

SPECIFIC PLAN

*Westside San Ramon*

November 1989

Amended May 1997



*City of San Ramon*

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# CHAPTER 1 Introduction and Background

## *Purpose of the Specific Plan*

The Westside Specific Plan, originally prepared in 1989 and updated in 1997, provides for the future conservation and development of approximately 3,300 acres of predominantly open hillside at the gateway to the City of San Ramon. The Plan was prepared to address issues and concerns which resulted from adoption of the City's Resource Conservation Overlay District, and it has been updated to incorporate Ordinance 197, affordable housing policies, and development proposals approved to date.

The Westside Specific Plan is intended to establish in more specific terms the nature, character and location of activities and development; to guide the orderly growth of the Westside; and to provide the basis for future implementing actions, including incorporation of portions of the site presently in the City's Sphere of Influence, extension of necessary utilities and services, and processing of development applications. The implementation of the Specific Plan will involve modification of City zoning, commitments to public and private improvements, and to development plans consistent with Specific Plan policies and design guidelines.

By its adoption and through the update, the Specific Plan serves to amend and implement the City's General Plan for this area. The City Council certified the Program EIR by Resolution No. 89-189 and adopted the Westside Specific Plan by Resolution No. 89-190 on October 31, 1989. The Westside has been rezoned consistent with the Specific Plan and implemented by Ordinance 172, which was adopted by the City Council on November 14, 1989.

## *Scope and Organization of the Plan*

The City's first General Plan in 1986 required that a Specific Plan be prepared for the Westside prior to consideration of development or zoning proposals. In 1990, the City adopted Ordinance 197, a general plan amendment by initiative. In addition to incorporating parts of the Resource Conservation Overlay District, Ordinance

197 provides development regulations for ridgelines, creeks, and slopes over 10%. This Plan's goals, objectives and policies reflect the intent of both Ordinance 197 and the Resource Conservation Overlay District, and includes affordable housing policies that are a part of the City's 1995 General Plan.

As required under California law (Government Code Section 65451, et. seq.), a Specific Plan is to contain:

- (a) . . . a text and diagram or diagrams which specify all of the following in detail:
- (1) *The distribution, location and extent of the uses of land, including open space, within the area covered by the plan.*
  - (2) *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.*



*View of Westside looking south along San Ramon Valley Boulevard.*

- (3) *Standards and criteria by which development will proceed and standards for the conservation, development and utilization of natural resources, where applicable.*
- (4) *A program of implementation measures including regulations, programs, public works projects and financing measures necessary to carry out paragraphs 1, 2 and 3 above.*

(b) *...a statement of the relationship of the Specific Plan with the General Plan.*

The specific planning process creates the opportunity to plan for a site comprehensively, as well as on the basis of more specific information than possible in a general plan or ordinance. A general plan is, by its nature, broad based, and is unlikely to address site-specific issues in great detail. On the other hand, an ordinance promulgates specific rules to be applied generically within a community and, therefore, seldom addresses the unique conditions and problems of a particular area or district in great depth. In contrast, a specific plan provides a forum for community input and discussion on specific issues and more detailed potential solutions. For a highly constrained site such as the Westside, it creates the vehicle for further examination of the implications of growth and development.

The Westside Specific Plan is organized into nine elements: Land Use and Housing, Circulation, Open Space and Conservation, Community Design, Public Services and Utilities, Hydrology, Geologic Safety, Implementation, and Consistency with Existing Policies. Each element includes background information, description of the plan concept, and proposed objectives and policies. Additionally, illustrations are provided to further indicate plan policies. Given the general scale of the illustrations in contrast with the detailed scale at which plan policies must be applied, the figures are illustrative and are not meant to be literally applied to specific development projects. When such projects are submitted to the City for review, these figures will be used to guide the application of the Plan's policies to the project. However, the Plan recognizes that a specific development project may show a physical design which varies from that shown by a given illustration but which still conforms to the policies. Similarly, the Land Use Plan map is not meant to be literally applied to specific development projects. Reasonable, contiguous adjustments in the boundaries or areas of designated uses on the Land Use Map may be allowed, provided that the



*View to the San Ramon Valley and Bishop Ranch.*

City determines that a specific development project still conforms to the objectives and policies of this Plan.

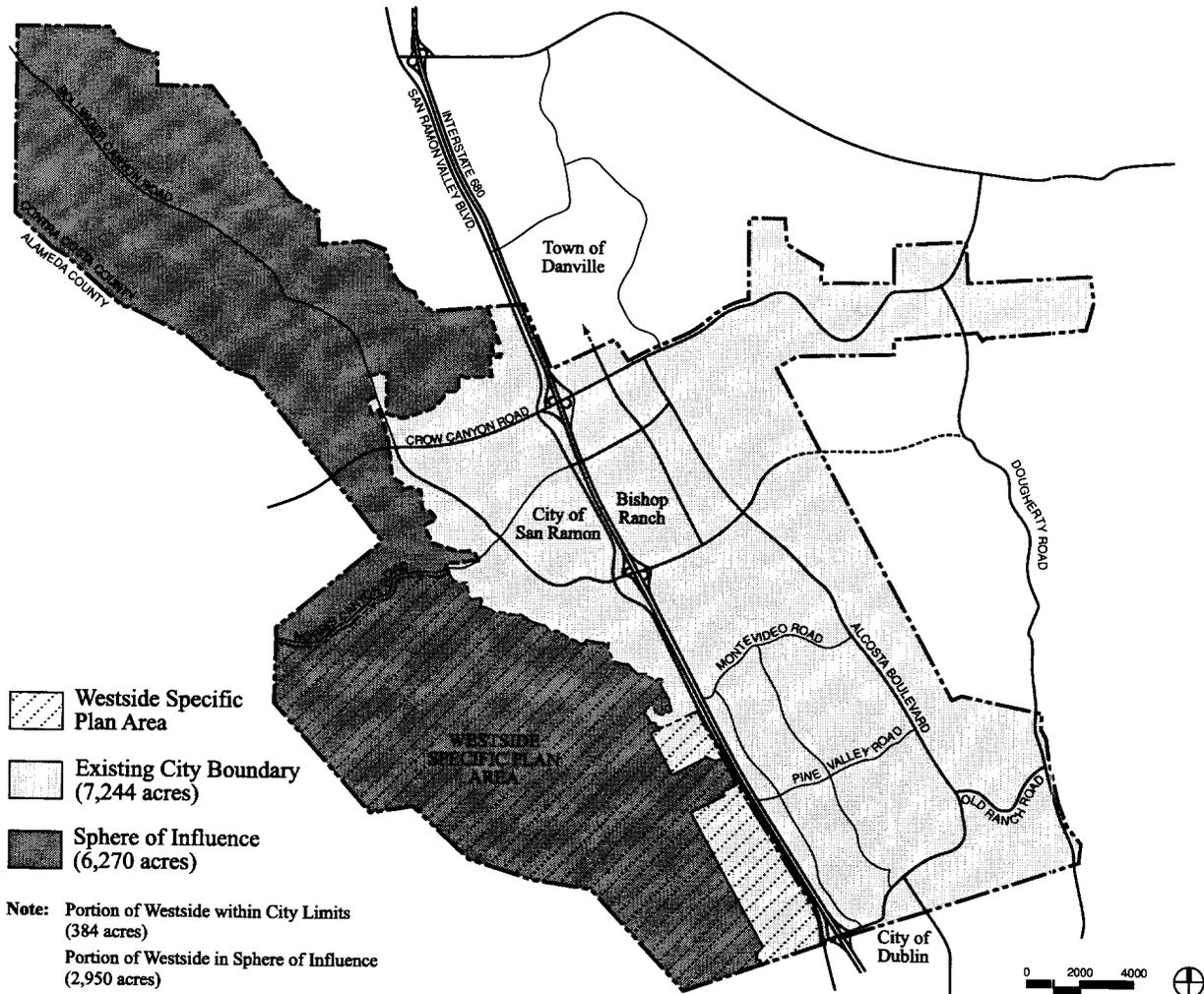
### *Site Location and Role within the City*

The Westside San Ramon planning area encompasses approximately 3,300 acres of predominantly unincorporated and undeveloped land adjacent to I-680 and San Ramon Valley Boulevard from Alcosta Boulevard on the south to Norris Canyon Road on the north and the Alameda County line on the west (see Figure 1.1). The site extends to peaks 1,400 feet above the valley floor in a series of parallel north-south trending ridges and deeply incised valleys and is ribboned in myriad streams and creeks, most of which are ephemeral in nature. The Westside is characteristic of a California foothills environment with more than 100 years of continuous cattle grazing.

Today, the area continues to be used primarily for cattle grazing, although some institutional (church) uses are located along San Ramon Valley Boulevard. Only a small portion of the site is within City limits, and the remaining portion is within the City's Sphere of Influence. In addition, only a small area is currently served by utility districts, and most of the site is outside the ultimate service boundaries of the East Bay Municipal Utility District.

The San Ramon Valley has been rapidly growing since the 1960's. In San Ramon, most of the developed areas are located on the valley floor and are beginning to extend up the slopes of the east side and into the Dougherty Valley. While there are large areas that have yet to be developed in the City and its Sphere, much of the existing character of the City comes from projects planned and approved before incorporation. Compared to other suburban communities, San Ramon has an ex-

FIGURE 1.1  
Site Context



tremely high employment base, as a result of the Bishop Ranch office business park. Planned expansion of Bishop Ranch is expected to generate some 26,000 employees at buildout; nearby Hacienda Business Park will generate an even higher number of employees. The Westside and other undeveloped lands within the City thus present a unique opportunity to provide housing in close proximity to jobs.

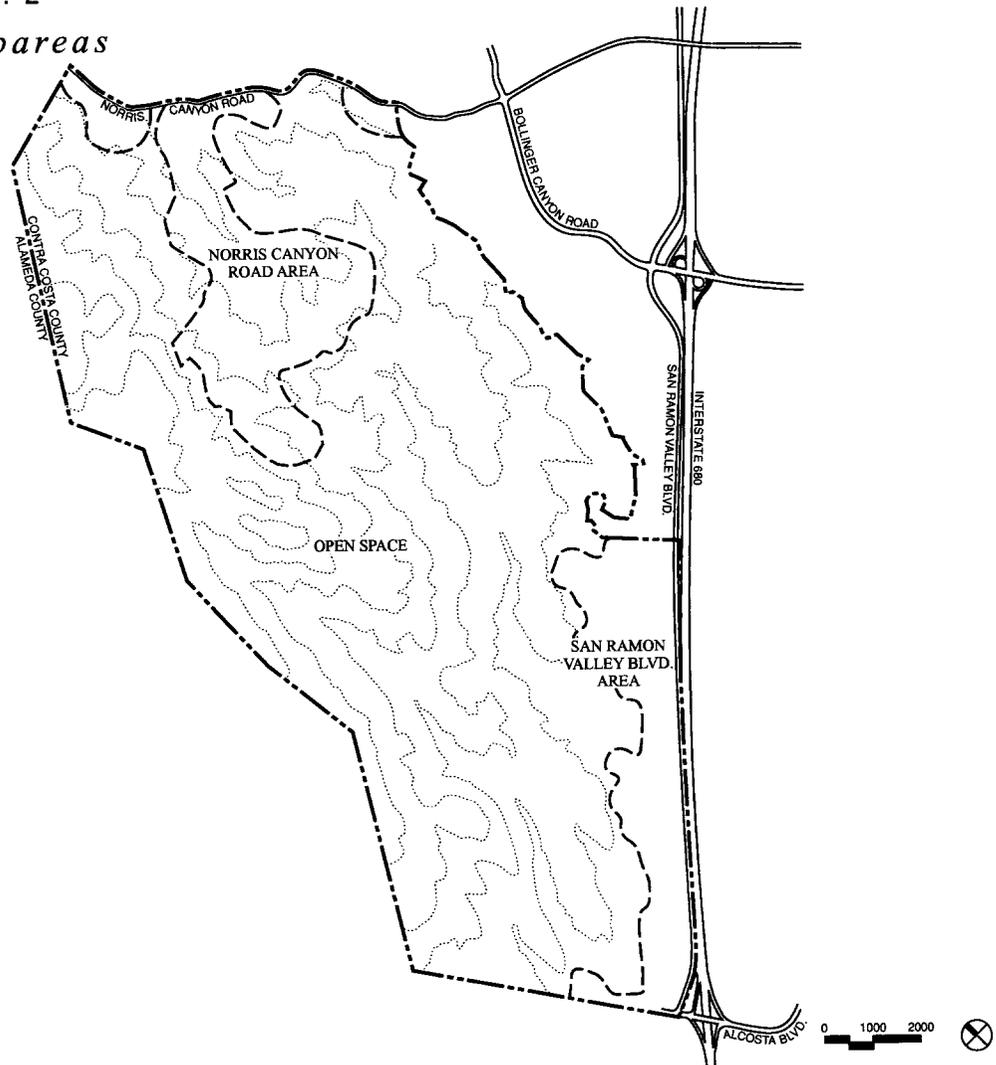
### Westside Planning Subareas

To facilitate the planning process and to focus more on site-related issues, the Westside was divided into three major subareas: the San Ramon Valley Boulevard area, the Norris Canyon Road area, and the remaining open space, which are shown on Figure 1.2. The subareas relate to geophysical characteristics of the natural land-

scape. Their boundaries generally break at ridges, and they encompass areas with generally similar characteristics. The San Ramon Valley Boulevard and Norris Canyon Road areas are "tributary" to adjacent roads, and the remaining open space area includes the major portion of the site comprised of steep slopes, ridgelines and creek valleys.

The Specific Plan provides for development within two discrete areas of the Westside, each with its own unique characteristics and implications on visual resources and urban design. The Norris Canyon Road area encompasses the larger San Catanio Valley adjacent to a rural road bisecting a narrow canyon. It is a steep site, with numerous creeks and valleys and, although relatively close to the City, it is contained on all sides by ridges and has a feeling of remoteness and isolation from surrounding suburban areas. There are a few homes lo-

FIGURE 1.2  
*Planning Subareas*



cated close to Norris Canyon Road, and the remaining portion of the site is open and primarily used for cattle grazing. In November 1992, Contra Costa County approved development plans for the Wiedemann Ranch Residential Community, which would allow 371 residential lots on 393 acres south of Norris Canyon Road, and three agricultural parcels totalling 598 acres. The agricultural parcels will be developed on lands subject to Williamson Act contracts.

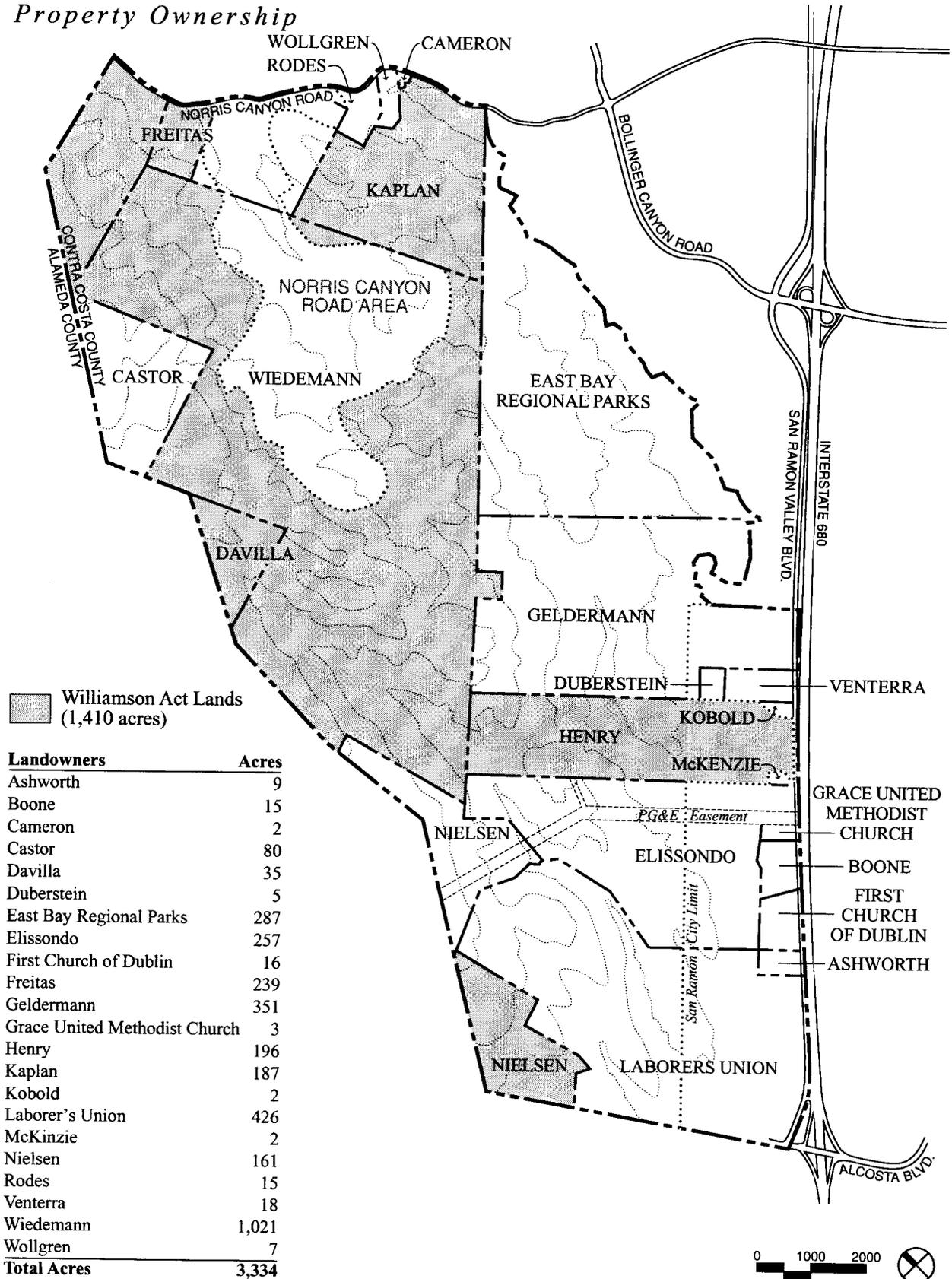
The San Ramon Valley Boulevard area lies adjacent to the heavily traveled routes of I-680 and San Ramon Valley Boulevard. Its tremendous visibility from these corridors and across the Valley makes it an important gateway to the City. It creates a landscape “wall” framing the San Ramon Valley and visually linking to the ridge known as the “Knife” (at the County line); see Figure 1.2. Slopes along the Boulevard are more gentle in nature than those adjacent to Norris Canyon Road,

and they provide an opportunity for a positive transition between the town, the freeway, and the hillsides which enclose it. The developable area, as defined by the Resource Conservation Overlay District and Ordinance 197, is limited to a linear and intermittent pattern following San Ramon Valley Boulevard.

Since the adoption of this Plan in 1989, three residential subdivisions and one commercial development have been approved adjacent to San Ramon Valley Boulevard. The Gateway Shopping Centre at the corner of Alcosta and San Ramon Valley Boulevards was approved in 1991, as were 104 single-family detached residences just north of the Gateway Shopping Centre. In 1993, 180 single- and multi-family homes were approved to be built on the Geldermann property adjacent to San Ramon Valley Boulevard. Three years later in 1996, the “Four Oaks” subdivision was approved with 53 single-family residences.

FIGURE 1.3

Property Ownership



## *Ownership and Easements*

Much of the land in the Westside has been in continuous ownership by ranching families descended from the original pioneers of the San Ramon Valley. In the size and configuration of land holdings, the Westside recalls the extensive land grant ranches dating from the Spanish secularization of the landscape in the 1800's. Many of the properties in the Westside are over 200 acres in size, are in agricultural preserves under the Williamson Act (see Figure 1.3), do not adjoin local roads, and extend over the "Knife" (the ridgeline at the County line) to include land in Alameda County.

In addition to recently-approved subdivisions, some smaller division of land has occurred along the front-

age of existing improved roads, particularly San Ramon Valley Boulevard. In the hillsides to the west of developed subdivisions, approximately 300 acres of land have been dedicated for open space purposes and are owned by the East Bay Regional Park District. In addition, the portion of the Geldermann property immediately to the west of the Twin Creeks project has been restricted in its deed to a maximum of five dwelling units.

There are a number of easements which affect the development of properties within the Westside. A Pacific Gas & Electric easement for high voltage transmission lines crosses the southerly portion of the site in an east-west axis on the Elissondo/Ove property, and transmission towers are located on the Wiedemann property with underground easements to Norris Canyon Road.

# CHAPTER 2 *Plan Summary*

## *Description of Overall Plan Concepts*

The Westside Specific Plan emphasizes the preservation of the majority of the planning area in open space. Open space serves as a visual resource to the entire community that should be accessible to the general public through recreational trails, and managed over the long term for both enhanced productivity and environmental quality.

The Westside Specific Plan concentrates development primarily within areas adjacent to existing roads, and the type and character of development reflects the unique qualities of each of these two distinct areas. In the more visible San Ramon Valley Boulevard area, gateway qualities are emphasized and an open, welcoming community encouraged, with a positive relationship to the existing community and the high ridges and steep hillsides to the west. In the rugged terrain of the Norris Canyon area, the emphasis of the Plan is placed on the creative integration of buildings with the site and the establishment of a high quality hillside community. In contrast to the San Ramon Valley Boulevard area, where development is concentrated along the road, most of the development in the Norris Canyon Road area is kept back from the main road to maintain the rural feeling of this area.

The balance of the site is to be maintained as open space. Recreational and fire trails connect the open space with developed areas. A limited amount of development (1 dwelling unit per 200 acres) would be permitted off of existing roads and a rustic conference center/camp facility is planned in the Koopman Canyon area. An emphasis on the proper management of the open space is made in the Specific Plan, as well as the creation of attractive transitions between developed and undeveloped areas.

## *Principal Features of the Plan*

The following summarizes some of the key features of the Westside Specific Plan:

## Resource Conservation

- Roughly 80 percent of the Westside planning area (or approximately 2,655 acres) is to remain open and undeveloped, because of its inherent scenic and natural qualities.
- A limited amount of development (1 dwelling unit per 200 acres) will be allowed in open space areas off of existing roads.
- With the exception of approximately 300 acres of land within the East Bay Regional Park District's Bishop Ranch Open Space, the undeveloped lands are expected to remain primarily in private ownership and managed as open space, with agricultural and recreational activities allowed. General guidelines for environmental management, which specify stocking levels, planting programs and periodic surveying of range management practices, are incorporated with the Specific Plan. These guidelines further address the relationship of developed areas to the open space areas in order to minimize potential conflicts between users.
- The most heavily vegetated portion of Big Canyon, which is currently in private ownership, could be set aside as a nature preserve, allowing no grazing or development, and with carefully controlled public access. The creation of this nature preserve would require the active participation and cooperation of these private property owners.
- A rustic conference center or camp may be developed in a portion of Koopman Canyon in an area already accessible by existing roads.
- Regional recreational trails will be established and maintained under special easements by the East Bay Regional Park District or other appropriate public agency, and will connect

parks, recreational areas and developed areas with the regional open space system.

- A recreational trail along San Catanio Creek will also be developed by the City, consistent with existing City policies.
- Fire trails will be maintained to provide access throughout the area for fire vehicles and prevention activities, and grazing encouraged to give protection against fire.
- The open space will be managed in such a way as to minimize erosion and potential hazards, to protect and enhance wildlife values, and to encourage public access to resources in selected locations.
- Preservation of all major and minor ridgelines as defined by the City's Resource Conservation Overlay District, stream corridors, and slopes over 20 percent, is encouraged within the City's Sphere of Influence, and required within City boundaries.
- Off-site surface water runoff will not exceed existing conditions, nor will development increase off-site flood hazards.
- Approaches to conservation of water resources are encouraged by limiting irrigated areas, encouraging drought-tolerant plantings, dual water systems, and other water conservation measures.



*Steep hills and creek valleys define the Westside landscape.*

## Image and Identity

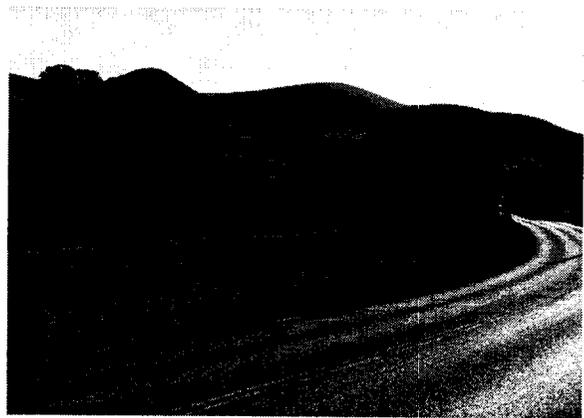
- The predominant open space identity of the Westside landscape will be preserved, and development will be concentrated in approximately 20 percent of the overall planning area.
- Development in the Norris Canyon Road area will be primarily located away from the road and adjacent to the cross valley ridge.
- Development will be confined to slopes less than 20 percent in the San Ramon Valley Boulevard area, and the development pattern defined by a series of open spaces and parks extending to agricultural open spaces to the west and by landscaped setback areas along the road.
- A minimal amount of woodland is removed to accommodate development as shown in the illustrative site plan for the San Ramon Valley Boulevard area. In general, removed woodland areas and riparian vegetation shall be replaced at a 3 to 1 ratio.

## Housing

- An estimated 1,289 dwelling units are assumed in the Plan.
- Of the residential units, approximately 900 units would be single-family units, 175 would be multi-family, and 200 (as a base) would be senior housing. Approximately 14 dwelling units are permitted in the open space area.
- Maximum number of dwelling units per parcel will be determined by a slope analysis pursuant to Ordinance 197. Specifically, above the 500-foot elevation, residential development is limited to one dwelling unit per one (1) acre on slopes between 10% and 15%, and to one unit per five (5) acres on slopes between 15% and 20%. For areas of 10% slope or less, density will be determined by the Plan's underlying zoning districts. Development is prohibited in areas with slopes of 20% or greater.
- A variety of different types of housing is encouraged, with densities ranging from less than 2 dwelling units per net acre in the Norris Canyon Road development area to approximately 22 dwelling units per net acre for se-

nior housing. Residential densities within the San Ramon Valley Boulevard development area average approximately 7 dwelling units per net acre, or 6 dwelling units per net acre not considering the senior housing. Gross density for the entire Westside planning area is less than .5 dwelling units per acre. With an overall site size of 5 square miles, this would amount to an average of roughly 680 people per square mile.

- In the Norris Canyon Road area, large lot, single-family housing will be built on lots of 15,000 square feet up to more than one acre in size. To encourage neighborhood diversity and take advantage of site opportunities, up to 20 percent of the total number of units in this area may be allowed, if developed in clusters and in suitable areas, with a minimum lot size of 7,000 square feet.
- In the San Ramon Valley Boulevard area, higher densities are allowed along the road adjacent to Pine Valley Road, on the senior housing site, and when affordable housing is integrated with market-rate housing. The minimum 7,000 square foot lot required for detached housing adjacent to San Ramon Valley Boulevard may be modified in exchange for affordable housing. Larger single-family lots are located in upland areas to the west of Westside Drive for a better transition to the open space and are provided for at a minimum of 10,000 square feet. Residential lots should increase in size from the 10,000 sq.ft. minimum as their proximity to open space increases, and when sited in uphill locations.
- Each development plan will be encouraged to include housing that is affordable to low- and moderate-income families. The City will enter into affordable housing agreements with the developer to ensure the provision of housing for all income levels, with preference given to those who work in San Ramon.
- Design guidelines and standards are set forth to encourage the highest quality residential environment that responds to the constraints inherent in the natural landscape. These guidelines, which are described in the accompanying Appendix, address issues related to grading, site design, building height, massing and character, landscape transitions and planting,



*The rural character of Norris Canyon Road will be maintained, and development set back a minimum of 100 feet.*

treatment of walls and fences, and character of entries, streets and parking areas.

#### Other Uses

- The Gateway Shopping Centre has been built adjacent to Alcosta Boulevard, providing approximately 115,000 square feet of neighborhood retail uses.
- Public and semi-public uses (the area of the Laborer's Camp facility and the potential conference center/camp site) and other institutional uses, including educational and health-related facilities, as well as churches and cemeteries, are allowed on a conditional use basis throughout the San Ramon Valley Boulevard area.
- The Plan provides for approximately 36 acres of parks. One park is planned within the Wiedemann Ranch Residential Community in the Norris Canyon Road area, and four parks totalling approximately 29 acres are shown adjacent to San Ramon Valley Boulevard. Connections to regional open space from residential neighborhoods and parks will be from publicly owned and maintained trails, for which staging areas will be provided in park areas only.

#### Circulation

- A hierarchy of streetscape improvements is included to serve future needs of the Westside as well as the surrounding community. These include a four-lane arterial on San Ramon



*Trails would take advantage of panoramic views from ridgelines.*

- Valley Boulevard; a two-lane collector along Norris Canyon Road; primary and secondary hillside roads; and all-weather access roads giving limited access to the interior of the site.
- San Ramon Valley Boulevard is widened to a right-of-way dimension of 100 feet, with four through lanes. Roadway widening will occur toward the west, to avoid potentially projecting into Caltrans' right-of-way for I-680.
- Norris Canyon Road is widened to a pavement width of 34 feet to reflect current standards for lane width and to accommodate emergency parking and bikeways.
- Design guidelines are set forth for hillside streets, with more narrow than standard widths and slopes of up to 20 percent to minimize the need for potential grading. Guidelines have been developed to address the siting, landscaping and general character of streets within the Westside.
- The Alcosta interchange is improved with a "hook-ramp" configuration, which will include new southbound on- and off-ramps hooking to San Ramon Valley Boulevard, just north of Alcosta Boulevard.

- Signalized intersections are provided along San Ramon Valley Boulevard at Alcosta, the Alcosta interchange ramp improvements, Pine Valley Road and Montevideo Drive. On Norris Canyon Road, left hand turn pockets would be provided at the major entries to the developed areas.

#### Parks and Open Space

- Approximately 36 acres of parkland are included in the Plan, with approximately 7 acres in the Norris Canyon Road area and 29 acres in the San Ramon Valley Boulevard area.
- A rustic conference center, which may be privately owned, would serve as a community facility of a recreational nature.
- A trail system would be developed and maintained by the East Bay Regional Park District or other public agency to connect parks and open spaces to the Calaveras Ridge Trail at the Las Trampas Ridge.
- Open space would be privately owned and maintained and primarily used for grazing. Dwellings built in the open space area would be encouraged to be in locations that conform to the City's RCOD requirements and where they could be served by existing roads. Residences would need to be self sufficient in terms of water and sewer services (i.e., wells and septic tanks or community leachfields).
- A nature preserve in a portion of Big Canyon would have limited public access and would



*The hills provide a backdrop of open space for San Ramon and surrounding communities.*

be protected from encroachment by people, domestic animals and livestock.

- Common open space would be set aside and maintained as visual easements connecting the San Ramon Valley Boulevard area to the western undeveloped hillsides. In the Norris Canyon Road area, common open spaces would protect much of the viewshed from the road and would include stream corridors.

#### Utility Service

- The Norris Canyon Road area is within the service boundaries of the East Bay Municipal Utility District for water and the Central Contra Costa Sanitary District for sewer service. Development in this area will require major infrastructural improvements in terms of sewer and water extensions and water storage tanks (every 200-foot elevation above the 650-foot elevation as required by East Bay Municipal Utility District).
- Much of the San Ramon Valley Boulevard area is within water and sewer service districts and can be easily served, but utility extensions to specific sites are required.

#### Noise and Safety

- A careful review will be made by qualified professional engineers prior to the approval of any proposed development or land alteration within the Alquist-Priolo zone in the vicinity of the Calaveras faultline and in other geologically sensitive areas to ensure that the



*Development along the freeway is subject to higher noise levels than elsewhere in the city.*



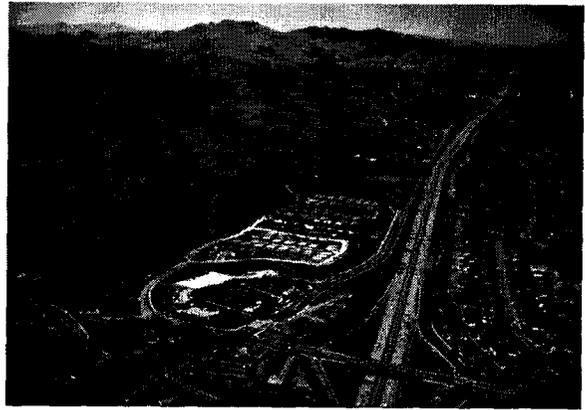
*A major PG&E easement traverses the site from east to west.*

health, safety and welfare of residents are protected as development occurs.

- All uses will conform to any and all federal, state and local statutes, codes, ordinances, rules and regulations governing the health, safety and welfare of the public.
- Particularly along San Ramon Valley Boulevard, where noise levels are high, creative solutions to noise mitigation are encouraged.
- A minimum 20-foot setback with a 30-foot average width is provided along the west side of San Ramon Valley Boulevard, in order to accommodate noise mitigations that do not rely on sound walls and steep berms.
- The highest standards of professional care will be followed in grading and development of the Westside, particularly on or near active earthquake faults, landslide prone areas, other geologically unstable soils, and areas of potential fire hazard.
- Fire trails will be maintained to give access to the interior of the Westside.
- Two means of access and egress to major roads would be provided in development areas.

## Implementation

- Phasing of development would occur according to accessibility, service availability, annexation, and cancellation of Williamson Act contracts.
- Development in the Westside may precede the implementation of the Alcosta interchange improvements.
- Landowners will be responsible for petitioning the City to form public finance programs in the San Ramon Valley Boulevard area to implement improvements.



*Development is proceeding along San Ramon Valley Boulevard.*

### *Primary Goal*

The overall goal for the Westside is to preserve the open space character of the area and, at the same time, create a high quality, attractive community of lasting value which enhances the unique visual and scenic qualities of the area and links regional and local-serving recreational areas within a larger open space system.

### *Supporting Goals and Objectives*

#### Environmental Preservation

The majority of the Westside should remain open and undeveloped and its scenic, recreational, open space and wildlife values enhanced. Major ridgelines, creek corridors, woodland, and steep slopes visible from San Ramon Valley Boulevard should be protected from development. Agricultural and grazing activities should be encouraged to continue over most of the area, observing the best management practices for maintaining and improving environmental quality. A portion of the Big Canyon area should be preserved as habitat for wildlife. Public access to scenic resources should be encouraged through trails, bikeways, parks, and the development of a rustic conference center/camp.

#### Pattern of Development

Development should be permitted in those areas where constraints can be minimized and environmental opportunities for development exist. The development pattern should be determined by the organization and character of open spaces. It should be excluded from major ridges visible from San Ramon Valley Boulevard; from creeks and earthquake faults; and in the most heavily vegetated portion of Big Canyon. In the San Ramon Valley Boulevard area, development should be concentrated in the lower slopes, with higher intensity uses adjacent to the road and lower density uses in the higher elevations. In the Norris Canyon Road area, development should be concentrated away from the road and, to a great extent, concealed from view of the road and from San Ramon Valley Boulevard. Development

should generally decrease in density as elevation increases away from existing residential areas, for a more positive transition to the surrounding landscape. Clustered development should be encouraged to improve diversity and to take advantage of site opportunities in the Norris Canyon Road area.

#### Residential Development

The Westside should offer a wide range of housing opportunities that are unlikely to be available in other parts of the City. These should be distinguished by high quality residential design standards carefully fitted to the constrained hillside environment, by a range of housing intensities and choices, and by a larger community identity characteristic of a master planned project, rather than a series of discrete and separate subdivisions.

#### Land Use Relationships

Potential conflicts between uses in the Westside, particularly between residential development, recreation and agriculture, should be minimized. Development should contribute to the overall enhancement of the environment and create positive linkages between the City of San Ramon and its undeveloped hillsides.

#### Image and Identity

Development should offer opportunities to create a positive image and identity for the City of San Ramon; build upon natural resources and scenic character; give structure and orientation to the urban environment; and foster creativity and innovation in fitting new development within a highly constrained natural landscape. A coherent pattern of development should be organized around a series of open spaces and natural areas.

#### Community Services

Necessary services to support the residential population and contribute to the overall livability of the community should be provided. For example, provision should be made for recreational trails, parks, and retail shopping.

## Infrastructure

Ensure that infrastructure is extended to best serve permitted uses, and that improvements are made which will best help meet community needs. Ensure that those benefiting from public improvements share fairly in the cost of such improvements and are not burdened by having to assume an excessive share of the costs.

## Safety

Ensure that development occurs in a fashion which minimizes public exposure to hazards affecting health, safety and general welfare.

## Growth Management

Development should be phased so that it corresponds



*Overview of the Norris Canyon Road area.*

with accessibility, the timing of service availability (in particular, water and sewer), annexation, and cancellation of Williamson Act contracts.

# CHAPTER 4 | Land Use and Housing

## *Land Use Policy Context*

Prior to incorporation of San Ramon in 1983, the Westside had been designated by the 1977 San Ramon Valley Area General Plan as an agricultural preserve, with open space and limited country estates on the gentler slopes adjacent to San Ramon Valley Boulevard. With the adoption of the San Ramon General Plan in 1986 and in response to the wishes of the Westside landowners, it was recognized that some limited development could be permitted on the land while still preserving the rich natural landscape. Residential, rather than retail or office development, was generally felt to be more in keeping with maintaining the open space character of the Westside hills. In addition, residential development would provide housing for the several thousands of jobs which have been created in San Ramon in recent years, and would help to achieve a balancing of housing with jobs.

## *Demographic Context*

The December 1995 population for San Ramon is approximately 40,660 persons. Buildout population of the San Ramon General Plan in 2010 is expected to be approximately 49,000. It is estimated that development



*The construction of the Caldecott Tunnel opened the San Ramon Valley to growth and development.*

in the Dougherty Valley will increase the population to 60,000 in the next 13 years.

The number of persons per household in San Ramon is currently estimated by the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) to be 2.76, which is slightly above the County average of 2.71. The number of persons owning their home in San Ramon (66%) is also similar to the County as a whole (68%). ABAG ranks San Ramon seventh from the 22 jurisdictions in Contra Costa County in mean household income. At buildout of the General Plan in 2010, ABAG estimates that San Ramon will have a total of 48,350 jobs.

ABAG estimated that in 1995, the jobs/employed residents ratio was 1.35 in San Ramon. In other words, the fact that there were fewer employed residents than jobs indicates that there was a net in-commute of workers from outside the City to jobs within San Ramon. This is due to the large employment base in San Ramon, particularly the Bishop Ranch Business Park. ABAG estimates that job growth will continue to outpace the number of employed residents, and in 2010, the ratio of jobs/employed residents will be 1.7.

## *Market Context*

In 1995, San Ramon had 9,422 detached and 5,881 attached dwelling units, for a total of 15,303 units. Residential zoning would allow a total of 2,857 additional dwelling units within City boundaries (including land in the Westside Specific Plan), which would bring the total housing stock to approximately 18,160 dwelling units in 2010. Dougherty Valley development will add an estimated 4,000 units by that same year.

Based on previous market studies prepared for property owners in the Westside area, there has been a strong demand for both single-family and multi-family housing in San Ramon. The forces driving demand include increased levels of employment at the Bishop Ranch and Hacienda business parks, desirable amenities and schools.

## Retail

From the preceding demographic analysis, it is expected that San Ramon will continue to attract relatively affluent households, who will tend to be small households, some without children, attracted by employment opportunities in the I-680 corridor. It is expected that this demographic base will exhibit high levels of retail spending.

## Description of Land Use

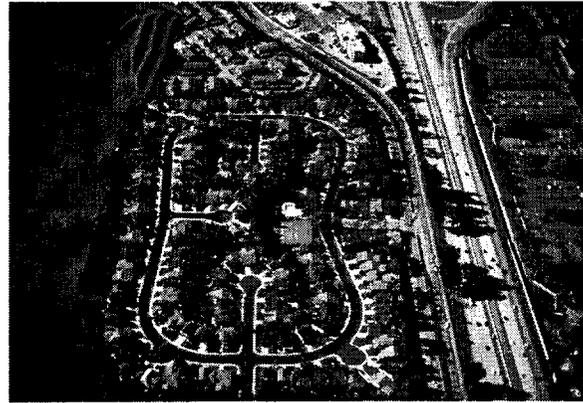
The Westside Specific Plan provides for the continuation of agricultural activities and the development of residential uses, with an estimated 1,289 dwelling units and 3,558 new residents (using ABAG assumptions of 2.76 persons per household). This equals approximately seven percent of the total population at buildout of the General Plan in 2010.

Of the estimated 1,289 dwelling units, 200 (base only) are attached senior housing units, approximately 175 are multi-family townhouse units, and approximately 900 are detached single-family dwelling units. At a density of one dwelling unit per 200 acres, 14 dwelling units would be permitted in the open space area. In addition, the Plan allows a 10-acre retail shopping center (which was built in 1994), a rustic conference facility or camp, and approximately 36 acres of new public parks.

As shown on the Land Use Plan map (see Figure 4.1), the Specific Plan includes five residential categories, ranging from large lot single-family in the upland por-



*Residential development in the Westside will provide housing close to jobs at Bishop Ranch.*



*Development within Westside San Ramon will be predominantly residential.*

tions of the Norris Canyon area to multi-family and senior housing adjacent to San Ramon Valley Boulevard. There is no commitment to approve the estimated number of units within either development subarea, as shown in Table 4.1. Final approvals will be based on such factors as geologic safety, slope analysis pursuant to Ordinance 197, views and visual appearance, and the design integrity of the proposed project.

## Open Space

This category is intended to encourage the continuance of cattle grazing activities in the area. In the open space, residential development is permitted at a density of 1 dwelling unit per 200 acres. In the nature preserve area, however, which may be located in a portion of Big Canyon, neither grazing nor agricultural uses would be permitted.

## Parks

This category includes proposed parks, but does not include private common area open spaces or the proposed nature preserve, which is a part of the open space designation and requires active property owner participation.

The Land Use Plan map and an illustrative plan (see Figure 4.2) indicate designated locations for residential development. An estimated 450 dwelling units are allowed in the Norris Canyon Road area, with the majority concentrated away from the road. An estimated 825 dwelling units are allowed in the San Ramon Valley Boulevard area, with lot sizes increasing with elevation. The senior housing site is shown to be located on the property belonging to the Baptist Church, which has expressed interest in pursuing the development of such housing. Parks are distributed throughout the San

# CHAPTER 4 | Land Use and Housing

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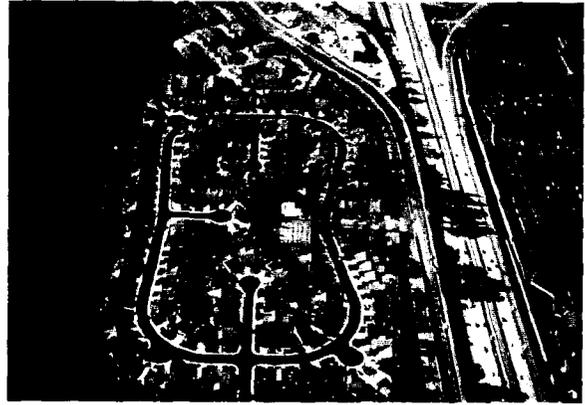
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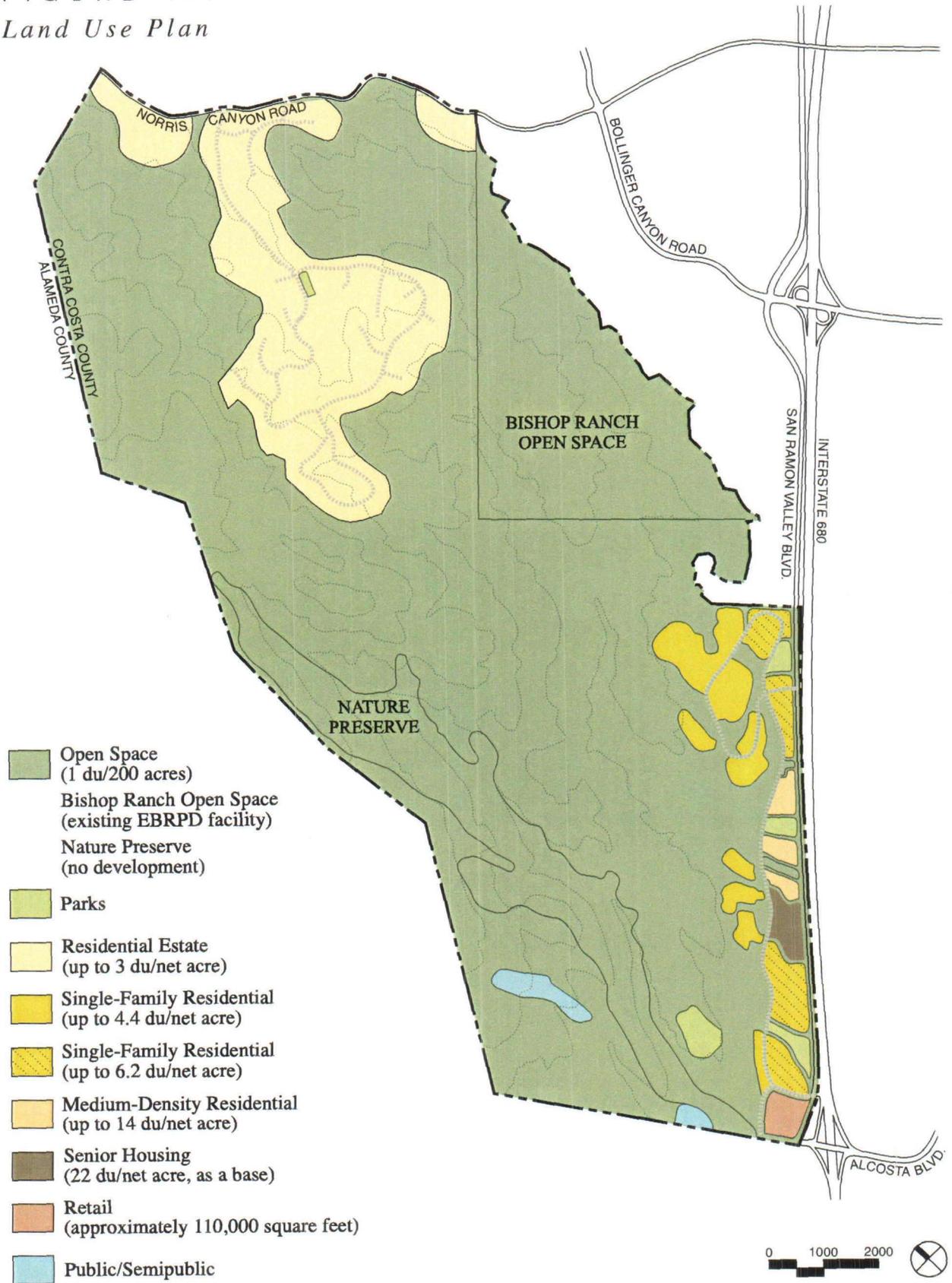
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FIGURE 4.1  
*Land Use Plan*



T A B L E 4 . 1

*Estimated Residential Units by Subareas*

<u>San Ramon Valley Boulevard Area</u>	
Single-Family Detached	450 units
Multiple Family	175 units
Senior Housing	200 units
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>825 units</b>
<u>Norris Canyon Road Area</u>	
Single-Family Detached	450 units
<u>Open Space Area</u>	
Single-Family Detached	14 units
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>(approximately) 1,289 units</b>

Ramon Valley Boulevard area in locations which are intended to maximize accessibility from surrounding residential areas. In addition, the Gateway shopping center has been built adjacent to the Alcosta interchange.

**Residential**

The four residential categories include:

1. Residential Estate

In the Norris Canyon Road area, large lot single-family homes are permitted at a minimum lot size of 15,000 square feet; minimum lot sizes of 20,000 square feet are encouraged in very steep situations.

2. Single-Family Residential

In the San Ramon Valley Boulevard area, single-family detached dwelling units on lots of a minimum 7,000 square feet would be permitted, and in the Norris Canyon Road area, in clusters of up to 20 percent of the estimated number of units (or 75 dwelling units of the estimated 450). In the upland locations to the west of Westside Drive in the San Ramon Valley Boulevard area, a minimum 10,000 square foot lot would be required.

3. Medium Residential Density

Medium density residential allows for detached and attached unit types in the lower elevations and closer to San Ramon Valley Boulevard and Pine Valley Road, to the north of the senior housing site.

4. Senior Housing

Senior housing would be allowed at a density of 22 (as a base) dwelling units to the acre.

Other land use categories include:

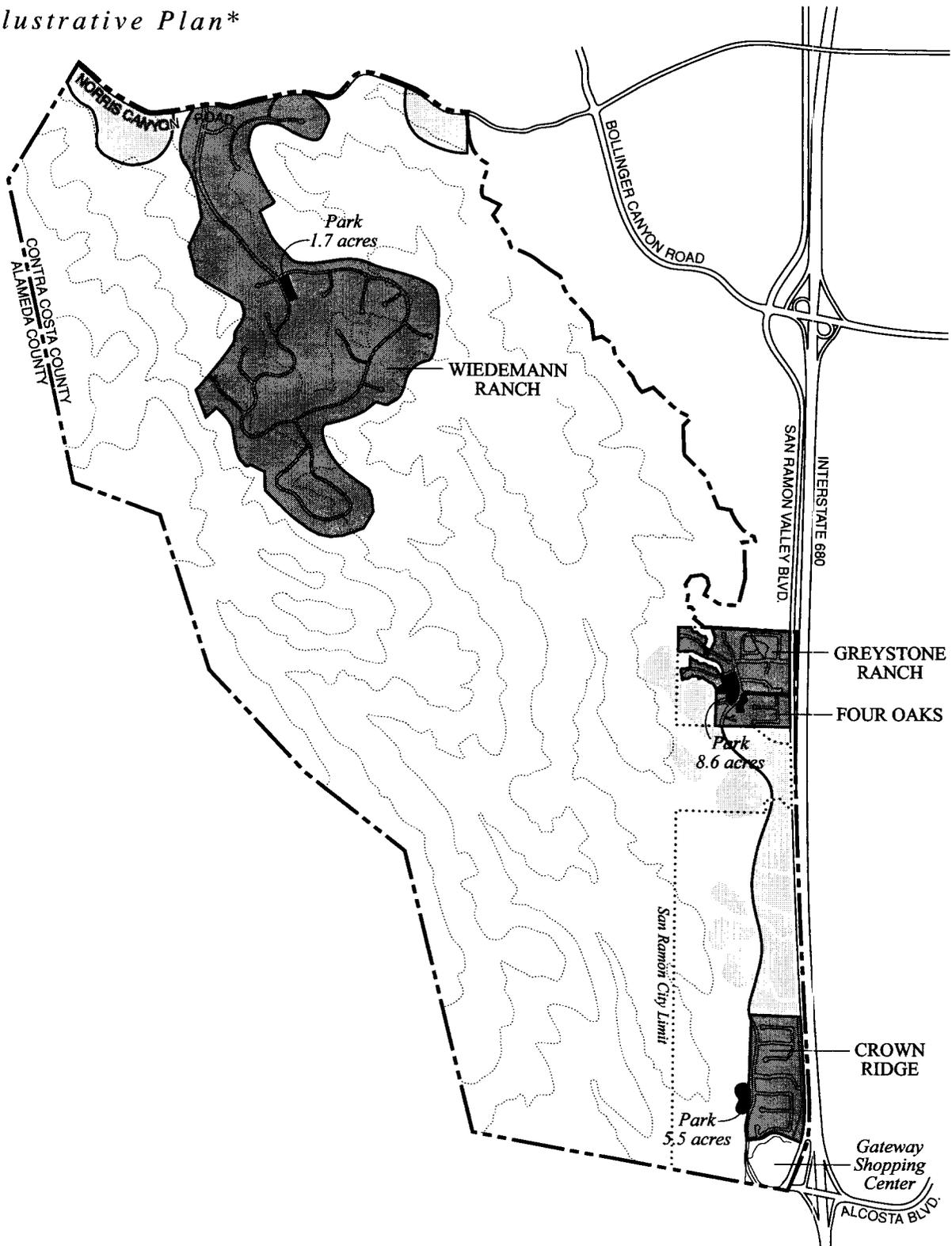
**Retail Shopping**

The Gateway Centre is approximately 115,000 square feet of retail stores, restaurants and personal, business and financial services.

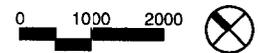
**Public and Semipublic**

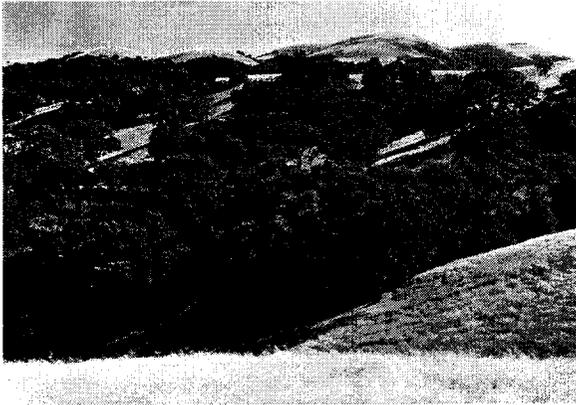
As set forth in the General Plan, this land use category would include schools, hospitals, and related medical offices, religious institutions, utilities and quasi-public uses. These uses are specifically shown only for the existing Laborer's Union facility and the rustic conference center or camp located in Koopman Canyon. Other

FIGURE 4.2  
*Illustrative Plan\**



\* This plan shows subdivisions approved as of May 1997, and also illustrates where future development could occur in the Westside area.





*The Westside provides an opportunity to maintain the hillside landscape in open space.*

institutional uses would be allowed in the San Ramon Valley Boulevard area on a conditional use basis.

### *Land Use Plan Policies*

1. Maintain existing agricultural uses within the Open Space land use designation.
2. Locate residential areas according to access, slope analysis, and environmental constraints.
3. Allow residential development of approximately 1,289 dwelling units, as shown in the Land Use Plan map (see Figure 4.1).
4. Allow for higher density housing associated with a senior housing site along San Ramon Valley Boulevard, and when below-market-rate housing is provided pursuant to the City's Affordable Housing Density Bonus.

5. Permit public and semipublic (institutional) uses as of right in specific sites and on a conditional use basis throughout the San Ramon Valley Boulevard area.
6. Integrate a retail shopping center as well as parks and open spaces as support services within the residential community.
7. Utilize the design standards and guidelines set forth in the Community Design Element and the Appendix as criteria for evaluating future development applications.
8. As a minimum, follow the submission requirements for development applications as set forth in the Resource Conservation Overlay District Ordinance, with the exception that detailed visual analyses using techniques such as computer simulation of project impacts should also be required. (See design review procedures described in the Community Design Element.)



*The scenic character of the Westside should be preserved as new development occurs.*

### *Existing Context*

The Westside Planning Area is immediately west of I-680 and accessible via the Alcosta Boulevard interchange at the south end and the Bollinger Canyon and Crow Canyon interchanges at the north end. San Ramon Valley Boulevard narrows to a two-lane roadway for the portion that borders the Westside between Montevideo Drive and Alcosta Boulevard. This two mile stretch of the Boulevard is currently being widened to four lanes in connection with development of the Westside Plan area. It currently carries up to 11,650 vehicles daily along the Westside boundary and is nearing the capacity ceiling for a two-lane roadway. San Ramon Valley Boulevard is designated as a route of regional significance in the Tri-Valley Transportation Plan.

Norris Canyon Road is a winding, narrow, two-lane collector road that serves as the northern border for the Westside. Within the Specific Plan area, it has two lanes with minimal shoulders. At an average of 1,800 vehicles daily, it is currently far below capacity. No significant public streets or roads penetrate to the interior of the Westside.

San Ramon Valley Boulevard currently has bicycle lanes, but Norris Canyon Road is too narrow to support



*The construction of I-680 was the catalyst for development of the San Ramon Valley.*

bicycle lanes. A Central Contra Costa Transit Authority bus route provides service to the Walnut Creek BART station principally via San Ramon Valley Boulevard, Tareyton Avenue, and Bollinger Canyon Road. A Livermore-Amador Valley Transit Authority bus route serves the southeast corner of the Westside Planning Area, as well as Stoneridge Mall and Hacienda Business Park. Public transit service is provided to and from the Dublin/Pleasanton BART station.

### *Transportation Policies*

#### Guiding Policies

1. Maintain intersection Level of Service "D" or better at all study area arterial roadway intersections during peak hours. (Level of Service "D" indicates tolerable delays in which drivers may occasionally wait through more than one red indication.)
2. Provide for maintenance of Transportation Service Objectives (TSOs) as established in the Tri-Valley Transportation Plan and the Contra Costa Transportation and Growth Management Program (Measure C).
3. Provide improved freeway access to the Westside and ameliorate the existing problem caused by the southbound I-680/Alcosta Boulevard off-ramp being located too close to San Ramon Valley Boulevard.
4. Provide traffic signals and stop signs where warranted within the guidelines of the Caltrans Traffic Manual.
5. Adopt an internal roadway system that provides continuity with existing San Ramon and Dublin streets, provides sufficient capacity for projected traffic, and allows direct access to land uses. The internal roadway system should have a clear hierarchy of roadway facility types

that serves different purposes and helps drivers orient themselves.

6. Establish specific horizontal and vertical alignments for Norris Canyon Road, San Ramon Valley Boulevard and Westside Drive to ensure orderly and coordinated development of these roads.
7. Align roadways in consideration of the topographic character of hillside areas. Roads with cross-slope alignments should undulate and incorporate street trees to minimize visual impact.
8. Minimize street widths and on-street parking in hillside areas to reduce grading and construction impacts.
9. Provide bicycle and pedestrian facilities suitable for commuter, school, and recreational trips.
10. Provide transit support facilities to increase the attractiveness to potential passengers.
11. Provide improved transit service to key employment and retail centers and the Dublin/Pleasanton BART station.
12. Protect existing residential neighborhoods from substantial increases in through traffic.

#### Internal Roadway Policies

1. *San Ramon Valley Boulevard Area Collector Road System* - Provide a north-south collector "spine road" (Westside Drive) linked to nearby San Ramon Valley Boulevard by three east-west collector roads.
2. *Stop Signs* should be provided to control minor street traffic at all intersections of collector roads with arterial roads or with other collector roads (except where traffic signals are recommended).
3. The principal *Collector Streets* in the San Ramon Valley Boulevard area should include a minimum of two 12-foot wide travel lanes and sidewalks (and bike lanes on Westside Drive, the west leg of Alcosta, and the northernmost access collector south of Montevideo Drive). Other collectors in the San Ramon

Valley Boulevard and Norris Canyon Road areas should include two 11-foot travel lanes and a single eight-foot wide parking lane where houses front on the street. (If a split level roadway is used for a collector road in the Norris Canyon Road area, a wider roadway width shall be considered for safety reasons.)

4. *Local Residential Streets* should have a minimum paved width of 26 feet (with no on-street parking, but parking provided in off-street bays). Alternatively, parking can be provided on one side, with a minimum width of 32 feet. Widths are curb-to-curb and include two feet of width for gutters.

#### Circulation Improvements

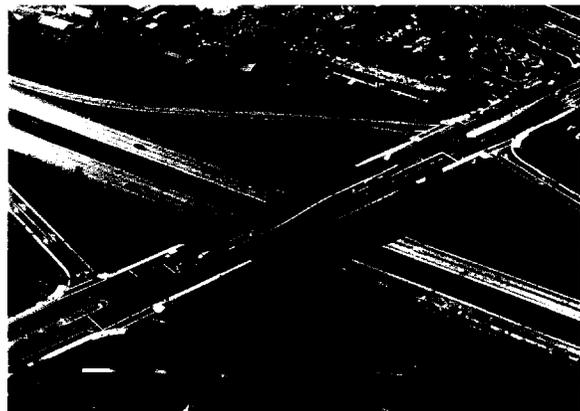
Three major freeway/roadway improvements are proposed in the Circulation Plan (as illustrated in Figure 5.1):

Alcosta/I-680 Interchange upgrade  
San Ramon Valley Boulevard widening  
Norris Canyon Road widening

These are described in greater detail below.

#### Alcosta Interchange

Improvements to the Alcosta interchange are needed to remedy existing operational problems in which westbound queues waiting at the Alcosta/San Ramon Valley Boulevard intersection back up and block the nearby southbound off-ramp, and to avoid future capacity conditions at the ramp terminals. In 1994, Caltrans approved a "hook ramp" design at this location. The new interchange will include new southbound on- and off-



View of the existing Alcosta Interchange.

FIGURE 5.1  
Circulation Plan

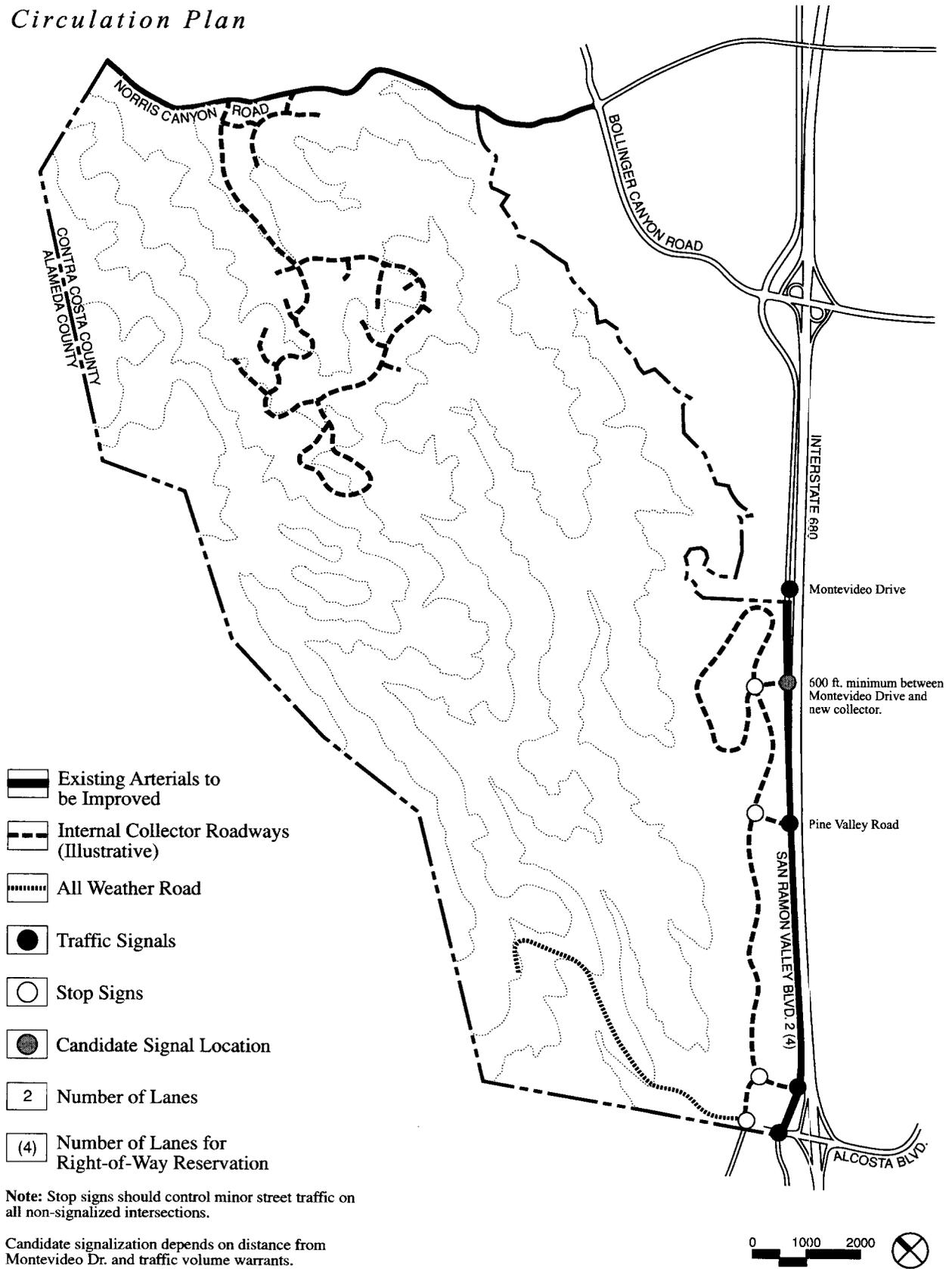
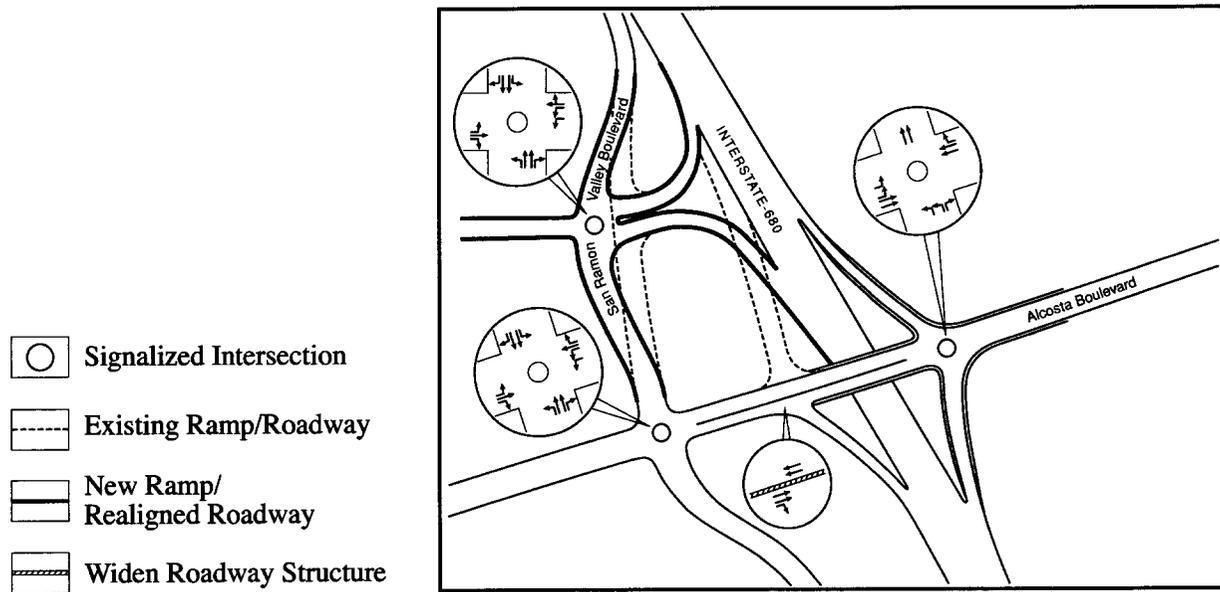


FIGURE 5.2

*Schematic Plan for Hook Ramps at Alcosta Boulevard*



ramps hooking to San Ramon Valley Boulevard, just north of Alcosta Boulevard (Figure 5.2 provides a schematic illustration of this improvement). The existing southbound off-ramp at Alcosta will be removed, but the existing southbound on-ramp will stay in operation. The existing intersection of the southbound ramps with Alcosta Boulevard will no longer need to be signalized, since left turns will be eliminated, but a new signalized intersection will be needed at San Ramon Valley Boulevard where the new ramps will connect.

Right-of-way to accommodate the new interchange has been acquired from the Gateway Centre development, and San Ramon Valley Boulevard has been realigned to accommodate the hook ramps. In addition, the Alcosta overcrossing will be widened to allow for the construction of a second eastbound-to-northbound left turn lane. The northbound on- and off-ramps will also be widened from two to three lanes.

#### San Ramon Valley Boulevard Widening

San Ramon Valley Boulevard is currently being widened to a 100-foot right-of-way, to allow a four-lane, divided arterial from Montevideo Drive to Alcosta Boulevard. Four through lanes are needed to handle antici-

pated future traffic volume increases, with the Westside contributing only a part of the increase. Bicycle lanes/emergency parking will be provided on both sides of the road, and a sidewalk will be located along the Boulevard's western edge.

#### Norris Canyon Road Widening

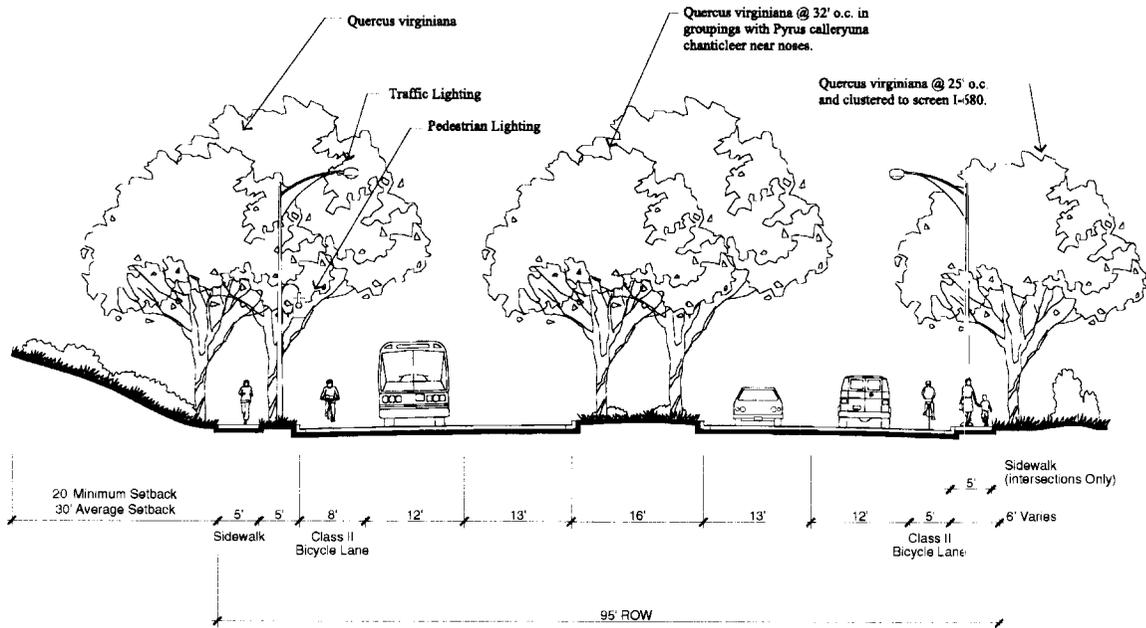
Norris Canyon Road will be widened and realigned to a 34-foot roadway dimension with two through lanes.



*Existing San Ramon Valley Boulevard.*

FIGURE 5.3

*Illustrative Sections —  
San Ramon Valley Boulevard*



Bicycle lanes will be added, which will serve for emergency parking. The principal objectives would be to improve convenience and driving ease for the motorist, allowing a uniform driving speed of 35 MPH, while also, to a limited extent, accommodating future capacity by the addition of turn lanes at the two principal Westside access intersections. No significant capacity problems are anticipated for future conditions with development of the Westside under the Specific Plan. Construction of this improvement may be delayed un-

til after development of the Westside, since it is not needed for additional capacity essential to Westside development. Widening will be accomplished principally on the northern side of the existing road, due to the limitations imposed by the San Catancio Creek on the south side. (See Figure 5.4.)

In addition, a traffic signal will be installed at the intersection of Bollinger Canyon and Norris Canyon Roads upon satisfaction of traffic signal warrants with the addition of Westside and cumulative growth traffic.

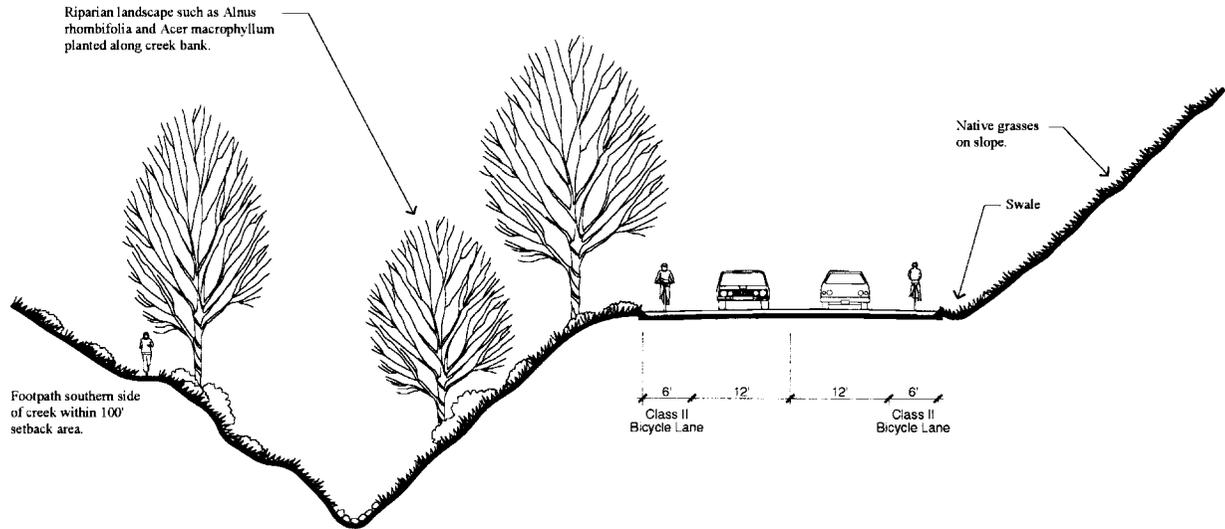
*Intersection Levels of Service*

With the improvements described above and those assumed in the General Plan analysis, PM peak-hour Levels of Service should be "D" or better at study area intersections at General Plan buildout with Specific Plan uses on the Westside. The Level of Service "D" indicates tolerable delays in which drivers may occasionally wait through more than one red indication. This standard is consistent with the Transportation Service Objectives (TSOs) included in the Tri-Valley Transportation Plan, as well as the requirements of the Measure C Growth Management Program.



*Existing Norris Canyon Road.*

FIGURE 5.4  
*Illustrative Section —  
 Norris Canyon Road*



### *Internal Roadway System*

An illustrative internal roadway system has been developed for the Westside that would provide convenient access to land uses, while respecting the natural contours of the hillsides and preserving open space to the maximum extent feasible. (See Figure 5.1, which shows the internal circulation plan, and the Community Design Element for illustrative cross sections of collector roads.) Key features of the internal roadway system include the following:

- A north-south collector “spine road” (Westside Drive) that runs parallel to and west of San Ramon Valley Boulevard. This roadway should provide rear access to the Gateway Centre at Alcosta and to residential units west of San Ramon Valley Boulevard. The principal collectors (Westside Drive and the three access roads to San Ramon Valley Boulevard) should include two 12-foot travel lanes with bicycle lanes and parking (if fronted by residential uses).
- Access to land uses tributary to San Ramon Valley Boulevard should be provided by three primary east-west collector roads along San

Ramon Valley Boulevard (see Figure 5.5). Average Daily Traffic volumes near any of the internal residential areas would be quite low (a maximum of 2,000 vehicles daily).

- All other collectors in the San Ramon Valley Boulevard area would conform to the standards for collectors in the Norris Canyon Road area, or approximately a 30-foot pavement width (with one-sided parking), or 26 feet with parking provided in bays. (See Figure 5.6.)
- Pine Valley Road should be continued across San Ramon Valley Boulevard (with a signalized intersection) to penetrate the interior of the Westside. However, the northernmost collector street would intersect San Ramon Valley Boulevard no closer than 600 feet south of Montevideo Drive, rather than connecting directly with the existing T-intersection (to provide sufficient storage for vehicles queued at the existing Montevideo traffic signal).
- Access to the Gateway Centre is provided via driveways at San Ramon Valley Boulevard and Westside Drive, and from the new I-680 southbound hook ramps.

FIGURE 5.5

*Illustrative Section —  
San Ramon Valley Boulevard Subarea Collector*

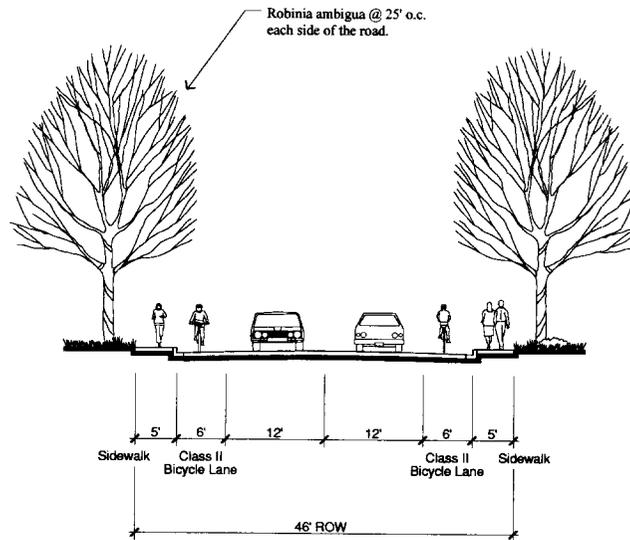


FIGURE 5.6

*Illustrative Section —  
Norris Canyon Subarea Collector*

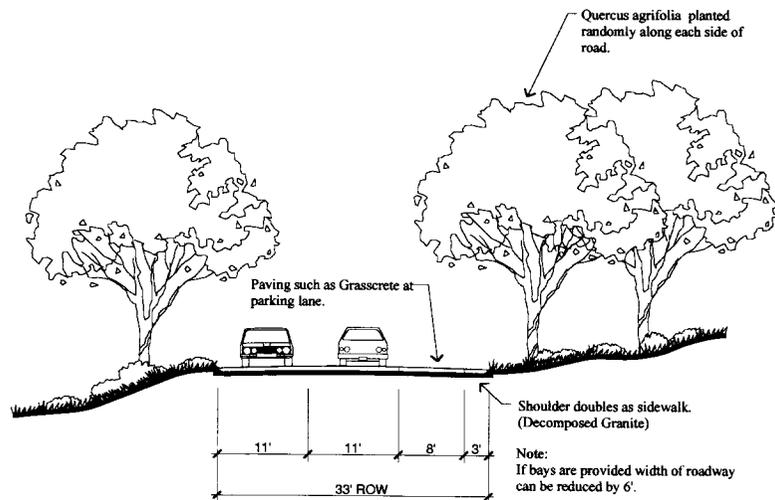
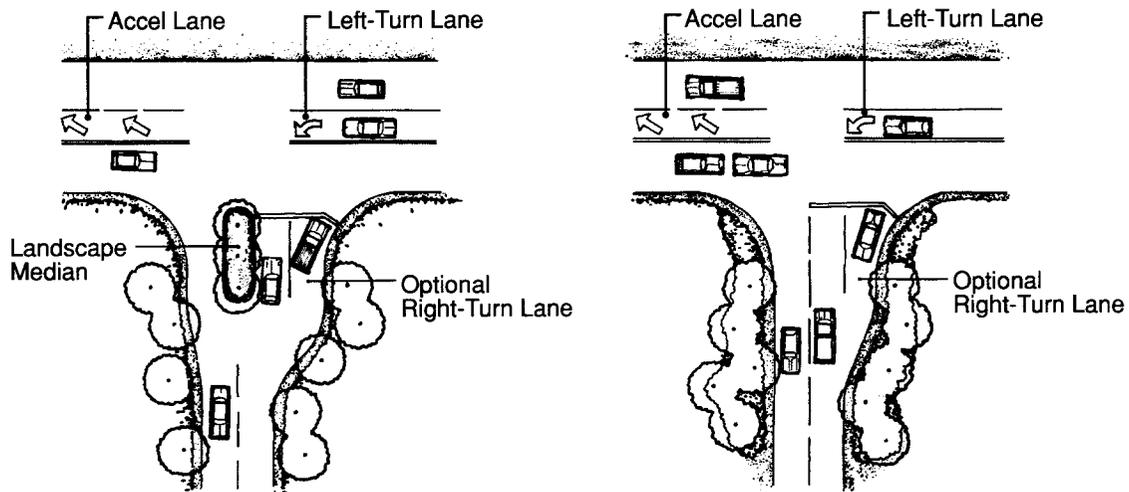
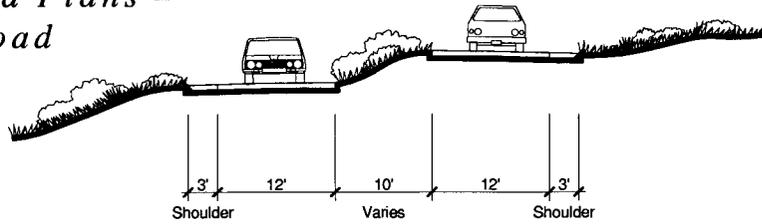


FIGURE 5.7  
*Illustrative Sections and Plans —  
 Norris Canyon Entry Road*



- Access to land uses tributary to Norris Canyon Road would be provided principally by two collector roads (Road "B" on the Plan) which would both meet a large internal loop road. Intersections with Norris Canyon Road would have stop signs controlling collector road traffic. Streets within the site would be relatively narrow and steep (up to 20 percent slope), to minimize the amount of grading which would be required, and a 30-foot road (pavement width) with parking on one side would be considered as standard. The eastern collector road would carry a maximum of about 3,000 vehicles daily near its intersection with Norris Canyon Road. (See Figure 5.7.)

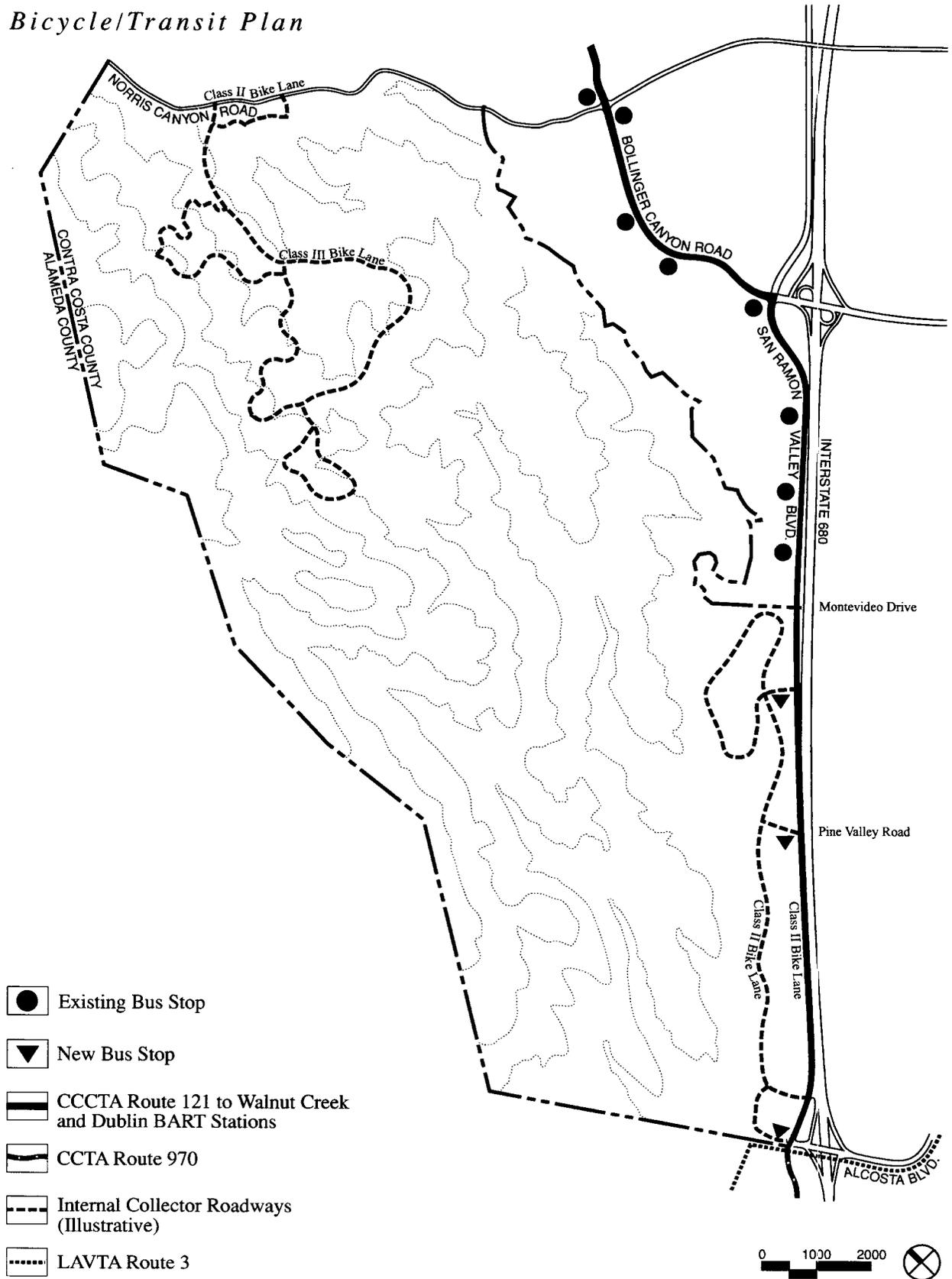
#### Transit

Central Contra Costa Transit Agency (CCCTA) bus service now connects the Westside with the Walnut Creek and Dublin/Pleasanton BART stations. Route 121 trav-

els San Ramon Valley Boulevard via Tareyton Avenue between Montevideo Drive and Pine Valley Road. It continues along the boulevard to Kimball Avenue and Village Parkway, with its final destination at the Dublin/Pleasanton BART Station. This route also provides weekend service, traveling along San Ramon Valley Boulevard to Village Parkway and completing its route at the transit stop. Another option for Westside residents and patrons of the Gateway Shopping Centre is Route 970, which continues south on San Ramon Valley Boulevard and wends through Dublin to its final destination, which is also the BART station.

The Livermore-Amador Valley Transit (LAVTA) Route 3 also passes along the southeast border of the Westside Planning area. It too provides service to the Dublin/Pleasanton BART Station. There passengers can connect with buses to the Stoneridge Mall and Hacienda Business Park in Pleasanton. San Ramon is outside of the LAVTA service area; however, for passengers along the Village Parkway route, riders may stop at selected bus stops or continue on to the BART Station.

FIGURE 5.8  
*Bicycle/Transit Plan*



**Bicycle Routes**

Bicycle facilities would include bike lanes (with a minimum width of four feet) on San Ramon Valley Boulevard, Norris Canyon Road, and the major internal collector roads for San Ramon Valley Boulevard (as indicated in Figure 5.8).

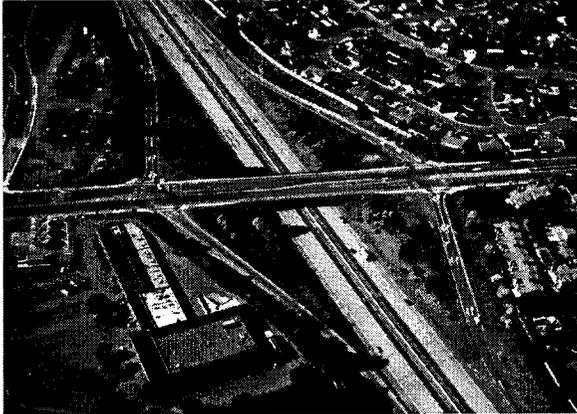
Roadways within the Norris Canyon Road residential area are encouraged to have special “semi-rural” cross sections that would not include sidewalks.

**Pedestrian Facilities**

An extensive trail system is planned for undeveloped areas of the Westside. These trails would connect residential areas near San Ramon Valley Boulevard and Norris Canyon Road area to the Bishop Ranch Regional Open Space and the high ridge at the County line. Sidewalks would be provided on San Ramon Valley Boulevard and Westside Drive.

**Parking**

Parking should be provided at City standards for all land uses. This should be sufficient to meet demand and avoid any spillover into adjacent residential areas.



*The Alcosta Interchange provides freeway access to Westside San Ramon.*

## CHAPTER 6 *Open Space and Conservation*

### *Background*

To many, the Westside landscape appears a rugged wilderness that has eluded modification and adaptation for human use. In fact, like much of the California foothills, the Westside has had a long productive history dating from the Spanish secularization of the landscape into ranches. In addition to cattle grazing, parts of the Westside have been quarried and mined, woodland has been forested for fire wood, ridges have been reshaped and roads extended. With the exception of the Laborer's Union property, most of the major land holdings are owned or leased to cattlemen that use its steep hillsides, creek valleys and broad ridges as range for over two hundred head of cattle.

The intense use of the Westside landscape for many years has taken away much of its biological value as habitat and has contributed to unstable slopes, downcutting of streams, and general erosion of fragile terrain. On the other hand, the Westside remains of great scenic value as an open space backdrop to the San Ramon Valley. In contrast to the more arid east side of the Valley, the Westside appears a verdant landscape with a greater number of trees and diversity of plants. It has steeper slopes, more eccentric and prominent land forms and is ribboned by myriad streams and drainages, most of which are ephemeral in nature. The Westside landscape naturally breaks into a series of canyons and valleys, which run north and south, creating clearly defined physiographic units. Three of these valleys are quite large and include San Catanio Creek Canyon off of Norris Canyon Road; the Oak Creek Canyon which extends to the heart of the San Ramon Valley Boulevard area; and Big Canyon, which is relatively isolated and characterized by extremely steep slopes and areas of dense vegetation.

The primary purpose of this element of the Specific Plan is to preserve and enhance the integrity of the Westside landscape and to balance its diverse values and uses as wildlife habitat, for cattle grazing, as scenic open space and as a recreational opportunity for Westside and San Ramon Valley residents.

### *Biotic Communities*

The Westside is characteristic of a California foothills environment with a history of heavy grazing and is primarily comprised of five basic plant communities: non-native grassland that has replaced the native perennial bunch grasses with wild oats, brome grass and rye grasses; oak woodland (primarily valley oaks) found on slopes and gentle ridges; broadleaved upland forest with a mixture of coast live oak, California bay, big-leaf maple and an occasional Madrone; riparian forest dominated by white alder; and the Diablan Sage Scrub comprised of drought-deciduous shrubs.

Biologically, the most important habitats in the Westside are the creekside habitats and the riparian woodlands that exist in most of the canyons and gullies in the Westside area. Due to the presence of water, these areas are, in most cases, more densely vegetated, and house a greater density of wildlife than any other habitat area in the planning area. They are also important wildlife corridors.

In general, however, most of the springs and creek beds have been heavily trampled and are of limited habitat value. Only one small drainage near the Wiedemann ranch house contains species associated with riparian habitats and probably carries water throughout the annual cycle in good water years. Even this drainage,



*View of Big Canyon and future nature preserve.*

though, has been degraded as useful aquatic habitat by cattle grazing. Near the uppermost springs in this drainage, several male California newts in breeding condition were observed in small pools. Other wildlife species commonly found in these densely wooded canyon bottoms include the raccoon, California mouse, Pacific tree frog, ringneck snake, and a wide variety of woodland birds, including Nuttall's woodpecker, Stellar's jay, Hutton's vireo, and the orange-crowned warbler.

The open grassland habitats provide for many wildlife species and excellent hunting areas for raptors and other predators. In portions of the planning area which are not overgrazed, the grassland habitat supports a wide variety of animals and birds including the valley pocket gopher, California vole, Pacific Coast Blacktail deer, Pacific gopher snake and western fence lizard, as well as many birds such as the lesser goldfinch, horned lark, and red-tailed hawk. (See Figure 6.1.)

### *Open Space Areas*

As discussed, the Westside is of tremendous scenic value as visual open space, providing a backdrop to the developed areas within the San Ramon Valley. The visual character of the Westside is comprised of a complex layering of different elements. These include the regionally visible ridge line and slopes above 1,400 feet and the locally visible ridges as well as landmarks such as the PG&E towers and Wiedemann Hill transmission facilities; woodland areas associated with coast live oak/California bay forests and riparian habitat; and San Catanio Creek which is notable for its continual flow of water. In addition, Big Canyon has been identified as a discrete physiographic unit of great scenic beauty deserving of a special response, as is the rural character of Norris Canyon Road, the historic buildings and property walls and the specific outcroppings of rock which occur on high hillsides throughout the Westside.

The basic visual elements of the landscape also contribute to the potential visibility of development. Visually sensitive areas include the high ridgeline at the County line and side slopes approximately four hundred feet below it. This ridge is of great value from a regional perspective and provides landmarks that can be seen from throughout the Valley. The intermediate ridges give definition to the landscape and are also quite sensitive to possible development. Finally, foreground areas in the view from the road (or the "proximate viewshed") are also particularly vulnerable. The remaining categories identify those areas where devel-



*View of Oak Creek Valley.*

opment might be, at least initially, conspicuous. In descending order, these range from exposed grasslands to concealed wooded areas in the valley.

In addition to its value as visual open space, the Westside landscape has tremendous potential for recreation. Popular recreational activities include horseback riding, camping and hiking, which occur throughout the Westside except where the steepness of the topography prohibits such activities. In addition, special community events, such as "Kite Day", have been instituted atop a broad sloping plane on the Wiedemann property. Although a variety of recreational activities take place within privately held land, a 300-acre open space area in the northeastern portion of the Westside is owned by the East Bay Regional Park District. Known as the Bishop Ranch Regional Open Space, this land provides hiking opportunities on existing unmarked fire roads, and will be included in the planned Calaveras Ridge Trail corridor, which will extend from Las Trampas Regional Wilderness near Danville to Sunol Regional Wilderness to the east of Fremont.

### *Conservation Concepts*

The Westside Specific Plan emphasizes open space preservation on the majority of the planning area in areas of special scenic value. Development would be prohibited on major and minor ridgelines as defined by the City's Resource Conservation Overlay District and high slopes over 1,400 feet in elevation (or within four hundred feet of the high ridge at the County line).

Creeks, springs and ponds would be protected from development and enhanced for limited public access and as wildlife habitat. Buildings would set back from the creeks and include a two-hundred foot corridor to

FIGURE 6.1

*Environmental Constraints Synthesis*



protect wildlife and riparian values. In addition, special site features, including historic buildings, rock outcroppings, and historic walls would be preserved. The most heavily vegetated portion of Big Canyon, which has special wildlife value, would be protected from development and set aside as a nature preserve.

Cattle grazing would be allowed on most of the open space lands in the Westside, in order to continue the tradition of an open landscape and minimize fire hazards. Management guidelines are developed and would be enforced to protect the long-term integrity and continued productivity of the landscape, and to minimize conflicts between developed and undeveloped areas. Additional recreational areas would include trails connecting Norris Canyon Road and San Ramon Valley Boulevard with Bishop Ranch Open Space and to the high ridge. They would also include more developed parkland areas associated with the new residential community.

### *Conservation/Open Space Policies*

#### Preservation Policies

1. Set aside the most heavily vegetated portion of Big Canyon as a nature preserve, prohibiting grazing and development and limiting public access. The designation of this preserve would require the active participation of the property owners. (See Figure 6.2.)
2. Work with Dublin and Alameda County to ensure that development to the west and the south of the planning area does not encroach into the ridgeline areas which are visible from



*Much of the Westside area is to remain as open space.*

San Ramon Valley, and that the recreational potential of the high ridgeline is achieved.

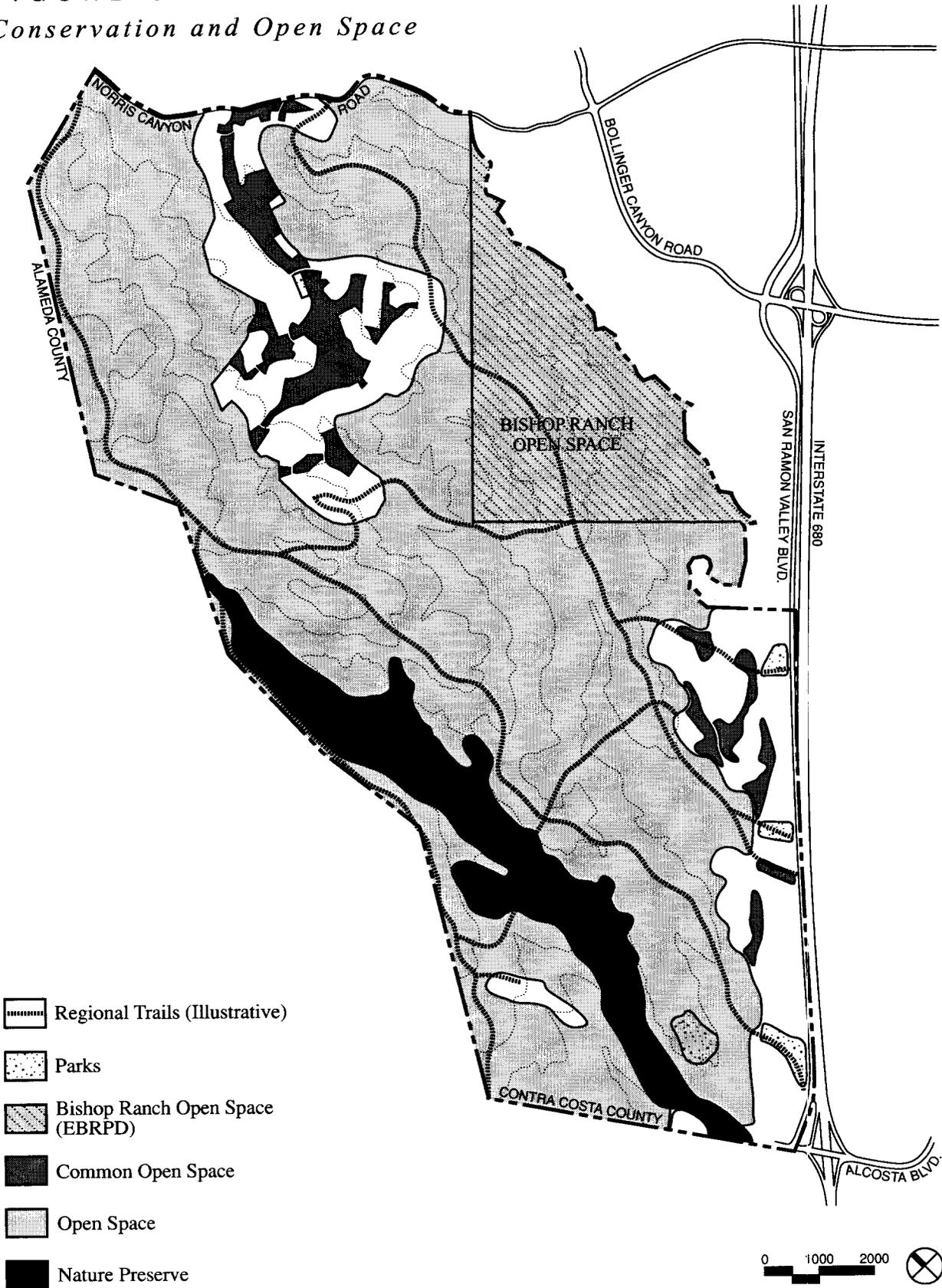
3. Require setback corridors of a total width of 200 feet along creeks and streams as a condition of new development, measured from the creek centerline. Setbacks should reflect specific biologic, hydrologic and geologic conditions along the creek reaches; should be uninterrupted; and should provide the necessary cover, food supply and access to water to enhance wildlife habitat.
4. New development shall minimize, to the greatest extent possible, the removal of valuable oak woodland and riparian habitat. All trees in excess of 3" DBH (Diameter at Breast Height) shall be replaced at a 3:1 ratio. In instances where a Tree Management Plan is not required, any proposal to remove trees shall be governed by the City's Tree Preservation Ordinance (No. 188), except that the replacement ratio stated herein shall also apply.
5. Ensure that all historic and cultural resources are preserved and enhanced, including the rock walls and any archaeological sites. The Harlan Homestead, the Boone home and the David Glass house are designated as places of historic interest that should be preserved. If desirable, the historic homes may be relocated to an appropriate site set aside as a "preservation park" area.

#### Conservation Policies

1. Adopt range management practices within grazing areas which enhance environmental quality and long-term productivity of the landscape. To avoid overgrazing, stocking levels should generally not exceed one cow for every ten acres (on an annual basis) and vegetative cover should be monitored to make sure that at the end of the season (sometime before the rainy season begins in the Fall) 3-4 inches of plant growth is remaining. These general performance guidelines should be implemented and administered as a condition of approval of subdivision or development for non-grazing purposes and should be incorporated into the Conditions, Covenants & Restrictions (CC&R's) of the development area.

FIGURE 6.2

*Conservation and Open Space*



In addition, they may be augmented by more specific standards from the “Wildland Management Policies and Guidelines” document, which was developed by the East Bay Regional Park District for grazing of parkland within their jurisdiction.

2. Permit development of residential uses within the open space area at a gross density of 1 dwelling unit every 200 acres if:
  - a. Development is accessed from existing roads. All development will be reviewed for consistency with Plan policies, in particular those which concern grading, visibility, fire protection and general safety.
  - b. Development is permitted in areas allowed under the Resource Conservation Overlay District and Ordinance 197.
  - c. Applications for parcelization, subdivision or construction undergo the design review process as set forth in this Plan.
3. Increase opportunities for surface water ponding for storm detention and to enhance wildlife habitat and riparian values and recreational and open space activities, to the greatest extent possible. Encourage the careful selection of native landscape materials for veg-



*Trails would link developed areas with Westside open space. A nature preserve is accommodated in the Big Canyon.*

etative cover and plant diversity in order to enhance the biologic potential of the area as wildlife habitat.

4. Ensure that water is evenly distributed over the site or that ponds are built in strategic locations to support livestock. If troughs are built, ensure that they are designed to permit access by wildlife as well as livestock.
5. Encourage the use of check dams and slope stabilization treatment in specific creek corridors where grading may occur in order to control erosion and improve stability.
6. Where crossings of a stream corridor are required, design culverts so that they can serve storm detention purposes and at the same time allow for the continuity of wildlife movement.
7. Minimize the culverting of streams. To the extent possible, filled streams should be re-established, replaced and improved for erosion and wildlife enhancement and drainage.
8. Permit grading and development on the minor cross valley ridge and Mustache Ridge, if, upon careful review of specific development proposals, it can be determined that:
  - a. Such development would not be seen from San Ramon Valley Boulevard, and appropriate provisions are taken to minimize visual impacts from Bishop Ranch Open Space;
  - b. The profile of the reconstructed ridge is integrated positively with the surrounding landscape, avoiding sharp breaks and steep interfacing of grades;
  - c. Buildings are sited below the high point of the reconfigured grade to minimize the silhouetting of structures against the horizon;
  - d. Buildings relate positively to the regraded terrain (see the design guidelines in the Community Design Element and Appendix);



*Relandscaping of graded areas is encouraged.*

- e. Cuts and fills are properly engineered to protect the health, safety and welfare of the population; and
  - f. Graded slopes are revegetated properly.
9. Incorporate creek areas within the fenced perimeter of development areas to protect them from encroachment by cattle, but provide specific access points for cattle that are rotated on a regular basis so that areas are not over-impacted. In addition, the common open spaces within development areas should be maintained with landscape materials commonly found in the area in order to make the most positive transition to the surrounding landscape. Introduced plant materials should be carefully selected for drought tolerance and fire resistance as well as to ensure that vegetation poisonous to livestock and wildlife is avoided.
  10. To minimize the impacts of feral cats and dogs on wildlife habitat, require the registration of domestic animals in adjacent areas. Where domestic animals accompany their owners into common areas and recreational open spaces, require that they be leashed or within sight of their owners.
  11. Encourage the use of drought-tolerant and fire-resistant plantings, minimized irrigation, dual water systems for irrigation and domestic use, as well as the use of other water conservation measures.
  12. Minimize the use of high water consumptive plant materials and support East Bay Municipal Utility District's water conservation programs.

#### Recreational Policies

1. Establish a system of recreational trails which extend from developed areas and connect proposed neighborhood parks, the proposed rustic conference center/camp facility, Bishop Ranch Regional Open Space and the Calaveras Ridge Trail along the high ridgeline. When feasible, provide an open space corridor at the end of cul-de-sacs to allow trail linkages and views to the hills.
2. For the most part, locate these trails along existing fire roads and on ridges. New trails should be developed and maintained by the East Bay Regional Park District or other appropriate public agency.
3. New trails should be built to EBRPD standards, and should be multi-purpose for hiking, bicycling, and equestrian uses. They should be generally a minimum width of 10 feet, and the easement should encompass a minimum 20-foot wide right-of-way. For the most part, these trails would be located on ridgetops to maximize views, provide a more gentle grade for walking, and take advantage of existing trails and fire roads as well as connections to the other ridges. They would also be generally located away from proposed developed areas, in order to minimize conflicts between public and private users, and to provide a greater sense of isolation and detachment from urbanized lower elevations. Staging areas for the trails will be provided in parkland areas only, where access is feasible and extensive grading is not necessary.
4. Restrict bicycle use to wider recreational trails and develop bicycle lanes along Norris Canyon Road, San Ramon Valley Boulevard, and Westside Drive.
5. Develop approximately 36 acres of parkland, as shown in the locations on the Plan's Land Use Map. The final configuration will be

determined at the time development plans are submitted. Approximately 7 acres should be located within the Norris Canyon Road area and the remaining 29 acres in the San Ramon Valley Boulevard area. These parks should include ball fields and playing areas to serve the surrounding areas, and should be designed in consideration of surrounding topographic conditions. In general, a one-acre minimum area should be graded to a relatively level or gently sloping plane to create the needed area for ballfields, however grading plans should be carefully reviewed to ensure that the imposition of a large flat area does not degrade the appearance of the landscape.

In the Norris Canyon Road area, an approximate 2-acre park has been approved within the Wiedemann Ranch Residential Community. If additional parkland cannot be developed for park purposes without major grading, then an off-site park should be developed as close to the Westside as possible and fees collected to pay for costs of acquisition and development. In the San Ramon Valley Boulevard area, four parks are indicated on the Land Use Map: one associated with the historic Harlan Homestead; another centrally located near Pine Valley Road, within the PG&E easement; and in the southern portion of the area, one is near the shopping center and another is located on a plateau area to the west of Westside Drive. Designation of any portion of the PG&E easement as parkland would not be calculated into the City's parkland dedication requirements,

due to the land use constraints imposed by high-voltage transmission lines. All parkland dedication shall be in accordance with City Ordinance 67 (Parkland Dedication) and shall be met with Functional Acreage only, as defined in the City's General Plan.

6. Provide for the development of a rustic conference center or camp, which can accommodate small meetings, and social and community events. The conference center would be located off of an existing dirt road, upgraded to allow for all-weather conditions.
7. Allow the development of a primitive campsite in Big Canyon to be owned and maintained by East Bay Regional Park District, or other appropriate public agency.
8. Plan for common open spaces within the development areas to provide intermittent breaks in the development pattern, open up views to hillside areas and link to parks, open spaces and recreational trails.
9. Provide for a landscape setback of a minimum twenty-foot width along San Ramon Valley Boulevard as a transition to upland residential and/or institutional uses, and connecting the common open space areas along the road.
10. Require environmental management and maintenance plans to be incorporated within the CC&R's of homeowners' associations that are consistent with the Westside Specific Plan.

### *The Design Challenge*

The Westside is highly constrained, not only in governmental and jurisdictional considerations, but also by physical conditions found on the site. The site is geologically fragile, with an active earthquake fault and some of the most expansive soils that can be found in the country. Slopes are extremely steep, ridgelines are visually vulnerable and numerous creeks of potential habitat value flow through the area.

From the community design perspective, development of the Westside area offers tremendous opportunities to give form to the emerging image and identity of San Ramon, and to create a quality living environment that responds to community values and to private market considerations. Development will require creative approaches and careful treatments within the framework established by the Westside Specific Plan.

### *Hillside Design Precedents*

In San Ramon, there are few precedents of hillside development in areas similar to the Westside. Much of the hillside housing that has been built in recent years has concentrated in the east side of the Valley, where slopes are more gentle and grading solutions have tended toward the more conventional wide-step terracing of flat building pads with sloped areas set aside as common open space between parcels. In addition, many of these developments (such as Canyon Lakes) are much higher in density than would be allowed by Ordinance 197 for the upland areas in the Westside.

Older examples of hillside housing in western slopes of the Valley outside of San Ramon, such as Pleasanton (Castlewood) and Danville (Montair Avenue), illustrate a more traditional approach to suburban hillside development. Instead of adapting the landscape to a standardized lot and building type, these older projects forced the building to adapt more to the existing terrain through stepped form buildings and minimal flat yard areas, with grading confined primarily to the street itself.

Another approach to the development of hillside areas is exemplified in newer developments such as the Bryan Ranch in Alamo, where rough grading of streets and building pads is later contoured to give a more natural hilly appearance. Flat back yards are provided and buildings constructed on standard foundations, but the sense of the hillside landscape prevails, and views to upland undeveloped areas are preserved.

### *Community Design Concept*

The concept for the development of the residential community within the Westside focuses on the maintenance of an open character, with the development pattern determined by intermittent open spaces that provide views and a sense of public access to more distant views and upland areas. Generally, the Specific Plan places emphasis on the integration of development with the natural landscape, in grading and landscaping, as well as through controlling the scale and character of fences, walls, and buildings. The overall concept is one of creating a gradual continuum between developed and undeveloped areas, blending one into another in the least intrusive manner as viewed from Norris Canyon Road or San Ramon Valley Boulevard. As a consequence, development in the San Ramon Valley Boulevard area is concentrated along the Boulevard, and away from the higher slopes and ridges. Grading



*Design approaches which utilize narrow streets on steep hills with extensive landscaping are encouraged.*



*As development occurs within the Westside, the visual quality and sense of place should be enhanced.*

would be primarily confined to slopes less than twenty percent, and attached and detached residential buildings would be encouraged to step with the slope in order to avoid wide-stepped terracing of the landscape. The Plan encourages the design of attached residential buildings to emulate large single family homes, when more than two units are attached.

In the San Ramon Valley Boulevard area, the intention is to bring together all of the separate properties into a visually coherent pattern, and not encourage the appearance of a series of discrete subdivisions along a strip, with their own individual entries, property walls and fences. Three major entries are shown at key locations and curb cuts along the Boulevard minimized. In general, the development works off of a main collector road (Westside Drive) that is relatively narrow in width and which generally separates larger lot single-family residential uses to the west from higher densities along the Boulevard. In addition, in this area, the intention is to develop creative solutions to the impacts of noise in outdoor areas, and minimize the appearance of long, high walls or steep embankments which tend to isolate the appearance of the community from the street and surrounding areas.

The Norris Canyon Road area is a different type of physical environment than the San Ramon Valley Boulevard area, and it demands its own special design and grading response. With much steeper slopes, a more traditional hillside approach is encouraged, where grading is accomplished primarily as a way of accommodating the street and the most minimal flat area adjacent to the road for a foundation. In extremely steep areas and where complicated cross-slopes occur, lot sizes should increase by 5,000 square feet to a minimum of 20,000 square feet. Ordinance 197 limits street

grades to 12 per cent, although minor variations are permitted when supported by technical studies. (Incline slopes of up to 20 percent are permitted by the San Ramon Valley Fire Protection District.)

Further back from Norris Canyon Road, a portion of the cross valley ridge will be cut, and the adjacent creek valley will be filled. The reconfiguration of the landscape in the area of the cross valley ridge will be reviewed by City staff and the Architectural Review Board, with emphasis given to how the cross valley ridge is regraded and integrated into the surrounding terrain; the relationship of development to stream corridors; and the visibility and prominence of the project not only from San Ramon Valley Boulevard but from Norris Canyon Road and the main entry road to the area.

In addition to these site specific considerations, the Plan also makes recommendations for generic design elements, such as the height, massing and footprint of buildings, as well as the treatment of walls, fences and open space areas. These design standards and guidelines are set forth in an appendix which accompanies this Plan.

## *Community Design Policies*

### Guiding Policies

1. Establish the highest quality in the design of the residential communities in the Westside, that respects the integrity of the landscape, reflects the unique qualities of special areas, and contributes in the most positive fashion to the identity of the City of San Ramon as a whole.

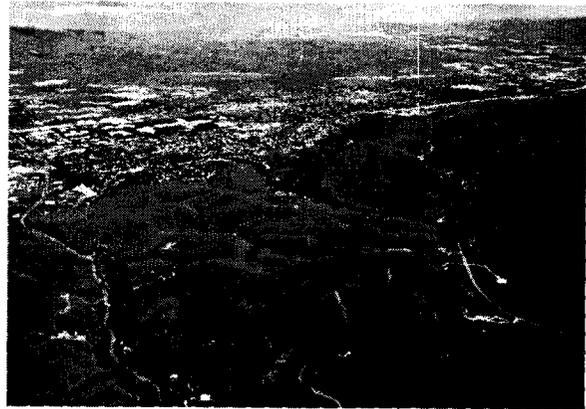


*Development has focused within the flat valley floor.*

2. Encourage creative solutions which would integrate new development within the landscape of the Westside.
3. Concentrate development in areas which minimize their visual prominence from adjacent streets and San Ramon Valley Boulevard.
4. Create a coherent development pattern, unified by a larger organizational framework of streets and entries, open spaces and parks.
5. Encourage the development of a sequence of open space easements which provide visual access to upland hillsides and maintain an open and uncrowded feeling within the development areas.
6. Encourage the appearance of a welcoming residential community and avoid the use of gated entries as well as high walls and steep embankments on perimeter boundaries.
7. Encourage development that builds upon the hillside environment and avoids "flatland" grading approaches to building pads.
8. Keep building heights low relative to the street and step them down in relation to the topography.
9. Minimize the apparent bulk of buildings.
10. Encourage a minimum of 25% single-story homes in new developments to provide visual relief and more variety in building form.



*The Plan discourages flat pads in hillside areas.*



*Canyon roads traverse hillside open spaces connecting urbanized areas throughout the region.*

### Design Policies

#### *San Ramon Valley Boulevard Area:*

1. Encourage a development pattern that is organized around a series of parks and open spaces on steep and undevelopable slopes, and which provide visual linkage to the upland landscape and high ridges (see Figure 7.1).
2. Minimize the appearance of a strip development comprised of a number of separate subdivisions, and instead create a coherent development pattern composed of buildings with complementary architectural character that relates to an internal and continuous collector street extending from Alcosta Boulevard to the northern portion of the site. (See Figure 7.2.)
3. Minimize individual curb cuts to parcels, and emphasize major gateways to the development area at the northern and southern boundaries.
4. Generally utilize the internal collector as a transitional element, separating developed and undeveloped areas and residential areas of different densities.
5. Emphasize the development of lower densities in upland areas generally to the west of the internal collector for a more positive transition to the rural landscape. Encourage decreasing densities as development approaches its open space boundaries.
6. Maintain a minimum setback of twenty feet (averaging 30 feet in width) along San Ramon

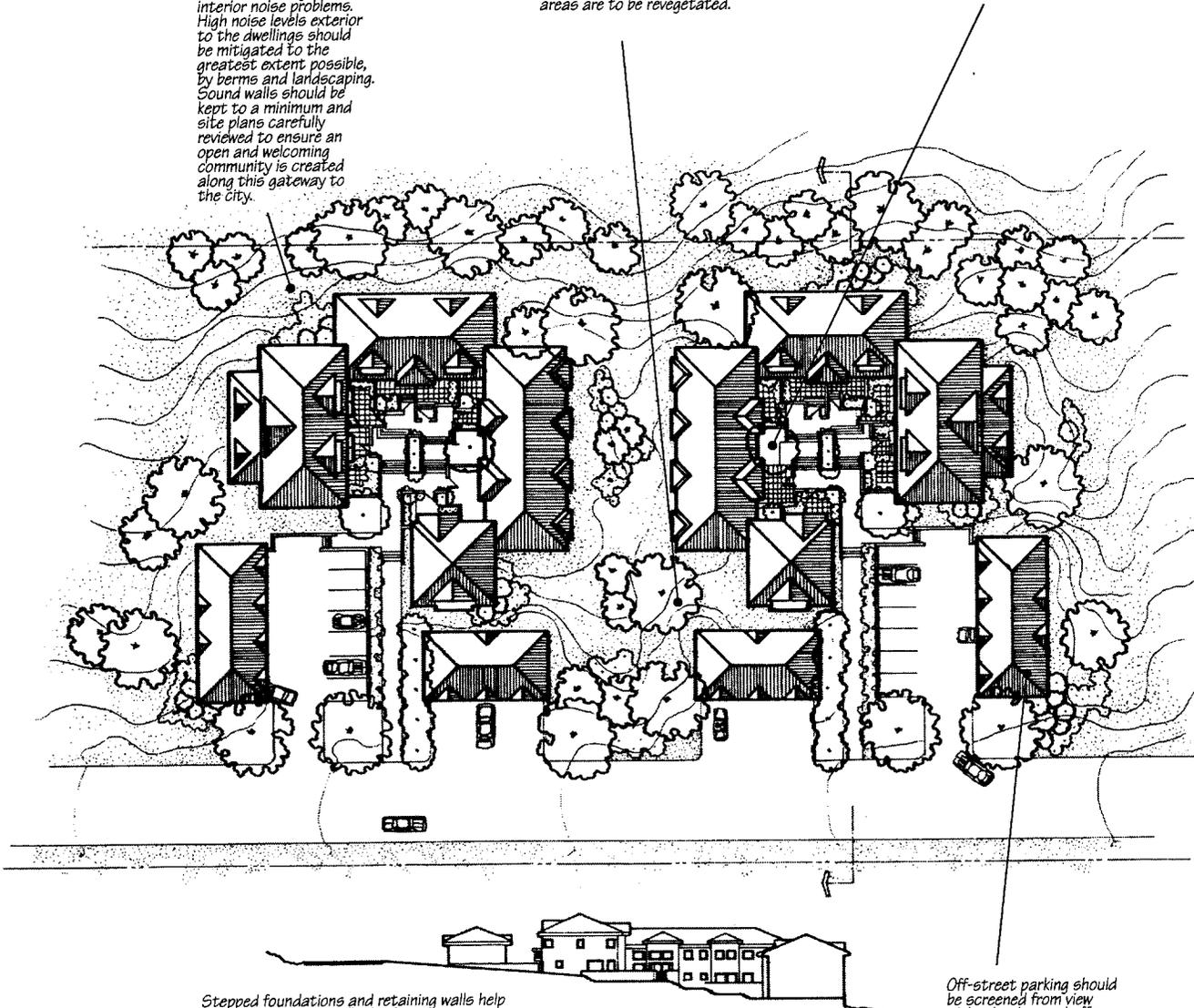
FIGURE 7.1

*Hillside Design Guidelines:  
San Ramon Valley Boulevard Area — Attached Single Family*

Rear units (fronting SRVB) act as sound barriers for the housing complex. Special treatments such as multiple windows must be used to mitigate interior noise problems. High noise levels exterior to the dwellings should be mitigated to the greatest extent possible, by berms and landscaping. Sound walls should be kept to a minimum and site plans carefully reviewed to ensure an open and welcoming community is created along this gateway to the city.

Transitional areas between buildings and streets are to be regraded where land is disturbed to resemble surrounding undisturbed areas. These transitional areas are to be revegetated.

Walled-in areas, the courtyard and private terraces can be planted with lush vegetation from an approved list.



Stepped foundations and retaining walls help to transition steep hillside slopes.

Off-street parking should be screened from view with a landscape buffer. Garages should be broken up and orientation varied to provide greater visual interest from the street.

FIGURE 7.2

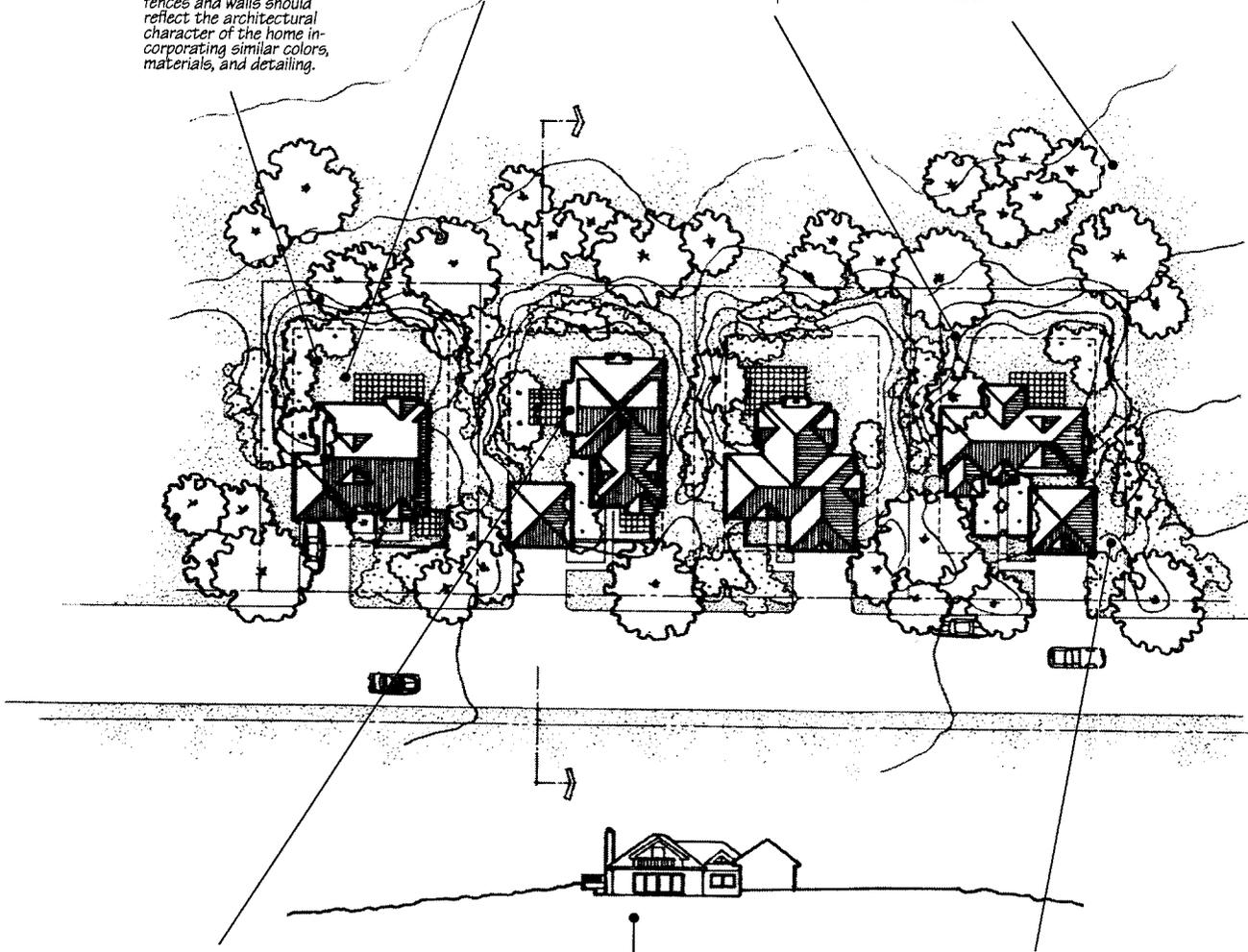
*Hillside Design Guidelines:  
San Ramon Valley Boulevard Area — Detached Single Family*

All enclosed yards should be carefully designed to take advantage of views to the open space or to create privacy where wanted. All fences and walls should reflect the architectural character of the home incorporating similar colors, materials, and detailing.

Private areas defined by walls or fences can be planted with non-indigenous vegetation from an approved list.

Transitional areas (areas within the setbacks) can be planted with approved non-indigenous plants as well as native plant material.

Use berms, walls and vegetation to protect the backyards from noise generated by Interstate 680.



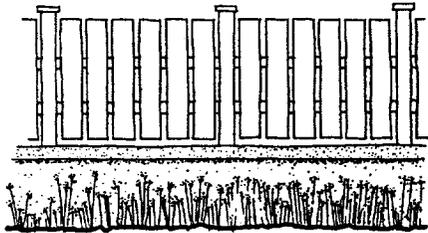
Orient windows on second story away from Interstate 680.

Berms and walls should be used to protect the house from noise.

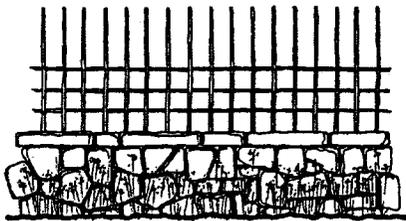
The area outside the building pad and enclosed yards is to be regraded, where the land is disturbed, to resemble the character of surrounding undisturbed areas.

FIGURE 7.3

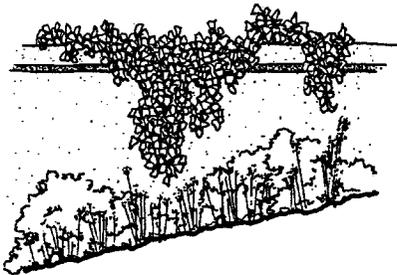
*Alternative Wall Treatments*



Encourage open fencing rather than walls for privacy and which incorporate short walls to help transition grade.



Use natural materials where possible that relate to the residential buildings. Encourage a family of wall and fence details that give richness and continuity to developed areas.



Retaining walls should be designed to incorporate plantings and allow views out to the landscape from private yards.



Step retaining walls where possible and use cascading plant materials to soften face of wall.

Valley Boulevard for landscaping and to emphasize berms and slopes as opposed to free-standing walls as a way of mitigating noise impacts from the freeway.

7. Encourage a continuity of landscape and wall treatments along San Ramon Valley Boulevard and discourage the use of long, uninterrupted walls for privacy and/or sound mitigation (see Figure 7.3).

*Norris Canyon Road Area:*

1. Maintain a continuous setback of approximately one hundred feet along Norris Canyon Road.
2. Concentrate most of the development away from the road and at the southern end of the valley, where it can be concealed from view of the road and San Ramon Valley Boulevard (see Figure 7.4).
3. Minimize alteration and grading within creek setback areas.
4. Allow development of lots with a minimum size of 15,000 square feet and encourage larger lots of a minimum 20,000 square feet in steeper areas or where complicated cross-slopes exist. Allow 20 percent of the estimated 450 dwelling units, or 75 dwelling units, to be clustered with minimum lot sizes of 7,000 square feet.

*Development Standards*

The following are the minimum development standards that are required of all development within the appropriate categories. It is encouraged that front yard setbacks be varied to provide a visually interesting streetscape and break up building mass along a roadway.

*Standard single-family lot of a minimum 7,000 square feet (see Figure 7.5):*

- Lot Width:* 65 foot minimum
- Setbacks:*
  - Front yard - 20-25 foot minimum<sup>1</sup>
  - Rear yard - 20 foot minimum
  - Side yard - 10 foot minimum

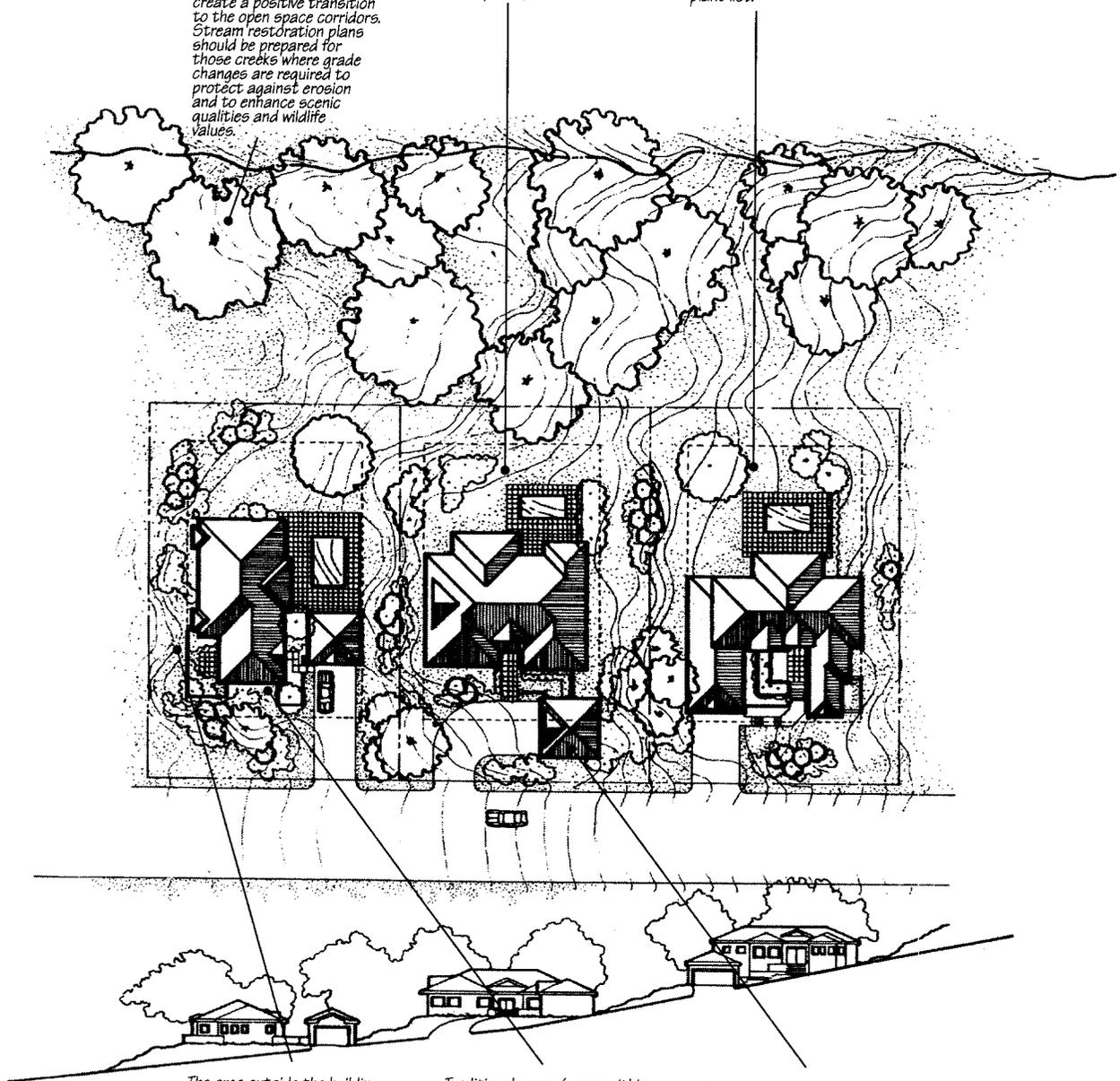
FIGURE 7.4

*Hillside Design Guidelines:  
Norris Canyon Road Area — Detached Single Family*

Establish a 200 ft. open space corridor along all identified stream beds. Grade the surrounding undeveloped areas so as to create a positive transition to the open space corridors. Stream restoration plans should be prepared for those creeks where grade changes are required to protect against erosion and to enhance scenic qualities and wildlife values.

All enclosed yards should be carefully designed to take advantage of views to the open space or to create privacy where wanted.

Private areas defined by walls or fences can be planted with non-indigenous vegetation from an approved plant list.



The area outside the building pad and enclosed yards is to be regraded, where the land is disturbed, to resemble the character of surrounding undisturbed areas.

Traditional areas (areas within the setbacks) can be planted with approved non-indigenous plants as well as native plant material.

To provide variety and help solve grading problems, garages can extend into front yard setbacks.

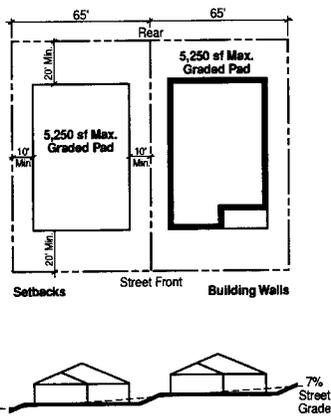


Figure 7.5 Standard single-family lot

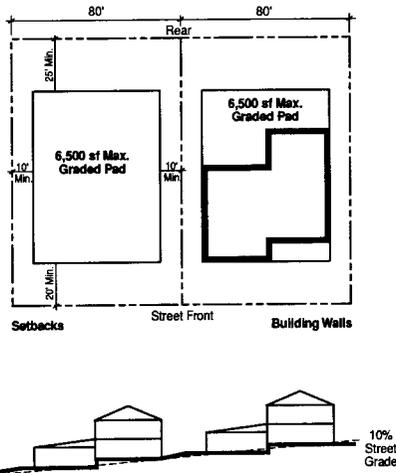


Figure 7.6 Medium single-family lot

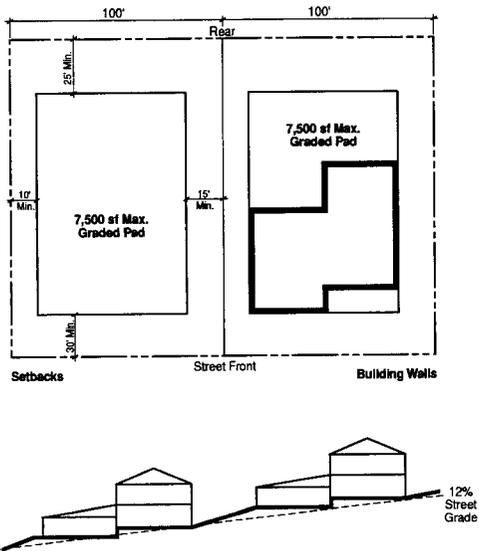


Figure 7.7 Large single-family lot

Medium single-family lot of a minimum 10,000 square feet (see Figure 7.6):

- Lot Width: 80-100 foot minimum
- Setbacks: Front yard - 20-25 foot minimum<sup>1</sup>  
Rear yard - 20 foot minimum  
Side yard - 10 foot minimum

Large single-family lots of a minimum 15,000 and 20,000 square feet (see Figure 7.7):

- Lot Width: 100 foot minimum
- Setbacks: Front yard - 30 foot minimum  
Rear yard - 25 foot minimum  
Side yard - 10 foot and 15 foot minimums

### Exceptions to Standards

**Building height** is limited to 32 feet for property over the 500-foot elevation and on slopes greater than 10 percent. Otherwise, maximum allowable heights are the same as those set forth in the City’s Zoning Ordinance. Building height shall be measured pursuant to Section D4-134 of the Zoning Ordinance.

**Front yard setbacks** can be reduced to 18 feet with roll-up garage doors. They may also be reduced to 10 feet for side entry garages, which can straddle the property line with a shared driveway. In areas designated for light grading, reduction of front yard setbacks would be permitted upon design review.

**Rear yard setbacks** need not apply if there is no adjoining rear residence.

If exceptions to development standards are requested with application of the Affordable Housing Density Bonus, they will be reviewed for consistency with the City’s Zoning Ordinance. Development standards for senior housing, multi-family housing, and retail shopping are otherwise the same as those set forth in the applicable zoning district.

### Design Review Procedures

The special qualities of the hillside landscape and its role in giving structure and identity to the City make the character of land forms, the alignment of roads, layout of individual parcels, and the design of specific buildings of particular importance to the successful

implementation of the Specific Plan. Design review will be based on the design guidelines and development standards contained in the Specific Plan and in the Appendix, but may be augmented by specific issues of community concern and other design guidelines established by the City as a whole. Stages One, Two and Three will be undertaken primarily by City staff, Stages Four and Six are conducted by the Architectural Review Board, and the public hearings with the Planning Commission comprise Stage Five. In addition, the services of a landscape architect or other design professional qualified to review site plans and grading should be used to assist in the design review process. The scale of all drawings submitted will be 1" = 40', or a scale determined to be appropriate by the Planning Services Director.

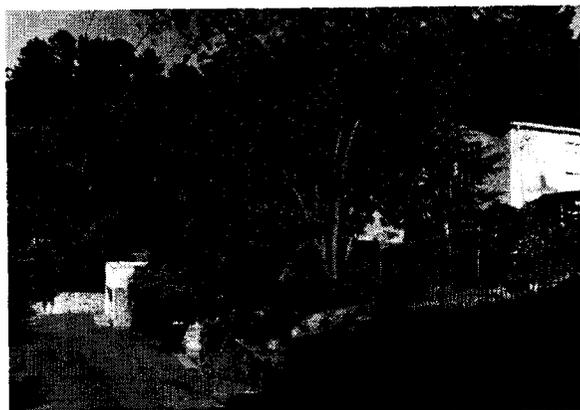
There are four basic steps required in the design review process, as follows:

#### Stage One - Preapplication Briefing Session(s) (Conducted by City staff)

In this preliminary stage, applicants would hold meetings with City staff to discuss the development standards, design guidelines, and any other issues relevant to the specific site and proposed development project, as well as to discuss a schedule for the review process.

#### Stage Two - Preapplication Concept Design Review (Conducted by City staff and the Architectural Review Board)

The purpose of Stage Two is to review the major concepts of the project, related primarily to conceptual grading, site design and landscape treatment. This stage is conducted prior to the submittal of the development plan application to the City, and is intended to deter-



*Narrow streets and informal landscaping can create a residential environment that fits into its surroundings.*

mine whether the development concepts are consistent with the goals and objectives of the Westside Specific Plan.

Specific submittals at this stage will include, but are not limited to:

1. Existing Conditions Map
2. Preliminary Soils Report
3. Geology Report
4. Constraints Map
5. Ordinance 197 Analysis
6. Site Layout and Circulation Concept, with street cross-sections
7. Grading and Drainage Concept
8. Landscape Concept
9. Density Bonus Analysis (if seeking an Affordable Housing Density Bonus)
10. Schematic Building Elevations, if possible

At this stage, it will be determined whether the services of a design professional will be necessary to peer review the project submittals. At a minimum, a Concept Design Review meeting will be conducted with the Architectural Review Board.

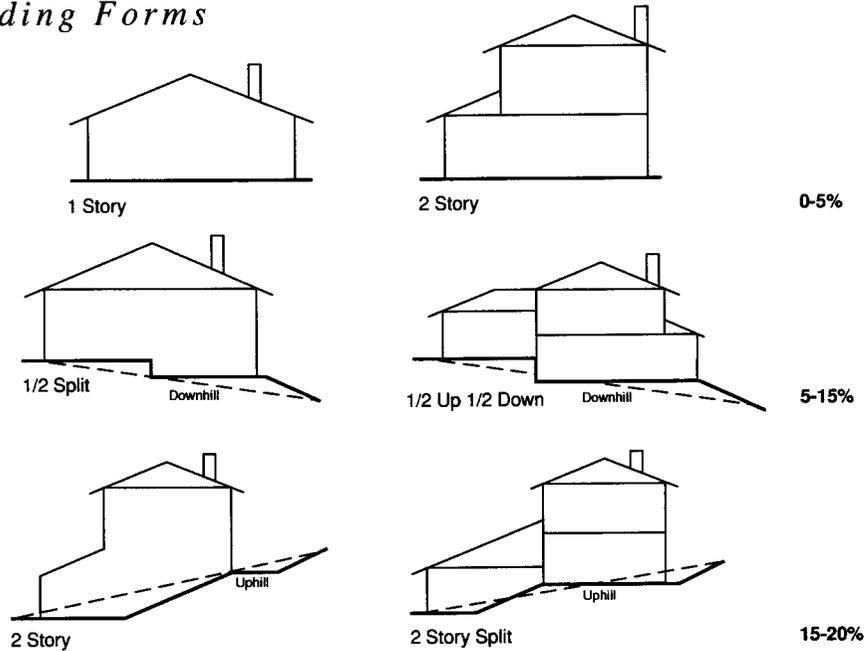
#### Stage Three - Formal Application Submittal and Review Process (Conducted by the Development Review Committee)

At this stage, the applicant submits the development plan for consideration and the City's review process officially begins. The purpose of Stage Three is to review the applicant's development proposal in significant detail. The content of the submittal information shall include, but not be limited to:

1. Modified Stage Two documents, if appropriate
2. Subdivision Map
3. Development Plan
4. Building Elevations

FIGURE 7.8

*Hillside Building Forms*



5. Building Section(s) (if necessary) to show building form in response to ground plane and slope
6. Grading/Drainage Plan
7. Site Model and/or Visual Simulation Analysis
8. Perspective Sketches/Renderings
9. Floor Plans
10. Preliminary Landscape Plan
11. Preliminary Fences, Hedges and Wall(s) Plan
12. Preliminary Open Space Land Management Plan, which includes designation of and proposed uses for all areas to be retained in open space and/or agricultural uses
13. Colors and Materials Board

**Stage Four - Preliminary Architectural Review (Conducted by the Architectural Review Board)**

The purpose of Stage Four is to obtain the Architectural Review Board's input regarding site and building design and layout, landscape treatments, walls and fences, and colors and materials. Submittals for Stage Four are the same as for Stage Three, minus the Open Space Land Management Plan.

**Stage Five - Public Hearing Process (Conducted by Planning Commission and in some cases, the City Council)**

The purpose of Stage Five is to have the Planning Commission evaluate the project's land use, site design and layout, and environmental effects in significant detail. The content of the submittal information is the same as that specified in Stage Three, in final draft form, plus the Final Draft of the Open Space Land Management Plan.

The Final Draft of the Open Space Plan shall include, but not be limited to:

1. Range Management Practices for any areas to be used for herd grazing

2. Wildlife Habitat Management and Mitigation Plan
3. Tree Management and Mitigation Plan
4. Rare Plant Survey and Mitigation Plan
5. Creek Management and Mitigation Plan
6. Erosion Control Plan
7. Long-term Maintenance Practices for all open space areas



*Hillside development in San Ramon.*

**Stage Six - Final Building and Landscape Design Review, if necessary (Conducted by Architectural Review Board)**

In this stage, building and landscape treatment review will be completed. Specific submittals at this stage will include, but not be limited to:

1. Final Landscape Plan
2. Final Fences, Hedges and Walls Plan
3. Perspective Sketches/Renderings
4. Floor Plans and Roof Plans

5. Exterior Elevations (keyed to a color and materials board)
6. Building section(s), if necessary, to show building form in response to ground plane and slope
7. Color and Materials Board
8. Any additional information deemed necessary by the Planning Services Director and the Architectural Review Board for a thorough review of the project.

<sup>1</sup> The City encourages front yard setbacks to vary within the referenced minimum ranges, and will review placement of building footprints in relationship to the street edge during the development review process.

## CHAPTER 8 *Public Services and Utilities*

### *Sanitary Sewer*

Both the Wiedemann Ranch development and the Bishop Ranch Regional Open Space are currently within the boundary of the Central Contra Costa Sanitary District (CCCSD). (See Figure 8.1.) The southeast portion of the Westside Planning Area along San Ramon Valley Boulevard, and the Greystone Ranch residential development are presently within the Dublin San Ramon Services District (DSRSD). The remainder of the site is not within any sewer district's current service area, and would therefore require annexation to the appropriate district for the provision of sanitary sewer service.

#### Central Contra Costa Sanitary District (CCCSD)

CCCSD has existing mains near the planning area boundary, but extensions of these mains are needed to reach development along Norris Canyon Road. A Sewer Capacity Study will be performed by the District to determine if upsizing of existing mains will be required due to development in this area. This study will be based on flow from the Westside area and remaining infill development allowed by the General Plan.

The CCCSD wastewater treatment plant in Martinez currently has an average dry weather flow capacity of 45 million gallons per day (MGD). The present flow to the plant is 33.6 MGD based on recent data. Based on historical connection rates within the District, it appears that adequate capacity will be available until at least the year 2002.

CCCSD would provide service for the entire northern portion of the planning area. Annexation of the northern portion not currently within CCCSD's service area would require the approval of both the CCCSD Board of Directors and the Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo). Upgrading of existing facilities necessary to provide service to the newly annexed area would be based on a capacity study conducted by the District. All upsizing of existing mains would be done by the District, and costs would be funded by new fees

and charges to the development responsible for the increased flow.

A new sewer main will be required on Norris Canyon Road to serve development in the higher elevations. This main would be installed by the first builder in the area. If this new main provides service to property other than that owned by the installer, the prorated value of that service would be determined and collected by the District from future area developers. Collected charges would then be rebated to the initial installer of the main. Connection fees would be charged by the District for all new development.

The use of pump stations for proposed development of this area is strongly discouraged by the District. All other forms of conveying flow shall be examined before presenting the option of pumping. The decision to allow a pump station will be made by the CCCSD Board of Directors, after petition from the builder.

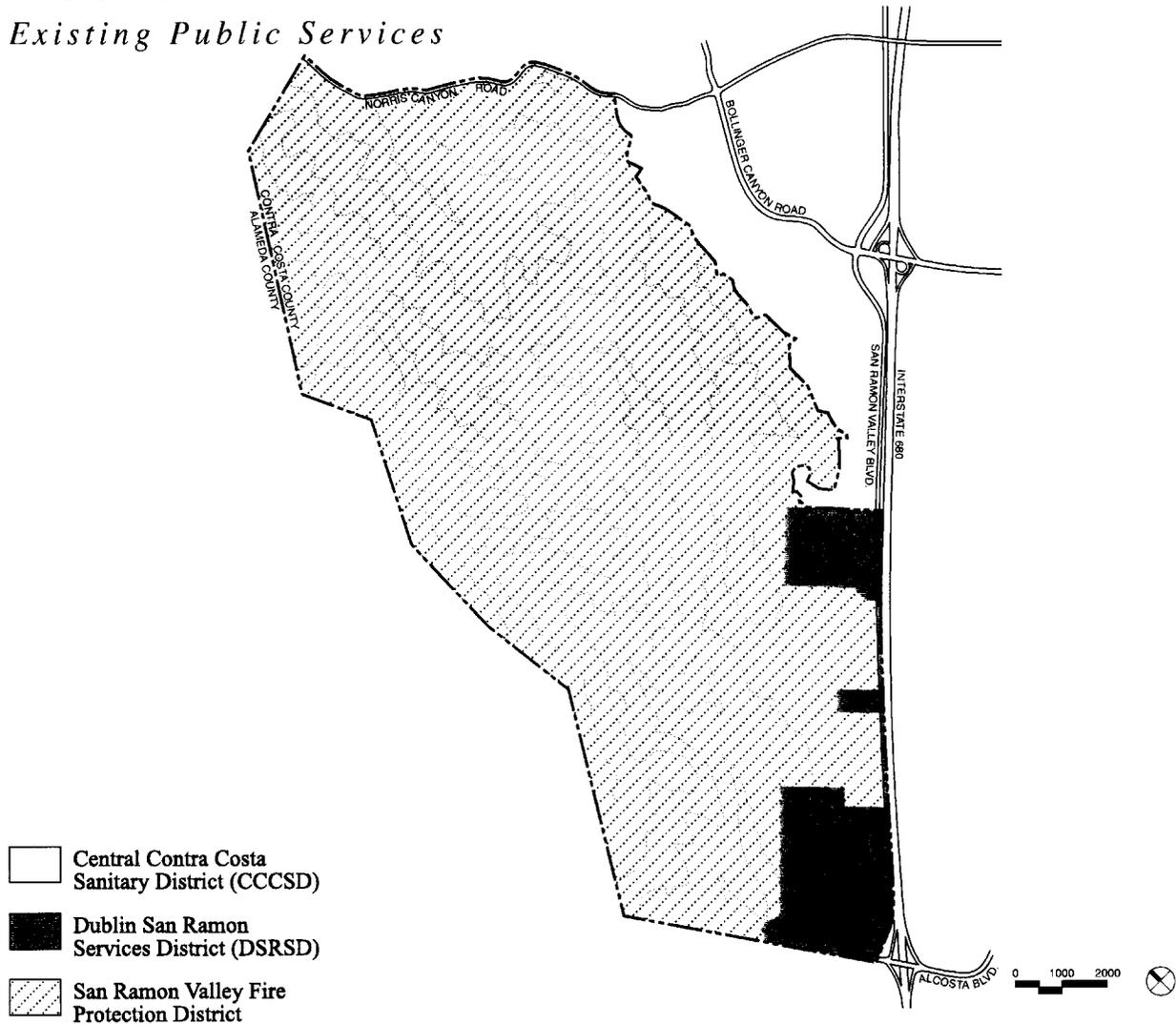
#### Dublin San Ramon Services District (DSRSD)

The DSRSD would provide sewer service to the southern portion of the Westside. Sewage within the DSRSD boundary is treated at the Dublin San Ramon Wastewater Treatment Plant located in Pleasanton. There are limited facilities provided by the District within the project area on the west side of Highway 680. Connections to existing facilities are possible at Pine Valley Road, Alcosta Boulevard, and adjacent to and south of the Greystone Ranch residential development.

Additional capacity studies will need to be performed prior to connection of any future developments to existing DSRSD trunklines. DSRSD is currently studying ways to increase effluent disposal capacity. Options include an expansion of effluent pipeline capacity, or a proposal to highly treat effluent to remove salts and inject the resulting water into the ground water basin.

Development within the southern portion of the Westside area requires annexation to the DSRSD, in

FIGURE 8.1  
Existing Public Services



order to provide sewer service. Annexation could occur for individual properties, with the owner supplying all required documentation for the process, or portions of the entire contributing watershed could be annexed as a part of the City of San Ramon annexation process. Annexation fees will be charged to the land to equalize historic capital expenditures and annexing costs.

Capacity studies of the existing mains would be required by the District to determine if upsizing might be needed. These studies would be prepared by the District for the contributing flow from the development (at developer cost), and the study would be reviewed by the District. Any upsizing of existing mains would be funded by the developer, and rebates for later connections could be applied for and granted by the DSRSD at its discretion pursuant to District regulations.

New sewer mains would be required along San Ramon Valley Boulevard for connection to the existing systems. These mains would be installed by the initial developer, and the expense of subsequent connections to these mains by other users could be rebated to the initial installer. Connection, plan check, and inspection fees would be charged by the District for all new development.

### Water

The southeastern portion of the Westside area adjacent to San Ramon Valley Boulevard, and the Wiedemann Ranch Residential Community are within the service boundary of the East Bay Municipal Utility District (EBMUD). The remainder of the site is contiguous to,

but not within, the ultimate service boundary for EBMUD.

The existing distribution system within the Westside area contained within EBMUD's service boundary consists of three pressure zones. The first zone covers the elevations of 340 to 540 feet, and is named the Amador Pressure Zone. The second zone, the San Ramon Pressure Zone, serves elevations from 450 feet to 650 feet. The Derby Pressure Zone, between 650 feet and 850 feet, presently serves the general area located to the west of Bollinger Canyon Road and south of Norris Canyon Road.

The water demand generated by development in this area would be approximately 1.0 MGD. This represents less than one percent of the current demand of the District. This increase in demand could easily be accommodated by the current water supply system during normal years.

The Wiedemann Ranch Residential Community will require water service from four pressure zones, of which three will be entirely new zones. The base zone (Derby) will serve lots between elevations 650 feet and 850 feet, the second zone (Bishop) between 850 feet to 1,060 feet, and the third pressure zone (Wiedemann) between 1,060 feet to 1,270 feet. The fourth or highest zone (Knife) will serve the lots above the elevation of 1,270 feet. New water storage, pumping and transmission facilities will be needed to extend the existing Derby Pressure Zone to the project area. Necessary offsite improvements along Norris Canyon Road will include the oversizing of planned pipeline improvements between San Ramon Valley Boulevard and Bollinger Canyon Road, and a pipeline extension (including a new pumping plant) westerly from Bollinger Canyon Road to the Wiedemann site. The construction of the major facilities in these zones would be funded by a separate System Capacity Charge (SCC) imposed by EBMUD under its regulations, which would be calculated on the basis of average water use by meter size, and also include components for future water supply, water main upsizing, and improvements in new zones supplying the area. The SCC would be placed on all new development within the affected area.

The area along San Ramon Valley Boulevard could be served by existing facilities as long as development is kept within EBMUD's service area and below the elevation of 650 feet. However, these existing facilities may need to be upsized or replaced to meet water service and fire flow requirements. Additional parallel and looped water main installations may be needed to

provide pipeline capacity and adequate fire flows for development in this area. All development would be required to pay the established SCC for EBMUD's Region 7, unless new major facilities are required to serve the area. The cost of water service would also include water mains, fire hydrants and service connections as required by EBMUD regulations, rates, and charges.

Other areas to be developed within the Westside plan area but outside EBMUD's current service area would require annexation to EBMUD for services. EBMUD's policy is to oppose all annexations outside its Ultimate Service Boundary unless certain findings can be made consistent with the District's Policy 1, adopted February 14, 1991.

The Westside planning area is currently being evaluated for inclusion within the DSRSD/EBMUD Recycled Water Authority (DERWA) service area. It is thus possible that all parks, streetscapes, golf courses and other large public areas will be irrigated with recycled water. Any areas within DERWA's service area would be subject to EBMUD's Nonpotable Water Policy and water service regulations, including any dual plumbing requirements.

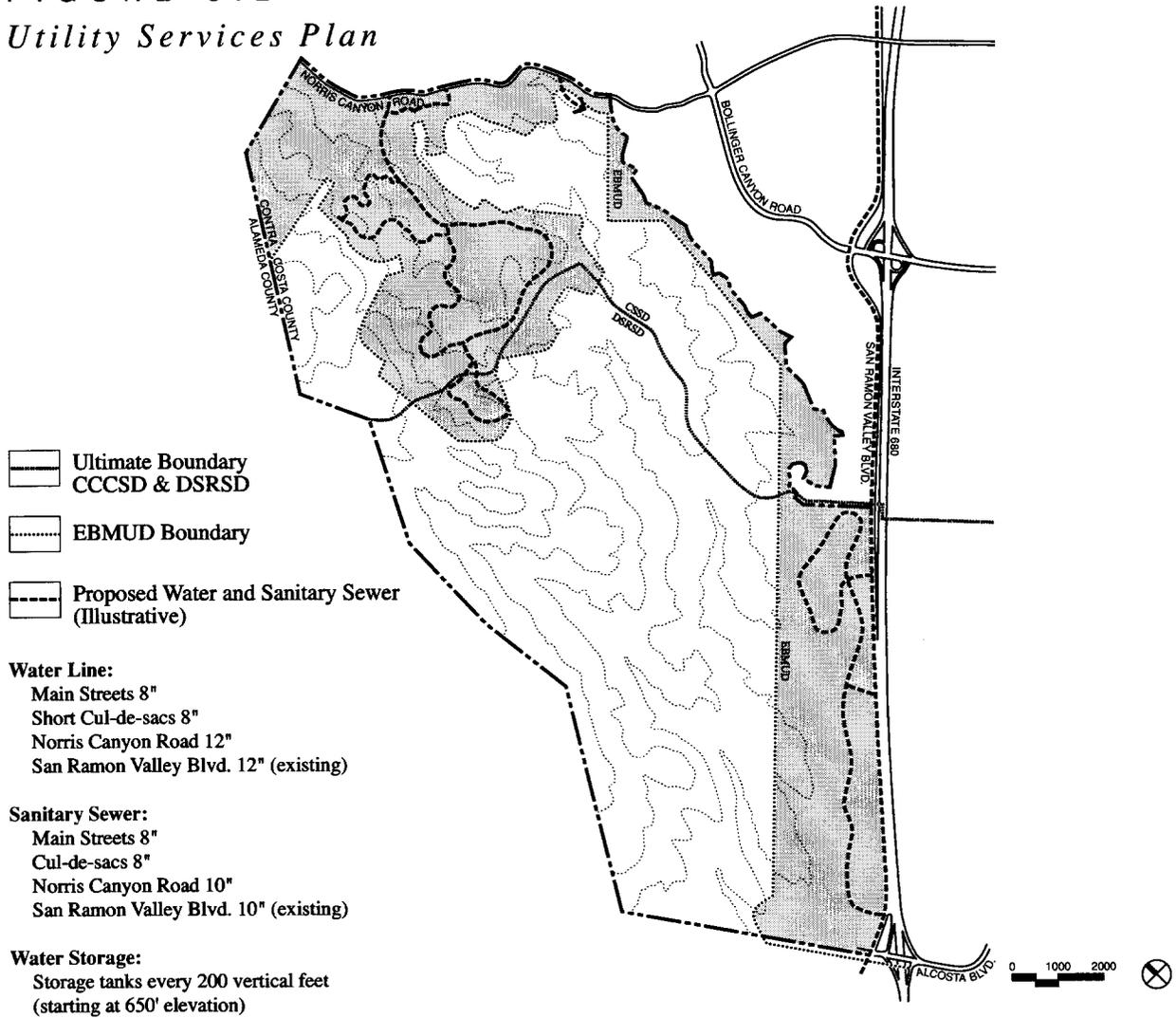
### *Police and Fire Protection*

Most of the Westside is currently served by the Contra Costa Sheriff's Department. When development occurs and the entire site is annexed into the City of San Ramon, police protection will be provided by the City of San Ramon Police Department.

The project site is currently served by the San Ramon Valley Fire Protection District (SRVFPD). The San Ramon Valley Fire Protection District's "First Due" fire response would arrive at the Westside from Fire Station #34 located near the intersection of Alcosta Boulevard and Bollinger Canyon Road, and from Station #39, located at Alcosta Boulevard and Fircrest Lane. Additional assistance would come from Station #38 located on Bollinger Canyon Road at Crow Canyon Road.

Development of the Westside planning area would increase demand for fire/emergency services. While the existing fire stations meet San Ramon Valley Fire Protection District standards and can adequately provide emergency response to this area, it will be necessary to ensure that adequate access directly from San Ramon Valley Boulevard is provided so that acceptable response times are maintained.

**FIGURE 8.2**  
*Utility Services Plan*



**Public Schools**

The Westside is located within the San Ramon Valley Unified School District (SRVUSD). The schools nearest to the planning area are:

- Neil Armstrong School (Grades K-5)
- Bollinger Canyon Elementary School (Grades K-5)
- Twin Creeks Elementary School (Grades K-5)
- Country Club School (Grades K-5)
- Iron Horse Middle School (Grades 6-8)

Pine Valley Middle School (Grades 6-8)

California High School (Grades 9-12)

While the average number of school children per household has been decreasing in the San Ramon area, the population growth has caused an increase in school enrollment. Furthermore, during the 1996/97 school year, the SRVUSD implemented the "Class Size Reduction Plan", which converts the student/teacher ratio for first and second grades to 20:1. Plans are currently being reviewed to expand class size reductions to the kindergarten through third grades. Population growth and the implementation of class size reductions has caused SRVUSD enrollment to exceed capacity at both the elementary and middle school levels.

The SRVUSD's future plans include seven new schools in the Dougherty Valley: four elementary, two middle, and one high school. The District also plans to expand three elementary schools (Bollinger, Twin Creeks, and Neil Armstrong), the Iron Horse Middle School, and California High.

The District is also studying the possibility of increasing developer fees for the purpose of building new school campuses and expanding existing facilities. However, none of these actions are a direct result of development in the Westside planning area.

### *Energy, Telephone and Wireless Communications, Cable Television*

Electricity and natural gas will be supplied to the Westside by the Pacific Gas & Electric Company (PG&E). Existing gas and electric facilities are located near the area.

Pacific Bell provides telephone and wireless communication services to the San Ramon area. A number of private, wireless service companies also offer an array of telecommunication options to the community. Existing facilities are located on San Ramon Valley Boulevard and within the development area adjacent to the Boulevard. Facilities for cable television service also exist within the Westside area.

### *Public Services Policies*

1. Annex the northern portion of the planning area (development area only) to CCCSD, and the southern portion (development area) to DSRSD, as appropriate, to provide service to these areas.
2. Extend sewer improvements to the site in accordance with the requirements of the appropriate sewer districts. (See Figure 8.2.)
3. Locate all new sewer lines underground and within the street rights-of-way with easements over public lines on private property.
4. Apply special standards, as required by the relevant district, for construction of sewer facilities in hillside areas.
5. Request development that is proposed in areas outside of East Bay Municipal Utility District's Ur-

ban Service Boundary to pursue other agencies for water service.

6. Provide new water facilities (potable and nonpotable) in accordance with EBMUD standards and requirements.
7. Locate a new reservoir so that the overflow elevation is 100 feet above the nominal upper service limit of the fully developed pressure zone and the new pressure zone will normally cover a two hundred foot elevation band.
8. Utilize water conservation and reclamation approaches in the design of all new water facilities.
9. Work with the water district to site and design water holding tanks so that their visibility from Norris Canyon Road and San Ramon Valley Boulevard is minimized to the greatest extent possible.
10. Ensure that all development within the Westside conforms to the applicable fire codes and development standards of the fire district.
11. Ensure that the development includes fire protection features such as the following:
  - a. The capability to provide not less than 1,500 GPM at 20 PSI fire flow from EBMUD hydrants on all engineered public water mains, except as otherwise recommended by the fire district.
  - b. Provide fire apparatus access roads meeting the following criteria:
    - i. Maximum 20 percent street slope, grooved concrete or rough asphalt for short stretches of road over 15 percent.
    - ii. Minimum road widths of:
      - (1) 20 feet with "no parking" on both sides of the road.
      - (2) 28 feet with "no parking" on one side of the road.
      - (3) 36 feet with parking on both sides of the road.
      - (4) Parking restrictions indicated by

posting signs and red curbs with labels per fire district specifications.

- c. Allow access throughout the subdivision to wildland open spaces. Minimum entries to these areas are to be 12 feet wide.
- d. Prohibit dead-end streets longer than 150 feet without providing a cul-de-sac or other suitable turnaround.
- e. Provide auxiliary access to an area with more than 75 units by way of an emergency vehicle access road. Auxiliary access to areas with more than 150 units would require two public access streets.
- f. Use fire resistive vegetation in conjunction with irrigated landscaping, as a buffer between open space and inhabited areas.
- g. Non-combustible roofing should be used in all new construction.
- h. Ensure the creation and ongoing implementation of an open space/ wildland fire management plan consistent with the standards of the fire districts which includes a system of haz-

ard mitigation. These mitigations may include, but are not limited to fire trails, fire breaks, grazing, and disking to control the spread of fire in these areas.

- 12. Expand police services to include the addition of approximately four officers, two patrol vehicles and adequate support and administrative staff, and create an additional beat for the department with a response time of four to six minutes for "Priority 1" calls.
- 13. Incorporate Police Department recommendations regarding design aspects of development that affect traffic safety and crime prevention in all new development.
- 14. Cooperate with the SRVUSD in planning for new facilities through the dedication of new school sites and/or development fees to ensure that adequate classroom space is available prior to allowing development of this area.
- 15. Coordinate with Pacific Gas and Electric, Pacific Bell and cable television providers in planning and scheduling future facilities which will serve the development.

### *Introduction*

The drainage element of the Specific Plan integrates the interrelated concepts of drainage, flood control, stormwater pollution control, sediment transport, and creek channel erosion, while preserving the riparian values of the natural creek system. Specific drainage plans created for proposed development must include the following elements:

- On-site drainage of stormwater which controls stormwater pollution and prevents flood hazards or drainage problems to the proposed project.
- Methods that prevent any increase in off-site flood hazards.
- Methods and practices that prevent on-site damage from creek channel and bank erosion.
- Methods and practices that prevent any increase in off-site sediment transport which would cause culvert blockage or channel aggradation.
- Methods and practices that preserve existing flow rates in creeks to maintain riparian values.
- Long-term management plans for the creek system to control stormwater pollution and prevent erosion damage, maintain flow capacity, provide access where desired, and maintain riparian vegetation.
- Multiple-use detention basins that accommodate recreation and open space, as well as hydrologic functions and wildlife habitats.

The hydrology of the Westside under existing conditions, the capacity of off-site and on-site hydraulic structures, the incised nature of the existing system, and the potential impacts of the proposed development and alternatives are described in great detail in previously

published technical reports. The following section describes the proposed drainage concept in response to predicted impacts during major flood events.

### *Drainage Concept*

#### **Norris Canyon Road Area**

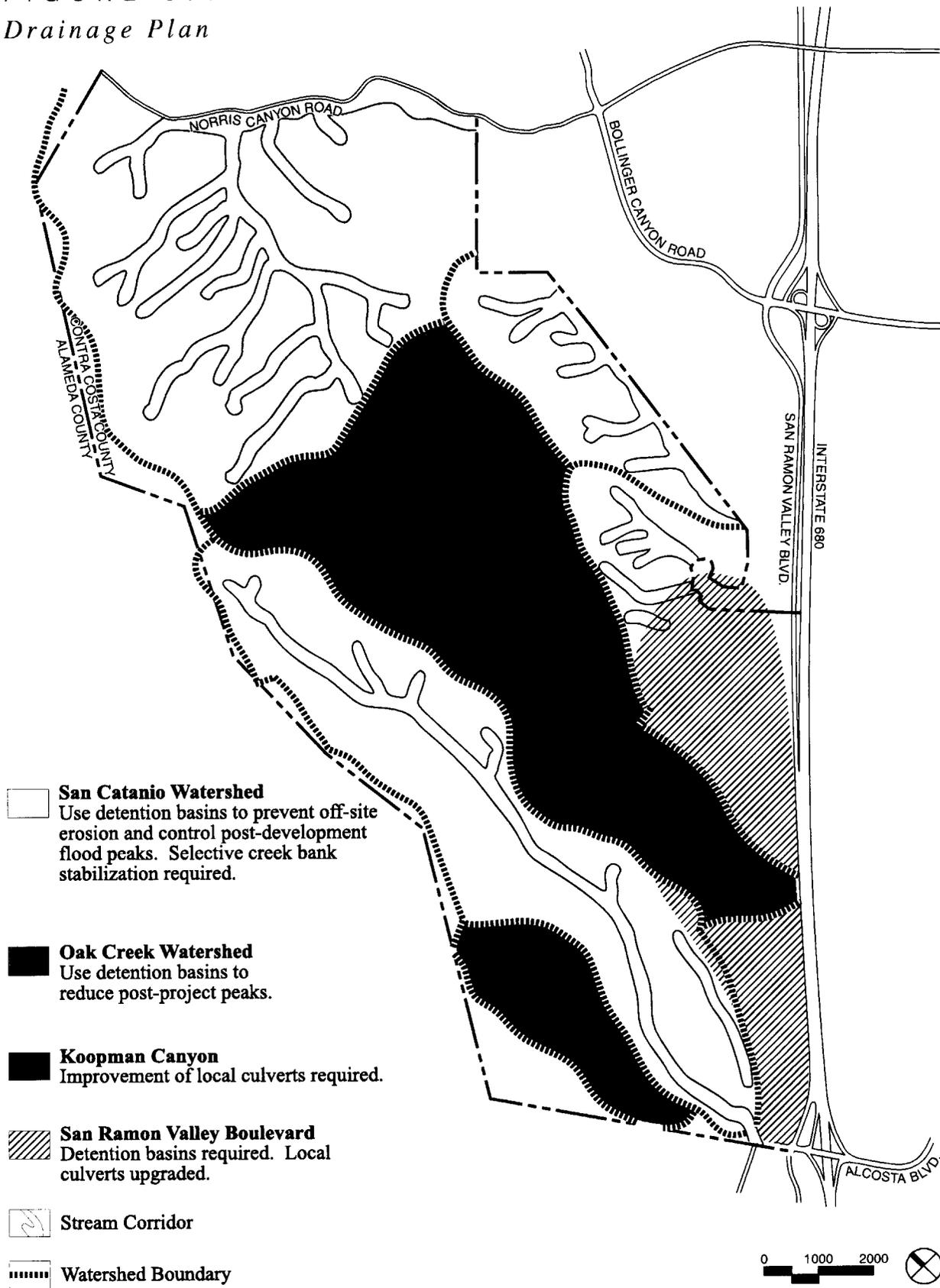
In the Norris Canyon Road area, setbacks would be maintained to the extent possible on both sides of the existing, deeply incised creeks in order to maintain riparian values, and prevent erosion damage to the proposed homes. The drainage improvements would minimize the filling or grading of creek systems.

The layout of the proposed storm drain system is intended to accomplish the following (see Figure 9.1):

- Produce no net increase in off-site peak flood flows from the Westside area. Detention basins would be provided to reduce flood peaks.
- Maintain flows in the creeks at existing rates.
- Provide energy dissipators at creek discharge locations to prevent channel erosion.
- Prevent further channel degradation at creek crossing locations. Create approximately 10 feet of channel aggradation in San Catanio Creek along Norris Canyon Road (where the channel has incised 30 to 40 feet).

To accomplish the above goals, the Plan provides for detention basins which would, during the construction phase of the project, be specifically designed to control stormwater pollution and serve as sediment basins, trapping eroded soil from the project areas. Following completion of the project, deposited sediment would be excavated to provide storage volume and the outlet control structure modified to function as flood detention basins. All outlet structures and box culverts will be sized to pass the 100-year flood safely, assuming 20 percent debris blockage. The storm drain layout would

FIGURE 9.1  
*Drainage Plan*



be designed to allow continued flow in the creeks at approximately the existing flow volumes, with excess runoff from the developed areas discharged directly to the detention basins. Where storm drains discharge directly to the creeks, energy dissipators would be required to prevent scour. The exact sizing of the storm drain culverts, detention basin volumes, and calculation of other site-specific criteria will be conducted during the project design.

In the reach of San Catanio Creek along Norris Canyon Road, past channel incision has created a gully 30-40 feet deep. As the steep gully banks collapse, Norris Canyon Road will continue to require maintenance. One alternative is to move Norris Canyon Road further north (into the hillside) and/or provide gabion and retaining wall protection along the creek-side of the road at critical locations. A second approach would be to stabilize and even raise the existing channel bed.

#### San Ramon Valley Boulevard Area

In this area, Oak Creek is the only major riparian corridor affected by the Plan. The major drainage constraint in this area is the size of the existing culverts under I-680 and the existing flood hazards off-site, particularly in Oak Creek. The recommended solution approach is to provide a series of detention basins to attenuate flood peaks to either their existing magnitude, or to the capacity of the existing culvert system (whichever is smaller). During the actual design of the project along San Ramon Valley Boulevard, a detailed study of each of the off-site culvert systems between the Westside area and the storm drain outlet should be conducted. This will allow sizing of the detention basins.

#### *Policies*

Hydrologic and hydraulic factors affect several elements of the Specific Plan, including drainage, safety, grading, and open space/conservation. Through the San Ramon General Plan, the Resource Conservation Overlay District Ordinance, and Ordinance 197, the City has established several policies to guide development in the Westside. To respond to these general and specific guidelines, a set of policies has been developed, which also affect the Geologic Safety Element (flood hazards) and the grading concept for stormwater pollution and erosion control.

#### Drainage

1. Post-project peak flood discharge rates in San Catanio Creek (Norris Canyon Road Area) shall not exceed existing discharge conditions.
2. Peak flood discharge rates in other creeks shall not increase off-site flood hazards or exceed the design capacity of any off-site drainage facility.
3. Drainage facilities shall be designed and constructed in accordance with Federal (FEMA), City, and County flood control policies to provide protection from a 100-year magnitude flood.
4. Storm water shall be discharged to storm drain facilities or water coursed to prevent damage to natural or graded areas.
5. Average rainy season post-project creek flows should be approximately the same as pre-project flows to maintain riparian habitat.
6. Long-term monitoring and maintenance of drainage facilities should be provided to ensure continued flood protection.
7. Minimize discharge of pollutants from surface runoff to creeks and drainage facilities.
8. Require a detailed drainage design plan for each phase of the proposed project. This re-



*View north along San Ramon Valley Boulevard.*



*Sensitive treatment of creekside conditions can enhance the quality of riparian environments.*

port must document pre-project and post-project flows in the critical channel reaches throughout the affected Westside area. The report shall also document the available flow capacity in any off-site drainage systems proposed for discharge from Westside projects.

9. Provide on-site detention basins in the Norris Canyon Area to reduce post-project flows to existing levels.
10. Provide on-site detention in the San Ramon Valley Boulevard areas of development to prevent downstream flood hazards. Other drainage solutions which also address issues of sediment transport, erosion, water quality, stormwater pollution, and visual and biotic resources, which are acceptable to the City and regulatory agencies, shall be considered. Maximize pervious surface areas in the multi-unit residential and commercial areas.
11. The lower reaches of Oak Creek west of San Ramon Valley Boulevard are subject to overbank flow during a major storm. New structures in this area should be adequately set back and elevated.
12. In the Norris Canyon area, design the drainage system to allow continued discharge to the creeks to maintain the existing flow regime. Excess runoff should be conveyed directly to detention basins.
13. Create local drainage districts or other organizations to provide funding for long-term monitoring and maintenance of drainage fa-

cilities. Prepare specific schedules of required periodic inspection and repair.

14. A specific water quality element of drainage plans shall be required to demonstrate the project design will control stormwater pollution and minimize pollutants in surface runoff. The most important element is a street and storm drain inlet cleaning program for both public access roads and parking areas. (Thorough sweeping and storm drain inlet cleaning prior to the first rainstorm is especially important.) Most grading plan elements which reduce erosion (for example, sediment traps, revegetation, regulating construction schedules) also reduce stormwater pollutants. Pollutant-intensive commercial areas (for example, gas stations, industrial sites) may require oil and grease traps prior to discharge to the storm drain system.

#### Creek Conservation

1. Preserve the natural creek values, including biotic, aesthetic, and recreational aspects.
2. The creeks and associated riparian corridors should be incorporated as a visual resource in the project design.
3. Those creeks which are currently degraded should be restored and enhanced to increase their intrinsic values.
4. Prevent damage to any facilities adjacent to the creeks from erosion or floods.
5. Prevent off-site erosion or sedimentation problems from Westside creeks. Provide ongoing inspection and maintenance to identify potential creek erosion damage and repair as needed.
6. Encourage public access to selected creek zones for passive recreation and as an educational resource.
7. Restrict public access to certain creek zones to minimize disturbance of wildlife and to preserve residents' privacy.
8. Require review of all proposed development plans to ensure that any development in the creek corridors is consistent with the applicable elements of this Plan.

9. Coordinate any creek modifications with permitting agencies (the Regional Water Quality Control Board, California Department of Fish & Game, and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers should be consulted to determine their regulatory authority).
10. Provide a 200-foot corridor along creeks, measured from the creek centerline.
11. Minimize the number of required creek road crossings. Road crossings shall be designed to prevent erosion while being visually attractive and minimizing wildlife and vegetation impacts.
12. Maintain and restore riparian vegetation. Replace disturbed areas with native riparian trees and shrubs. Restrict cattle access to the creeks on any open space areas which remain open to animal grazing.
13. Restrict public access to desired areas to minimize wildlife disturbance and access to private yards.
14. Provide guidelines on recommended backyard fencing and landscaping to future residents in the Norris Canyon area.
15. Ensure that the drainage plans for specific projects prevent increased peaks in the creeks, while maintaining existing flow rates to maintain riparian values.
16. In general, bridges are preferred to culverts for major creek crossings to maximize habitat and allow wildlife passage. However, in areas of deep alluvial soil, stabilization may be needed to prevent channel degradation.
17. The design of the detention basins should include landscaping to create visually attractive areas with wildlife values and recreational opportunities.
18. In any location where creeks are graded, specific restoration plans should be provided. These would include reconfiguration, channel design and stabilization, and revegetation and non-local creek enhancements, where necessary.

## *Implementation*

As part of the final design, and to allow for phased construction, the City should require a detailed plan for each project phase, which includes provision for drainage and erosion control. These plans should include the following elements:

### **Drainage Plan**

1. Pre- and post-project flows and volumes for both frequent and extreme storms at key points in the development.
2. The plan should include size, shape, outlet works, revegetation, and long-term maintenance provisions for detention basins. Multiple use of detention basins for recreation and open space as well as wildlife habitat should be encouraged, and the design of the basins should be carefully integrated with the surrounding terrain.
3. The location and size of the culvert system, with energy dissipation structures where the culverts discharge to the creeks.
4. Typical details for creek road crossings, including erosion prevention and revegetation plans.
5. A site grading plan which minimizes paved areas.
6. Plan for management/maintenance of the creek corridors as an integral part of the open space program. This should include grazing controls, provision of creek maintenance, monitoring of creek erosion, access, and treatment of backyards which front on the creek.

### **Erosion and Sedimentation Plan**

1. A construction-phase stormwater management plan should be prepared by project applicants which specifies control measures to reduce stormwater pollution problems, and reviewed by the appropriate State and/or local agency. This plan should address:
  - a. Location of all areas where vegetation will be removed.

- b. Methods of stabilizing these areas. as hay bales, earth berms, sand-bagging, or silt fences should be specified.
  - c. Location of areas to be revegetated and types, quantities, and methods of seeding, mutating, planting, fertilizing, and irrigation of planted areas. f. Schedule for implementation such that all erosion control measures will be installed and established by October 15 and be maintained through April 15 of each construction year.
  - d. Methods to reduce runoff across cut-and-fill slopes and other graded areas.
  - e. The location and functioning of sediment traps; methods of using the proposed detention basins as sediment traps during construction; provisions for removing sediment following construction, identification of disposal locations, and provisions for long-term maintenance; and location and type of temporary measures such
2. The plan should identify any locations where specific creek-bank or channel restoration or protection is required. A comprehensive restoration and erosion control plan, including channel and bank stabilization, replanting, and maintenance should be required for any creek area that will be filled in the Norris Canyon Road area. In addition, the treatment along Norris Canyon Road, including the creek crossings and banks, should be specified.

# CHAPTER 10 *Geologic Safety*

## *Geologic Setting*

In the Westside Planning Area, as in most of the Bay Area, earthquake faults and landsliding are significant constraints to development. In addition, as in many areas in the East Bay, expansive soils and bedrock are a significant constraint to development. The active Calaveras fault traverses the San Ramon Valley Boulevard Area, generally lying parallel to and just west of San Ramon Valley Boulevard. This fault is capable of generating a Maximum Credible Earthquake of 7.25 with accompanying surface ground rupture and violent to very violent ground shaking. The State of California has established an Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone along the fault requiring detailed studies of rupture hazards prior to construction of certain types and uses of structures. The inactive Dublin fault is located in the Westside Planning Area but does not traverse the San Ramon Valley Boulevard Area or Norris Canyon Road Area.

Existing conditions includes the Calaveras fault, Dublin fault and other ancient bedrock faults, as well as landslides and areas of soil creep and surface erosion and colluvium-filled swales, which are areas of landsliding. Landslides and related features and areas of potential slope instability will be removed, stabilized or repaired by grading in development areas. Maps describing existing conditions, soils and geologic constraints are included in a previously published report for the Westside on Opportunities and Constraints. However, all development requires a higher level of evaluation of geologic conditions based on site-specific soils and geotechnical investigations. There is no guarantee of the developability of areas as they are shown on the Land Use Map and illustrative plans. (See Figure 10.1.)

## *Purpose of Element*

The Geologic Safety Element of the Westside Specific Plan is intended to provide specific information with respect to the Westside Planning Area "for the protection of the community from unreasonable risks associ-

ated with the effects of seismically induced surface rupture, ground shaking, ground failure, and dam failure; slope instability leading to landslides, subsidence and other geological hazards; flooding; hazardous material accidents; and wildland and urban fire," (Government Code, Section 65302{g}).

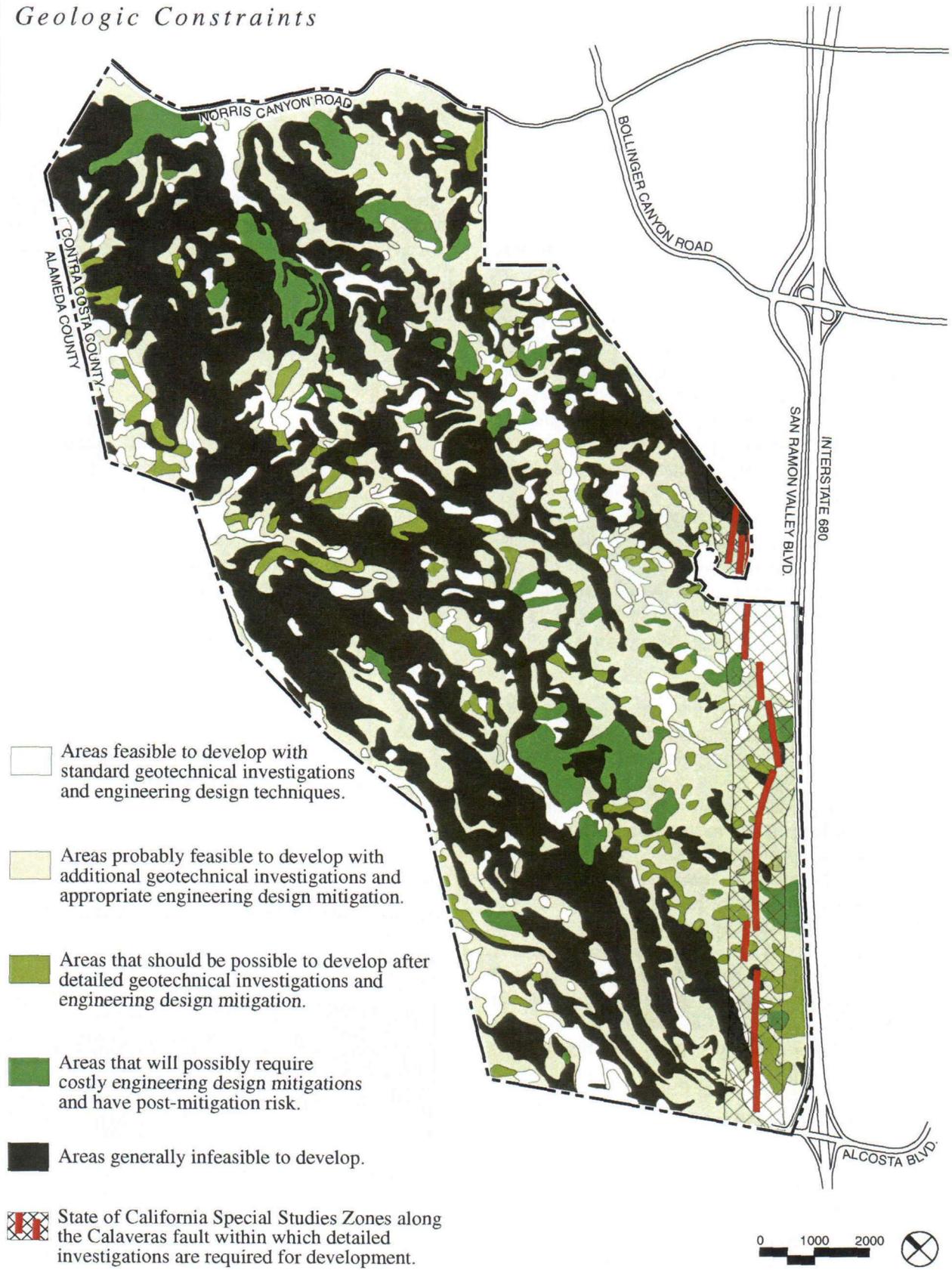
## *Policies*

1. Conduct detailed geotechnical investigations for proposed developments to identify and mitigate geologic, soils and seismic hazards in order to preserve lives and protect property. Mitigations include siting development away from hazards, and removing, stabilizing or repairing such hazards.
2. Encourage development that is sensitive to geologic conditions.
3. Require the establishment of organizations vested with the financial responsibility, such as geological hazard abatement districts, to manage and maintain common areas within and surrounding development areas.

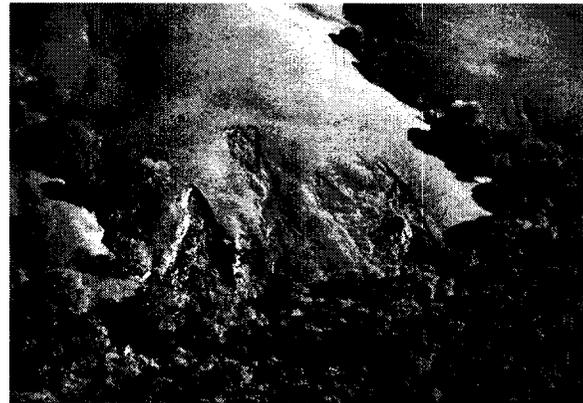


*The Calaveras fault generally follows San Ramon Valley Boulevard.*

FIGURE 10.1  
*Geologic Constraints*



4. Encourage geologic input at the earliest (feasibility) stage of the planning process for all specific developments to mitigate geologic conditions and potential hazards whenever possible.
5. Require detailed design-level geotechnical investigations for all specific developments as part of the applicable tentative map or grading/building permit approval process.
6. Hire or contract with a registered Geologist/certified Engineering Geologist to establish minimum geologic elements for geotechnical reports submitted as part of the applicable tentative map or grading/building permit approval process, and to review reports submitted by applicants for conformance with City requirements. Required reports and review process should be implemented by City ordinance.
7. Require detailed fault investigations prepared by a registered Geologist/certified Engineering Geologist for all development within the Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone along the Calaveras fault to establish the location and activity of fault traces.
8. Do not locate any residential, commercial or institutional structure closer than 50 feet from a fault trace judged to be capable of ground rupture unless a lesser distance is specifically approved by the City consulting Geologist/Engineering Geologist based on the results of a detailed fault investigation.
9. Surface and/or subsurface utilities shall be sited and designed to both safely accommodate expected ground movement and automatically shut off in the event ground movement exceeds design expectations. Roads, open space and parking lots are the most appropriate land uses for development along the Calaveras fault.



*Geologically fragile slopes characterize much of the Westside hills.*

10. Develop an emergency plan to reestablish access and critical utilities and services to developed areas west of the Calaveras fault in the event of a major earthquake.
11. In general, cut slope inclinations should not be greater than 2:1 (horizontal to vertical) and fill slope inclinations should not be greater than 2:1. Slope design criteria should be appropriate for site specific conditions as determined by a detailed geotechnical investigation performed by a registered Geologist/certified Engineering Geologist. Cut slope inclinations steeper than 2:1 may be more appropriate in many areas (e.g., cuts in bedrock with favorable structure orientation). Steeper cuts reduce the amount of grading and associated loss of soil and vegetation, and therefore the visual impact of the cut.
12. An erosion and sedimentation control plan should be developed for the Norris Canyon Road area by a certified Erosion and Sedimentation Control Specialist, and implemented by City ordinance.

# CHAPTER *II* *Implementation*

## *Purpose of Element*

California Planning and Zoning law requires that a specific plan contain a program of "...implementation measures including regulations, programs, public works projects, and financing measures necessary to carry out [the plan]." Pursuant to Government Code Section 65451(a)(4), this chapter discusses regulatory changes resulting from the City's adoption of the Specific Plan, development impact fees, financing planned improvements, monitoring and maintenance of City services, and development phasing, as they relate to implementing the Westside Specific Plan.

The context for the following discussion is the primarily rural landscape of the planning area, the development that has occurred since this Plan's adoption in 1989, and recent changes in State law which affect the City's ability to finance needed improvements and ongoing maintenance of public lands. The majority of the Westside (87 percent) is outside the City's corporate limits and is undeveloped, without water, sewer, or City services. Approximately 40 percent of the land is designated as agricultural preserve under the Williamson Act. As discussed earlier in the Plan, several parcels along San Ramon Valley Boulevard have either been approved or are proposed for development (totalling 503 residences of the 825 units allowed under this Plan), and the Wiedemann Ranch residential subdivision off of Norris Canyon Road was approved for 371 units by Contra Costa County in 1992. Furthermore, the construction of Westside Drive and the widening of San Ramon Valley Boulevard are underway, and land has been acquired and partial funding secured for the future hook-ramp configuration linking Alcosta Boulevard with I-680.

In November 1996, voters of the State of California approved Proposition 218, which requires all new or increased general taxes, assessments and fees to be approved by a majority vote of the local electorate. It also changes the procedure for creating assessment districts, which have been used by San Ramon to fund

ongoing maintenance of public lands, such as parks, greenbelts, and roadways. Now, when an assessment district is proposed, local agencies are required to mail a ballot to each affected property owner, then tabulate returned ballots. If the majority of property owners returning ballots oppose the levying of assessments, they cannot be imposed.

## *Regulatory Changes Resulting from Adoption of the Specific Plan*

Since its adoption in 1989 by Ordinance 172, the Westside Specific Plan has served as the basis for development of a variety of residential densities with support commercial and public/semi-public uses, and for the conservation of open space lands which comprise more than 80 percent of the planning area. The Plan modifies the City's existing review and permitting procedures, requiring additional design review stages for proposed development projects. The additional review is a result of the Plan's overriding philosophy to protect the Westside hills as the planning area's most memorable image, and to ensure that the built environment blends in with the existing natural terrain. So that development proposals can be adequately reviewed for consistency with land use policies and design guidelines contained in the Specific Plan, submittal requirements have been also augmented, and computer-aided visual analyses, Open Space Management Plans, and Tree Management Plans may be required, particularly in instances where properties are characterized by high elevations and complex topography.

## *Development Impact Fees*

Development in the Westside is subject to all of the charges and development impact fees normally levied by the City of San Ramon, as well as the utility, fire and school districts. Furthermore, a fee of \$271 per dwelling unit and \$0.27 per building square foot for commercial space is levied to recover the cost of the

Specific Plan and its environmental documents. This fee is subject to annual Consumer Price Index increases, as determined by the City, to reflect the time value of the money initially advanced by the City of San Ramon to complete planning for the Westside.

### *Financing Planned Improvements*

The two development areas within the Westside are extremely different in character. The Norris Canyon Road area is remote and characterized by highly constrained topography. The need to ready lots for development in difficult terrain, extend utilities, and make associated roadway improvements all contribute to a high level of development costs. Prior to annexation by the City, identified funding sources for needed on- and off-site improvements will be required. It is the developer's responsibility to work with Contra Costa County to establish financing mechanisms for the needed improvements.

In the San Ramon Valley Boulevard area, the costs of development on a per unit basis are also significant. To assure both the orderly progress of construction, and that all affected landowners will participate equitably in the responsibility to pay for necessary public improvements, it is anticipated that a combination of financing techniques may be used, as follows:

- Citywide development impact fees collected throughout San Ramon;
- Development impact fees applicable only to the San Ramon Valley Boulevard area; and
- Some form of tax-free municipal bonds to finance improvements which are needed at the outset and will require ongoing City maintenance.

All currently existing development fees applicable in San Ramon, including fees which are necessary to fund off-site roadway improvements, such as the widening of San Ramon Valley Boulevard and the I-680/Alcosta Boulevard hook ramp design, will be adjusted to pay for planned improvements. As development continues and improvement plans are refined, development impact fees may increase. For instance, it is assumed that the major improvements at the I-680/Alcosta Boulevard interchange will be funded in part from the citywide roadway impact fee, and that citywide fees will be adjusted to fund this additional improvement.



*Built in the mid-1800's, the Glass House (shown here in its original location) has been identified by the City as one of three historic homes along San Ramon Valley Boulevard that should be preserved.*

If it is determined that municipal bonds are necessary, project developers must petition the City to form an assessment district. This would occur prior to the City's approval of proposed developments. Two forms of financing districts that could be used are a Special Assessment District or a Mello-Roos Community Facilities District. The exact form of the financing district can be selected at the time the district is created to reflect landowner preferences.

### *Monitoring and Maintenance for Ongoing City Services*

Prior to project approval, a mechanism for maintaining ongoing public services must be determined for development areas both inside and outside the City's corporate limits. For the area outside the City, a likely funding source would be a County Service Area assessment district, for which landowners would petition Contra



*The Boone House is a good example of high style Dutch Colonial homes built in the early 1900's.*

Costa County to establish prior to annexation. For the San Ramon Valley Boulevard area, a special tax, as authorized under the Mello-Roos Community Facilities District Act and approved by landowners in the affected planning area, may be levied to redress any fiscal imbalance resulting from changes in the assessment of unit costs for services. Levels of required services are evaluated each time a proposed project is reviewed by the City. If an evaluation indicates that a new development would create a fiscal imbalance, project approval would be based upon imposition of a tax designated for providing ongoing City services to that development. This tax would be used to augment property tax, sales tax and other revenues generated by land uses in the Westside.

A frequently used mechanism for assuring maintenance of common open space areas within residential communities is a homeowners' association. It is assumed that the Declaration of Covenants, Conditions and Restrictions (CC&R's) of a homeowners' association will establish a "right to ranch" on the adjacent open spaces used for grazing which will prevent the possibility of future homeowners requesting nuisance abatement proceedings because there is cattle grazing adjacent to residential property. It is also assumed that the CC&R's will set forth specific requirements aimed at resolving potential conflicts that may arise where residential communities adjoin a working ranch or farm.

A Landscape and Lighting Maintenance District may be established if a homeowners' association is not used to ensure the maintenance of open space, roadside lighting and landscaping, and drainage. A benefit assessment sufficient in amount to ensure ongoing maintenance of these common areas would be levied. The project developer/landowner will be responsible for beginning the process of forming the maintenance district, through petition to the City.

The estimated cost of providing public services for development in the San Ramon Valley Boulevard planning area is summarized in Table 11.1, and is expressed as costs per dwelling unit.

### *Development Phasing*

The phasing of development in the Westside is an assumption, not a recommendation or a requirement. Market forces and landowner intentions may result in a different phasing. If a property owner of an area both outside the City and outside service district boundaries

wishes to develop, and if the owner can meet conditions of approval relating to having necessary roadway improvements constructed in advance of development, then there is no policy reason within the Specific Plan to prevent such a landowner from making necessary applications. The following shows the sequence in which the Westside could be expected to, but may not necessarily, develop:

- Lands within the City with full access to sewer and water services could be expected to develop first.
- Lands within the City and within the Sphere of Influence of a sewer or water provider would be expected to develop second.
- Lands requiring annexation to both the City and service districts could be expected to develop third.
- Lands under existing Williamson Act contracts could be expected to develop last.

Currently, approximately 725 acres within the Westside are designated in the Contra Costa County General Plan as agricultural preserve (this does not include the three agricultural parcels that the County designated for Williamson Act Preserves when the Wiedemann Ranch Residential Community was approved). Under the Williamson Act, the owners of these lands agree to withdraw them from development for a minimum of ten years. In exchange, their landholdings are taxed as agricultural lands, rather than at their present market value. This agreement with the County must be renewed every year; once a landowner serves notice that he will not renew the agreement, a ten-year moratorium on development is initiated.



*The El Nido House on the Geldermann property.*

T A B L E 1 1 . 1

*Development Costs\*—San Ramon Valley Boulevard Planning Area  
(825 units)*

<u>San Ramon Valley Boulevard Area</u>	
Development Services	\$113,500
Parks	57,000
Public Services	198,000
Police	227,000
Roadway Improvements	44,000
<hr/>	
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$639,500</b>
Citywide Landscaping & Lighting	49,500
<hr/>	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$689,000</b>
<b>Costs per dwelling unit .....</b>	<b>835</b>

*\* Amounts are in 1996/97 dollars.*

Consistent with the goals of the Specific Plan, either Contra Costa County or the City of San Ramon may be petitioned for cancellation of the Williamson Act contract.

*Next Steps*

As mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, implementation of the Westside Specific Plan is well underway since the Plan's adoption in 1989. The Gateway Shopping Center has been completed at the corner of Alcosta Boulevard and San Ramon Valley Boulevard, and the Greystone Ranch residential subdivision is under construction. The City continues to receive proposals for residential development along San Ramon Valley Boulevard. Contra Costa County has approved the Wiedemann Ranch residential subdivision. The widening of San Ramon Valley Boulevard has been initiated, and sufficient right-of-way and partial funding for the Alcosta Boulevard/I-680 hook ramps have been secured. As implementation of the Westside Spe-

cific Plan continues, new development will increase the need for City services. Identifying adequate funding sources to support the services will require early resolution, and it will be the responsibility of the landowners to initiate the formation of financing districts prior to approval of development proposals.

It is anticipated that developers of land along Norris Canyon Road will eventually approach the City with requests for annexation. When such requests are received, the City will approach the Contra Costa County Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo) to commence annexation proceedings. For those properties not yet annexed into the East Bay Municipal Utility District's (EBMUD) service boundaries, it may be appropriate for the City to approach the water district on behalf of the property owner, to establish a plan for the delivery of water. Discussions may also be necessary with the Alameda County LAFCo to arrange for a transfer of exclusive jurisdiction to the Contra Costa County LAFCo regarding annexations to EBMUD within San Ramon's Sphere of Influence.

### *Relationship to the General Plan*

The Westside Specific Plan was adopted in 1989, and the City's first General Plan was updated in October 1995. The 1995 update incorporated this Plan's land use designations and policies. The update of the Westside Specific Plan is intended to incorporate previously adopted City policy, in particular Ordinance 197 (the "Save Our Hills Initiative") and Ordinance 248 (the "Affordable Housing Density Bonus"), as well as to make the entire document current with approved development entitlements and adopted City programs. The following discussion outlines the major General Plan policies applicable to the Westside and shows the relationship of the Specific Plan to them. The other elements of the Specific Plan demonstrate this consistency relationship in greater detail.

#### Preservation of Open Space

One of the guiding policies of the City of San Ramon is that the open space character of the Westside be preserved. In support of this goal, the majority of the Westside landscape will be preserved for agricultural and open space uses, and development confined within two basic areas - one tributary to Norris Canyon Road and the other tributary to San Ramon Valley Boulevard. Furthermore, in accordance with Ordinance 197, development is prohibited on slopes greater than 20 percent, within 100 feet and 50 feet of Major and Minor Ridges, respectively, as denoted on the City's Ridgeline and Creek Protection Zone Map, and within 100 feet of the centerline of creeks or stream channels shown on the same Map. The Plan also restricts density on land greater than 10 percent slope over the 500 foot elevation. Residential density may not exceed one unit per acre on slopes between 10 percent and 15 percent, and one unit per five acres on slopes between 15 percent and 20 percent.

The City's Resource Conservation Overlay District (RCOD), which was adopted by Ordinance 129 in May 1988, requires the submittal of "resource conservation plans" for properties with the overlay district zoning. These are comprised of several documents, including

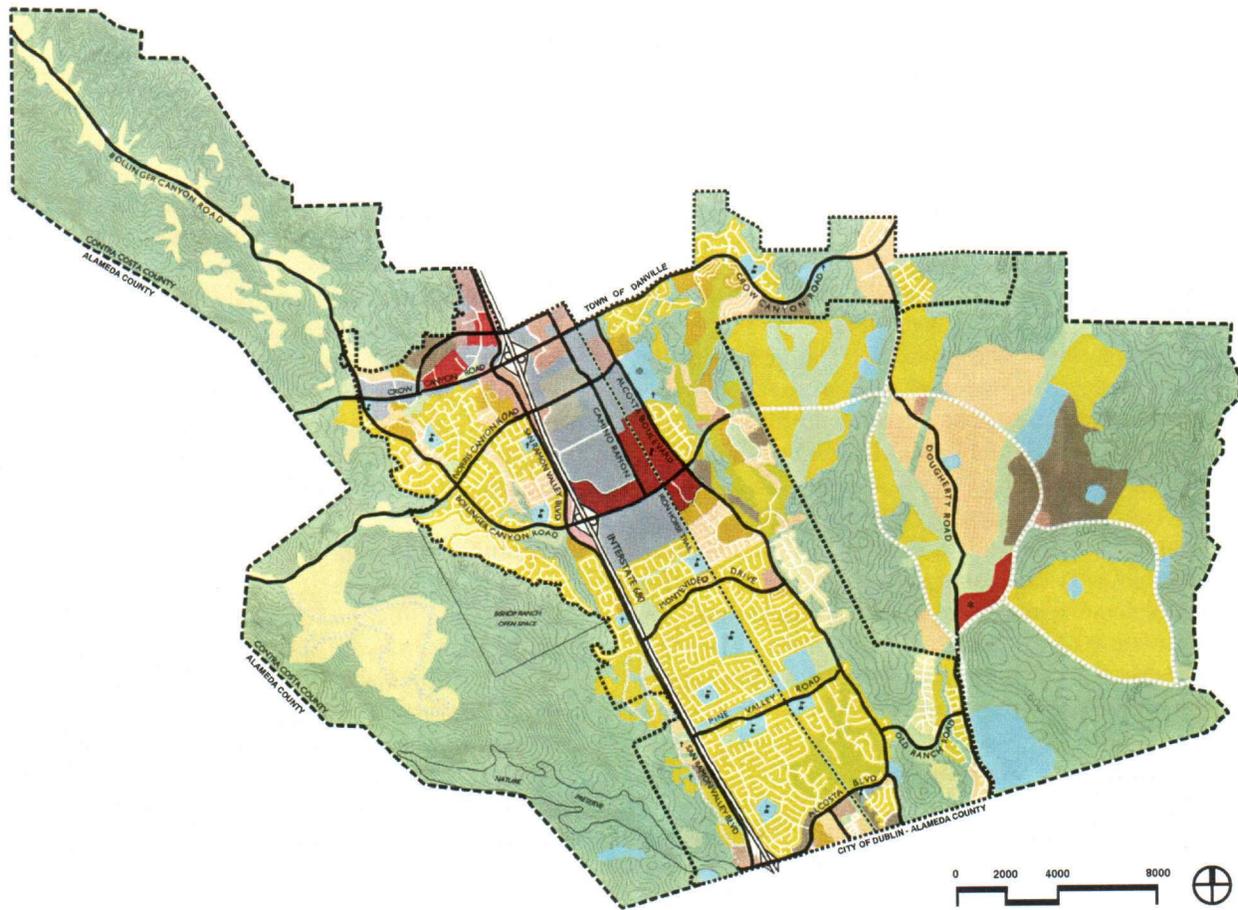
an existing conditions map, slope map, site and circulation plan, preliminary soils report, geology and drainage reports, and a landscape plan. The Westside Specific Plan requires the submittal of these documents in conjunction with development proposals, especially in areas with complex topography, and also requires "land and tree management plans" which shall describe the techniques and practices to maintain land for open space and/or agricultural uses, and to preserve and protect the area's oak trees.

#### Distribution of Land Uses

The Specific Plan provides for primarily residential development in two discrete development areas, one of which is within the City's boundaries (the area adjacent to San Ramon Valley Boulevard), the other within its Sphere of Influence (the area south of Norris Canyon Road). Both the 1995 General Plan and this Specific Plan have incorporated the Wiedemann Ranch Development Plan, which was approved by Contra Costa County in December 1992. This Plan, as well as the City's updated General Plan, designates residential development in the Norris Canyon Road area in addition to the Wiedemann Ranch Residential Community, which was indicated in the 1989 Westside Specific Plan. This further residential development could occur on properties both to the west and east of the Wiedemann Ranch. If future residential development is approved consistent with City policy, and with minimum 15,000 square-foot lots, a maximum of 35 dwelling units could be additionally built in the Norris Canyon Road area.

Specific Plan densities for housing along Norris Canyon Road are within the range provided in the City's General Plan, allowing 15,000 square-foot lots behind a 100-foot setback from the road. Clustering of 7,000 square-foot lots is encouraged, if these smaller lots are developed consistent with the goals and objectives of this Plan. In the San Ramon Valley Boulevard area, densities range from 4.5 to 14 dwelling units per net acre. Senior housing is designated at the First Baptist Church site at approximately 22 dwelling units per acre. Consistent with the General Plan, senior housing density bonuses may be applied which would allow the

FIGURE 12.1  
*San Ramon General Plan*



**Legend**

**RESIDENTIAL**

- Ranchettes (5 acre minimum)
- Residential Low Density (0.2 to 3 units per net acre)
- Residential Low Medium Density (3 to 6 units per net acre)
- Residential Medium Density (6 to 14 units per net acre)
- Residential Medium High Density (14 to 22 units per net acre)
- Residential High Density (22 to 30 units per net acre)

**OFFICE, COMMERCIAL, AND INDUSTRIAL**

- Office
- Retail Shopping
- Thoroughfare Commercial
- Commercial Services
- Commercial Recreation
- Manufacturing and Warehouse

**COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND OPEN SPACE**

- Public and Semipublic
- Parks
- Open Space

**MIXED USE**

- Mixed Use
- City Center

**\* Potential Site for Community College**

- Planned Streets
- City Limits
- Sphere of Influence
- School
- Church
- Hospital
- Fire Station

density of the senior units to potentially double. The application of Ordinance 197 could potentially reduce the number of maximum allowed dwelling units of 825 under the Specific Plan in the San Ramon Valley Boulevard area.

Final determination of the maximum number of residential units shall be based upon a slope analysis submitted as part of a development application pursuant to Ordinance 197.

The Specific Plan advances the concept of an overlay district, for public and semi-public uses, which allows a wide range of institutional uses on a conditional use basis anywhere within the identified developable areas of the San Ramon Valley Boulevard area. These uses include churches, cemeteries, educational and health care facilities.

#### Number and Location of Parks

The established parkland standard, as stated in the General Plan, is 4.5 acres per 1,000 residents for neighborhood parks, and 2 acres of community park for every 1,000 residents. The Westside Specific Plan provides for six parks, totaling approximately 36 acres, which is more than what the City's per capita calculations require. These facilities are located in places where they can best serve future development. The plan calls for two neighborhood parks in the Norris Canyon Road area; one 1.7-acre (minimum) park will be provided in the Wiedemann Ranch development. Four parks are shown in the San Ramon Valley Boulevard area. A park and open space facility has been approved in conjunction with the Greystone Ranch and Four Oaks developments totaling approximately 8.6 acres in size, and another 5-acre park will be provided when the residential portion of the Gateway development is built.

In addition, a third facility is shown in the central portion of the site, in the Pacific Gas & Electric easement near Pine Valley Road, and a fourth park is located on a plateau area in the southern portion of the San Ramon Valley Boulevard area, to the west of Westside Drive. The addition of the park within the PG&E right-of-way will provide a centrally located park that will serve neighboring residents and have good access from Pine Valley Road. It will also take advantage of relatively

level ground that can be more easily graded but, because of utility restrictions, cannot be developed. A park located on the plateau to the west of Westside Drive will also take advantage of a unique site opportunity to provide ballfields and playgrounds on a large flat area in a location that is otherwise highly constrained by hilly topography.

In addition to the six parks, the Plan encourages the development of a community facility in a remote location in the interior of the Westside which could be used as a rustic conference center or camp.

#### Affordable Housing

In December 1993, the City adopted Ordinance 248, the "Affordable Housing Density Bonus," which permits developers to achieve higher densities when they agree to construct below-market-rate housing. If a residential developer provides (1) 20% of the units for low-income households, or (2) 10% of the units for very-low-income households, or (3) 50% of the units for senior citizens, the City will grant a minimum 25% increase in density, plus at least one additional incentive. A density bonus was approved for the Greystone Ranch residential development, where 23 townhome units were made available to low-income households. To further enable affordable housing, the City also allowed minimum lot size adjustments and the construction of multi-family housing immediately adjacent to San Ramon Valley Boulevard. The Plan encourages residential proposals with an affordable housing component, as it addresses San Ramon's need to provide a diversity of housing for the City's large employment base; it provides the opportunity to cluster residential development, thereby keeping development close to San Ramon Valley Boulevard, on flatter land, and allowing hillsides to remain primarily undeveloped; and multi-family buildings can be designed to mitigate the noise constraints imposed by the adjacent roadway and I-680.

The Community Design Element and the Appendix further set forth additional guidelines and standards that are intended to implement and provide a greater level of specificity and detail in grading, site layout, building design, and street character.

# APPENDIX | *Westside Design Guidelines*

The following guidelines for development in the Westside are a reflection of the Plan's objectives and policies and are to be used as a more specific basis for evaluating the design of projects. The special character of the hill landscape and its role in giving structure and identity to the City make the modeling of landforms, the alignment of roads, layout of individual parcels, and the design of specific buildings of particular importance to the successful implementation of the Specific Plan.

## *Grading*

1. Contour grading techniques should be used to provide a variety of both slope percentage and slope direction in a three-dimensional undulating pattern similar to existing adjacent natural terrain. The lines established by the toe and top of the graded slope should undulate so that in no case shall a straight flat, cut or filled slope greater than 30 feet in height or 200 feet in length be created. Rock outcrops should be retained to break up flat graded planes.
2. A 3:1 maximum slope should be observed, except on uphill cuts along roads for daylighting the grade and in steep portions



*Wide-step terracing of slopes is discouraged.*



*Contour grading is encouraged.*

- of the Norris Canyon Road area, where a maximum 2:1 slope may be permitted, upon design review.
3. Incremental terracing as opposed to large-scale wide step terracing for building pads should be encouraged.
4. Flat, graded areas for both building and yards should not exceed the following percentages:
 

7,000 s.f. lot:	75 percent graded pad area of total lot (or 5,250 s.f. for both the house and flat yard areas)
10,000 s.f. lot:	65 percent graded pad area of total lot (or 6,500 s.f. for both the house and flat yard areas)
15,000 s.f. lot:	50 percent graded pad area of total lot (or 7,500 s.f. for both the house and flat yard areas)
20,000 s.f. lot:	40 percent graded pad area of total lot (or 8,000 s.f. for both the house and flat yard areas)



*Detention ponds can serve as amenities for development.*

Graded pad percentages should apply only to parcels where the natural slope averages over five percent. In the areas designated for light grading, stepped form buildings would be required with a minimal graded area. Graded pad restrictions may be relaxed if yard areas are terraced in the direction of the slope of the hill and upon design review.

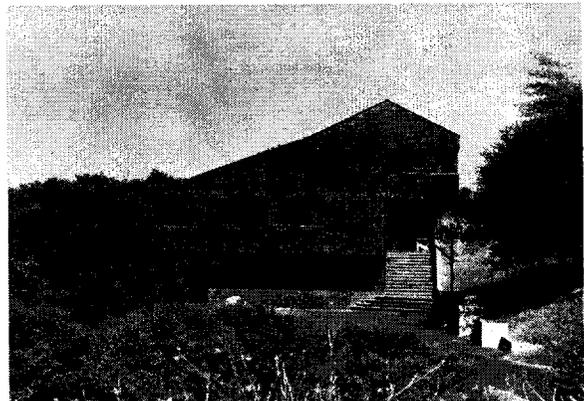
5. The volume of earth moved for cuts and fills should be minimized, and balanced against visibility considerations. The volume and extent of grading will be governed by the Specific Plan.
6. Split pads and stepped form buildings should be used to minimize the need for grading.
7. Site drainage should be accommodated with swales and catch basins rather than V-ditches and benches.
8. Hillside drainage should, to the maximum extent feasible, maintain all natural drainage patterns and courses. Roofwater collection and drainage-dispersal systems should be provided for all dwelling units that do not drain directly onto a paved surface.
9. Impervious areas should be minimized to the extent possible.

## *Building Design*

1. **Scale and Intensity:** Buildings should be carefully reviewed to ensure that they are well-scaled to the size of the lot.
2. **Height:** Building heights should respond to uphill and downhill conditions along the street. An attractive composition of one- and two-story buildings should be created and the proper mix of one- and two-story buildings be determined upon a review of streetscape elevations and localized topographic conditions. As a general guideline, two-story buildings should not predominate along a given street (or add up to more than 50 percent of the buildings on a block). However, on downhill lots, a more stringent guideline minimizing even further the number of two-story buildings should be considered, whereas on uphill lots, greater flexibility may be allowed.

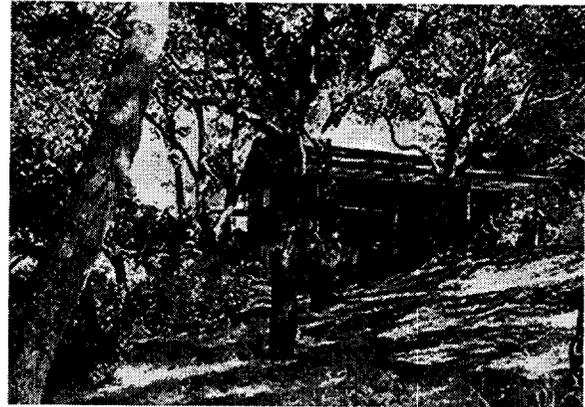


*The height of buildings should respond to uphill and downhill conditions.*



*Building forms which evoke the tradition of rural development are encouraged.*

3. **Form:** Buildings should reflect the surrounding topographic character and generally step with the form of the hill, with minimum five-foot stepbacks between floors. Second floor area should be limited to 70 percent of the ground floor.
4. **Architectural Character:** Diversity in building design should be encouraged with a variety of building plans and elevations used to avoid the appearance of a monotonous "tract". Architectural style should draw upon the simple forms and positive relationship between indoor and outdoor spaces found in traditional ranch and rural buildings. Furthermore, building design should be sympathetic in color, form and style with the surrounding landscape and earthtone colors emphasized.
5. **Garages:** Three-car garages, which should be the maximum allowed for any size lot, require



*Planting in residential areas should transition to the surrounding natural landscape.*

individualized entries, or a five-foot stepback between the second and third garage.



*Split level roadways in steep areas will help to minimize grading.*



*A rural, well landscaped appearance along streets is emphasized.*

### *Streets*

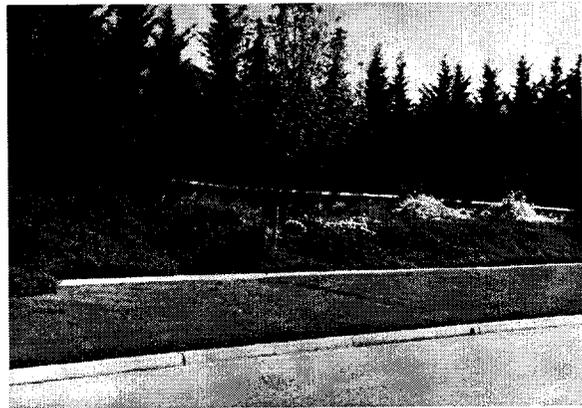
1. Major entries should be emphasized through appropriate treatments, such as landscaped medians or corner plantings, consistent with the San Ramon Streetscape Beautification Guidelines.
2. Hillside streets should be as narrow as possible and the roadway itself should slope with the terrain.
3. A rural appearance on hillside streets should be established by minimizing curbs and street lighting, and by encouraging a pattern of street tree planting that is related more closely to the character of adjacent plant communities than to the geometry of streets. Where possible on streets and driveways, paved surfaces should be minimized (e.g., to wheel dimension). Parking lanes should be paved with an all-weather material to make the street appear more narrow.
4. "Notched" or "gunsight" road cuts should be avoided.

## *Landscape*

1. Landscaping along streets should be varied and random, with the exception of San Ramon Valley Boulevard, in order to fit more closely with the natural planting of the hillsides.
2. A landscape buffer should be incorporated along the freeway to screen it from the Westside.
3. Fire-resistive and drought-tolerant landscape materials should be used, and fire district recommendations regarding prohibited plant species shall be followed.
4. Special landscape treatments should be incorporated at major entries.
5. Planting around homes (outside the building envelope area) with drought-tolerant, fire-resistant and indigenous landscape materials should be encouraged to help transition to the larger natural landscape.
6. Planting on ridges should generally be avoided, with the possible exception of the cross-valley ridge, where planting may help visually transition graded areas.
7. Cut slopes should be hydro-seeded with a mixture of hardy grasses and native wildflowers, and on regraded slopes of 3:1 and less, tree planting should be encouraged to match the pattern and color of the surrounding landscape. In general, more rounded tree forms (emulating the indigenous oaks) should be favored over vertical or columnar forms.

## *Walls*

1. A maximum three foot wall may be allowed in yard areas to take up the grade. The height of the wall may be exceeded, if it is part of a foundation wall.
2. The appearance of sound walls shall be minimized wherever possible, and approaches which utilize berms at a maximum 3:1 slope



*Walls should be landscaped and stone-faced.*

and landscaping with noise mitigations encouraged. Long uninterrupted walls shall be avoided to the greatest extent possible, and breaks encouraged incorporating gates, openings and accessways for a more welcoming appearance. A common treatment of all walls along San Ramon Valley Boulevard must be used upon design review.

3. Retaining walls along streets and graded areas shall be no more than five feet in height without a minimum setback of three feet, which will provide a pocket for planting.
4. All walls are to be stone faced where visible from streets and public areas.

## *Fences*

1. A maximum fence height of six feet should be maintained.
2. Fences along property lines should be transparent and open, and their visibility from streets and other public areas minimized to the greatest extent possible.
3. All fences should be sited to blend with the existing landscape and work with existing grades.
4. A common fencing treatment shall be established and approved as part of the design review process.



*Fences can be transparent and recall a rural character.*



*Visible fence lines in hillside areas are discouraged.*

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

*Westside Specific Plan*

*"No house should ever be on any hill or on anything. It should be of the hill, belonging to it, so hill and house could live together each the happier for the other."*

Frank Lloyd Wright

*City of San Ramon City Council*

Patricia Boom—*Mayor*  
Hermann Welm—*Vice Mayor*  
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