

# Alternatives

## 19.1 Introduction

CEQA requires that a lead agency evaluate the comparative effects of a range of reasonable alternatives to the proposed program that would feasibly attain most of the primary objectives of the program but would avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects of the program [CEQA Guidelines, Section 15126.6(a)]. Section 15126.6 also states that an environmental impact report (EIR) is required to set forth only those alternatives necessary to permit a reasoned choice. Significant effects of the alternatives shall be discussed but, in less detail, than those of the Project.

The EIR is required to assess the identified alternatives and determine which among the alternatives (including the proposed Project) is the environmentally superior alternative. One of the alternatives assessed must be the “No Project” alternative. If the No Project alternative is identified as the environmentally superior alternative, then another of the remaining alternatives must be identified as the environmentally superior alternative.

## 19.2 Final PEIR Program Alternatives

The 2016 Final PEIR evaluated two CWP alternatives: the In-System Storage Program and Full Conveyance Program. When the San Mateo City Council approved the Final PEIR, the In-System Storage Program Alternative was selected as the preferred alternative. The Project is a necessary component of the Program Alternative, specifically as part of the City’s collection system. As part of the In-System Storage Program Alternative, the Final PEIR described 12 potential locations for one or more storage basin(s) but none was independently evaluated in the Final PEIR at the Project-level. Since approval of the Final PEIR, the City continued to investigate basin options and conduct additional refinement of the collection system projects.

## 19.3 Project Alternatives

The City considered different temporary storage options in the *Alternatives Analysis Report Basin 2 and 3 Collection System Improvements* (Alternatives Report) by Stantec, Inc, 2017 (Stantec, 2017). The Alternatives Report began with the 12 holding structure options from the Final PEIR and added one option that had previously been eliminated during Final PEIR development, for a total of 13 potential alternatives. These alternatives were evaluated in conjunction with the proposed relief sewer and pump stations projects within the same hydraulic basins. Evaluation of the results from the hydraulic analysis, combined with factors related to the feasibility of the facilities and public input, reduced the number of potential alternatives to five potential basin locations (one alternative included two holding structures) plus one tunnel alternative for a total of five potential alternatives (including the proposed Project) (see **Figure 19-1** for a conceptual layout of Project alternatives). The City conducted further alternative refinement of the five alternatives that was based on a series of technical, environmental, and social criteria for a basis of comparison. This additional refinement resulted in one feasible alternative: the Project alternative.

The focus of this chapter is on the No Project alternative and the four other storage alternatives: three flow equalization basin alternatives and the storage tunnel alternative.

### 19.3.1 No Project Alternative

The No Project Alternative assumes that the Project is not approved, and proposed construction activities associated with Project implementation would not occur; therefore, construction impacts associated with temporary impacts on traffic, air quality, noise, and use of energy and materials would not occur.

However, if the Project is not approved, wet-weather SSOs would continue to occur. The City of San Mateo and its partner agencies would continue to be in violation of the Cease and Desist Order related to the SSOs. Stormwater quality and Bay water quality would be negatively affected. The CWP and Project objectives would not be met. Although some impacts would be avoided, the No Project alternative would result in potentially significant impacts that would not occur with the Project.

### 19.3.2 Temporary Holding Structure Alternatives

As previously discussed, the City conducted an alternatives analysis for collection system improvements in two of the five basins (Basins 2 and 3) that comprise the wastewater collection system. The report evaluated four alternatives for one or more temporary holding structures: San Mateo Department of Public Works Corporation Yard, Fiesta Meadows Park, San Mateo County Event Center (proposed Project),<sup>3</sup> and Hillsdale Plaza/San Mateo County Event Center.

The alternatives were analyzed in the Alternatives Report using three criteria: technical, environmental, and social to determine conformance with the desired criteria. Once the alternatives were ranked, a score was assigned for each alternative. The alternatives report narrowed the selection to two alternatives, the Corporation Yard and Event Center, and ultimately the City determined that the Event Center was the most feasible alternative.

The storage facilities were all similar in concept and size, ranging from 5.0 to 5.2 MG. The major differences between the alternatives were their locations and the configuration of the diversion pipelines. Construction methods would generally be the same for all the alternatives, and construction impacts would all be similar to those described for the proposed Project, with the following exceptions:

- The Fiesta Meadows Park alternative would be located in Fiesta Meadows Park, a 4.7-acre park located in the Fiesta Gardens neighborhood. This neighborhood park is located on Bermuda Drive within the Fiesta Meadows Neighborhood and includes picnic tables, a soccer field, and an asphalt perimeter pathway. During the entire 25-month construction period, access to the park would be prohibited, causing impacts to the park's recreational users. Additionally, the primary access route to the construction site would be via Bermuda Avenue, which is classified as "local street." Local streets typically have up to 1,000 daily vehicle trips, are "designed to serve only adjacent land uses, and are intended to protect residents from through traffic impacts" (San Mateo, 2010).
- Hillsdale Plaza/San Mateo County Event Center alternative would include two storage facilities at two different locations: a 3.6-MG basin at Hillsdale Plaza and a 1.5-MG basin at the Event Center for a combined total holding capacity of 5.1 MG. Traffic estimates for this alternative would be considerably higher, an approximate 35 percent increase over other alternatives, which would also result in increased construction-related air and GHG emissions. Additionally, though each holding basin would be smaller than the proposed Project, both sites would require similar construction equipment and durations as the proposed Project, essentially doubling the construction impacts for this alternative.

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<sup>3</sup> The Alternatives report described the San Mateo County Event Center as the "Expo Center." This is the alternative that was selected for the proposed Project.

Zoning and General Plan designations vary among Project alternatives. **Table 19-1** provides the zoning designations for the Project alternatives.

**Table 19-1. Current Zoning - Project Alternatives**

*Underground Flow Equalization System Project, Environmental Impact Report*

Location	Zoning	Permitted Uses
San Mateo Department of Public Works Corporation Yard	TOD – Transit Oriented Development	Uses designated in the Rail Corridor Plan Land Use Plan.  Non-designated uses that the Planning Commission concludes are so similar to any specifically permitted use, as designated in the Rail Corridor Plan Land Use Plan, so as to be virtually identical thereto in terms of impact and land use requirements may also be allowed as special uses, subject to review and approval as a special use permit by the Planning Commission.
Fiesta Meadows Park	OS – Open Space	Parks, playgrounds, community centers, and facilities that are publicly owned; vacant land for open space preservation.  Public utility facilities are allowed if a special use permit is approved.
Hillsdale Plaza/San Mateo County Event Center	TOD/A	See definitions under the Corporation Yard and Event Center options.
Storage Tunnel	TOD or BMSP	See definition under Corporation Yard for TOD.  Bay Meadows Specific Plan ensures that the Bay Meadows Race Track, Practice Track, and Bar Area is developed in a comprehensively planned manner, compatible with adjacent residential neighborhoods and consistent with the City's quality of life goals.  All uses in the BMSP District are subject to the conditions of use specified in the Bay Meadows Specific Plan, including, but not limited to, off-street parking and loading, setbacks, building heights, and floor area ratio requirements.

In terms of the zoning designations, the Corporation Yard and Hillsdale Plaza/Event center alternatives are zoned Transit Oriented Development (TOD), which is not compatible with the intended use. These options would require amendments to the City's General Plan and Zoning Code. All other holding structure alternatives would be allowed under a special use permit from the City's Planning Department.

### 19.3.3 Delaware Storage Tunnel Alternative

The Delaware Storage Tunnel alternative would consist of a 6,155-foot by 12-foot-diameter pipeline approximately 50 feet below Delaware Avenue between Concar Drive and E. 31st Avenue. The tunnel would require construction of three permanent access shafts in or near Delaware Avenue for maintenance; construction of diversion structures and sewers for influent/effluent to be diverted into and out of the tunnel; effluent pump stations to allow the tunnel to be emptied; and odor control facilities.

Most of the tunnel would be constructed below grade via a tunnel bore machine; therefore, this alternative would have a smaller construction footprint relative to the footprint for the holding structure alternatives. Launch and receiving sites would be required for tunnel construction, which would be situated in parcels adjacent to Delaware Avenue. A third access shaft would be situated within Delaware Avenue, near or in the intersection of 28th Avenue. Given that, long-term closures of portions of Delaware Avenue and/or 28th Avenue could be required during construction, causing potentially significant disruptions to local traffic.

Construction-related haul trucks to remove and dispose of material to accommodate the tunnel, and resulting construction-related air and GHG emissions, would be comparable to the proposed Project. This alternative has a construction duration similar to the proposed Project; however, construction

would occur on an ongoing 24-hour basis and could cause nighttime lighting and noise impacts to adjacent neighborhoods.

Odor control facilities and effluent pump stations would be required at all three shafts and cleaning the tunnel would require a considerably larger flushing chamber, or the tunnel would require manual cleaning using hoses. The cost for this alternative would be more than double that of the holding structure alternatives.

The launch and receiving sites would require approximately 0.5 acre per site of permanent footprint to accommodate at-grade and aboveground features, which would preclude any other development on the parcels. The launch site would be located on a parcel that is zoned TOD and the receiving pit would be located on a parcel that is zoned Bay Meadows Specific Plan (BMSP). Neither the launch nor the receiving pit would be compatible with the zoning codes and would require amendments to the City's General Plan and Zoning Code to accommodate the intended use.

## 19.4 Alternatives Summary

The No Project alternative would avoid or substantially lessen the significant and unavoidable construction noise impact. However, it would not meet any Project objectives, and would result in the continuance of SSOs to occur, resulting in significant water quality impacts and conflict with regulatory requirements.

All the other alternatives would meet the Project objectives in that, they all would provide storage within the City's collection system and help reduce the occurrence of SSOs. The temporary holding structure alternatives would have similar-to-higher construction-related impacts, including similar impacts to noise associated with the installation of shoring and foundation piles. Two of the holding structure alternatives would not be compatible with the City's Land Use and zoning designations and would require an amendment to the City's General Plan and zoning code.

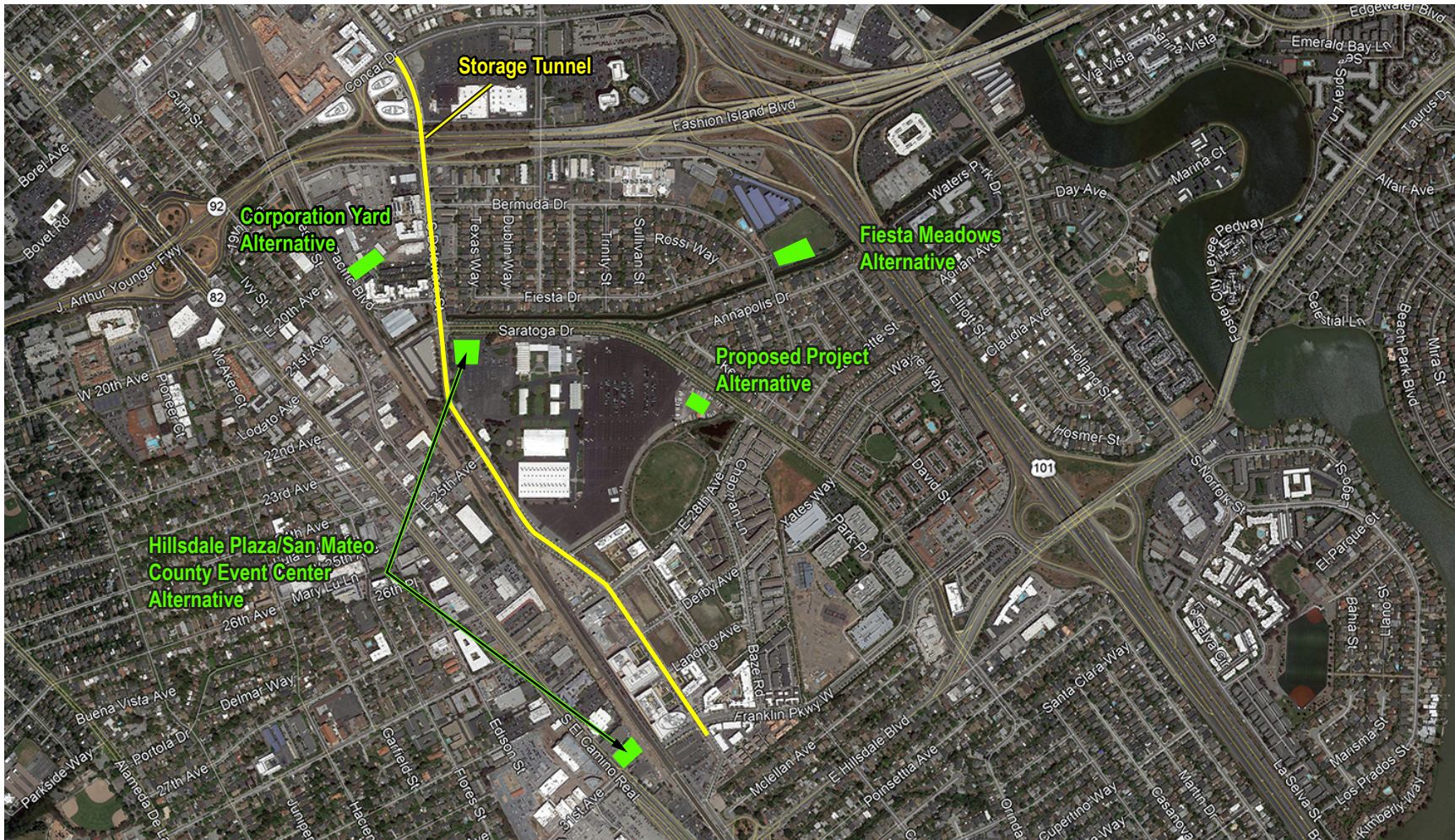
The tunnel alternative would not require the installation of foundation piles; however, nighttime construction noise impacts would occur due to 24-hour construction. Therefore, this alternative could potentially result in significant construction noise. Additionally, this alternative could result in significant impacts to traffic due to the need for the long-term partial closure of Delaware Avenue and/or 28th Avenue and impacts to and nighttime lighting and glare due to 24-hour construction. Additionally, the permanent at-grade/aboveground features for this alternative would not be compatible with existing zoning designations.

Because all other alternatives would result in similar or greater impacts than the proposed Project and would not substantially lessen or reduce potential impacts from the proposed Project, no other alternatives were determined to be environmentally superior; therefore, no other alternatives were carried forward for further analysis.

## 19.5 References

Stantec, Inc. 2017. *Alternatives Analysis Report, Basins 2 and 3 Collection System Improvements*. March.  
City of San Mateo. 2010. *Circulation Element, City of San Mateo General Plan*. October.





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**Figure 19-1. Approximate Locations of Project Alternatives**  
 Underground Flow Equalization System,  
 Environmental Impact Report  
 City of San Mateo Clean Water Program