

Chapter 5 CEQA Considerations

5.1 EFFECTS FOUND NOT TO BE SIGNIFICANT

An Initial Study was prepared for the proposed project and is included in Appendix A of this report. The Initial Study determined that certain impacts associated with the proposed project would have a less-than-significant effect on the environment. Consistent with CEQA Guidelines section 15128 and Public Resources Code sections 21002.1, subdivision (e), and 21100, subdivision (c), these less-than-significant impacts are discussed in detail in the Initial Study and summarized briefly below:

- **Agriculture Resources:** The West Valley College campus is currently developed with college facilities and is surrounded by urban uses. Therefore, project implementation would not result in any impacts to farmlands, conflict with any agricultural uses, or cause conversion of farmland to non-agricultural use.
- **Mineral Resources:** The Saratoga General Plan does not identify any regionally or locally important mineral resources on the West Valley College campus.
- **Housing:** Implementation of the project would not displace any existing housing or result in the need to provide replacement housing.
- **Recreation:** Since West Valley College is a community college, projected increases in student enrollment and instructional capacity are not expected to directly increase the residential population in the campus vicinity and therefore, would not increase usage of nearby City recreational facilities. Although the proposed Plan would support the projected increase in student enrollment, these additional students are expected to use on-campus recreational facilities rather than increase demand for recreational facilities in adjacent neighborhoods. Implementation of the LRDP would include interior remodeling and expansion of the Physical Education (P.E.) Complex as well as resurfacing of the running track. During this remodeling project, P.E. classes and access by students to facilities located in the P.E. complex could be temporarily disrupted. In addition, use of the practice fields and the running track could also be temporarily disrupted when irrigation and drainage improvements are installed in these fields. However, the District is committed to providing alternative facilities (such as at Mission College) to minimize temporary disruption effects.

The Initial Study also identified potentially significant impacts related to the following topics but provided mitigation measures that would reduce these potential impacts to a less-than-significant level:

- **Geology and Soils:** The College is located in a region of high seismic activity, and no significant construction has been undertaken since the campus founding in the late 1960's. A study initiated by the Office of the State Architect indicated that the risk to structures from earthquake-induced

instability (ground fault rupture, liquefaction, landslides) is believed to be less than significant, according to the Facilities Master Plan. The Master Plan indicates that this study did not examine geotechnical conditions and the Plan recommends that such an investigation be completed prior to any new development. In addition, the State of California will require that all construction on the campus comply with the latest version of the Uniform Building Code, which includes special requirements for public school facilities. The following mitigation measures, which should be considered part of the proposed project, will reduce potential geotechnical hazards and soils constraints to a less-than-significant level:

Mitigation Measure 5.1-1: Geotechnical and/or soil engineering investigations will be performed for each renovation, expansion, and new construction project.

Mitigation Measure 5.1-2: Detailed surveys of seismic strengthening needs will be performed in all buildings to be remodeled or renovated.

Mitigation Measure 5.1-3: A survey of non-structural elements will be conducted in all buildings to determine seismic resistance needs.

- **Hydrology and Water Quality:** Runoff generated on the campus drains to surface drainage facilities that discharge into Vasona Creek and eventually into the San Francisco Bay. With respect to non-point sources, new, more stringent water quality regulations of the Clean Water Act have recently been triggered because the NPDES (National Pollution Discharge Elimination System) permit program has failed to protect beneficial uses of Santa Clara County's creeks and the South San Francisco Bay. Evidence includes violations of ambient water quality criteria, high concentrations of toxic substances, and fish consumption health advisories. Implementation of the following mitigation measures, which should be considered part of the proposed project, will reduce the project's potential water quality effects to a less-than-significant level:

Mitigation Measure 5.1-4: All new construction projects located outside of existing development areas (outside existing building footprints, roadways, walkways, and paved areas) shall be subject to requirements of Provision C.3, New and Redevelopment Performance Standards of Order No. 01-024 of the NPDES permit program as required by the Santa Clara Valley Urban Runoff Pollution Prevention Program (SCVURPPP). These projects shall incorporate the following measures:

- a. Since Plan implementation would result in disturbance of more than one acre, the District must obtain coverage under the State's General Permit for Storm Water Discharges Associated with Construction Activity. A Notice of Intent must be filed with the RWQCB and the General Permit requires that a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) be prepared. The SWPPP must be consistent with the terms of the Santa Clara Valley Urban Runoff Pollution Prevention Program's recommended best management practices (BMPs) for construction activities, which could include the following (CASQA 2003):
 - Erosion Prevention and Sediment Control. Measures could include: avoiding excavation and grading during wet weather; limiting on-site construction routes and stabilizing construction

- entrances; removing existing vegetation only when absolutely necessary; constructing diversion dikes and drainage swales to channel runoff around the site; using berms and drainage ditches to divert runoff around exposed areas; planting vegetation on exposed slopes; covering soil stockpiles and landscaping materials; protecting storm drain inlets from sediment-laden runoff; using terracing, rip-rap, sand bags, rocks, straw bales to reduce runoff velocity and trap sediments; and collecting and detaining sediment-laden runoff in sediment traps.
- **Control of Erosion and Discharge of Sediment:** BMPs are selected based on specific site conditions, construction activities, and cost. Various BMPs may be needed at different times during construction since activities are constantly changing site conditions. Selection of erosion-control BMPs will be based on the following:
 - *Minimizing Disturbed Areas:* Only clear land which will be actively under construction in the near term (e.g., within the next 6-12 months), minimize new land disturbance during the rainy season, and avoid clearing and disturbing sensitive areas (e.g., steep slopes and natural watercourses) and other areas where site improvements will not be constructed.
 - *Stabilizing Disturbed Areas:* Provide temporary stabilization of disturbed soils whenever active construction is not occurring on a portion of the site. Provide permanent stabilization during finish grade, and landscape the site.
 - *Protecting Slopes and Channels:* Safely convey runoff from the top of the slope and stabilize disturbed slopes as quickly as possible. Avoid disturbing natural channels. Stabilize temporary and permanent channel crossings as quickly as possible and ensure that increases in runoff velocity caused by the project do not erode the channel.
 - *Controlling Site Perimeter:* Delineate site perimeter to prevent disturbing areas outside the project limits. Divert upstream runoff safely around or through the construction project. Local codes usually state that such diversions must not cause downstream property damage or be diverted into another watershed. Runoff from the project site should be free of excessive sediment and other constituents. Control tracking at points of ingress to and egress from the project site.
 - *Retaining Sediment:* Retain sediment-laden waters from disturbed, active areas within the site.
 - **Manage Non-Stormwater Discharges and Materials:** BMPs involve performing activities in a manner that keeps potential pollutants from coming into contact with stormwater or being transported off-site to eliminate or avoid exposure.
 - **Contain Materials and Wastes:** BMPs include storing construction, building, and waste materials in designated areas, protecting these materials from rainfall and contact with stormwater runoff, disposing of all construction waste in designated areas, keeping stormwater from flowing on to or off of these areas, preventing spills and cleaning up spilled materials.

SWPPP implementation requires staff training, site inspections, BMP monitoring, BMP maintenance, and stormwater pollution control documentation.

- b. Since Plan implementation would involve construction of impervious surface areas over one acre, the project must incorporate site source control and stormwater treatment BMPs per SCVURPPP Provision C.3. This Provision requires the project to implement site design/landscape characteristics that maximize infiltration (where appropriate), provide retention or detention, slow runoff, and minimize impervious land coverage, so that post-development pollutant loads from the site will be reduced to the maximum extent practicable (or to the applicable level at the time of project construction). Development projects can comply with the NPDES Permit Provision C.3 to reduce the adverse impacts of stormwater pollutants and increases in peak runoff rate by implementing stormwater BMPs in the following categories:
- **Site Design Measures:** Site design measures for water quality protection integrate basic stormwater management and hydrological concepts into site planning to create development projects that mitigate their impact on stormwater quality. The five main site design principles that promote water quality protection include:
 - Define and locate the development envelope in order to protect sensitive areas and minimize changes to the natural topography;
 - Minimize impervious surface areas;
 - Maximize permeability by preserving open space and using permeable pavement surfaces where feasible;
 - Maximize the choices for mobility by planning for alternative modes of transportation other than automobiles; and,
 - Use drainage as a design element.
 - **Source Control Measures:** Source control measures are post-development BMPs that prevent pollutant generation, discharge and runoff by controlling it at its source or, at a minimum, limiting pollutant exposure to stormwater. Typically, a source control measure involves a cover, berm, drain connection to the sanitary sewer system or some other structural design element that prevents a pollutant from becoming a direct discharge to stormwater. Both structural and operational source control BMPs can prevent pollutants from entering stormwater runoff.
 - **Stormwater Treatment Measures:** Stormwater treatment BMPs are structural or landscaped facilities that remove pollutants from stormwater. The major types of treatment facilities are bio-retention, vegetated swales, filters, detention basins (dry ponds), water quality wetlands, and solid separators. Permit Provision C.3 focuses on permanent, post-construction treatment systems rather than those treatment controls placed temporarily during the construction process (e.g., temporary detention basins and other treatment measures designed to remove sediment from stormwater at construction grading sites).

5.2 SIGNIFICANT UNAVOIDABLE ADVERSE IMPACTS

All significant and potentially significant impacts that are identified in this EIR for the proposed project would be mitigated to less-than-significant levels by mitigation measures that are proposed by the District or measures that are recommended in the EIR. Of all proposed mitigation measures, the only ones that District staff at present believe may prove to be infeasible are those components of Mitigation Measure 4.8-2 that would be necessary to avoid any substantial adverse change in the historical significance of the Carlson House. If those measures, and all others, prove to be feasible and are adopted in connection with project approval, then implementation of the LRDP would not result in any significant unavoidable adverse impacts. If the District Board of Trustees concludes, however, that it is infeasible to avoid any significant effects on the Carlson House, then Impact 4.8-2 would be significant and unavoidable.

5.3 GROWTH-INDUCING IMPACTS

Section 15126.2(d) of the *CEQA Guidelines* requires an EIR to discuss "the ways in which the proposed project could foster economic or population growth, or the construction of additional housing, either directly or indirectly, in the surrounding environment. Included in this are projects which would remove obstacles to population growth." The project could be considered to induce growth if it causes the local growth rate to exceed growth rates projected by the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG). For the period between 2005 and 2015, ABAG estimates population growth of 1.8% per year for the Bay Area as a whole (ABAG, 2005), 0.9% for Santa Clara County, and 0.35% for Saratoga (Santa Clara County Planning Office 2005).

The District's anticipated growth rate of 2% per year in student enrollments would appear to exceed ABAG's projected growth rate for the region, and therefore, could be considered growth-inducing. However, West Valley College, like other community colleges, provides educational facilities for local residents and does not provide on-campus housing. Therefore, the college itself does not generate new population, but rather accommodates the increased demand for educational services that results from population increases in surrounding areas. In addition, since over 60% of the College's enrollment comes from areas outside of the District's political boundaries (WVCCMD 2001), the college accommodates increased demand from a larger area than the City of Saratoga. Therefore, any future increase in student enrollments at the college would not necessarily cause the population in Saratoga to increase, but rather, Plan implementation would accommodate future growth that is anticipated by ABAG in Saratoga and other surrounding communities as well.

5.4 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

Section 15130(a) of the *CEQA Guidelines* requires discussion of a project's cumulative impacts when the project's incremental effect is cumulatively considerable. A cumulative impact would be considered cumulatively considerable when project-specific impacts which are considered individually minor may be

significant when combined with the environmental effects of other projects; significant cumulative impacts must be addressed, but not necessarily in “as great detail” as the discussion of project-related impacts.

Cumulative Impacts on Campus. The proposed LRDP provides a guide for 28 projects on the West Valley College campus ranging from maintenance and interior remodeling to new building construction. When some of these projects are considered individually, they would ordinarily be exempt from the environmental review requirements of CEQA. However, when these 28 projects are taken as a whole, their combined or cumulative impact could be considerable. This Program EIR evaluates the cumulative or combined impacts of all planned projects on this campus (as listed in [Table 3-1](#)), and therefore, the significant impacts identified in this Program EIR constitute a cumulative impact analysis of the LRDP. Identified significant cumulative impacts relate primarily to:

- Impact 4.2-1: Cumulative loss of mature native and non-native trees that contribute to the scenic and aesthetic values of the campus. This impact would be mitigated to a less-than-significant level by required 2-to-1 replacement planting of 24-inch box trees.
- Impact 4.7-5: Construction of the new Information Systems Building, pool renovation, and demolition of the existing Information Systems Building are planned to start in 2005. Although these projects are proposed to occur somewhat sequentially rather than simultaneously, there could be some overlap. If heavy equipment were operated simultaneously for more than one project in the same vicinity, cumulative noise levels would not exceed the Speech Interference Criterion except if trucks or impact equipment were operated simultaneously at two of the sites. Mitigation measures are recommended to limit truck and impact equipment operations to maintain cumulative truck and impact equipment noise impacts at a less-than-significant level.

Cumulative noise impacts are not anticipated to occur as a result of simultaneous construction of other projects that are planned in 2006 and 2010 because they are located in different parts of the campus and would affect different residential receptors. All planned roadway construction projects scheduled to occur in 2010 would be distributed along both campus street frontages, and the noise impacts associated with each project would be location-specific, affecting different receptors and minimizing the potential for any significant cumulative noise impacts on any particular receptors.

Of the projects planned for 2012, the Art Labs, Art Studios, and Library projects are the only projects located in proximity to each other. If heavy equipment were operated simultaneously at these sites, estimated project-related noise levels at residences at the west end of Camino Barco would increase by approximately 1 to 2 dBA. Such cumulative noise levels would not exceed the Speech Interference Criterion, and therefore, would be less than significant. In addition, recommended use of feasible noise controls would reduce the potential for noise impacts on these residents.

- Impact 4.9-5: Cumulative development of the LRDP projects would increase solid waste generation, generating 58,344 pounds of additional solid waste per year for disposal at the Guadalupe Rubbish Disposal Site. Required participation in the recycling program implemented by the District and operated by the Green Valley Disposal Company would reduce this impact to a less-than-significant level.

Cumulative Impacts on the Surrounding Community. CEQA Guidelines Section 15130(b)(1)(A) requires an EIR to discuss cumulative impacts resulting from the proposed project in combination with “past, present, and probable future projects.” Probable future projects are defined as those projects "requiring an agency approval for an application which has been received at the time the notice of preparation is released..." According to City of Saratoga, there are no approved or planned projects in the area that would significantly affect the proposed project.¹ The greatest influence on any cumulative traffic increases in the project vicinity (outside of the project) would be any future development within the City. Beyond the city boundaries, traffic generated by any future development in surrounding communities would become so small and dispersed by the time it reaches the project vicinity, that its impact would be negligible. Since there are no specific projects in Saratoga that could contribute to cumulative impacts, the City indicated that application of an annual growth factor of 1% to account for any future projects in the City would be an acceptable approach. The traffic impact analysis Section 4.5 of this EIR includes a background annual growth rate of 1% to account for any currently unforeseeable, future development projects in Saratoga. This assumed increase is reflected in the traffic impact scenario identified as “Future Baseline” or “2015 No Project Conditions”.

Potential cumulative impacts that could result from implementation of the LRDP in conjunction with this potential future background growth would relate primarily to increases in traffic on local roadways. Cumulative traffic increases on local roadways would incrementally degrade service level operation at intersections in the college vicinity. However, all but one intersection would operate at an acceptable LOS C or better. With the project and assumed future background growth, the Fruitvale Avenue/main entrance driveway intersection would operate at LOS F due to excessive delays in the westbound left-turn during the AM peak hour (see Impact 4.5-1). The project’s incremental contribution to this excessive delay was determined to be less-than-cumulatively-considerable (i.e., less-than-significant) since the number of vehicles turning left from the driveway during the AM peak hour is estimated to be only 5 vehicles. In any event, provision of a safe “refuge” within the existing median south of this intersection and/or addition of another campus driveway access on Fruitvale Avenue to the south of this intersection is recommended to improve egress and overall operation of this driveway.

Projected cumulative traffic increases on local roadways (due to implementation of the LRDP in conjunction with this potential future background growth) would degrade local air quality and increase

¹ Letter communication dated February 2, 2005 from D. Sohrab Rashid, P.E., City of Saratoga Contract Traffic Engineer regarding cumulative project assumptions for the West Valley College Long Range Development Plan EIR traffic analysis.

traffic noise levels. However, the cumulative increases in local (CO) emissions were determined to be less than significant (see Impact 4.6-6). Likewise, noise increases along local roadways due to cumulative traffic increases were determined to be less than significant (see Impact 4.7-5).

When the proposed LRDP is considered in conjunction with other future development in surrounding communities, project impacts identified under aesthetics, biological resources, public health, and cultural resources are location-specific in nature, and would not contribute to any cumulative impacts in surrounding communities. Because of the localized nature of these project impacts, such impacts would not exacerbate or compound the impacts of other projects occurring off campus, as on-site and off-site impacts are too isolated or distant to be additive.

Cumulative Impacts on Project Region. As indicated in Impacts 4.6-6, the California Air Resources Board (CARB) estimates that ROG, NO_x, SO_x emissions rates are projected to decline despite increases in population and trip lengths (vehicle miles traveled) in the San Francisco Bay Area air basin. Projected declines in certain regional emissions rates (ROG, NO_x and SO_x) will more than offset regional emissions increases associated with cumulative growth in surrounding communities and the Bay Area region. Therefore, cumulative increases in these regional emissions (even with the project increment included) would be less than significant. However, the CARB projects that PM₁₀ levels (exhaust only) would increase in the air basin. Therefore, PM₁₀ emissions associated with cumulative growth in surrounding communities and project implementation would exacerbate projected regional increases. Since the Bay Area is currently non-attainment for PM₁₀, this would be a significant cumulative impact. Required implementation of transportation control measures to reduce the college's incremental contributions to cumulative regional increases in PM₁₀ emissions would reduce the project's contribution to this cumulative impact to a less-than-cumulatively-considerable (i.e., less-than-significant) level.

5.5 ALTERNATIVES

CEQA Section 15126.6(a) requires that an EIR analyze "a range of reasonable alternatives to the project, or to the location of any 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." The discussion of alternatives needs to focus on alternatives to the project 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. CEQA also requires that an EIR evaluate the "No Project" Alternative [Section 15126(d)(3)].

The EIR identifies the following potentially significant impacts:

- **Aesthetics:** The LRDP project components would result in a cumulatively substantial loss of mature native and non-native trees that contribute to the scenic and aesthetic values associated with the West Valley College campus. The proposed campus entrance realignment projects and portable classrooms

in the north parking lots would have the potential to significantly alter views from nearby off-campus locations.

- **Biological Resources:** Construction activities associated with implementation of the LRDP could indirectly affect sensitive species (e.g., the California red-legged frog, passerine nests, and bats). In addition, project implementation could result in the removal and/or pruning of native and non-native trees meeting the City of Saratoga's definition of a "protected tree". Use of non-native ornamental species in future landscaping could result in highly invasive non-native ornamental species colonizing riparian areas, and this could reduce diversity of native species and reduce wildlife habitat values.
- **Hazards and Hazardous Materials:** Hazardous materials could be encountered in the soil and/or groundwater during ground-disturbing activities associated with implementation of the LRDP. In addition, hazardous building materials may be present in buildings planned for renovation or demolition in the proposed LRDP.
- **Transportation and Traffic:** Proposed spacing between the proposed Allendale Avenue/Science Way intersection and the Allendale Avenue/Harleigh Avenue would be inadequate. Proposed parking lot reconfiguration would not provide sidewalk connections between adjacent streets and the campus. Project construction could temporarily disrupt access to transit facilities.
- **Air Quality:** Construction and demolition activities associated with project implementation would result in temporary increases in particulate and equipment exhaust emissions. The proposed project could result in increased stationary source emissions, which includes various toxic air contaminants (TACs) and associated odors. Mobile emissions generated by project-related traffic in addition to growth in the surrounding communities would cumulatively increase regional emissions.
- **Noise:** Project construction would result in temporary short-term noise increases due to the operation of heavy equipment. Mechanical equipment associated with the proposed Information Systems Building could significantly affect residences to the east.
- **Cultural Resources:** There is a moderate possibility that future construction-related earthmoving could unearth and disturb prehistoric archaeological materials related to exploitation of creekside resources. Also, the demolition of the Carlson House would be a significant impact to a historic resource on the campus.

All of the above impacts could be reduced to a less-than-significant level by mitigation measures included in this EIR, although mitigation that would avoid significant effects to the Carlson House may prove to be infeasible, leaving the impact significant and unavoidable. While most of these measures are procedural measures (e.g. changes in construction practices) intended to ensure that potential impacts are avoided, some measures recommended in this EIR involve minor design changes and road improvements that could be implemented under any alternative. The alternatives presented below include CEQA-required alternatives that present a range in the magnitude of environmental impact: No Project Alternative, Modified Design Alternative, Lower Student Enrollment Alternative, and Building Relocation Alternative. After the discussion of these alternatives, Table 5.5.1 summarizes the impacts of these alternatives and the extent to which they are greater, the same, or less than those of the project as

proposed. In addition, as required by CEQA, the Environmentally Superior Alternative is also identified below.

5.5.1 No Project Alternative

Under the No Project Alternative, the projects listed in the proposed LRDP would not occur and the environmental impacts identified in this report (summarized above) would be avoided. However, if aging facilities on the campus are not renewed to remedy space deficits created by enrollment growth and to provide the state-of-the-art space, technology, and infrastructure required by modern education and research, students from the local area will likely have to travel to other, possibly more distant community colleges to obtain the classes and technical facilities required. If students are forced to travel to other community colleges for classes, regional traffic increases and associated increases in regional air emissions (due to longer trips) could occur.

Under the No Project Alternative, the need for maintenance, remodeling, and modernization of facilities would continue to persist but would not be satisfied. Maintenance and interior remodeling projects are categorically exempt and could proceed without approval of the LRDP. However, expansion and new construction projects would require CEQA review on a project-by-project basis, but would not have the benefit of assessing cumulative impacts resulting from a series of interrelated and dependent projects. CEQA disfavors the use of this approach to project development since it may preclude comprehensive environmental review of impacts that are individually inconsequential but collectively significant. The preparation of the LRDP and the evaluation of its environmental effects provide a comprehensive analysis of all potentially significant impacts.

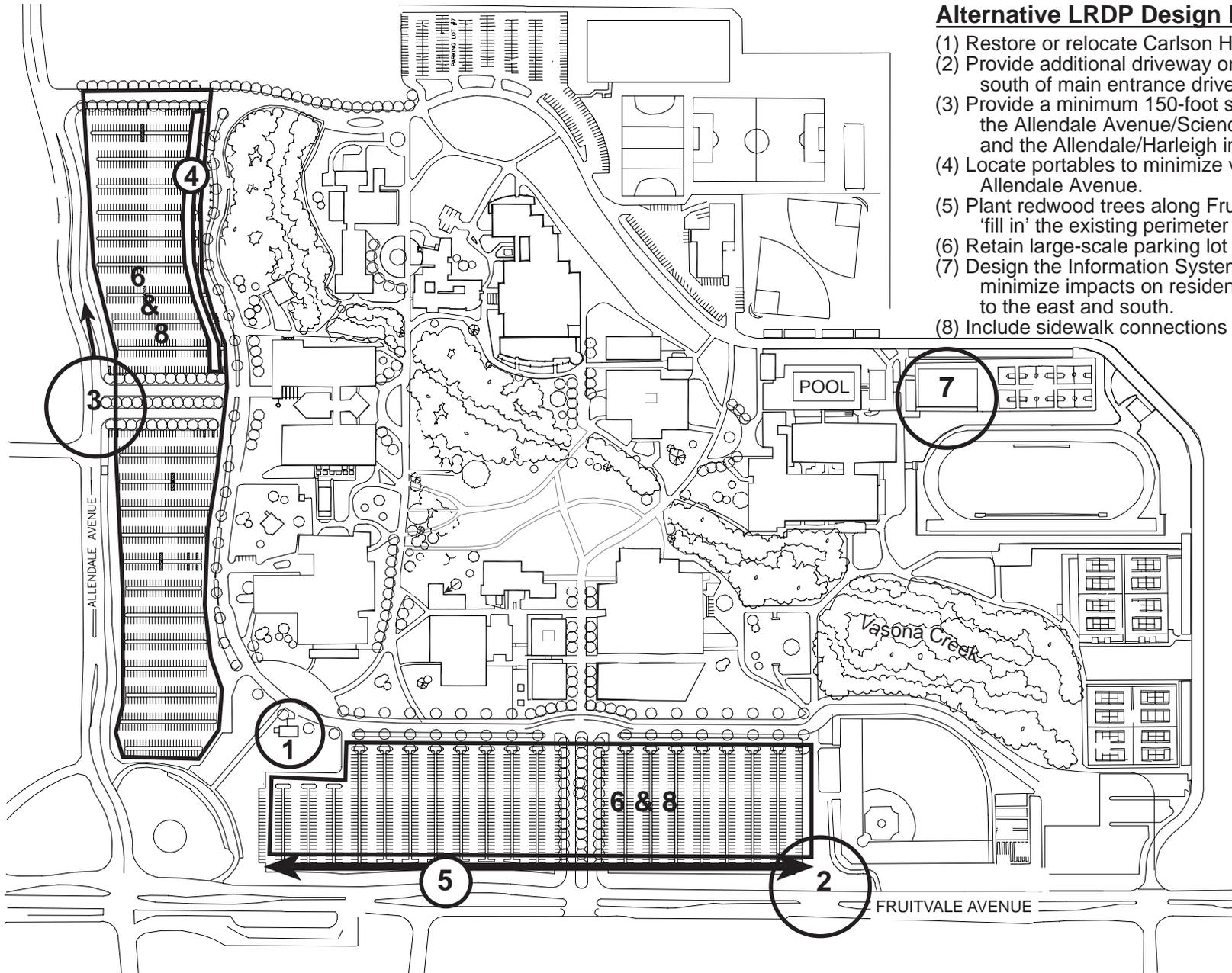
The No Project Alternative also would not meet the principal objective in the long-range planning process for the West Valley College campus, which is to provide up-to-date instruction programs supported by the appropriate physical facilities. Information technology, including campus-wide networks, instructional resources, and remote access to college information resources are now critical tools in supporting student learning. In addition, the Facilities Plan points out that the college's mission of being a learning-centered institution is challenged by the campus' 30-year old infrastructure, with buildings now requiring major repair and upgrades.

5.5.2 Modified Design Alternative

This alternative would involve the implementation of an LRDP that avoids some or all of the significant environmental impacts identified for the proposed project. The Modified Design Alternative implements eight of the mitigation measures required or recommended in the Aesthetics, Traffic and Circulation, Noise, and Cultural Resources sections of the EIR. These design changes are represented in Figure 5.5-1. This alternative would: (1) restore or relocate the Carlson House; (2) provide an additional driveway on Fruitvale Avenue south of the main entrance driveway; (3) relocate the Allendale Avenue/Science Way intersection to provide more separation from the Allendale/Harleigh Drive intersection; (4) locate

Alternative LRDP Design Elements

- (1) Restore or relocate Carlson House.
- (2) Provide additional driveway on Fruitvale Avenue, south of main entrance driveway.
- (3) Provide a minimum 150-foot separation between the Allendale Avenue/Science Way intersection and the Allendale/Harleigh intersection.
- (4) Locate portables to minimize visibility from Allendale Avenue.
- (5) Plant redwood trees along Fruitvale Avenue to 'fill in' the existing perimeter hedgerow.
- (6) Retain large-scale parking lot trees.
- (7) Design the Information Systems Building to minimize impacts on residential receptors to the east and south.
- (8) Include sidewalk connections in parking lots.



Information Systems Building to minimize impacts on residential receptors to the east and south; and (8) provide sidewalk connections in parking lots.

The incorporation of these design measures into the LRDP would reduce some of the environmental impacts listed above, while attaining the objectives of the LRDP. This alternative's impacts are compared with the impacts of the proposed LRDP below:

- **Consistency with Project Objectives:** Except for retention of Carlson House, this alternative would meet the principal objective in the long-range planning process for the West Valley College campus, which is to provide up-to-date instruction programs supported by remodeled and upgraded physical facilities. Information technology, including campus-wide networks, instructional resources, and remote access to college information resources are now critical tools in supporting student learning. Proposed retention of Carlson House would not be consistent with the LRDP objective of providing physical resources that support the District and College educational mission.
- **Aesthetics:** This alternative would involve planting trees along the campus perimeter to eventually provide continuous visual screening along Fruitvale and Allendale avenues. Also, campus entrance realignments would be designed to retain existing mature trees in campus parking lots. Under this alternative, classroom portables would be located in the north parking lots, but as far from Allendale Avenue as possible and in a manner that retains existing parking lot trees. When compared to the proposed LRDP, this alternative would reduce two identified significant visual impacts to a less-than-significant level.
- **Biological Resources:** When compared to the proposed LRDP, this alternative would have the same impact on biological resources.
- **Hazards and Hazardous Materials:** This alternative would pose the same public health risks as the proposed LRDP.
- **Transportation and Traffic:** This alternative would provide more convenient access by adding the recommended driveway on Fruitvale Avenue to the south of the main entrance driveway. Since this driveway would not mitigate a significant impact, this driveway would not reduce any significant traffic impacts. However, this alternative would reduce other significant traffic impacts by relocating the Allendale Avenue/Science Way intersection to the east (to provide at least 150 feet of separation from the Allendale/Harleigh intersection) and providing sidewalk connections in parking lots. When compared to the proposed LRDP, this alternative would reduce two identified traffic impacts to a less-than-significant level.
- **Air Quality:** Potential increases in stationary source emissions would be the same as the proposed LRDP. Since the project's emissions are determined by student enrollments, this design alternative would not reduce the proposed LRDP's cumulative impacts on regional air quality.
- **Noise:** This alternative would include design measures to ensure that the mechanical equipment associated with the Information Systems Building would comply with the Saratoga Noise Ordinance noise standards. This design measure would reduce one identified significant noise impact to a less-than-significant impact, but construction-related temporary noise impacts would still occur similar to the proposed LRDP.

- **Cultural Resources:** This alternative would either restore the Carlson House or relocate it to an appropriate site in the campus vicinity (e.g. Saratoga Heritage Orchard site or similar remnant orchard parcel near the college). When compared to the proposed LRDP, this alternative would not reduce the potential for unearthing and disturbing prehistoric archaeological materials but would reduce the significant impact associated with proposed demolition of the Carlson House to a less-than-significant level. It should be noted that development of the campus in the 1960's and '70's has eliminated most, if not all of the historic context for the house, and relocation to a suitable site may be a better option for preserving this resource.

5.5.3 Lower Student Enrollment Alternative

This alternative addresses the effects of limiting West Valley College enrollment to a level that is lower than specified by the State Chancellor's Office.² The LRDP accommodates an estimated annual 2% student enrollment increase for the LRDP's 10-year planning period through 2015. As indicated in Section 3.3.1 (*Student Enrollments*), the District has estimated that the LRDP growth rate would result in enrollment of 34,524 students for 2015. Using the District's estimated 53% share of this enrollment for West Valley College (WVMCCD 2001), enrollment at the college is estimated at 18,297 students for 2015. In 1989, the highest enrollment year for the District, West Valley College served approximately 60% of the District's 31,270 enrolled students, or 18,762 students. Comparing the historic and projected enrollment levels for West Valley College, it is clear that the anticipated 2015 enrollment projections will almost attain the previously recorded enrollment levels of 1989. The primary reason for this circumstance was the overall decline in District enrollments between 1989 and 2000.

Under the assumption that the growth rate for the District's enrollment was an annual 1% for the LRDP's planning horizon of ten years, the District's enrollment would increase to 30,978 with West Valley College enrollment for 2015 reaching 16,418 students. This future level of enrollment would still be lower than the 1989 level of 18,762 students.

A preliminary conclusion that may be derived from these resulting estimates is that the existing West Valley College facilities are adequate to serve future student levels generated by either the LRDP enrollment growth rate or a lower student enrollment level. However, the LRDP and the supporting Facilities Master Plan have indicated that a principal objective in the long-range planning process for the West Valley College campus is the provision of up-to-date instruction programs supported by the appropriate physical facilities. Information technology, including campus-wide networks, instructional resources, and remote access to college information resources are now critical tools in supporting student learning. The Master Plan points out that the college's mission of being a learning-centered institution is challenged by the campus' 30-year old infrastructure, with buildings now requiring major repair and upgrades. The LRDP is a plan to rectify these conditions.

² Telephone communication dated December 14, 2004 from Bud Allen, CCS Group, to Fritz Geier, Geier & Geier Consulting, Inc.

Consequently, a reduction in the number of enrolled students would not preclude the nature and extent of improvement projects specified by the LRDP. A 50% reduction in student enrollment would reduce some of the environmental impacts listed above (i.e. projected traffic increases and associated noise and air quality impacts would be less), but the impacts associated with building demolition, remodeling, renovation, and new construction would still occur under this alternative. This alternative's impacts are compared with the impacts of the proposed LRDP below:

- **Consistency with Project Objectives:** The Lower Enrollment Alternative would not preclude the nature and extent of improvement projects specified by the LRDP. Therefore, this alternative would meet the principal objective in the long-range planning process for the West Valley College campus, which is to provide up-to-date instruction programs supported by remodeled and upgraded physical facilities. Information technology, including campus-wide networks, instructional resources, and remote access to college information resources are now critical tools in supporting student learning. However, this alternative would not meet the District's LRDP objective to provide open access for educational services to all members of the community.
- **Aesthetics:** Since planned demolition, remodeling, renovation, and new construction projects would still occur under this alternative, this alternative would have the same significant visual impacts associated with tree removal, campus entrance realignments, and portable classrooms as the proposed LRDP.
- **Biological Resources:** Planned demolition, remodeling, renovation, and new construction projects would still occur under this alternative. Therefore, this alternative would have the same significant biological impacts on sensitive species and protected trees as the proposed LRDP.
- **Hazards and Hazardous Materials:** Since planned demolition, remodeling, renovation, and new construction projects would still occur under this alternative, this alternative would have the same potential for encountering hazardous materials in soil and groundwater during ground-disturbing activities as the proposed LRDP. In addition, this alternative would have the same potential for encountering hazardous building materials as the proposed LRDP.
- **Transportation and Traffic:** This alternative would generate 50% less traffic than the proposed LRDP. While potential impacts on operation of local intersections would be less, the significance determination would remain the same. The project's impact on local intersections were determined to be less than significant since all intersections would operate acceptably and they would also operate acceptably under this alternative. Other identified potentially significant traffic impacts related to intersection separation, sidewalk connections in parking lots, and transit access during construction would be the same as the proposed LRDP.
- **Air Quality:** Since the remodeling, renovation, and new construction projects would still occur under this alternative, this alternative would have the same potential for increased stationary source emissions as the proposed project. However, since this alternative would generate 50% less traffic, this alternative would contribute lower regional emissions, although cumulative regional emissions increases would still be significant.

- **Noise:** Planned demolition, remodeling, renovation, and new construction projects would still occur under this alternative. Therefore, this alternative would have the same significant noise impacts related to construction and operation of the Information Systems Building as the proposed LRDP. However, since this alternative would generate 50% less traffic, this alternative would generate lower traffic noise increases along local roadways, and traffic noise increases would still be less than significant.
- **Cultural Resources:** Since planned demolition, remodeling, renovation, and new construction projects would still occur under this alternative, this alternative would have the same the potential for unearthing and disturbing prehistoric archaeological materials and adversely affecting Carlson House as the proposed LRDP.

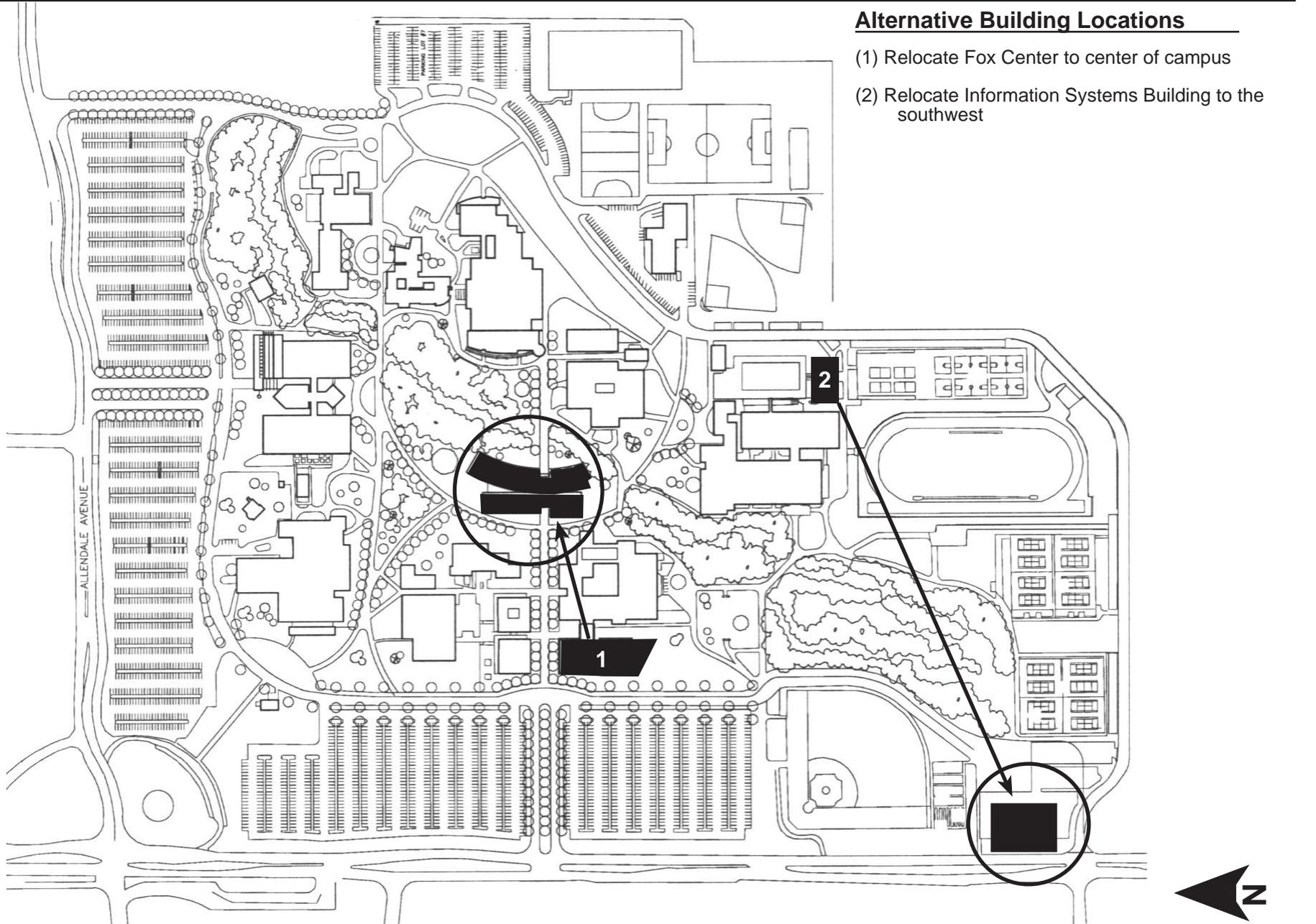
5.5.4 Building Relocation Alternative

As indicated above, CEQA Section 15126.6(a) requires that an EIR analyze “a range of reasonable alternatives to the project, or to the location of any project,” The LRDP for West Valley College is a plan for the improvement of existing facilities on the college campus. These improvements entail the renovation and expansion of buildings on the college site, as well as the replacement of structures to be demolished. As a result, there are no alternate locations for the West Valley College improvements proposed by the LRDP. However, there are some alternative locations under consideration for the Campus Technology Center (Fox Center) and Information Systems Building.

Relocation of the Fox Center

Under the LRDP, the Fox Center would be located west of the Campus Center. However, since this location is on the periphery of the clustered campus buildings, an alternative location would be center of campus (east of the Campus Center), where it could serve as a focal point for student instruction and activities (see Figure 5.5-2). While a central location would be more consistent with the goals of the LRDP and would be less visible from off-campus locations, this alternative location would pose significant biological impacts due to its proximity to Vasona Creek and several large oak trees. In addition, most of the campus utilities extend through this central area and they would require relocation as part of building development. Such major utility relocation would result in more extensive surface disturbance, grading, and loss of trees than under the LRDP. Location of this building in the campus quad would limit the use of this area as a central outdoor gathering place for the college.

Another relocation alternative would be development of this building at an off-campus location. Similar to the alternate on-campus location, this alternative would not meet a principal objective of the LRDP, i.e. the establishment of a shared facility that focuses college programs and student activities at the center of the campus. The development of the Fox Center at an off-campus location would also result in additional travel requirements for students requiring access to the facility. Whether through private or shuttle vehicle use, travel between the campus and an off-site Fox Center would result in additional traffic on local roadways along with associated air quality and noise impacts beyond those anticipated for the proposed



LRDP. For these reasons, an off-site alternative for LRDP improvements would result in a greater level of environmental effects.

Relocation of the Information Systems Building

This alternative would relocate the new Information Systems Building from its proposed location at the sand volleyball courts to the parking lot adjoining to the archery fields in the southwest corner of the campus, as indicated in Figure 5.5-2. This alternative location would reduce potential construction and operational noise impacts on one residential receptor located east of the campus, but would require major extension of utilities from the existing Information Systems Building to the new location. Such utility extension would entail either construction across Vasona Creek or along the South College Circle. Such utility construction could result in significant biological impacts on the Vasona Creek riparian corridor and significant construction noise impacts on residential receptors located to the south and west across Fruitvale Avenue.

These relocation alternatives would reduce some of the environmental impacts listed above, while increasing others. Alternative locations of these two buildings would still attain the objectives of the LRDP. This alternative's impacts are compared with the impacts of the proposed LRDP as follows:

- **Consistency with Project Objectives:** The Building Relocation Alternative would not preclude the nature and extent of improvement projects specified by the LRDP, and would only relocate two buildings. Therefore, this alternative would meet the principal objective in the long-range planning process for the West Valley College campus, which is to provide up-to-date instruction programs supported by remodeled and upgraded physical facilities. Information technology, including campus-wide networks, instructional resources, and remote access to college information resources are now critical tools in supporting student learning. Location of the Fox Center at the campus quad would meet the objectives of the LRDP to develop a "centralized shared facility for college programs & campus activities."
- **Aesthetics:** By relocating the Fox Center to the center of campus, this alternative would reduce visibility of the Fox Center from Fruitvale Avenue. However, since visual impacts associated with this building were determined to be less than significant, this alternative would not reduce any significant visual impacts. In addition, this alternative would result in the removal of several existing mature oaks, which would result in greater impacts on the aesthetic values on campus than the proposed LRDP.

Relocation of the Information Systems Building to the southwest corner of the campus could significantly alter the visual character of the campus as viewed from Fruitvale Avenue. There are currently no college buildings located as close to Fruitvale Avenue or Allendale Avenue. This alternative would result in greater visual impacts than the location of the Information Systems Building under the proposed LRDP.

- **Biological Resources:** Relocation of the Fox Center to the center of campus would increase the number of significant biological impacts since the building area would most likely extend into the Vasona Creek riparian corridor and require removal of several existing mature oaks. With more

impacts on the creek riparian corridor, this alternative would have more significant biological impacts on sensitive species and protected trees than the proposed LRDP. With its closer proximity to the creek, it would have a greater potential to adversely affect the diversity of native species and wildlife habitat value if highly invasive, non-native ornamental species were used in landscaping around this building.

Major utility extensions, required as part of relocation of the Information Systems Building, would have to either cross Vasona Creek or be located in South College Circle. Construction of utilities across Vasona Creek would pose significant biological impacts on the riparian corridor of Vasona Creek, and these biological impacts would be greater than the proposed LRDP.

- **Hazards and Hazardous Materials:** Since planned demolition, remodeling, renovation, and new construction projects would still occur under this alternative, this alternative would have the same potential for encountering hazardous materials in soil and groundwater during ground-disturbing activities as the proposed LRDP. However, this alternative would require major utility relocations and extensions, which would involve more extensive surface disturbance; more disturbance could increase the potential for encountering hazardous materials. Therefore, this alternative would have more potential for encountering hazardous building materials than the proposed LRDP.
- **Transportation and Traffic:** This alternative would not alter proposed changes in campus entrances and therefore, this alternative would pose the same significant impacts associated with campus entrances and sidewalk connections in parking lots as the proposed LRDP.
- **Air Quality:** Relocation of the Fox Center to the center of campus would increase the buffer area between the emergency diesel generator for this building and residential receptors to the west (across Fruitvale Avenue). However, this relocation would not mitigate a significant impact since it was determined that the buffer area would not decrease under the proposed LRDP. Since the project's emissions are determined by student enrollments, this building relocation alternative would not reduce the project's cumulative impacts on regional air quality.
- **Noise:** Relocation of the Fox Center to the center of campus would reduce construction noise impacts on residential receptors to the west. However, construction noise impacts associated with Fox Center construction were determined to be less than significant under the LRDP. Relocation of the Information Systems Building would reduce identified operational noise impacts on one residential receptor located 150 feet to the east. However, there are several residences located within approximately 260 feet of the alternative location, and they would be subject to increased operational noise. At either the proposed LRDP or alternative location, noise attenuation measures would be required to ensure that noise from the building's mechanical equipment would meet noise limits specified in the Saratoga Noise Ordinance. Therefore, this alternative would not reduce the significance or extent of construction-related or operational noise impacts identified under the proposed LRDP, and the same extent of mitigation would be required.

Alternatively, if utilities are extended to this alternative location via South College Circle, there would be significant construction-related noise impacts on residential receptors to the south due to their proximity to this road. In this case, construction noise impacts under this alternative would be greater than the proposed LRDP.

- **Cultural Resources:** When compared to the proposed LRDP, this alternative would not reduce the significant impact associated with proposed demolition of the Carlson House. Since there would be major utility extensions required under this alternative, the potential for unearthing and disturbing prehistoric archaeological materials could be greater under this alternative.

5.5.5 Alternative Withdrawn from Consideration

During the scoping process, one other alternative was considered, but as a result of preliminary analysis was determined either to be infeasible or to offer no significant environmental benefits over the LRDP, the Modified Design Alternative, or Lower Enrollment Alternative. Therefore, this alternative was not analyzed further in this EIR.

Campus Stadium Alternative

The West Valley College Educational and Facilities Master Plan (2001) served as a basis for the improvement plans identified by the LRDP and included a comprehensive schedule for the improvement of campus facilities. The Master Plan also specified goals and policies for the future direction of the College's educational services and the physical plant improvements necessary to achieve these objectives. The Master Plan entailed the development of most of the facilities improvements that are currently proposed by the LRDP including the scheduled remodeling and expansion of the Physical Education Complex. However, there is one major difference between the Master Plan's schedule of new facilities and those proposed by the LRDP. A significant component of the Master Plan that was withdrawn involved campus stadium improvements, including installation of bleachers, lights for the playing field, and scoreboard.

The components of the program to improve the sports facilities on the campus were the subject of a controversial proposal for similar facilities in 1974. At that time, the proposed stadium improvements were the subject of an EIR that was certified by the District. The project was also approved by the District, but not implemented due to community opposition. While the stadium improvements proposed by the Master Plan were not as extensive as those proposed in 1975, community concerns regarding lighting glare and noise impacts from the Master Plan's sports complex improvements resulted in the elimination of these campus improvements as part of the LRDP. The stadium improvements were abandoned as a result of a renewed commitment from the District to ensure the campus planning program responds to the needs of the community as well as the student body.

5.5.6 LRDP Environmentally Superior Alternative

An EIR is required to identify the Environmentally Superior Alternative from a range of reasonable and feasible alternatives evaluated in the EIR [Section 15126.6 (e) (2)]. The Environmentally Superior Alternative would be the alternative that results in fewer environmental impacts.

The preceding discussion compares the impacts of these alternatives with the proposed LRDP and a tabular comparison summary is presented in Table 5.5-1. As shown in this table, the Modified Design Alternative would result in the greatest reduction in identified significant environmental impacts associated with implementation of the LRDP. It would mitigate six of the identified significant impacts to less-than-significant levels. However, it should be noted that this alternative would not completely meet the objectives of the LRDP since it would include restoration or relocation of the Carlson House.

When compared to the proposed LRDP, the Modified Design Alternative represents a better balance of the District's objectives and environmental responsibility. Therefore, the Modified Design Alternative is the Environmentally Superior Alternative.

References – CEQA Considerations

Santa Clara County Planning Office, 2005. *Growth Projections 2000 – 2025*. Information provided through the SCC Website (<http://www.sccgov.org/content/0,4745,ccid%253D630916,00.html>). Accessed on January 23, 2005.

West Valley-Mission Community College District (WVMCCD), 2001. *West Valley College Educational and Facilities Master Plan*. February 16.

Table 5.5-1
Summary Comparison of Project Alternatives

Impact	Proposed LRDP	No Project Alternative	Modified Design Alternative	Lower Enrollment Alternative	Building Relocation Alternative
<u>Project Objectives</u> Meets Principal Project Objectives?	Yes	No	Yes except Carlson House	No	Yes
<u>Aesthetics</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Cumulatively result in a substantial loss of mature native and non-native trees that contribute to the scenic and aesthetic values on campus. ▪ Alter the visual character of the project site and its vicinity. 	PSM PSM	- LTS LTS	- LTS LTS	= PSM PSM	+ PSM PSM
<u>Biological Resources</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Construction impacts on sensitive species (e.g., the California red-legged frog, passerine nests, and bats). ▪ Potential to reduce diversity of native species and reduce wildlife habitat values in riparian areas if highly invasive, non-native ornamental species were used. 	PSM PSM	- LTS LTS	= PSM PSM	= PSM PSM	+ PSM PSM
<u>Hazards and Hazardous Materials</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Potential to encounter hazardous materials in the soil and/or groundwater during ground-disturbing activities as well as in buildings planned for renovation or demolition. 	PSM	- LTS	= PSM	= PSM	+ PSM
<u>Traffic and Circulation</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Although less than significant, there would be long delays for the westbound left-turn movement at the Fruitvale Avenue/main driveway intersection during the AM peak hour. ▪ Proposed spacing between the proposed Allendale Avenue/Science Way intersection and the Allendale Avenue/Harleigh Avenue would be inadequate. ▪ Proposed parking lot reconfiguration would not provide sidewalk connections between adjacent streets and the campus. ▪ Project construction could temporarily disrupt access to transit facilities. 	LTS PSM PSM PSM	- LTS LTS LTS	- LTS LTS PSM	- LTS PSM PSM	= LTS PSM PSM
<u>Air Quality</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The proposed project could result in increased stationary source emissions, which includes various toxic air contaminants (TACs) and associated odors. ▪ Mobile emissions generated by project-related traffic in addition to growth in the surrounding communities would cumulatively increase regional emissions. 	PSM PSM	- LTS LTS	= PSM PSM	= PSM PSM	= PSM PSM

LTS = Less than Significant PSM = Potentially Significant but can be Mitigated to a Less-than-Significant Level

PS = Potentially Significant but Mitigation May Be Infeasible

"=" Same Level of Impact as Project "-" Less Impact than Project "+" More Impact than Project

Table 5.5-1 (Cont'd)
Comparison of Project Alternatives

Impact	Proposed LRDP	No Project Alternative	Modified Design Alternative	Lower Enrollment Alternative	Building Relocation Alternative
<u>Noise</u>					
▪ Project construction would result in temporary short-term noise increases due to the operation of heavy equipment.	PSM	- LTS	= PSM	= PSM	+ PSM
▪ Mechanical equipment associated with the proposed Information Systems Building could significantly affect residences to the east.	PSM	- LTS	- LTS	= PSM	= PSM
▪ Cumulative construction noise impacts if planned construction projects occurred in the same vicinity at the same time.	PSM	- LTS	= PSM	= PSM	- PSM
<u>Cultural Resources</u>					
▪ Future construction-related earthmoving could unearth disturb prehistoric archaeological materials related to exploitation of creekside resources.	PSM	- LTS	= PS	= PS	+ PSM
▪ Demolition of the Carlson House would be significant impact to a historic resource on the campus.	PS	- LTS	- LTS	= PS	= PS

LTS = Less than Significant PSM = Potentially Significant but can be Mitigated to a Less-than-Significant Level

PS = Potentially Significant but Mitigation May Be Infeasible

"=" Same Level of Impact as Project "-" Less Impact than Project "+" More Impact than Project