

### 3. NEW ALTERNATIVE

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This chapter describes a new alternative referred to as “Alternative 4: Alternative with Retention of the Pond and 187-Room Hotel.” The chapter summarizes Alternative 4, evaluates its potential impacts as compared to the proposed project, and identifies the environmentally superior alternative. The project objectives are also summarized, as background for the evaluation of Alternative 4. This chapter of the REIR supplements Chapter 5, Alternatives, of the DEIR, which identified and evaluated three alternatives to the project (see discussion below and in Chapter 1 of this REIR).

The State CEQA Guidelines (Section 15126.6) require that an EIR describe and evaluate the comparative merits of a range of reasonable alternatives to the project, or to the location of the project, that could feasibly attain most of the basic objectives of the project. The CEQA Guidelines further require that the discussion focus on alternatives capable of avoiding or substantially lessening any of the significant effects of the project, including the “No Project” Alternative. Furthermore, if the environmentally superior alternative is the “No Project” Alternative, the EIR must also identify an environmentally superior alternative from among the other alternatives.

The project objectives are summarized below and the new Alternative 4’s relationship to these objectives is assessed in Section 3.1, Summary of Alternative 4, below.

The following objectives for the project have been identified by the applicant (as described in Chapter 3, Project Description, of the DEIR):

- Develop a hotel project to provide both short-term and extended-stay hotel accommodations to satisfy market demand, and to affiliate the hotel development with a top-tier hotel brand (e.g., Marriott, Hilton) to provide economic stability to the project.<sup>1</sup>
- Provide short-term accommodations (75 to 100 rooms) in a limited-service hotel designed to target the mid/upper-scale hotel market. These rooms are in replacement of the failing and outdated hotel facilities at the 110-room Corte Madera Inn. The SpringHill Suites by Marriott brand is a mid/upper all-suites limited service hotel that achieves this objective. Limited-service hotels, originally defined as a hotel without a full-service restaurant, typically offer basic services and amenities. However, these services and amenities have expanded over the past two decades, necessitating further classification within the limited-service segment. “Budget” limited-service hotels offer no-frills rooms at modest prices (e.g., Motel 6). More robust limited-service hotels offer many of the same high-quality amenities that guests would expect from full-service hotels, with one significant difference: limited-service hotels lack a dedicated, revenue-producing food and beverage component.
- Provide extended-stay accommodations (105 to 135 rooms) to target the underserved demand for extended-stay accommodations in Marin County. Extended stay hotels are a type of

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<sup>1</sup> Hotel brands require distinct branding (e.g., SpringHill Suites and Residence Inn) and physical separation of short-term and extended-stay guest rooms. Moreover, they require sufficient scale for each brand to be competitive and efficient. Combining two hotel brands into one building envelope is referred to as “dual-branding” in the industry and this is an objective because it allows the project to serve multiple markets while offering operational efficiencies from shared public spaces, meeting rooms, recreational facilities, and back-of-the-house operations.

lodging with features unavailable at standard hotels. These features are intended to provide more home-like amenities. There is substantial variation among extended-stay hotels with respect to quality and the amenities available. The Residence Inn brand by Marriott targets the upper tier of the extended-stay market. Extended-stay hotels typically have self-serve laundry facilities and offer discounts for extended stays, beginning at 5 or 7 days. They also have guestrooms (or "suites") with kitchens. The kitchens usually include, at a minimum, a sink, a refrigerator (usually full size), a microwave oven, and a stovetop. Extended-stay hotels are aimed at business travelers on extended assignments, families in the midst of a relocation, and others in need of temporary housing.

- Improve the safety conditions of the vehicular entrance at Madera Boulevard.
- Minimize noise and traffic impacts by not extending vehicular access to/from Tamal Vista Boulevard.
- Minimize the visual impact on the adjacent residential neighborhood by:
  - Breaking up the building massing and limiting the building height along Tamal Vista Boulevard;
  - Providing a generous building setback from the western property line;
  - Retaining existing mature trees and planting others to provide screening; and
  - Constructing a fence along the Tamal Vista property line.
- Eliminate the pond for aesthetic, odor, and safety reasons without affecting the Town's ability to prevent flooding during a 100-year rainfall event.
- Serve as a community gathering place during times of emergency. Provide shelter as necessary. Equip the facility with an emergency generator.
- Increase the water quality of the storm drainage exiting the site.
- Provide superior vehicular and pedestrian circulation. Improve access to local pedestrian sidewalks to reduce the use of cars.
- Provide a hotel lobby entrance convenient to the Madera Boulevard entrance.
- Minimize the number of rooms facing east (toward U.S. Highway 101 [Highway 101] noise).
- Provide 3,000 to 4,000 square feet of conference space in a quiet and attractive setting as replacement for the 3,000 square feet provided by the Corte Madera Inn.
- Provide recreational facilities (e.g., swimming pool, whirlpool, sport court, barbeque area, fire pits) in an attractive and quiet setting.
- Maximize the energy efficiency and water conservation of the new facility.

The following three alternatives were evaluated in the original Draft EIR (DEIR):

- Alternative 1: No Project (existing 110-room hotel and restaurant) (82,000 square feet)
- Alternative 2: Alternative with Retention of the Pond and 147-Room Hotel (101,769 square feet)
- Alternative 3: Alternative with Filling in the Pond and 111-Room Hotel (80,264 square feet – maximum allowed under existing zoning)

This REIR now evaluates the following new alternative:

- Alternative 4: Alternative with Retention of the Pond and 187-Room Hotel (130,326 square feet)

### 3.1 SUMMARY OF ALTERNATIVE 4

#### SITE PLAN AND FEATURES

Under Alternative 4, the existing hotel would be removed and a new hotel with 187 total rooms would be constructed. Thus, this alternative would include the same number of rooms as the proposed project. The existing 0.64-acre pond would be left in place, with a 20-foot buffer at the pond's edge (see Figure 1-1 in Chapter 1, Introduction, of this REIR). No restaurant would be provided on the site, and the existing restaurant would be removed.

The new building would be an "L-shaped" (partial third side return), two- to four-story building with the primary driveway entrance off Madera Boulevard. The two-story portions would be located along the southern portion of the site, fronting Madera Boulevard. The four-story portions would adjoin these two-story segments on the south and would also be located at the north end of the site. The three-story portion would be in the center of the building fronting on Tamal Vista Boulevard and joining the two four-story portions of the building (see Figure 1-1).

As with the proposed project, the new hotel would be a "dual-branded" hotel project, with one part being a limited-service traditional hotel (79 total rooms) and the other being an extended-stay hotel (i.e., with kitchenettes) (108 total rooms). The extended-stay hotel would be called Residence Inn by Marriott and the limited-service hotel would be called SpringHill Suites by Marriott.

New landscaping would be added to the perimeter of the site as well as interior portions of the site. A pool, spa, and water features would be provided for hotel guest use only. However, Alternative 4 would have a much reduced open space area in the center of the site for these facilities, as compared to the proposed project, due to the retention of the pond.

Options to improve conditions associated with the on-site pond could be explored under this alternative. These options include 1) increasing water circulation to reduce odor problems and improve water quality, and 2) providing enhancement plantings (native marshland, riparian, and upland species) around the perimeter. These changes would serve to improve habitat conditions and the aesthetics of this feature.

#### GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT AND REZONING

Alternative 4 would require a General Plan amendment and a rezoning to allow an increase in the allowable floor area ratio (FAR) for the site from 0.34 to 0.67.<sup>2</sup> The current General Plan designation is "Mixed-Use Commercial." Like the General Plan amendment proposed for the project, the amendment for Alternative 4 would designate the site as "Motel/Hotel Highway

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<sup>2</sup> Floor area ratio (FAR) refers to the ratio of total square footage of building area to the net area of the site. According to Corte Madera Municipal Code Section 18.04.530, the area of the pond, including its buffer, is excluded from the total area of the site.

Commercial.” The current zoning is C-3 Highway Commercial, with the Baylands Risk Zone and Natural Habitat Special Purpose Overlay District. Like the rezoning proposed for the project, the rezoning for Alternative 4 would change the zoning of the site to C-5 Motel/Hotel Highway Commercial and retain the Baylands Risk Zone and Natural Habitat Special Purpose Overlay District. The C-5 district would be a new zoning district specific to the project site and would retain all the development standards of the C-3 district, except for the 0.34 FAR.

Under Alternative 4, however, building heights would exceed the limits specified for the proposed C-5 district. Building heights under this alternative would be 47 feet to 49 feet in certain locations, which would exceed the 35-foot height limit of the C-5 district as proposed under the project (see Appendix G of the DEIR). It is assumed that the permissible height could be addressed at the time of the Precise Plan approval and would not require a variance.

### **COMPLIANCE WITH PROJECT OBJECTIVES**

This alternative would comply with many of the project objectives, such as meeting market demand and providing short-term as well as extended-stay accommodations. However, this alternative would not comply with the following objectives:

- Minimize the visual impact on the adjacent residential neighborhood by:
  - Breaking up the building massing and limiting the building height along Tamal Vista Boulevard; and
  - Providing a generous building setback from the western property line.
- Eliminate the pond for aesthetic, odor, and safety reasons without affecting the Town’s ability to prevent flooding during a 100-year rainfall event.
- Provide recreational facilities (e.g., swimming pool, whirlpool, sport court, barbeque area, fire pits) in an attractive and quiet setting.

## **3.2 IMPACTS OF ALTERNATIVE 4**

This section summarizes the impacts of Alternative 4 as compared to the proposed project. When impacts are similar to the proposed project, this is called out. The discussion below follows the format used in Chapter 5, Alternatives, of the DEIR.

### **ALTERNATIVE 4: ALTERNATIVE WITH RETENTION OF THE POND AND FAR OF 0.67 (187-ROOM HOTEL)**

#### **Aesthetics**

While detailed landscape plans have not been identified for this alternative, it is assumed that similar new landscaping could be provided along the western edge of the site adjacent to Tamal Vista Boulevard to partially screen the new building from view. Figure 1-1 shows new trees planted along this western edge of the site. However, this entire side of the building would be three stories or four stories in height, resulting in a stronger visual contrast to the single-story homes to the east. With the proposed project, the western edge of the new building would be two and three stories in height and there would be a significant gap between northern and southern building segments,

breaking up the building's massing. From Tamal Vista Boulevard, looking both northeast and southeast, the increased height of this alternative compared to the proposed project would result in an increased building mass as compared to the proposed project. Trees planted along Tamal Vista Boulevard at the western edge of the site may partially screen the building from view, but this screening is not expected to be as effective as shown in Figure 4.1-12 and 4.1-13 of the DEIR that included visual simulations of the proposed project. This is due to the increased height of the building in this alternative. The visual screening capability would largely depend on the types of trees planted and the time until they were mature.

Visual impacts from Madera Boulevard would be more significant than those of the proposed project due to the four-story section of building that would be located approximately 135 feet from Madera Boulevard as shown in Figure 1-1. The proposed project includes a three-story section of building in this location approximately 150 feet from Madera Boulevard. While both structures would be significantly set back from Madera Boulevard, the increased height and reduced setback distance of Alternative 4 would create more visual impact when viewed from Madera Boulevard. However, this view of the hotel would be most visible to those exiting the Town Center parking lot at the northern exit point. No residences are in the immediate vicinity of this main entrance to the hotel.

From Highway 101, visual impacts would be partially reduced compared to the proposed project because the pond would be retained and vegetation in the vicinity of the pond would continue to screen much of the site from view. With retention of the pond, the central and northern segments of the new building would be pushed to the western edge of the site. The narrow portion of the south wing of the hotel would be the only section in close proximity to the highway. Some tree cover would be retained near this southeast corner of the new building, but final landscape plans have not been developed to show what additional type of screening could be included. Northbound motorists on Highway 101 may see the new four-story segment of the building at the southeast portion of the site due to limited space to provide effective tree cover in the southeast corner of the site.

From the north, the four-story segment of the building may be visible to occupants of the two-story commercial building just north of the site. However, some existing and potential new tree cover could possibly screen this segment of the building from view, particularly from Highway 101. Visual impacts from this location would not be considered significant.

Due to the retention of the pond under this alternative, the site open space areas would be limited primarily to the pond area and a small area at the center of the site (see Figure 1-1). No openings in the building façade along Tamal Vista Boulevard would occur, resulting in a more massive structure from this viewpoint location.

Extensive areas of surface parking are shown on the south side of the building (see Figure 1-1). It is assumed that landscaping of this parking area could be completed to partially screen the cars from the view from Madera Boulevard, reducing visual impacts to less-than-significant levels.

As compared to the proposed project, impacts from lighting could be partially increased, especially for nearby residents, due to the taller building along Tamal Vista Boulevard. Light from both inside and outside the structure could be visible to nearby residents.

The same mitigation measures as identified for the proposed project would also apply to this alternative as related to visual and light/glare impacts.

## Air Quality

### Construction Emissions

Like Alternative 2 in the DEIR, Alternative 4 would not involve filling of the pond. Thus, it is estimated by the project applicant that 9,000 less cubic yards (CY) of soil import would be required, for a total of 12,403 CY. CalEEMod was used to predict construction emissions with 12,403 CY of soil import input to the model. The same modeling done for Alternative 2 in the DEIR would also apply to Alternative 4. **Table 3-1** shows average daily construction emissions of reactive organic gases (ROG), nitrogen oxides (NO<sub>x</sub>), coarse particulate matter (PM<sub>10</sub>) exhaust, and fine particulate matter (PM<sub>2.5</sub>) exhaust during construction of the project. As indicated in Table 3-1, predicted project emissions would not exceed the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) significance thresholds. The impact associated with construction-period exhaust emissions is, therefore, considered less than significant. Construction-period mitigation would still be necessary to control fugitive dust, and the mitigation measure for the proposed project would reduce potential construction impacts for this alternative to a less-than-significant level.

**TABLE 3-1 ALTERNATIVE 4: PROJECT CONSTRUCTION EXHAUST EMISSIONS**

	ROG	NO <sub>x</sub>	PM <sub>10</sub> Exhaust	PM <sub>2.5</sub> Exhaust
Total Emissions (tons)	1.14	3.55	0.17	0.16
Average Emissions (pounds/day) based on 330 construction days	6.9	21.5	1.0	1.0
BAAQMD Thresholds (pounds/day)	54	54	82	54
<b>Exceed Threshold?</b>	No	No	No	No

Note: ROG = reactive organic gases, NO<sub>x</sub> = nitrogen oxides, PM<sub>10</sub> = coarse particulate matter or particulates with an aerodynamic diameter of 10 micrometers (µm) or less, PM<sub>2.5</sub> = fine particulate matter or particulates with an aerodynamic diameter of 2.5µm or less, BAAQMD = Bay Area Air Quality Management District.

Dispersion modeling was conducted using the same methodology as under the proposed project, with Alternative 4 PM<sub>2.5</sub> exhaust emissions (assumed to be diesel particulate matter) input to the ISCST3 model. Results of modeling indicate that the maximum incremental residential child cancer risk at the maximally exposed individual (MEI) receptor would be 6.1 in 1 million and the residential adult incremental cancer risk would be 0.3 in 1 million, 0.27 micrograms per cubic meter (µg/m<sup>3</sup>) PM<sub>2.5</sub> concentration, and 0.011 hazard index (HI)—the same results as under the proposed project, representing a less-than-significant construction health risk impact.

### Operational Emissions

Due to the size of Alternative 4, operational-period emissions would be less than significant. In its latest update to the CEQA Air Quality Guidelines, BAAQMD identifies screening criteria for the sizes of land use projects that could result in significant air pollutant emissions. For operational

impacts, the screening project size is identified at 489 rooms. Hotel projects of a smaller size would be expected to have less-than-significant impacts with respect to operational-period emissions. Since Alternative 4 would have a total of 187 hotel rooms, it is concluded that emissions would be below the BAAQMD significance thresholds for the operational period.

Alternative 4 would include installation of one 80-kilowatt (kW) emergency back-up diesel generator. The generator would be located near the northwest corner of the property. The new generator would use a diesel engine that meets the EPA Tier 4 off-road diesel emission standards. Diesel particulate matter (DPM) emissions (assumed to be the same as PM<sub>2.5</sub> emissions) were calculated assuming use of a Tier 4 diesel engine with operation of 50 hours per year, the maximum allowed by BAAQMD for periodic testing and maintenance of emergency generators. Maximum daily emissions from this generator would be less than 0.1 pound for each of the following criteria pollutants: ROG, NO<sub>x</sub>, PM<sub>10</sub>, and PM<sub>2.5</sub>. This would be negligible when compared to the BAAQMD daily thresholds for these criteria pollutants. Yearly emissions would be far below BAAQMD annual thresholds. Appendix E of the DEIR contains calculated emissions from operation and routine testing and maintenance of the back-up generator.

### **Biological Resources**

The alternative would avoid the significant impacts of the project associated with filling of the proposed pond and removal of many of the trees of regulated size under Chapter 15.50 of the Town's Municipal Code. Potential adverse impacts on nesting birds and the remote possibility of disturbance to roosting bats in the existing structures could still occur under this alternative but would be mitigated to less-than-significant levels with implementation of required mitigation. Compliance with Chapter 15.50 of the Municipal Code would still be required to address trees of a regulated size and species that would still have to be removed under this alternative. However, implementation of the relevant mitigation measures would reduce potentially significant impacts to a less-than-significant level under this alternative.

Retaining the existing pond and establishing a minimum 20-foot-wide buffer around this feature would avoid the significant impacts associated with filling of the 0.64-acre of jurisdictional waters and would allow for substantial improvement to its current condition to address odor, aesthetic, and safety concerns and improve existing wildlife habitat values as well. As with the No Project Alternative and Alternative 2 addressed in the DEIR, Alternative 4 would require further detailed study but could include a number of modifications to the existing bank configuration and improved management of water levels and circulation. In addition, the buffer zone created under this alternative would allow for additional native enhancement plantings around this feature not available under the No Project Alternative. Increasing water circulation and aeration during the warmer months when anaerobic conditions develop as a result of poor water quality and higher water temperatures could help address the concerns about odor and aesthetic problems. With proper management and controls, options to be explored to improve water quality and circulation include using the existing culvert with slide gate to the tidally influenced ditch along the west side of Highway 101 and the culvert to Lagoon No. 1 for improved water circulation, and using spray fountains in the pond to improve aeration. Reconfiguring the steeply sided banks around the pond to create a shallow terrace would allow for establishing native marshland vegetation around the entire feature, improving existing wildlife habitat and aesthetic values and reducing the risk posed to visitors from the steep banks. To further improve the existing limited habitat values, the perimeter of the pond could be revegetated with native marsh riparian and upland plant species,

including substantial plantings in the upland 20-foot buffer and adjacent areas along the cross-site roadway in this alternative. Any modifications to jurisdictional waters would require appropriate authorizations from regulatory agencies, including the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB), and possibly California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW). This would be a relatively simple process in comparison to the proposed project, however, given that the improvements would greatly improve existing habitat functions and values and could be designed as a habitat improvement and restoration program.

### **Cultural Resources**

Impacts of this alternative on built-environment historical resources would be comparable to those of the proposed project because this alternative would not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a resource that is listed in, or eligible for listing in, the California Register of Historical Resources.

Impacts of this alternative on archaeological resources, paleontological resources, and human remains interred outside of formal cemeteries would be comparable to those of the proposed project because ground-disturbing activities would have the potential to unearth these resources. The impacts on these resources would be less than significant with mitigation, similar to the project. However, with retention of the pond, less area of the site would be disturbed, which could slightly reduce the potential to disturb cultural resources.

### **Geology and Soils**

Impacts related to geology and soils would be comparable to those of the proposed project, as new buildings would be developed at the site that would be subject to potentially significant seismic and geotechnical hazards. The mitigation measures for the proposed project would reduce potential impacts of this alternative to less-than-significant levels. A significant reduction in fill would occur under Alternative 4 due to retention of the pond with this alternative.

### **Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

#### *Construction Emissions*

Construction impacts of this alternative would be comparable to those of the project because the construction schedule and proposed construction equipment list likely would remain the same under this alternative. Because Alternative 4 would not involve filling of the pond, it is estimated by the project applicant that 9,000 less CY of soil import would be required, for a total of 12,403 CY. CalEEMod was used to predict construction emissions under Alternative 2 using the same methodology as the proposed project, except with 12,403 CY of soil import input to the model. This modeling would also apply to Alternative 4. Total construction carbon dioxide equivalent (CO<sub>2</sub>e) emissions were calculated to be 566 metric tons (MT) of CO<sub>2</sub>e, compared to 604 MT of CO<sub>2</sub>e for the proposed project, and construction greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions under this alternative would remain less than significant.

### *Operational Emissions*

Operational GHG emissions would be similar to those of the proposed project, as the same number of hotel rooms would be built under Alternative 4 as under the proposed project (187 rooms). Like the proposed project, Alternative 4 would not result in any significant operational-related GHG emissions.

### **Hazards and Hazardous Materials**

Impacts related to hazards and hazardous materials would be comparable to those of the proposed project, as existing buildings would be demolished and lead, asbestos, and other hazardous materials within those buildings could be released. The mitigation measures for the proposed project would reduce potential impacts of this alternative to less-than-significant levels.

While not a specific significance criterion, the potential for a safety hazard associated with retention of the pond would be associated with this alternative. As currently occurs, the hotel has liability for anyone drowning in the pond despite the fact that the Town operates the pond. Without fencing around the pond, this safety hazard could continue. Fencing could be installed at the edge of the pond to reduce this potential hazard.

### **Hydrology and Water Quality**

Impacts related to hydrology and water quality would be comparable to those of the proposed project, as construction and operation of Alternative 4 would have the potential to affect stormwater quality and the new structures would be subject to potential flooding hazards. However, Alternative 4 may have a slightly reduced area of impervious surface area compared to the proposed project, resulting in slightly less runoff from the site. It is assumed that on-site retention of stormwater would also occur for this alternative, with the use of bioswales at the edge of parking areas.

Retention of the pond under this alternative would result in a small negative but unquantified effect on water quality, as the pond water becomes increasingly brackish in the summer, resulting in odor complaints. The "Biological Resources" analysis above explains how water quality could be improved. The mitigation measures for the proposed project would reduce potential impacts of this alternative to less-than-significant levels.

### **Land Use and Planning**

Like the proposed project, this alternative would require a General Plan amendment and rezoning to allow additional floor area above what is currently allowed. The increased floor area combined with retention of the pond would primarily have secondary impacts related to visual quality, hydrology, and other topics that would either increase or decrease the level of impacts when compared to the proposed project. For example, as discussed in the "Aesthetics" analysis above, the massing of the building in Alternative 4 would have more visual impacts on views from Tamal Vista Boulevard; however, as discussed in the "Hydrology and Water Quality" analysis above, Alternative 4 would have slightly less hydrology and water quality impact due to the reduced area of impervious surfaces proposed.

The potential for conflicts with General Plan policy would be similar to the proposed project. Retention of the pond would result in this alternative meeting more of the policies of the General Plan, especially as related to protection of “other waters of the U.S.”

## Noise

### *Future Exterior Noise Environment*

Based on the orientation of the hotel under Alternative 4 with respect to Highway 101, the swimming pool and basketball court would have direct line-of-sight to traffic, which is the dominant noise source in the project site vicinity. According to the plans for this alternative, the distance from the swimming pool and basketball court to Highway 101 would be very similar to that shown for Alternative 2 in the DEIR. The noise levels at the pool were calculated to be 66 dBA  $L_{dn}$ , which exceeds the 65 dBA  $L_{dn}$  limit established in the Town of Corte Madera General Plan. The calculated noise levels at the basketball court were 64 dBA  $L_{dn}$ , which would not exceed the 65 dBA  $L_{dn}$  limit. The noise impact of this alternative would be potentially significant because the General Plan guidelines would be exceeded and mitigation measures would need to be implemented to reduce noise levels to 65 dBA  $L_{dn}$ . Similar to the recommendation for Alternative 2, a 6-foot noise barrier that shields the pool would sufficiently reduce noise levels to comply with the General Plan guidelines.

### *Future Interior Noise Environment*

Under Alternative 4 conditions (as for Alternative 2), perimeter hotel rooms would be exposed to future exterior noise levels ranging from under 60 dBA  $L_{dn}$  at rooms adjacent to Madera Boulevard to 67 dBA  $L_{dn}$  at the corner hotel rooms nearest Highway 101. Based on these exterior levels, projected interior noise levels for the Alternative 4 would potentially be as high as 47 dBA  $L_{dn}$  assuming standard hotel construction methods with the windows closed. Therefore, this impact would be potentially significant because interior noise levels would exceed 45 dBA  $L_{dn}$ . The southeastern corner of the proposed hotel that is nearest to Highway 101 would require analysis for potential sound-rated construction methods, building façade treatments, and mechanical ventilation systems to maintain interior noise levels at or below acceptable levels. Mitigation Measure NOISE-1 would need to be implemented for Alternative 4.

### *Project-Generated Traffic Noise and Cumulative Noise*

This alternative would have similar traffic to the proposed project because the same number of rooms would be provided under this alternative. Traffic-generated noise would be less than significant.

### *Operational Noise*

Alternative 4 would require the same mechanical equipment as the project design, including heating, ventilation, and air conditioning systems. The proposed hotel in the Alternative 4 design would have similar mechanical needs to the proposed project because the same number of rooms would be provided. However, information regarding the number and type of mechanical units, locations, size, housing enclosures, and other factors were unknown at the time of this study. The impacts of mechanical equipment noise on nearby noise-sensitive receptors would need to be

assessed during the final stage of design. This is a potentially significant impact. Mitigation Measure NOISE-2 identified in the DEIR would need to be implemented for Alternative 4.

#### *Project Construction Noise and Vibration*

The phases of construction, equipment to be used, and total duration for Alternative 4 would be similar to the project design, except that the pond would not be filled. Furthermore, the distance to the nearest noise-sensitive receptor would be similar. Vibration levels due to construction activities for Alternative 4 would be less than the significance threshold of 0.3 inches per second Peak Particle Velocity (in/sec PPV) at the nearest sensitive receptor, and while construction vibration would at times be perceptible at the receptors, adjacent land uses would not be subjected to excessive vibrations over extended periods. Assuming construction hours would be limited to daytime hours only, this impact would be less than significant.

Noise generated by construction activities for Alternative 4 would temporarily elevate noise levels at adjacent noise-sensitive receptors. On a temporary basis, noise levels are expected to exceed 60 dBA  $L_{eq}$  and to be at least 5 dBA  $L_{eq}$  above the ambient noise environment. Therefore, construction noise for Alternative 4 would be potentially significant. The same list of best management practices from Mitigation Measure NOISE-3 identified in the DEIR would need to be incorporated into Alternative 4.

#### **Public Services**

Impacts of this alternative would be comparable to those of the project because this alternative would not create a need for new or physically altered fire stations or police facilities, schools, or recreational facilities.

#### **Transportation/Traffic**

Impacts of this alternative would be comparable to those of the project since a similar number of additional vehicle trips and pedestrian trips would be generated, relative to current conditions. Daily and peak hour trip generation would be similar to the proposed project because both Alternative 4 and the proposed project would include 187 hotel rooms.

Similar to the proposed project, Alternative 4 would not result in significant impacts on study highway segments, highway ramps, roadway segments, and intersections.

Like the proposed project, Alternative 4 would result in increased vehicle turning movements into the site's driveway, construction-related traffic, and increased pedestrian trips to or across Madera Boulevard and Tamal Vista Boulevard. Mitigation Measures TRAFFIC-1, TRAFFIC-2, and TRAFFIC-3 would apply to this alternative.

Similar to project conditions, the sidewalk abutting the project site along Tamal Vista Boulevard would continue to have cross-slopes and obstructions that are not compliant with Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards. Mitigation Measure TRAFFIC-4 would apply to this alternative.

## Utilities and Service Systems

Impacts of this alternative would be comparable to those of the project because the alternative 1) would not require the construction of new water treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities, 2) would not require new or expanded water entitlements, 3) would not require or result in the construction of new wastewater treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities, 4) would not exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board, 5) would not exceed landfill capacity, and 6) would not conflict with federal, state, or local statutes and regulations related to solid waste.

## Energy

Impacts of this alternative would be comparable to those of the project because the alternative 1) would not require or result in the construction of new sources of energy supplies or additional energy infrastructure capacity, and 2) would not conflict with applicable energy efficiency policies or standards.

### 3.3 ENVIRONMENTALLY SUPERIOR ALTERNATIVE

The CEQA Guidelines require that the “environmentally superior alternative” be identified. If the environmentally superior alternative is the No Project Alternative, the EIR must also identify an environmentally superior alternative from among the other alternatives. **Table 3-2** provides a comparison of the alternatives to the proposed project, including the original alternatives evaluated in the DEIR.

For this project, the No Project Alternative would be the environmentally superior alternative as it would leave the site unchanged from its existing condition and no new impacts would be created. However, this alternative would not meet the project objectives. In addition, the EIR must also identify another alternative as mentioned above.

Alternative 2: Alternative with Retention of the Pond and 147-Room Hotel (101,769 square feet) would be considered the environmentally superior alternative because of the following:

- Alternative 2 would avoid filling the 0.64 acre of jurisdictional waters and could provide for improved aesthetic, safety, and habitat conditions of this feature. This would require further study, but could provide for appropriate water circulation and aeration, reconfiguration of the existing banks to allow for expansion of marshlands for improved natural filtration functions and habitat values, and native marshland and upland plantings to improve wildlife habitat and aesthetic conditions for hotel guests and visitors.
- Alternative 2 would avoid significant impacts associated with removal of trees of regulated size under Chapter 15.50 of the Town’s Municipal Code.
- Trip generation would be reduced, as would associated air and GHG emissions, as compared to the proposed project.

**TABLE 3-2 COMPARISON OF IMPACTS OF ALTERNATIVE 4 AND OTHER PROJECT ALTERNATIVES (AFTER MITIGATION)**

<b>Environmental Issue Area</b>	<b>PP Proposed Project</b>	<b>ALT 1 No Project</b>	<b>ALT 2 Retention of Pond and 147-Room Hotel</b>	<b>ALT 3 Filling of Pond and 111-Room Hotel</b>	<b>ALT 4 Retention of Pond and 187-Room Hotel</b>
Aesthetics	LTS	LTS-	LTS+	LTS-	LTS+
Air Quality	LTS	LTS-	LTS	LTS	LTS
Biological Resources	LTS	LTS-	LTS-	LTS+	LTS-
Cultural Resources	LTS	LTS-	LTS-	LTS	LTS-
Geology and Soils	LTS	LTS-	LTS	LTS	LTS
Greenhouse Gas Emissions	LTS	LTS-	LTS	LTS	LTS
Hazards and Hazardous Materials	LTS	LTS-	LTS	LTS	LTS
Hydrology and Water Quality	LTS	LTS-	LTS	LTS-	LTS-
Land Use and Planning	LTS	LTS-	LTS-	LTS-	LTS-
Noise	LTS	LTS-	LTS+	LTS-	LTS+
Public Services	LTS	LTS	LTS	LTS	LTS
Transportation/Traffic	LTS	LTS-	LTS	LTS	LTS
Utilities and Service Systems	LTS	LTS	LTS	LTS	LTS
Energy	LTS	LTS	LTS	LTS	LTS

Notes: PP = Proposed Project  
 ALT 1 = No Project Alternative  
 ALT 2 = Alternative with Retention of the Pond and 147-Room Hotel  
 ALT 3 = Alternative with Filling in the Pond and 111-Room Hotel  
 ALT 4 = Alternative with Retention of the Pond and 187-Room Hotel  
 + = Greater adverse impact than proposed project  
 - = Lesser adverse impact than proposed project

Source: A. Skewes-Cox, 2015.

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