



IV. Alternatives to the Proposed Project

IV. ALTERNATIVES TO THE PROPOSED PROJECT

A. INTRODUCTION

Under CEQA, the identification and analysis of alternatives to a project is a fundamental aspect of the environmental review process. CEQA Guidelines Section 21002.1(a) establishes the need to address alternatives in an EIR by declaring that, in addition to determining a project's significant environmental impacts and potential means of mitigating or avoiding those impacts, "the purpose of an environmental impact report is to identify alternatives to the project." An EIR need not consider every conceivable alternative. Rather, as stated in CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(a), it must consider a reasonable range of potentially feasible alternatives that will foster informed decision-making and public participation. CEQA also requires that a "No Project" alternative be evaluated and compared to the proposed action.

Pursuant to Section 15126.6(a) of the CEQA Guidelines, an EIR "shall describe a range of reasonable alternatives to the project, or to the location of the project, which could 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."

B. PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The primary objectives of the City of Pasadena and the Pasadena Center Operating Company (PCOC), the manager and operator of the Pasadena Conference Center, for implementing the proposed Project include the following:

- To design an expanded Conference Center that is complimentary to the Civic Auditorium and the National Register Historic District, while providing modern amenities and facilities that would make it more competitive with other centers in the region. This would aid in strengthening the local economy by drawing an increased number of out-of-town patrons to Pasadena.
- To design a site plan that would take advantage of the Conference Center's unique location within the Central District, including its proximity to shopping, dining, and entertainment uses.
- To foster a design that (1) would attract pedestrians from the Pasadena Conference Center site into the Civic Center area by encouraging pedestrian movement along

both Green Street and Marengo Avenue, (2) would improve the use of underutilized public plazas, and (3) would enhance the pedestrian experience.

- To increase the number of events, and the quality of those events, that occur on an annual basis in order to take advantage of those times when the facility is currently unutilized.

C. ALTERNATIVES SELECTED FOR FURTHER ANALYSIS

Three (3) alternatives have been selected for the analysis:

- Alternative 1: No Project
- Alternative 2: Alternate Design
- Alternative 3: Reduced Project

Alternative 1, the No Project Alternative assumes that no project is approved and the Project site remains unchanged. Thus, under this alternative the physical conditions of the Project site would remain, as they exist today. The No Project Alternative is required under Section 15126.6(e) of the CEQA Guidelines. Alternative 2, the Alternate Design Alternative proposes the same uses as set forth in the Project with an alternate arrangement of these uses on the Project site. This Alternative was chosen to address a potential reduction in Project impacts by placing the proposed Project uses on a smaller portion of the Project site. Alternative 3, the Reduced Project Alternative includes most of the same uses as the proposed Project, including the conversion of the ice rink, and reduces the scale of the development that would occur at the Project site. The alternatives are described in detail below.

In addition to the three alternatives described above, an EIR normally includes an analysis reflecting the development of the proposed Project at an alternative site. While this is typically the case, per CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(f)(2)(B), there may not be alternative locations that are feasible for some projects and, per CEQA Guideline Section 15126.6(a), an EIR need not consider alternatives that are infeasible. The Project involves the expansion of an existing facility that represents a substantial past investment by the City of Pasadena in its current location. Furthermore, an important element of the Pasadena Conference Center is its physical relationship to surrounding uses. The Pasadena Conference Center has been integrated into the site of the historic Civic Auditorium such that they form a complex that is a key element of the Civic Center area of Pasadena. Furthermore, the location of the Project allows for synergy with the Paseo Colorado mixed-use development north of Green Street and with the nearby Sheraton and Hilton hotels. As such, alternative locations that are distant from the Project site

would not be able to maintain these critical relationships. In addition, there are no comparable alternative sites in the vicinity of the existing Conference Center site that would allow the Conference Center to function as it does today. Therefore, it is concluded that there is no alternative site that would be a feasible alternative for the Project.

D. ANALYSIS METHODOLOGY

Each of the three alternatives is evaluated in sequence below. Each alternative is evaluated in less detail than the Project has been in this EIR, but in sufficient detail to determine whether overall environmental impacts after mitigation would be greater, similar, or worse than the corresponding impacts of the Project, and in sufficient detail to determine whether Project objectives are substantially attained. The evaluations of the individual alternatives are followed by an identification of the environmentally superior alternative per Section 15126.6 of the CEQA Guidelines.

The discussions of the comparative impacts for each of the alternatives include the following:

- An evaluation of the environmental impacts of each alternative in comparison to the proposed Project is provided for each of the environmental topics analyzed in Section III, above. The evaluations address the ability of each alternative to avoid or substantially lessen any significant environmental impacts associated with the proposed Project.
- The comparative conclusions regarding the environmental evaluations of the alternatives are summarized to indicate the relative merits of the alternatives.
- Each of the alternatives is evaluated against the Project's Objectives.

E. ALTERNATIVE 1: NO PROJECT ALTERNATIVE

1. Description of the No Project Alternative

The No Project Alternative assumes that the Project would not be implemented and that existing land uses within the Project area would remain unchanged. Therefore, expansion and modernization of the Pasadena Conference Center and the conversion of the ice rink would not occur. The existing Pasadena Conference Center and ice rink would remain in operation.

Accordingly, this alternative would be equivalent to the conditions discussed under existing conditions for each category analyzed in this EIR.

2. Environmental Impacts of the No Project Alternative

a. Land Use

The No Project Alternative would not result in development, therefore existing land use conditions would remain as they currently exist. The Project site would continue to contain the Pasadena Civic Auditorium, the Conference Center building, Exhibition Hall, Mishima Plaza, Ludwigshafen Plaza, and the Pasadena Ice Skating Center as well as two subterranean parking levels beneath the Exhibition Hall, Ludwigshafen Plaza and Mishima Plaza.

This alternative, in relation to the proposed Project, would not result in the strengthening of the southern terminus of the Garfield Avenue axis and the creation of synergism with the Paseo Colorado project. The Conference Center building and Exhibition Hall would continue to be separated from the adjacent sidewalks by 25-foot-wide embankments that slope down from the sidewalk to the base of the buildings, which are depressed one level below street grade. The existing Convention Center building and Exhibition Hall would remain in their existing condition, referred to in the Civic Center Specific Plan as “unfortunately blank and crudely formed” and presenting “a dead wall to the adjoining streets.” The location of Mishima Plaza and Ludwigshafen Plaza as well as the grade differential with the adjacent sidewalks would continue to limit the interface between these plazas and the streetscapes as well as the uses to the east and west. This would result in underutilized, often vacant public plazas that are referred to as “lifeless and bare” in the Civic Center Specific Plan. As such, the land use impacts of a No Project Alternative would be less beneficial than those associated with the proposed Project.

At the same time, this alternative would continue the existing nonconforming conditions, including the setback provisions along Marengo Avenue and Green Street and the obstruction of the pedestrian and view corridors on Marengo Avenue. While these conflicts would occur with the proposed Project, these inconsistencies with land use requirements and policies were not considered significant impacts.

b. Traffic and Circulation

The No Project Alternative would not generate additional traffic on the roadway system and would not include the proposed parking improvements. The No Project Alternative would not generate the construction related traffic of the proposed Project; however, Project-related construction traffic is expected to result in a less-than-significant impact. The traffic study determined that the amount of traffic generated with the Project would result in equivalent

impacts as future conditions without the Project. The proposed 7-level Parking Structure would not be developed and therefore, the addition of approximately 391 parking spaces would not result under the No Project Alternative.⁵² Vehicular access conditions would be similar to the proposed Project. However, loading dock operations would not be improved, as they would be with the proposed Project. Finally, under the No Project Alternative the pedestrian access to the plazas and buildings would not be improved as it would be with the Project.

c. Historic Resources

The No Project Alternative would not result in development; therefore no existing structures would be modified or removed. However, because of their age and lack of important historical or architectural significance, the existing Exhibition Hall, Convention Center, Ludwigshafen Plaza, and Mishima Plaza are not considered historical resources for the purposes of CEQA. However, under the No Project Alternative, the existing steps leading to the front of the Civic Auditorium from Green Street and the forecourt would not be restored with steps similar in design to the original 1932 layout. However, this alteration that would be included in the Project and would restore the original pedestrian entrance to the Civic Auditorium would not represent a significant adverse impact to a historic resource. The No Project Alternative would not alter existing views of the Civic Auditorium. In contrast, the proposed Project would obstruct views of the Civic Auditorium from the west.

d. Aesthetics

Under the No Project Alternative, the Project site would remain as is and no changes in the visual character of the site would occur. As a result of the No Project Alternative, the site would still be characterized by the awkward sloped embankments that currently exist along Green Street and the visual character of the existing buildings that is referred to as “unfortunately blank and crudely formed” in the Civic Center Specific Plan. As such, the visual character of the site would not be improved as a result of the No Project Alternative. Existing views would be preserved. Specifically, the No Project Alternative would not result in the obstruction of pedestrian access view corridors to the Civic Auditorium from Marengo Avenue. However, this impact of the proposed Project is considered less than significant. The No Project Alternative would not increase ambient light levels on the Project site nor alter the potential for glare. With regard to shade/shadow, the No Project Alternative would not result in a change in the existing shadows. The proposed Project would not result in substantial shading effects on sun-sensitive uses.

⁵² *With the 5-level parking structure, the increase in parking on site would be 147 spaces.*

e. Air Quality

The No Project Alternative would not generate the short-term construction-period emissions, or long-term regional burden emissions that would occur with the Project. As such, this alternative would avoid the Project's less-than-significant construction-period daily emissions of CO, PM₁₀, and SO_x and the less-than-significant long-term daily emissions of CO, ROC, NO_x, PM₁₀, and SO_x. Moreover, this alternative would avoid the Project's temporary but significant and unavoidable impact that would occur due to construction-period NO_x and ROC daily emissions that would exceed SCAQMD significance thresholds. This alternative also would avoid the Project's less-than-significant contribution to the Basin's cumulative air quality condition.

f. Noise

The No Project Alternative would not result in changes to the existing noise environment present on and adjacent to the Project site. As such, this alternative would avoid the less-than-significant construction-period and operations-period noise impacts, including impacts from the above-grade parking structure, as well as the loading docks, that would occur with the Project. In addition, this alternative would also avoid the Project's less-than-significant contribution with respect to cumulative noise impacts.

3. Summary of Comparative Impacts

This alternative would avoid the Project's significant unavoidable construction (short-term) significant impact on air quality. It would also reduce non-significant impacts from construction noise. It would eliminate the Project's impacts on aesthetics, but would not include the Project's aesthetic enhancements to the site. This alternative would avoid the non-significant exceptions to land use regulations and policies that occur with the proposed Project, but would not include the proposed Project's beneficial impacts on land use with regard to enhancing an activity center and the design and interface along Green Street and Garfield Avenue.

4. Relationship of No Project Alternative to the Project Objectives

The No Project Alternative would not achieve the objectives of the proposed Project. The Pasadena Conference Center would not be expanded and modernized nor would the southern terminus of the Garfield Avenue axis be strengthened or synergy created with the Paseo Colorado project, and thereby the City's planning framework for the site would not be implemented.

F. ALTERNATIVE 2: ALTERNATE DESIGN ALTERNATIVE**1. Description of the Alternate Design Alternative**

Alternative 2, the Alternate Design Alternative proposes the same uses as set forth in the Project with an alternate arrangement of these uses on the site. The Alternate Design concept would develop the expanded Conference Center on the west side of the Civic Auditorium; the existing Conference Center building and Mishima Plaza on the east side of the Civic Auditorium would remain unchanged. The alternative design would replace the existing Exhibition Hall and Ludwigshafen Plaza with a new three-story structure featuring exhibition halls, meeting rooms, a ballroom, pre-function space and other support, circulation and back-of-house space. As with the Project, the Alternate Design would include the conversion of the Ice Skating Center to its previous use as a ballroom. The Alternate Design Alternative would include the restoration of the steps in front of the Auditorium similar in design to the original 1932 layout. Access and loading would be equivalent to the proposed Project. Parking would remain in the existing subterranean structure. No increase in parking on the site would occur under the Alternate Design Alternative.

2. Environmental Impacts of the Alternate Design Alternative**a. Land Use**

The Alternate Design Alternative would replace the existing Exhibition Hall and Ludwigshafen Plaza with the new Conference Center complex. The Alternate Design Alternative would not modify the existing Conference Center building or Mishima Plaza on the east side of the Civic Auditorium. This alternative would somewhat strengthen the southern terminus of the Garfield Avenue axis and creation of synergism with the Paseo Colorado project though the development of the new conference center complex on the west side of the Civic Auditorium. However, the Conference Center building would continue to be separated from the adjacent sidewalks by a 25-foot-wide embankment that slopes down from the sidewalk to the base of the building. Furthermore, the existing Conference Center building would remain in its existing condition, which was referred to in the Civic Center Specific Plan as “unfortunately blank and crudely formed” and presenting “a dead wall to the adjoining streets.” Due to its location and the grade differential with the adjacent sidewalks, Mishima Plaza would continue to be disconnected from the Euclid Avenue streetscape as well as the uses to the east, resulting in the plaza being underutilized and often vacant, or “lifeless and bare” as described in the Civic Center Specific Plan. As such, the land use impacts of the Alternate Design Alternative would be less beneficial than those associated with the proposed Project.

Additionally, as with the proposed Project, this alternative would not comply with the setback provision along Marengo Avenue and Green Street. In addition, as with the Project, this alternative would result in an obstruction of the pedestrian and view corridors on Marengo Avenue. Finally, this alternative would conflict with the height constraints of existing and proposed specific plans.

b. Traffic and Circulation

As the Alternate Design Alternative would include the same level of new development, vehicular access, parking, and loading would be equivalent to the proposed Project. As such, the resulting traffic generated would be equivalent to that generated by the Project and impacts would be the same. The traffic study conducted for the proposed Project determined that the future conditions with the Project would have equivalent impacts to future conditions without the Project. As a result, the Alternate Design Alternative's traffic impacts can be anticipated to be similar to that of the Project. The Alternate Design Alternative also would generate construction related traffic similar to the Project. However Project-related construction traffic is expected to be a less-than-significant impact. Under the Alternate Design Alternative, additional parking would be provided under the Exhibition Hall rather than in a new parking structure. In addition, the loading dock on the western side of the site would be modified to improve access and circulation. No changes would occur to the parking and loading dock located under Mishima Plaza. The Alternate Design Alternative would have traffic and circulation impacts similar to the Project.

c. Historic Resources

Like the Project, the Alternate Design Alternative would include the replacement of the existing steps leading to the front of the Civic Auditorium from Green Street and the forecourt with steps similar in design to the original 1932 layout. As with the Project, these changes would not result in the physical expansion or change of the Civic Auditorium building itself. Like the proposed Project, the Alternate Design Alternative would replace the existing Exhibition Hall and Ludwigshafen Plaza with a new structure. However, because of their age and lack of important historical or architectural significance, the Exhibition Hall and Ludwigshafen Plaza are not considered historical resources for the purposes of CEQA. Unlike the proposed Project, the Alternate Design Alternative would not remove or modify the Conference Center building or Mishima Plaza. However, because of their age and lack of important historical or architectural significance, the Conference Center building and Mishima Plaza are not considered historical resources for the purposes of CEQA. Additionally, the Alternate Design Alternative would create a similar reduction, compared to the proposed Project, in the views of the Civic Auditorium from the west. Furthermore, the larger mass and greater height of this alternative would not defer to the historic Civic Auditorium as the proposed Project

would. As such, the impacts of the Alternate Design Alternative on historic resources would be greater than those of the Project.

d. Aesthetics

The Alternate Design Alternative would result in the removal of the existing Exhibition Hall and Ludwigshafen Plaza and the development of a new Exhibition Hall. The existing Conference Center building would remain as is, including the awkward sloped embankment that currently exists along Green Street. The design, materials, façade treatment and setbacks of the new Exhibition Hall would be similar to that of the proposed Project. As a result, most visual impacts of the Alternate Design Alternative would be similar to those of the proposed Project. However, the height of the Exhibition Hall in the Alternate Design Alternative would be as tall as the adjacent Civic Auditorium. The Alternate Design Alternative would therefore challenge the monumentality of the Civic Auditorium, conflicting with the Citywide Design Principles. This alternative would also result in a visual imbalance on the site. As such, the Alternate Design Alternative would have a significant visual impact not associated with the proposed Project.

The Alternate Design Alternative would increase ambient light levels on the Project site and in the immediately surrounding vicinity due to the development of a larger structure that would feature glass along the Green Street façade. The closest sensitive uses are the residences located to the north across Green Street in the Paseo Colorado development. Exterior lighting would be designed in accordance with Section 17.33.050 of the PMC. Lighting within on-site parking structures would continue to be screened, as the parking would be below grade. Therefore, the Alternate Design Alternative would result in similar lighting impacts as those of the proposed Project.

Glare results from the building materials and colors used in the new development. The Alternate Design Alternative would comply with Section 17.64.260 of the PMC, limiting the use of mirror or highly reflective glass to no more than 20 percent of a building surface visible to the street. Just as in the proposed Project, vehicles would be parked underground and therefore, there would be no reflection of sunlight from parked vehicles. Therefore, the Alternate Design Alternative would result in similar glare related impacts as those of the proposed Project.

The Alternate Design Alternative maintains the existing visual access to the Civic Auditorium along the civic axis formed by Garfield Avenue, however the view of the Civic Auditorium for motorists and pedestrians traveling east along Green Street would be reduced from the existing view due to the increased building massing resulting from the new three-story Exhibition Hall in place of the low, one-story existing building. Additionally, development of the Alternate Design Alternative would completely obstruct views of the Civic Auditorium from

Marengo Avenue. The Civic Center Specific Plan specifically refers to the 130-foot-wide viewshed and pedestrian access from Marengo Avenue to the Auditorium. As such, the Alternate Design Alternative would not conform to the Civic Center Specific Plan with regard to the view corridors. These impacts to views from Marengo Avenue would be similar to the impacts of the proposed Project. Therefore, this alternative would have similar view impacts to those of the proposed Project.

Shade/shadow from the three-story Exhibition Hall would be longer than the shadows cast by the proposed Project's buildings. However, as with the Project, the increase in shade/shadow would be a less than significant level.

e. Air Quality

The Alternate Design Alternative would result in the development of the Project site, but the development would be situated on the site in a different manner. The Alternate Design Alternative would require a similar amount of construction activities as the proposed Project, and on days of intensive construction activity, both the number of construction workers and heavy-duty construction equipment that would operate on site would be similar to the Project as proposed. Construction-period emissions for the Alternate Design Alternative would be similar to the Project, as neither the duration (i.e., number of days) nor the intensity of activities would be reduced. As such, construction-period emissions would be similar to the Project and result in an impact that is significant and unavoidable with respect to NO_x and ROC daily emissions. Impacts with respect to CO, PM₁₀, and SO_x daily emissions during construction would be less than significant.

The Alternate Design Alternative would generate mobile-source emissions during long-term operations that are similar to proposed Project emissions, as the average daily trip volumes and trip lengths would be similar under both development scenarios. Stationary-source daily emissions during long-term operations would also be similar to proposed Project emissions, as on-site emissions sources (e.g., natural gas combustion for heating and cooking, landscape maintenance equipment exhaust, etc.) would also be similar. As such, the Alternate Design Alternative would have a less-than-significant impact on regional air quality with respect to daily emissions during long-term operations, similar to the Project. The Alternate Design Alternative would also add a less-than-significant contribution to the Basin's cumulative air quality condition, similar to the Project.

f. Noise

The Alternate Design Alternative would require similar types of construction activity as the proposed Project, but the development would be configured on the site in a different manner.

On days of intense construction activity, both the number of construction workers and heavy-duty construction equipment that would operate on site would be similar as the Project as proposed. The maximum construction-period noise level associated with the Alternate Design Alternative would be similar to the Project as proposed. As with the Project, this alternative would result in short-term construction-period noise levels that are above ambient levels, but less than significant.

The Alternate Design Alternative would generate noise levels that are comparable to the Project during long-term operations. Similar to the proposed Project, the Alternate Design Alternative would generate noise related to traffic circulation, parked vehicles, loading dock activities, trash compactor and refuse truck activities, and rooftop mechanical equipment. As with the Project, the Alternate Design Alternative would be required to comply with City Noise Ordinance provisions. As such, noise impacts during construction and operations associated with the Alternate Design Alternative, as with the Project, would be less than significant. In addition, the Alternate Design Alternative would add a less-than-significant noise contribution with respect to cumulative noise impacts, similar to the Project.

3. Summary of Comparative Impacts

Impacts of this alternative would be essentially the same as those of the proposed Project, including the Project's short-term, significant construction impact on air quality. The only variation would occur in regards to the relocation of development from along Euclid Avenue into a taller building along Marengo Avenue. This relocation would cause a similar impact regarding the view corridor policy on Marengo Avenue and along Green Street. Further, the development of a taller building would likely conflict with applicable height standards and would cause the new building to stand taller than the Civic Auditorium thus causing an adverse impact on that building's prominence on the Project site and in the City.

4. Relationship of Alternate Design Alternative to the Project Objectives

The Alternate Design Alternative would achieve the objectives of the City of Pasadena to expand and modernize the Pasadena Conference Center. In addition, the southern terminus of the Garfield Avenue axis would be partially strengthened and synergy would be somewhat created with the Paseo Colorado project. Although implementation of the Alternate Design Alternative is technically feasible, it would not meet the goals and objectives of the Project, the Civic Center Specific Plan, or the draft Central District Specific Plan to the same extent as the proposed Project would.

G. ALTERNATIVE 3: REDUCED PROJECT ALTERNATIVE

1. Description of the Reduced Project Alternative

Alternative 3, the Reduced Project Alternative features expansion of the Convention Center to a lesser extent than set forth with the Project. Under the Reduced Intensity Alternative, the Exhibition Hall and Ludwigshafen Plaza would be redeveloped with the new Conference Center complex. The existing Conference Center building would be modified as with the Project. However, Mishima Plaza on the east side of the Civic Auditorium would not be replaced. Rather, under the Reduced Project Alternative, the proposed Ballroom would be located within the existing Pasadena Ice Skating Center. As a result, the proposed amount of new space would be reduced by 55,653 square feet, and Mishima Plaza would not be reconfigured. Parking would remain in the existing subterranean structure and no increase in parking would occur. Access and loading would be equivalent to the proposed Project. As with the Project, the Reduced Project Alternative would include replacement of the existing steps leading to the front of the Civic Auditorium from Green Street and the forecourt with steps similar in design to the original 1932 layout.

2. Environmental Impacts of the Reduced Project Alternative

a. Land Use

As with the proposed Project, the Exhibition Hall and Conference Center building would no longer be separated from the adjacent sidewalks by a 25-foot-wide embankment that slopes down from the sidewalk to the base of the building. This would modify the Exhibition Hall and Convention Center building from their condition that is referred to in the Civic Center Specific Plan as “unfortunately blank and crudely formed” and presenting “a dead wall to the adjoining streets.” Therefore, like the Project, this alternative would strengthen the southern terminus of the Garfield Avenue axis and create synergy with Paseo Colorado. However, due to its location and the grade differential with the adjacent sidewalks, Mishima Plaza would continue to be disconnected from the Euclid Avenue streetscape as well as the uses to the east, resulting in the plaza being underutilized and often vacant, or “lifeless and bare” as described in the Civic Center Specific Plan. As such, the land use impacts of a Reduced Project Alternative would be similar, or slightly less beneficial, to those associated with the proposed Project.

This alternative would result in the same non-significant inconsistencies with the view corridor on Marengo Avenue of the Civic Center Specific Plan and the setback requirements along Marengo Avenue and Green Street of the proposed Central District Specific Plan as would the proposed Project.

b. Traffic and Circulation

The Reduced Project Alternative also would generate construction related traffic similar to the Project. However Project-related construction traffic is expected to be a less-than-significant impact. Though the Reduced Project Alternative would include a reduced level of new development, the traffic generated by this alternative would be equivalent to that of the Project, as the overall size of events held on site would be similar. The traffic study conducted for the proposed Project determined that the future conditions with the Project would have equivalent impacts to future conditions without the Project. As such, the traffic impacts of the Reduced Project Alternative can be anticipated to also result in a less than significant impact compared to future conditions. Under the Reduced Project Alternative, additional parking would be provided under the Exhibition Hall rather than in a new parking structure. In addition, the loading dock on the western side of the site would be modified to improve access and circulation. No changes would occur to the parking and loading dock located under Mishima Plaza. The Reduced Project Alternative would have traffic and circulation impacts similar to the Project.

c. Historic Resources

Like the Project, the Reduced Project Alternative would include replacement of the existing steps leading to the front of the Civic Auditorium from Green Street and the forecourt with steps similar in design to the original 1932 layout. As with the Project, the Reduced Project Alternative would convert the existing Pasadena Ice Skating Center to a ballroom. The existing ice rink has historically been used as a ballroom, and any modifications would be done in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and would be subject to review by the City of Pasadena Design Commission. Like the proposed Project, the Reduced Project Alternative would replace the existing Exhibition Hall and Ludwigshafen Plaza with a new structure. However, because of their age and lack of important historical or architectural significance, the Exhibition Hall and Ludwigshafen Plaza are not considered historical resources for the purposes of CEQA. Like the proposed Project, the Reduced Project Alternative would modify the Conference Center building, though it would not replace Mishima Plaza. However, because of their age and lack of important historical or architectural significance, the Conference Center building and Mishima Plaza are not considered historical resources for the purposes of CEQA. Additionally, the Reduced Project Alternative would have a similar impact on views of the Civic Auditorium from the west. As such, the impacts of the Reduced Project Alternative on historic resources would be similar to those of the Project.

d. Aesthetics

The Reduced Project Alternative would result in the removal of the existing Exhibition Hall and Ludwigshafen Plaza as well as redevelopment of the existing Conference Center Building. The design, materials, façade treatment, and setbacks of the new Exhibition Hall and the redesigned Conference Center building would be similar to that of the proposed Project. As a result, most visual impacts of the Reduced Project Alternative would be similar to those of the proposed Project.

The Reduced Project Alternative would increase ambient light levels on the Project site and in the immediately surrounding vicinity due to the development of a larger structure that would feature glass along the Green Street façade. The closest sensitive uses are the residences located to the north across Green Street in the Paseo Colorado development. Exterior lighting would be designed in accordance with Section 17.33.050 of the PMC. Lighting within on-site parking structures would continue to be screened, as all parking would be below grade. Therefore, the Reduced Project Alternative would result in similar lighting impacts as those of the proposed Project.

Glare results from the building materials and colors used in the new development. The Reduced Project Alternative would comply with Section 17.64.260 of the PMC, limiting the use of mirror or highly reflective glass to no more than 20 percent of a building surface visible to the street. Just as in the proposed Project, vehicles would be parked underground and therefore, there would be no reflection of sunlight from parked vehicles. Therefore, the Reduced Project Alternative would result in similar glare related impacts as those of the proposed Project.

The Reduced Project Alternative would maintain the existing visual access to the Civic Auditorium along the civic axis established by the 1923 Civic Center Plan; however, the view of the Civic Auditorium for motorists and pedestrians traveling east along Green Street would be reduced from the existing view due to the development of a new Exhibition Hall. Additionally, development of the Reduced Project Alternative would obstruct views from Marengo Avenue. The Civic Center Specific Plan specifically refers to the 130-foot-wide viewshed and pedestrian access from Marengo Avenue to the Civic Auditorium. As such, the Reduced Project Alternative would not conform to the Civic Center Specific Plan with regard to the view corridors. These impacts to views would be the same as the impacts of the proposed Project. Therefore, this alternative would have similar view impacts to those of the proposed Project.

With regard to shade/shadow, the Reduced Project Alternative would result in similar shadows cast by the Exhibition Hall. However, no new shadows would occur on the eastern side of the site since the parking structure would not be developed and Mishima Plaza would not be

modified. As with the Project, the shade/shadow from the Reduce Project Alternative would be a less-than-significant level.

e. Air Quality

The Reduced Project Alternative would result in the development of the Project site, but the building space would be reduced by 55,653 square feet. The Reduced Project Alternative would require similar types of construction activities as the proposed Project, and on days of intense construction activity, both the number of construction workers and heavy-duty construction equipment that would operate on site would be similar to the Project as proposed. As such, construction-period emissions would be similar to the Project and result in an impact that is significant and unavoidable with respect to NO_x and ROC daily emissions. Impacts with respect to CO, PM₁₀, and SO_x daily construction emissions would be less than significant.

The Reduced Project Alternative would generate mobile-source daily emissions during long-term operations that are similar to proposed Project emissions, as the average daily trip volumes and trip lengths would be similar under both development scenarios. Stationary-source daily emissions during long-term operations would also be comparable to proposed Project emissions, as on-site emissions sources (e.g., natural gas combustion for heating and cooking, landscape maintenance equipment exhaust, etc.) would also be similar. As such, the Reduced Project Alternative would have a less-than-significant impact on regional air quality with respect to daily emissions during long-term operations, similar to the Project. The Reduced Project Alternative would also add a less-than-significant contribution to the Basin's cumulative air quality condition, similar to the Project.

f. Noise

The Reduced Project Alternative would require similar types of construction activity, but as a result of the 55,653-square-foot reduction in building space, the duration of construction activities would be reduced. However, on days of intense construction activity, both the number of construction workers and heavy-duty construction equipment that would operate on site would be similar to the Project as proposed. Therefore, the maximum construction-period noise level associated with the Reduced Project Alternative would be similar to the Project as proposed. As with the Project, this alternative would result in construction-period noise levels that are above ambient levels, but less than significant.

The Reduced Project Alternative would generate noise levels that are comparable to Project noise levels during long-term operations. Similar to the proposed Project, the Reduced Project Alternative would generate noise related to traffic circulation, parked vehicles, loading dock activities, trash compactor and refuse truck activities, and rooftop mechanical equipment.

As with the Project, the Reduced Project Alternative would be required to comply with City Noise Ordinance provisions. As such, noise impacts during construction and operations associated with the Reduced Project Alternative, as with the Project, would be less than significant. In addition, the Reduced Project Alternative would add a less-than-significant noise contribution with respect to cumulative noise impacts, similar to the Project.

3. Summary of Comparative Impacts

This alternative would have similar impacts to the proposed Project, including the significant construction impact on air quality, except that construction activity on the east side of the site would be reduced, resulting in a larger area of open space. As with the Project, the location of the Ballroom in the place of the current Pasadena Ice Skating Center would not create a potential impact with regard to the immediately adjacent, historic Civic Auditorium. This alternative would require the same non-significant inconsistencies with the respect to the existing Civic Center Specific Plan and the proposed Central District Specific Plan.

4. Relationship of Reduced Project Alternative to the Project Objectives

The Reduced Project Alternative would achieve the objectives of the City of Pasadena to expand and modernize the Pasadena Conference Center. In addition, the southern terminus of the Garfield Avenue axis would be partially strengthened and synergy would be somewhat created with the Paseo Colorado project. The Reduced Project Alternative is technically feasible and somewhat meets the objectives, but not to the same extent as the proposed Project.

H. ENVIRONMENTALLY SUPERIOR ALTERNATIVE

Section 15126.6 of the CEQA Guidelines indicates that an analysis of alternatives to the proposed Project shall identify one alternative as the environmentally superior alternative. Furthermore, if the environmentally superior alternative is the No Project Alternative, the EIR shall also identify the environmental superior alternative from among the other alternatives.

The No Project Alternative has the least impact of all of the alternatives. The Reduced Project Alternative is selected as the environmentally superior alternative, as it achieves most of the objectives of the Project and reduces some of the potential impacts of the proposed Project to a greater extent than the remaining alternatives. Therefore, this alternative is considered the environmentally superior alternative.