3.3 Cultural Resources, Section 3.5 Hazards and Hazardous Materials, and Section 3.8 Transportation/Traffic, of this EIR, land use impacts on environmental and natural resources would be less than significant. However, impacts associated with the Level of Service Policy 3.12.1 in Section 3.8, Transportation/Traffic, would result in significant and unavoidable transportation impacts due to uncertain feasibility or timing of mitigating transportation improvements (see Section 3.8 Transportation/Traffic Impacts and Mitigation Measures).</p>



**Table ES-1
Summary of Environmental Impacts and
Mitigation Measures**

Impact	Mitigation Measure	Significance after Mitigation
TRANSPORTATION/TRAFFIC		
<p>Impact TRA-1 Implementation of the proposed Project would result in potentially significant impacts to the Soquel Drive/Robertson Street intersection, and the Soquel Drive/Porter Street intersection under Existing Plus Project and Near Term Plus Project conditions. With the required mitigation, both intersections would move to acceptable levels of service C or D. LOS D is the minimum acceptable to the County of Santa Cruz where additional enhancements to achieve LOS C may be considered infeasible. However, due to lack of currently identified funding, the required mitigation measure to reduce significant impacts to the intersection of Soquel Drive at Robertson Street would be considered infeasible. If <u>The County has determined that the mitigation is determined to be feasible and will be implemented. However, there would be a temporary significant and unavoidable impact until Mitigation Measure TRA-1 is implemented. The temporary impact would begin with project operations and end with the signal construction, a period not to exceed two five years.</u> In addition, the proposed project would result in potentially significant impacts to the segment of Highway 1 located north/west of 41st Avenue and the Highway 1 segment located south/east of 41st Avenue. These segments</p>	<p>TRA-1 Soquel Drive/Robertson Street (Intersection #4) Uncertain feasibility, therefore classified as infeasible. Traffic at the Soquel Drive / Robertson Street intersection, which is currently operating at an unacceptable LOS E during the AM and PM peak hour, will continue to operate at LOS E or worse during all future conditions. To mitigate these significant impacts, the Project applicant shall, prior to issuance of a building occupancy permit, pay \$14,200 (2.84% of the total unfunded improvement costs) toward the cost of construction of the following improvements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Install a traffic signal control. • On Soquel Drive, restripe the westbound approach to one left turn lane and one thru lane, consolidate north driveways and close the north leg (southbound approach), converting the intersection to a signalized, three-directional intersection. Until north driveways are consolidated, the north leg will remain open to provide access to the building(s) using the existing driveway. The analysis evaluated this intersection with three approaches (i.e., a signalized "T" intersection with east, west, and south legs). Existing traffic volumes on the north approach are very low at (0 vehicles in the AM peak and 3 vehicles in the PM peak). The intersection would also operate acceptably should the County decide to construct a signalized four-way intersection instead (i.e., with east, west, south, and north legs). • On Robertson Street, restripe the northbound approach from one lane to one left- and one right-turn lane. Limit the restriping to approximately 25 feet, due to the close spacing of the mobile home park driveway southwest of the intersection. The design for this improvement will be challenging and the designer should exercise care to ensure that northbound and southbound traffic can be safely accommodated. Analysis conservatively analyzed this intersection with one shared thru, left, and right lane. <p>TRA-2: Soquel Drive/Porter Street (Intersection #6) On Soquel Drive, the area on the south side west of Porter Street (adjacent to the curb) is currently signed as a loading zone from 8am to 5pm,</p>	<p>Anticipated Existing Plus Project LOS at intersections #4 and #6 with implementation of Mitigation Measures TRA-1 and TRA-2 is shown in Table 3.8-7. With the implementation of the above improvements outlined in Mitigation Measures TRA-1 and TRA-2, the Soquel Drive at Robertson Street intersection would improve to LOS B in the AM and LOS D in the PM peak hours with the Project. Soquel Drive at Porter Street would improve to LOS C in the AM peak hour and LOS D in the PM peak hours with the Project. It is anticipated that, when the intersection of Soquel Drive/Robertson Street is signalized, Soquel Drive/ Daubenbiss Avenue and Soquel Drive/Porter Street signal timings and coordination would be updated and optimized. Impacts to intersection level of service would be reduced to a less than significant level for Existing Plus Project conditions with the incorporation of the above mitigation measures. <u>The improvement is partially funded, and the County has confirmed that the improvement is feasible and will be implemented. At its May 22, 2018 public meeting, the Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors directed staff to complete the installation of the traffic signal and associated right-of-way improvements within three years of issuance of the building permit for the Project. The County anticipates construction commencing in either 2020/2021 or 2021/2022 fiscal year. It should be noted that the complete cost to signalize the intersection of Soquel Drive at Robertson Street</u></p>



Table ES-1 Summary of Environmental Impacts and Mitigation Measures		
Impact	Mitigation Measure	Significance after Mitigation
<p>currently operate at LOS F in both the AM and PM peak hours. LOS D or better is acceptable under Caltrans significance criteria, and LOS E and F is considered unacceptable. Any new trips added to Highway 1 on these segments is considered to be significant requiring mitigation. However, no mitigation is available to reduce impacts to Highway 1. Therefore, project impacts under Existing Plus Project and Near Term Plus Project conditions would be <i>Class I, significant and unavoidable</i> for the intersection of Sequel Drive at Robertson Street and for Highway 1 segment operations.</p>	<p>Monday through Friday. When not in use as loading zone, this area currently operates as a de facto right-turn pocket. To mitigate AM and PM peak hour traffic impacts, the Project applicant shall, prior to building occupancy permit, pay \$20,000 to the County of Santa Cruz to construct the following improvements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through signage and restriping, convert the on-street loading zone on the south side of west leg (eastbound approach) into an eastbound right-turn pocket lane during peak hours, and optimize the signal phasing, cycle length, and splits. • Restripe the existing bike lane to provide a right-turn with bike access, the lane should be combined into a 12-foot shared bike lane and right turn lane. The combined bike lane/turn lane treatment will include signage advising motorists and bicyclists of proper positioning within the lane. 	<p>is estimated at \$373,612 in the 2017/2018 County of Santa Cruz Capital Improvement Program (CIP). However, updated cost estimates by the County of Santa Cruz Department of Public Works have placed the cost of the signalization closer to \$500,000. Because this signalization project is listed in the 2017/2018 CIP as unprogrammed, no funding for design or construction is currently available. The only available funding would be the project's fair share contribution of \$14,200 or 2.84% of the total unfunded improvement costs. Therefore, it is uncertain as to whether proposed Mitigation Measure TRA-1 could be implemented within the next five years. For this reason, the addition of project generated traffic trips to the intersection at Sequel Drive/Robertson Street (Intersection #4) in the PM peak hour under the Existing Plus Project and Near term Plus Project conditions would be considered significant and unavoidable.</p> <p>Currently Caltrans has no impact fee program in place to help mitigate traffic impacts on Highway 1 in Santa Cruz County. As a result, these additional trips impacting segments of Highway 1 cannot be mitigated by the proposed Project and are considered significant and unavoidable.</p> <p>Anticipated Near Term Plus Project LOS at intersections #4 and #6 with implementation of Mitigation Measures TRA-1 and TRA-2 is shown in Table 3.8-8. With the implementation of the above improvements outlined in Mitigation Measures TRA-1 and TRA-2, the Sequel Drive at Robertson Street intersection</p>



**Table ES-1
Summary of Environmental Impacts and
Mitigation Measures**

Impact	Mitigation Measure	Significance after Mitigation
		would improve to LOS B in the AM and LOS B in the PM peak hours with project. Soquel Drive at Porter Street would improve to LOS D in the AM peak hour and LOS D in the PM peak hours with project. Impacts to intersection level of service would be reduced to a less than significant level for Near Term Plus Project conditions with the incorporation of the above mitigation measures.

2.2.2 Revisions to Draft EIR Section 3.8, Transportation / Traffic

Page 3.8-17 Revise Impact TRA-1, fourth sentence, which was added in the in the Final EIR as follows:

If the mitigation is determined to be feasible, there would be a temporary significant and unavoidable impact until Mitigation Measure TRA-1 is implemented. The temporary impact would begin with Project operations and end with the signal construction, a period not to exceed two five years. This is based on the directive from the Board of Supervisors to complete installation of the traffic signal within three years of issuance of the Project building permit and the assumption that Project construction would be completed within one year of issuance of a building permit.

Page 3.8-22 Revise the text under the “Significance After Mitigation” subsection as follows regarding feasibility of implementation of Mitigation Measure TRA-1 and TRA-2.

The complete cost to signalize the intersection of Soquel Drive at Robertson Street is estimated at ~~\$1,094,113~~ ~~\$373,612~~ in the ~~2019/2020~~ ~~2017/2018~~ County of Santa Cruz Capital Improvement Program (CIP). ~~however, updated cost estimates by the County of Santa Cruz Department of Public Works have placed the cost of the signalization closer to \$500,000. Because this signalization project is listed in the 2017/2018 CIP as unprogrammed, no funding for design or construction is currently available. The only available funding would be the project’s fair share contribution of \$14,200 or 2.84% of the total unfunded improvement costs. Therefore, it is uncertain as to whether proposed Mitigation Measure TRA-1 could be implemented within the next five years. For this reason, the addition of project generated traffic trips to the intersection at Soquel Drive/Robertson Street (Intersection #4) in the PM peak hour~~



~~under the Existing Plus Project and Near term Plus Project conditions would be considered significant and unavoidable. However, If the County identifies and commits funding, then Mitigation Measure TRA-1 would be feasible and the impact would be reduced to less than significant in the long term. The improvement is partially funded, and the County has confirmed that the improvement is feasible and will be implemented (County of Santa Cruz Department of Public Works, July 2019). At its May 22, 2018 public meeting, the Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors directed staff to complete the installation of the traffic signal and associated right-of-way improvements within three years of issuance of the building permit for the Project. The improvement is budgeted for design development in the 2019/2020, and the County is seeking proposals for project design. The County anticipates that the project improvement plans and permitting requirements will be completed by June 2020 with construction commencing in either 2020/2021 or 2021/2022 fiscal year. The Project applicant has stated a commitment of \$200,000 toward funding this improvement, and the balance of the funds will be provide by other County sources including general funds if necessary in the fiscal year the project is constructed (Ibid.). Thus, the County is committed to funding, and Mitigation Measure TRA-1 is considered feasible. Therefore, the impact would be reduced to less than significant.~~

~~However, a temporary impact would occur from the time the proposed Project would be operational until the time the intersection of Soquel Drive and Robertson Street would be signalized (approximately two 5 years if funding becomes available). This is based on the directive from the Board of Supervisors to complete installation of the traffic signal within three years of issuance of the Project building permit and on the assumption that Project construction would be completed within one year of issuance of building permits. Although temporary, This temporary impact would be considered a significant, and unavoidable, impact if the signal is not operational at the time the Project begins operations.~~

Page 3.8-29 Revise the text in the “Cumulative” subsection after Table 3.8-11 as follows regarding feasibility of implementation of Mitigation Measure TRA-1 and TRA-2.

~~As shown in Table 3.8-11, with implementation of Mitigation Measure TRA-1 and Mitigation Measure TRA-2, discussed above, cumulative intersection impacts of the proposed Project would not be significant, cumulatively considerable. However, the complete cost to signalize the intersection of Soquel Drive at Robertson Street is estimated at \$373,612 in the 2017/2018 County of Santa Cruz Capital Improvement Program (CIP) and recently updated cost estimates by the County of Santa Cruz Department of Public Works have placed the cost of the signalization closer to \$500,000. Because this signalization project is listed in the 2017/2018 CIP as unprogrammed, no funding for design or construction is currently available. The only available funding would be the project’s fair share contribution of \$14,200 or 2.84% of the total unfunded improvement costs. Therefore, it is uncertain as to~~



~~whether proposed Mitigation Measure TRA-1 could be implemented within the next five years. For this reason, the addition of project generated traffic trips to the intersection at Soquel Drive/Robertson Street (Intersection #4) in the PM peak hour under Cumulative Plus Project conditions would be considered significant and unavoidable. If~~ As discussed in the Impact TR-1 analysis, the improvement is partially funded, and the County has confirmed that the improvement is feasible and will be implemented. Thus, the County has a schedule and committed funding for implementation, and ~~identifies and commits funding then the mitigation would be feasible and the cumulative impacts would be reduced to less than significant. With the Project's proposed funding contribution, the Project's contribution would not be cumulatively considerable.~~

2.2.3 Revisions to EIR Section 4.0, Significant Unavoidable Impacts

Page 4-11 Revise the text under Section 4.4.5, Soquel Drive at Robertson Street (Intersection #4) Existing, Near Term, and Cumulative Conditions, as follows:

This existing all way stop controlled intersection is under County jurisdiction. Under the Existing Plus Project, Near Term Plus Project, and Cumulative Plus Project scenarios, the proposed Project would increase delay at this intersection, which already operates at an unacceptable LOS E in the AM and LOS F during the PM. Although vehicle delay is slightly higher, no change in the Level of service would occur under any of the scenarios. However, due to the intersection currently operating at an unacceptable LOS E and F, the addition of vehicle trips is considered significant under County criteria requiring mitigation.

With the implementation of the improvements outlined in Mitigation Measures TRA-1, the Soquel Drive/Robertson Street intersection would improve to LOS B in the AM and LOS D in the PM peak hours for Existing Plus Project, improve to LOS B in the AM and LOS B in the PM peak hours for Near Term Plus Project, and LOS B in the AM and LOS D in the PM peak hours for Cumulative Plus Project. Impacts to intersection level of service would be reduced to a less than significant level for Existing Plus Project, Near-term Plus Project, and Cumulative Plus Project conditions with the incorporation of Mitigation Measure TRA-1.

The County has determined that the mitigation is determined to be feasible and will be implemented as discussed in Section 3.8. However, there would be a temporary significant and unavoidable impact until Mitigation Measure TRA-1 is implemented. The temporary impact would begin with Project operations and end with the signal construction, a period not to exceed two years if the signal is not operational at the time the Project begins operations.



~~However, the complete cost to signalize the intersection of Soquel Drive at Robertson Street is estimated at \$373,612 in the 2017/2018 County of Santa Cruz Capital Improvement Program (CIP). However, updated cost estimates by the County of Santa Cruz Department of Public Works have placed the cost of the signalization closer to \$500,000. Because this signalization project is listed in the 2017/2018 CIP as unprogrammed, no funding for design or construction is currently available. The only available funding would be the project's fair share contribution of \$14,200 or 2.84% of the total unfunded improvement costs. Therefore, it is uncertain as to whether proposed Mitigation Measure TRA-1 could be implemented within the next five years. For this reason, the addition of project generated traffic trips to the intersection at Soquel Drive/Robertson Street (Intersection #4) in the PM peak hour under the Existing Plus Project and Near term Plus Project conditions would be considered significant and unavoidable. If the County identifies and commits funding then the Mitigation Measure TRA-1 would be feasible and the impacts would be reduced to less than significant.~~

2.2.4 Revisions to EIR Section 5.0, Project Alternatives

Section 5.0 of the Draft EIR is rewritten in its entirety, and for ease of reading, changes are not shown in ~~strikeout~~ or underline typeface.

5.1 Introduction

As required by Section 15126.6 of the State of California CEQA Guidelines, an EIR shall describe a range of reasonable alternatives to the project or to the location of the project, which would feasibly attain most of the basic objectives of the project but would avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects of the project, and evaluate the comparative merits of the alternatives. The guidelines further require that the discussion focus on alternatives to the project or its location, which are capable of avoiding or substantially lessening any significant effects of the project, even if these alternatives would impede to some degree the attainment of the project objectives or would be more costly. An EIR is not required to consider alternatives which are infeasible.

An EIR need not consider every conceivable alternative to a project. Rather, it must consider a reasonable range of potentially feasible alternatives that will foster informed decision-making and public participation. The range of alternatives is governed by a "rule of reason" that requires the EIR to set forth only those potentially feasible alternatives necessary to permit a reasoned choice. There is no ironclad rule governing the nature or scope of the alternatives to be discussed other than the rule of reason.

The lead agency is responsible for selecting a range of reasonable alternatives. The range of potential alternatives 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 EIR should briefly describe the rationale for selecting the alternatives to be discussed and also identify any



alternatives that were considered by the lead agency but were rejected as infeasible during the scoping process and briefly explain the reasons underlying the lead agency's determination. Among the factors that may be used to eliminate alternatives from detailed consideration in an EIR are: failure to meet most of the basic project objectives, infeasibility, or inability to avoid significant environmental impacts.

"Feasible" means capable of being accomplished in a successful manner within a reasonable period of time, taking into account economic, environmental, legal, social, and technological factors (State CEQA Guidelines, section 15364). According to State CEQA Guidelines section 15126.6(f)(1), factors that may be taken into account when addressing the feasibility of alternatives include site suitability, economic viability, availability of infrastructure, general plan consistency, other plans or regulatory limitations, jurisdictional boundaries (projects with a regionally significant impact should consider the regional context), and whether the proponent can reasonably acquire, control, or otherwise have access to the alternative site (or already owns the alternative site). None of these factors establishes a fixed limit on the scope of reasonable alternatives.

Regarding evaluation of alternatives, the CEQA Guidelines indicate that the EIR shall include sufficient information about each alternative to allow meaningful evaluation, analysis, and comparison with the proposed project. A matrix displaying the major characteristics and significant environmental effects of each alternative may be used to summarize the comparison. If an alternative would cause one or more significant effects in addition to those that would be caused by the project as proposed, the significant effects of the alternative shall be discussed, but in less detail than the significant effects of the project as proposed. (State CEQA Guidelines section 15126.6(f)).

5.2 Summary of Significant Project Impacts and Project Objectives

Significant Project Impacts

The following potentially significant impacts have been identified, all of which can be mitigated to a less-than-significant level, except for Project and cumulative traffic on Highway 1, which remain significant unavoidable impacts.

- **Cultural Resources (CUL-1):** Construction associated with the proposed Project would involve surface excavation, which has the potential to unearth and adversely impact previously unidentified archaeological resources.
- **Hazardous Materials (HAZ-1):** Construction and operation of the proposed Project could include the use, storage, or transport of hazardous materials that could potentially create a safety hazard to the public or the environment.
- **Noise (NOI-4):** Construction of the proposed Project would result in a short-term increase in noise levels due to the operation of heavy equipment.
- **Transportation/Traffic (TRA-1):** Implementation of the proposed Project would result in potentially significant impacts to the Soquel Drive/Robertson Street intersection, and the



Soquel Drive/Porter Street intersection under Existing Plus Project and Near Term Plus Project conditions. With the required mitigation, both intersections would move to acceptable levels of service (LOS) C or D. The County has determined that the mitigation is determined to be feasible and will be implemented as discussed in Section 3.8. However, there would be a temporary significant and unavoidable impact until Mitigation Measure TRA-1 is implemented. The temporary impact would begin with Project operations and end with the signal construction, a period projected to be up to two years if the signal is not operational at the time the Project begins operations.

In addition, the proposed Project would result in potentially significant impacts to the segment of Highway 1 located north/west of 41st Avenue and the Highway 1 segment located south/east of 41st Avenue. These segments currently operate at LOS F in both the AM and PM peak hours. LOS D or better is acceptable under Caltrans significance criteria, and LOS E and F is considered unacceptable. The EIR concluded that any new trips added to Highway 1 along these segments is considered to be significant requiring mitigation. While Caltrans has been studying the addition of lanes, no project is currently funded. Therefore, at this time no mitigation is available to reduce impacts to Highway 1. Therefore, Project impacts would continue to *be significant and unavoidable* for Highway 1 segment operations.

- **Cumulative Impacts:** Cumulative traffic to the Soquel Drive intersections at Robertson and Porter Streets would contribute to continued unacceptable LOS, but would be mitigated to a less-than-significant level with implementation of Mitigation Measure TR-1. Cumulative traffic along Highway 1 north and south of 41st Avenue would also contribute to continued unacceptable LOS. These segments currently operate at LOS F in both the AM and PM peak hours. Currently Caltrans has no impact fee program in place to help mitigate traffic impacts on Highway 1 in Santa Cruz County. As a result, these additional trips impacting segments of Highway 1 cannot be mitigated by the proposed project and are considered significant and unavoidable.

Summary of Project Objectives

In conducting the alternatives analysis, consideration must be given as to how, and to what extent, an alternative can meet the project's basic objectives. The objectives for the Project are as follows:

1. To provide a conveniently located, attractively designed automotive dealership and service center that will offer a full range of automotive models and services that satisfy the demand for new car buying opportunities within unincorporated Santa Cruz County.
2. To provide Service Commercial development within an area currently designated as Community Commercial.
3. To combine multiple small parcels into one large parcel that can be developed to provide a greater community benefit.



4. To provide for the efficient redevelopment of an existing community commercial area that is currently underutilized with blighted properties, outdated commercial uses, and non-conforming uses.
5. To provide commercial tax revenues to the unincorporated County of Santa Cruz.

5.3 Alternatives Eliminated from Consideration

As previously discussed, the lead agency is responsible for selecting a range of reasonable alternatives. The range of potential alternatives 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 State CEQA Guidelines indicate that an EIR should also identify any alternatives that were considered by the lead agency but were rejected as infeasible during the scoping process and briefly explain the reasons underlying the lead agency's determination. Among the factors that may be used to eliminate alternatives from detailed consideration in an EIR are: failure to meet most of the basic project objectives, infeasibility, or inability to avoid significant environmental impacts. The County considered two alternatives that were rejected and eliminated from further review as discussed below.

Development Under Existing General Plan and Zoning Designations

The proposed Project would require a General Plan amendment to change the site designation from Community Commercial (C-C) to Service Commercial (C-S) and a zoning amendment to change the existing Community Commercial (C-2) zoning to Service Commercial (C-4). The amendments are required because auto dealerships are not permitted in the Community Commercial land use and zone districts. Development under existing General Plan and zoning designations was considered, but this alternative does not represent a feasible alternative as none of the Project objectives would be met. However, development pursuant to existing designations would be a potential, foreseeable development scenario under the No Project alternative. Development in accordance with existing designations could include either development of commercial uses or a mixed-use development consistent with the existing C-C zoning. . Either type of development would be consistent with the existing General Plan and zoning designations, and therefore, no amendments would be needed. Potential development scenarios under existing designations are reviewed below in the No Project Alternative.

Expanded Site Alternative

An expanded site alternative was considered that would add Assessor Parcel Number 030-121-34 to the existing eight parcels that comprise the Project site for a total of nine parcels. The additional 0.123 acre (5,348 square foot) parcel is located on the eastern side of the Project area fronting on 41st Avenue. The addition of this parcel would increase the acreage from 2.568 acres to 2.691 acres. Two possible scenarios were considered, but neither one reduced potentially significant impacts of the proposed Project, although adding the parcel to the Project site would address issues of existing blight. Under the first, the parcel would not be added to the proposed automotive dealership Project



site, but the County would initiate and approve a re-designation and rezoning of the parcel to Service Commercial / C-4 if the dealership is approved, in order to maintain consistency of land use designation and a logical land use pattern in the immediate area. It is not foreseeable to identify how the parcel might be developed in the future. Since this scenario is not related to the Project, it is not a feasible project alternative and was eliminated from further consideration as a Project alternative.

Under the second scenario, the parcel would be added to the proposed Project with demolition of the existing structures. The additional parcel would be graded and paved to meet the grade of the surrounding parcels to provide approximately 20 additional parking spaces for vehicle inventory. This would provide a slightly expanded area for Project uses, but would not change the Project size or other features in a manner that would avoid or substantially reduce Project impacts. Therefore, this potential alternative was eliminated from further consideration.

5.4 Alternatives Selected for Evaluation

Consistent with the above parameters, included in this analysis is the CEQA-required “No Project” alternative. Two other alternatives were selected for analysis, resulting in the following alternatives that are discussed in greater detail within the impact analysis for each alternative:

- Alternative No. 1: No Project
- Alternative No. 2: Reduced Project
- Alternative No. 3: Alternative Project Site Location

5.4.1 *No Project Alternative*

The State CEQA Guidelines require evaluation of a “no project” alternative. The purpose of describing and analyzing a no project alternative is to allow decision makers to compare the impacts of approving the proposed project with the impacts of not approving the proposed project. The “no project” analysis shall discuss the existing conditions at the time the notice of preparation is published, or if no notice of preparation is published, at the time environmental analysis is commenced, as well as what would be reasonably expected to occur in the foreseeable future if the project were not approved, based on current plans and consistent with available infrastructure and community services.

For a development project on identifiable property, the “no project” alternative is the circumstance under which the project does not proceed. Here the discussion would compare the environmental effects of the property remaining in its existing state against environmental effects which would occur if the project is approved. If disapproval of the project under consideration would result in predictable actions by others, such as the proposal of some other project, this “no project” consequence should be discussed. After defining the no project alternative using one of these approaches, the lead agency should proceed to analyze the impacts of the no project alternative by projecting what would reasonably be expected to occur in the foreseeable future if the project were



not approved, based on current plans and consistent with available infrastructure and community services.

Given this guidance, the No Project Alternative includes three scenarios: 1) no development; 2) future commercial development consistent with existing General Plan and zoning designations; and 3) future development of a mixed-use commercial/residential project consistent with the existing General Plan and zoning designations. Therefore, this alternative includes three scenarios: a) No Project/No Development Alternative; b) No Project/Commercial Development Pursuant to Existing Designations; and c) No Project/Mixed-Use Development. Both the Commercial Use and the Mixed-Use development alternatives would be of a nature that would be consistent with the existing C-2 Community Commercial zoning. Each of these scenarios is discussed below.

Alternative 1A: No Project / No Development

Description

The No Project/No Development Alternative assumes that the proposed Project is not approved, and that the Project site remains in its current state. The Project site is located on an approximate 2.5-acre property that had been developed in the past with the exception of one 0.82 acre parcel. The alternative assumes that the existing structures, including an existing commercial building, self-serve car wash, and single-family homes would remain, and the proposed Project would not be developed. All single-family houses have been demolished and commercial activities have ceased. Development permits may be required to re-establish these uses.

Impacts

With the implementation of the No Project/No Development Alternative, the Project site would remain in its current condition, would not be redeveloped, and none of the impacts identified in the EIR would occur. This alternative would avoid the mitigated significant and unavoidable impacts as well as the less-than-significant impacts identified in the EIR. Overall, impacts resulting from the No Project/No Development Alternative would be less than for the proposed Project. The improvement in traffic LOS with the signalization of the intersection of Soquel Drive and Robertson Street would not occur. In addition, the right-turn pocket proposed as Mitigation Measure TRA-2 at the intersection of Soquel Drive and Porter Street would not occur and frontage improvements to include a right-turn pocket from northbound Soquel Drive to 41st Avenue and separated sidewalks on both Soquel Drive and 41st Avenue would not occur under this alternative.

Conclusion

In summary, this alternative would avoid the mitigated significant and unavoidable impacts identified in this EIR, but would not attain any of the Project objectives.



Alternative No. 1B: No Project / Future Commercial Development

Description

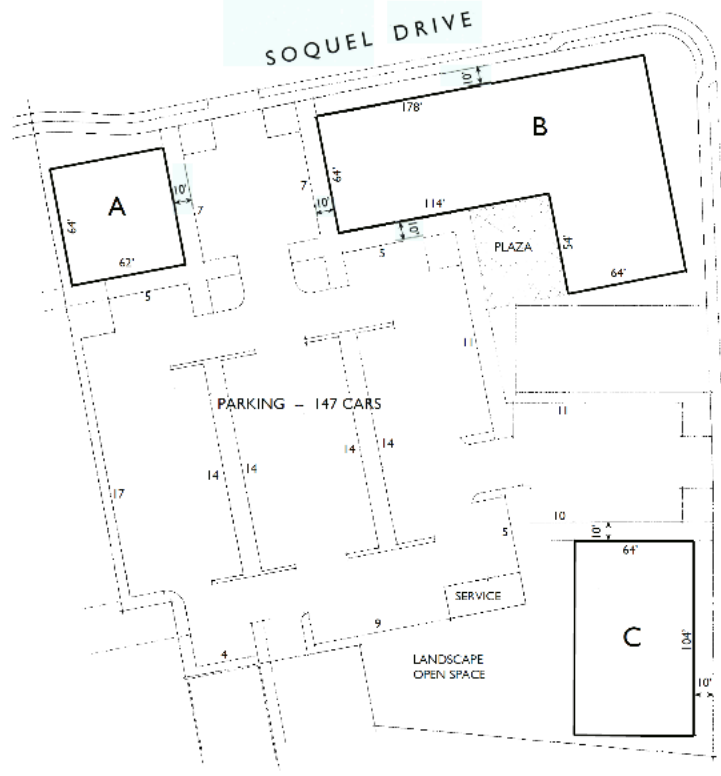
Under this No Project alternative scenario, the Project site would be redeveloped in the future in accordance with existing General Plan and zone district designations without a General Plan amendment or rezoning as proposed with the Project. County staff identified a potential commercial use development concept, prepared with the assistance of a local design consultant, which consists of approximately 36,100 square feet of commercial space in three buildings as shown on a conceptual site plan presented in Figure 5-1.

For the purpose of discussion, two buildings were considered single story and one building was considered for two stories. A total of 147 parking spaces would be proposed to meet the demand of the proposed commercial use. As under the proposed Project, this scenario would also provide approximately 15-feet for road right-of-way along the Project frontage on Soquel Drive that would be required to construct a dedicated approximately 340 foot long right-turn pocket onto 41st Avenue from eastbound Soquel Drive. County staff indicated that a commercial use development alternative could likely support a 4,000 square foot restaurant within the total 36,100 square feet of commercial retail uses.

Impacts

Identified Significant Impacts

- *Cultural Resources.* Under this No Project scenario, impacts to cultural resources would be similar to those identified for the Project since construction would involve surface excavation, which has the potential to unearth and adversely impact previously unidentified archaeological resources. Mitigation would be required as with the proposed Project.
- *Hazards and Hazardous Materials.* Impacts associated with hazards and hazardous materials would be similar to those identified for the proposed Project as building demolition would result in potential exposure to hazardous materials (asbestos-contained materials) and LBPs (lead based paints), which may be present in the structures to be demolished. Mitigation would be required as with the proposed Project.
- *Noise.* This alternative would result in increased building square footage over the proposed Project (approximately 13,500 square feet), and construction-related noise could have a longer duration. Therefore, construction noise impacts would be significant as with the Project with a potential increase in severity over the Project. As under the proposed Project temporary construction-related noise impacts would be reduced to a less than significant level with the incorporation of mitigation measures identified in the EIR, which would be required under this alternative.



SOQUEL DRIVE AT 41ST AVENUE -- NISSAN SITE

COMMERCIAL USE OPTION

SITE AREA	110,571 SF NET
ESTIMATED PARKING DEMAND	147 CARS
NON-RESIDENTIAL FLOOR AREA	36,100 SF
RESTAURANT	4,000 SF
GENERAL	32,100 SF

THE GRAPHIC BUILDING FOOTPRINTS SHOWN ARE 64' X 398' OR 25,472 SF, GROSS

BUILDING A	[ALL NON-RESIDENTIAL]
FIRST FLOOR	3,968 SF
TOTAL	3,968 SF
BUILDING B	[ALL NON-RESIDENTIAL]
FIRST FLOOR	14,848 SF
SECOND FLOOR	10,628 SF
TOTAL	25,476 SF
BUILDING C	[ALL NON-RESIDENTIAL]
FIRST FLOOR	6,656 SF
TOTAL	6,656 SF



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Source: County of Santa Cruz 2019



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- Transportation/Traffic.** Future commercial development could generate approximately 625 net new trips with 17 AM peak hour trip and 46 PM peak hour trips as summarized on Table 5-1. This alternative would result in an additional 457 daily trips, 22 AM peak hour trips, and 20 PM peak hour trips than would occur with the proposed Project. This alternative generally would result in greater traffic on the roadway network, therefore increasing the severity of the identified significant impact TR-1. Signalization of the Soquel Drive/Robertson Street intersection would continue to be required with potential commercial development on the site. Impacts associated with additional Project-generated traffic trips on Highway 1 under this alternative would be considered significant and unavoidable as with the proposed Project.

Table 5-1: Alternative 1B – No Project / Commercial Use Development Trip Generation

Land Use	Size	Units	Daily Trip Rate	Daily Trips	AM Peak Hour Rate	AM Peak Hour Trips (IN/OUT)	PM Peak Hour Rate	PM Peak Hour Trips (IN/OUT)
Existing Conditions (Trip Credits)								
Single-Family Detached Housing (LU 210)	4	DU	9.52	38	0.75	3 (1/2)	1.00	4 (3/1)
Paint Store (5/23/17 Counted Study)	4.053	KSF	65.38	265	8.64	35 (17/18)	0.99	4(1/3)
Car Wash (5/23/17 Counted Study)	6	Wash Stalls	42.83	257	1.67	10 (4/6)	4.17	25 (14/11)
Total				560		48 (22/26)		33 (18/15)
Alternative No. 1B – Commercial Use Development Conditions								
Restaurant (LU 932)	4.000	KSF	127.15	508	10.81	43 (24/19)	9.85	39 (23/16)
Office (LU 710)	10.628	KSF	11.03	117	1.56	17 (15/2)	1.49	16 (3/13)
Retail (LU 826)	21.472	KSF	44.32	952	0.96	21 (10/11)	2.71	58 (26/32)
<i>ITE Internal Reduction</i>				-392		-16 (-8/-8)		-34 (-18/-16)
				1,185		65 (41/24)		79 (34/45)
Net Alternative No. 1B – Commercial Use Development Trip Generation								
Net Alternative No. 1B – Commercial Use Trip Generation				625		17 (19/-2)		46 (16/30)
Net Proposed Project (Auto Dealership) Trip Generation				168		-5 (11/-16)		26 (5/21)
Difference (Alternative No 3 to Proposed Project)				457		22 (8/-14)		20 (11/9)
<i>Source: Kimley-Horn and Associates, 2017</i>								

Other Impacts

This alternative would generally result in less-than-significant impacts similar to those identified for the Project. No new significant impacts have been identified.

- Aesthetics.** This alternative could result in the construction of a larger project than is proposed by the Project. Development could be slightly more massive than the proposed Project due to increased building size, but would be required to meet zone district



development standards. Thus, a project under this alternative would be of similar size, scale, massing and design as other similar commercial developments in the area and would not substantially degrade the visual character of the surrounding area. Figure 5-2 provides a visual simulation looking southwest towards the Project site of what a potential commercial development may look like under Alternative 1B. Therefore, potential aesthetics impacts would continue to be less than significant impact, although the building visibility would be increased. However, this alternative could screen interior parking areas and would eliminate the areas of outdoor parking proposed with the Project with a slight reduction in lighting.

- *Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Emissions.* Commercial development could result in slightly increased emissions due to potential increased size over the proposed Project. However, the estimated building size would be far below the Monterey Bay Air Resources District (MBARD) screening levels for emissions that could exceed emission thresholds (MBARD, 2008). Overall, net emissions from construction and operations under this alternative would not be expected to exceed MBARD thresholds or result in significant impacts, although emission levels may be slightly greater than the proposed Project.
- *Land Use and Planning.* This alternative would not require a General Plan amendment and Zone change as would be required with the proposed Project. Changing a land use designation and/or zoning is not itself considered a potentially significant impact, as amendment processes exist within the Santa Cruz County Code and the subject existing and proposed land use designations are not considered mechanisms that mitigate adverse environmental effects. As with the proposed Project, potential future commercial development would be consistent with the General Plan policies related to land use, conservation and open space, public safety and noise, parks and recreation, public facilities, and community design.
- *Other Impacts.* Development on the Project site under this alternative would result in similar less-than-significant impacts identified for the proposed Project related to geology, soils, drainage and hydrology due to similar site coverage. Impacts would also be similar to identified less-than-significant public services and utilities due to similar facility size, though the nature of the commercial use would be retail instead of service under this alternative.

Conclusion

Under this No Project scenario, none of the identified significant Project impacts would be eliminated, and significant traffic impacts would increase. In addition, the magnitude of identified less-than-significant impacts related to aesthetics and air/greenhouse gas emissions would slightly increase, although the impacts would remain less than significant. This alternative would satisfy two out of five Project objectives. It would not meet objectives 1 through 3 due to a retail-commercial development rather than an automotive dealership as under the proposed Project.



No Project 1C: Future Mixed-Use Development

Description

Under this alternative, the Project site would be redeveloped in the future with a mixed-use development under existing zoning regulations; no General Plan Amendment or Zone change would occur. A potential mixed-use development concept was formulated by County Planning Department staff with the assistance of a local design consultant to provide an example of a potential mixed-use development on the site. This example includes construction of 21,000 square feet of commercial space and 21,000 square feet of residential within three buildings, two of which could be two-story structures. A total of 28 housing units could occur within the residential portion of the project. Onsite parking and two vehicle access driveways would be provided. A conceptual layout is shown on Figure 5-2. County staff determined that this alternative could also potentially support a 3,000 square foot restaurant within the commercial and residential areas.

Impacts

Identified Significant Impacts

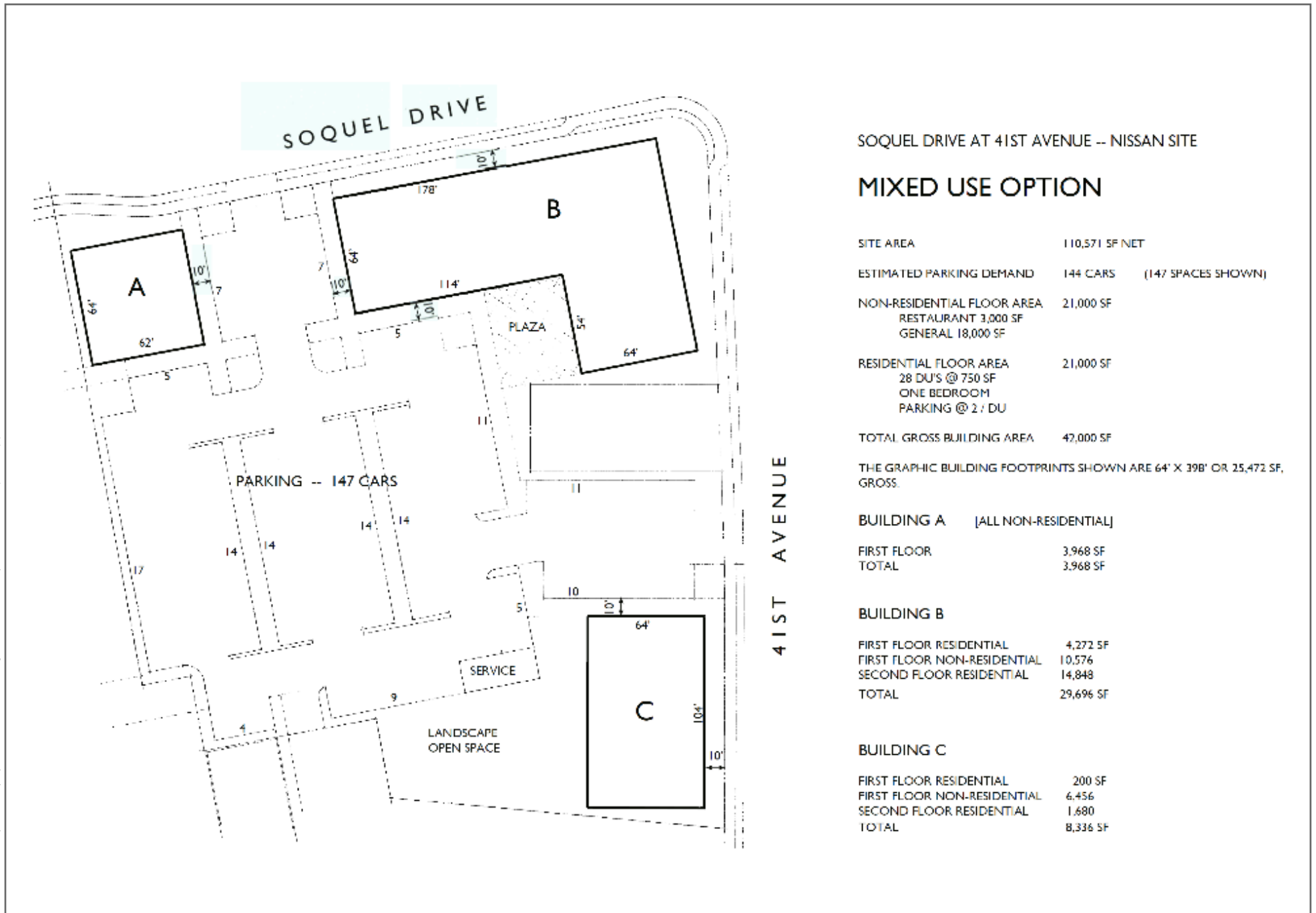
- *Cultural Resources.* Under this No Project scenario, impacts to cultural resources would be similar to those identified for the Project since construction would involve surface excavation, which has the potential to unearth and adversely impact previously unidentified archaeological resources. Mitigation would be required as with the proposed Project.
- *Hazards and Hazardous Materials.* Impacts associated with hazards and hazardous materials would be similar to those identified for the proposed Project as building demolition would result in potential exposure to hazardous materials (asbestos-contained materials) and LBPs (lead based paints), which may be present in the structures to be demolished. Mitigation would be required as with the proposed Project.
- *Noise.* This alternative could result in increased building square footage over the proposed Project (approximately 22,450 square feet), and construction-related noise could have a longer duration. Therefore, construction noise impacts would be significant as with the Project with a potential increase in severity over the Project. As under the proposed Project temporary construction-related noise impacts would be reduced to a less than significant level with the incorporation of mitigation measures identified in the EIR, which would be required under this alternative.
- *Transportation/Traffic.* Future commercial development could generate approximately 380 new net trips with 26 PM peak hour trips and a decrease of 5 trips in the AM peak hour as summarized on Table 5-2. Compared to the proposed Project, this alternative would result in approximately 212 additional daily trips over the proposed Project, but AM and PM peak hour trips would be the same as the Project.

This alternative generally would result in increased traffic on the roadway network throughout the day, but would result in the same level of impact to the Soquel



Drive/Robertson Street intersection and Highway 1 as with the proposed Project. Signalization of the Soquel Drive/Robertson Street intersection would continue to be required with potential commercial development on the site. Impacts associated with additional project-generated traffic trips on Highway 1 under this alternative would be considered significant and unavoidable as under the proposed Project. Therefore, impacts to transportation/traffic would be similar to the proposed Project, but with a greater severity of impact for daily trips under this alternative.

Table 5-2: Alternative No. 1C – Mixed-Use Development Trip Generation								
Land Use	Size	Units	Daily Trip Rate	Daily Trips	AM Peak Hour Rate	AM Peak Hour Trips (IN/OUT)	PM Peak Hour Rate	PM Peak Hour Trips (IN/OUT)
Existing Conditions (Trip Credits)								
Single-Family Detached Housing (LU 210)	4	DU	9.52	38	0.75	3 (1/2)	1.00	4 (3/1)
Paint Store (5/23/17 Counted Study)	4.053	KSF	65.38	265	8.64	35 (17/18)	0.99	4(1/3)
Car Wash (5/23/17 Counted Study)	6	Wash Stalls	42.83	257	1.67	10 (4/6)	4.17	25 (14/11)
Total				560		48 (22/26)		33 (18/15)
Alternative No. 1C – Mixed Use Development Conditions								
Restaurant (LU 932)	3.000	KSF	127.15	382	10.81	32 (18/14)	9.85	30 (18/12)
Retail (LU 826)	18.000	KSF	44.32	798	0.96	17 (8/9)	2.71	49 (22/27)
Apartment (LU 220)	28	DU	6.65	188	0.51	14 (3/11)	0.62	17 (11/6)
<i>ITE Internal Reduction</i>				-428		-20 (-10/-10)		-37 (-19/-18)
				940		43 (19/24)		59 (32/27)
Net Mixed Use Development Trip Generation								
Net Alternative No. 1C – Mixed-Use Trip Generation				380		-5 (-3/-2)		26 (14/12)
Net Proposed Project (Auto Dealership) Trip Generation				168		-5 (11/-16)		26 (5/21)
Difference (Alternative No 4 to Proposed Project)				212		0 (9/-14)		0 (9/-9)
<i>Source: Kimley-Horn and Associates, 2017</i>								



Source: County of Santa Cruz 2019



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Other Impacts

This alternative would generally result in less-than-significant impacts similar to those identified for the Project. No new significant impacts have been identified.

- *Aesthetics.* This alternative could result in the construction of approximately 45,000 square feet of one- and two-story commercial-retail buildings along the frontages of both Soquel Drive and 41st Avenue. Development could be slightly more massive than the proposed Project due to increased building size, but would be required to meet zone district development standards, thus, and would be of similar size, massing and design as other similar commercial developments in the area. Figure 5-2 provides a visual simulation looking southwest towards the Project site of what a potential commercial development may look like under Alternative 1B, and a similar site plan and massing would be expected with a mixed-use development. Therefore, this No Project scenario would not substantially degrade the visual character of the surrounding area, and potential aesthetics impacts would continue to be less than significant impact with a slightly increased visibility. However, this alternative could screen interior parking areas and would eliminate the areas of outdoor parking proposed with the Project with a slight reduction in lighting.
- *Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Emissions.* A mixed-use development could result in slightly increased emissions due to potential increased size over the proposed Project. However, the estimated building size would be far below the MBARD screening levels for emissions that could exceed emission thresholds (MBARD, 2008). Overall, net emissions from construction and operations under this alternative would not be expected to exceed MBARD thresholds or result in significant impacts, although emission levels may be slightly greater than the proposed Project.
- *Land Use and Planning.* This alternative would not require a General Plan amendment and Zone change as would be required with the proposed Project. Changing a land use designation and/or zoning is not itself considered a potentially significant impact, as amendment processes exist within the Santa Cruz County Code and the subject existing and proposed land use designations are not considered mechanisms that mitigate adverse environmental effects. As with the proposed Project, potential future commercial development would be consistent with the General Plan policies related to land use, conservation and open space, public safety and noise, parks and recreation, public facilities, and community design.
- *Other Impacts.* Development on the Project site under this alternative would result in similar less-than-significant impacts identified for the proposed Project related to geology, soils, drainage and hydrology due to similar site coverage. Impacts would also be similar to identified less-than-significant public services and utilities, although the inclusion of residential uses could result in a slight increased demand for some services, such as potable water and recreation. This alternative would result in population growth related to construction of housing units with this alternative, although given the relatively low number



of units (28), it is expected that this level of housing development and associated growth would be within regional projections.

Conclusion

Under this No Project scenario, none of the identified significant Project impacts would be eliminated, and significant traffic impacts would be the same as with the proposed Project. In addition, the magnitude of identified less-than-significant impacts related to aesthetics and air/greenhouse gas emissions would slightly increase, although the impacts would remain less than significant. Other impacts would remain less than significant, although some public service and utility demands may increase with a residential component of this No Project scenario. This alternative would satisfy two out of five Project objectives. It would not meet objectives 1 through 3 due to a mixed-use development rather than an automotive dealership as under the proposed Project.

Alternative 2: Reduced Project

Description

Alternative 2 considers reduction in the Project size. In order to develop a potentially feasible alternative, a 10-20% reduction in size was considered a reasonable range in which a potentially feasible project could be developed that also could potentially avoid or substantially lessen any of the identified significant impacts. A 15% reduction was selected for this alternative in order to reduce impacts, while reasonably attaining Project objectives. This would result in a Project building size of 19,165 square feet instead of the proposed 22,547 square foot facility, resulting a reduction of 3,382 square feet in the dealership building and/or auto service center.

Impacts

Identified Significant Impacts

- *Cultural Resources.* Under Alternative 2, impacts to cultural resources would be similar to those identified for the proposed Project since construction would involve surface excavation, which has the potential to unearth and adversely impact previously unidentified archaeological resources. Mitigation that is required for the proposed Project also would be required with this alternative.
- *Hazards and Hazardous Materials.* Impacts associated with hazards and hazardous materials would be similar to those identified for the proposed Project as building demolition and new construction would result in potential exposure to hazardous materials (asbestos-contained materials) and LBPs (lead based paints), which may be present in the structures to be demolished. Thus, impacts would be similar to the Proposed Project, and identified Project mitigation measure would be required.
- *Noise.* Impacts would be similar to those identified for the proposed Project. Construction-related noise may be slightly reduced with a smaller building, but the structure would



generally be the same size as the Project and potential construction-noise impacts would not be substantially lessened. As under the proposed Project, temporary construction-related noise impacts would be reduced to a less-than-significant level with the incorporation of mitigation measures..

- Transportation/Traffic.** This alternative would generate approximately 59 net new trips with 17 new PM peak hour trips and a reduction of 11 AM peak hour trips as summarized on Table 5-3.. Alternative 2 would result in 109 fewer daily trips and 9 fewer PM peak hour trips than would occur with the proposed Project. Additionally, reduced trips in the AM peak hour would be greater with this alternative than with the Project. Impacts to the significantly impacted intersections of Soquel Drive at Robertson Street and Porter Street and along Highway 1 segments would be reduced during both the AM and PM peak hours. PM Peak hour trips along Highway 1 would be reduced by approximately 2 trips from the estimated 7-8 trips generated by the Project, which represents a 25-35% reduction. While, the significant traffic impact would not be eliminated, Alternative 2 would reduce impacts at the affected intersections and along Highway 1. However, Mitigation Measures TRA-1 and TRA-2 would continue to be required.

Table 5-3: Alternative 2 – Reduced Project Trip Generation

Land Use	Size	Units	Daily Trip Rate	Daily Trips	AM Peak Hour Rate	AM Peak Hour Trips (IN/OUT)	PM Peak Hour Rate	PM Peak Hour Trips (IN/OUT)
Existing Conditions (Trip Credits)								
Single-Family Detached Housing (LU 210)	4	DU	9.52	38	0.75	3 (1/2)	1.00	4 (3/1)
Paint Store (5/23/17 Counted Study)	4.053	KSF	65.38	265	8.64	35 (17/18)	0.99	4(1/3)
Car Wash (5/23/17 Counted Study)	6	Wash Stalls	42.83	257	1.67	10 (4/6)	4.17	25 (14/11)
Total				560		48 (22/26)		33 (18/15)
Alternative No. 2 – Reduced Project								
Automobile Sales (LU 841)	19.165	SF	32.30	619	1.92	37 (17/20)	2.62	50 (20/30)
Net Alternative No. 2 – Reduced Project								
Net Alternative 2 – Reduced Project Trip Generation				59		-11 (-5/-6)		17(2/15)
Net Proposed Project (Auto Dealership) Trip Generation				168		-5 (11/-16)		26 (5/21)
Difference (Alternative No 3 to Proposed Project)				-109		-6 (-6/-10)		-9 (-3/-6)
<i>Source: Kimley-Horn and Associates, 2017 and Dudek, 2019</i>								



Other Impacts

Other less-than-significant impacts would be similar or reduced under this alternative with a reduced building size. No new significant impacts have been identified.

- *Aesthetics.* This alternative would result in the construction of a slightly smaller building than proposed at approximately 19,200 square feet of new building space. Development under this alternative would be slightly less massive than the proposed Project, but would be generally be the same scale as the proposed Project. Therefore, potential impacts would be less than significant impact and similar or slightly reduced from the proposed Project.
- *Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Emission.* Operational and construction emissions would be slightly reduced with a reduced building size and reduced vehicle trips. Therefore, potential impacts would be less than significant impact, although slightly reduced from the proposed Project.
- *Land Use and Planning.* This alternative would result in a slightly smaller Project, but would continue to require a General Plan amendment and Zone change as would be required with the proposed Project. Changing a land use designation and/or zoning is not itself considered a potentially significant impact, as amendment processes exist within the Santa Cruz County Code and the subject existing and proposed land use designations are not considered mechanisms that mitigate adverse environmental effects. As with the proposed Project, potential future commercial development would be consistent with the General Plan policies related to land use, conservation and open space, public safety and noise, parks and recreation, public facilities, and community design.
- *Other Impacts.* Development on the Project site under this alternative would result in similar or slightly reduced less-than-significant impacts identified for the proposed Project related to geology, soils, drainage and hydrology due to similar site coverage. Impacts would also be similar to identified less-than-significant public services and utilities due to similar facility size.

Conclusion

Under this alternative, none of the identified significant Project impacts would be eliminated. Significant traffic and noise impacts would be reduced, but noise impacts would not be substantially lessened. Mitigation measures would continue to be required as with the proposed Project. However, traffic impacts would be substantially lessened. This alternative would satisfy all of the Project objectives.



Alternative 3: Alternative Project Site Location

Introduction

In accordance with CEQA Guidelines section 15126.6(f)(2), the key question and first step in analysis of alternative site locations is whether any of the significant effects of the project would be avoided or substantially lessened by putting the project in another location. Only locations that would avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects of the project need be considered for inclusion in the EIR. If the lead agency concludes that no feasible alternative locations exist, it must disclose the reasons for this conclusion, and should include the reasons in the EIR.

(CEQA Guidelines section 15126.6(f)(1) identifies factors that may be taken into account when addressing the feasibility of alternatives that include site suitability, economic viability, availability of infrastructure, general plan consistency, other plans or regulatory limitations, jurisdictional boundaries (projects with a regionally significant impact should consider the regional context), and whether the proponent can reasonably acquire, control or otherwise have access to the alternative site (or the site is already owned by the proponent). No one of these factors establishes a fixed limit on the scope of reasonable alternatives. (*Citizens of Goleta Valley v. Board of Supervisors* (1990) 52 Cal.3d 553; see *Save Our Residential Environment v. City of West Hollywood* (1992) 9 Cal.App.4th 1745, 1753, fn. 1).

Alternative Project Site Selection and Screening Process

Alternative site locations were identified by the County of Santa Cruz Office of Economic Development. Eight potentially feasible alternative sites were identified based on general site selection criteria identified for the type of use proposed, taking into account overall project objectives, in particular: “*To provide a conveniently located, attractively designed automotive dealership and service center that will offer a full range of automotive models and services that satisfy the demand for new car buying opportunities within unincorporated Santa Cruz County.*” The site selection criteria included:

- **Site Size:** From 2.5 to 3 acres (based on dealership/franchise and industry standards)
- **Building Location:** Conveniently located (defined as ease of access from the Freeway and preferably, proximity to other dealerships), and located within the Primary Market Area (PMA) for Santa Cruz County that includes the cities of Scotts Valley, Santa Cruz, Capitola and Watsonville
- **Site Suitability:** Appropriate general plan/zoning designations; topography, parcel configuration, and physical ability to accommodate the Project; consideration of existing uses; availability of services
- **Availability:** Site is for sale or potentially available to the Project applicant



Based on these criteria, alternative sites were identified by County through a combination of the County's geographic information system (GIS), physically driving the target market area or PMA, and conversations with local commercial real estate brokers and owners. Information about alternative sites also was drawn from the on-line commercial real estate information websites. Confirmation of each site's existing use and availability was conducted through telephone or in-person interviews with property owners. Initial assessment of potential suitability was drawn from each property's general plan and zoning designations, topography, configuration, availability of services including water, freeway access, adjacent uses, proximity to other dealerships, and leaseholds of existing businesses. See Appendix R in this document for further description of the County's process.

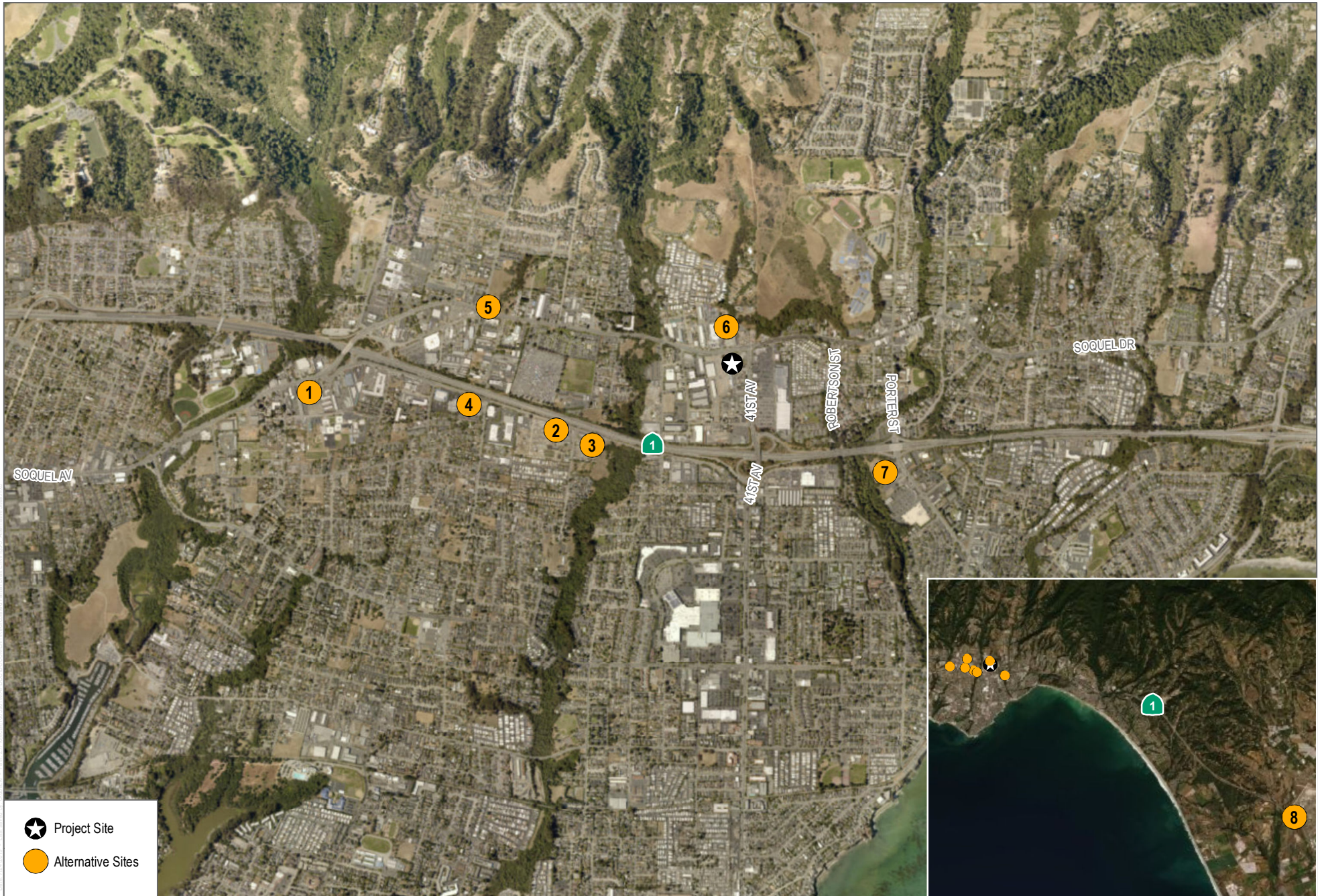
The results of the County's search identified eight potential alternative sites, six of which are in the general vicinity of the Project site - three are along Soquel Drive and Soquel Avenue in the vicinity of the Project and three of which are located on Soquel Avenue south of Highway 1 and west of 41st Avenue. One site is located in the City of Capitola and one site is located in the City of Watsonville. The alternative site locations are shown on Figure 5-3 and include:

1. 2777 & 2808 Soquel Drive
2. 5960 Soquel Avenue
3. 6100 Soquel Avenue
4. 2505 Chanticleer Avenue
5. Northwest Corner of Soquel Drive and Thurber Lane
6. 3845 Soquel Drive
7. 835 Bay Avenue
8. 220 Westgate Drive

Site Screening

The first step in the analysis is determining whether any of the significant effects of the project would be avoided or substantially lessened by putting the project in another location. Only locations that would avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects of the project need be considered for inclusion in the EIR. Therefore, each site was reviewed to ascertain whether any significant Project impacts could be avoided or substantially lessened at a different location. The alternative sites assumed that a project of the same size as the proposed Project would be developed on each site considered, except for Site #4 (2505 Chanticleer Avenue) which had an estimated smaller project size because the site is smaller than the Project site.

Due to the identified significant unavoidable impacts to Highway 1 and impacts to impacted Soquel Drive intersections, additional traffic information was developed for each alternative site. This information was developed by Kimley-Horn and peer reviewed by Dudek; results are included in Appendix R. The trip generation included daily and peak hour trips (AM and PM), and general trip distribution was developed to determine trips generated on Highway 1 and at the impacted Soquel Drive intersections. The net increase in trips was identified for those sites that have existing development (#1, 2, and 3) by subtracting trips from existing uses.



SOURCE: County of Santa Cruz 2016

FIGURE 5-3
Alternative Site Locations
 Nissan of Santa Cruz Project Recirculated Partial Draft EIR



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Table 5-4 summarizes trips associated with alternative site locations. None of the alternative sites would result in a reduction of daily trips, although Sites #1 and 3 would result in a reduction of PM peak hour trips. Since the other sites would not reduce significant traffic impacts, they were eliminated from further consideration because significant impacts would not be avoided or substantially lessened, and the severity of traffic impacts would increase.

Table 5-4: Net New Trip Generation for Alternative Location Sites								
Site	Address	Daily Trips	AM Peak Hour			PM Peak Hour		
		Total	In	Out	Total	In	Out	Total
Site 1	2776 & 2808 Soquel Drive	570	23	2	25	1	12	13
Site 2	5960 Soquel Avenue	492	20	3	23	10	22	32
Site 3	6100 Soquel Avenue	386	2	-6	-4	-8	2	-6
Site 4	2505 Chanticleer Avenue	572	26	8	34	18	28	46
Site 5	NE Corner of Soquel Drive & Thurber Lane	728	33	10	43	23	36	59
Site 6	3845 Soquel Drive	728	33	10	43	23	36	59
Site 7	835 Bay Avenue	728	33	10	43	23	36	59
Site 8	220 Westgate Drive	728	33	10	43	23	36	59
Project	SW Corner of Soquel Drive & 41st Avenue	168	11	-16	-5	5	21	26

SOURCE: Kimley-Horn, July 2019

Alternative Sites #1 and 3 were further reviewed for feasibility, taking into the account the factors identified in the CEQA Guidelines: site suitability, economic viability, availability of infrastructure, general plan consistency, other plans or regulatory limitations, jurisdictional boundaries (projects with a regionally significant impact should consider the regional context), and whether the proponent can reasonably acquire, control or otherwise have access to the alternative site (or the site is already owned by the proponent). Notes on feasibility were also made for the other sites. The results of this review are also summarized on Table 5-5. This table provides a summary of screening results for all alternative sites considered.

Based on this review, Site #1 was eliminated from further consideration as it would not substantially reduce traffic impacts. This alternative site would result in an *increase* in AM peak hour trips in an amount *substantially greater* than the reduction of PM peak hour trips that would occur at this alternative location. Trips along Highway 1 would be reduced by 25-35% in the PM peak hour, but this translates to only 2-3 trips. The cultural resources impact would be eliminated, but not hazardous



materials or noise. Furthermore, the property is not for sale and wouldn't be available to the Project proponent, and therefore, the site was not considered a feasible alternative location and was eliminated from further consideration.

Alternative Site #3 would result in a avoidance of significant traffic impacts, but no changes to other significant impacts would occur. The site is not for sale and may not be available to the applicant, thus rendering this site as infeasible. However, because the significant traffic impact and cumulative traffic impacts are avoided, this site was selected for further evaluation.

Description

The site consists of approximately 6 acres, which is larger than needed for the Project site. The site is designated Commercial Services and a area adjacent to the Rodeo Gulch riparian corridor is designated Urban Open Space in the County's General Plan; the site is zoned M-1, Light Industrial. However, it is estimated that approximately half of the site is undevelopable due to presence of sensitive riparian corridor habitat and drainage/steep slope features along and adjacent to Rodeo Gulch. The site would require assembly of two parcels and would require a rezoning to allow an auto dealership, although the site has the appropriate General Plan designation to support the proposed use. While automotive services are allowed in the M-1 zone district, auto dealerships are not a permitted use, and a zoning amendment would be required. The property is not for sale or available to the applicant.

Impacts

Identified Significant Impacts

- *Cultural Resources.* Under Alternative 3, impacts to cultural resources would be similar to those identified for the proposed Project. A portion of the site is identified as being in an archaeologically sensitive area, and has the potential to unearth and adversely impact archaeological resources. Mitigation would be required for this alternative as is required for the proposed Project.
- *Hazards and Hazardous Materials.* Impacts associated with hazards and hazardous materials may be similar to those identified for the proposed Project as building demolition would be required, although it is not known whether the existing building contains hazardous materials asbestos-contained materials and/or lead based paints. However, the existing auto business and/or past businesses may have a history of use of hazardous materials, and there may be other impacts related to presence of hazardous materials in soils. Overall, impacts under this alternative may be similar to the proposed Project or involve different hazards, and mitigation may be required.

Table 5-5: Alternative Sites Screening Comparison

	Site Location	Size	General Plan / Zoning	Eliminate/Reduce Impacts	Screening Based on Impacts	Feasibility	Screening Based on Feasibility Evaluate in EIR
1	2776 & 2808 Soquel Avenue County of Santa Cruz • Size Criterion: Yes • Convenient Location: Yes • Suitable Site: Yes • Potentially Available: No-not for sale	2.6 acres	Commercial Services / C-4	Cultural: Yes: Site not in sensitive area Haz Mat: No: Unknown; but potential for impacts due to past uses Noise: No: Construction noise potentially greater due to proximity to sensitive receptors (school, residences) Traffic: Yes: Soquel Drive intersections-Impacts reduced during PM peak hour, but increase during AM peak hour Yes: Highway 1: Impacts reduced during PM peak hour, but increase during AM peak hour Cum Traffic: Yes: PM peak trips reduced, but AM trips higher than Project	Significant traffic impacts are reduced, and cultural resource impact is avoided. However, traffic impacts are only reduced in the PM peak hour, and would increase in the AM peak hour with net effect of no substantial reduction as the significant unavoidable highway impact is not avoided. Therefore, alternative can be eliminated from further consideration.	Site Suitability: Yes Services Available: Yes General Plan Consistency: Yes and zoned for proposed use Economic Viability: Yes, within market area and near other dealerships Jurisdictional Boundaries: In County Availability: Site consists of two parcels that would need to be assembled; site not for sale Other: None	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No substantial reduction in impacts • Potentially not feasible due to unavailability - property is not for sale • <i>ELIMINATE FROM FURTHER CONSIDERATION</i>
2	5960 Soquel Avenue County of Santa Cruz • Size Criterion: Yes • Convenient Location: Yes • Suitable Site: Yes • Potentially Available: No	2.7 acres	Commercial Services/ M-1-Light Industrial	Cultural: Yes: Site not in sensitive area Haz Mat: No: Unknown; but potential for impacts due to past uses Noise: No: Construction noise potentially greater due to proximity to sensitive receptors (residences) Traffic: Yes: Soquel Drive intersections-Impacts reduced in AM and PM peak hour No: Highway 1-impacts higher in AM and PM peak hour Cum Traffic: No: Daily, AM and PM peak trips higher than Project	Two significant impacts are reduced: cultural resources and intersection traffic. However, the significant unavoidable traffic impact on Highway 1 is not reduced, and noise and traffic (Highway 1) impacts would be greater than Project impacts. Therefore, alternative can be eliminated from further consideration.	Site Suitability: Yes Services Available: Yes General Plan Consistency: Yes; requires rezoning, which would be consistent with General Plan designation Economic Viability: Yes, within market area and near other dealerships Jurisdictional Boundaries: In County Availability: Site is not for sale; current Tenant has 10-year lease Other: None	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No substantial reduction in impacts • Not feasible due to unavailability with existing long-term tenant lease • <i>ELIMINATE FROM FURTHER CONSIDERATION</i>
3	6100 Soquel Avenue County of Santa Cruz • Size Criterion: Yes • Convenient Location: Yes • Suitable Site: Yes • Potentially Available: No-not for sale	6.0 acres	Commercial Services, Urban Open Space / M-1, Light Industrial	Cultural: No: Portion of site within sensitive archaeological area Haz Mat: No: Existing hazardous materials use Noise: No: Construction noise potentially greater due to proximity to sensitive receptors (residences) Traffic: Yes: Soquel Drive intersections-Impacts reduced during AM and PM peak hours Yes: Highway 1: Impacts reduced during AM and PM peak hours Cum Traffic: Yes: PM peak trips reduced	Significant traffic impacts are reduced, but no changes to cultural, hazardous materials or noise impacts. The significant unavoidable highway impact would be avoided in the AM and PM peak hours, as would traffic intersection impacts. Therefore, alternative can be considered further.	Site Suitability: Yes Services Available: Yes General Plan Consistency: Yes; requires rezoning, which would be consistent with General Plan C-S designation, but not with Open Space designation Economic Viability: : Yes, within market area and near other dealerships Jurisdictional Boundaries: In County Availability: Site not for sale Other: Two parcels would need to be assembled; riparian area and topography limit developable area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Substantial reduction in traffic impacts. • Potentially feasible. • REVIEW IN EIR
4	2505 Chanticleer Avenue County of Santa Cruz • Size Criterion: No • Convenient Location: Yes • Suitable Site: Yes • Potentially Available: No	1.9 acres	Commercial Services/M-1-Light Industrial	Cultural: Yes: No identified resources at site Haz Mat: No: Similar to Project Noise: No: Construction noise potentially greater due to proximity to sensitive receptors (residences) Traffic: Yes: Soquel Drive intersections-Impacts decrease by 1 trip in PM peak, but AM peak hour traffic increases No: Highway 1-Impacts greater during AM and PM peak hours Cum Traffic: No: Daily, AM and PM peak hour trips are higher	Most significant impacts are not avoided or reduced, except cultural resources impacts are avoided. Traffic intersection impact is only reduced in the PM peak hour and would increase in the AM peak hour with net effect of no substantial reduction. The significant unavoidable highway impact is not reduced, but increases. Significant noise impact would be greater than Project impacts. Therefore, alternative can be eliminated from further consideration.	Site Suitability: Smaller than needed Services Available: Yes General Plan Consistency: Yes; requires rezoning, which would be consistent with General Plan designation Economic Viability: : Yes, within market area and near other dealerships Jurisdictional Boundaries: In County Availability: Soquel Creek Water District has Purchase option Other: Site under consideration for Hwy 1 bike/pedestrian bridge landing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No substantial reduction in impacts • Not feasible due to unavailability; another party has purchase option • <i>ELIMINATE FROM FURTHER CONSIDERATION</i>



Table 5-5: Alternative Sites Screening Comparison

	Site Location	Size	General Plan / Zoning	Eliminate/Reduce Impacts	Screening Based on Impacts	Feasibility	Screening Based on Feasibility Evaluate in EIR
5	NE corner of Soquel Drive and Thurber Avenue County of Santa Cruz • Size Criterion: Yes • Convenient Location: Partial • Suitable Site: Yes • Potentially Available: Not for sale, but owner may consider offers	6.2 acres	Neighborhood Commercial, Professional Office, Urban Open Space / C-1-Neighborhood Commercial, PA-Professional and Administrative Offices	Cultural: Yes: Not in sensitive area Haz Mat: No: Not known Noise: No: Construction noise potentially greater due to proximity to sensitive receptors (residences) Traffic: No: Soquel Drive intersections-Impacts same as Project during PM peak hour and increased trips in AM peak hour Cum Traffic: No: Highway 1-Impacts greater during AM and PM peak hours No: Daily, AM and PM peak hour trips are higher	Cultural resources impact is avoided, but none of the other significant impacts are reduced. Noise and traffic (intersections and Highway 1) impacts would be greater than Project impacts. Therefore, alternative can be eliminated from further consideration.	Site Suitability: Maybe Services Available: Yes General Plan Consistency: No, requires General Plan amendment and rezoning, Economic Viability: Yes, within market area and near other dealerships Jurisdictional Boundaries: In County Availability: Not for sale, but owner may consider offers Other: Legal issue with County; potential physical constraints with existing drainage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No substantial reduction in impacts <i>ELIMINATE FROM FURTHER CONSIDERATION</i>
6	3845 Soquel Drive County of Santa Cruz • Size Criterion: No • Convenient Location: Yes • Suitable Site: No (narrow configuration) • Potentially Available: No	2.2	Commercial Services, Urban Open Space, Residential Urban Medium / C-4 Commercial Services	Cultural: Yes: Not in identified sensitive area Haz Mat: No: Unknown Noise: No: Construction noise potentially greater due to proximity to sensitive receptors Traffic: No: Soquel Drive intersections-Impacts greater during AM and PM peak hours Cum Traffic: No: Highway 1-Impacts greater during AM and PM peak hours No: Daily, AM and PM peak hour trips are higher	Cultural resources impact is avoided, but none of the other significant impacts are reduced. Noise and traffic (intersections and Highway 1) impacts would be greater than Project impacts. Therefore, alternative can be eliminated from further consideration.	Site Suitability: No – site too small and narrow Services Available: Yes General Plan Consistency: Yes; requires rezoning, which would be consistent with General Plan C-S designation, but potentially inconsistent with others Economic Viability: Yes, within market area and near other dealerships Jurisdictional Boundaries: In County Availability: Not for sale Other: Narrow configuration could limit design for auto dealership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No substantial reduction in impacts <i>ELIMINATE FROM FURTHER CONSIDERATION</i>
7	835 Bay Avenue, City of Capitola • Size Criterion: Yes • Convenient Location: Yes • Suitable Site: Potentially • Potentially Available: No-not for sale	3.3 acres	Community Commercial/CC-Community Commercial	Cultural: No: Unknown Haz Mat: No: Unknown Noise: No: Construction noise similar to Project Traffic: No: Soquel Drive intersections-Impacts reduced during PM peak period, but increase during PM peak hours Cum Traffic: No: Highway 1-Impacts greater during AM and PM peak hours No: Daily, AM and PM peak hour trips are higher	Traffic intersection impact would be reduced, but other significant impacts may not be reduced or avoided. Noise and traffic (Highway 1) impacts would be greater than Project impacts. Therefore, alternative can be eliminated from further consideration.	Site Suitability: Yes Services Available: Yes General Plan Consistency: Yes Economic Viability: Yes, within market area and near other dealerships Jurisdictional Boundaries: In Capitola, not in County Availability: Not for sale Other: Borders riparian area, which may limit buildable area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No substantial reduction in impacts <i>ELIMINATE FROM FURTHER CONSIDERATION</i>
8	220 Westgate Drive City of Watsonville • Size Criterion: Yes • Convenient Location: Yes • Suitable Site: No (Topography and drainage constraints) • Potentially Available: Yes-for sale	3.6 acres	General Commercial / CD-IP, Commercial-Industrial Park	Cultural: No: Unknown Haz Mat: No: Unknown Noise: No: Construction noise similar to Project Traffic: Yes: Soquel Drive intersections-Impacts reduced during AM and PM peak hours Cum Traffic: No: Highway 1-Impacts greater during AM and PM peak hours No: Daily, AM and PM peak hour trips are higher	Traffic intersection impact would be reduced, but other significant impacts would not be reduced or avoided. The significant unavoidable highway traffic impact would not be reduced and would be greater than Project impacts. Therefore, alternative can be eliminated from further consideration.	Site Suitability: No-topographical and drainage constraints Services Available: Yes General Plan Consistency: Not clear if proposed used consistent with GP and zoning; Master Plan for medical office buildings Economic Viability: Yes, within market area, but not near other dealerships Jurisdictional Boundaries: In Capitola, not in County Availability: Not for sale Other: No other dealerships in proximity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No substantial reduction in impacts <i>ELIMINATE FROM FURTHER CONSIDERATION</i>



- Noise.* Construction noise impacts would be greater than those identified for the proposed Project due to the proximity of sensitive receptors (residential uses) to adjacent to the site to the south. As under the proposed Project temporary construction-related noise impacts would be reduced to a less than significant level with the incorporation of mitigation measures. Thus, mitigation would be required as with the proposed Project. Due to the proximity of adjacent residences and depending on the layout of the facility, development of the Project at this location could result in potentially significant operational noise impacts that would require sound buffering and/or attenuation mitigation measures. Overall, noise impacts under this alternative would increase compared to the proposed Project, including a potential new operational noise impact.
- Transportation/Traffic.* This alternative would generate approximately 386 net new trips, and approximately 218 more daily trips than the proposed Project. Because of the existing uses, net traffic under this alternative would not result in a net increase in the AM and PM peak periods, but would result in a reduction of trips during these periods as summarized on Table 5-6. As compared to the proposed Project, Alternative 3 would eliminate significant intersection and highway traffic impacts. PM Peak hour trips along Highway 1 would be reduced by approximately 2 trips compared to the estimated 7-8 PM peak trips generated by the Project along Highway 1. However, daily traffic would more than double the daily traffic generated by the proposed Project.

Table 5-6: Alternative 3 – Alternative Site #3 Trip Generation

Land Use	Size	Units	Daily Trip Rate	Daily Trips	AM Peak Hour Rate	AM Peak Hour Trips (IN/OUT)	PM Peak Hour Rate	PM Peak Hour Trips (IN/OUT)
Existing Conditions (Trip Credits)								
Auto Care Center (LU 942)	21,000	SF	16.8	342	2.25	47 (31/16)	3.11	65 (31/34)
Alternative No. 3 – Alternative Site Location: (6100 Soquel Avenue)								
Automobile Sales (LU 841)	22,547	SF	32.30	728	1.92	43 (33/10)	2.62	59 (23/36)
Net Alternative 3 – Alternative Site Trip Generation				386		-4 (2/-6)		-6(-8/2)
Net Proposed Project (Auto Dealership) Trip Generation				168		-5 (11/-16)		26 (5/21)
Difference (Alternative No 3 to Proposed Project)				218		-1 (-9/-10)		-20 (-3/-19)
<i>Source: Kimley-Horn, 2019</i>								



Other Impacts

Other less-than-significant impacts would be generally similar or reduced under this alternative. This alternative could result in new potentially significant impacts related to biological resources and operational noise, as well as a potential new less-than significant impact related to scenic views.

- *Aesthetics.* This alternative would be similar to the proposed Project in terms of building size. The structure would be larger than existing onsite or adjacent structures. However, an existing two-story office building complex exists on Soquel Avenue further west of the site, and a project under this alternative would be similar in scale and mass as other nearby development. Development under this alternative would be visible from Highway 1, and this segment of the highway is a County-designated scenic highway. Therefore, a new impact to scenic views would occur, although given the visibility of other existing developments in the area, development would not significantly affect a scenic view. Some trees may be removed, but none of the existing trees are large, distinctive or visually prominent from a wide public area, and thus, no significant impacts to on-site scenic resources are expected. Overall, development of the Project at this site would introduce a new commercial facility but would not substantially degrade the visual character of the surrounding area.

Depending on the Project layout, development at this site could result in more severe impacts related to lighting due to the proximity of adjacent residences and the typical outdoor lighting provided at auto dealerships. It is possible that the impact could be potentially significant. The proposed Project includes 64 15-foot tall, mounted lights throughout the project to illuminate the parking/display areas and dealership and also may include temporary construction lighting. All lighting would be directed downward onto the site and shielded such that there would not be overspill onto adjacent properties. Outside of approved hours of operation, all lighting (including sign lighting) would be turned off with exception of minimal lighting necessary to provide security of the site. If necessary, dimmers and shields would be installed and/or fixtures would be relocated to eliminate glare and or excessive light from leaving the site. With these provisions, the project would not be expected to result in significant offsite lighting impacts, although there may be a background illumination in the night sky that is noticeable to some residents.

- *Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Emission.* The Project size would not change from the proposed Project, and therefore, air and greenhouse gas emissions would be at a similar level as the Project.
- *Biological Resources.* Development at this site could result in indirect or potentially direct impacts to sensitive habitat and/or special status species found on the eastern portion of the site adjacent to Rodeo Gulch. Given existing General Plan and zoning designations, as well as other County regulations, it is expected that development would not be permitted in sensitive habitat areas. However, indirect impacts could result due to construction activities, drainage, potential erosion and water quality effects in Rodeo Gulch, and introduction of lighting. However, as discussed above, lighting would be required to be shielded and not directed to offsite locations, although there could be background illumination. Tree removal could result



in impacts to nesting birds, but Project design features would be included as with the proposed Project that would require pre-construction nesting surveys and protective measures if tree removal and construction occurs during nesting season.

- *Land Use and Planning.* This alternative would not require a General Plan amendment as would be required with the proposed Project. However, a zoning amendment would be required as the existing M-1 zone district does not allow an auto dealership. Changing a land use designation and/or zoning is not itself considered a potentially significant impact, as amendment processes exist within the Santa Cruz County Code and the subject existing and proposed land use designations are not considered mechanisms that mitigate adverse environmental effects. As with the proposed Project, potential future commercial development would be consistent with the General Plan policies related to land use, conservation and open space, public safety and noise, parks and recreation, public facilities, and community design.
- *Other Impacts.* Development on the Project site under this alternative would result in similar less-than-significant impacts identified for the proposed Project related to geology, soils, drainage and hydrology due to similar site coverage. Impacts would also be similar to identified less-than-significant public services and utilities, except demand for potable water use may not be fully offset by the existing use.

Conclusion

Under this alternative, significant traffic impacts would be eliminated, but other identified significant impacts would not be substantially reduced. Construction noise impacts would be more severe due to proximity of sensitive receptors, and potentially significant operational noise impacts could result that weren't identified with the proposed Project. In addition, the severity of identified less-than-significant impacts related to aesthetics and public services and utilities would increase, although the impacts would remain less than significant. This alternative could result in new potentially significant impacts to biological resources due to construction and operation adjacent to a sensitive riparian habitat area, including potential indirect effects of introduced lighting. This alternative would satisfy three of five the Project objectives. It would not meet Objective 2 related to providing a service commercial use on a community commercial site as the property is already designated for service commercial uses. This alternative would meet Objective 4 in that it would provide redevelopment of an existing underutilized site, but the property does not contain blighted or non-conforming uses.

5.5 Environmentally Superior Alternative

According to CEQA Guidelines section 15126.6(e), if the environmentally superior alternative is the "no project" alternative, the EIR shall also identify an environmentally superior alternative among the other alternatives. Furthermore, Sections 21002 and 21081 of CEQA require lead agencies to adopt feasible mitigation measures or feasible alternatives in order to substantially lessen or avoid otherwise significant adverse environmental effects, unless specific social or other conditions make such mitigation measures or alternatives infeasible. Where the environmentally superior alternative



also is the no project alternative, CEQA Guidelines in Section 15126(d)(4) requires the EIR to identify an environmentally superior alternative from among the other alternatives.

Table 5-7 presents a comparison of Project impacts between the proposed Project and the alternatives. Alternative 1A-No Project / No Development would eliminate significant Project impacts and cumulative impacts related to traffic. The other two No Project Alternatives (1B and 1C) would generally result in increased severity of identified significant and less-than-significant impacts than identified for the proposed Project.

Excluding the No Project Alternative, Alternative 3-Alternative Site Location (Site #3-6100 Soquel Avenue), would avoid the significant unavoidable traffic impacts on Highway 1 and at impacted intersections under Project and cumulative conditions, although daily trips would more than double over the proposed Project. Alternative 3 would not substantially lessen other significant impacts and could potentially result in more severe significant noise impacts, more severe less-than-significant impacts related to aesthetics, and potentially new significant impacts related to biological resources. This alternative would meet most of the Project objectives. However, the site potentially is not feasible as it is not for sale or currently available to the applicant.

Alternative 2, Reduced Project, would not eliminate significant impacts, but would substantially lessen traffic impacts due to a reduced size. Significant noise impacts would be reduced, but not substantially lessened. Alternative 2 also would reduce the severity of other less-than-significant impacts. This alternative would meet all the Project objectives.

Alternative 2 is considered the environmentally superior alternative of the alternatives considered. Although it would not eliminate significant impacts, it would substantially reduce significant traffic impacts and attain all the Project objectives. While, Alternative 3 would avoid significant traffic impacts, the severity of other significant impacts would increase, and this alternative could result in new significant impacts and more severe less-than-significant aesthetics impacts. Additionally, it would not fully meet Project objectives and may be potentially infeasible.



Table 5-7: Comparison of Environmental impacts of the Alternatives in Relation to the Proposed Project

	Environmental Topic	Proposed Project	Alternative				
			1A No Project No Development	1B No Project Commercial Use Development	1C No Project Mixed-Use Development	2 Reduced Project	3* Offsite Nissan Dealership
AES-2	Aesthetics: Scenic Resources	LS	NI	LS	LS	LS	LS
AES-3	Visual Character	LS	NI	LS+	LS+	LS-	LS
AES-4	Light and Glare	LS	NI	LS-	LS-	LS-	LS+
AIR-1-5	Air Quality: Emissions	LS	NI	LS+	LS+	LS-	LS
AIR-6	Odor	LS	NI	LS	LS	LS	LS
CUL-1	Cultural Resources: Archaeological Resources	LSM	NI	LSM	LSM	LSM	LSM
CUL-2-3	Paleo Resources, Human Remains	LS	NI	LS	LS	LS	LS
GHG-1-2	Greenhouse Gas Emissions	LS	NI	LS+	LS+	LS-	LS
HAZ-1	Hazardous Materials	LSM	NI	LSM	LSM	LSM	LSM
HAZ-2-6	Other Hazards	LS	NI	LS	LS	LS	LS
LU-1-2	Land use	LS	NI	LS	LS	LS	LS
NOI-1	Noise: Exposure to Noise	LS	NI	LS	LS	LS	LS
NOI-2	Construction Vibration	LS	NI	LS	LS	LS	LS
NOI-3	Operational Noise	LS	NI	LS	LS	LS	LS+
NOI-4	Construction Noise	LSM	NI	LSM+	LSM+	LSM	LSM+
TRA-1	Traffic: Intersections	LSM	NI	LSM+	LSM	LSM-	NI
TRA-2-5	Highways	SU	NI	SU+	SU	SU-	NI
	Traffic: Other Modes	LS	NI	LS	LS	LS	LS
CUM	Traffic	SU	NI	SU+	SU+	SU-	NI
OTHERS	Potential New Significant Impacts	No	No	No	No	No	YES

Notes:

- * Alternative Site #3-6100 Soquel Avenue
- NI = No Impact
- LS = Less than significant impact
- LSM = Less than significant with mitigation
- SU = Significant unavoidable impact
- + Greater adverse impact than proposed Project
- Lesser adverse impact than proposed Project



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