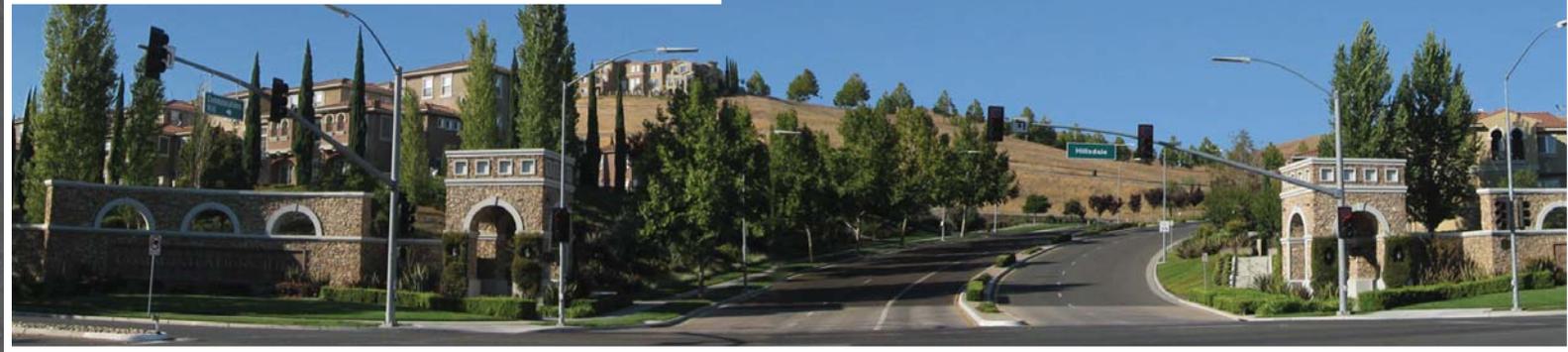


Communications Hill 2 Project

Draft Subsequent Environmental Impact Report



June 2014

State Clearinghouse # 2001062119

Draft
Subsequent Environmental Impact Report

Communications Hill 2 Project

State Clearinghouse #2001062119

Prepared by the



In Consultation with:



June 2014

June 3, 2014

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Subject: Communications Hill 2 Project, SCH # 2001062119

The Planning Commission of the City of San José will hold a Public Hearing to consider the Draft Subsequent Environmental Impact Report (Draft SEIR) prepared for the project described below. A copy of the Draft SEIR is attached for your review.

Your comments regarding the significant environmental effects of this project and the adequacy of the Draft SEIR are welcome. **Written comments, submitted to the Department of Planning, Building, and Code Enforcement by 5:00 PM, July 18, 2014, will be included in the EIR and be considered by the Planning Commission at this public hearing.** *If you make comments through a state or regional clearinghouse, please send a copy of your comments to the contact person listed below to insure prompt consideration.* If we receive no comments (nor a request for an extension of time) from you by the specified date, we will assume you have none to make.

Project Location:

The Communications Hill Specific Plan Area comprises roughly 900 acres of hilly land located approximately four miles south of downtown San José. The Plan Area is bounded by Curtner Avenue to the north, Monterey Road to the east, Capitol Expressway, Snell Avenue, and Hillside Avenue to the south, and Guadalupe Freeway (SR 87) to the west. The proposed project site is within the Specific Plan Area near the top of the hill adjacent to the existing Tuscany Hills development. The approximately 331.6-acre site is generally bounded by the Caltrain/Union Pacific railroad tracks on the north, Old Hillside Avenue to the east, the Tuscany Hills development to the south, and the Millpond and Dairy Hill residential neighborhoods to the west.

Project Description: The Communications Hill 2 project proposes the development of the remaining 2,200 residential units in the Communications Hill Specific Plan (CHSP), along with 67,500 square feet of retail uses and 1.44 million square feet of industrial uses. The project includes rezoning and annexation of unincorporated lands within the project site, rezoning, minor amendments to the Envision 2040 General Plan, and formation of an Area Development Policy for the CHSP area.

Tentative Hearing Date: September 10, 2014

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Sincerely,
John Davidson
Senior Planner

PREFACE

This document has been prepared by the City of San José as the Lead Agency in conformance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the CEQA Guidelines. This Environmental Impact Report (EIR) provides project- and program-level environmental review for the proposed Communications Hill 2 Project. The purpose of an EIR is clarified in Sections 15121, 15146 and 15151 of CEQA:

§15121. Informational Document.

- (a) An EIR is an informational document, which will inform public agency decision makers and the public of the significant environmental effects of a project, identify possible ways to minimize the significant effects, and describe reasonable alternatives to the project. The public agency shall consider the information in the EIR, along with other information which may be presented to the agency.
- (b) While the information in the EIR does not control the agency's ultimate discretion on the project, the agency must respond to each significant effect identified in the EIR by making findings under Section 15091 and if necessary by making a statement of overriding considerations.

§15146. Degree of Specificity. The degree of specificity required in an EIR will correspond to the degree of specificity involved in the underlying activity which is described in the EIR.

- (a) An EIR on a construction project will necessarily be more detailed in the specific effects of a project than will an EIR on the adoption of a local general plan or comprehensive zoning ordinance because the effects of the construction can be predicted with greater accuracy.
- (b) An EIR on a project such as the adoption or amendment of a comprehensive zoning ordinance or local general plan should focus on the secondary effects that can be expected to follow from the adoption or amendment, but the EIR need not be as detailed as an EIR on the specific construction project that might follow.

§15151. Standards for Adequacy of an EIR. An EIR should be prepared with a sufficient degree of analysis to provide decision makers with information which enables them to make a decision which intelligently considers environmental consequences. An evaluation of the environmental effects of the proposed project need not be exhaustive, but the sufficiency of an EIR is to be reviewed in light of what is reasonably feasible. Disagreement among experts does not make an EIR inadequate, but the EIR should summarize the main points of disagreement among the experts. The courts have looked not for perfection, but for adequacy, completeness, and a good-faith effort at full disclosure.

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SUMMARY

The Communications Hill 2 project proposes the development of the remaining 2,200 residential units in the Communications Hill Specific Plan (CHSP), along with 67,500 square feet of retail uses and 1.44 million square feet of industrial uses. The project includes rezoning and annexation of unincorporated lands within the project site, rezoning, minor amendments to the Envision 2040 General Plan, and formation of an Area Development Policy for the CHSP area.

Summary of Significant Impacts and Mitigation Measures

The following table is a brief summary of the significant environmental impacts of the project identified and discussed within the text of the SEIR, and the mitigation measures proposed to avoid or reduce those impacts. The reader is referred to the main body text of the SEIR for detailed discussions of the existing setting, impacts, and mitigation measures. Alternatives to the proposed project are also summarized at the end of the table.

The project would result in the following significant and unavoidable impacts:

- Level of Service impacts at intersections;
- Freeway segment impacts;
- Air quality (ROG, NO_x, and PM₁₀); and
- Aesthetics (change and degrade existing visual character).

The project would also result in the following significant and unavoidable cumulative impacts:

- Air quality (ROG, NO_x, and PM₁₀); and
- Population and housing (substantial contribution to jobs/housing imbalance identified in Envision 2040 General Plan).

Impact	Mitigation Measures
Transportation	
<p>Impact TRAN-2: The project would have a significant impact under background plus project conditions at the intersection of Monterey Road and Curtner Avenue.</p> <p>(Significant and Unavoidable Impact)</p>	<p>The necessary improvements to mitigate the project impact would consist of the addition of an exclusive southbound right-turn lane. This improvement would require the acquisition of approximately four feet of right-of-way along approximately 225 feet on the west side of Monterey Road just north of Curtner Avenue. In addition, the improvements would require the removal and relocation of utility poles and a bus duct-out along Monterey Road as well as the relocation of trash enclosures and parking at the existing commercial development. The extent of right-of-way acquisition and other infrastructure improvements make the implementation of the improvements infeasible. For these reasons, this impact must be considered significant and unavoidable. However, the project proposes to implement an Area Development Policy which consists of a series of improvements to transportation infrastructure to improve operations in the project area.</p>
<p>Impact TRAN-3: The project would have a significant impact under background plus project conditions at the intersection of Almaden Expressway and Foxworthy Avenue.</p> <p>(Significant and Unavoidable Impact)</p>	<p>The necessary improvement to mitigate the project impact at this intersection would consist of the addition of a second westbound left-turn lane. The improvement would require the acquisition of approximately 10 feet of right-of-way along approximately 100 feet of the north side of Foxworthy Avenue just east of Almaden Expressway. The improvements would also require removal of the island at the northeast corner of the intersection, removal of trees and parking within the adjacent shopping center on the north side of Foxworthy Avenue. The extent of right-of-way acquisition and other infrastructure improvements make the implementation of the improvements infeasible. For these reasons, this impact must be considered significant and unavoidable. However, the project proposes to implement an Area Development Policy which consists of a series of improvements to transportation infrastructure to improve operations in the project area.</p>
<p>Impact TRAN-4: The project would have a significant impact under background plus project conditions at the intersection of Communications Hill Boulevard and Curtner Avenue.</p> <p>(Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated)</p>	<p>MM TRAN-4.1: The necessary improvement at this intersection would include the addition of a second 650-foot long westbound left-turn lane. The improvement would require median modifications, removal of the “pork chop” islands, restriping of lanes, and traffic signal modifications. Sufficient right-of-way is available for this mitigation measure. These improvements are included in the Curtner Avenue Corridor improvements described in the Area Development Policy which is included in the proposed project.</p>
<p>Impact TRAN-5: The project would</p>	<p>The necessary improvement to mitigate the project impact</p>

Impact	Mitigation Measures
<p>have a significant impact under background plus project conditions at the intersection of Snell Avenue and Capitol Expressway.</p> <p>(Significant and Unavoidable Impact)</p>	<p>at this intersection would consist of the addition of a third southbound left-turn lane. Approximately 10 feet of right-of-way along approximately 350 feet of the west side of Snell Avenue just north of Capitol Expressway is required. In addition, the removal of the corner islands along the west side of the intersection and removal and relocation of utility poles on the west side of Snell Avenue would be required. The extent of right-of-way acquisition required makes the implementation of this improvement infeasible. For these reasons, this impact must be considered significant and unavoidable. However, the project proposes to implement an Area Development Policy which consists of a series of improvements to transportation infrastructure to improve operations in the project area.</p>
<p>Impact TRAN-6: The proposed project would result in significant impacts to the following freeway segments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>SR 87 (NB):</u> SR 85 to Capitol Expressway (AM Peak Hour), Curtner to Almaden Road (AM Peak Hour), Almaden Road to Alma Avenue (AM and PM Peak Hour), Alma Avenue to I-280 (AM Peak Hour) • <u>SR 87 (SB):</u> Julian Street to I-280 (PM Peak Hour), I-280 to Alma Avenue (PM Peak Hour), Alma Avenue to Almaden Road (PM Peak Hour), Almaden Road to Curtner (PM Peak Hour) • <u>I-680 (SB):</u> Capitol Expressway to King Road (AM Peak Hour) • <u>I-280 (WB):</u> Bird Avenue to Meridian Avenue (AM Peak Hour) <p>(Significant and Unavoidable Impact)</p>	<p>As described above, the proposed project would result in significant impacts on mixed-flow lanes on 10 directional freeway segments and HOV lanes on two directional freeway segments during at least one peak hour. Full mitigation of significant project impacts on freeway segments would require roadway widening to construct additional through lanes, thereby increasing freeway capacity. It is not feasible for an individual project to bear responsibility for implementing such extensive transportation system improvements due to constraints in acquisition and cost of right-of-way. In addition there is no comprehensive project to add through lanes developed by Caltrans or VTA for individual projects to contribute to that would reduce freeway impacts. For these reasons, significant impacts on the directional freeway segments must be considered significant and unavoidable. However, the project proposes to implement an Area Development Policy which consists of a series of improvements to transportation infrastructure to improve operations in the project area.</p>
<p>Noise</p>	

Impact	Mitigation Measures
<p>Impact NOI-1: Proposed residences would be exposed to exterior noise levels greater than 60 DNL and interior noise levels greater than 45 dBA DNL, which exceed the standards set forth in the 2040 Envision San José General Plan.</p> <p>(Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated)</p>	<p>MM NOI-1.1: Site specific noise analyses shall be conducted for future residences to be located along the railway near Esfahan Drive and near the Carol Drive residences to verify consistency with City noise standards. The study will identify site specific mechanisms to reduce interior noise to levels considered acceptable in the City’s General Plan and Zoning Ordinance, such as forced air mechanical ventilation systems, window rating standards, and fences and/or noise barriers.</p>
<p>Impact NOI-2: The proposed retail and industrial park uses on the site could generate noise in excess of 55 dBA DNL at the nearest property line adjacent to proposed residential uses.</p> <p>(Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated)</p>	<p>MM NOI-2.1: Future retail and industrial park uses on the project site will be required to maintain a noise level of 55 dBA at property lines located adjacent to sensitive receptors. At the time the plans for future retail and industrial park uses are finalized, the project applicant shall submit an acoustical study demonstrating compliance with the City’s requirements.</p>
<p>Impact NOI-3: Construction activities associated with the proposed project would expose adjacent residential uses to substantial construction noise.</p> <p>(Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated)</p>	<p>MM NOI-3.1: The project shall implement the following measures to reduce construction noise impacts to a less than significant level:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limit construction activity to 7:00 am to 7:00 pm on weekdays, 9:00 am to 5:00 pm on Saturdays, and no construction activity on Sundays or holidays. • Schedule highest noise-generating activity and construction activity along the site boundaries near Kurte Park, Tuscany Hills Residences, Esfahan Drive Residences, Millpond Community, and Carol Residences between 9:00 am and 3:00 pm wherever feasible. • Install temporary construction noise barriers at residential property lines to reduce noise at locations closest to residences. • Equip all internal combustion engine-driven equipment with original factory (or equivalent) intake and exhaust mufflers which are maintained in good condition. • Prohibit and post signs prohibiting unnecessary idling of internal combustion engines. • Locate all stationary noise-generating equipment such as air compressors and portable generators as

Impact	Mitigation Measures
	<p>far as practicable from noise-sensitive land uses.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Locate staging areas and construction material areas as far as practicable from noise-sensitive land uses. • If impact pile-driving is proposed, temporary noise control blanket barriers shall shroud pile drivers or be erected in a manner to shield adjacent land uses. Foundation pile holes shall be pre-drilled to minimize the number of impacts required to seat the piles. All adjacent land uses shall be notified of any pile-driving schedule in writing. • Utilize “quiet” air compressors and other stationary equipment where feasible and available. • Designate a noise disturbance coordinator who would respond to neighborhood complaints about construction noise by determining the cause of the noise complaints and require implementation of reasonable measures to correct the problem. Conspicuously post a telephone number for the disturbance coordinator at the construction site.
Air Quality	
<p>Impact AIR-1: Construction of the proposed project would result in significant emissions of NO_x during construction.</p> <p>(Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated)</p>	<p>MM AIR-1.1: Consistent with guidance from the BAAQMD, the following additional actions shall be required of construction contracts and specifications for the project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Idling times shall be minimized either by shutting equipment off when not in use or reducing the maximum idling time to 2 minutes. Clear signage shall be provided for construction workers at all access points; • The project shall develop a plan, which will be implemented and adhered to during construction activities, demonstrating that the off-road equipment (more than 50 horsepower) to be used in the construction project (i.e., owned, leased, and subcontractor vehicles) would achieve a project wide fleet-average of at least 70 percent NO_x reduction compared to unmitigated emissions. Acceptable options for reducing emissions include the use of late model engines, low-emission diesel products, alternative fuels, engine retrofit technology, after-treatment products, add-on devices such as particulate filters, and/or other options as such become available. Specifically, all

Impact	Mitigation Measures
	<p>diesel-powered off-road equipment larger than 50 horsepower and operating on the site for more than two days continuously shall meet U.S. EPA particulate matter emissions standards for Tier 4 engines or equivalent;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All construction equipment, diesel trucks, and generators shall be equipped with Best Available Control Technology for emission reductions of NO_x; • All contractors shall use equipment that meets ARB’s most recent certification standard for off-road heavy duty diesel engines; and • Minimize the number of hours that equipment will operate, including the use of idling restrictions.
<p>Impact AIR-2: The project would result in significant emissions of ROG, NO_x, and PM₁₀ during project operation.</p> <p>(Significant and Unavoidable Impact)</p>	<p>MM AIR-2.1: The project shall develop and implement a transportation demand management (TDM) Program, consistent with City requirements. At a minimum, the TDM program shall include the following measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider providing transit stops on site, such as at convenient locations on Communications Hill Boulevard with pedestrian access no more than 0.25 mile from the project center. Also consider the posting of transit information at high pedestrian traffic areas on-site. Any resulting plans to modify transit stops would have to be made in accordance with the City and VTA; • Bicycle amenities should be provided for the project. This would include secure bicycle parking for employees and multi-family residents along with the proposed bike lane connections; • Provide on-site shower and locker room facilities for employee use to the extent feasible; • Consider providing pedestrian signage and signalization. Enhanced pedestrian crossings at strategic areas with countdown signals should be considered; • Encourage employers at the project site to purchase Eco Passes from VTA to provide transit incentives for employees. In addition, project site employers should be required to promote transit use by providing transit information and incentives to employees; and • The applicant and City shall explore opportunities to implement a “car share program” and measures

Impact	Mitigation Measures
	<p>that would reduce vehicle travel by reducing parking availability (such as an employee parking cash out program).</p> <p>MM AIR-2.2: A future heavy-duty truck route to the industrial portion of the site shall be designated, so as to minimize long-term disturbance and exposure of TAC pollutants to project residences and sensitive receptors.</p>
<p>Impact AIR-3: The project would result in significant health risks related to emissions of toxic air contaminants (TACs) and fine particulate matter during construction.</p> <p>(Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated)</p>	<p>Implementation of MM AIR-1.1 and MM AIR-2.1 would reduce child and adult cancer risks from TAC exposure to a less than significant level.</p>
Cultural Resources	
<p>Impact CUL-1: Previously unknown and known archaeological resources could be exposed during ground disturbing construction operations associated with residential and industrial park development, including on- and off-site roadway, utility, and/or drainage improvements. Construction operations in areas of native soil could result in the inadvertent exposure of buried prehistoric or historic archaeological materials that could be eligible for inclusion on the CRHR and/or meet the definition of a unique archeological resource as defined in Section 21083.2 of the Public Resources Code.</p> <p>(Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated)</p> <p>Impact CUL-2: Native American remains could be exposed during ground disturbing construction operations associated with residential and industrial park development, including on- and off-site roadway, utility, and/or drainage improvements. Construction operations could result in</p>	<p>MM CUL-1.1: The project proponent shall have a qualified archaeologist present to monitor subsurface construction excavation activities into native soils in the vicinity of CA-SCL-68, near Narvaez Avenue. The frequency and duration of the monitoring shall be at the discretion of the archaeologist and dependent on his/her subsurface observations during construction operations.</p> <p>MM CUL-1.2: Construction personnel involved in all site clearing and subsequent grading and trenching associated with the proposed project shall be warned that there is a potential for the discovery of archaeological and paleontological materials. Indicators of archaeological site deposits include, but are not limited to, the following: darker than surrounding soils, evidence of fire (ash, fire altered rock and earth, carbon flecks), concentrations of stone, bone and shellfish, artifacts of these materials and burials, either animal or human. Potential fossil types that may be encountered will be discussed.</p> <p>MM CUL-1.3: In the event any unanticipated prehistoric or significant historic era cultural materials are exposed during construction, all grading and/or excavation operations within 50 feet of the find shall be halted, the Director of PBCE shall be notified, and a</p>

Impact	Mitigation Measures
<p>the inadvertent exposure of prehistoric or protohistoric Native American human remains.</p> <p>(Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated)</p> <p>Impact CUL-3: Subsurface historical resources could be exposed during ground disturbing construction operations associated with roadway, utility, and/or drainage improvements and/or residential development. Construction operations could result in the inadvertent exposure of historical resources that could be eligible for inclusion on the CRHR.</p> <p>(Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated)</p>	<p>qualified professional archaeologist shall examine the find and make appropriate recommendations regarding the significance of the find and the appropriate mitigation. The recommendation shall be implemented and could include collection, recordation, and analysis of any significant cultural materials.</p> <p>MM CUL-1.4: In the event that human remains are found, all project-related construction shall cease within a 50-foot radius of the find in order to proceed with the testing and mitigation measures required. Pursuant to Section 7050.5 of the Health and Safety Code and Section 5097.94 of the Public Resources Code of the State of California:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the event of the discovery of human remains during construction, there shall be no further excavation or disturbance of the site or any nearby area reasonably suspected to overlie adjacent remains. The Santa Clara County Coroner shall be notified and shall make a determination as to whether the remains are Native American. If the Coroner determines that the remains are not subject to his authority, he shall notify the Native American Heritage Commission who shall attempt to identify descendants of the deceased Native American. If no satisfactory agreement can be reached as to the disposition of the remains pursuant to this State law, then the landowner shall re-inter the human remains and items associated with Native American burials on the property in a location not subject to further subsurface disturbance. <p>MM CUL-1.5: If cultural resources or remains are discovered during any construction associated with the project, a final report shall be submitted to the Director of PBCE. This report shall contain a description of the mitigation program that was implemented and its results, including a description of the monitoring and testing program, a list of the resources found, a summary of the resources analysis methodology and conclusion, and a description of the disposition/curation of the resources. The report shall verify completion of the mitigation program to the satisfaction of the Director of PBCE.</p>

Impact	Mitigation Measures
<p>Impact CUL-4: Although not anticipated, construction activities associated with the proposed project could result in a significant impact to paleontological resources, if encountered.</p> <p>(Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated)</p>	<p>MM CUL-4.1: If paleontological resources are discovered during construction, all work on the site will stop immediately until a qualified professional paleontologist can assess the nature and importance of the find and recommend appropriate treatment. Treatment may include preparation and recovery of fossil materials so that they can be housed in an appropriate museum or university collection and may also include preparation of a report for publication describing the finds. The City will be responsible for ensuring that the recommendations of the paleontological monitor regarding treatment and reporting are implemented.</p>
<p>Hazards and Hazardous Materials</p>	
<p>Impact HAZ-1: Grading and construction activities on the project site could result in the generation of asbestos-containing dust.</p> <p>(Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated)</p>	<p>MM HAZ-1.1: The project applicant shall prepare an Asbestos Dust Mitigation Plan and submit the plan to BAAQMD for review and approval prior to grading activities. The plan must describe dust control measures during grading as well as long term dust control measures. The plan shall include, at a minimum, the following measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Track-out prevention and control measures; • Active stockpiles shall be adequately wetted or covered with tarps; • Control for disturbed surface areas and storage piles that remain inactive for more than seven days; • Control for traffic on unpaved roads, parking lots, and staging areas; • Control for earthmoving activities; and, • Control for off-site transport. <p>MM HAZ-1.2: Disturbed surfaces with NOA exceeding the BAAQMD threshold concentration of 0.25 percent shall be stabilized using one or more of the following methods:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishment of a vegetative cover; • Placement of at least three inches of non-asbestos-containing material; • Paving; • Any other measure deemed sufficient to prevent wind speeds of 10 miles per hour or greater from

Impact	Mitigation Measures
	causing visible dust emission.
<p>Impact HAZ-2: Soils containing mercury, nickel, motor oil, and lead in excess of established thresholds are present on the project site. Hazardous materials may also be present in areas in which off-site improvements may be constructed.</p> <p>(Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated)</p>	<p>MM HAZ-2.1: Prior to issuance of a PD Permit, a soil management plan (SMP) shall be developed that identifies management practices for characterizing the impacted soil that may be encountered during site development activities. If, after characterizing the impacted soil, concentrations of chemicals are found above residential CHHSLs or other clean up level approved by a regulatory oversight agency, remedial measures are required. Possible remedial measures include: 1) excavation and off-site disposal of the impacted soil at a permitted facility; 2) use of engineering and administrative controls such as consolidation and capping of the soil on-site and land use covenants restricting certain activities/uses; and 3) a combination of the above. The project shall obtain regulatory agency oversight and approval of the remedial measure(s) prior to site development.</p> <p>The SMP shall include the following elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • procedures for transporting and disposing the waste material generated during removal activities, • procedures for stockpiling soil on-site, • provisions for collecting additional soil samples in previously inaccessible areas to confirm the extent of soil contamination, following demolition activities, • confirmation soil sampling to verify achievement of remediation goals, • procedures to ensure that fill and cap materials are verified as clean, • truck routes, and/or staging and loading procedures and record keeping requirements.
<p>Impact HAZ-3: Removal of the quarry pond could result in the release of elevated levels of methyl mercury.</p> <p>(Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated)</p> <p>Impact HAZ-4: Sampling of water from the two naturally occurring</p>	<p>MM HAZ-3.1: To avoid the spread of harmful levels of contamination, the discharge of any water from dewatering activities will be required to comply with NPDES permit requirements, which may involve installation of a treatment system(s) at the dewatering location.</p>

Impact	Mitigation Measures
<p>springs on the site identified elevated concentrations of arsenic, thallium, and nickel.</p> <p>(Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated)</p>	
Biological Resources	
<p>Impact BIO-1: Construction activities could result in significant impacts to nesting raptors, including the white-tailed kite and loggerhead shrike.</p> <p>(Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated)</p>	<p>MM BIO-1.1: To the maximum extent practicable, trees and large shrubs planned for removal shall be removed during the non-breeding season (September 1 through January 31). If it is not possible to avoid tree removal or other disturbances during the breeding season (February 1 through August 31), a qualified biologist shall conduct a pre-construction survey in all trees, large shrubs, or other areas of potential nesting habitat within the construction footprint and within 250 feet of the footprint, if such disturbance will occur during the breeding season. This survey shall be conducted no more than 14 days prior to the initiation of demolition/construction activities during the early part of the breeding season (February through April) and no more than 30 days prior to the initiation of these activities during the late part of the breeding season (May through August).</p> <p>MM BIO-1.2: If nesting raptors or migratory birds are detected on the site during the survey, a suitable construction-free buffer shall be established around all active nests. The precise dimension of the buffer (a minimum of 150 feet, up to a maximum of 250 feet) would be determined at that time and may vary depending on location and species. Buffers shall remain in place for the duration of the breeding season or until it has been confirmed by a qualified biologist that all chicks have fledged and are independent of their parents.</p>
<p>Impact BIO-2: The project would result in the loss of 2.4 acres of aquatic habitat, including wetlands.</p> <p>(Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated)</p>	<p>MM BIO-2.1: <i>Regulatory Agency Mitigation.</i> If required by the pertinent regulatory agencies, the applicant shall satisfy agency mitigation requirements by compensating for aquatic impacts at a 1:1 replacement-to-loss ratio either on-site or offsite, in addition to payment of wetland fees via the HCP.</p> <p>Should the applicant choose to complete its own mitigation on-site, several areas within designated open</p>

Impact	Mitigation Measures
	<p>space on the site may have the potential to accommodate such mitigation. Potential opportunities for wetland/aquatic creation or restoration include, but are not limited to, as aquatic/wetland feature along the proposed water quality and detention basins, and creation of one or more aquatic/wetland features in the eastern part of the site designated as open space. These areas could offset some of the required wetland fee and/or may also satisfy a portion of the anticipated mitigation requirements by the CDFW and RWQCB.</p> <p>An on-site mitigation and monitoring plan (MMP) would need to be developed to mitigate for impacts to these features. At a minimum, the MMP shall:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define the location of all restoration/creation activities; • Provide evidence of a suitable water budget to support any created aquatic and riparian habitats; • Identify the species, amount, and location of plants to be installed in the aquatic and riparian habitats; • Identify the time of year for planting and method for supplemental watering during the establishment period; • Identify the monitoring period. This should be not less than 5 years for aquatic restoration. • Define success criteria that will be required for restoration efforts to be deemed a success; • Identify adaptive management procedures that accommodate the uncertainty that comes with restoration projects. These include, but are not limited to, measures to address colonization by invasive species, unexpected lack of water, and excessive foraging of installed plants by native wildlife; • Define management and maintenance activities (weeding of invasive plants, providing for supplemental water, repair of water delivery systems, etc.); and • Provide for surety in funding the monitoring and ensuring that the created aquatic and riparian habitats fall within lands to be preserved and managed into perpetuity.

Impact	Mitigation Measures																												
	<p>Any remaining mitigation required by these two agencies to satisfy the additional 1:1 replacement-to-loss ratio would need to be obtained offsite (e.g., via the purchase of credits from an approved mitigation bank).</p>																												
<p>Impact BIO-3: Development of the proposed project would result in the removal of 52 trees on-site, including 51 native trees and 20 ordinance size trees.</p> <p>(Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated)</p>	<p>MM BIO-3.1: Prior to approval of a PD Permit for any phase of development on the project site, an updated tree survey, which identifies the number of ordinance size trees on the site, prepared by a certified arborist or licensed landscape architect shall be completed. In locations where preservation of existing trees is not feasible due to site constraints, relocation and replanting of significant existing trees (especially native species) shall be incorporated into the project, where feasible and appropriate, to the satisfaction of the Director of PBCE.</p> <p>MM BIO-3.2: Trees to be removed as part of the project shall be replaced at the following ratios:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="699 995 1409 1535"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="5" data-bbox="699 995 1409 1115">Table 4.7-1: Tree Replacement Requirements</th> </tr> <tr> <th data-bbox="699 1115 850 1287" rowspan="2">Diameter of Tree to be Removed</th> <th colspan="3" data-bbox="850 1115 1219 1203">Type of Tree to be Removed</th> <th data-bbox="1219 1115 1409 1287" rowspan="2">Minimum Size of Each Replacement Tree</th> </tr> <tr> <th data-bbox="850 1203 964 1287">Native</th> <th data-bbox="964 1203 1078 1287">Non-Native</th> <th data-bbox="1078 1203 1219 1287">Orchard</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="699 1287 850 1371">18 inches or greater</td> <td data-bbox="850 1287 964 1371">5:1</td> <td data-bbox="964 1287 1078 1371">4:1</td> <td data-bbox="1078 1287 1219 1371">3:1</td> <td data-bbox="1219 1287 1409 1371">24-inch box</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="699 1371 850 1455">12-18 inches</td> <td data-bbox="850 1371 964 1455">3:1</td> <td data-bbox="964 1371 1078 1455">2:1</td> <td data-bbox="1078 1371 1219 1455">None</td> <td data-bbox="1219 1371 1409 1455">24-inch box</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="699 1455 850 1535">Less than 12 inches</td> <td data-bbox="850 1455 964 1535">1:1</td> <td data-bbox="964 1455 1078 1535">1:1</td> <td data-bbox="1078 1455 1219 1535">None</td> <td data-bbox="1219 1455 1409 1535">15-gallon container</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p data-bbox="699 1535 1409 1675">Notes: X:X = tree replacement to tree loss ratio Trees greater than 18-inches in diameter shall not be removed unless a Tree Removal Permit, or equivalent, has been approved for the removal of such trees.</p> <p>MM BIO-3.3: The species and exact number of trees to be planted on the site shall be determined in consultation with the City Arborist and to the satisfaction of the Director of PBCE. In the event the sites do not have sufficient area to accommodate the required tree</p>	Table 4.7-1: Tree Replacement Requirements					Diameter of Tree to be Removed	Type of Tree to be Removed			Minimum Size of Each Replacement Tree	Native	Non-Native	Orchard	18 inches or greater	5:1	4:1	3:1	24-inch box	12-18 inches	3:1	2:1	None	24-inch box	Less than 12 inches	1:1	1:1	None	15-gallon container
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Impact	Mitigation Measures
	<p>mitigation, one or both of the following measures shall be implemented at the PD Permit stage:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The size of a 15-gallon replacement tree may be increased to 24-inch box and count as two replacement trees. • An alternative site(s) will be identified for additional tree planting, with a priority placed on proximity to the project site. Alternative sites may include local parks or schools, or installation of trees on adjacent properties for screening purposes, to the satisfaction of the Director of PBCE. • A donation equal to the replacement/installation cost per replacement tree will be made to Our City Forest or a similar organization for in-lieu off-site tree planting in the community. These funds will be used for tree planting and maintenance of planted trees for approximately three years. A donation receipt for off-site tree planting will be provided to the Planning Project Manager prior to issuance of a development permit.
Geology and Soils	
<p>Impact GEO-1: Slope configurations on the site do not meet the minimum safety factor established by the California Geological Survey.</p> <p>(Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated)</p> <p>Impact GEO-2: Portions of the proposed project would be located on unstable soils, including compressible soils and artificial fill.</p> <p>(Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated)</p> <p>Impact GEO-3: The presence of shallow groundwater on the site could lead to significant geologic impacts resulting from development on unstable geologic units or soils.</p>	<p>MM GEO-1.1, 2.1, and 3.1: The project proponent shall have a qualified geotechnical professional complete a design-level geotechnical investigation to address the geologic hazards identified on the site. The investigation shall be consistent with the guidelines published by the State of California (CDMG Special Publication 117) and the Southern California Earthquake Center (SCEC report). The investigation shall identify the specific design features that will be required for the future development on-site, including site preparation, compaction, trench excavations, foundation and subgrade design, drainage, and pavement design. Field exploration shall concentrate on obtaining engineering parameters of the site soils for determining site specific bearing capacity, settlement, and liquefaction potential. The geotechnical investigation shall be reviewed and approved by the City Geologist prior to issuance of a grading permit or Public Works Clearance.</p> <p>Examples of measures to be included in the design-level geotechnical investigation include the following:</p>

Impact	Mitigation Measures
<p>(Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated)</p>	<p><u>Slope Stability:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The maximum inclination of cut and fill slopes shall be 2:1 (horizontal to vertical) unless retained by a retaining wall. • For cut slopes in weak serpentinite or claystone, slopes higher than 40 feet inclined at 2:1 will require geogrid-reinforced fills. For cut slopes in stronger serpentinite, slopes higher than 50 feet inclined at 2:1 will require geogrid-reinforced fills. • In general, fill slopes greater than 40 feet in height will require either flattening the slope to 2.5:1 or reinforcing the fill with geogrid. • Benches shall be shown on the grading plans and shall be at least six feet wide and spaced at a maximum of 30 feet in vertical height. • Every effort shall be made to reduce cut/fill transitions occurring in the slopes. These areas will require remedial grading. • "V" ditches or "J" ditches shall be placed along the benches and the tops of the slopes to intercept surface water. • Irrigation of the slope areas shall be kept to a minimum. Subdrains may be necessary to remove excess surface and subsurface water. • Grading plans shall show locations of keyways, subdrains, and colluvium and fill removals. Grading plan details shall include geogrid type, strength, vertical spacing, and length, subdrain details, and keying and benching details. <p><u>Expansive Soils:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structures located on relatively flat building pads shall be founded on post-tensioned mat foundations. • Structures located on slopes shall be designed on pier and grade beam foundation systems. • Reuse of claystone and colluvium on the site shall be limited to deeper fill areas and not at the outer edges of new engineered fill slopes.

Impact	Mitigation Measures
	<p><u>Compressible Soils:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quarry stockpiles and soils disturbed or loosened by quarry operations shall be excavated and recompact. • During mass grading, colluvium soils shall be removed down to bedrock. <p><u>Artificial Fill:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Artificial fill shall be removed and replaced with engineered fill. <p><u>Shallow Groundwater:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Routine earthwork procedures such as chemical treatment, drying/mixing soil before compaction, and installing subdrains shall be implemented during project construction. <p>MM GEO-1.2 and 2.2: The proposed project shall be constructed in accordance with the standard engineering practices in the Uniform Building Code.</p> <p>MM GEO-1.3, and 2.3: Prior to issuance of a Public Works Clearance and prior to commencement of excavation and construction, the project proponent shall obtain a grading permit. The grading permit requires implementation of standard grading and best management practices that would prevent substantial erosion and siltation during development of the site.</p>
<p>Impact GEO-4: The grading and backfilling of the mines could result in impacts associated with construction worker safety during remediation. (Significant Impact)</p>	<p>MM GEO-4.1: Quality Assurance and Construction Quality Control (QA/QC) shall be provided consistent with a Construction Quality Assurance (CQA) Plan for remediation of the abandoned mercury mine. The intent of the CQA Plan is to provide independent third party verification and testing to demonstrate that the Contractor has met its obligations in the supply and installation of earthwork (soils) materials according to the design and project specifications and Backfill Work Plan.</p> <p>Specific components of the QA/QC process are included in Appendix H-2 and will generally consist of the</p>

Impact	Mitigation Measures
	<p>following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment of the underground working stability; • Assessing the quality and competence of the rock material encountered during over-excavation to confirm the over-excavation depth required. • Addressing on-site queries and making recommendations as to any revisions to the original remediation plan; • Working with on-site surveyors to develop initial estimate of backfill quantities; • Issuing daily reports; • Documentation of remediation quantities; and • Issuing as-built report. <p>MM GEO-4.2: To avoid potential incidents, all MSHA and OSHA regulations and guidelines shall be followed for mine remediation. A qualified safety officer shall prepare a Worker Safety Program for the project and shall oversee all aspects of the program. The program will include at least the following measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proper Personnel Protection Equipment (PPE) shall be worn while working in the mine. PPE should include as a minimum: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Steel-toe boots; - Hard hat; - Safety glasses; - Gloves; - Battery lamp light; and - Hearing protection when mechanical equipment is working underground. • Due to the abandoned nature of the workings, the following additional safety equipment shall be provided to the crew working underground: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gas monitor; - Fresh ventilation air; - Pry bars for loose ground; and - Communication radio. • Injury by ground fall is the single largest hazard underground, especially because ground conditions have not been verified for some time. Before any area can be accessed a crew member trained in

Impact	Mitigation Measures
	ground control measures, tunnel conditions will be determined and any loose ground will be removed before other members of the crew have access to the area. It is important that crew members do not wander off into uninspected/secured areas.
Cumulative Impacts	
Impact C-AIR-1: The project's emissions of ROG, NO _x , and PM ₁₀ are considered cumulatively considerable. (Significant and Unavoidable Cumulative Impact)	The implementation of a TDM program (see MM AIR-2.1) would reduce the project's emissions, but not to a less than significant level.
Impact C-PH-1: Future development under the proposed project would make a substantial contribution to the significant unavoidable impact related to the jobs/housing imbalance. This same impact was identified previously in the certified Envision San José 2040 General Plan Final EIR (SCH#2009072096). (Significant and Unavoidable Cumulative Impact)	No mitigation measures are proposed.

Summary of Project Alternatives

CEQA requires that an EIR identify alternatives to the project as proposed. The CEQA Guidelines specify that an EIR identify alternatives which “would feasibly attain the most basic objectives of the project but avoid or substantially lessen many of the significant environmental effects of the project,” or would further reduce impacts that are considered less than significant with the incorporation of identified mitigation.

While CEQA does not require that alternatives must be capable of meeting all of the project objectives, their ability to meet most of the objectives is considered relevant to their consideration. The applicant's objectives for the project are as follows:

- Construct the remaining residential units allowed by the CHSP consistent with a very high level of quality in site planning and architectural and landscape design;
- Develop approximately 1.44 million square feet of industrial park uses on the eastern portion of the site, consistent with the CHSP to encourage job opportunities near housing to facilitate ease of access between uses;
- Provide as great a variety of retail opportunities keeping with the neighborhood character while maximizing convenience and accessibility;

- Create an urban neighborhood that fosters community with walkable streets and reasons to walk;
- Distribute housing types and densities, workplaces, and facilities to create a mixed but compatible arrangement of land uses, streets, and buildings;
- Integrate existing land uses with new land uses, ensuring the viability and compatibility of both;
- Provide access to and connections with multiple forms of public transportation;
- Provide parks and open space resources in a manner which will enhance the quality of residential and community uses;
- Minimize grading or re-contouring of Communications Hill to preserve the topography of the land wherever possible and to avoid the creation of visible cut and fill slopes or obviously engineered or flat-surfaced slopes; and
- Minimize the potential adverse impacts of the Communications Hill area development on the immediately surrounding neighborhood.

A summary of the project alternatives evaluated in this SEIR is provided below. Refer to *Section 8.0 Alternatives* for the full discussion of each alternative.

No Project Alternatives

The CEQA Guidelines specifically require consideration of a “No Project” Alternative. The purpose of including a No Project Alternative is to allow decision makers to compare the impacts of approving the project with the impacts of not approving the project. The Guidelines specifically advise that the No Project Alternative is “what would be reasonably expected to occur in the foreseeable future if the project were not approved, based on current plans and consistent with available infrastructure and community services.” The Guidelines emphasize that an EIR should take a practical approach, and not “...create and analyze a set of artificial assumptions that would be required to preserve the existing physical environment [§15126.6(e)(3)(B)].”

Currently, the project site is unoccupied and mostly undeveloped except for a concrete recycling operation. Under the No Project Alternative, two scenarios could occur: 1) the project site could remain as is (No Project/No Development), or 2) it could be developed with uses consistent with the City’s General Plan (No Project/Allowed Development).¹ Because the proposed project is the buildout of the Communications Hill Specific Plan (CHSP), which is included in the Envision 2040 General Plan, the existing General Plan allows for essentially the same development as is proposed by the project (ie, 2,200 residential units, 1.44 million square feet of industrial uses, and 67,500 square feet of retail uses).

No Project/No Development Alternative

The No Project/No Development Alternative assumes that the project site would remain as it is today, mostly undeveloped except for an existing concrete recycling operation. Because the No

¹ Currently, portions of the project site are in the unincorporated area of Santa Clara County. Under the No Project/No Development Scenario, unincorporated areas on the project site, along with a few adjoining properties, would not be annexed to the City of San Jose. In order to allow development under the No Project/Allowed Development scenario, these areas would require annexation.

Project/No Development Alternative would not result in any development on the project site, this Alternative would avoid all of the environmental impacts from the project. However, this Alternative would not meet any of the project objectives.

No Project/Allowed Development Alternative

The No Project/Allowed Development Alternative assumes the eventual development of 2,200 residential units, 1.44 million square feet of industrial uses, and 67,500 square feet of retail uses, as allowed by the current CHSP and General Plan. The major difference when compared to the proposed project is that the industrial uses would be located in the northern portion of the site along the UPRR tracks, as shown on the existing General Plan Land Use/Transportation Diagram in the Envision 2040 General Plan. The No Project/Allowed Development Alternative would result in roughly the same impacts as the proposed project, and could meet all of the project's objectives.

Reduced Development Alternative

The purpose of the Reduced Development Alternative is to avoid the project's significant and unavoidable freeway and intersection impacts. Because the proposed project consists of large residential and industrial components, two reduced development scenarios have been identified that would reduce traffic impacts to a less than significant level: 1) *No Residential Development/Reduced Industrial Development Alternative* (100 percent reduction in residential units, 85 percent reduction in Industrial square footage), and 2) *Reduced Residential Development/Reduced Industrial Development Alternative* (80 percent reduction in residential units and 90 percent reduction in Industrial square footage).² Under Scenario 1, the project would consist of no residential development and 216,000 square feet of industrial development. Under Scenario 2, the project would consist of 440 residential units and 144,000 square feet of industrial development.

The Reduced Development Alternative scenarios would avoid the project's significant and unavoidable freeway and intersection impacts. Because the amount of allowed development would have to be reduced to such a great extent to avoid these traffic impacts, other significant unavoidable impacts, such as air quality emissions and visual resources, would also be avoided. However, this alternative would not meet most of the project's objectives, nor would it fulfill the intent of the CHSP or the General Plan, which has outlined the City's desired development for the project site since 1992. Additionally, according to the project applicant, development on such a reduced scale would not be economically feasible on this site. The City Council will ultimately determine whether this is a feasible alternative (e.g., economically feasible, etc.) when making a decision on the project.

Known Views of Local Groups and Areas of Controversy

Pursuant to Section 15123(b)(2) of the state CEQA Guidelines, an EIR shall identify areas of controversy known to the lead agency including issues raised by agencies and the public. The Notice of Preparation (NOP) for the *Communications Hill 2 Project* SEIR was circulated starting on May 21, 2013. Public scoping meetings were held on June 10, 2013 and June 17, 2013. Additional meetings were also held with individual neighborhood organizations. Key issues raised by residents

² Hexagon Transportation Consultants. Personal communication. April 7, 2014.

of the City of San José and members of community, environmental, and business or trade organizations during the scoping meetings for the proposed project include:

- Concerns related to components of the existing residential development on Communications Hill and the interface of the proposed project with the existing development;
- Potential traffic impacts of the proposed project, especially at on- and off-ramps of SR 87;
- The need for traffic calming on existing streets;
- Potential impacts to existing wildlife species;
- Visual impacts to surrounding residential neighborhoods;
- The desire that the project include a public school and the reopening of the existing fire station;
- Concerns related to construction on asbestos-containing soils on site; and
- Drinking water quality.

SECTION 1.0 INTRODUCTION, BACKGROUND, AND PROJECT OBJECTIVES

1.1 INTRODUCTION

This Environmental Impact Report (EIR) has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the City of San José. The purpose of the EIR is to inform the public and various governmental agencies of the environmental effects of the proposed Communications Hill 2 Project.

The EIR for the Communications Hill 2 Project will be a Subsequent EIR (SEIR) to the previously certified *Communications Hill Specific Plan (CHSP) Environmental Impact Report* (City of San José, 1992). The CHSP serves as the action guide for development activities in the Plan Area, including the project site. The proposed project is within the boundaries of the approved Communications Hill Specific Plan Area (Plan Area) and would result in the construction of the remaining residential units included in the Specific Plan.³ Other land uses proposed, consistent with the Specific Plan, are commercial/retail, industrial park, a future school, parks, trails, open space, and stormwater filtration/detention facilities. Therefore, the Communications Hill 2 Project EIR will tier off the *Communications Hill Specific Plan EIR* to the extent possible. Information contained in the recently approved *Envision San José 2040 General Plan*, which includes the development of the project site, has also been utilized as it pertains to the project and site characteristics.

The SEIR will be prepared and processed in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) of 1970, as amended and the City of San José's requirements. In accordance with the requirements of CEQA, the SEIR will include the following:

- A summary of the project;
- A project description;
- A description of the existing environmental setting, probable environmental impacts, and mitigation measures;
- Alternatives to the project as proposed; and
- Environmental consequences, including (a) any significant environmental effects which cannot be avoided if the project is implemented; (b) any significant irreversible and irretrievable commitments of resources; (c) the growth-inducing impacts of the proposed project; and (d) cumulative impacts.

This SEIR evaluates the impacts of the project according to the requirements of the City of San José and CEQA. The Communications Hill Specific Plan and Envision San José General Plan 2040 are available for review at <http://www.sanjoseca.gov/DocumentCenter/Home/View/456> and <http://www.sanjoseca.gov/index.aspx?nid=1737>, respectively.

³ The project also includes offsite improvements to the transportation network in the project area, some of which are located outside of the CHSP boundaries. These improvements are described in further detail in *Section 2.3 Area Development Policy/Off-Site Improvements*.

1.2 PROJECT LOCATION

The Communications Hill Specific Plan Area comprises roughly 900 acres of hilly land located approximately four miles south of downtown San José. The Plan Area is bounded by Curtner Avenue to the north, Monterey Road to the east, Capitol Expressway, Snell Avenue, and Hillside Avenue to the south, and Guadalupe Freeway (SR 87) to the west. The Oak Hill Cemetery is located adjacent to the northwestern boundary of the Plan area.

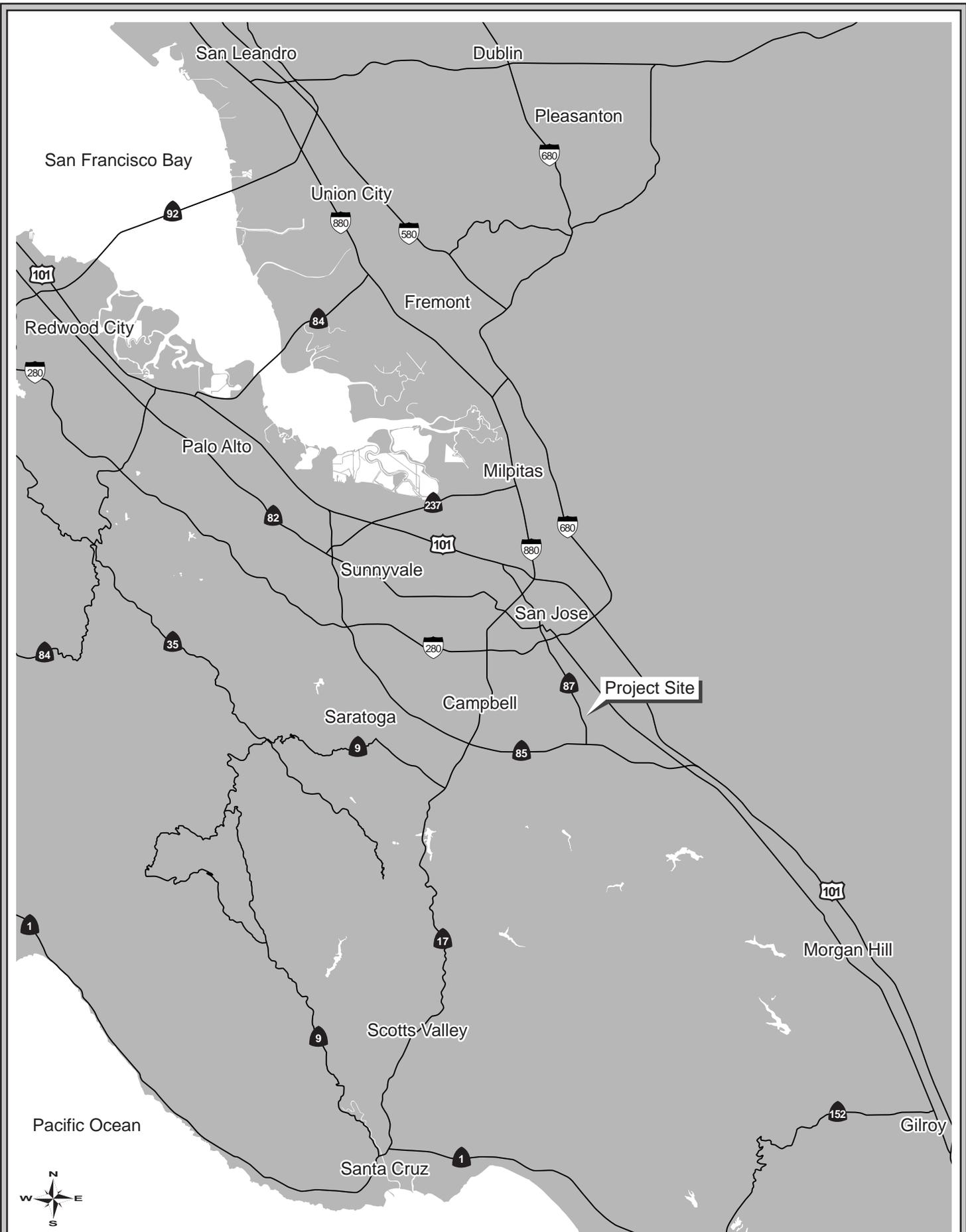
The proposed project site is within the Specific Plan Area near the top of the hill adjacent to the existing Tuscany Hills development. The approximately 331.6-acre site is generally bounded by the Caltrain/Union Pacific railroad tracks on the north, Old Hillside Avenue to the east, the Tuscany Hills development to the south, and the Millpond and Dairy Hill residential neighborhoods to the west.

The regional project location is shown on Figure 1.0-1, the project vicinity is shown on Figure 1.0-2, and an aerial image of the project area is shown on Figure 1.0-3.

1.3 BACKGROUND

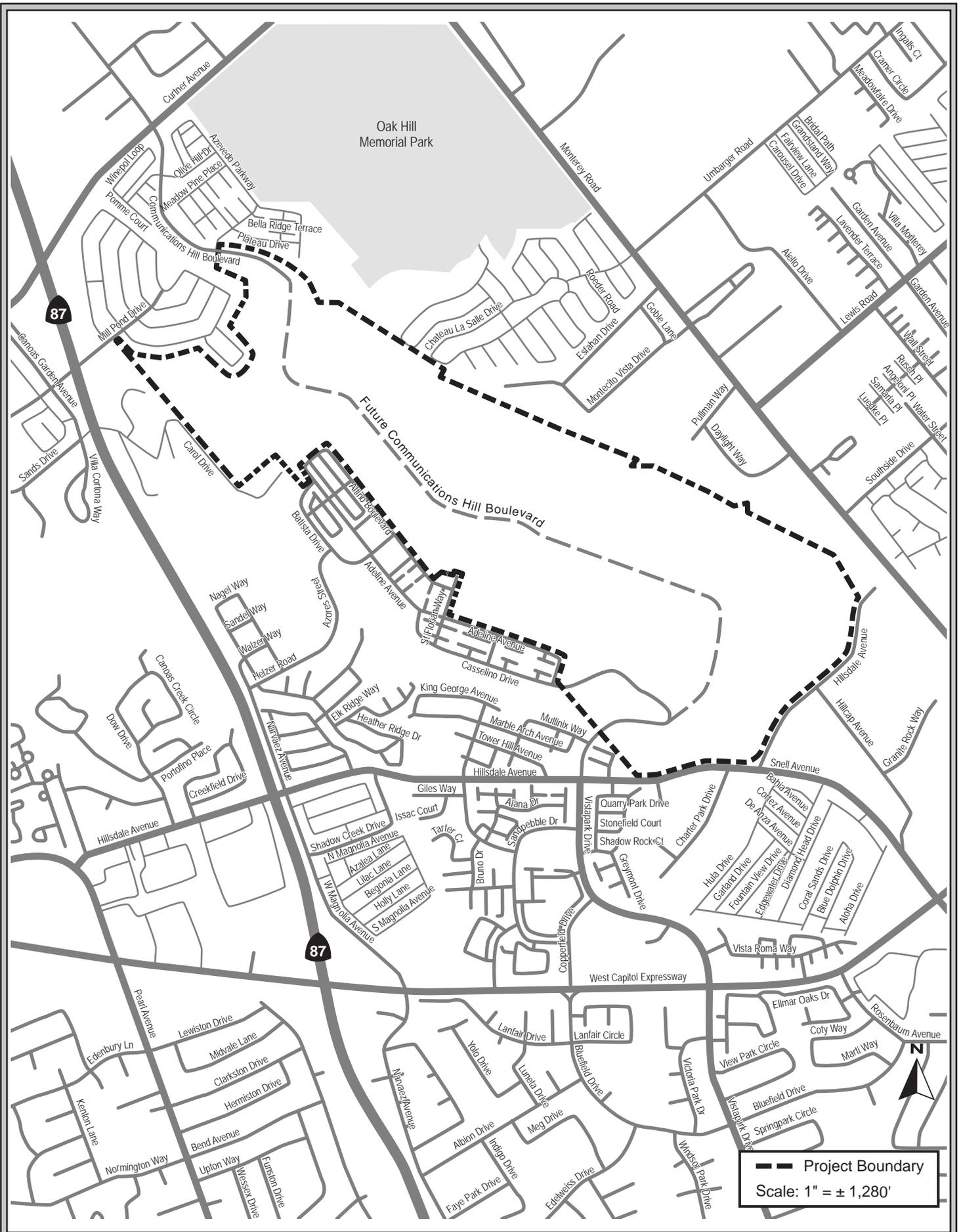
In the San José Horizon 2000 General Plan adopted in 1984, Communications Hill was recognized as a suitable location for development of a high-density urban community due to its proximity to major transportation facilities and employment centers. In 1992, the City of San José adopted the CHSP, which established the framework for development of a mixed-use, high density, pedestrian-oriented, urban neighborhood with supporting public facilities and infrastructure. A program-level EIR was prepared for the Specific Plan in 1991. Since then, several amendments to the Specific Plan have been adopted and residential projects have been constructed.

Residential projects constructed thus far within the CHSP Area include the 733-unit, 130-acre Kaufman and Broad Residential Project (“Tuscany Hills”), for which a supplemental EIR was prepared in 2000. Other residential projects constructed within the Plan Area include the Dairy Hill, Helzer Ranch, Lancaster Gate, and Goble Lane projects. All of these projects have resulted in the construction of approximately 2,500 residential units and infrastructure within the Plan Area. The proposed project is the construction of the remaining 2,200 residential units, the Village Center retail/office/commercial area, parks, open space, infrastructure and the development of industrial park uses consistent with the Specific Plan. Program-level environmental review is also provided for the school anticipated on approximately 5.7 acres in the central portion of the site as shown on Figure 1.0-4.



REGIONAL MAP

FIGURE 1.0-1



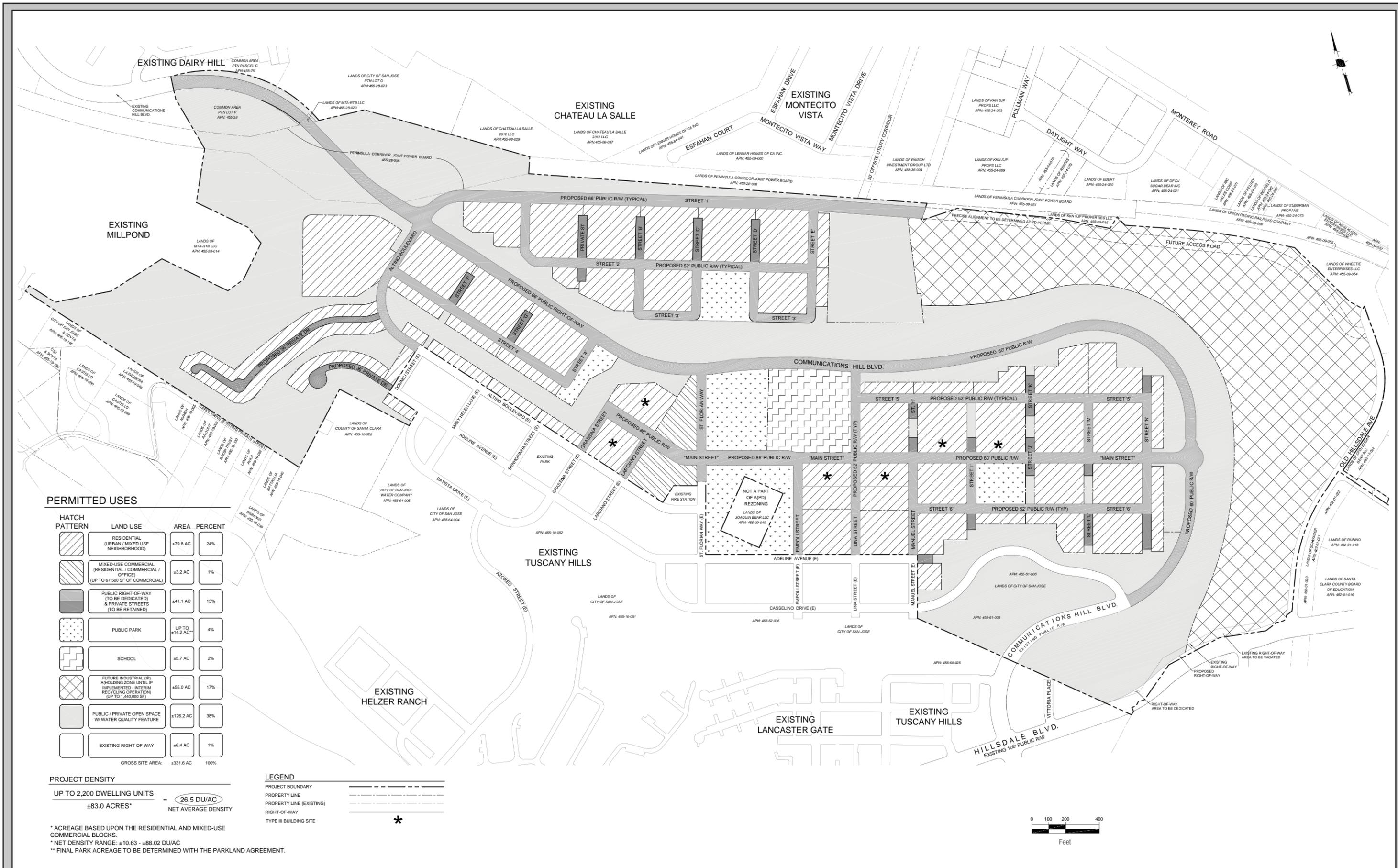
VICINITY MAP

FIGURE 1.0-2



AERIAL PHOTOGRAPH AND SURROUNDING LAND USES

FIGURE 1.0-3



PERMITTED USES

HATCH PATTERN	LAND USE	AREA	PERCENT
	RESIDENTIAL (URBAN / MIXED USE NEIGHBORHOOD)	±79.8 AC	24%
	MIXED-USE COMMERCIAL (RESIDENTIAL / COMMERCIAL / OFFICE) (UP TO 67,500 SF OF COMMERCIAL)	±3.2 AC	1%
	PUBLIC RIGHT-OF-WAY (TO BE DEDICATED) & PRIVATE STREETS (TO BE RETAINED)	±41.1 AC	13%
	PUBLIC PARK	UP TO ±14.2 AC*	4%
	SCHOOL	±5.7 AC	2%
	FUTURE INDUSTRIAL (IP) HOLDING ZONE UNTIL IP IMPLEMENTED - INTERIM RECYCLING OPERATION (UP TO 1,440,000 SF)	±55.0 AC	17%
	PUBLIC / PRIVATE OPEN SPACE W/ WATER QUALITY FEATURE	±126.2 AC	38%
	EXISTING RIGHT-OF-WAY	±6.4 AC	1%
GROSS SITE AREA:		±331.6 AC	100%

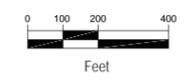
PROJECT DENSITY

UP TO 2,200 DWELLING UNITS
±83.0 ACRES* = **26.5 DU/AC**
NET AVERAGE DENSITY

* ACREAGE BASED UPON THE RESIDENTIAL AND MIXED-USE COMMERCIAL BLOCKS.
* NET DENSITY RANGE: ±10.63 - ±88.02 DU/AC
** FINAL PARK ACREAGE TO BE DETERMINED WITH THE PARKLAND AGREEMENT.

LEGEND

- PROJECT BOUNDARY
- PROPERTY LINE
- PROPERTY LINE (EXISTING)
- RIGHT-OF-WAY
- TYPE III BUILDING SITE



1.4 PROJECT OBJECTIVES

As described previously, the City of San José has approved the CHSP as a dense, highly urbanized pedestrian-oriented residential neighborhood with industrial park uses. The proposed project has been designed in accordance with the parameters outlined in the Specific Plan and includes parks/playfields, open space, infrastructure, and neighborhood-serving commercial uses.

New development areas within the Specific Plan boundaries are to be integrated with existing and planned residential, industrial, and commercial uses, both on-site and in the project vicinity. Implicit in the planning process is a desire to establish a high-quality living environment through building guidelines and standards for the design of both public and private improvements. Consistency with the Envision San José 2040 General Plan and the Specific Plan are also project objectives.

The main objectives of the project, consistent with the overall goals and policies of the CHSP, include the following:

- Construct the remaining residential units allowed by the CHSP consistent with a very high level of quality in site planning and architectural and landscape design;
- Develop approximately 1.44 million square feet of industrial park uses on the eastern portion of the site, consistent with the CHSP to encourage job opportunities near housing to facilitate ease of access between uses;
- Provide as great a variety of retail opportunities keeping with the neighborhood character while maximizing convenience and accessibility;
- Create an urban neighborhood that fosters community with walkable streets and reasons to walk;
- Distribute housing types and densities, workplaces, and facilities to create a mixed but compatible arrangement of land uses, streets, and buildings;
- Integrate existing land uses with new land uses, ensuring the viability and compatibility of both;
- Provide access to and connections with multiple forms of public transportation;
- Provide parks and open space resources in a manner which will enhance the quality of residential and community uses;
- Minimize grading or re-contouring of Communications Hill to preserve the topography of the land wherever possible and to avoid the creation of visible cut and fill slopes or obviously engineered or flat-surfaced slopes; and
- Minimize the potential adverse impacts of the Communications Hill area development on the immediately surrounding neighborhood.

SECTION 2.0 DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT

FOR THE PURPOSES OF THIS SEIR, THE CHSP PLAN AREA REFERS TO THE ENTIRE 900-ACRE COMMUNICATIONS HILL SPECIFIC PLAN AREA, OR “PLAN AREA”, WHICH IS GENERALLY BOUNDED BY THE GUADALUPE FREEWAY (SR 87) TO THE WEST, CURTNER AVENUE TO THE NORTH, MONTEREY ROAD TO THE EAST, AND CAPITOL EXPRESSWAY, SNELL AVENUE, AND HILLSIDE AVENUE TO THE SOUTH. THE “PROJECT SITE” IS DEFINED AS THE APPROXIMATELY 331.6-ACRE AREA GENERALLY BOUNDED BY THE UPRR/CALTRAIN TRACKS, HILLSDALE AVENUE, THE TUSCANY HILLS DEVELOPMENT, AND THE MILLPOND AND DAIRY HILL NEIGHBORHOODS.

2.1 INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

The proposed project is located within the Communications Hill Specific Plan Area (“CHSP Area” or “Plan Area”). The Communications Hill Specific Plan (CHSP), which was adopted in 1992, provides a comprehensive planning framework for development of a unified, high density, pedestrian-oriented, urban community with a mix of uses on approximately 900 acres on and around Communications Hill.

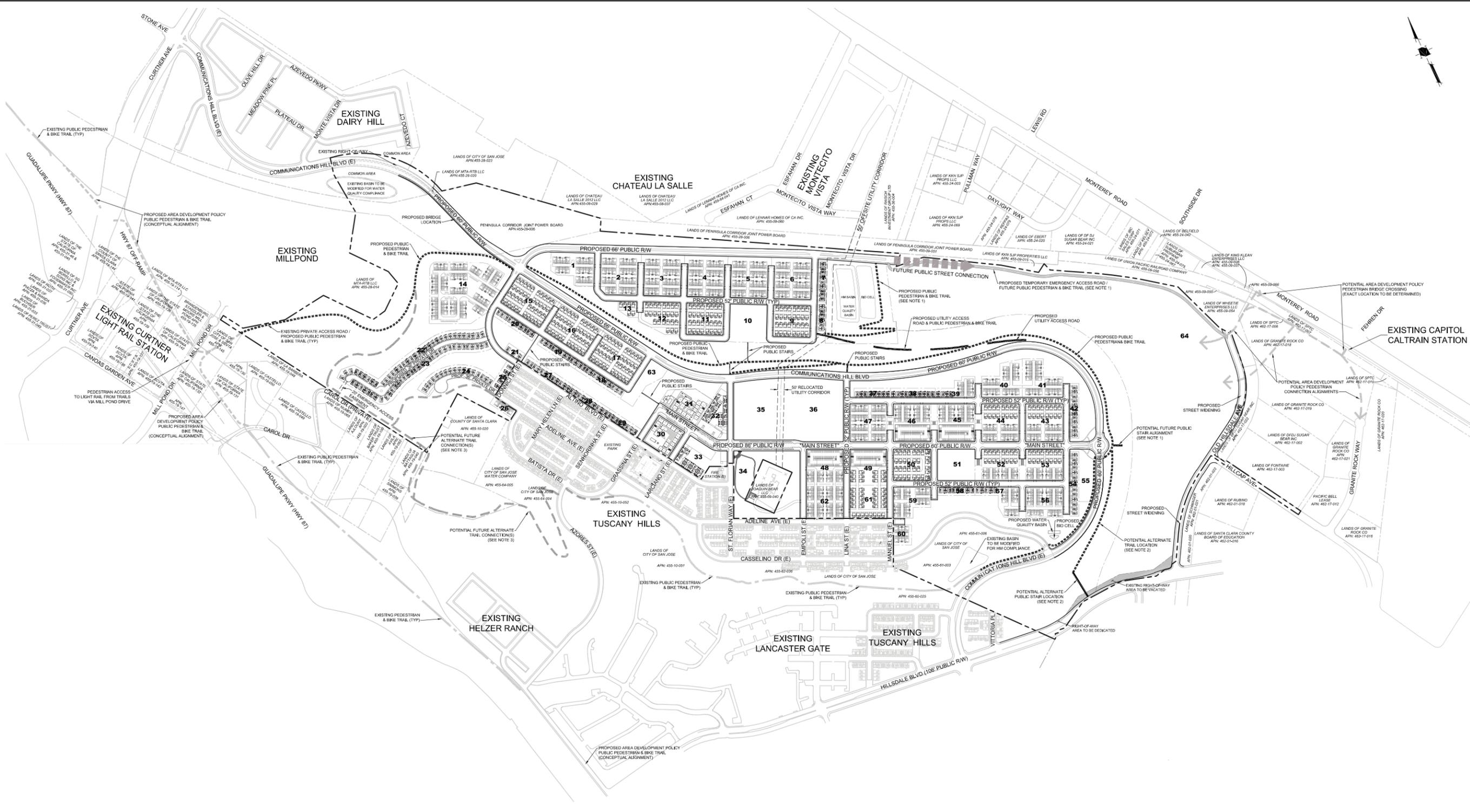
Of the roughly 4,700 residential units envisioned for the CHSP Area⁴, approximately 2,500 have been constructed. The proposed project is the build-out of the remaining approximately 2,200 residential units allowed within the Specific Plan Area. It also includes construction of up to 67,500 square feet of commercial/retail uses, parks, open space, trails, streets, stormwater facilities, and other associated supporting infrastructure. The EIR also provides program-level environmental review for the development of a school (approximately 5.7 acres), which will require subsequent environmental review.

The project also includes development of approximately 55 acres of industrial park uses in the eastern portion of the site near the base of Communications Hill adjacent to Old Hillside Avenue (refer to Figure 2.0-1). This development was included in the Specific Plan. Details of the industrial development have not yet been determined, although it is anticipated that such development would occur at a Floor Area Ratio (FAR) of approximately 0.6. This would allow approximately 1.44 million square feet of industrial park development, consistent with the Specific Plan. Building heights would be between one and four stories.

The project also includes implementation of an Area Development Policy (ADP) to reduce overall traffic impacts on a regional level. The Communication Hill Specific Plan ADP (CHADP) includes roadway/freeway ramp improvements, trails, bike lanes, and connections to transit.

While the proposed project is consistent with the overall goals and intent of the Specific Plan, General Plan amendments would be required. The existing land use designations of the site would be changed to be consistent with the City’s recently updated Envision San José 2040 General Plan. General Plan amendments would also be required to implement the project as described in *Section 2.5*, below.

⁴ City of San José, Envision San José 2040 General Plan, Chapter 1, page 49.



NOTE 1: FINAL LOCATION, ALIGNMENT AND CONSTRUCTION SCHEDULE TO BE DEFINED WITH THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE FUTURE INDUSTRIAL AREA AND ARE NOT PROPOSED WITH THE CURRENT PROJECT.

NOTE 2: FINAL ALIGNMENT AND FEASIBILITY OF THESE "POTENTIAL ALTERNATE" ALIGNMENTS AND THEIR IMPLEMENTATION TO BE DETERMINED AT THE PD PERMIT STAGE FOR THE APPLICABLE AREA.

NOTE 3: FINAL ALIGNMENT AND FEASIBILITY TO BE DETERMINED AT A LATER TIME. THESE "POTENTIAL ALTERNATE" ALIGNMENTS AND THEIR IMPLEMENTATION ARE A PART OF THE LONG RANGE PLAN FOR TRAIL CONNECTIVITY OF THE AREA.

LEGEND

PROJECT BOUNDARY	---
PROPERTY LINE	---
RIGHT-OF-WAY	---
PROPOSED TRAIL	---
PROPOSED TRAIL/ACCESS ROAD	---
PROPOSED / POTENTIAL STAIRS (SEE NOTES)	---
POTENTIAL ALTERNATE TRAIL ALIGNMENTS/CONNECTIONS (MAY INCLUDE STAIRS WHERE NOTED)	---
PROPOSED TRAIL (BY OTHERS)	---
EXISTING TRAIL	---

CONCEPTUAL SITE PLAN

FIGURE 2.0-1

Pre-zoning, annexation, and rezoning of the site would also be required. Potential discretionary actions associated with the proposed project include:

- Approval of Assessment Districts, Capital Improvement Programs, and/or an Area Development Policy to determine funding arrangements for infrastructure;
- Approval of a development Phasing Plan;
- Approval of new and/or revisions to existing Development Agreements;
- Development Permits and Subdivision Maps;
- Approval of pre-zoning of parcels to be annexed
- Public right-of-way dedication;
- NPDES Permits;
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and Regional Water Quality Control Board Permits;
- Tentative Maps;
- Parkland agreement;
- Park Master Plan development;
- PG&E power line relocation
- Tree Removal Permits; and
- Grading Permits.

2.2 Land Uses

The 331.6-acre project site is currently a vacant hilltop primarily covered with seasonal grasses with the appearance of open space. There is an existing aggregate recycling operation on the eastern portion of the site, at the base of the hill. The project area is located adjacent to an existing hilltop development that consists of approximately 733 residential units (a development known as “Tuscany Hills”), a fire station, a public park, existing communications facilities, and associated infrastructure.

The proposed project is the build-out of the remaining approximately 2,200 residential units, along with the development of 67,500 square feet of retail and 1.44 million square feet of industrial park uses, anticipated in the Communications Hill Specific Plan. The new streets and infrastructure would connect to the roadways and utility systems constructed by the previous development. Table 2.2-1 shows the approximate area of the proposed land uses on the site.

Land Use Type	Acres	Percentage
Residential	79.8	24%
Mixed Use Commercial/Residential	3.2	1%
Streets/Public Right-of-Way	41.1	13%
Public Parks	14.2	4%
School	5.7	2%

Land Use Type	Acres	Percentage
Future Industrial Park	55	17%
Open Space with Water Quality Basins	126.2	38%
Existing Right-of-Way	6.4	1%
TOTAL SITE AREA	331.6	100%

2.2.1 Residential Development

The project proposes the development of up to 2,200 residential units consisting of townhouses/flats, detached alley houses, detached row houses, podium condominiums, and apartments in the Village Center. The overall density of the residential development would be approximately 26.5 dwelling units per acre per block. An approximate breakdown of residential units to be developed is shown in Table 2.2-2 and on Figure 2.0-2. It is assumed that at least 15 percent of the proposed housing would be affordable to households of low- and moderate-income, consistent with City policies and goals.

Unit Type	Number of Units (Up to)	Acreage	Approx. Density (du/ac)
Attached Townhouses/Flats	885	36	25
Detached Alley Houses	375	20	19
Detached Row Houses	275	17	16
Podium Condominiums	500	7	71
Apartments in Village Center*	165	3	55
Total	2,200	83	26.5 Net Average
*These structures also include commercial/retail uses			

The majority of the residential blocks would be primarily developed with three-story attached townhouse/flat units and detached alley houses. The attached townhouse/flat buildings would have between four and nine units per building. To add some diversity to the design, some of the townhouse units would be two stories and some would be four stories. The townhouse units would be less than 45 feet in height measured from the average grade plant to top of roof ridge.

Six tall podium condominium buildings are proposed as part of the project, as required in the CHSP. Two of these buildings would be located northwest of the Village Center and four would be located on the eastern side of the hill. These buildings would vary in height, up to a maximum of 85 feet measured from the average finished grade plane to the top of parapet (excluding architectural projections, shafts, and mechanical ventilation). This would allow buildings up to seven stories with a density of between 30 and 90 DU/AC. These tall buildings will comprise about 500 of the project's 2,200 units. The locations of these structures are shown on Figure 1.0-4.

Approximately 200 detached row houses are proposed as part of the project. The majority of these units would be placed on edges of the grid-patterned streets or curvilinear cul-de-sacs on the steep slopes of the northwest portion of the project site.

2.2.2 Commercial and Mixed Use Development

The Communications Hill Specific Plan includes the construction of between 50,000 and 80,000 square feet of commercial/retail development in the "Village Center." The project proposes up to approximately 67,500 square feet of mixed use commercial/retail uses, consistent with the amount and type of development allowed by the CHSP. Uses include restaurants, shops, entertainment, and small office consistent with the Specific Plan. While retail and commercial uses would generally be limited to the ground floor, some office uses may be allowed on the second floors and restaurants may be on the upper floors to take advantage of view opportunities. Outdoor eating areas may be provided at grade and along the street or on upper floor decks or rooftops. Building heights would be up to 75 feet.

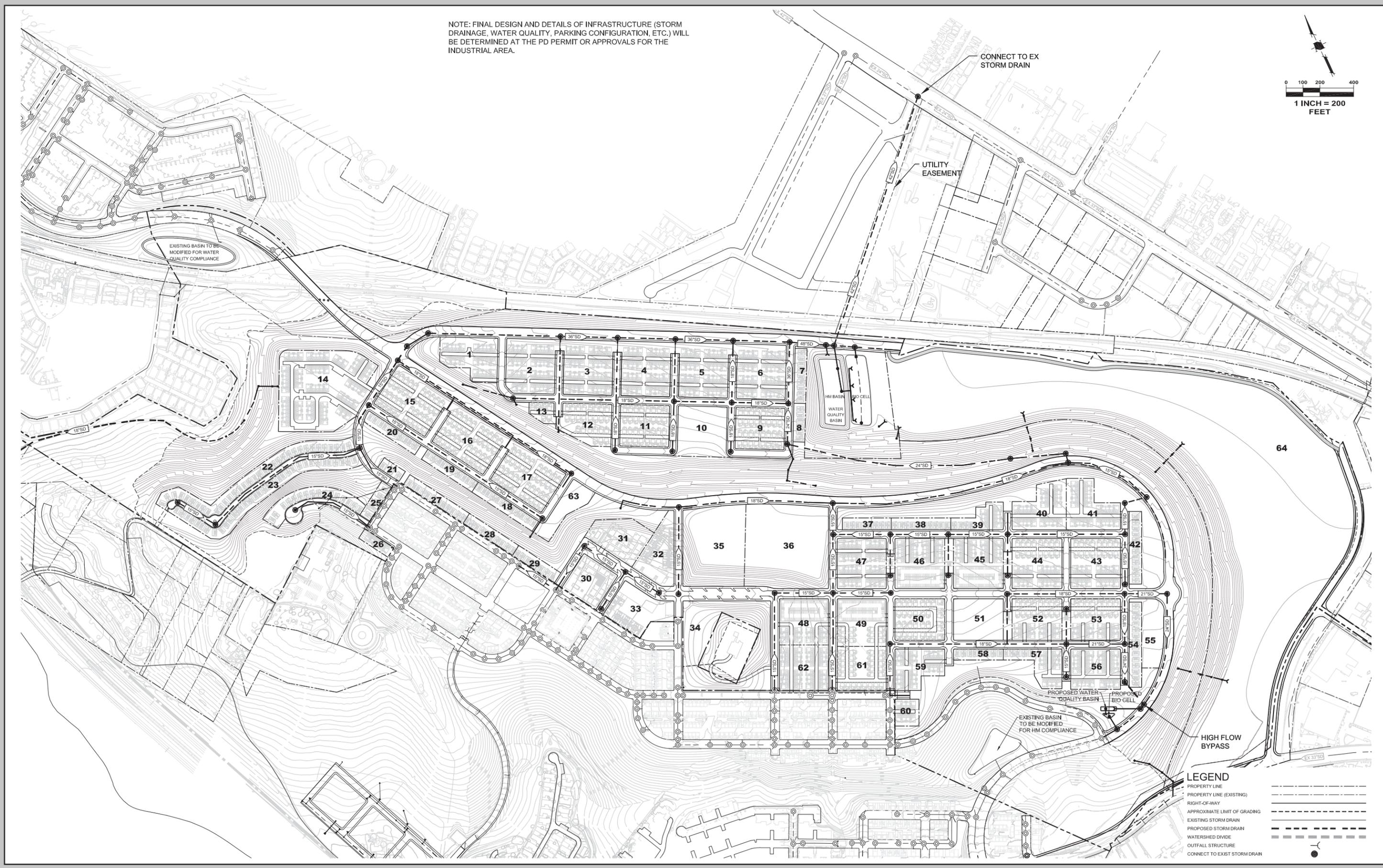
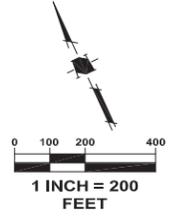
2.2.3 Industrial Development

The project includes the development of approximately 55 acres of industrial park uses in the eastern portion of the site near the base of Communications Hill adjacent to Old Hillsdale Avenue (refer to Figure 2.0-1). Details of the industrial development have not yet been determined, although it is anticipated that such development would occur at a Floor Area Ratio (FAR) of approximately 0.6. This would allow approximately 1.44 million square feet of industrial park development, consistent with the Specific Plan and the City's Zoning Ordinance. Uses could include research and development, manufacturing, assembly, testing, and offices. Multiple buildings are anticipated with building heights between one and four stories.

2.2.4 Parks, Trails, Open Space, and Landscaping

The Specific Plan includes 22.8 acres of parks, including five acres of school playfields. Approximately six acres of parklands and trails have been constructed thus far as part of the Tuscan Hills and Dairy Hill developments. The proposed project includes the construction of approximately 11.8 acres of parklands and 7.5 acres of on-site trails, for a total of 19.4 acres. The project would result in the construction of approximately 4.6 miles of on- and off-site trails. The precise location, size, and shape of parks and trail alignments are subject to modification and variation during the development review process.

NOTE: FINAL DESIGN AND DETAILS OF INFRASTRUCTURE (STORM DRAINAGE, WATER QUALITY, PARKING CONFIGURATION, ETC.) WILL BE DETERMINED AT THE PD PERMIT OR APPROVALS FOR THE INDUSTRIAL AREA.

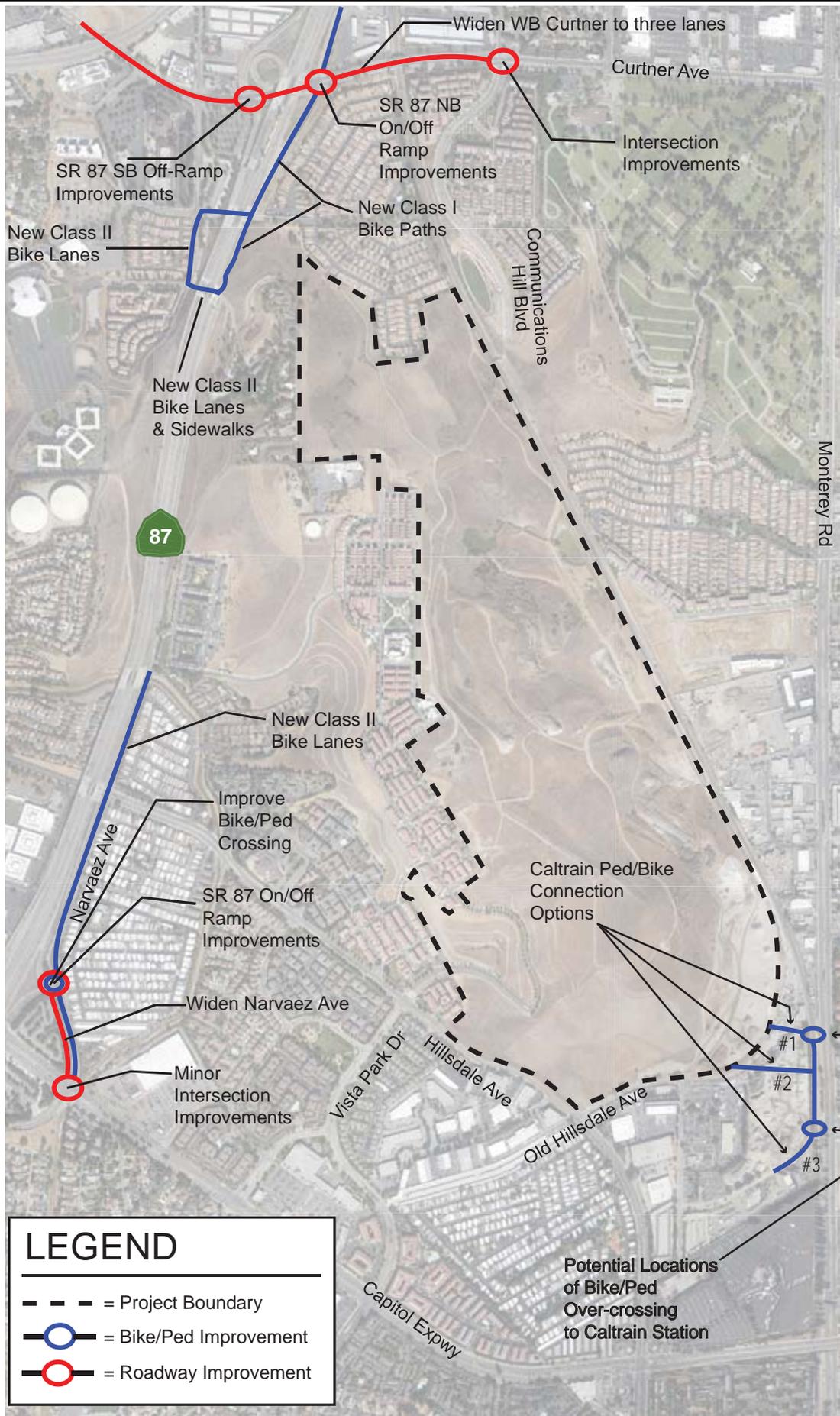


LEGEND

PROPERTY LINE	---
PROPERTY LINE (EXISTING)	---
RIGHT-OF-WAY	---
APPROXIMATE LIMIT OF GRADING	---
EXISTING STORM DRAIN	---
PROPOSED STORM DRAIN	---
WATERSHED DIVIDE	---
OUTFALL STRUCTURE	---
CONNECT TO EXIST STORM DRAIN	---

CONCEPTUAL STORM DRAIN PLAN

FIGURE 2.0-3



CONCEPTUAL ADP ROADWAY AND BICYCLE / PEDESTRIAN IMPROVEMENTS

FIGURE 2.0-4

The proposed project includes roughly 126.2 acres of open space, predominately consisting of hillside slopes. Trails, staircases, and water quality facilities are included in the open space areas, consistent with the Specific Plan, as shown on Figure 2.0-1. Landscaping would be consistent with the Specific Plan and the existing landscaping on the hill. The CHSP includes a trail that would completely circumnavigate the hill. Portions of this trail were completed for the Tuscany Hills development, and the proposed project would construct much of the remainder. However, because portions of the trail may be placed on lands owned by the County, the entirety of the circumnavigating trail may not be completed as part of the proposed project. The proposed project would not preclude the development of this trail connection.

The project also includes the construction of off-site improvements as part of the Communications Hill Specific Plan Area Development Policy (CHSPADP) included in the project. Trail connections on the west side of the hill would be constructed and/or improved from the Curtner Avenue/SR 87 on-ramp to Narvaez Avenue in the south, as shown on Figure 2.0-4 and described in detail below. An off-site trail/street connection to a future Caltrain overcrossing near Monterey Road, east of the project site, is also included in the CHSPADP to provide better pedestrian/bicycle access to commuter rail facilities.

2.2.5 School

The Specific Plan designates a 5.7-acre centrally located parcel for use as a future school site, as shown on Figures 1.0-4 and 2.0-1. The Specific Plan anticipated that the school would be an elementary school serving the Franklin-McKinley School District; however, this has not yet been determined. For this reason, this SEIR only provides program-level environmental review for the school and subsequent environmental review would be required.

The proposed project does, however, include the remediation of hazardous materials on the school site primarily related to Naturally Occurring Asbestos (NOA). Capping of the site in accordance with all federal, state, and local regulations would be completed and is included in the analysis completed for this SEIR.

2.2.6 Existing Mercury Mine/Former Quarry

There is an existing abandoned mercury mine and a former rock quarry within the boundary of the proposed project site, as shown on Figure 1.0-3. The 295-acre Azevedo Quarry was operated on the project site until 1999. An aggregate recycling center is currently using the quarry property. Reclamation efforts were undertaken in 1995 under an approved Reclamation Plan to restore vegetation to the quarried areas. Although these efforts ceased in 2009 due to a lack of funding, most of the former quarry area has been revegetated, with the exception of areas occupied by existing recycling operations. It is anticipated that the recycling operation will continue to utilize this portion of the site, which is the location of the proposed industrial park uses, until its Use Permit expires in approximately 10 years (2023).

Initial excavation and grading activities associated with the project would safely eliminate much of the former quicksilver mine, as described in *Section 4.8 Geology and Soils*. However, in some locations, mine shafts would be backfilled by injecting a flowable sand and foam or concrete based slurry prior to site grading to reduce the potential of mine collapse during construction. The backfill

materials would be injected from surface portals or mine openings. Some of these areas may ultimately be graded out during construction. The remaining filled mines will be left in place as described in the Geohazard Clearance obtained for the project. All graded areas would be engineered for stability. For a detailed description of the project's Mine Remediation Plan, please refer to *Section 4.8 Geology and Soils*.

2.2.7 Infrastructure

As previously described, some residential uses, infrastructure, and roadways have been constructed within the Specific Plan Area, including the 733-unit Tuscan Hills development at the top of the hill adjacent to the proposed project site. A portion of Communications Hill Boulevard was constructed to provide access to the existing and proposed residential units. Infrastructure components including streets, water and sewer lines, and utilities (gas, electricity, cable, and telephone) constructed thus far were sized to accommodate the proposed project.

An existing PG&E distribution/transmission line runs east/west through the Specific Plan Area. This line would be relocated as part of the project in order to optimize its alignment within the proposed school site by eliminating the diagonal crossing of the site and shifting it away from anticipated school buildings. The proposed project includes additional infrastructure components to serve the proposed development, as well as changes to some elements currently included in the Specific Plan. Major infrastructure elements are described below:

2.2.7.1 *Roadway System*

Currently, Communications Hill Boulevard extends from Hillsdale Boulevard to the southeastern portion of the site, where it terminates at Casselino Drive, providing access to the existing Tuscan Hills development. The project proposes to extend Communications Hill Boulevard through the entire site until it meets an existing stub that connects to Curtner Avenue, northwest of the hill (refer to Figure 2.0-1). The extended portion of Communications Hill Boulevard would be a two-lane arterial roadway with marked bike lanes and raised sidewalks. A series of internal roadways connecting to Communications Hill Boulevard would provide access to residences, commercial/retail areas, the future school site, and parks. The proposed streets would be constructed consistent with the Design Standards for streets in the Specific Plan and would be appropriately phased for development.

A vehicle bridge over the Caltrain tracks would be constructed in the northwestern portion of the site as part of Communications Hill Boulevard, as shown on Figure 2.0-1, consistent with the Specific Plan. In addition, a pedestrian and bicycle overcrossing would be constructed as part of the Communications Hill Specific Plan Area Development Policy (CHSPADP) in the eastern portion of the site to provide access to the Monterey Road Caltrain Station, as described in Section 2.3 below. Three connection alternatives have been identified for the location of the overcrossing and the trail to the overcrossing (refer to Figure 2.0-5).



Note: For Illustrative Purposes Only.

POSSIBLE PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE DESIGNS

FIGURE 2.0-5

2.2.7.2 Storm Drainage Facilities

The project site drains into two watersheds: Coyote Creek and the Guadalupe River. The project would implement a storm drain system designed to convey 10-year storm events to each watershed in a manner that maintains the existing flow distribution. Drainage from a small portion of the development area would be diverted from the Guadalupe River watershed into the Coyote Creek watershed to allow for regional water quality treatment within the stormwater treatment facility located at the base of the hill along the eastern project boundary.

The project would incorporate site design and source control measures on each individual block of residential development and in the industrial park area to reduce impervious surface area and control the amount of pollutants generated. Site design techniques include the clustering of buildings and creation of self-treating and self-retaining areas (landscaping and open space areas). Source control measures include roofed trash enclosures, marking of storm drain inlets with “No Dumping” messages, street sweeping, and regular inspection and cleaning of storm drain inlets.

Stormwater treatment and hydromodification management for the project would be accomplished through the incorporation of treatment systems for each of the two major watersheds on the site (Coyote Creek and the Guadalupe River), with each system consisting of a hydromodification detention basin, a water quality basin, and an adjacent biotreatment cell. Runoff would be collected in a conventional underground storm drain network within public and private streets, and would be piped to the designated treatment facilities.

A description of the drainage systems for each watershed, as shown on Figure 2.0-3, is provided in *Section 4.9 Hydrology and Water Quality*.

2.2.7.3 Sanitary Sewer Service

Sanitary sewer discharge from the project site would be distributed to existing sanitary sewer systems in Monterey Road and Hillsdale Avenue. Approximately 1,600 residential units, public parks, retail/commercial/office, school, and a portion of the industrial area are anticipated to discharge from the project system to the existing 54-inch sanitary sewer main in Monterey Road. The off-site system would include approximately 1,500 feet of new sewer main, crossing under the railroad tracks and through the adjacent parcel to Monterey Road. Right-of-way acquisition would be required. The Tuscany Hills residential development included a temporary sump and sewer lift station with a force main connection to the sewer in Batista Drive to provide sewer service for 84 residential units. These temporary facilities would be removed and a gravity connection would be provided with the project sewer system.

Approximately 600 residential units, along with public park facilities, are anticipated to discharge from the project system into the existing sewer main in Hillsdale Avenue via the existing 8-inch main in Communications Hill Boulevard that connects to the Hillsdale Avenue main.

Wastewater from the southern portion of the industrial area is anticipated to discharge from the project site into the existing sewer main in Old Hillsdale Avenue. A portion of the proposed southern residential development may also discharge into the existing sewer main in Old Hillsdale Avenue. This sewer will have adequate capacity after the City of San Jose completes its planned

capital improvement project for a sewer diversion upstream of the project. Actual flow split for the industrial park uses would be configured to meet the available capacity in the existing system as determined by the City of San Jose.

2.2.7.4 Water Service

Water service for the project site would be supplied by San Jose Water Company within three pressure zones: Dow Gravity Zone, Batista Gravity Zone, and Batista Pressure Zone. The distribution of water would be accomplished by a network of proposed water mains that would be owned and maintained by San Jose Water Company within the proposed public and private streets. The installation of facilities would include mains and valves, service laterals, air valves, pressure release valves, and fire hydrants. Services would include air gaps, booster pumps, and pressure reducers at some locations.

The major expansion facilities (water tank and pump stations) needed to create the upper pressure zones and service capacity for the project have already been constructed as part of the Tuscany Hills development and are sized to serve the project.

The project water main would connect to existing water main stubs in Altino Boulevard, Adeline Avenue, Azores Street and Communications Hill Boulevard, as constructed with the Tuscany Hills Residential Development. Each connection would be made within existing public right of way. In addition, the project would construct a new water main that connects to the existing pipeline in Batista Drive to provide a new gravity-fed pressure zone. The proposed development of the industrial park uses would require an additional connection to the existing water main within Old Hillsdale Avenue.

2.2.7.5 Other Utilities

The proposed project would require extension of electrical, natural gas, communications, and solid waste collection and disposal services to the development area. These utilities would be extended from the existing Tuscany Hills development and/or a utility corridor proposed to extend from Monterey Road to the project site, and would mostly be installed within the proposed public streets as they are constructed.

PG&E Overhead Transmission Line Relocation

The proposed project would include the relocation of an existing overhead 60kV transmission line and associated 50-foot wide easement. The overhead line enters the site at the eastern boundary across the Caltrain/UPRR railroad tracks and extends west to the top of Communications Hill at the former AT&T communications tower. The line then continues down to the previously developed western side of Communications Hill (Tuscany Hills).

The overhead line would be relocated vertically to accommodate new grades and vertical clearance requirements within the proposed development. The line would also be relocated horizontally in order to facilitate the school site development. Currently, the line crosses the future school site at a diagonal angle. The proposed realigned overhead line would cross the site at a perpendicular angle (refer to Figure 1.0-4). The overhead line would be subject to temporary relocation during grading and construction activities associated with residential development.

2.3 AREA DEVELOPMENT POLICY/OFF-SITE IMPROVEMENTS

The City's General Plan recognizes that in some areas, such as downtown or in other intense development areas, there may be counter-balancing or other economic benefits to the City that can warrant deviations from strict compliance with the City's Traffic Level of Service Policy. In order to consider such deviations, the City's General Plan identifies that alternatives to the traditional LOS mitigation for traffic impacts can be accepted in the context of an Area Development Policy (ADP).

The City has determined based on the analysis of potential LOS traffic impacts caused by the build-out of the Communications Hill Specific Plan (refer to Section 4.2 Transportation) and an analysis of the potential benefits, relative to the cost of the improvements, that alternative traffic and transportation related improvements would provide a better overall benefit and value to the Communications Hill area. Such alternative improvements provide opportunities to better improve multi-modal transportation opportunities for pedestrians, bicycles and transit use (bus, Caltrain and Light Rail Transit) improvements. Improving multi-modal transportation opportunities is a key goal of the Envision San Jose General Plan.

The Communications Hill Specific Plan Area Development Policy (CHSPADP), which is part of the proposed project, would provide for the implementation of several improvements to the roadway system, transit system, and pedestrian and bicyclist facilities in the immediate area of the proposed project, as shown on Figure 2.3-1. The purpose of the CHSPADP is to establish a variance from the City's standard Level of Service Policy to allow for a balanced transportation system as identified by goals and policies of the City of San Jose Envision 2040 General Plan. The Envision 2040 General Plan allows for exceptions to City's standard Level of Service Policy with the establishment of an ADP with the intent to meet City of San Jose Transportation Policies. In particular, the CHSPADP provides for improvement to the transportation system to meet the City of San Jose Transportation Policies that provide for the following:

- Encourage the use of non-automobile travel modes to reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT);
- Consider the impact on the overall transportation system when evaluating the impacts of new developments; and
- Increase substantially the proportion of travel modes other than single-occupant vehicles.

Each of the CHSPADP improvements and benefits of their implementation is discussed below. A copy of the CHSPADP is included as Appendix C to this SEIR.

2.3.1 Curtner Avenue Corridor Improvements

Curtner Avenue serves as a major east-west arterial that provides access to SR 87 and Almaden Expressway which are primary links to employment north of the project area. The Curtner Avenue interchange with SR 87 serves as a major access point from the project area to north and south San Jose. Primary access to the proposed project would be provided from Curtner Avenue. The addition of project traffic at the intersection of Curtner Avenue and Communications Hill Boulevard was identified to result in a significant impact at the intersection. In addition, project traffic would contribute to deficient operations at the Curtner Avenue and SR 87 northbound on-ramp.

Improvements to mitigate the project impact at the Curtner Avenue and Communications Hill Boulevard intersection (MM-4.1) as well as reduce the project impacts at the other intersections identified to be impacted by the project have been identified, and are included as part of the CHSPADP planned improvements. These improvements include the following:

CHSPADP Improvement 1: Widen Curtner Avenue to Five Lanes between Communications Hill Boulevard and the Almaden Expressway Southbound Off-Ramp

- Remove existing four-foot wide median and replace with two-foot wide median across existing Curtner Avenue Bridge over the railroad tracks.
- Re-stripe westbound Curtner Avenue lanes from Communications Hill Boulevard to SR 87 on-ramp to accommodate additional through lane.
- Convert westbound lane from Communications Hill Boulevard into dedicated right-turn lane at SR 87 northbound on-ramp.
- Existing Curtner Avenue Bridge over the railroad tracks to remain in place and proposed improvements shall occur within the existing right-of-way.
- Re-stripe Curtner Avenue under SR 87 overpass to improve alignment.
- Modify existing median.
- Maintain existing Class II bicycle lane along Curtner Avenue by restriping it between Communications Hill Boulevard and the Curtner Avenue Bridge over the railroad tracks.

CHSPADP Improvement 2: Intersection of Communications Hill Boulevard and Curtner Avenue

- Add second westbound left-turn lane from Curtner Avenue onto southbound Communications Hill Boulevard upon modification of existing median.
- Restripe existing westbound right-turn lane onto northbound Communications Hill Boulevard to accommodate an additional through lane upon removal of existing pork chop islands.
- Remove pork chop islands, reduce radius returns on both north and south sides of Curtner Avenue, modify traffic signal including new poles, mast arms, pedestrian facilities, and restriping.

CHSPADP Improvement 3: Intersection of SR 87 Northbound Off-Ramp and Curtner Avenue

- Modify traffic signal including new mast arm poles, upgrades to pedestrian facilities, and restriping.

CHSPADP Improvement 4: SR 87 Northbound On-Ramp at Curtner Avenue

- Add second eastbound left-turn lane from Curtner Avenue onto the SR 87 northbound on-ramp.
- Modify the existing median island at the SR 87 and Curtner Avenue intersection.
- Extend the existing HOV lane on the on-ramp back to Curtner Avenue and provide additional mixed-flow lane on the ramp from Curtner to metering light for a total of three lanes on the ramp.

- Add Class I bicycle facility to shoulder along Unified Way. Construct 10-foot paved trail with two-foot shoulders from existing path terminus at bus yard driveway to the corner of Unified Way and Curtner Avenue.
- Install traffic signal at Unified Way at Bus Yard.

Improvements along the Curtner Avenue corridor would provide additional capacity to serve project traffic as well as alleviate congestion along other roadways and intersections in the project area were identified by the City. In particular, the planned improvements to the Curtner Avenue and SR 87 ramps are expected to reduce congestion and operational issues currently experienced at the Narvaez Avenue/Capitol Expressway and SR 87 Ramps. The Envision 2040 General Plan identifies the need to widen Curtner Avenue between Stone Avenue and SR 87 from its existing four to six lanes.

2.3.2 Capitol Expressway/Narvaez Avenue/SR 87 On/Off Ramps

The SR 87 freeway ramps at Capitol Expressway and Narvaez Avenue serve as the primary freeway access point and link between the residential land uses in the project area with employment centers north of the project area. The SR 87 on-ramp at Narvaez Avenue currently experiences lengthy queues during the AM peak hour when ramp metering is active. Although, it is projected that the primary freeway access point for the proposed project would be provided by the Curtner Avenue interchange with SR 87 and that the project traffic will have a minimal effect on the SR 87 ramps at Narvaez Avenue, improvements have been identified and are included as part of the CHSPADP to increase vehicular queue storage at the Narvaez Avenue on-ramp. These improvements are included to alleviate operational issues near the freeway ramps. The planned improvements in the vicinity of the Capitol Expressway/Narvaez Avenue/SR 87 On/Off Ramps are summarized below:

CHSPADP Improvement 5: Improvement to the SR 87 On-Ramp/Narvaez Avenue Corridor

- Widen Narvaez Avenue from Capitol Expressway northerly to the SR 87/Narvaez on/off ramps to extend two existing northbound through lanes on Narvaez Avenue to the SR 87 northbound on/off ramps.
- Reconfigure the intersection at the SR 87 northbound on/off ramps to improve the intersection operations, queuing for both northbound and southbound Narvaez Avenue, and construction of a retaining wall adjacent to the existing VTA parking lot.
- Modify full traffic signal including improved pedestrian and bike facilities at the SR 87 on/off ramps.
- Modify traffic signal at the intersection of Capitol Expressway and Narvaez Avenue.

2.3.3 Public Transit/Pedestrian/Bike Improvements

Although the project area is served by several major public transit lines (Caltrain and VTA bus lines and LRT), the project site itself is not served directly by any transit services. In addition, there are no existing pedestrian/bike links between the project site and other existing pedestrian/bike and transit facilities in the area. The CHSPADP, which is part of the proposed project, includes several improvements to existing as well as the construction of new non-auto facilities with the intent to promote and encourage the use of multi-modal travel options. The identified improvements are consistent with the Envision 2040 General Plan goals and policies that are dedicated to the

enhancement of the transportation infrastructure, including public transit and pedestrian/bike facilities. The Transportation Policies contained in the General Plan create incentives for non-auto modes of travel while reducing the use of single-occupant automobile travel as generally described below:

- Through the entitlement process for new development, fund needed transportation improvements for all transportation modes, giving first consideration to improvement of bicycling walking, and transit facilities.
- Give priority to the funding of multimodal projects to provide the most benefit to all users of the transportation system.

Thus, the implementation of the improvements discussed below are intended to reduce the identified project impacts to the roadway system by providing the project site with viable connections to existing surrounding pedestrian/bike and transit facilities. They would also provide for a balanced transportation system as outlined in the Envision 2040 General Plan goals and policies.

CHSPADP Improvement 6: Bicycle and Pedestrian Facility Improvements (Unified Way to Masonic Drive)

- Construct a Class I bicycle facility (10 feet paved with two-foot shoulders) from trail terminus at Unified Way southerly crossing at SR 87/Curtner Avenue northbound off/on ramp intersection and continuing along the east side of SR 87 ending at Millpond Drive/Masonic Drive.
- Construct a Class I bicycle/pedestrian facility (10 feet paved with two-foot shoulders) from Millpond Drive south along the east side of SR 87 to Carol Drive. This will require the construction of a retaining wall along the east side of the trail.

CHSPADP Improvement 7: Bicycle and Pedestrian Facility Improvements (Azores Street to Capitol Expressway)

- Stripe Class II bike lanes along Narvaez Avenue from existing trail terminus at Azores Street/Helzer Road southerly within the existing right-of-way on Narvaez Avenue. Continue the Class II bicycle lane along the newly constructed/widened Narvaez Avenue from the SR 87 off/on ramps to Capitol Expressway.
- The traffic signal at Narvaez Avenue and the SR 87 on/off ramps will be modified to include improved bike/pedestrian crossing.

CHSPADP Improvement 8: Capitol Caltrain Station Pedestrian/Bicycle Connection along Monterey Highway

Access from the Communications Hill 2 project site to the Capitol Caltrain Station on the east side of the railroad tracks adjacent to Monterey Road can be acquired by way of three options. These options were developed because property would need to be obtained from private property owners. Option #1 assumes the crossing would be located north of the existing Capitol Caltrain Station. The overcrossing location for Options #2 and #3 would be approximately the same; adjacent to or very near the existing Station. The design of the crossing itself would be the same regardless of the access location. These options are generally described below and shown on Figure 2.

Option #1 Alignment

- Construct approximately 400 linear feet of sidewalk or pathway from the project site to the western landing of the future overcrossing to be located north of the existing Capitol Caltrain Station.
- Construct a pedestrian/bicycle overcrossing between the end of the sidewalk/pathway and the existing sidewalk on the east side of the railroad tracks. The sidewalk on the east side of the railroad tracks along Monterey Road would be utilized to access the Station.
- Requires right-of-way (easement) from at least one private property owner.
- Requires coordination/permit from the Joint Powers Board

Option #2 Alignment

- Construct approximately 1,200 linear feet of pathway or trail from the project site to the western landing of the overcrossing to the Caltrain Station. A portion of this trail would run along the east side of the railroad tracks.
- Construct a pedestrian/bicycle overcrossing between the end of the pathway/trail and the Station.
- Requires easement from at least two private property owners.
- Requires coordination/permit from the Joint Powers Board.

Option #3 Alignment

- Utilize existing public streets and sidewalks south of the project site to the extent possible to access the future overcrossing. This would require the construction of approximately 2,200 linear feet of new sidewalks from the project site along Hillcap and Hillsdale Avenues and Granite Rock Way. At the terminus of Granite Rock Way, an approximately 400-foot long pathway/trail would be constructed to the western landing of the overcrossing. Construct a pedestrian/bicycle overcrossing between the end of the pathway/trail and the Station.