

January 25, 2013

Catherine Kutsuris
DCD Director
Department of Conservation and Development
Contra Costa County
30 Muir Road
Martinez, CA 94553

SUBJECT: **Request for General Plan Study - 589 Pacifica Avenue**

Dear Ms. Kutsuris,

This letter requests initiation of a General Plan Study focusing on a 2.4 acre parcel¹ located on the south side of Pacifica Avenue, between Driftwood Drive and Wharf Drive in the community of Bay Point. The subject property is surrounded by various residential, public/semi-public and open space uses on all sides, is situated inside the County-wide Urban Limit Line (ULL) and is currently zoned R-10 (Single-Family Residential). It is designated SM (Single-Family Residential - Medium Density) on the General Plan Land Use Map. However, Habitat for Humanity East Bay/Silicon Valley, Inc. ("Habitat") proposes to increase the density to accommodate a development of 23 attached townhomes to be sold at affordable sales prices. This request provides background information and a preliminary site plan in support of a proposed amendment of the General Plan designation of this property to ML (Multiple-Family Residential - Low Density).

Background

Habitat purchased 589 Pacifica Avenue on December 31, 2009 and recently applied for Contra Costa County ("County") funding to construct an affordable residential neighborhood on the property. The project we envision for this site is an extension of our ongoing efforts to revitalize the Bay Point community. Over the past four years, Habitat has made a significant and positive difference in Bay Point by completing nine new affordable homes and nine home renovations. Habitat has also organized volunteers to participate in community improvement projects, including graffiti abatement, road cleanups, and a school landscaping project, as part of our Neighborhood Revitalization Initiative (see attachment 12). We are currently working to expand our Neighborhood Revitalization Initiative with a home repair program that will serve Bay Point homeowners.

Habitat is developing a preliminary site plan for 589 Pacifica Avenue that will be consistent with local goals and County-wide policies for residential development. Our work in the preliminary stages of this project have thus far included meeting with County Staff to review County General Plan and Zoning Policies, consulting architects on potential site and home designs, and meeting with community stakeholders to solicit input on the proposed project. A density allowance of 7.3 to 11.9 units per net acre will enable us to construct a project that would:

¹ Survey by SMP Engineers, April 25, 2007

- a) Maintain consistency with surrounding residential densities and the suburban character of the unincorporated County;
- b) Achieve a high level of compatibility with surrounding homes, schools, and public streets;
- c) Create a development of new single family homes which would be sold at affordable sales prices to families with incomes below 80% of the Area Median Income;
- d) Provide shared common outdoor space to serve the recreation and open space needs of future residents and their children.

Setting, Land Use Policy & Physical Conditions

Attached for your review are a set of graphics and a preliminary site plan to provide additional background information to support a General Plan Study. These include the following:

1. ***Location Map*** showing the 2.4 acre site situated on the south side of Pacifica Avenue between Driftwood Drive and Wharf Drive in the community of Bay Point.
2. ***Enlarged Setting Map*** identifying this infill site, bounded by vacant land and single family residential uses on the north and west, Rio Vista Elementary School on the east, and the Delta de Anza Regional Trail and multi-family attached homes to the south.
3. ***County-Wide Urban Limit Line Map*** showing the position of the property inside the voter-adopted Urban Limit Line.
4. ***Existing County General Plan Land Use Map*** identifying the property's land use designation as SM (Single Family Residential - Medium Density), and also identifying the surrounding land use designations of SM (Single Family Residential - Medium Density), PS (Public and Semi Public), SH (Single Family Residential - High Density), ML (Multiple-Family Residential - Low Density) and OS (Open Space).
5. ***Existing County Zoning*** of R-10 Residential on the subject property, with R-10 continuing to the east, P-1 (Planned Development) to the north and south, and A-2 (General Agriculture) to the west.
6. ***Assessors Map*** identifying the parcel as APN 098-210-001-8, and showing the property boundaries.
7. ***Photographs*** taken from locations along Pacifica Avenue and from the middle of the site.
8. ***Conceptual Site Plan*** identifying the preliminary design for 23 residential lots (and at least one common lot) served by a private street.
9. ***Aerial View of Conceptual Site Plan*** showing the relationship of the planned residential development to existing trees and surrounding land uses.
10. ***Proposed General Plan Land Use Designation*** showing the proposed land use for the property as ML (Multiple-Family Residential - Low Density).
11. ***Proposed Zoning*** showing the proposed zoning amendment to P-1 (Planned Development).
12. ***Habitat Projects in Bay Point*** showing the location of Habitat new construction, renovation and other neighborhood revitalization projects in Bay Point.

Proposed Land Use Designation & Zoning (see attachments 10 and 11)

The current General Plan Land Use Designation provides policy guidance for increasing the allowed residential density on sites that would achieve consistency with the General Plan as a whole, including policies contained in the Land Use Element (Chapter 3) and the Housing Element (Chapter 6). These policies strive to balance the reasonable economic use of private property in the context of local

community and County-wide interests. Of particular importance for the proposed General Plan Study are the County-wide Land Use Policies for Residential Uses (p. 3-35 to 3-36) and the local Land Use Policies for the Bay Point Area (p. 3-46 to 3-50) in Chapter 3 (Policy Goals 3-21, 3-22, 3-23, and 3-77a), the Housing Element Policies in Chapter 6 (Policy Goals 3.1, 5.1, 6, and 7.2), and Open Space Policy 9-7. Habitat has demolished the dilapidated home and minor structures on the property, and their replacement with our visually appealing proposed development is consistent with Land Use Policy 3-77a for the Bay Point Area. The proposed density allowance of 7.3 to 11.9 units per net acre will enable us to utilize the site in a way that is consistent with the General Plan goals listed in the paragraph above. With the ML (Multiple-Family Residential – Low Density) General Plan designation, we can achieve a moderate residential density level while modeling the character and appearance of a suburban neighborhood. A density of 7.3 to 11.9 units per net acre makes the project consistent with subdivisions to the south and east of the site, while maintaining the character and appearance of single family neighborhoods located north of Pacifica Avenue and west of Driftwood Drive. The project would transition between surrounding multi-family and single family land uses. This will serve to advance Land Use Policy 3-21 by helping to retain the “predominantly single family character” of developed areas while also serving to avoid a concentration of multiple-family densities.

The Habitat model of providing homeownership opportunities for low income households is made feasible in part by spreading the cost of subdividing land over a number of small lots. The exceptional quality and visual appeal of Habitat neighborhoods is apparent in each of our completed projects in the Bay Point community. Habitat takes steps to ensure that each new subdivision development is well maintained and compatible with the design and quality of surrounding neighborhoods. We can help to achieve a greater diversity of housing options for the County, and still ensure the level of quality and community compatibility referred to in Land Use Policy 3-23, when assisted by regulatory flexibility from local governments. The flexibility in site development standards which is inherent in the proposed General Plan Amendment also helps to promote affordable housing and is consistent with Housing Element Policies 3.1, 6, and 7.2 and Land Use Policy 3-22.

According to the current Housing Element, lower income households are often concentrated in unincorporated regions like Bay Point, where the median household income is just over 70% of the County median. The Housing Element indicates that over 14% of Bay Point households experience overcrowding and that Bay Point has few parcels that are suitable for affordable housing development. Our proposed development will help lower Bay Point’s shortage of affordable housing by providing homeownership opportunities for low income households and is therefore consistent with the Housing Element’s priority to ensure the availability and affordability of housing for all economic segments of the County.

Habitat’s approach is consistent with the Housing Element’s goal to promote homeownership opportunities for low and moderate income households (Chapter 6, Policy 5.1), as well as with the County Land Use Policy’s intention to promote a diverse range of land uses that promote attractive, quality neighborhoods, diverse living options and equitable urban growth. Habitat’s proposed land use at 589 Pacifica Avenue provides several important public benefits including:

- ***Housing Accessible to Job Centers***

The project site is well connected to existing and future regional job centers. A large amount of housing and job growth is expected to occur in the region surrounding the North Concord BART Station. This future economic center can be accessed in less than ten minutes, while the recently completed Willow Pass Business Park off Evora Road can be reached in less than five minutes from the project site. A number of other local economic centers can be accessed by vehicle quickly from

the site, including Concord in fewer than ten minutes, Pittsburg in twelve minutes, and downtown Bay Point in three minutes.

- ***Housing in Proximity to Transit***

The site is well served by Tri Delta Transit, providing service to Concord, Bay Point, and Pittsburg. Lines 393, 389 and 201 provide regular service to the Pittsburg/Bay Point BART station (15 minutes), while Line 201 Eastbound provides service to the Willow Pass Business Park (15 minutes), and the North Concord BART station (25 minutes).

- ***Support for Local Schools***

The nearby Rio Vista and Shore Acres elementary schools belong to a school district that has recently suffered budget shortfalls due to declining enrollment. The proposed Habitat project would help to curb this critical enrollment trend by providing housing opportunities for families in proximity to the two schools. The project can also help to improve local school performance, since homeownership is an important factor in community and family stability. Improved stability can lead to better focus, health and wellbeing for children attending local schools.

- ***Provision of Visual Open Space***

Habitat's site layout will allow much of the site to be utilized as private common area and open, unprogrammed space. This development will provide outdoor space for recreation and enjoyment by lower income households and create an open visual landscape from Pacifica Avenue. The new community will have a Homeowner's Association that will care for landscaping and common space maintenance and upkeep in perpetuity.

- ***Access to Public Open Space***

The proximity of the Delta de Anza Regional Trail gives the Project a unique role in the provision of safety for a local public facility. An access point for the trail is located off of Driftwood Drive, at the Northwest corner of the project site and Habitat may provide our buyers with an additional access point to the trail from the southeast portion of the site. Thus, development of the property will grant our low-income buyers safe access to public open space, which is consistent with Open Space Policy 9-7.

Based on the above considerations, we request that the County proceed with a General Plan Study to consider amending the General Plan Land Use Designation, as shown in the attached Proposed General Plan Land Use Designation exhibit, to ML (Multi-Family Residential, Low Density). We also request that the Zoning for this property be amended from R-10 to P-1 (Planned Development), as reflected in the attached Proposed Zoning exhibit. This would ensure that the residential subdivision filed to implement the project remains consistent with the land use approach shown in the attached Conceptual Site Plan.

Conclusion

As noted above, this proposal is based on discussions with County staff and feedback from the local community. We have also received support from the following agencies, organizations and individuals:

1. Supervisor Federal Glover
2. Elaine Prendergast, Center for Human Development
3. Leaders and members of Bay Point's faith community
4. Bay Point Partnership

5. SparkPoint Center
6. First Congregational Church of Antioch
7. St. Ignatius of Antioch
8. St. John's Episcopal Church
9. Good Shepherd Evangelical Lutheran Church
10. First Christian Church of Concord
11. St. Bonaventure
12. Calvary Temple
13. First AME Church
14. Queen of the World Roman Catholic Church

We look forward to your additional thoughts and feedback, and request that this matter be scheduled for consideration by the Board of Supervisors at the earliest convenient date. A check in the amount of \$750 is attached as a filing fee.

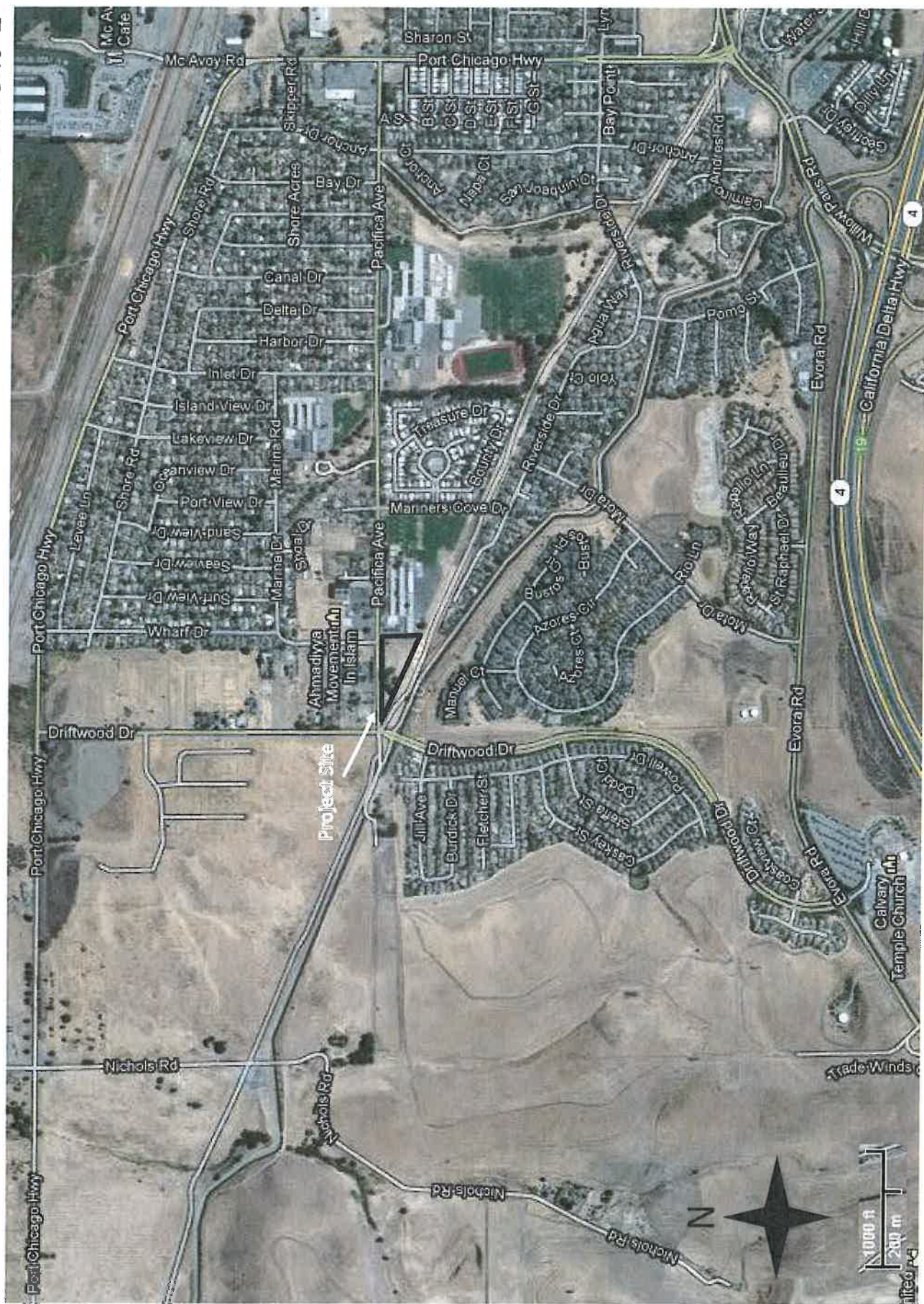
Sincerely,

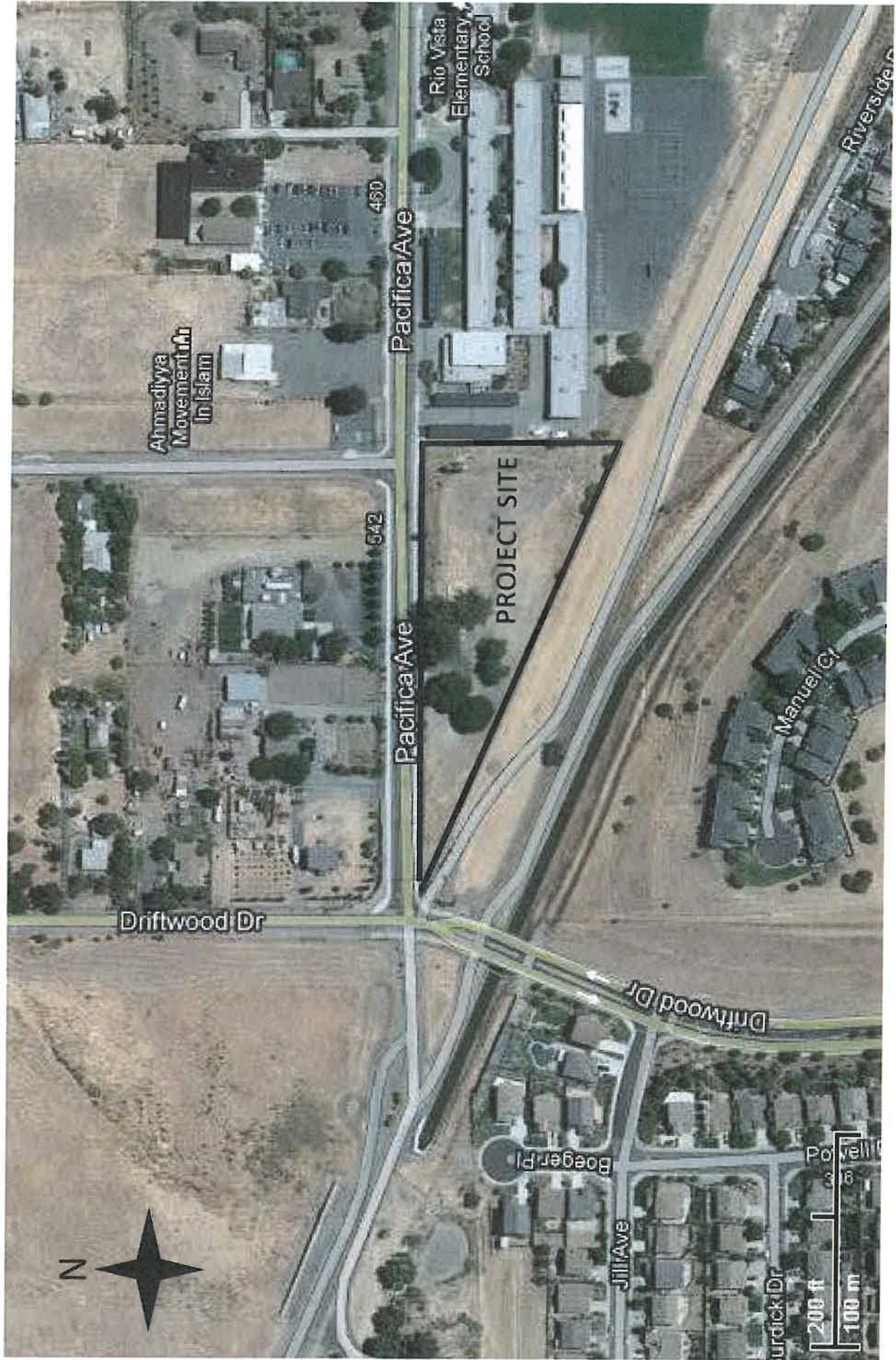
A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Doug Stimpson", with a stylized flourish at the end.

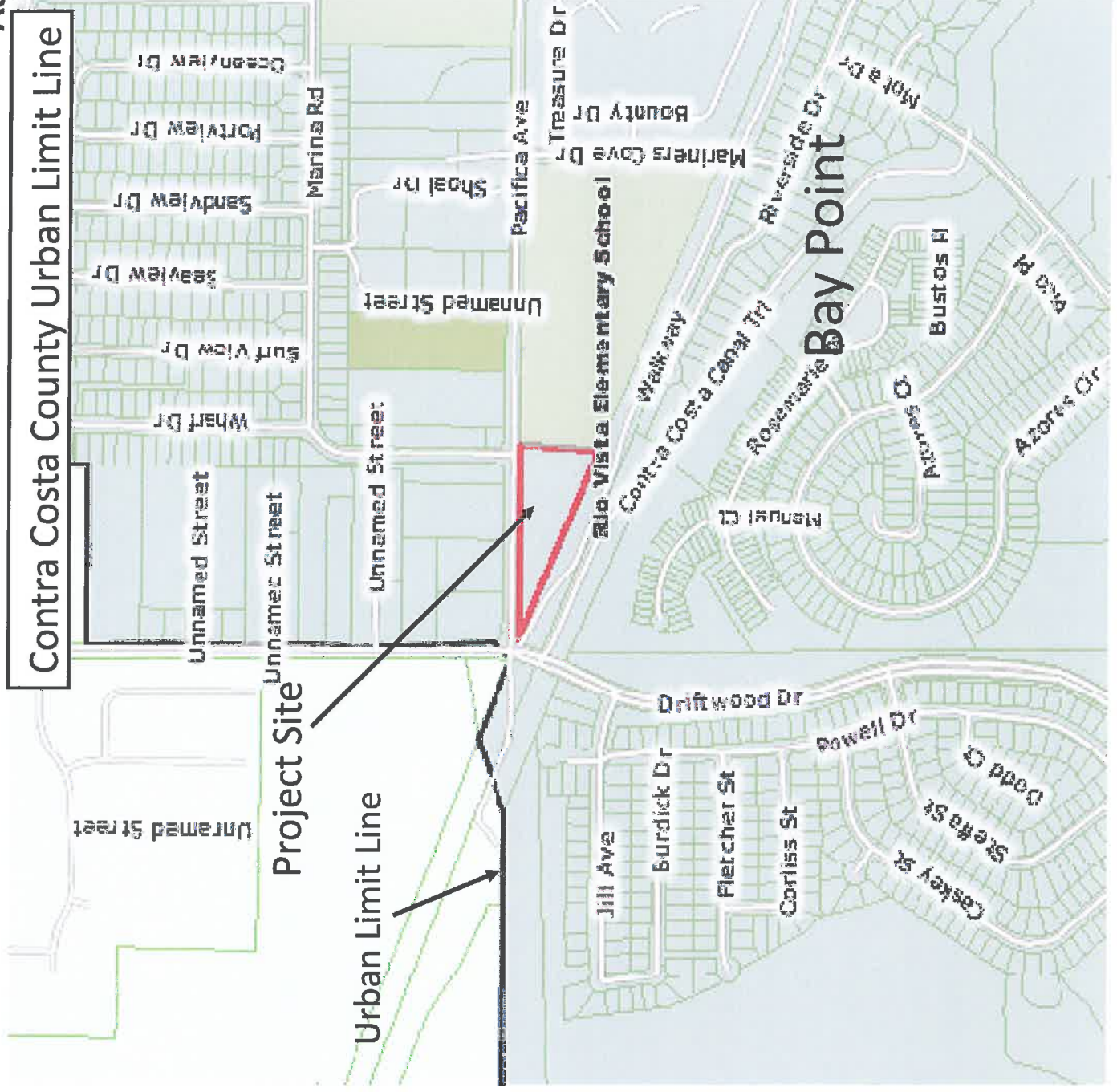
Douglas Stimpson
Vice President, Real Estate Development

Attachments

Attachment 1

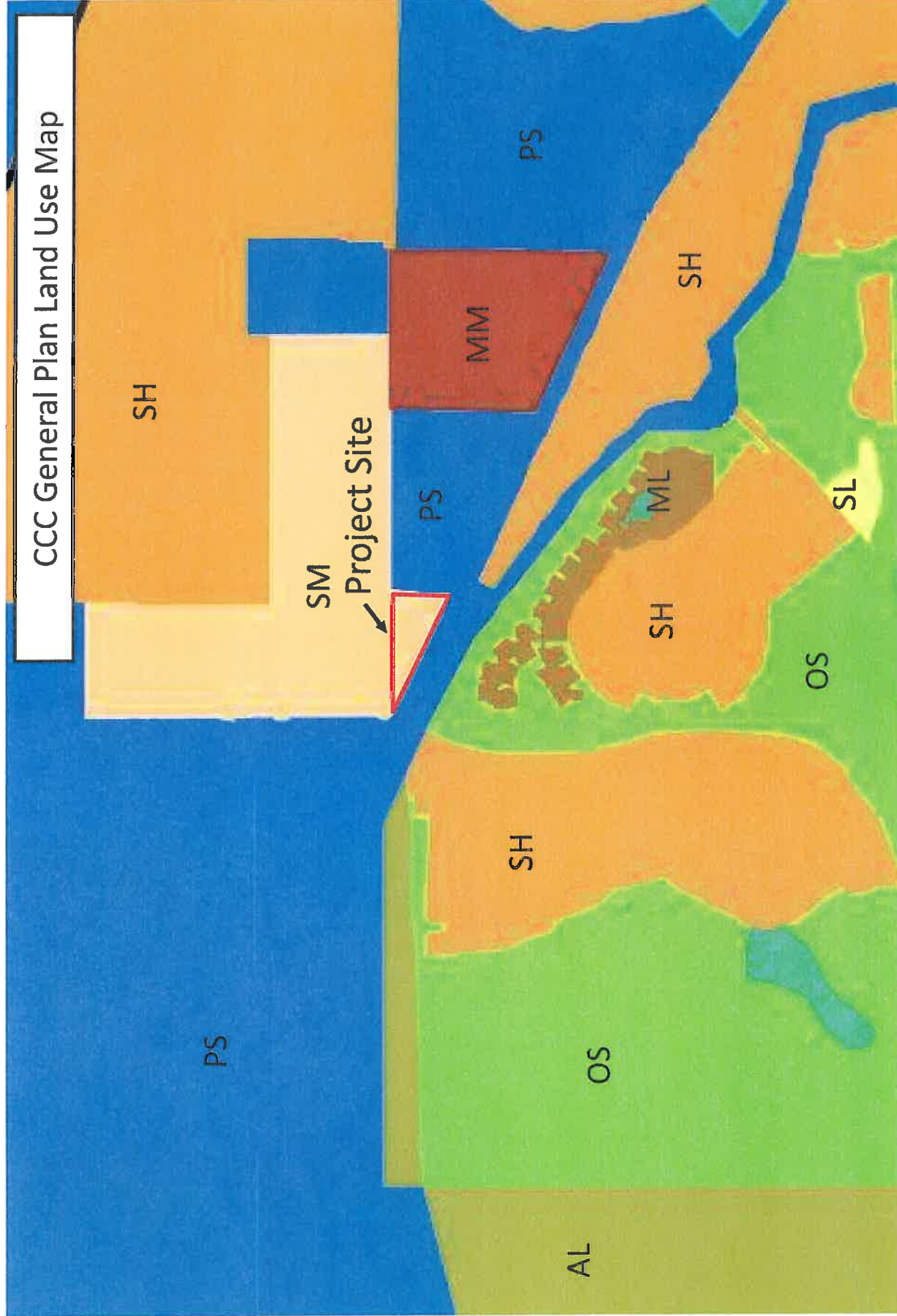


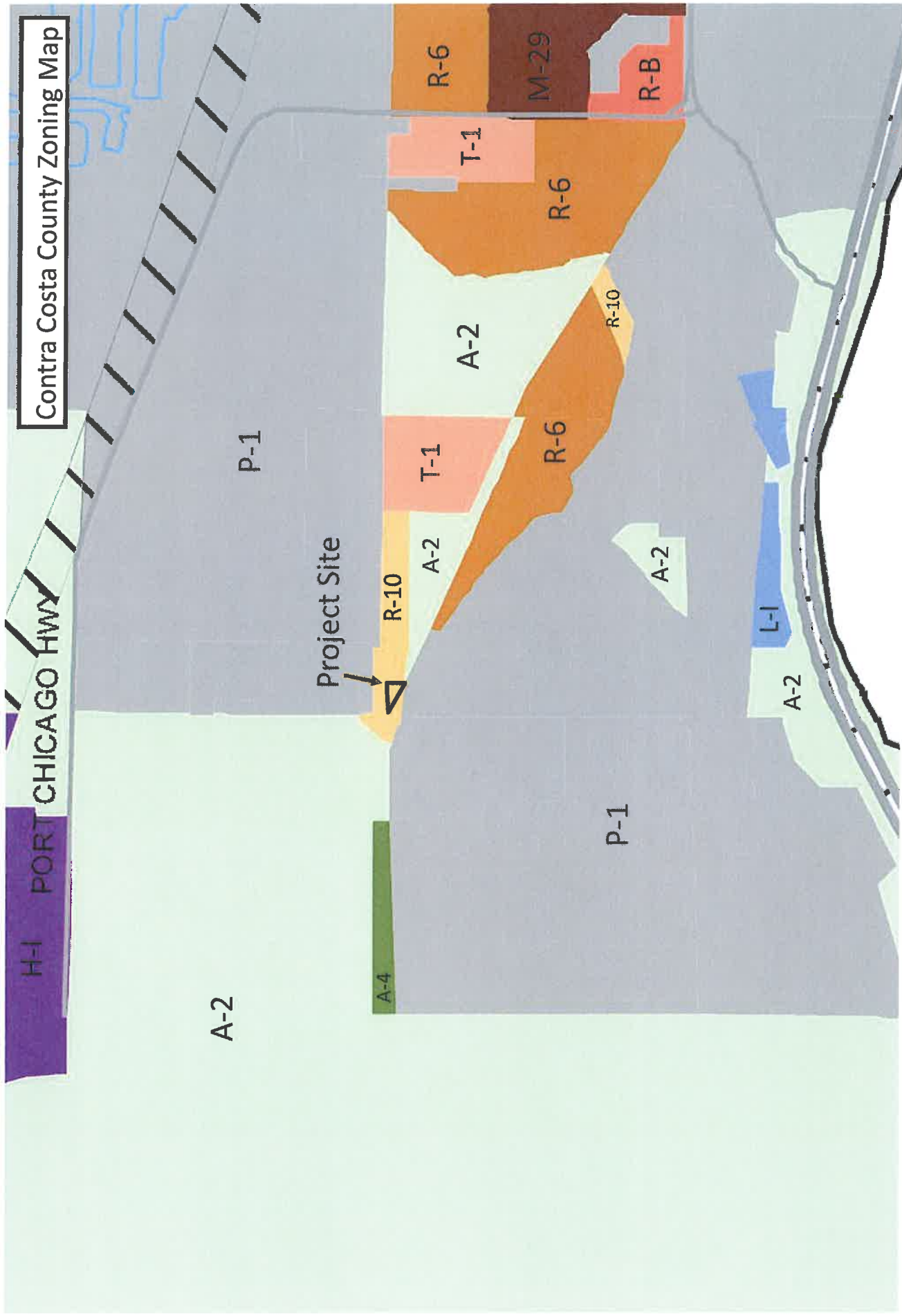




Attachment 4

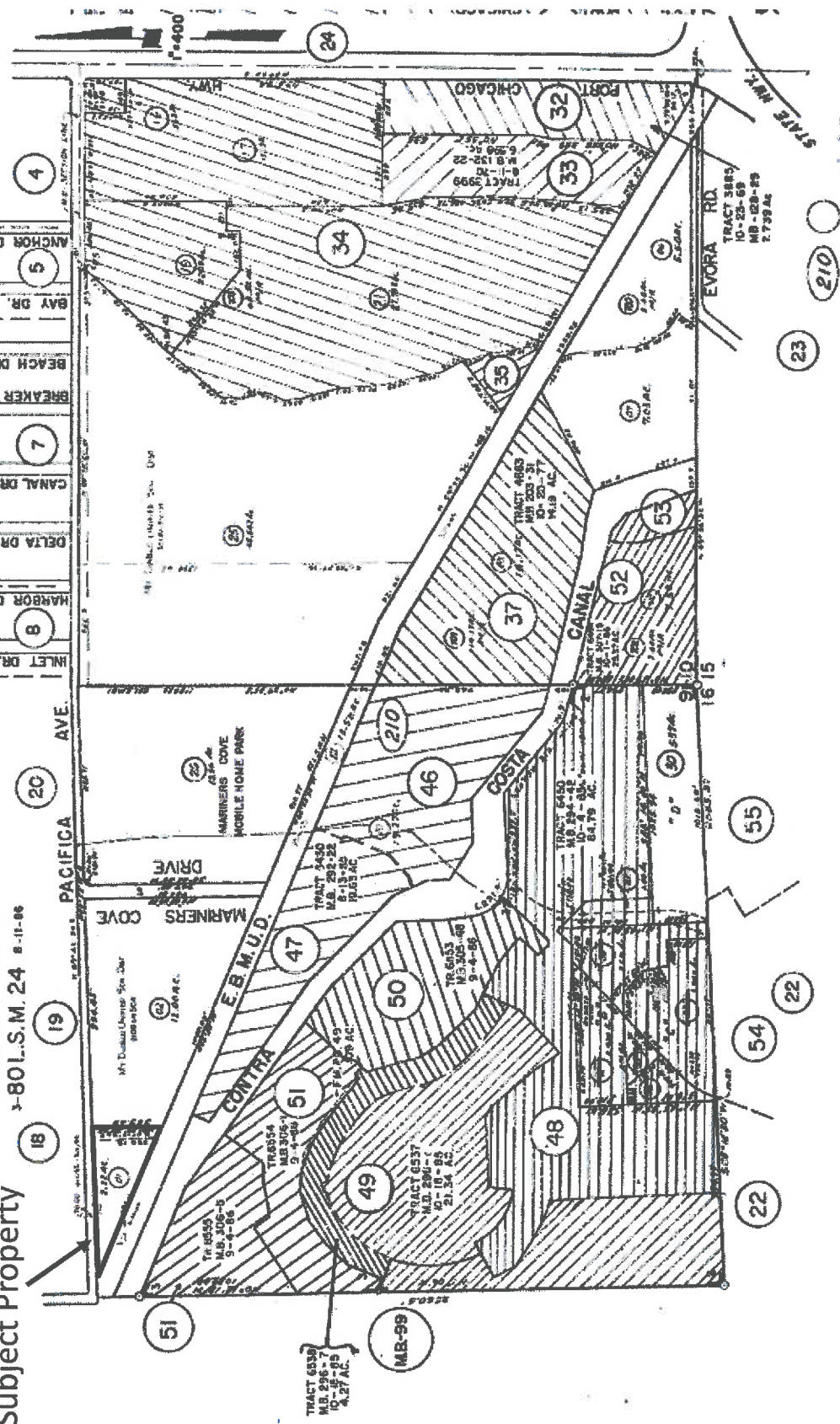
CCC General Plan Land Use Map





Assessors Map

Subject Property



ASSESSOR'S MAP
BOOK 98 PAGE 21
COUNTY OF CONTRA COSTA, CALIF. 1

Attachment 7



View from Pacifica Avenue

Note: All structures have been removed from the property



View from middle of site facing northeast toward Pacifica Ave.

Attachment 7

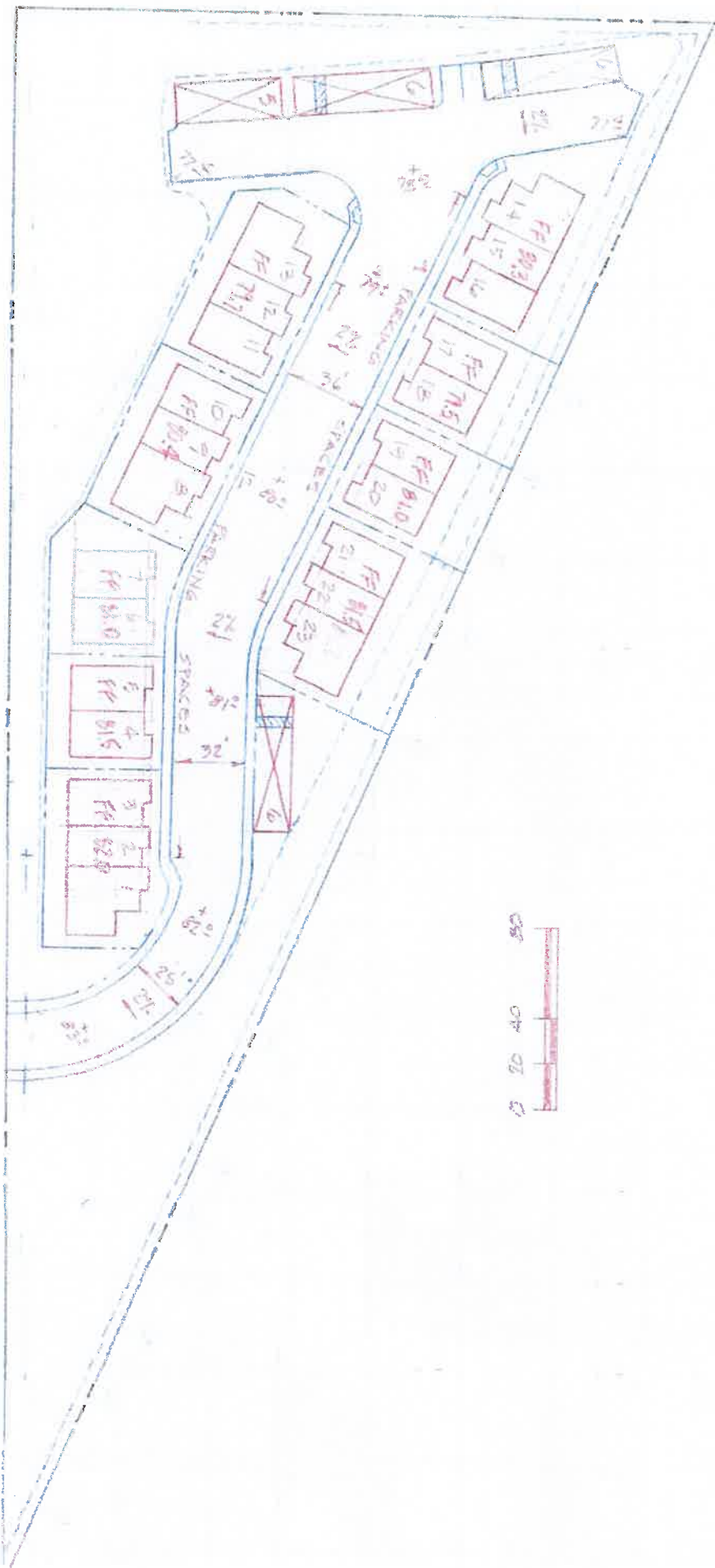


View of site facing north toward Pacifica Ave.

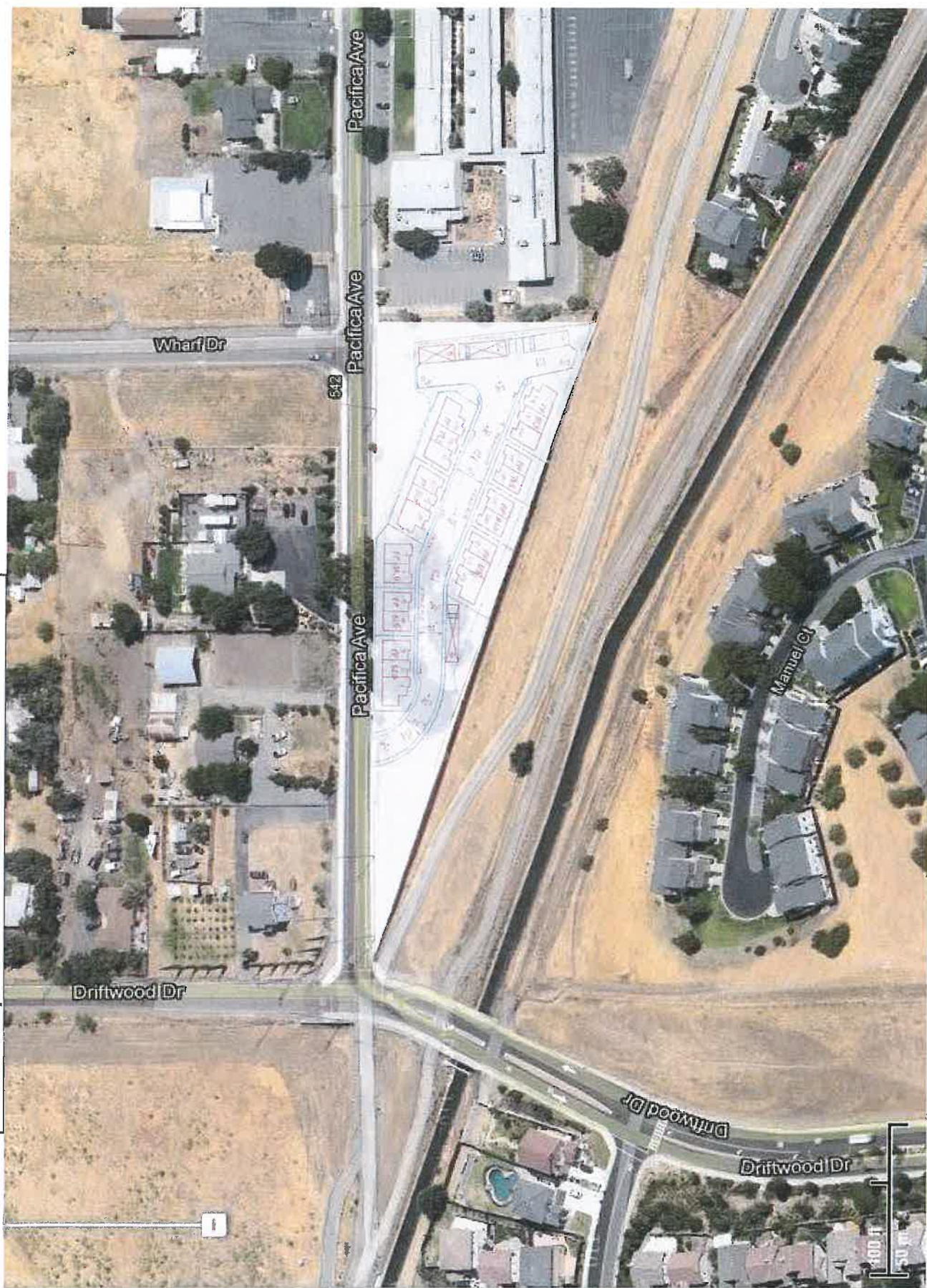
Note: All structures have been removed from property

Conceptual Site Plan

Pacific Avenue

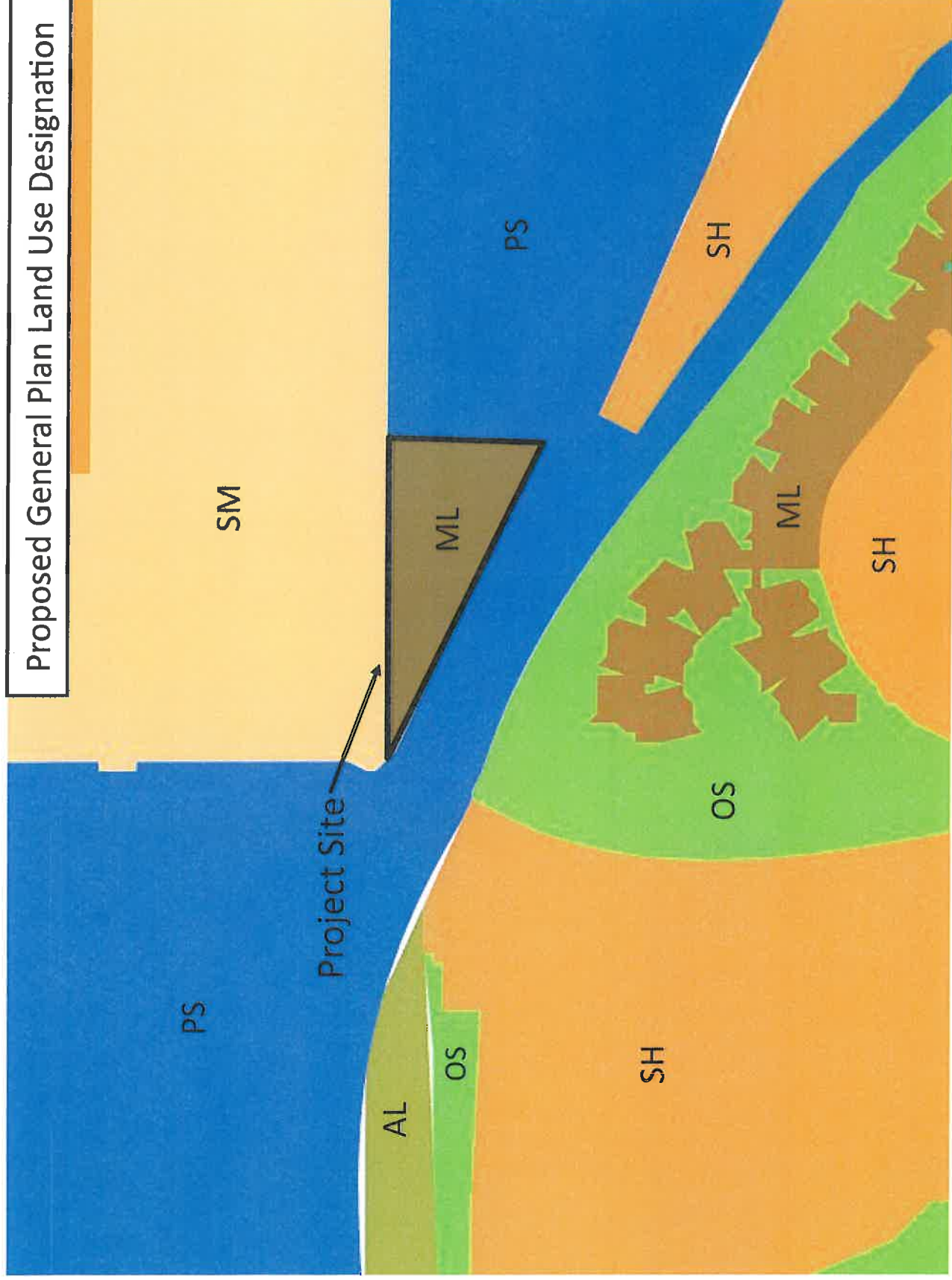


Conceptual Site Plan Aerial View



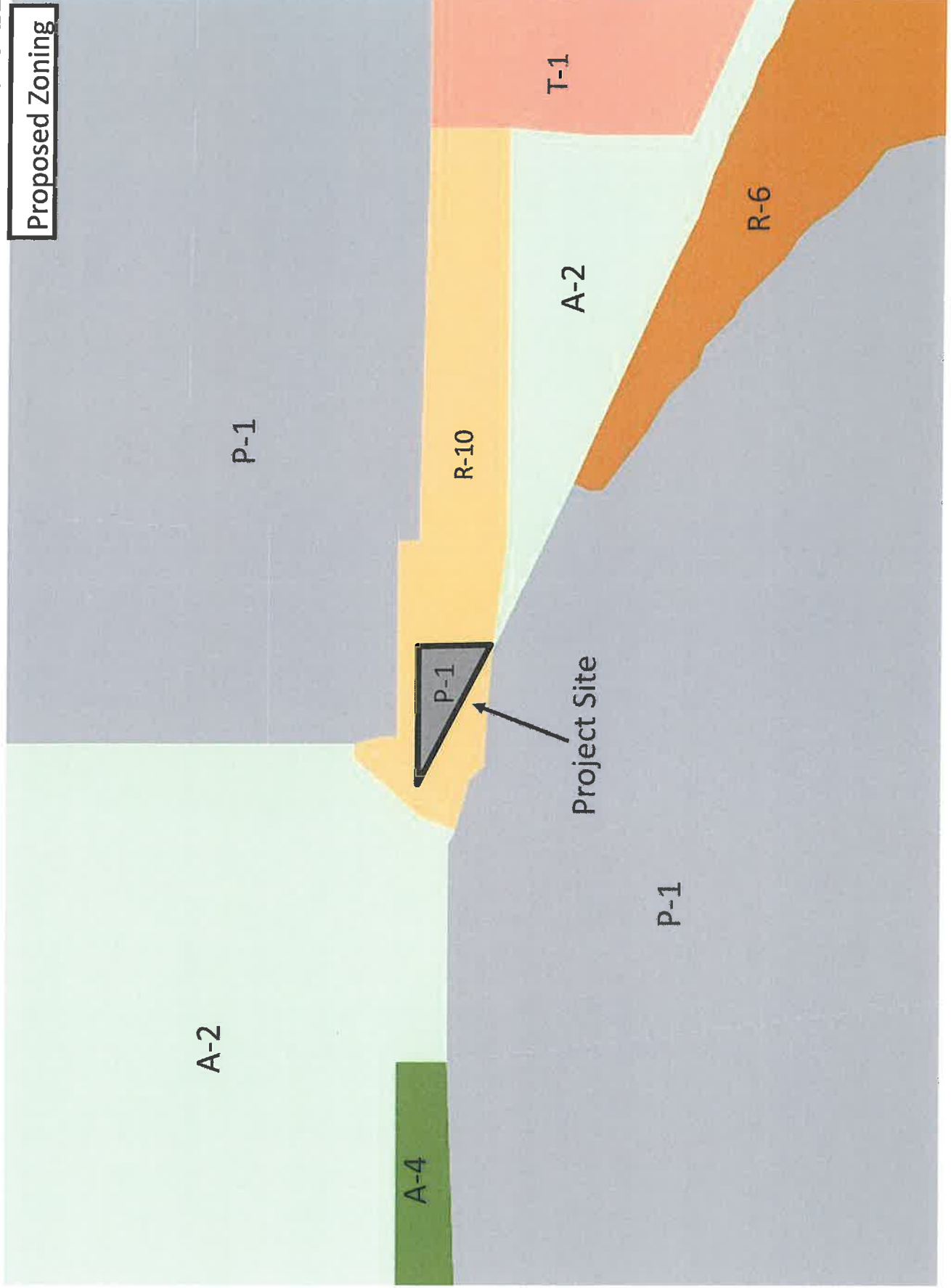
Attachment 10

Proposed General Plan Land Use Designation



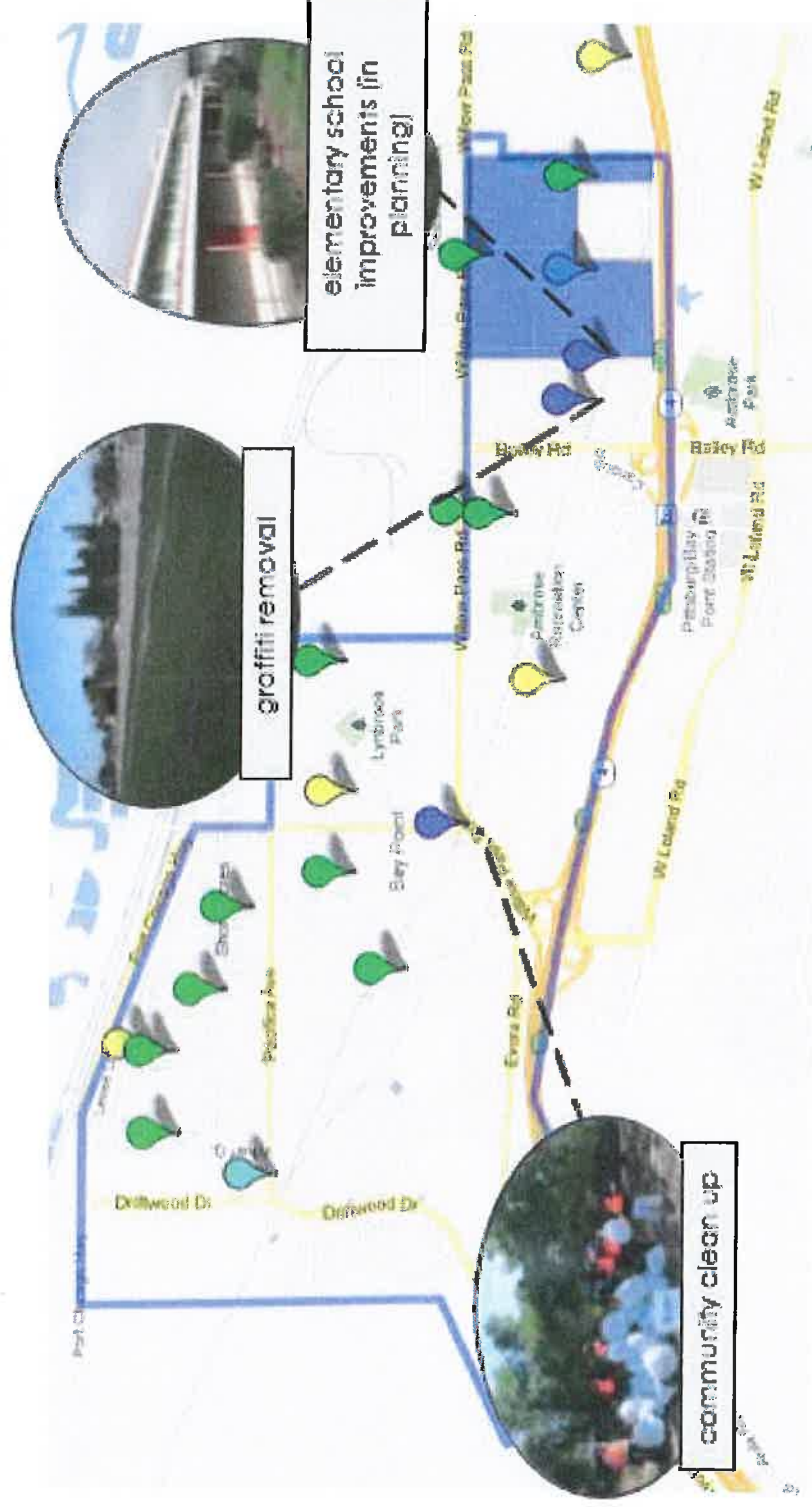
Attachment 11

Proposed Zoning



Habitat for Humanity in Bay Point

Neighborhood Revitalization



Habitat Renovation - Complete

Habitat Renovation - In Progress

Habitat Neighborhood Revitalization Projects

Habitat Development - El Rincon

New Habitat Development - Pacifica

