

The Stock Ranch Plan area includes 129 acres of which the dominant land uses are commercial, single-family residential and open space.

### 4.1.1 ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUE

This section of the EIR describes the existing land uses on the project site, characterizes surrounding uses, summarizes current planning activities in the project area, and discusses the project in the context of the Existing City of Citrus Heights General Plan and the Draft General Plan. The analysis focuses on land use compatibility, General Plan and zoning consistency, and land use impacts associated with development of the project. Impacts such as flooding, increased traffic, noise, and air pollution are discussed in other sections of this EIR (i.e. Hydrology and Water Quality, Traffic and Circulation, etc.).

### 4.1.2 METHODOLOGY

Evaluation of potential land use impacts of the proposed Stock Ranch development were based on review of the Draft General Plan (June 2000) the City of Citrus Heights Zoning Ordinance, and field review of the project and surrounding area.

Potential land use conflicts or incompatibility (specifically during construction activities)

are usually the result of other environmental effects, such as the generation of noise or air quality emissions resulting from grading activities. These impacts are discussed specifically in the Noise and Air Quality Sections of this EIR.

### 4.1.3 SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA

The following criteria are used to determine whether the proposed project will result in a significant impact to land use:

- 1) Result in land uses that are incompatible with existing and planned land uses on or surrounding the project site; or
- 2) Result in an inconsistency with the land use objectives and policies of the Draft Citrus Heights General Plan and Zoning Code.

Based on the criteria identified in the CEQA Checklist, this project's impacts on land use are also considered significant if they will result in any of the following:

- 3) Physically divide an established community;

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- 4) Conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including, but not limited to the Draft General Plan, community plan, or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect;
- 5) Conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan.

This section assesses the project's impacts using these criteria to determine whether significant impacts will result from implementation of the proposed project. It should be noted that the project is not located on prime agricultural lands and would not result in the loss of designated important farmland. Thus, no agricultural resource impacts are expected to occur as a result of the project and are not discussed further.

### 4.1.4 EXISTING SETTING AND BACKGROUND

#### **Incorporation of Citrus Heights**

For most of its history, Citrus Heights has been part of the unincorporated area of Sacramento County. As a result, Citrus Heights adhered to County land use policies and zoning regulations. The County adopted the Sacramento County General Plan (including the Citrus Heights Community Plan) to provide guidance for future development in the unincorporated community of Citrus Heights (Sacramento County, 1978). Following its incorporation in January 1997 the City adopted the Sacramento County General Plan as its General Plan. The City of Citrus Heights Zoning Code was adopted a year-and-a-half later (August 26, 1998). The City also began the process of preparing a new General Plan that would specifically capture the spirit of the newly incorporated City. The process has included community workshops, formation of a General Plan Advisory Committee and a community survey. A Draft General Plan was circulated for public review in June 2000 and is expected to be adopted in November 2000.

#### **Existing Land Use**

**Citywide Context:** The City of Citrus Heights is approximately 95 percent buildout (i.e. approximately 5 percent of the land in the City limits is vacant and undeveloped.) Of the remaining vacant land, approximately one-quarter is within the Stock Ranch area making the project site the largest vacant piece of land remaining in the City of Citrus Heights.

**Project Site:** As described in Chapter 3.0, Project Description, the project site has been subject to a number of land use actions. The site's present General Plan land use designations per the Existing General Plan are Medium Density Residential, Industrial and Commercial.

The project site is currently undeveloped and contains a range of habitats including almond orchards, oak woodland riparian and non-native grassland. Portions of San Juan Creek and Arcade Creek and associated tributaries cross the project site. The Arcade Creek is a major dividing feature separating the project site into a northern and southern half. The Creek is unaltered (i.e. has not been straightened and/or concrete lined) and its corridor is characterized by Valley foothill riparian habitat. The Arcade Creek floodplain and open space corridor ranges from 120 to 200 feet in width with fingers of floodplain extending north and south. A number of

old dirt roads traverse the Stock Ranch property. Past activities including recreational vehicle use, dumping, and grading have altered portions of the project site.

**Adjacent and Surrounding Land Uses:** Land uses and zoning on adjacent and surrounding properties are illustrated in **Figure 3-3**. Land uses immediately adjacent to the site include:

- A master-planned residential subdivision north of Arcade Creek (the Crosswoods development) and a single-family residential subdivision south of Arcade Creek to the west;
- Large lot residential uses, multi-family residential uses and duplexes (Sylvan Estates) to the east;
- A senior assisted-living facility (Merrill Gardens), senior apartments (Vintage Oaks), and an Alzheimers care facility (Manor Care Health) to the south; and
- A vacant multi-family site across Stock Ranch Road south of the project site.

Surrounding (i.e. non-adjacent land uses) include:

- Single-family residential subdivisions across Auburn Boulevard to the north;
- A post office and the City of Citrus Heights City Hall to the south of the site and north of Greenback Lane along Fountain Square Drive; and
- A shopping center and a vacant theater complex to the south, east of Fountain Square Drive.

### **Draft General Plan Land Use Designations for the Project Site**

The City's Draft General Plan identifies three land use designations on the project site: General Commercial, Low Density Residential and Open Space. They are illustrated in **Figure 4.1-1** and described below.

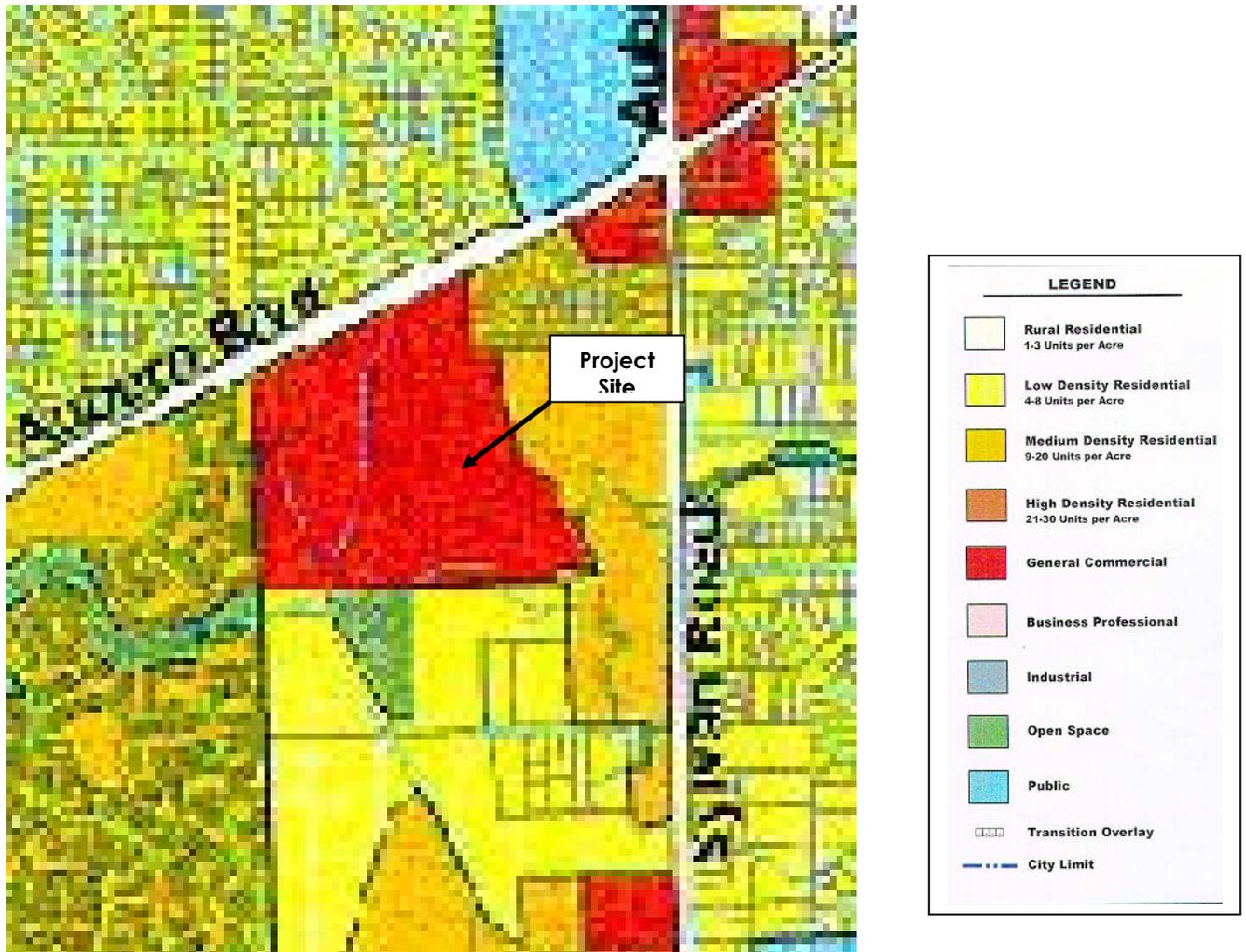
**General Commercial:** This designation provides for retail uses, services, restaurants, professional and administrative offices, hotels and motels, mixed-use projects, multi-family residences, public and quasi-public uses, and similar and compatible uses. The FAR for residential and non-residential uses shall not exceed 0.6. Residential densities shall not exceed 20 units per net acre.

**Open Space:** This designation provides for outdoor recreational uses, habitat protection, agriculture, drainage features, public and quasi-public uses, and other areas typically limited for human occupation due to public health and safety features such as floodways or unstable soils or environmentally-sensitive features. The FAR shall not exceed 0.1.

**Low Density Residential (1 to 7 units):** This designation provides for single-family detached homes, secondary residential units, public and quasi-public uses, and similar and compatible uses. Residential densities shall be in the range of 1 to 7 units per net acre. The FAR for non-residential uses shall not exceed 0.4.

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Figure 4.1-1: Draft General Plan Land Use Map



Source: City of Citrus Heights, 2000a.

### Draft General Plan Land Use Designations for Lands Surrounding the Project Site

**Medium Density Residential (8 to 20 units):** This designation provides for single family detached and attached homes, duplexes, triplexes, four-plexes, multi-family residential units, group quarters, public and quasi-public uses, and similar and compatible uses. Residential densities shall be in the range of 8 to 20 units per net acre. The FAR for non-residential uses shall not exceed 0.5.

**Public:** This designation applies to public and quasi-public facilities such as schools, hospitals, libraries, government offices, religious places of worship, meeting halls, and similar and compatible uses. The FAR shall not exceed 0.5.

### 4.1.5 PROJECT IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

#### Project compatibility with existing and planned land uses

**Impact 4.1.1** The proposed project would introduce commercial, single-family, multi-family residential and possibly office uses on a previously undeveloped site. Surrounding areas developed with residential uses could be incompatible with these uses. This impact is considered potentially significant. *Note: This impact is mitigated through the Development Standards contained in the Guide for Development. See Discussion below.*

The following discussion focuses on land uses adjacent to or surrounding the project, which may be affected by the proposed project. Land uses in the area that are not immediately affected by the project are not discussed.

**Crosswoods:** The Crosswoods development abuts the western property line of the project site. Crosswoods is a planned development project that contains several hundred units north and south of Arcade Creek. Arcade Creek, within the Crosswoods development, has been maintained in its natural state and draws upon the heavily wooded banks of the creek as a natural amenity throughout the development. A closed circulation plan (Crosswoods Circle) avoids through-traffic and maintains the quiet pedestrian-oriented character of the development.

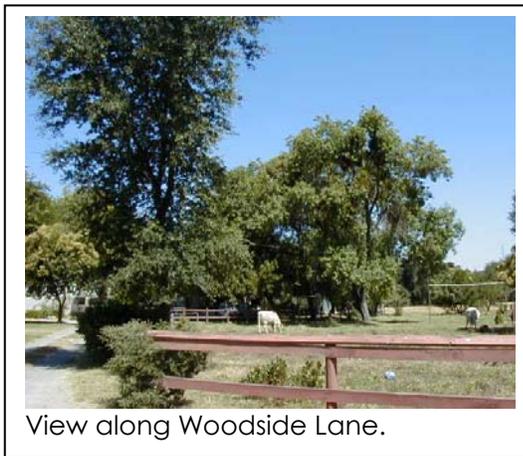
**Discussion:** The project does not propose any structures or parking areas immediately adjacent to the Crosswoods development. The Development Standards for major tenants over 65,000 square feet adjacent to residential uses require a building setback of at least 100' between any structure and the property line. In addition, the Development Standards requires a landscape planter of at least 20' feet adjacent to the wetland preserve line.

The property line separating Crosswoods from Stock Ranch is buffered by a combination of open space and an existing mobile home parking area extending approximately 400 feet south of Auburn Boulevard. A five-acre open space/wetland preservation linear buffer varying in width from 125 feet to 200 feet wide separates the closest proposed building area on the project site from the Crosswoods. In addition, the project plan identifies a 100-foot building setback with 20' foot landscape setback from the open

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space/wetland buffer. The wetland would be landscaped in accordance with the Design Guideline specifications for oak woodland. Tree types include Blue Oak, Live Oak, Valley Oak, and Foothill Pine as well as a variety of shrubs and groundcover. In total, therefore, the project would likely be setback a minimum of 270' feet from the eastern boundary of Crosswoods.

In terms of traffic, the Stock Ranch land use plan does not propose any access to the site from the west through the Crosswoods. No bike or pedestrian connections to Crosswoods are proposed. The project would preserve the Creek in its natural condition in keeping with its designation as a Special Planning Area (discussed in detail below). For these reasons, the proposed project is considered **compatible** with the Crosswoods development.



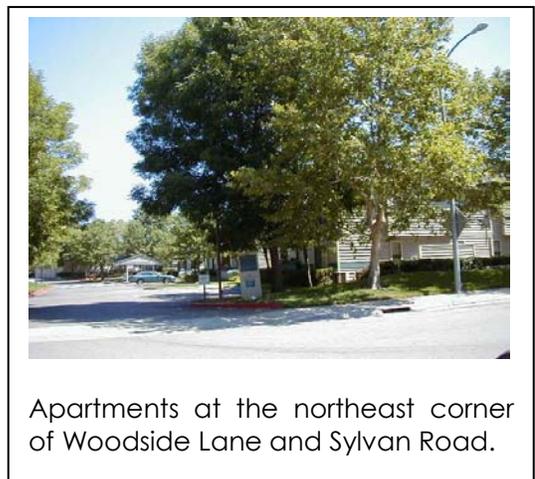
View along Woodside Lane.

### **Special Planning Area (Sylvan Road - Woodside Lane):**

The project site surrounds the Sylvan Road - Woodside Lane Special Planning Area (SPA) on the north, west and south. A few homes on large lots are developed along Woodside Lane. Livestock graze on acreage adjacent to the homes providing a semi-rural atmosphere.

**Discussion:** Woodside Lane currently dead-ends at the project site's eastern boundary. The project does not propose access from this road, although it will be designed to allow a future connection should development occur on Woodside Lane. Only emergency vehicles would be able to enter the site

from Woodside Lane. The proposed land use map includes a setback of approximately 20 feet from the Stock Ranch property line (to the north, south, east and west of the SPA enclave). The project proposes Single Family Residential development surrounding the SPA. The Development Standards require single family (attached and detached) housing to comply with the City of Citrus Heights setback and yard standard standards as set forth in the City's Zoning Ordinance. In the event that commercial uses are developed on the parcels within the "Sylvan Commerce District" zoning to the south of the SPA, the Development Standards require a building setback of at least 75' between any structure and the property line. In addition, a landscape planter of at least 20' is required between any paving and the property line. The combination of setback and proposed single-family residential development would provide an appropriate transition in development densities from east to west towards Stock Ranch Road. Therefore, the project is considered **compatible** with the SPA.



Apartments at the northeast corner of Woodside Lane and Sylvan Road.

**Apartments west of Sylvan and north of Woodside Lane:** An apartment complex abuts the eastern boundary of the project site. This multi-family development is directly to the east of the proposed commercial portion of the Stock Ranch property. The complex is a high-density development (RD-20 zone) and includes dense landscaping and the amenity of Arcade Creek.

**Discussion:** The project plan includes a 100' foot setback for commercial buildings on the project site west of the complex in keeping with the Development Standard which requires a building setback of at least 100' feet between any structure over 65,000 sq. ft. and the property line. The Development Standards also require a landscape planter of at least 20' adjoining the property line. In addition, a 20' foot landscape buffer would screen views of the project from the complex to the east. All total, a minimum of 120 feet would separate the two uses. A minimum 6' foot high masonry wall would also be required as part of the development – the exact height will be determined at time of development. Therefore, the project is considered **compatible** with the apartments to the east of the project site.

**Sylvan Estates:** A mixture of single-family residential units (RD-10) and duplexes (RD-20) are located east of the Stock Ranch property north of Arcade Creek and south of Auburn Boulevard. Sylvan Estates includes development of primarily single-family homes. In addition, several lots in the western portion of the property are developed with duplexes.

**Discussion:** Approximately six lots in the Sylvan Estates development abut the Stock Ranch eastern property line. The Development Standards require a building setback of at least 100' feet between any structure and the property line as well as a landscape planter of at least 20' between any paving and the property line. As a result, no building would occur within a minimum of 100' feet from residents in Sylvan Estates. Furthermore, the Development Standards require a building setback of at least 100' between any loading dock and the property line. No vehicular access to the project is proposed through this neighborhood. Therefore, the project is considered **compatible** with Sylvan Estates.

**Merrill Gardens, Vintage Oaks and Manor Care Health:** A variety of recently developed senior housing is located south of the project site. Merrill Gardens is located south of Stock Ranch Road approximately 200 feet west of Sylvan Road. Merrill Gardens is a three-story retirement community providing assisted-living for residents. To the west of Merrill Gardens is the Vintage Oaks apartment complex. Vintage Oaks is a retirement-oriented community of apartments for seniors. South of the project site is a Manor Care Health facility that provides care for Alzheimers patients. The facility is surrounded on the west, north and east by the Stock Ranch property and fronts onto Stock Ranch Road on the south.



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**Discussion:** A good portion of uses to the south of the project site are senior living quarters. All are high-density developments (RD-20 zone). As retirement and health care facilities, they are by nature sensitive land uses. Noise, light, and glare in particular can present nuisances to residents desiring a tranquil environment. The project proposes single family residential uses (or as an option, a cluster development to the west and north of the Manor Care Health facility). The Development Standards require that single-family residential housing must comply with the City of Citrus Heights setback and yard standards as set forth in the City's Zoning Ordinance. The Development standards specify that residential edges must be landscaped with planting treatments on the project side of fences separating the project site from adjacent uses. One tree planting is required for every 15 linear feet of property line.



View of Manor Care Alzheimer's facility on the north side of Stock Ranch Road.

The Manor Care facility is setback from all property lines as well as Stock Ranch Road. The facility has also been constructed slightly below grade that helps provide a degree of buffering from surrounding uses. As a neighboring use, the project provides a lower density (8 units/acre) of residential uses to serve as a transition north and west from these higher density senior complexes. Therefore, the single family residential uses proposed would be **compatible** with the Manor Care facility as well as the Vintage Oaks and Merrill Gardens retirement communities to the south.

The eastern property line of the Manor Care facility borders on a parcel proposed for

Commercial/Office and Multi-Family Residential (Sylvan Commerce Districtible zoning). Multi-family would be consistent with the Merrill Gardens development directly to the south of this parcel. According to the Development Standards, multi-family housing must comply with the City of Citrus Heights setback and yard standards as set forth in the City's Zoning Ordinance. No setbacks or buffer areas are depicted on the land use plan for this parcel. However, the Development Standards specify a building setback of at least 75' between any structure and the property line for shops, pads and specialty under 30,000 sq. ft. In addition, a landscape planter of at least 20' adjacent to the property line is required. The Development Standards also require a building setback of at least 100' between any loading dock and the property line. Further, this parcel is located in Landscape Zone D, which requires planting treatments on the project side of the fence to screen the project from adjacent uses. Therefore, based on the setbacks and landscaping requirements, commercial uses would be considered **compatible** with the Manor Care facility.

**Stock Villages and Stock Village:** A multi-family development known as Stock Villages (RD-20 zone) is located west of the Manor Care Health facility on the west side of Stock Ranch Road as it curves to the northwest. West of this development is a single-family residential development, Stock Village (RD-7 zone). Both developments have been constructed in the last several years and are characterized by modern architecture and newly installed landscaping.

**Discussion:** The project proposes single-family residential development south of Arcade Creek along Stock Ranch Road east of Stock Village and Stock Villages. Proposed densities in this area of the project would be approximately 8 gross units per acre. This density would be similar to the Stock Village development and lower than the Stock Villages multi-family development. A proposed open space buffer adjacent to the east side of Stock Ranch Road also provides buffering between uses on the project site and portions of Stock Villages and Stock Village. Therefore residential uses proposed on the project site would be **compatible** with surrounding residential development. Vehicular access is proposed from an extension of Fountain Square Drive between Stock Village and Stock Villages. Due to the configuration of these developments (i.e. walls buffering backyards from the proposed extension), the extension of Fountain Square Drive would not interfere with access to these neighborhoods.

**Arcade Creek:** Portions of San Juan Creek, Arcade Creek and associated tributary drainages traverse the project site. Arcade Creek is the primary east-west waterway that separates land uses in the north portion of the plan area from those in the south. The width of the Arcade Creek floodplain and open space corridor ranges from 120 to 200 feet in width with fingers of floodplain extending north and south.

**Discussion:** Arcade Creek provides a natural division of the project site north and south. Approximately 27 acres of the plan area is within the Arcade Creek and San Juan Creek floodplains. Two distinctive development scenarios are identified on the project plan with the Creek as the dividing line. Commercial uses are the predominant land use proposed north of the Creek with some recreation and open space areas along Arcade Creek and a tributary east of the project's western property line. South of Arcade Creek, residential development prevails with a mixture of both single and multi-family housing. Park and open space, and potentially a small amount of commercial/office (Sylvan Commerce Districtible zoning) make up the remainder of the southern portion of the project plan.



Arcade Creek meanders through the middle portion of the site.

Arcade Creek, and the surrounding floodplain, provides a natural buffer to separate uses that may otherwise pose challenges if located directly adjacent to each other (e.g. the proposed commercial and single family residential uses). The Stock Ranch project has been designed to orient to and take advantage of the extensive network of open space, of which Arcade Creek is the most prominent and visible element. The open space network proposed for the Stock Ranch site consists of, at a minimum, approximately 32 acres of dedicated land, including floodplain and wetland preserve. No roadways or buildable areas are located within the boundaries of the floodplain. Moreover, the Development Standards for Arcade Creek require a building setback of at least 100' between any building and the edge of the floodplain. In addition, a

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landscape planter of at least 25' between any paving and the edge of the floodplain is required.

For the westside tributary on the north side of Arcade Creek, a building setback of at least 100' between any structure and the bank of the tributary is required. Additionally, the Development Standards require a landscape planter setback of at least 20' adjoining the eastern boundary of the wetland preserve. The provisions of the Development Guide are sufficient to ensure that the proposed project is **compatible** with Arcade Creek and its associated tributaries.

**Auburn Boulevard:** The northern boundary of the project site fronts on the south side of Auburn Boulevard. The north side of Auburn is developed with low-density (RD-5 zone) single-family residential uses. This neighborhood is well established and is setback from Auburn Boulevard by a landscaped median and frontage road. Auburn is a four-lane thoroughfare that aligns southwest/northeast north of the project site.

**Discussion:** Auburn Boulevard will provide the primary access to the northern commercial area. The project plan includes three points of ingress/egress to Stock Ranch along Auburn Boulevard.

The northern portion of the property is screened in some areas by existing stands of trees adjacent to Auburn Boulevard. The Development Standards require a landscape planter of at least 50' between any structure or paving and the edge of curve line. The Development Standards also require landscaping along Auburn Boulevard. The Design Guidelines specify that large canopy shade trees and ornamental trees should be planted to maximize visual appeal.

Auburn Boulevard is approximately 165 feet wide. Combined with the project setbacks (50 feet) as well as the median and frontage road (approximately 20 feet) on the north side of Auburn Boulevard, residential uses north of Auburn Boulevard will be setback a minimum of approximately 235 feet from commercial structures. Additionally, landscape treatments will visually enhance and screen the project site from residential uses to the north. Therefore, the project is considered **compatible** with residential uses to the north.

**Fountain Square Drive:** The hub of City government and administration is located south of the project site on Fountain Square Drive. In addition, a post office is located north of City Hall creating the atmosphere of a civic center.

**Discussion:** The location of the City government facilities and a post office south of the project site provides the opportunity for linkage with Stock Ranch. The extension of Fountain Square Drive (not a part of this project) will provide a connection between development on the project site and City Hall and the post office. The civic center (not part of the site) will provide an anchor at the south end of the project area near Greenback Lane while the commercial development on the northern half of the project site will anchor the project to Auburn Boulevard. Connection of civic uses with the project site is considered **compatible** and complementary to the expansion and development of the civic area of the City.

**Sylvan Road/Stock Ranch Road Intersection:** A “finger” of the project area extends south of Stock Ranch approximately 425 feet along the west side of Sylvan Road. This piece of property is approximately 175 feet wide and 1.8 acres and is bordered to the west by Merrill Gardens and to the east by Sylvan Road. The southern tip is adjacent to an existing shopping center.

**Discussion:** The portion of the project site south of Stock Ranch Road is designated as a Sylvan Commerce District Zone and would allow either commercial/office or multi-family development. Based on the dimensions of the parcel, it would most likely be developed with a commercial strip that would be accessed either from the north off of Stock Ranch Road or from a connection to the parking lot of the existing commercial center to the south and east. The Development Standards require a building setback of a least 20' from any structure and the right-of-way line for Sylvan Road and Stock Ranch Road. Commercial development on this site would be **compatible** with the shopping center located south of the project site and Merrill Gardens to the west.

### Project Consistency with City of Citrus Heights Zoning Ordinance

**Impact 4.1.3** The proposed project will require rezoning in order to be consistent with the City of Citrus Heights Zoning Code. Currently the proposed zoning is inconsistent with the Zoning Code. *Note: This impact can be mitigated to less than significant. See discussion below.*

The City of Citrus Heights Zoning Code provides specific development and land use standards for land within the City. The purpose of the Code is broad and includes the regulation of building usage, building size, setbacks, signage, intensity, etc. The project site includes several zoning designations that allow for a mix of uses. Below is a description of zoning designations for the project site.

**Project Site:** The project is currently zoned MP (Industrial - Office Park), SC (Shopping Center), RD-20 (Residential Density - 20 Units per acre), RD-7 (NS) (Residential Density 7 units per acre with Natural Stream overlay zone), O (NS) (Recreation General Purpose with Natural Stream overlay zone), MP (NS) (Industrial Office Park with Natural Stream overlay zone), O (Recreation General Purpose) and RD-20(NS) (Residential Density 20 units per acre with Natural Stream overlay).

The proposed project includes the rezoning of the project site to a designation of “SPA-Special Planning Area.” The SPA designation in the Citrus Heights Zoning Code provides for the adoption of site- or project-specific zoning and development standards which implement the General Plan but may differ from standard zones. In the case of the proposed project, the SPA zoning would incorporate the Stock Ranch Guide to Development, which would provide land use regulations and development standards (except in those instances where the Guide to Development references the City's Zoning Code). *Note: The existing “Stock Ranch SPA referenced in Section 235-35 of the Zoning Code would be repealed and replaced by the proposed project.*

**Surrounding Properties:** The proposed project is surrounded by a variety of zoning designations (see **Figure 4.1-1**). Properties to the west of the project site are zoned RD-30 (PD) (Residential Density - 30, Planned Development), RD-5, and RD-7. Uses to the south are zoned RD-7 and SC. To the east, uses are zoned RD-20 in addition to the SPA enclave along Woodside Drive. To the

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northeast, uses are zoned RD-20 and RD-10. Residential densities would allow between 5 and 30 units per acre. The SPA zone is described below.

**Discussion:** The proposed "SPA" zoning will accommodate the proposed project by providing several zoning designations, including two—"Sylvan Commerce District zoning" and "residential cluster"—which are unique to this project.

Two parcels of land are designated as SPA/ General Comments in the Sylvan Commerce District. These are located in the southern portion of the site, along Stock Ranch Road, and contain 12 acres of land. The zoning allows for Sylvan Commerce Districtibility in land use to reflect the "market" at time of development. The site may be used for office, retail, or multi-family housing or any combination of those uses, contingent on approval by the City. Office and retail uses would be permitted to develop up to a FAR of 0.25, or nearly 131,000 square feet of retail or office uses. Multi-family housing would be permitted at the same standards currently allowed under the Draft General Plan for that area – nine to 20 units per acre.

**Residential Cluster** zone would be applied to residential development south of Arcade Creek. If cluster housing is pursued as an alternative, a maximum of 364 units may be developed at a gross density of approximately eight units to the acre (compared to a maximum of 216 single family units at a gross density of 5 units to the acre. This new category would permit preservation of significant amounts of the 43.2 acres for open space available for community uses such as walking, picnicking and nature study.

The proposed SPA would also redesignate several areas on the project site from the current MP zoning to residential development at eight units per acre.

Following the rezone to SPA and adoption of the Guide (which would be incorporated as part of the SPA proposal), the proposed uses will be **consistent** with City of Citrus Heights Zoning.

**Special Planning Area Land Use Zone:** The SPA zone regulates property that has unique environmental, historic, architectural, or other features that require special conditions not provided through the application of standard zone regulations.

The Citrus Heights Zoning Code (Article 3, Section 235-35) identifies the Stock Ranch Special Planning Area as an existing SPA Zone that is to be regulated according to the provisions of Title III (Regulations and Standards), Chapter 7 (Special Planning Area Development Standards). *Note: As discussed above, the proposed project would replace the existing Stock Ranch SPA with the proposed project.*

The Sylvan Road - Woodside Drive Special Planning Area (SPA) is surrounded on three sides by the project site. The City Council's intent for this SPA is to allow development which will protect and preserve the creeks and floodplains in a natural condition, buffer future residents from commercial development to the south and from the traffic noise associated with Auburn Boulevard and Sylvan Road, provide for adequate circulation within the project site and adequate access to the major streets, encourage the establishment of a trail system and

preserve the residential character of this portion of the community by prohibiting the expansion of the commercial areas to the north and south into the area shown in Section 307-35.

Density in the Sylvan Road - Woodside Drive Special SPA is limited to 5 dwelling units per acre. Density in excess of 5 units may be approved by the Planning Commission as part of development plan approval for a portion of a development where corresponding areas are dedicated for the preservation of open space along natural streams, where there are significant groves of heritage or landmark trees, or in other environmentally sensitive areas.

**Discussion:** The proposed project includes zoning designations that will provide appropriate transitions between surrounding land uses. The Sylvan Road - Woodside Drive Special SPA is proposed to be surrounded by residential zoning (following rezone from MP to RD) which will allow development of residential uses proposed at a density of 8 units per acre. No commercial development is proposed adjacent to the SPA. Therefore, the project is **consistent** with surrounding SPA zoning.

### **Physically Divide an Established Community**

**Impact 4.1.4** The proposed project would provide infill on the largest remaining vacant parcel in the City. No impact would occur relative to dividing the community.

The proposed project would provide infill on the largest vacant parcel remaining in the City of Citrus Heights. Uses proposed would provide transition and variation in residential land use as well as expand the variety of commercial offerings in the City. The project will result in **no impact** to this issue.

### **Conflict with any applicable land use plan – Citrus Heights Draft General Plan**

**Impact 4.1.5** The proposed project is anticipated in the Draft General Plan and is consistent with applicable land use goals and policies contained in the plan. Therefore, no project conflicts would occur in association with the Draft General Plan.

The Draft City of Citrus Heights General Plan (June 2000) includes a Community Development Component that addresses future land uses throughout the City. The land area considered in the Guide is designated in the General Plan for three land uses: General Commercial, Low Density Residential (1 to 8 units per acre) and Open Space (refer to **Figure 4.12**). As shown on the Land Use Diagram, General Commercial uses are designated in two sites: one large site north of Arcade Creek and south of Auburn boulevard and the other site on the northwest corner of Stock Ranch and Sylvan Roads. Low Density Residential uses are shown south of Arcade Creek and north of Stock Ranch Road. Open Space uses are shown adjacent to Arcade Creek, east of Stock Ranch Road. Surrounding land uses designated on the Draft General Plan land use map (June, 2000) include Medium Density Residential, Public and General Commercial.

As previously noted, the plan has not been approved or adopted. As a result, modifications to the land use map may occur prior to adoption. The following discussion is provided to acknowledge the draft plan and anticipate potential land uses on the project site and surrounding areas:

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### ***Land Use - Goal 1: Ensure quality of development by establishing and maintaining an orderly land use pattern.***

Policies:

- 1.1 Development in the City shall occur as shown on *Map 1: Land Use Diagram* and *Table 3: Land Use Designations and Development Standards*.

**Discussion:** The proposed project is an infill project on the largest remaining piece of vacant land in the City. One of the project's development objectives is to "Implement a comprehensive land use strategy that ensures that development occurs in a unified manner rather than as a series of independent, unrelated projects." Development of the proposed commercial and residential uses on the project site is consistent with this objective as well as with Goal 1 of the Draft General Plan. Further, the land uses proposed for the project site **are consistent** with the Draft General Plan Land Use Map. However, the project would require an amendment to the Existing General Plan. In the event that the Draft General Plan is adopted prior to approval of the proposed project, the land use plan and development policies of the Stock Ranch Guide for Development will be **consistent** with and incorporated into the new General Plan, and the proposed amendment would not be necessary.

### ***Community Character and Identity - Goal 2: Preserve Citrus Heights' unique character and create a distinctive community identity.***

Policies:

- 2.1 Distinguish Citrus Heights from other communities through quality development that typifies the City's desired image.
- 2.4 Preserve individual neighborhoods and promote a prosperous business community.

**Discussion:** A development objective of Stock Ranch is to "Develop land uses that enhance the character of Citrus Heights and create a sense of place to uniquely distinguish the City." This objective is consistent with Goal 2 of the Draft General Plan. The project would support Goal 2 through development of the project site with sensitivity to the special features of the site (e.g. Arcade Creek) and the surrounding neighborhoods. The project includes open space (creek corridor, park), setbacks and landscaping to buffer on-site uses from surrounding neighborhoods. The project will provide additional housing, jobs, commercial and retail offerings as well as recreational activities that support Policy 2.1 and 2.4.

### **Neighborhoods - Goal 4: Ensure that new development is compatible within its neighborhood**

#### Policies:

- 4.1 Require new residential development to maintain or enhance the positive characteristics of the surrounding neighborhood.
- 4.2 Ensure that decisions concerning land use and development are not detrimental to the positive character and identity of existing residential neighborhoods in Citrus Heights.
- 4.4 Provide opportunities for interested and affected parties to have input in proposed planning activities as early stage as possible.

**Discussion:** One of the project's objectives is to "Develop land uses that enhance existing neighborhoods and provide linkages from neighborhoods to uses within the project." This objective is consistent with Goal 4 of the Draft General Plan.

The project's land use plan depicts residential uses clustered around the Woodside Lane SPA. Proposed single-family residential densities are compatible with surrounding neighborhoods south and east of Stock Ranch Road. Open space, setbacks and landscape treatments are incorporated throughout the project. The Design Guidelines specify architecture, landscape, streetscape and signage that will enhance the visual quality and compatibility of the project with surrounding land uses. Therefore, the project is **consistent** with Goal 4 and supporting policies 4.1, and 4.2. Public workshops have been conducted allowing the public to provide input on the project **consistent** with Policy 4.4.

### **Economic Development - Goal 17: Develop the Stock Ranch property with a mix of uses that enhance the City's economic base, are compatible with surrounding land uses, and are sensitive to natural resources.**

#### Policies:

- 17.1 Use a Sylvan Commerce Districtible planning approach for Stock Ranch to allow for a variety of uses and to respond to evolving market conditions and community needs.

#### Action:

- A. Prepare and adopt "A Guide for Development" of the Stock Ranch property.
- 17.2 Promote uses in Stock Ranch that can be economically supported, are financially feasible and self-sustaining, and maximize fiscal benefits to the City.
- 17.3 Promote development in Stock Ranch in a manner that creates an attractive, distinct, cohesive, high quality place. Features shall include: recognition of site

## 4.1 LAND USE

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and City history; good automobile and pedestrian connection; compatibility with surrounding land uses; avoids cut-through traffic; and maintains open space.

17.4 Incorporate trail, park, open space and public access along Arcade Creek.

17.5 Provide adequate infrastructure concurrent with development of Stock Ranch.

**Discussion:** The Guide identifies several planning principals and objectives that are similar to Policies 17.1 through 17.5. Moreover, the project proposes land uses supporting the intent of Goal 17 and fulfills the requirements of Action A. Therefore, the project is **consistent** with Goal 17 of the Draft General Plan and its associated policies.

### **Conflict with Any Applicable Habitat Conservation Plan or Natural Community Conservation Plan**

**Impact 4.1.6** The project site is not located within a Habitat Conservation Plan or Natural Community Conservation Plan. Therefore, no impact would occur.

The project site is within an urbanized area and is not included in any habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan. Therefore, the project will have **no impact**. (Please refer to Section 4.6 of this report for a discussion of potential impact to biological resources).

### **4.1.6 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS**

The proposed project would result in the development of approximately 129 acres of vacant land in the City of Citrus Heights. Although the Stock Ranch project would convert vacant land to urban uses, the project is in an urbanized area and is therefore an infill project. Stock Ranch accounted for in the cumulative list of projects included in the Draft General Plan. As a result, the cumulative effects of the project on land use have been fully considered in General Plan EIR. Therefore, impacts to land use resulting from the proposed project are considered **less than significant**.

## **REFERENCES**

City of Citrus Heights, 2000. *Draft General Plan Citrus Heights, California* (August 2000a).

City of Citrus Heights. *City of Citrus Heights General Plan: Draft Environmental Impact Report* (August 2000b)