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## INTRODUCTION

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### 1.1 VISION

The Hillcrest Station area presents a major opportunity to create an exciting new district for Antioch. The 375-acre site is unique in East County, offering large land acreage with freeway visibility at a strategic location - the juncture of State Route 4 (SR 4) and State Route 160 (SR 160). BART is scheduled to open a new eBART station in 2015, connecting into the Pittsburg/Bay Point line. The area has been identified as a major opportunity site for transit-oriented development—an opportunity to take advantage of the major public investment in transit infrastructure and to create a compact area with both jobs and housing.

Over the past 18 months, community members, property and business owners, city staff and decision-makers, regional and local agencies, and technical experts have collaborated to come up with a flexible, long-range Specific Plan that will guide the transformation of this site. They have worked to identify the numerous opportunities and constraints that shape the land use, circulation, and open space components of the Plan.

Due to its high-visibility location and potential accessibility from Antioch and other East County communities, this site has the potential to become

a unique destination. The Hillcrest Station Area Specific Plan provides the framework for a pedestrian- and transit-oriented district with tree-lined streets, conveniently-located stores and services, and great public spaces and recreation opportunities. Employees will be able to ride eBART to new jobs, reversing commute patterns, and reducing traffic on SR 4. Existing and new residents of Antioch can find new types of housing options within walking distance to transit, work, shopping, dining, and entertainment venues. East Antioch Creek is to be improved to provide natural habitat, drainage, and a unique asset in the form of a linear park. Together, these elements will create an attractive, livable, high-intensity, transit-oriented community.

The vision developed for the Hillcrest Station area during the planning process is summarized as follows:

Create a vibrant signature area for Antioch, offering shopping, restaurants, and entertainment, combined with office and residential uses, in a compact pedestrian-oriented setting. Develop the area as a model of “transit-oriented development”, where residents and workers can take advantage of transit instead of driving, and can walk to stores, restaurants, and services.

## 1.2 THE HILLCREST STATION AREA

The Planning Area for the Hillcrest Station Area Specific Plan is shown on the aerial photo in Figure 1-1. It encompasses the 375 acres of undeveloped land surrounded by Hillcrest Avenue, SR 4 and SR 160. The larger Study Area shown in Figure 1-1 was also defined for the project, in order to evaluate circulation and access to the site and the future eBART station.

The photos on this page show the existing conditions in the Hillcrest Station Area. The Planning Area is defined mostly by unimproved open space covered with grasses and small trees. There are a few isolated residential and industrial sites. The southeastern portion of the area is dominated by two rolling hills. East Antioch Creek meanders across the Planning Area. The PG&E Substation, electrical transmission lines and towers are dominant visual features. A Union Pacific railroad line runs in an east-west alignment across the site.



The Union Pacific railroad line and existing industrial uses.



Transmission towers and powerlines.



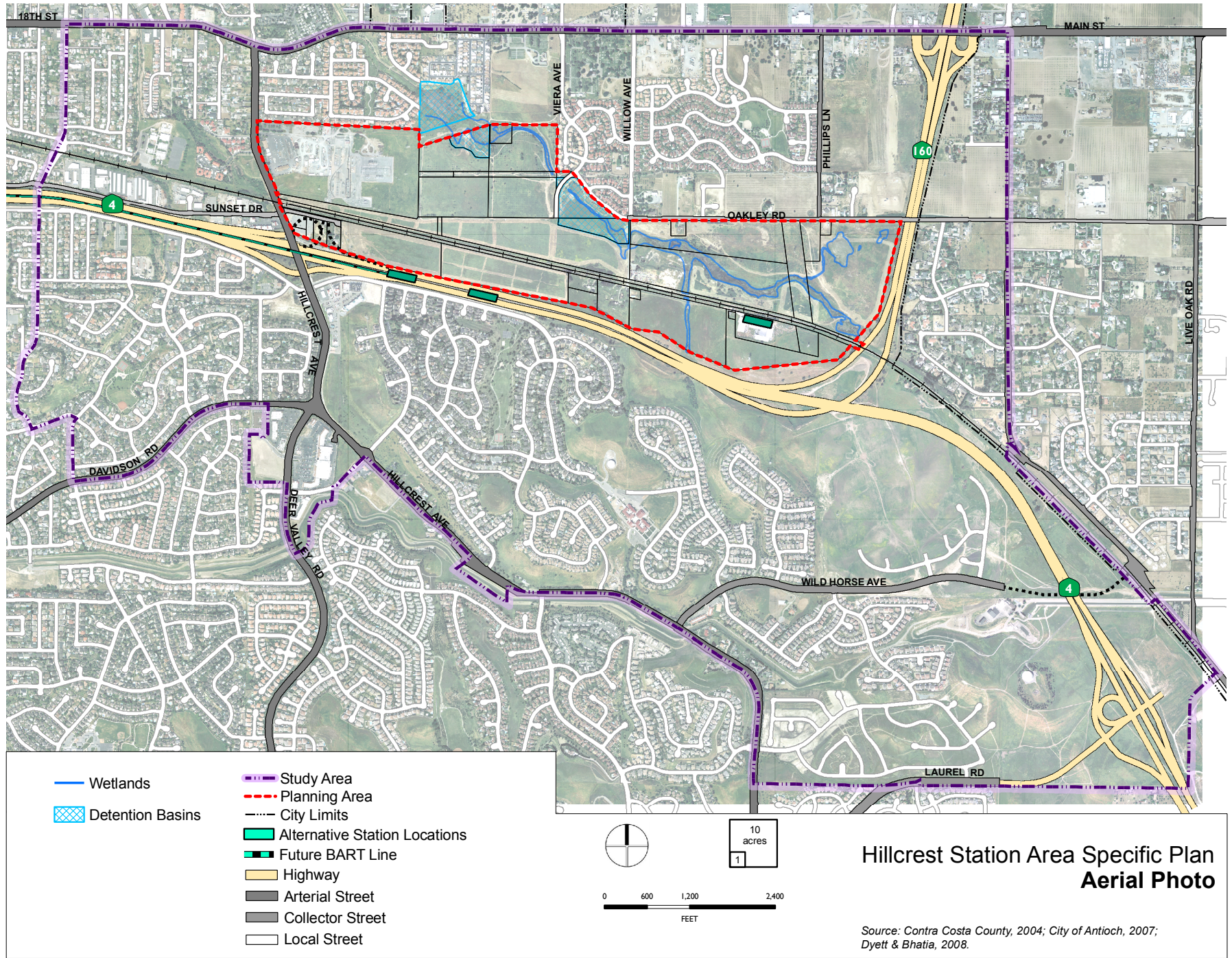
East Antioch Creek and Hill-sides.



Non-native grasslands and rolling hills.



Figure 1-1: Aerial Photo





## 1.3 PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

### Plan Purpose

The Hillcrest Station Area Specific Plan will serve as the land use regulatory document that governs the development of the Planning Area. It will also meet the requirements of a Ridership Development Plan (RDP) as required by BART (Bay Area Rapid Transit) and the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) for evaluation and construction of the eBART line. The General Plan Amendment that accompanies the Specific Plan will also satisfy the BART and MTC requirements.

### Plan Objectives

#### Land Use and Development

- Establish a signature area of Antioch with high quality development and dynamic pedestrian areas that add to the quality of life of the city.
- Designate sites for new employment uses, including both office and retail uses, that add quality jobs and improve the City's job/housing balance. Accommodate at least 2,300 jobs in order to create an employment center and improve the City's jobs/housing balance.
- Create a transit village residential neighborhood, with a variety of high-density housing types within walking and bicycling distance of the transit station. Accommodate between 650 and 2,500 housing units within the project area.
- Designate sites for retail uses that can take advantage of the freeway visibility and access.

#### Circulation

- Generate transit ridership to support the public investment in eBART.
- Construct roads to serve projected increases in traffic.
- Minimize impacts on regional highway facilities and on surrounding residential neighborhoods.
- Enhance multi-modal access and connectivity for pedestrians, bicyclists, automobile drivers, bus, and eBART passengers.

#### Environmental Protection

- Provide appropriate protection for wildlife habitat, biological resources, and other sensitive natural features of the Planning Area.
- Ensure that land uses and circulation routes are compatible with the surrounding neighborhoods.
- Ensure that sensitive receptors such as homes and schools are adequately protected from noise and air emissions.

#### Infrastructure and Financing

- Establish infrastructure for roads, water, sewer, storm drainage, utilities, and other systems needed to support development.
- Establish parks, trails, and other community facilities necessary to serve future development.
- Establish financing mechanisms to pay for the infrastructure required to support development. Ensure that the revenues generated from the area and the expenses to provide services do not negatively affect the City's General Fund.



## 1.4 PLANNING PROCESS

The City of Antioch, in partnership with the Dyett & Bhatia consulting team, led the planning process for the Hillcrest Specific Plan. BART and Brosamer & Wall, a major property owner, also contributed to the plan by providing data and studies relevant to the area.

### Background Research

The planning process began with researching the issues, opportunities, and constraints through field visits and evaluating relevant planning documents and studies. The Existing Conditions, Opportunities, and Constraints Report summarized the results. Individual stakeholders were interviewed to provide additional context and understanding of the vision for the area. The Stakeholder Interviews Summary Report reviews the major topics and information gathered during the initial outreach phase. A Market Overview and Absorption Projections Report was also prepared, analyzing the market demand and absorption potential for residential, retail, and office uses. All three documents are available for review at the City’s Economic Development Department.

### Alternatives

The next stage involved drafting alternative land use and circulation diagrams and evaluating potential traffic, environmental, and market impacts. This work was summarized in the Alternative Development Scenarios Report, dated May 2008. Meetings with the City Council, consulting team, city staff, and property owners provided feedback in order to refine the diagrams. City Council Study Sessions were conducted on May 20, July 8, and October 28, 2008. The alternative diagrams and draft project description were presented to the Planning Commission as part of the Environmental Impact Report scoping session on June 18, 2008.

## Community Workshops

A community workshop, attended by approximately 50 residents and interested parties, was conducted on September 18, 2008. Comments and concerns expressed at the workshop were incorporated into the plan diagrams and draft plan policies.

Another public workshop was conducted at the Planning Commission meeting on December 3, 2008 to garner feedback from community members about the plan policies, final plan diagrams, and the draft implementation strategy.

**TABLE 1-1: SPECIFIC PLAN PROCESS**

Task 1:	Identify Issues, Opportunities, and Constraints
Task 2:	Community Outreach
Task 3:	Station Area Plan Alternatives
Task 4:	Revised Alternatives
Task 5:	Final Alternatives and Development Standards
Task 6:	Implementation Strategy
Task 7:	Draft Station Area Specific Plan and Draft EIR
Task 8:	Adoption of Final Plans
Task 9:	Infrastructure and Costs Analysis
Task 10:	Financing Strategy
Task 11:	Infrastructure Strategic Plan

## **Draft Plan and EIR Documents**

The diagrams, development summaries, and plan policies were finalized as part of the Draft Specific Plan. These elements were incorporated into the Draft Environmental Impact Report. The public review drafts of the Plan and Draft EIR were released in January 2009. The draft documents were reviewed by the Planning Commission and City Council in January and February 2009. The final documents were prepared and presented at hearings in March and April 2009.

## **Implementation**

The Specific Plan includes an implementation strategy based on the phasing of development and necessary infrastructure. In addition, the regional planning agencies, the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG), and Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) awarded the City of Antioch a grant to prepare a more detailed Infrastructure Phasing and Financing Plan to support the Hillcrest Station Area Plan. The Plan is a separate document and will act as the financing implementation mechanism of the Specific Plan. It is anticipated that the Infrastructure Phasing and Financing Plan will be completed by Fall 2009.

The City of Antioch adopted the final Hillcrest Station Area Specific Plan and certified the Final Environmental Impact Report on \_\_\_\_\_, 2009.



## 1.5 PLAN ORGANIZATION

This Specific Plan has seven chapters including this introductory chapter. The chapters include explanatory text, graphic illustrations, and Plan policies.

The Plan policies are highlighted in color, because they are the regulatory components of the Plan which the City Council officially adopts.

### Chapter 2: Background

This chapter presents a summary of the development context and existing conditions that provide the structure for the plan framework.

### Chapter 3: Land Use, Circulation, and Open Space

This chapter summarizes the proposed Specific Plan, and describes the development program. It is divided into three sections that detail the land use, circulation, and open space plans and policies.

### Chapter 4: Urban Design

This chapter identifies the Plan's major policies related to the public realm – streets, parks, and public spaces. Street sections, landscaping guidelines, and other urban design factors are defined. Policies related to buildings and parking are also included.

### Chapter 5: Environmental Protection and Hazards

This chapter lists all the policies that need to be followed in order to protect the environment and protect the public from hazards. Environmental topics include: biological resources, air quality, greenhouse gas emissions, cultural resources, hydrology, and water quality. Hazards issues include geologic safety, hazardous materials remediation, and noise. Green building and energy-efficiency policies are also included.

### Chapter 6: Utilities & Infrastructure

This chapter defines the utility and infrastructure improvements required to support the new development proposed in the Plan.

### Chapter 7: Implementation

This chapter describes how development will be phased over time, based on the funding and financing of major infrastructure improvements. It also describes the requirements for master plans at the early stages of the development review process.

## 1.6 LEGAL CONTEXT AND RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER PLANS

### A Specific Plan Under California Law

California Government Code (Section 65450) states that planning agencies may prepare specific plans for the systematic implementation of the general plan for all or part of the area covered by the general plan. “A specific plan shall include a text and a diagram or diagrams which specify all of the following in detail:

- The distribution, location, and extent of the uses of land, including open space, within the area covered by the plan.
- The proposed distribution, location, and extent and intensity of major components of public and private transportation, sewage, water, drainage, solid waste disposal, energy, and other essential facilities proposed to be located within the area covered by the plan and needed to support the land uses described in the plan.
- Standards and criteria by which development will proceed, and standards for the conservation, development, and utilization of natural resources, where applicable.
- A program of implementation measures including regulations, programs, public works projects, and financing measures necessary to carry out paragraphs (1), (2), and (3).”

The Hillcrest Station Area Specific Plan is consistent with these requirements of State law.

### Relationship to General Plan

State law states that specific plans can only be adopted or amended if they are consistent with the adopted local general plan. The intent of the Hillcrest Station Area Specific Plan is consistent with the goals of the 2003 General Plan. The General Plan identifies the Planning Area as part of the SR 4 Industrial Frontage Focus Area. The General Plan policies direct this area to become a transit-oriented development, with a mix of office, business park, light industrial, retail commercial, and high-density residential uses, when rail transit is built. The Hillcrest Station Area Specific Plan implements this policy direction and provides more specific detail and implementation policies.

As part of the implementation of the Specific Plan, the City will need to amend the 2003 General Plan to ensure consistency within the details of both plans. The land uses classifications and land use maps will be amended to match the mixed-use Specific Plan. The uses allowed and development standards in the General Plan will also be amended to reflect a more detailed analysis completed during the Specific Plan planning process.

### Relationship to East Antioch Specific Plan

In April 1981, the City of Antioch adopted the East Antioch Specific Plan for the 677-acre area bounded by East 18th Street on the north, SR 4 on the south and east, and existing City limits along the eastern boundary of the PG&E parcel on the west. This Specific Plan has been superseded by the 2003 City of Antioch General Plan, and has been replaced by the Hillcrest Station Area Specific Plan.



## **Metropolitan Transportation Commission Resolution 3434**

The Hillcrest Station Area Specific Plan meets the requirements established by Metropolitan Transportation Commission's Resolution 3434 for a Station Area Plan. The Specific Plan responds to the Resolution's various elements:

- Current and proposed land use by type of use and density within the half-mile radius, with a clear identification of the number of existing and planned housing units and jobs;
- Station access and circulation plans for motorized, non-motorized and transit access. The station area plan should clearly identify any barriers for pedestrian, bicycle and wheelchair access to the station from surrounding neighborhoods (e.g., freeways, railroad tracks, arterials with inadequate pedestrian crossings), and should propose strategies that will remove these barriers and maximize the number of residents and employees that can access the station by these means. The station area and transit village public spaces shall be made accessible to persons with disabilities;
- Estimates of transit riders walking from the half mile station area to the transit station to use transit;
- Transit village design policies and standards, including mixed use developments and pedestrian-scaled block size, to promote the livability and walkability of the station area;
- Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) parking supply and parking requirements for station area land uses, including consideration of pricing and provisions for shared parking;
- Implementation plan for the station area plan, including local policies required for development per the plan, market demand for the proposed development, potential phasing of development and demand analysis for proposed development.

## 1.7 ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

### **Environmental Impact Report Prepared For the Specific Plan**

A programmatic Environmental Impact Report (EIR) was prepared concurrently with the preparation of the Specific Plan, pursuant to the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Policies within the Specific Plan minimize significant environmental impacts, based on the analyses of the EIR.

The EIR is for the Hillcrest Station Area Specific Plan project. The project includes the Specific Plan as well as the subsequent actions needed to implement the Plan and make it consistent with existing plans and regulations. The City will adopt an amendment to the Antioch General Plan concurrently with adoption of the proposed Plan. The General Plan amendment will include changes to the Land Use and Circulation Elements. Implementation of the proposed Plan will also include, but is not limited to, such tasks as amending the City of Antioch Zoning Ordinance and Map, updating the City's Capital Improvements Program (CIP), and establishing development impact fees.

The EIR undertakes quantitative and qualitative analysis to assess service requirements for sewer, water, and storm drainage, as well as schools, fire, police, and other public services. A transportation analysis was conducted using the model prepared by the County and the Contra Costa Transportation Authority for analyzing regional circulation. The EIR also makes a full quantitative analysis of the buildout and traffic impacts of the existing General Plan policies, which are compared to those of the Hillcrest Area Specific Plan project. Refer to the Hillcrest Area Specific Plan Draft Environmental Impact Report, Clearinghouse Number 2008052128, dated January 2009; and the Final Environmental Impact Report dated March 2009.

### **Environmental Review For Future Development Projects**

The Hillcrest Station Area Specific Plan Program EIR assesses the implications of an assumed program of residential, retail, office, light industrial, and open space uses, which is described in Chapter 3. When specific development proposals are submitted to the City for development in the Hillcrest Station Area, the City will determine whether or not the environmental effects of the proposed projects were addressed in the Program EIR.

If the City finds that proposed projects would not result in any additional environmental impacts beyond those considered in the EIR, no new environmental analysis would be required. If the City determines there are potential environmental impacts not studied in the EIR, or that environmental conditions have changed substantially since the EIR was prepared, the City could require further environmental review to determine appropriate revisions to the project, conditions of approval, or mitigation measures.