

V. ALTERNATIVES

The *CEQA Guidelines* require the analysis of a range of reasonable alternatives to the project, or to the location of the project, which would feasibly attain most of the project's basic objectives and avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects of the project. The range of alternatives required in an EIR is governed by a "rule of reason" that requires the EIR to set forth only those alternatives necessary to permit a reasoned choice.¹ An EIR need not consider every conceivable alternative to a project. Rather, it must consider a reasonable range of potentially feasible alternatives that will foster informed decision-making and public participation.

The proposed project and the project objectives are described in detail in Chapter III, Project Description, and the potential environmental effects of implementing the proposed project are analyzed in Chapter IV, Settings, Impacts and Mitigation Measures. Impacts associated with the following environmental topics would be significant for the proposed project without the implementation of mitigation measures, but would be reduced to a less-than-significant level if the mitigation measures recommended in this EIR are implemented:

- Transportation, Circulation and Parking
- Noise and Vibration
- Geology, Soils and Seismicity
- Hydrology and Storm Drainage
- Biological Resources
- Cultural and Paleontological Resources
- Hazards and Public Safety
- Visual Resources

The following impacts are significant and unavoidable, and cannot be reduced to a less-than-significant level with implementation of mitigation measures. After mitigation, the project would result in the following significant unavoidable impacts:

- Transportation, Circulation and Parking – The proposed project would contribute to existing deficient level of service conditions at the Donner Pass Road/Bridge Street and Bridge Street/West River Street intersections, and the roadway segment of SR 267

¹ *CEQA Guidelines*, 1998, Section 15126.6.

between I-80 and Brockway Road resulting in three significant unavoidable traffic impacts.

- Air Quality – Implementation of the proposed project could result in an increase in long-term regional emissions that would exceed the Northern Sierra Air Quality Management District significance criteria resulting in one significant unavoidable air quality impact.
- Noise - Implementation of the proposed project could expose noise sensitive land uses within the Railyard Master Plan Area to railroad-related noise levels in excess of normally acceptable standards resulting in one significant unavoidable noise impact.
- Cultural Resources – Implementation of the proposed project would result in the removal of a historic structure (UPRR Warehouse) resulting in one significant unavoidable cultural resource impact.

The following discussion is provided to meet the requirement of the *CEQA Guidelines* and provide the public and decision makers with information that will help them understand the adverse impacts and benefits associated with three potential alternatives to the proposed project. A discussion of the environmentally superior alternative is also provided, as required by CEQA. The three alternatives are as follows:

- The **No Project/No Build alternative**, which assumes the Railyard Master Plan would not be developed. The existing railyard operations, industrial and residential uses would continue with no new development on the project site.
- The **Reduced Development alternative**, which assumes a 25 percent reduction in the Maximum Allowable Development (MAD). With a 25 percent reduction in the MAD, development under this alternative would include up to: 210 residential units; 124 live/work units; 93 work/live units; 52,500 square feet of retail space; 11,250 square feet of office space; one 750-seat movie theater; one 45-room hotel; one 15,000 square-foot grocery store; and 18,750 square feet of civic space.
- The **Maintain Donner Pass Road Alignment alternative**, which assumes that Donner Pass Road would maintain its current alignment, and not extend directly into the Master Plan Area. This alternative would maintain the northerly “swoosh” alignment of Donner Pass Road and keep the through movement for vehicles and pedestrians on Donner Pass Road, with vehicles and pedestrians having to turn into the project area onto Donner Pass Road Extension. This alternative reduces the development area of the Downtown Extension District and removes the conceptual park location at the western edge of the plan area. All other roadway improvements and the MAD would remain the same as the proposed project.

In considering the range of alternatives to be analyzed in an EIR, the CEQA Guidelines state that an alternative site/location should be considered when feasible alternative locations are available and the “significant effects of the project would be avoided or substantially lessened by putting the project in another location.” A feasible alternative location that would achieve the key project objective of redeveloping the Truckee Railyard is not

available. Further, independent of the project alternatives, an alternative site that would avoid or substantially lessen the impacts of the proposed project, without creating different impacts of a similar level does not exist. As such, an alternative site location is not considered.

As stated above and described in detail in Section IV, Impacts and Mitigation Measures, implementation of the Master Plan would result in six significant unavoidable impacts. However, only two of the proposed project's six significant unavoidable impacts could potentially be avoided by an alternative project. Four of proposed projects impacts would result with or without the project. The four impacts are identified as a significant impact for this project as the project's contribution to the impacts is considered significant, but it is noted that the adverse effect would exist with or without the proposed project.

The three significant unavoidable transportation impacts occur in the 2025 No Project Condition, , as well as the 2025 with Project Condition, so the two intersections and one roadway segment would fail with or without implementation of the Master Plan.

The Northern Sierra Air Quality Management District is currently in nonattainment status, so the one significant unavoidable air quality impact related to non attainment status cannot be reduced to a less-than-significant level. As a result, a modified project would not eliminate this impact.

To reduce the one significant unavoidable noise impact, the nature of the project would need to be modified to remove all residential units and sensitive land uses so as to avoid single-source noise impacts associated with railroad noise. Redefining the proposed project to eliminate residential uses would transform the development program and not achieve project objectives. Those objectives include “[p]rovid[ing] a variety of housing units, including employee housing and affordable housing” and “[c]reat[ing] mixed-use development that enhances the Downtown experience and strengthens Downtown as Truckee’s premier destination.” These objectives can be achieved only if the Master Plan includes a significant component of residential uses. These objectives are also consistent with 2025 General Plan policies, which call for the inclusion of a significant residential component into the Truckee Railyard Master Plan as a means of encouraging redevelopment of the site as a vibrant, mixed-use extension of the existing Downtown (e.g., Goal CC-7, Policies DSA-P8, A6.4, P6.5, P8.5). The only way to avoid the significant, adverse impact associated with railroad noise would be to virtually eliminate residential uses from the Master Plan Area. Because an alternative that eliminates residential uses is inconsistent with the basic objectives of the project, and is inconsistent with General Plan policies regarding the redevelopment of the site, such an alternative is not analyzed in detail.

The significant unavoidable cultural resource impact could be reduced to a less-than-significant impact by designing the proposed project to maintain the UPRR Warehouse. This could be achieved under the Maintain Donner Pass Road alternative considered below.

A. NO PROJECT/NO BUILD ALTERNATIVE

1. Principle Characteristics

The No Project/No Build alternative assumes that the Master Plan Area (project site) would generally remain in its existing state and would not be subject to development. Existing uses on the project site would continue. There would be no structures constructed on the project site, and all existing structures would remain.

The No Project/No Build alternative would not meet any of the project objectives. The proposed project's objectives are centered on redevelopment of the Master Plan Area with a mix of land uses that will encourage vibrant and economically sustainable redevelopment that offers housing, retail, entertainment and civic opportunities. The No Project/No Build alternative assumes no redevelopment of the site, and is therefore not consistent with any of the project objectives.

2. Analysis of the No Project/No Build Alternative

The potential impacts of the No Project/No Build alternative are described in the following section.

a. Land Use and Planning Policy. Under the No Project/No Build alternative, there would not be any construction or the introduction of new land uses on the project site. The positive land use impacts of carrying out land use direction contained in the Truckee General Plan and Redevelopment Plan would not occur under this alternative.

This alternative would not result in any significant land use or planning policy impacts.

b. Population, Employment and Housing. Under the No Project/No Build alternative, there would not be the addition of up to 570 new residential units (including 125 work/live units) with an associated "full-time population" increase of 1,470 persons. Further, this alternative would not result in a positive impact on the Town's jobs-to-housing balance by providing up to 570 new housing units and over 85,000 square feet of new commercial, office, entertainment, tourism and civic activities that would provide jobs for existing and future residents. This alternative would not result in any significant population, employment or housing impacts.

c. Transportation, Circulation and Parking. The No Project/No Build alternative would not change the existing traffic conditions. Existing intersections within the study area would operate at acceptable levels of services. Under future 2025 conditions, even without the project, the Donner Pass Road/Bridge Street and River Street/Bridge Street intersections and the roadway segment of SR 267 between I-80 and Brockway Road would fail. This alternative would not increase the delays at any intersection, and applicants would not contribute to the improvements of any intersections.

- d. Air Quality.** This alternative would not change the existing air quality. Under this alternative, there would not be construction or an increase in vehicle trips that is associated with the proposed project. However, while the No Project alternative would not contribute to regional emissions, Nevada County would still be in nonattainment status for ozone and PM_{10} .
- e. Noise and Vibration.** The No Project/No Build alternative would not result in noise impacts associated with the construction of the proposed project. Additionally, under this alternative there would be no new residential units exposed to traffic and rail noise sources. Noise currently generated on the project site, such as noise from railyard operations, would continue.
- f. Geology, Soils, and Seismicity.** Under the No Project/No Build alternative, the uses envisioned in the Draft Master Plan would not be developed. The project sites would still be susceptible to seismic ground shaking and differential compaction, as are identified under the proposed project. However, given that the project site would continue in railyard, industrial and residential uses, potential additional residents associated with the proposed project would not be exposed to potential seismic ground shaking.
- g. Hydrology and Storm Drainage.** The No Project/No Build alternative would not result in the construction of any new structures, and the plan area would remain in its current state. This alternative would not result in an increased amount of runoff that could affect stormwater conveyance systems or degradation of water quality in receiving waters. As dewatering would not occur, construction workers and the public would not be exposed to potential contaminants in the soil and groundwater.
- h. Biological Resources.** The No Project/No Build alternative would not result in the construction of any new structures, and the plan area would remain in its current state. The potential impacts to nesting yellow warbler and/or other birds, willow flycatcher, and Sierra Nevada mountain yellow-legged frog would not occur. This alternative also would not impact waters of the US and CDFG, including approximately 0.31-acre of non-wetland waters in Trout Creek (no wetlands would be impacted) and 0.37-acre of CDFG waters. As the project site would remain unchanged, there would be no impact to wildlife species that could be located onsite.
- i. Cultural and Paleontological Resources.** Implementation of the No Project/No Build alternative would not result in the construction of any structures on site. As such, this alternative would not have any associated grading or digging associated with construction. Because no ground-disturbing activities would occur as part of the No Project/No Build alternative, subsurface archaeological, paleontological, and Native American resources that could occur within the project site would not be disturbed.

j. Hazards and Public Safety. Implementation of the No Project/No Build alternative would keep the site in its existing condition. As such, it would not create significant hazards to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials, or create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset or accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment. This alternative would not expose construction workers or the public to hazardous materials from contaminants in the soil during and following construction activities, or expose workers or the public to airborne toxics, (e.g., lead-based paint and asbestos) during demolition, but would forego the opportunities to improve conditions as provided by the project.

k. Utilities. The No Project/No Build alternative would not result in any development on the project site. There would be no increase in demand for water, wastewater, or other utility services.

l. Public Services. The No Project/No Build alternative would not result in any residential development on the project site. As such, there would be no increase demand for school or recreational facilities.

m. Visual Resources. Under the No Project/No Build alternative, the project site would remain in railyard, industrial and residential use. Existing structures currently located on the project site would remain. As no development would result under the No Project/No Build alternative, there would be no impacts related to light and glare. The visual character of the project site under this alternative would be the same as the current conditions.

B. REDUCED DEVELOPMENT ALTERNATIVE

1. Principal Characteristics

The Reduced Development alternative would include redevelopment of the Master Plan Area with a 25 percent reduction in the MAD. Development under this alternative would include up to: 210 residential units; 124 live/work units; 93 work/live units; 52,500 square feet of retail space; 11,250 square feet of office space; one 750-seat movie theater; one 45-room hotel; one 15,000 square-foot grocery store; and 18,750 square feet of civic space.

The Reduced Development alternative would meet some of the project objectives. This alternative would include a mix of land uses that would promote vibrant and economically sustainable redevelopment in the plan area; however, the reduction of development would not provide the substantial number of units anticipated by the proposed project, and this alternative would not yield a financially feasible development.

2. Analysis of the Reduced Development Alternative

The potential impacts of the Reduced Development alternative are described in the following section.

a. Land Use and Planning Policy. Under the Reduced Development alternative, there would be a corresponding reduction in construction and a similar introduction of new land uses on the project site. The positive land use impacts of carrying out land use direction contained in the Truckee General Plan and Redevelopment Plan would occur, but to a lesser degree than with the proposed project. Like the proposed project, this alternative would not result in any significant land use or planning policy impacts.

b. Population, Employment and Housing. Under the Reduced Development alternative, there would be a corresponding reduction of new jobs, housing and new resident population. This alternative would generate fewer jobs and housing units resulting in a reduced increase of employee and resident population for the Town. Like the proposed project, this alternative would not result in any significant population, employment and housing impacts.

c. Transportation, Circulation and Parking. Assuming that all proposed land uses would be reduced equally by 25 percent, the total traffic generated by development within the Reduced Development alternative on adjacent roadways (i.e., after reduction for internal and pass-by trips) would equal 8,028 daily trips and 638 total peak-hour trips. Further, because all existing land uses would be removed under this alternative, the net impact of development within the Reduced Development alternative would be an increase of 6,596 daily vehicle-trips and 500 total peak-hour vehicle-trips on adjacent roadways. Comparing these figures with the net impact of the proposed project, the Reduced Development alternative would result in 2,984 fewer daily vehicle trips and 240 less peak-hour vehicle trips (roughly a 32 percent reduction) on adjacent roadways.

This reduction in site traffic generation would not materially change the 2025 impacts associated with development of the proposed project. The three roadway segments and nine intersections significantly impacted by the project would fail, even if the proposed project is not built. Furthermore, the feasible mitigation measures identified to reduce 2025 level of service deficiencies are identical under No Project and Proposed Project scenarios and the lists of level of service deficiencies that cannot be feasibly mitigated are also identical. While a comparison of Tables IV.C-15 and IV.C-20 in Chapter IV, Impacts and Mitigation Measures, indicates that the proposed project does result in increases in average delays, none of these increases are sufficient to change mitigated levels of service between the No Project and Proposed Project 2025 conditions. This indicates that a smaller development envelope within the Railyard Master Plan Area of any size (at least that results in a net increase in traffic generation over the existing land uses) would not change the overall traffic impacts or mitigation measures associated with the proposed project.

d. Air Quality. This alternative would contribute to an increase in emissions affecting air quality due to construction activities and long-term project operations; however, to a lesser extent than the proposed project. Under this alternative, there would be construction activities and an increase in vehicle trips as compared with existing conditions. The reduction in development assumed under this alternative would decrease the emissions affecting air quality; however, this alternative would likely result in the same impacts as the proposed project.

e. Noise and Vibration. The Reduced Development alternative would result in noise impacts associated with the construction of the project. Additionally, under this alternative there would be fewer new residential units exposed to traffic and railyard noise sources as compared with the proposed project. The reduction in development assumed under this alternative would decrease the number of persons exposed to noise impacts associated with the project; however, this alternative would likely result in the same impacts as the proposed project.

f. Geology, Soils, and Seismicity. Under the Reduced Development alternative, the uses envisioned in the Draft Master Plan would be developed at a lesser intensity. The project site would be susceptible to seismic ground shaking and differential compaction, as are identified under the proposed project. However, fewer residents would be exposed to potential seismic ground shaking. As with the proposed project, potential significant impacts in this topical area would be reduced to a less-than-significant level with implementation of mitigation measures contained in Section IV.F, Geology, Soils and Seismicity.

g. Hydrology and Storm Drainage. The Reduced Development alternative would result in the construction of new structures, but to a lesser extent than the proposed project. This alternative would result in an increased amount of impervious surfaces and runoff over existing conditions that could affect stormwater conveyance systems or degradation of water quality in receiving waters. Dewatering would occur on the project site and construction workers and the public would be exposed to potential contaminants in the soil and groundwater. Hydrology and storm drainage effects would be similar, but less extensive, as compared with the proposed project. With implementation of mitigation measures provided in Chapter IV.G, Hydrology and Storm Drainage, impacts with this alternative would be reduced to a less-than-significant level.

h. Biological Resources. As with the proposed project, the Reduced Development alternative would disturb the project area but result in a project of lesser development intensity. Under this alternative, the potential impacts to nesting yellow warber and/or other birds, willow flycatcher, and Sierra Nevada mountain yellow-legged frog would still occur. This alternative also would impact waters of the US and CDFG, including approximately 0.31-acre of non-wetland waters in Trout Creek (no wetlands would be impacted) and 0.37-acre of CDFG waters. With implementation of mitigation measures provided in Chapter IV.H,

Biological Resources, biological impacts with this alternative would be reduced to a less-than-significant level.

i. Cultural and Paleontological Resources. Implementation of the Reduced Development alternative may result in a reduced amount of ground disturbing activities associated with construction as compared with the proposed project. However, because these construction activities would still occur, subsurface archaeological, paleontological, and Native American resources that may occur within the project site could be disturbed. Mitigation measures pertaining to cultural and paleontological resources outlined in Section IV.I, Cultural and Paleontological Resources, would reduce the potential impacts to a less-than-significant level. However, this alternative would still include removal of the UPRR warehouse, a historic resource under CEQA. Like the propose project, this impact would remain significant unavoidable.

j. Hazards and Public Safety. Implementation of the Reduced Development alternative would result in the construction of development with similar uses with reduced development intensity. Three sites within the Master Plan Area are on lists of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5. Construction would occur under this alternative and could expose construction workers or the public to hazardous materials from contaminants in the soil during and following construction activities, or expose workers or the public to airborne toxics, (e.g., lead-based paint and asbestos) during demolition. Implementation of the mitigation measures outlined in Section IV. J, Hazards and Public Safety, would reduce the potential impacts to a less-than-significant level.

k. Utilities. The Reduced Development alternative would result in increased demand for utility services to the site as compared with existing conditions. However, the demand for water service, wastewater service and solid waste removal would be less than the proposed project as this alternative would result in the construction of fewer residential units and less commercial development. As with the proposed project, implementation of this alternative would result in less-than-significant impacts.

l. Public Services. Due to fewer residential units and less commercial development, the Reduced Development alternative would result a reduction in demand for police, fire protection, school, recreation and library services as compared with the proposed project. As with the proposed project, implementation of this alternative would result in less-than-significant impacts.

m. Visual Resources. Under this alternative fewer dwelling units and less commercial development would be constructed. This alternative would have comparable visual impacts to the proposed project. This alternative would also introduce new sources of light and glare to the site that could be reduced to a less-than-significant level.

C. MAINTAIN DONNER PASS ROAD ALIGNMENT ALTERNATIVE

1. Principal Characteristics

The Maintain Donner Pass Road Alignment alternative assumes that Donner Pass Road would maintain its current alignment, and not extend directly into the Master Plan Area. This alternative would maintain the northerly “swoosh” alignment of Donner Pass Road and keep the through movement for vehicles and pedestrians on Donner Pass Road, with vehicles and pedestrians having to turn into the project area onto Donner Pass Road Extension. Figure V-1 shows the Maintain Donner Pass Road Alignment Alternative.

This alternative reduces the development area of the Downtown Extension District and removes the conceptual park location at the western edge of the plan area. All other roadway improvements and the MAD would remain the same as the proposed project.

The Maintain DPR alternative would meet some of the project objectives. This alternative would include a mix of land uses that would promote vibrant and economically sustainable redevelopment in the plan area. However, maintaining the current alignment of Donner Pass Road would not provide for the seamless pedestrian and vehicular connection between the Master Plan Area and existing uses in downtown. Extending Donner Pass Road directly into the Plan Area provides for a direct extension of downtown, whereas the existing alignment maintains the barrier or physical division between the Plan Area and the existing downtown. Additionally, this alternative would reduce the developable area in the Downtown Extension District and would likely result in a development that would not be financially feasible.

2. Analysis of the Maintain Donner Pass Road Alignment Alternative

The potential impacts of the Maintain Donner Pass Road Alignment alternative are described in the following section.

a. Land Use and Planning Policy. Under the Maintain Donner Pass Road Alignment alternative, there would be a similar level of construction and introduction of new land uses on the project site. The positive land use impacts of carrying out land use direction contained in the Truckee General Plan and Redevelopment Plan would occur. As compared with the proposed project, this alternative would lessen the direct connection of the Plan Area to downtown. Having the redevelopment of the Master Plan Area serve as an extension of downtown is a critical component of this project that is supported by General Plan policies A7.1 and P7.1. Although development of this alternative would not support these General Plan policies, this alternative would not result in any significant land use or planning policy impacts.

b. Population, Employment and Housing. The Maintain Donner Pass Road Alignment alternative assumes no changes to the MAD. The same level of development intensity would occur under this alternative (up to 570 new residential units (including 125 work/live units)

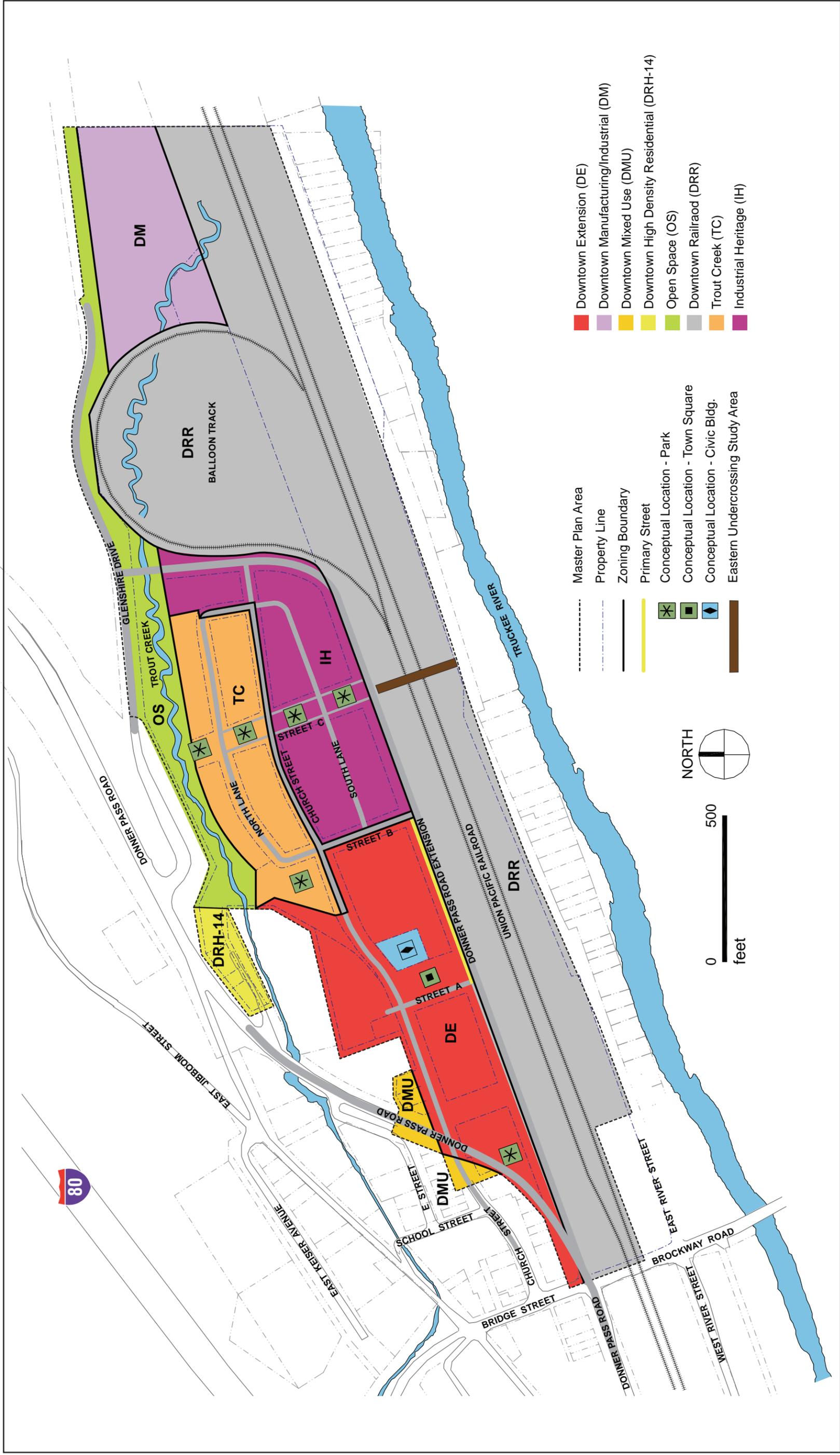


FIGURE V-1

Truckee Railyard Master Plan EIR
 Maintain Donner Pass Road Alignment Alternative

with an associated “full-time population” increase of 1,470 persons. This alternative would not result in any significant population, employment and housing impacts.

c. Transportation, Circulation and Parking. The Maintain Donner Pass Road Alignment alternative would result in the same number of average daily vehicle trips and same demand for parking as with the proposed project because the proposed development intensity would be the same. Though the developable area of the Downtown Extension would be decreased, the transportation analysis for this alternative assumes the total land use quantities associated with the propose project would remain unchanged from the proposed project. Under this alternative, traffic flow would differ from the proposed project in two ways:

- 1) The alignment of the Donner Pass Road and Donner Pass Road Extension intersection would be modified from a four-way intersection to a T intersection, with Donner Pass Road forming the top of the T and Donner Pass Road Extension forming the base of the T. The proposed project provides a turn movement for drivers traveling through the area on Donner Pass Road and a through movement for drivers traveling between Donner Pass Road Extension and Donner Pass Road to the west. Under this alternative, drivers along Donner Pass Road would be provided with the through movement, while movements to and from Donner Pass Road Extension would need to turn. With the proposed project, the southern leg of the Donner Pass Road and Donner Pass Road Extension intersection provides access to parking lots. Under the Maintain Donner Pass Road alternative these lots are assumed to be accessed via a separate driveway intersection on Donner Pass Road Extension.
- 2) The alignment of the Donner Pass Road/Church Street intersection would maintain the roughly 45 degree angle between approaches, whereas the proposed project would have a 90 degree angle between approaches.

The key difference between the traffic patterns generated by the Maintain Donner Pass Road alternative and those identified for the proposed project is that this alternative would increase the travel time for through movements between Glenshire Drive east of the Railyard and Downtown Truckee via Donner Pass Road Extension in comparison with the travel time for through movements on Donner Pass Road and Glenshire Drive. For instance, a driver traveling between Glenshire and Downtown Truckee would tend to turn left off of Glenshire Drive onto Donner Pass Road Extension in order to avoid the long delay turning left from Glenshire Drive onto Donner Pass Road as they would have little delay at the Donner Pass Road and Donner Pass Road Extension intersection. Under the Maintain Donner Pass Road alternative, this driver would still avoid the Glenshire and Donner Pass Road delay, but would be faced with the left-turn delay from Donner Pass Road Extension to Donner Pass Road and thus would be less likely to use Donner Pass Road Extension and more likely to use Donner Pass Road. This same shift would also occur in the eastbound direction.

The long-term traffic shifts associated with the Maintain Donner Pass Road alternative would be confined to the Master Plan Area between the Donner Pass Road/Donner Pass Road Extension and Glenshire and Donner Pass Road Extension intersections. Traffic congestion at the Donner Pass Road and Bridge and the Bridge and West River Street intersections would meter traffic through the downtown area and result in diversion of traffic away from downtown (under either roadway option), resulting in no changes in volumes in other areas.

Overall, the Maintain Donner Pass Road alternative would degrade level of service at the Donner Pass Road and Donner Pass Road Extension, Donner Pass Road and Church Street and the Donner Pass Road and Glenshire Drive intersections. A preliminary evaluation of traffic conditions indicates that:

- The Donner Pass Road and Donner Pass Road Extension intersection could provide adequate level of service as an unsignalized T-intersection controlled by a stop sign on the Donner Pass Road Extension approach. A two-way center left-turn lane may be warranted on Donner Pass Road to the west of this intersection to allow left-turning drivers to make a two-stage movement from Donner Pass Road Extension to Donner Pass Road.
- The Donner Pass Road and Church Street intersection could provide adequate level of service as an unsignalized four-leg intersection controlled by stop signs on the east and west approaches and separate left and through/right lanes on the east and west approaches.
- The Donner Pass Road and Glenshire Drive intersection would provide poor (LOS F) conditions for the left-turn movement from Glenshire Drive to Donner Pass Road, but this movement would not generate sufficient delay to exceed the Town's four-hour of delay standard.
- The Glenshire Drive and Donner Pass Road intersection would provide adequate level of service with no change from the T-configuration (with stop sign on the Donner Pass Road Extension approach) assumed for the proposed alignment.

d. Air Quality. This alternative would contribute to an increase in emissions affecting air quality due to construction activities and long-term project operations to the same extent as the proposed project. The project impacts and mitigation measures identified in Section IV.D, Air Quality, would apply to this alternative.

e. Noise and Vibration. The Maintain Donner Pass Road Alignment alternative would result in noise impacts associated with the construction of the project to the same degree as the proposed project. With this alternative there would be the same number of new residential units exposed to traffic and railyard noise sources as compared with the proposed project. Noise impacts and mitigation measures contained in Section IV.E, Noise and Vibration, would apply this alternative.

f. Geology, Soils, and Seismicity. Under the Maintain Donner Pass Road Alignment alternative, the uses envisioned in the Draft Master Plan would be developed at the same intensity. The project site would be susceptible to seismic ground shaking and differential compaction, as are identified under the proposed project. The same number of additional residents associated with this alternative would be exposed to potential seismic ground shaking. As with the proposed project, potential significant impacts in this topical area would be reduced to a less-than-significant level with implementation of mitigation measures contained in Section IV.F, Geology, Soils and Seismicity.

g. Hydrology and Storm Drainage. The Maintain Donner Pass Road Alignment alternative would result in the construction of new structures to the same extent as the proposed project. As with the proposed project, this alternative would result in an increased amount of impervious surfaces and runoff over existing conditions that could affect stormwater conveyance systems or degradation of water quality in receiving waters. Dewatering would occur on the project site and construction workers and the public would be exposed to potential contaminants in the soil and groundwater. Hydrology and storm drainage effects would be similar, but less extensive, as compared with the proposed project. With implementation of mitigation measures provided in Chapter IV.G, Hydrology and Storm Drainage, impacts with this alternative would be reduced to a less-than-significant level.

h. Biological Resources. Similar to the proposed project, the Maintain Donner Pass Road Alignment alternative would disturb the project area with grading and site preparation activities and result in a project of the same development intensity. Under this alternative, the potential impacts to nesting yellow warber and/or other birds, willow flycatcher, and Sierra Nevada mountain yellow-legged frog would still occur. This alternative also would impact waters of the US and CDFG, including approximately 0.31-acre of non-wetland waters in Trout Creek (no wetlands would be impacted) and 0.37-acre of CDFG waters. With implementation of mitigation measures provided in Chapter IV.H, Biological Resources, biological impacts with this alternative would be reduced to a less-than-significant level.

i. Cultural and Paleontological Resources. The Maintain DPR alignment alternative would not require the removal of the UPRR Warehouse to allow the infrastructure improvements of extending Donner Pass Road thereby reducing this significant unavoidable cultural resource impact to a less-than-significant level. As part of the proposed project, the UPRR Warehouse would be removed and a new UPRR building would be constructed further east within the Plan Area to allow for the extension of Donner Pass Road into the Plan Area and to facilitate development envisioned for the Downtown Extension District. Therefore, though not required for roadway improvements, it is likely that the UPRR warehouse would be removed through implementation of the Maintain Donner Pass Road alternative.

Implementation of the Maintain Donner Pass Road alternative would result in the same amount of ground disturbing activities associated with construction as compared with the

proposed project. Because these construction activities would occur, subsurface archaeological, paleontological, and Native American resources that may occur within the project site could be disturbed. Impacts mitigation measures pertaining to cultural and paleontological resources outlined in Section IV.I, Cultural and Paleontological Resources would apply to this alternative.

j. Hazards and Public Safety. Implementation of the Maintain Donner Pass Road Alignment alternative would result in the construction of development with same uses and development intensity as with the proposed project. Three sites within the Master Plan Area are on lists of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5. Construction would occur under this alternative and could expose construction workers or the public to hazardous materials from contaminants in the soil during and following construction activities, or expose workers or the public to airborne toxics, (e.g., lead-based paint and asbestos) during demolition. Implementation of the mitigation measures outlined in Section IV. J, Hazards and Public Safety, would reduce the potential impacts to a less-than-significant level.

k. Utilities. The Maintain Donner Pass Road Alignment alternative would result in the same demand for utility services to the site as compared with the proposed project. The demand for water service, wastewater service and solid waste removal would be the same as the proposed project as this alternative would result in the construction of same amount of residential units and commercial development. As with the proposed project, implementation of this alternative would result in less-than-significant impacts.

l. Public Services. The Maintain Donner Pass Road Alignment alternative would result the same demand for police, fire protection, school, recreation and library services as compared with the proposed project. Implementation of this alternative would result in less-than-significant impacts.

m. Visual Resources. This alternative would have comparable visual impacts to the proposed project. Under this alternative the same number of dwelling units and amount of commercial development would be constructed. This alternative would also introduce new sources of light and glare to the site that could be reduced to a less-than-significant level.

D. ENVIRONMENTALLY-SUPERIOR ALTERNATIVE

CEQA requires the identification of the environmentally superior alternative in an EIR. Of the three alternatives analyzed above, the No Project/No Build alternative is considered the environmentally superior alternative in the strict sense that the environmental impacts associated with its implementation would be the least of all the scenarios examined (including the proposed project). While this alternative would be environmentally-superior in the technical sense that contribution to these aforementioned impacts would not occur, this

alternative would not meet many of the project objectives, nor offer the environmental benefits identified.

In cases like this where the No Project/No Build alternative is the environmentally superior alternative, CEQA requires that the second most environmentally superior alternative be identified. The Maintain Donner Pass Road alternative would be considered the second most environmentally superior alternative as it generally represents the next-best alternative in terms of reducing impacts because of the potential to avoid removal of the UPRR Warehouse building, a cultural resource under CEQA.

