



6.0 ALTERNATIVES TO THE PROPOSED PROJECT

In accordance with *California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines* Section 15126.6, the following section describes a reasonable range of reasonable alternatives to the proposed Project that could feasibly attain most of the basic objectives of the Project, but would avoid or substantially lessen any significant effects of the Project.

PROJECT IMPACTS

Impacts primarily consist of temporary demolition and construction impacts, and limited operational impacts associated with additional building square footage, the dry stack boat storage, and marina configuration. However, the majority of the impacts are either not significant, or are reduced to less than significant levels through Project Design Features, Standard Conditions of Approval, or Mitigation Measures. The EIR identifies the following unavoidable significant impacts:

- Construction-related noise impacts;
- Construction-related and long-term air quality emissions;
- Cumulative off-site traffic noise; and
- Long Term Aesthetics Impacts (from off-site views).

PROJECT OBJECTIVES

For purposes of this analysis, the Project's relevant objectives are the 12 goals established for Dana Point Harbor Revitalization Project, as developed through the Dana Point Harbor Concept Plan process in 1998; refer to Section 3.5 (Project Goals and Objectives).

ALTERNATIVES PROCESS

This evaluation considers the comparative merits and impacts of seven alternatives to the Project. The analysis focuses on alternatives capable of avoiding or substantially reducing the "Project" unavoidable significant environmental effects, even if these alternatives would impede, to some degree, the attainment of the Project objectives. Two alternatives (described in Sections 6.1.1 and 6.1.2) were determined by the Project team to be nonviable, and so are not evaluated in this EIR. Sections 6.2 through 6.6 describe and evaluate the potential environmental impacts of the five remaining feasible alternatives, and compares their impacts to those of the proposed Project. These alternatives are:

- No Project/No Development,
- Reduced Density,
- Commercial Core Only,
- Infrastructure Only, and
- Alternative Site.



This section concludes with the identification of the “environmentally superior” alternative. Note that the Project has been developed in part to improve environmental, infrastructure, and accessibility conditions in the Harbor while meeting overall Harbor objectives including adequate revenue to fund, operate, and maintain Harbor improvements. In particular, the County has incorporated numerous Project Design Features (PDFs) into the Project to improve existing conditions, reduce environmental impacts, and better achieve Coastal Act compliance. To that end, the “Project” is considered “environmentally superior” compared to the “no Project” condition.

6.1 ALTERNATIVES REJECTED FROM FURTHER CONSIDERATION

As discussed in Section 3.2 (Background and History), the County of Orange, City of Dana Point, Harbor business owners, and other stakeholders have explored the issues and alternatives of revitalizing Dana Point Harbor since the mid-1990s. This process culminated in the *Dana Point Harbor Concept Plan* in 1998. As part of the *Concept Plan* development process, various Project alternatives were considered, including some with intense revenue-generating uses for the Harbor. The more intense uses (such as a tourism-oriented aquarium and more intense commercialized retail uses) were rejected because most of the agencies and stakeholders desire to maintain the existing character and charm of Dana Point Harbor as a small-craft harbor. The Project design team has explored numerous design variations, all within the context of the Project goals and objectives identified in Section 3.3. Two of the alternatives are not considered viable:

- Harbor Heritage Design Alternative
- Master Plan Design Alternative

These two Project alternatives are described in this Section 6.1, but their potential impacts are not compared to those of the proposed Project because no comparative analysis is required for nonviable alternatives.

6.1.1 HARBOR HERITAGE DESIGN ALTERNATIVE

DESCRIPTION OF ALTERNATIVE

The Harbor Heritage Design Alternative is based upon the land use plan provided in the *Harbor Heritage Plan for Dana Point Harbor*, developed in the mid-1990s by Harbor business owners. This Alternative includes the following improvements.

- Renovation of Mariners Village, Dana Village, and Dana Wharf (retaining the existing uses) with new exteriors/interiors, minor expansions, and new construction (approximately 24,800 square feet); new pedestrian walks, bridges, and viewing and dining decks and patios; construction of a 1.5-acre public Festival Plaza (including parking) linking the Villages; and a new ferry terminal and charter boat and sportfishing center, new slips, and parking at Dana Wharf.



- Construction of an 800-boat Embarcadero Marina stacked power-boat storage facility; 132-boat on-trailer sailboat storage yard; boat rental center; launching facilities and improvements to the existing launch ramps and slips; expanded parking; and new offices, marine store, and other support space.
- Construction of a new 1,700-space parking structure for visitors to the Villages and to their expanded marine activities (ferry, charter, and sportfishing boats); service to visitors and tenants of the Embarcadero Marina uses; a public boat launch ramp; and parking for employees and the general public.
- Complete renovation of the Dana Point Marina Inn hotel, including new rooms and suites; new conference and hospitality areas (5,670 square feet); new pool, lobby, entry and parking; and expanded capacity (150 rooms).
- Complete renovation of the 13 Dana Point Marina and Dana West Marina support buildings; complete replacement of existing slips with 2,284 new slips; renovated parking; and pedestrian rest and viewing areas around the basin perimeter pedestrian routes.
- Complete renovation and 1,300-square-foot expansion of the Island Restaurant; parking expansion; and support improvements for the commercial fishing fleet.
- Expansion of the existing Ocean Institute based on education programs, with 19,000 square feet of new building; additional slip space; and renovated existing parking.¹
- Improvements to the Dana Point Yacht Club building and parking lot; and a new 120-boat dry storage yard with launch crane.
- Improvements to and expansion of Dana Point Shipyard and Dana Point Fuel Dock facilities, capacities, parking, and services.
- New, coordinated-design landscaping, lighting, and signs in all of the new and renovated areas to simplify design and maintenance.
- A parking management program covering all 4,847 parking spaces (3,147 in lots and 1,700 in a structure) in Dana Point Harbor leasehold areas.
- Supplemental transportation for the public by water taxi (with docks) and shuttle bus (with shelters); Festival Plaza and parking structure terminal.

IMPACTS AND OBJECTIVES

Generally, development of this alternative would have similar impacts to the proposed Project regarding land use and planning, geology and soils, biological resources, public health and safety, public services and utilities, cultural resources, and recreation because it would have similar land uses and development. However,

¹ This facility has since been reconstructed as a 38,000-square-foot, state-of-the-art educational facility.



this alternative will have greater impacts related to traffic, air quality, aesthetics, and noise because its proposed density is higher than that of the proposed Project.

The proposed Project is considered a more favorable refinement of this alternative. The Harbor Heritage Design alternative would not fulfill the Project goal of “Providing for efficient construction staging such that disruption to Harbor businesses and activities is minimized,” since it will not include the two off-site areas for construction activities and long-term parking. In addition, this alternative provides a less desirable marina slip configuration as well as greater impacts on views associated with the proposed dry stack boat storage facility and two parking decks.

6.1.2 MASTER PLAN DESIGN ALTERNATIVE

DESCRIPTION OF ALTERNATIVE

The Master Plan Design Alternative is based upon the land use plan provided in the *Dana Point Harbor Commercial Core Master Plan*, developed in early 2003, and is similar to the “Commercial Core Only” alternative described in Section 6.3.4, except that it proposes two parking structures and would have less open views of the Harbor from Street of the Golden Lantern. This alternative would develop a “Festival Plaza” at the terminus of Street of the Golden Lantern. One- and two-story commercial buildings, providing an additional 25,000 square feet of commercial space, would flank both sides of the Plaza. Also similar to the proposed Project, this alternative would include the development of a pedestrian promenade along the bulkhead, which will also provides greater emergency access to buildings and slips.

A two-level parking deck would be located north of the new commercial buildings, with direct access from Dana Point Harbor Drive to the upper level of parking. One would be able to directly connect between the upper level of retail and parking through pedestrian links. A total of 400 additional parking spaces would be provided under this alternative. The Master Plan Alternative also includes a proposed dry stacked boat storage facility in the northeast corner of the commercial core, near the intersection of Puerto Place and Dana Point Harbor Drive. This Alternative does not provide for any improvements to the existing marinas.

The Master Plan also provides specifications and guidelines for architecture, landscaping, and signage, and recommends improving the bulkhead, utilities, roadways, and water quality.

IMPACTS AND OBJECTIVES

The Master Plan Design Alternative would not fulfill the following Project goal:

- Increasing the number of larger slips to reflect existing and projected boater demand, while maintaining storage capacity for the same quantity of smaller vessels as required to meet market demands.

The higher density of development (due to the two parking structures) proposed by this alternative will have similar impacts as will the proposed Project regarding land use and planning, geology and soils, biological resources, public health and safety, public services and utilities, cultural resources, and recreation. However, this



Alternative will have greater impacts related to air quality, aesthetics, and noise, and have greater impacts on drainage and water quality due to its additional runoff.

The proposed Project is considered a more favorable alternative with respect to aesthetics due to the increase in obstruction of views due to the two proposed parking structures (rather than one proposed parking structure in the proposed Project) and the large dry stack boat storage facility (approximately twice as large as the proposed dry stack boat storage facilities).

6.2 NO PROJECT AND NO DEVELOPMENT ALTERNATIVE

This alternative is required to be addressed by CEQA, and provides an evaluation of impacts in the event the Project is not approved.

DESCRIPTION OF ALTERNATIVE

The No Project and No Development Alternative assumes the Dana Point Harbor Revitalization Project would not be implemented and that land uses and other improvements identified in the Revitalization Plan would not be constructed. Additionally, no infrastructure improvements (such as water, wastewater, drainage and circulation facilities) would be constructed. The design and development standards for the Revitalization Plan would not be implemented, and the *General Plan* land use designations and allowable uses set forth by the Planned Community (PC) Text would remain unchanged. By not developing the additional 6,200 square feet of retail uses and 27,100 square feet of restaurant uses and not expanding the hotel, the City would not receive additional sales tax revenue. The County needs additional revenue to provide adequate infrastructure and maintenance for the Harbor, and this alternative has a reduced revenue potential. In addition, the parking supply and boater access would also be reduced.

IMPACTS AND OBJECTIVES

Land Use and Relevant Planning

Under the No Project and No Development Alternative, the Dana Point Harbor site would remain in its present condition. While the proposed Project involves a Local Coastal Plan Amendment (LCPA) and PC Text Amendment, the No Project and No Development Alternative would not require any such amendments.

The Project site is currently zoned Commercial/Recreational. Since the No Project and No Development Alternative would also not alter the existing uses on-site, this alternative would not require a Zone Change. Therefore, the No Project and No Development Alternative is considered neither environmentally superior nor inferior.

Aesthetics, Visual, and Glare

The No Project and No Development Alternative would maintain the current views across the Project site from off-site vantage points. No aesthetic improvements to the site resulting from Project implementation would occur. Off-site views to the Harbor from the west and northwest would remain obstructed. Views from the existing commercial area, the Street of Golden Lantern, and the Dana Point Marriott



would not be altered because the commercial/retail uses along the waterfront would not be consolidated and no landscaping improvements would be made. The reconfiguration of the commercial area as proposed with the Project would potentially allow for additional opportunities to view the marina area, taking advantage of the grade differential with the design of parking deck that is level with Dana Point Harbor Drive, and the design of an open Festival Plaza that is aligned with the main entrance along Street of the Golden Lantern. The No Project and No Development Alternative, without the placement of the main entrance and alignment of the Festival Plaza, would have no additional view corridor from the Street of Golden Lantern and Dana Point Harbor Drive, and no new light sources would be developed. The No Project and No Development Alternative is considered environmentally superior to the proposed Project.

Geology, Soils, and Seismicity

Implementation of the No Project and No Development Alternative would not expose additional people and structures to potential adverse effects associated with seismic activity or adverse soil or geologic conditions. Additionally, as this alternative would not involve construction activities, no potential soil erosion impacts would occur. This alternative would also not result in seawall improvements. Although potentially significant impacts have been identified with Project implementation, impacts would be mitigated to less than significant levels. Nevertheless, the No Project and No Development Alternative is considered environmentally superior to the proposed Project.

Drainage and Water Quality

The No Project and No Development Alternative will not result in short-term impacts on water quality associated with grading, excavation, and construction activities. Additionally, the existing quality and quantity of stormwater and urban runoff will not change, since the site will not be altered from its current condition. However, this alternative will not improve existing conditions by providing water quality control measures and treatment control Best Management Practices (BMPs) as will the proposed Project. In addition, the proposed Project will include hydrologic measures that will actually reduce the amount of flows compared to existing conditions. The No Project and No Development Alternative will be considered environmentally inferior to the proposed Project.

Traffic and Parking

Current traffic conditions would continue and none of the Project's proposed and required circulation improvements would occur. Although there would be less off-site traffic, these off-site impacts are mitigated by the Project, and this Alternative would not provide the improved parking, additional boat storage, off-site parking and storage options, or improved pedestrian circulation and guest slip locations. Therefore the No Project and No Development Alternative can be considered environmentally inferior to the proposed Project.



Air Quality

The demolition, grading, and construction activities associated with the proposed Project will not occur with this alternative, and there will be no air pollutant emissions from construction equipment and no exceedances of SCAQMD construction thresholds. In addition, this alternative will not demolish existing structures and develop additional commercial uses. Thus, the No Project and No Development Alternative will be considered environmentally superior to the proposed Project.

Biological Resources

No construction-related impacts on terrestrial biological resources would occur, including special-status vegetation types, plant species, sensitive habitat, and marine biological resources under the No Project and No Development Alternative, as no new buildings and developed areas would be constructed. However, no long-term impacts on terrestrial or marine biological resources would occur with implementation of the recommended mitigation measures as part of the proposed Project. Nevertheless, the No Project and No Development Alternative is considered environmentally superior to the proposed Project.

Public Health and Safety

The No Project and No Development Alternative would not increase the routine transport of hazardous materials. However, it would also not remediate contaminated soil and remove buildings that may contain asbestos and lead-based paint. Thus, the No Project and No Development Alternative is considered environmentally inferior to the proposed Project.

Noise

Under the No Project and No Development Alternative, no new stationary and mobile noise sources would be generated, and ambient noise levels would not increase. It is noted, that under the proposed Project, noise impacts from construction, mobile, and stationary noise sources would be reduced to less than significant levels following mitigation. Nevertheless, the No Project and No Development Alternative is considered environmentally superior to the proposed Project.

Public Services and Utilities

Under the No Project and No Development Alternative, there would be no increased demand for public services (including fire and police protection and education) or for public utilities (roadway maintenance, solid waste disposal, stormwater, reclaimed water, gas, water, wastewater, telephone, cable television, and electricity). This alternative would not improve infrastructure as would the Project. However, the No Project and No Development Alternative is environmentally superior to the proposed Project.



Cultural Resources

The No Project and No Development Alternative would not result in any grading or construction on the Project site, and there would be no potentially adverse impacts on archaeological sites that may be located on-site. This alternative would not disrupt fossil-bearing formations, nor unearth previously unknown subsurface historic resources. Therefore, the No Project and No Development Alternative is considered environmentally superior to the proposed Project.

Recreation

The No Project and No Development Alternative will not improve and expand the existing recreational facilities, and would therefore be inconsistent with the goals and policies of the *County General Plan*. Thus, the No Project and No Development Alternative will be considered environmentally inferior to the proposed Project.

ABILITY TO MEET PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The No Project and No Development Alternative would not fulfill the Project objectives, including:

- Renovate and maintain the Harbor's appearance (including boat slip renovation);
- Provide better utilization of parking spaces;
- Improve Harbor water quality;
- Provide more parking in the commercial area;
- Provide additional restroom and shower facilities near the slips;
- Provide enhanced boater services; and
- Increase the number of larger slips to meet market demand.

Land use and development objectives, including improving the pedestrian environment and water orientation of buildings and walkways and increasing public access to the waterfront, will not be fulfilled. By maintaining the existing site in its current condition, there will not be the opportunity to improve visitor-serving uses, open space, and public access within the Coastal Zone, nor the opportunity to provide the fiscal benefits of providing additional space for commercial uses and encouraging revitalization and reuse of the Project site.

6.3 REDUCED DENSITY ALTERNATIVE

The purpose of this Alternative is to reduce Project-related construction and operational impacts; particularly with respect to off-site traffic and the dry stack boat storage. Although generally environmentally superior to the Project, this Alternative fails to meet key Project objectives including providing boat slip renovations.



DESCRIPTION OF ALTERNATIVE

The Reduced Density Alternative would include limited expansion (up to 10,000 square feet) of existing uses, but would not develop any additional retail or commercial space, nor would it demolish and reconstruct an estimated 77,900 square feet of existing Commercial Core buildings. In addition, this alternative would not develop a parking structure but instead would utilize a Parking Management Plan and restriping in order to improve parking and traffic distribution throughout the Harbor. The Reduced Density Alternative would not develop dry stack boat storage, nor expand the hotel. Infrastructure improvements would involve only reconstruction of currently deficient utilities, and would not include providing additional capacity. The East and West Marinas would include only improvements for compliance with ADA standards. The ADA requirement is 9 slips for the West Marina and 13 slips for the East Marina (based on current configuration). To accomplish this, this alternative entails constructing (2) 80-foot gangways (one in each marina) providing access to the slips. Finally, the Youth and Group Facility, Yacht clubs, and Harbor Patrol Office would not be expanded under this alternative.

IMPACTS AND OBJECTIVES

Land Use and Relevant Planning

The Reduced Density Alternative would not require a Local Coastal Plan Amendment (LCPA) or PC Text Amendment. The Project site is currently zoned Commercial/Recreational and no Zone Change would be required. Therefore, the Reduced Density Alternative is considered environmentally superior to the proposed Project.

Aesthetics, Visual, and Glare

The Reduced Density Alternative would alter current views across the Project site from off-site vantage points, as would the proposed Project; however, the amount of development would be at least 23,300 square feet less, and there would be less development that would obstruct views from surrounding areas. In addition, the two dry stack boat storage buildings (which would be the largest structures obstructing views across the southeast portion of the Project site) would not be developed under this Alternative. Therefore, the aesthetic impacts would be less. However, no aesthetic improvements to the site would be made, such as building rehabilitation, attractive signage, and landscaping. In addition, new light sources would be developed under this Alternative (as with the proposed Project), but there would be fewer interior building lights by not developing an additional 23,300 square feet of commercial uses. Thus, the Reduced Density Alternative is considered environmentally superior to the proposed Project.

Geology, Soils, and Seismicity

Implementation of the Reduced Density Alternative would still expose additional people and structures to potential adverse effects associated with seismic activity, adverse soils, or geologic conditions, but to a lesser extent due to the reduced development. Since this Alternative would involve construction, potential soil erosion impacts would occur, as with the proposed Project. Although potentially significant



impacts have been identified with Project implementation, impacts would be mitigated to less than significant levels. Nevertheless, the Reduced Density Alternative is considered environmentally superior to the proposed Project.

Drainage and Water Quality

Under the Reduced Density Alternative, the short-term impacts on water quality associated with grading, excavation and construction activities would be less since a maximum of 10,000 additional square feet would be developed, as opposed to 6,200 square feet of retail and 27,100 square feet of restaurant uses for the Project. However, the reduced density alternative would not include the full development of best management practices associated with the Dana Point Harbor Revitalization Project. Thus, the Reduced Density Alternative is considered environmentally inferior to the proposed Project.

Traffic and Parking

A peak hour intersection analysis was conducted for the existing conditions traffic scenario. According to the *Traffic and Parking Analysis* prepared for the Project, the Camino Capistrano/Stonehill Drive intersection presently operates at LOS D during the weekday AM peak hour. During the weekend Noon/PM peak hour, this same intersection also operates at an LOS D. Since the Reduced Density Alternative would result in fewer trips, it would have a lower fair-share contribution to fund the improvements required to bring the roadways back up to an acceptable LOS. Under the Reduced Density Alternative, the proposed parking improvements would not be implemented, although it would include restriping to alleviate traffic conditions within the Harbor, the lack of additional parking would continue to result in unsatisfactory traffic conditions throughout the Harbor. Therefore, the Reduced Density Alternative is considered environmentally inferior to the proposed Project.

Air Quality

The Reduced Density Alternative would have less demolition, grading and construction activity, and so there would be no exceedances of SCAQMD construction thresholds. This Alternative would involve the additional development of only 10,000 square feet of commercial uses. Thus, the Reduced Density Alternative would be considered environmentally superior to the proposed Project.

Biological Resources

The Reduced Density Alternative would have fewer impacts from construction-related activities by removing fewer native and non-native trees. Impacts on the nesting areas of the black-crowned night herons, snowy egrets, and raptors would also be less, as only existing retail and commercial buildings would be expanded. However, no long-term impacts on terrestrial or marine biological resources would occur with implementation of the recommended mitigation measures as part of the proposed Project, and this alternative would not provide the open space/conservation proposed by the Project. Nevertheless, the Reduced Density Alternative is considered environmentally superior to the proposed Project.



Public Health and Safety

The Reduced Density Alternative would result in less routine transport of hazardous materials compared to the proposed Project. It would not demolish any buildings and pose possible health and safety risks from lead-based paint and asbestos. Thus, the Reduced Density Alternative is considered environmentally superior to the proposed Project.

Noise

Under the Reduced Density Alternative, only 10,000 square feet of expanded uses would be developed on the site, avoiding the significant construction-related noise associated with demolition and reconstruction of existing buildings. Thus, new stationary and mobile noise sources would still occur and ambient noise levels would increase, but not to the extent proposed for the Project. Under the proposed Project, impacts from construction, mobile, and stationary noise sources will be reduced to less than significant levels following mitigation. Nevertheless, the Reduced Density Alternative is considered environmentally superior to the proposed Project.

Public Services and Utilities

Under the Reduced Density Alternative, there would be less demand for public services (including fire and police protection and education) and public utilities (roadway maintenance, solid waste disposal, stormwater, reclaimed water, gas, water, wastewater, telephone, cable television, or electricity), as compared to the proposed Project. Therefore, the Reduced Density Alternative is environmentally superior to the proposed Project.

Cultural Resources

The Reduced Density Alternative would require grading or construction on the Project site, as would the proposed Project. Therefore, this alternative would result in potentially adverse impacts to archaeological sites located on-site. This alternative may also disrupt fossil-bearing formations and there would be the potential to unearth previously unknown subsurface historic resources. Therefore, the Reduced Density Alternative is considered neither environmentally superior nor inferior to the proposed Project.

Recreation

The Reduced Density Alternative would not improve or expand existing recreational facilities. This alternative would be inconsistent with the goals and policies of the *County General Plan*. Thus, the Reduced Density Alternative is considered environmentally inferior to the proposed Project.

ABILITY TO MEET PROJECT OBJECTIVES

This Alternative will not fulfill the Project objectives to the full extent of the proposed Project, including:



- Renovate and maintain the Harbor's appearance (including boat slips and the hotel);
- Provide better utilization of parking spaces;
- Ensure the future of the Yacht clubs;
- Preserve the existing parkland, beach and landscape buffers;
- Address the balance of revenue and non-revenue generating land uses;
- Provide more parking in the commercial area;
- Provide additional restroom and shower facilities near the slips; and
- Provide boat slips to meet boater demand.

Land use and development objectives (including improving the pedestrian environment and water orientation of buildings and walkways and increasing public access to the waterfront) would not be fulfilled, since there would be no improvements to the infrastructure or design of the Harbor. This alternative would not provide modern dry stacked-boat storage and related services or increase the number of larger boat slips. Finally, this Alternative would not provide an opportunity to enhance and create new activity centers.

6.4 COMMERCIAL CORE ONLY ALTERNATIVE

DESCRIPTION OF ALTERNATIVE

This Alternative is a variation of the Reduced Density Alternative.

This alternative consists of a phased demolition of the existing facilities; construction of the Commercial Core retail area and parking deck; construction of a dry stack boat storage building; remodel of existing commercial/restaurant buildings; Catalina Ferry Service facility improvements; construction of new boater service facilities; modification of the boat slips to be in conformance with ADA requirements, street and infrastructure improvements; and implementation of all required mitigation measures (on and off-site) involving construction of improvements.

The first construction phase will create access and additional parking opportunities, followed by construction of the new Commercial Core area and Festival Plaza. Then existing businesses will be relocated and the existing Mariner's Village demolished to create additional parking and public amenities. This alternative excludes any renovation or new construction outside of Planning Areas 1 and 2 (and therefore excludes the hotel expansion, Youth & Group Facility expansion, Harbor Patrol expansion, seawall improvements, and other program-level Project elements described in this EIR).

IMPACTS AND OBJECTIVES

This alternative will have similar impacts as the Project as the demolition, renovation, and expansion it proposes for the Commercial Core is almost as great as with the proposed Project. There will be slightly less overall buildout square footage because it will not have certain "Program-level" elements described above. This alternative will have similar construction-related impacts, and slightly less long-term operational impacts. As this will achieve some of the Project objectives while generating slightly



less air quality and noise impacts, it is considered Environmentally Superior and may be considered by the decision-makers.

6.5 INFRASTRUCTURE ONLY ALTERNATIVE

This Alternative was selected to evaluate the impacts of achieving the Project's infrastructure goals without demolition or construction of new or expanded structures. This Alternative eliminates many of the key Project objectives including Harbor renovation and revenue generation.

DESCRIPTION OF ALTERNATIVE

This alternative consists of projects that are contemplated either by the County or other utility and service agencies as part of ongoing maintenance operations throughout the Harbor, and excludes all proposed commercial renovation and new building construction (i.e., no changes in existing buildings, and no new or renovated buildings). Potential projects include water and sewer improvements constructed by the South Coast Water District (SCWD) to correct existing deficiencies and prevent future failures; water quality enhancements funded by State or Federal grant programs; building and deck area repair and/or replacement; street maintenance improvements and parking area restriping; renovation of the marina slips for compliance with ADA standards; landscaping and landscape irrigation replacement; and breakwater repairs. These elements may be constructed independently and/or as part of other facility renovation and construction, and include:

Streets

- Within Planning Area 4, improvements would be made to the Dana Drive turn-around on the Island to improve vehicle circulation.
- Within Planning Area 5, the turn-around on Dana Point Harbor Drive adjacent to the Youth and Group Facility would be reconfigured to reduce conflicts with access to and from adjacent uses, and facilitate entries/exits for secured parking at these locations.

Harborwide Utilities, Drainage, Lighting, and Signage

- Utility capacities would be upgraded to serve the proposed improvement areas (including drainage and sewer facilities) and to reroute storm drainage away from marina basins.
- Improved nonglare lighting on primary streets and on pedestrian walkways.
- Improved signage, including lighted signs for both direction and information.

Seawall and Bulkhead

- Within Planning Areas 8 and 12, the existing seawall would be repaired and/or renovated to filling voids and gaps. Additionally, within Planning Area 10, the bulkhead would be repaired by placing tie-back system or anchor rods to provide improved longevity and seismic safety, as needed.



Harborwide Walkways and Landscaping Improvements

- Improved continuity of walkway systems, including new paving, signage, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) access ramps, and links with proposed walkway improvements.
- New landscaping along walkways to reduce root damage to walks, and drainage and irrigation problems, and new shade and trellis structures.

IMPACTS AND OBJECTIVES

The impacts of this alternative would be slightly greater than those identified in Section 6.2, No Project/No Development Alternative. Compared to the proposed Project, this alternative would substantially reduce or avoid many of the significant impacts, particularly those related to building demolition, renovation and construction. In addition, this alternative would avoid the potentially significant visual impacts associated with the dry stacked boat storage facility. This alternative would have fewer operational impacts due to not including the additional 6,200 square feet of retail uses, 27,100 square feet of restaurant uses, and other Project-related structures.

This alternative is considered an environmentally superior alternative, pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(e)(2). However, this alternative may not be feasible, due to limited funding available for Harbor improvements; it also fails to meet several key Project objectives (related to renovation, parking, boating facilities, and revenue generation), and represents greater impacts than the Project, as described below:

- Reduced boater options and access due to lack of dry stacked-boat storage;
- Inferior parking due to lack of new parking deck;
- Reduced revenue potential due to lack of hotel expansion;
- Reduced function of Harbor uses, including Harbor Patrol and Youth & Group facility, due to lack of expansion potential;
- Reduced community benefits without development of the lighthouse and museum;
- Without commercial/retail renovation and (minor) expansion to improve revenues, the long-term viability of Harbor infrastructure would be questionable; and
- No renovation of boat slips in the east and west marinas.

6.6 ALTERNATIVE SITE ALTERNATIVE

This is a CEQA required Alternative, and is not considered relevant to the Project for the reasons set forth below. The purpose and goal of the proposed Project is to enhance the specific existing facilities and services provided at Dana Point Harbor.



Therefore, any alternative sites proposed would not fulfill the objectives of the Project, including:

- Renovate and maintain the Harbor's appearance;
- Maintain a full-service Harbor;
- Prevent commercialization of the Island;
- Improve and enhance the Harbor's recreational amenities;
- Ensure the future of Yacht clubs;
- Provide better utilization of parking spaces;
- Improve Harbor water quality;
- Provide more parking in the commercial area;
- Preserve existing parkland, beach, and landscape buffers;
- Address the balance of revenue- and non-revenue-generating land uses;
- Provide additional restroom and shower facilities near the slips;
- Renovate boat slips in the east and west marinas; and
- Renovate and expand the hotel.

In addition, Dana Point Harbor is already heavily developed; no additional area exists to increase marina services and provide additional commercial opportunities within the City or surrounding area. Any alternative site would have greater construction-related air quality and noise impacts because it would require construction within developed areas that would require greater demolition and construction. Finally, enhancement of the proposed Project site would limit the environmental impacts associated with developing an undeveloped area. Therefore, this alternative is considered environmentally inferior to the proposed Project.

6.7 ENVIRONMENTALLY SUPERIOR ALTERNATIVE

CEQA Section 15126(d)(2) indicates that if the No Project alternative is the "environmentally superior" alternative, then the EIR shall identify the environmentally superior alternative among the other alternatives.

The Commercial Core Only and Reduced Density alternatives would result in reduced or avoided construction-related impacts on air quality and from noise, when compared to those of the proposed Project. Therefore, both alternatives are environmentally superior to the proposed Project.

However, neither alternative is desirable from the perspective of achieving the goals of the Project for the Harbor. Both alternatives would also result in reduced coastal access due to lack of parking improvements, as well as reduced boater and visitor recreational amenities due to not improving any areas outside of Planning Areas 1 and 2. Finally, neither alternative provides for a comprehensive plan for improving the infrastructure of the Harbor.

While the proposed Project would result in unavoidable significant impacts, the impacts would be substantially mitigated through the indicated Project Design Features (PDFs), Standard Conditions of Approval (SCAs), and Mitigation Measures.