Orcutt Park
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Table of Contents

1.) Executive Summary..................................... 2

2.) Project Overview........................................ 6

3.) Location & Constraints................................ 10

4.) Case Studies............................................. 14

5.) Project Description..................................... 20

6.) Community Outreach.................................. 36

7.) Transportation & Circulation....................... 40

8.) Implementation & Recommendation............. 46

Appendix......................................................... 50
1. Executive Summary
Hired by the City of San Luis Obispo, Polhemus & Gonzalez Associates has prepared an alternative to the Orcutt Area Specific Plan (OASP) for the Orcutt Plan Area. Polhemus & Gonzalez Associates compares the OASP to the Orcutt Park recreational commercial complex. The report describes the alternative development and compares the projected impacts and potential success of Orcutt Park compared to the OASP. In the end of the report, the project team provides a conclusion and recommendation whether or not to develop this project compared to the OASP.

The Orcutt Plan Area is 230 acres of relatively undeveloped land. Few homes exist on site and the location is used mainly for cattle grazing and other less intensive agricultural uses. The project is approved for annexation into the City of San Luis Obispo, so many infrastructure improvements must be made in order to guarantee the success of a future development on this site. San Luis Obispo prefers that the site takes advantage of the wine country surrounding the City. Edna Valley is located very close to the plan area and the City is pressuring developers to propose plans that emphasize and exploit this resource – making San Luis Obispo one of the premier wine producers.

Polhemus & Gonzalez Associates has prepared a different type of project – the project team has designed a recreational commercial complex for the plan area. Orcutt Park is designed to provide many recreational amenities to San Luis Obispo that the City currently lacks. The vision for Orcutt Park is to provide family-wide entertainment and activities that will bring revenue, entertainment, and serve San Luis Obispo as a venue for sports tournaments. The plan includes a public park, a public municipal golf course, sports fields, athletic courts, an amusement park, and designated open space. The development program is designed to provide amenities to the City that improves the quality of life for San Luis Obispo residents. As stated before, the plan proposes competition sports venues. Instead of being home to a premier wine facility, the project site could serve as one of California’s premier sports venues. Located in between San Francisco and Los Angeles, the sports complex can host a variety of tournaments, attracting visitors and revenue to San Luis Obispo. In addition, a much needed amusement park is proposed for the project site. This amusement park would provide year-round, family entertainment.
As part of the implementation strategy, the project team organized a public outreach program including community meetings with important stakeholders in order to build consensus in the design and implementation of this project. The outreach strategy is comprised of four meetings to address community visioning, goal setting, and brainstorming related to the project. The intent of the outreach strategy is to ensure all winners and no losers. Through design charrettes and workshops, the public will be able to voice their opinions through the design process. This process and findings is provided later in detail.

Polhemus & Gonzalez Associates prepared an environmental review to compare potential impacts with the OASP. After review, similar findings were produced because both projects will greatly transform the character and identity of the site. Although, Orcutt Park will produce less effects in traffic, air quality, and population and housing compared to the OASP. Orcutt Park will produce much less traffic and impervious surfaces, which help preserve existing qualities. Shown in the traffic section, traffic volumes for Orcutt Park are significantly less than the OASP. But, upon further examination by a transportation engineer, these figures may change.

When considering implementation, the project team had to evaluate the permits needed in order to produce such a development. These permits and other implementation steps are provided.

After analysis and comparing Orcutt Park to the OASP, the project team had to either recommend or reject the proposed alternative. To the team’s regret, Polhemus & Gonzalez Associates decided not to recommend the project for future consideration. The following report outlines the development proposal and reasons for not recommending the project.
2. Project Overview
The City of San Luis Obispo determined it was in the best interest of the city and its residents to thoroughly evaluate alternatives to the Orcutt Area site, located within the City’s Urban Reserve Line (URL), prior to the circulation of the Draft Orcutt Area Specific Plan (OASP) and Environmental Impact Report (EIR). The proposed OASP is a fairly traditional mix of residential and neighborhood commercial uses. The current OASP SP / EIR proposes nearly 113 acres of residential use, 81 acres of open space, 21 acres of park and .25 acres of Neighborhood Commercial.

The City issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) for independent consultant developed plans. The city was looking for diverse development scenarios, incorporating a wide range of land uses, site designs and implementation strategies. The goal of the alternatives was to provide opportunities for economic development, cultural appreciation, job creation and recreation opportunities in ways that enhance the San Luis Obispo experience without negatively impacting existing neighborhoods.

Polhemus & Gonzalez Associates was contracted to test and make recommendations regarding the feasibility and potential for success of an alternative to the OASP. The project’s feasibility was determined by the San Luis Obispo City Council’s project goals to: 1) achieve a high-quality, environmentally sound and economically successful community development project on the OASP property, 2) attract / create development create an “anchor” in this location and 3) to implement City General Plan goals, while showcasing bold innovation, sustainability, and outstanding design and planning.

The proposed alternative is a Commercial recreation complex including a mix of tourist-, student- and family-oriented recreational activities. The original site included a miniature golf course, formula car race track, 24-lane bowling alley, 150,000 s.f. ice or roller skating rink, “ultimate” skateboard park with competition half pipe facility, historic carousel, 60-seat drive-in restaurant with dining bays for 24 cars, a snack bar, a 40,000 s.f. historic “penny” arcade, 15,000 s.f. offices and ticket facility, 20,000 s.f. maintenance and storage building, parking and support facilities.
With the original proposed uses, the first design ran into issues with filling up the large project site. After looking at case studies of neighborhood recreational centers, an updated proposal was designed after the Neighborhood of William Land Park in Sacramento, California. The neighborhood was designed with a network of centrally located park space including attractions such as a zoo, small amusement park, public golf course, and athletic fields & courts.

The commercial / public recreation complex was named Orcutt Park, and was designed to incorporate the site into the surrounding neighborhood by adding uses that can be utilized by nearby residents while having others that attract visitors from the city and beyond. A project that is designed with uses for residents was considered more likely to be looked up favorably by the community opposed to strictly commercial uses that exclude the area to paying customers only. This consideration fits with the City and property owner’s desire to have a project that can be the basis for community consensus.

Orcutt Park was designed to incorporate both commercial recreational activities, public uses, and recreation options that will allow the city to attract visitors to not only the site but the City of San Luis Obispo. Orcutt Park is split into 5 zones: (1) Public Park, (2) Public Golf Course, (3) Recreational Sports Center, (4) Athletic Courts, and (5) Amusement Park Center.

Each zone offers recreational activities for various members of the community and visitors to San Luis Obispo and the site. Orcutt Park is designed to incorporate the project into the existing community with public amenities while providing uses that will attract guests from outside of the area and bring in revenue. This alternative to the OASP is designed to provide the city with uses and amenities that either missing or serve to complement existing ones.
**Conceptual Diagrams**

**Image 2.3: Conceptual Diagram 1**

**Image 2.4: Conceptual Diagram 2**
3. Location & Constraints
The Project is located in the designated Orcutt Plan Area, a 230-acre property located in the County of San Luis Obispo, contiguous with the southeast side of the City of San Luis Obispo. The site is bounded on the north and east by Orcutt Road, on the south by Tank Farm Road and on the west by the Union Pacific Railroad. The site is primarily vacant with the exception of a few single-family homes and sheds related to agricultural uses. The project area is surrounded to the north, south, and west by single-family residential homes – east of the site is the County of San Luis Obispo, which primarily consists of vacant land. Image 3.1 shows the site location map, highlighting many of the key community services in San Luis Obispo.

Image 3.1: Site Location Map
This site is a great location for the further expansion of the City of San Luis Obispo because it is located along arterial roads that can handle future growth, and is situated in a position that will link existing neighborhoods and retail services near Broad and Tank Farm to those at the southern end of Johnson Avenue. Because of this, the project site will serve as a link to the southeast portion of the City.

The project area has remained primarily vacant for many reasons – the Orcutt site features a natural setting that is very unique to San Luis Obispo. The Orcutt area is home to Righetti Hill, located in the southern portion of the site. The City’s General Plan identifies Righetti Hill as a natural landmark, as one of the Morros distinctive to San Luis Obispo. In addition to Righetti Hill, the project area boasts other features that may pose as constraints to development.

The project area includes physical, biological, and contextual features that may act as constraints toward development of the site. Creeks, wetlands, various plant communities, and scenic resources are spread throughout the project area. Image 3.2 shows the mapping of such features identified on site. Plant communities including annual grassland, riparian woodland, wetlands, and coastal scrubs fill up the site. Riparian communities exist along the creeks and isolated wetlands surrounding Righetti Hill.

Due to the existing natural characteristics on-site, there is a potential for the significant loss of biological habitat in the Plan Area. Many special-status plant species exist on site including Adobe sanicle, Cambria morning-glory, Jone’s layia, Marsh sandwort, Obispo Indian paintbrush, Rayless ragwort, Saline clover, and San Luis Obispo sedge. These species exist within the following unique habitats: grassland, fresh water emergent wetland, wetland, and coastal scrub. Included with the potential loss of these species and habitat is the potential for loss of locally-designated protected trees, riparian woodland, and wetland habitat. In addition, the existence of special-status wildlife species on-site poses a potential constraint. These species include special-status bird species, the Burrowing owl, Yellow Warbler, Northern harrier, Monarch butterfly, and others.

Beyond biological factors, the project site is located on an area of potential cultural significance. The Orcutt area lies within territory of the Chumash Indian tribe. Records indicate that the Chumash resided in the San Luis Obispo area up to 9,000 years ago. A 2004 archaeological survey conducted on this site shows this area was not resided heavily, but used for hunting and gathering. Considering this, a substantial amount of precious archaeological resources may exist on-site in the form of human remains, prehistoric tools, etc.

The Orcutt Plan Area is a recently acquired land in San Luis Obispo, which comes with some contextual constraints. The extension of the URL decreases the City’s established Green Belt, thus altering the aesthetics of the City by increasing roadways, signage, and light outside of the existing city fabric. Considering the proposed project will not produce much urban development, the plan will add streets and lighting that affect the existing city aesthetics. In addition, because the development is proposed in areas outside of the URL, the plan is inconsistent with the 2001 Clean Air Plan. The CAP states that all development outside of the URL is inconsistent with long-term regional air quality planning efforts.

In conclusion, the project will have similar environmental effects compared to the OASP. When transforming rural land into developed land, the character of the site will change dramatically. When evaluating long-term effects, the project will have less significant impacts in areas of traffic and air quality. This project shall not produce the same amount of traffic expected from a large housing development. For this analysis and other environmental impacts, refer to the Initial Study in the appendix.
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4. Case Studies
Polhemus & Gonzalez Associates examined two case studies throughout the design of the Orcutt Park development. The following describes aspects and features of William Land Park and Scandia Family Fun Center which were used to aid the project team in visioning and designing Orcutt park.

William Land Park:

William Land Park is a 165 acre regional park in Sacramento, California that was originally designed in the 1920s. The park was originally designed and constructed as a site close to the city center that could be a recreation spot for families. Currently, William Land Park is home to a 9-hole municipal golf course, two children-oriented amusement parks, a zoo, 3 regulation baseball fields, 2 regulation softball fields, 3 soccer fields and a basketball court shown in image 4.1.

Dating back to the 1920s, the Land Park Golf Course was the first major attraction designed and constructed in the park dating back – opening in 1924. In addition, the Sacramento Zoo opened in 1927 and now features over 140 species. Before the site was designated as a park, William Land Park was owned by several ranchers; pony and horse rides were a major attraction at the location during the early and mid 20th Century. In the 1940s and 1950s, two small amusement parks for children opened – Funderland and Fairytale Town. These locations have served as regional attractions for families for more than half a century.

Today, William Land Park’s attractions continue to serve the community and region as a large recreational site situated in the middle of one of Sacramento’s oldest neighborhoods. This location serves as a great case study because it serves as an example of how the project team’s desired attractions are integrated together into a successful and desired park.
William Land Park Fact Sheet

Funderland
Funderland Train Ride
Dragon Coaster
Airplane Ride
Octopus Ride
Car Ride
Tea Cups
Carousel
Log Ride
Himalaya Roller Coaster
10-19 employees | $1 to 2.5 million annual revenue

Fairytale Town
Children's Play Park
Gardens
Petting Zoo
20-49 employees | $2.5 to 5 million annual revenue

Sacramento Zoo
50-99 employees

Land Park Golf Course
9 hole municipal golf course
67 acres
10-19 employees | $1 to 2.5 million annual revenue

3 Regulation Baseball Fields
2 Regulation Softball Fields
Image 4.1: Fairytale Town

Image 4.2: William Land Park Public Golf Course
Scandia Family Fun Center

The Scandia Family Fun Center, located in Sacramento, California is a small, family-oriented amusement park. Scandia offers many of the attractions that are requested in the original program including two miniature golf courses, go-kart track, arcade, and snack bar. In addition, Scandia Family Fun Center includes bumper boats, laser tag arena, batting cages, and a thrill ride shown in image 4.4.

Manta.com – a free source of information on small companies that provides details about company’s number of employees and estimated annual revenue shows that Scandia Family Fun Center employs between 20-49 employees and produces estimated annual revenue of $2.5 to 5 million.

The Scandia Family Fun Center is a valuable case study because it brings many of the desired attractions into one amusement park. Scandia and other similar attractions offer family entertainment in one centrally located site. A project like this could be beneficial in San Luis Obispo because similar projects exist either in Santa Margarita – Boomers, and Paso Robles – Ravine Water Park. The only difficulty in producing a similar theme park is the amount of space available for the Orcutt Area Plan. Similar amusement parks need only 10 acres; producing a similar type of project may seem out of context for the project area.

Image 4.4: ScandiaBird’s Eye View
5. Project Description
Orcutt Park is split into 5 zones: (1) Public Park, (2) Public Golf Course, (3) Recreational Sports Center, (4) Athletic Courts, and (5) Amusement Park Center.

Each zone offers recreational activities for various members of the community and visitors to San Luis Obispo and the site. Orcutt Park is designed to incorporate the project into the existing community with public amenities while providing uses that will attract guests from outside of the area and bring in revenue.

This alternative to the OASP is designed to provide the city with uses and amenities that either missing or serve to complement existing ones.

**Table 5.1: Land Use Percentages**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Use</th>
<th>Acreage</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Public Golf Course</td>
<td>52.1</td>
<td>22.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recreational Sports Center</td>
<td>34.4</td>
<td>14.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Athletic Courts</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amusement Park Center</td>
<td>11.4</td>
<td>4.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Park</td>
<td>12.9</td>
<td>5.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open Space</td>
<td>90.2</td>
<td>39.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parking &amp; Roads</td>
<td>26.8</td>
<td>11.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>231</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The park is 12.9 acres of open space provided for recreational use. This neighborhood park, as described in the San Luis Obispo Parks and Recreation Section of the General Plan, will serve as an area which is convenient and accessible for active and passive recreation to residents within the prescribed service area. It will serve as a link from the site to the community. Elements of the park will include playground equipment, landscaped picnic/seating areas, restrooms, group barbecue pits, a pond, and street side parking. The park can also host special events for the community, including Family Movie Night and 4th of July celebrations.
(2) Public Golf Course

The public golf course proposed for Orcutt Park is a municipal, par 30 course that is challenging for all playing levels. The Orcutt Park course is small and challenging – the golf course designers utilized the natural topography, creeks, and wetlands to create many obstacles in an environmentally sustainable way. The utilization of this site as a golf course is ideal for best practices because it will preserve much of the natural features of the site and will have less environmental impacts than a large scale urban development.
A goal listed in the San Luis Obispo Parks and Recreation Section of the General Plan is the continued development of athletic fields and support facilities. Although the 20 acre Damon-Garcia Sports Field facility recently opened at the corner of Broad Street (State Highway 227) and Industrial Way, the site only contains four regulation soccer fields. The proposed on site sports center will complement the Damon-Garcia fields while giving San Luis Obispo opportunities to host regional and national soccer, rugby, football, lacrosse, and baseball tournaments. The participants and families of these tournaments will also need places to stay, recreate, and eat and will bring in added revenue to the city. Features of the zone are 2 regulation soccer fields, 2 regulation little league baseball fields, restrooms, concession stand, and picnic/seating areas.
Image 5.9: Sketch-Up Concept of Competition Soccer Field

Image 5.10: Sketch-Up Concept of Competition Baseball Field
(4) Athletic Courts

The athletic courts are meant more for public recreation than the recreational sports center. They are intended to serve the local community and residents from around San Luis Obispo looking to play basketball or tennis. The features of the zone are four basketball courts, and three artificial turf tennis courts.
The Amusement Park center will be the main draw for residents from around San Luis Obispo city and county. The proposed zone houses unique recreational activities such as (A) a small amusement park (including miniature-golf, formula car race track, and roller-coaster), (B) competition skateboard park, (C) drive-in restaurant, and (D) 24-lane bowling alley (including laser-tag and an arcade). The site will be the main source of sales tax income for the city. The zone also incorporates open park space and a public plaza for use by surrounding residents or any visitors to the site.
Amusement Park

The zone includes a small amusement park that, if successful, has the potential to produce high revenue and sales tax income for the city. Unlike the large amusement parks of Disneyland, Six Flags, or Paramount, the proposed amusement park will be small and attract families in the San Luis Obispo area, or surrounding communities. Intended to provide family-fun opportunities for all ages, the amusement park has attractions for young children, teenagers, and adults. The features of the amusement park include a miniature golf course, go-kart track, batting cages, and small roller coaster and rides.

Image 5.16: Concept of small amusement park Entrance
Competition Skateboard Park

The competition skate park will give the city the opportunity to hold skate competitions that will bring visitors to the city. The park includes a competition half pipe, ramps, rails, and stairs. It can also be used by community members when an event is not being held.

Image 5.19: Concept of competition skateboard park
Drive-In Restaurant

The proposed restaurant is a 60-seat drive-in with dining bays for 24 cars. It would most likely be filled by a company such as Sonic or A&W whose business model is the creation of drive-in fast food locations. This restaurant would serve visitors to the site that came for other uses or just to grab a bite to eat.

Image 5.20: Concept of drive-in restaurant

Image 5.21: Concept of drive-in car bay
Bowling Alley

The 24-Lane Bowling Alley will provide a commercial recreation activity for residents of San Luis Obispo. Currently, Cal Poly’s 10-Lane Mustang Lanes is the only bowling alley in the city’s limits, however it suffers from overcrowding and poor conditions. The next closest alley is Pismo Bowl. The building would also house laser-tag, and arcade.

Image 5.22: Concept of bowling alley
6. Community Outreach
A community outreach strategy for the proposed project includes community meetings with important stakeholders present and meetings with landowners in order to build consensus among them. An initial meeting will be held with landowners and members of the city planning department alone.

**Community Outreach:**

The city will start an outreach program explaining the benefits of the upcoming community workshops and encourage community members to express their opinions of the project. Advertisements can come in the form of posters and radio commercials. Information booths will be setup at public events and in popular public locations throughout the city.

**Possible Community and Land Owner Concerns:**

The anticipated concerns from community members are issues with noise and traffic. The issues will be addressed by communicating to residents that they project alternative will generate less traffic than the OASP and is designed to mitigate sound levels even though the impact is only level C and is not considered a significant impact.

Landowners concerns will come mostly from the amount of revenue they will receive from various proposed uses. The city will have to work with these property owners to purchase land that will be used for public uses. Also, a revenue sharing program can be incorporated into the plan to ensure all landowners profit from the commercial uses in the project.

*Image 6.1: Community Design charette*

*Image 6.2: Community Design Game example*
1st Meeting:

• Visioning: The first meeting is designed to have the landowners participate in a visioning exercise. This process will allow landowners to express what they like, what they dislike, and what they feel is missing from the project.

• Goal Setting: Next, the landowners would collaborate with the planning department staff members to establish goals that they all wish to accomplish though the project.

2nd Meeting:

• Put on by planning department, open to community members only

• No longer than 2 ½ hours

• Brainstorming Workshop

• Facilitate Brainstorming groups to determine community member’s opinions of the project, what they would like to see added or changed, and strategies to implement these changes.

• In the end make a master list of top changes and strategies from each group

3rd Meeting:

• Design Charette

• 3 hours max

• Start with recap of master list of changes and strategies from last meeting

• Give meeting attendees design tools/ games (Image 6.1 & 6.2) to determine what they will design

• Open discussion about final products

Final Meeting:

• Informational meeting

• Open to everyone

• 1 hour meeting

• Show final project Specific Plan with community ideas incorporated

• Provide response sheets for comments
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7. Transportation & Circulation
The Orcutt Plan Area is, for the most part, a Greenfield development, meaning there is no circulatory or developed portions on site. Because of this, the project team had to implement a circulation network that is compatible with San Luis Obispo’s circulation plan. The project team created a trip generation to estimate the projected volumes of traffic expected into the site.

Many of the uses on-site are not typical uses, so finding trip rates for the projected uses was difficult. In order to prepare a legitimate trip generation AM, PM, and daily trip rates are needed to project the estimated levels of traffic. The project team was only able to produce expected AM peak hour trips based on ITE trip generation rates. Tables 7.1 and 7.2 show the difference between Orcutt Park trips and OASP trips.

### Table 7.1: AM Peak Hour Trips for Orcutt Park

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Units</th>
<th>Expected Units</th>
<th>Trips Per Unit</th>
<th>Trips Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>City Park Acre</td>
<td>12.9</td>
<td>0.16</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miniature Golf Course Hole</td>
<td>18.0</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Golf Course Acre</td>
<td>55.1</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>16.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Batting Cages Cage 1000</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>2.22</td>
<td>22.2</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Bowling Alley SF</td>
<td>23.0</td>
<td>3.54</td>
<td>81.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amusement Park Acre</td>
<td>14.4</td>
<td>3.95</td>
<td>56.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soccer/Baseball Complex Field</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>20.67</td>
<td>82.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tennis/Basketball Courts Court</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>3.88</td>
<td>31.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drive-thru Restaurant SF</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>34.67</td>
<td>52.0</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>350.6</td>
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Notes:
1. ITE TRIP GENERATION RATE (PM Peak Hour) (Trip Generation Manual, 8th Edition)

### Table 7.2: AM Peak Hour Trips for OASP

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Units</th>
<th>Expected Units</th>
<th>Trips Per Unit</th>
<th>Trips Total</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low &amp; Medium Density Residential DU</td>
<td>540</td>
<td>0.91</td>
<td>489</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium-High &amp; High Density Residential DU</td>
<td>439</td>
<td>0.59</td>
<td>259</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restaurant SF 1000</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>11.00</td>
<td>44</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighborhood Commercial SF 1000</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7.75</td>
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<tr>
<td>Office SF 1000</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>10.35</td>
<td>88</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>911</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Notes:
2. OASP FEIR Appendix G from Fehr & Peers
Traffic Conclusion:

Based on these tables, Orcutt Park will produce much less traffic during the AM peak hour. Although, these figures are not completely conclusive and a traffic engineer must be hired to better evaluate the expected trips produced by such a development.

Bike Plan:

The City of San Luis Obispo has an advanced bike plan and one of the City’s goals is to ensure future developments comply or improve the bike plan established in the Circulation element. Existing on the site are Class I bike lanes; Class II bike lanes are proposed for the major corridor running through the site. Figure 7.1 shows the bike plan proposed for the Orcutt Park development.
The design for the main corridor throughout the development allows for alternative transportation options. In addition to Class II bike lanes, the main corridor provides access for a city bus. The proposed development supports codes and policies to support public transportation in order to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Figure 7.2 shows a plan for the major arterial road running through the site. The main corridor throughout the site features two lanes with bicycle lanes and bus turnouts.

Image 7.2: Aerial of the main corridor with bus stop and kiosk.
Due to the expected levels of traffic produced by the project, traffic signals are to be implemented to ease traffic service during busy times. Examples of the entrance into the site are shown in images 7.4 and 7.5. A median is placed at the entrance for visual appeal. The medians do not exist throughout the corridor, as they are undivided, two way lanes. There are three entrances onto the project site as illustrated in image 7.3.

With its bike plan and expected traffic volumes, the Orcutt transportation network on-site and off-site shall be less intensive than the OASP. Upon further examination by traffic engineers, the traffic volumes for the site should be similar to the AM peak hour trip generation and continue to be far less than the OASP.
Image 7.4: Perspective Concept of Entrance

Image 7.5: Elevation of Entrance
8. Implementation & Recommendation
Implementation

As part of the project implementation, the project team must go through a series of permit approvals from the City of San Luis Obispo and other jurisdictions. Below is a list of permits needing approval before any project implementation.

• Environmental impacts associated with the project, along with mitigation measures can be found in the Initial Study. The Initial Study provides only those mitigation measures that would be different from the OASP.

• Annexation – The City has agreed to annex the project area, annexation agreements between property owners, the City, and consultants must be approved by time of potential construction.

• Commercial construction will undergo architectural review per City requirements. Minor or incidental procedure should be used for such projects meeting the design standards.

• Building permits must be applied-for and approved for all project features.

• Approval from the Army Corp of Engineer must be reached in order to adjust and improve the creeks for the implementation of the golf course, parking lots, and roadways.

• Compliance with the City Noise Ordinance.

• Landscaping Plan Review to ensure project does not introduce non-native species.

• General plan amendment to allow recreational and commercial land uses.

• Ensure compliance with the ALUP – being in Safety Area S-2, the plan is consistent with the ALUP.
Orcutt Park offers many attractions and recreational activities that are needed in San Luis Obispo. San Luis Obispo lacks many of the features present in Orcutt Park such as a bowling alley (other than Mustang Alley on Cal Poly) and amusement park. In addition, the Orcutt Park plan will produce tournament rated athletic fields. San Luis Obispo is a perfect location for such fields because it is halfway between the San Francisco Bay Area and Los Angeles – the location would be a great site to host state-wide baseball, soccer, lacrosse, and rugby tournaments.

As much as San Luis Obispo can benefit from such a project, it is not the best alternative for the site location. As the project team observed from case studies, developments similar to the original development program for this project only necessitated 10-15 acres. The Orcutt Plan Area is a 230 acre site, far greater than any comparable development. Although, with the addition of a golf course, athletic courts and fields, the project was able to fill the site.

The Orcutt Plan Area is located in a site that could be used for greater potential. The City’s goal is to develop the site as an attraction and linkage to the wine vineyards south of the project area. As a 230 acre site located on the fringe of the city, it is not necessary to use this area as active open space, such as a golf course, public park and athletic fields. This site will better serve a project that produces more revenue for the city and takes advantage of the local resources, such as the wine country surrounding San Luis Obispo.

As stated earlier, the City would benefit from features of this development. A small amusement park would be a great attraction for families to enjoy. The project team does not recommend this project to be developed, but would suggest to construct features of the development. A similar amusement park may only need 10 acres to be developed. The Dalidio property may be a great alternative site for a similar project. The Dalidio site is closer to more populated areas, increasing chances for access to public transportation. In end, the City can use the Orcutt location for greater revenue, but the project idea must not be eliminated. Features of Orcutt Park will benefit in San Luis Obispo considering proper site location and design.
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Feasibility

The most important factor to consider before designing a golf course is to test and question the financial feasibility of the project. Population and economic conditions must be analyzed prior to course design and consideration. The most important questions to ask include: what is the population within a 20-mile radius of the site; how many other public and private courses are in the area; what is the projected volume of play and fees; what are the projected operating expenses; are employment levels and per capita income at suitable levels?

The project area is located centrally in San Luis Obispo County, most cities and unincorporated communities existing within 20 miles of San Luis Obispo. In estimating the population within 20 miles of the project area, the project team used San Luis Obispo County’s Census data, excluding Paso Robles because it is 30 miles outside of San Luis Obispo. This population estimate is 216,900 residents. There are five courses in the San Luis Obispo area – three public and two private. These courses are shown in image 2A. From studies taken in the area, the golf course should expect an average volume of 37,000 - 42,000 rounds a year.

San Luis Obispo City and San Luis Obispo County residents have the employment levels and income in order to suit such a project. Census shows that SLO county has an average household income of $57,722 – incomes fully capable of supporting a golf course project.

In terms of golf course construction, with the decline of golf course design and building, right now is a prime time to develop golf courses. Turner Macpherson golf design states that with low interest rates, the marketplace is excellent for developers to get great loans and competitive bids from architects and construction companies. Based on the Golf Course Builder’s Association of America, a minimalist golf course costs approximately $520,000 to build. This would include all par three holes and includes minimal features such as ponds, sand traps, etc. Based on the project team’s need to preserve and enhance wetland and creek features, the course is expected to cost $1 million to produce.

Image 1A: Concept Image of clubhouse for private course
Site Selection

In evaluating a site for a golf course, it is necessary to consider the economic, physiographical, and off-site criteria. The economic criteria includes an accessible location, acceptable land costs, manageable development costs, and ability to support project components (i.e. development, recreation, regulatory constraints, circulation and infrastructure). Physiographical criteria is the study of the natural opportunities and constraints on the site which includes topography, soils, water, vegetation, wildlife and site drainage. In addition the project team must consider off-site issues including air traffic, noise, views, and odors.

Based on the above criteria, the Orcutt Area is an ideal location for a golf course. The land is highly accessible via Tank Farm Road, Broad Street, and Johnson Avenue. The site has been purchased and is readily available to develop pending approval of a specific plan to allow uses not designated for the area under the County Land Use Element. In addition, the physiographical conditions make this location a great location to design a golf course. There are not many constraints to the implementation of a golf course — the only consideration is the existence of creeks on the site, which can be used as an advantage in golf course design. Hazards will remain natural and any environmental degradation will be mitigated by improvements to creeks and wetlands on and off the golf course.
Land Planning

Golf course site planning requires a collaborative approach amongst many disciplines that requires an intense planning process. Among the planning process is the preliminary program definition, site analysis, conceptual design, master plan, agency approvals and funding, and implementation and construction. The project team collaborated with landscape architects, engineers, biologists, hydrologists, geologists, and others in order to produce a design that would least degrade the natural features of the site.

Course Program

After several design options the project team finalized the course program for the Orcutt Park Golf Course. The Orcutt Park Golf Course is a small, challenging executive course that utilizes the natural topography, creeks, and wetlands to create many obstacles in an environmentally sustainable way. Mimicking the principles used in the design of Mirimichi Golf Course, the first LEED approved golf course in the United States, the course will preserve natural grasses, trees, and other natural habitat wherever possible. Orcutt Ranch Golf Course is a 3,000 yard, par 30 course that is challenging for all playing levels. Images 3A and 4A are elevations that show the course design and incorporation of creeks and wetlands. The utilization of this site as a golf course is ideal for best practices because it will preserve much of the natural features of the site and will have less environmental impact than a large scale urban development. The golf course will also utilize purple pipe technology to use reclaimed water from the site.

Image 3A: Elevation of Course at 1": 65'

Image 4A: Elevation of Course at 1": 200’