



## **SECTION TWO**

### ***Summary of Existing Site Conditions & Issues***

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## SECTION 2: SUMMARY OF EXISTING SITE CONDITIONS AND ISSUES

### A

#### Site Conditions

##### General

The Stock Ranch site is undeveloped and contains fallow orchards, oak woodlands, grasslands, riparian zones, and aquatic habitats. The predominant habitat type is grassland with clusters of oak trees. The site was grazed in the past and grassland vegetation was introduced over time. A portion of the site contains an abandoned orchard.

The property is bisected by Arcade Creek. Arcade Creek is fed by San Juan Creek at the eastern edge of the site and by associated tributary drainages traversing the site. The Arcade Creek floodplain ranges from 120 to 200 feet in width with fingers of floodplain extending north and south. The Creek corridor currently provides scenic vistas and recreation for area residents.

Several dirt roads and paths crisscross the site and are illegally used by off-road vehicles. As the property was a working ranch, all areas on the site have been altered due to past agricultural activities.

The site is served by existing utilities and no upgrades are anticipated to any infrastructure system except water and storm water drainage. A description of the existing service providers, system configuration, and proposed changes and upgrades is found in Section 4.E – Infrastructure and Service Plan.

##### Biologic Resources

The site contains few sensitive plant species. Past environmental surveys have listed a grouping of elderberry shrubs, a protected species, within the Arcade Creek riparian corridor. Within the overall site are jurisdictional wetlands including vernal pools (seasonally wet areas) and wetlands associated with tributary creek corridors. These wetlands are habitat and, if lost or modified during development, they must be replaced or mitigated either on- or off-site. These habitats are subject to state and federal review and permitting requirements.

Outside of the creek corridor there are stands of oak trees scattered throughout the site, particularly northwest of the creek.

Existing oak trees along the western edge of the northern portion of the Plan Area provide an opportunity for a natural buffer to the Crosswoods community. Seasonal wetlands and vernal pools constrain usable acreage, but provide opportunities for wetland preservation as an extension on the site.

Existing trees line the Auburn Boulevard frontage and provide a green edge to the street at this location. The community has expressed interest in keeping these trees in place.

The site, where it is not in tree cover, is a grassland. This grassland is composed primarily of species introduced during grazing of livestock. The grasses are primarily annual and weedy species and are not of high habitat value.

**SECTION 2: SUMMARY OF EXISTING SITE CONDITIONS AND ISSUES**



*Trees Along Arcade Creek*



*North Portion of Site*

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*Oak Trees Along Crosswoods Boundary*



*Auburn Boulevard Frontage*

## SECTION 2: SUMMARY OF EXISTING SITE CONDITIONS AND ISSUES



*Existing Conditions*

### **Water-Related Resources**

Vernal pools occur on the site and are primarily located north of Arcade Creek. Vernal pools are topographic depressions which, due to poor permeability, retain water during the rainy season. A number of specialized species occur around the fringes and in the mud of the pools.

There are wetlands on the site that are associated with sub-drainages to Arcade Creek. These wetlands are identifiable by their various grasses and are important habitat.

### **Drainage and Flooding**

Arcade Creek is the source of periodic flooding downstream of Stock Ranch, which includes the adjacent Crosswoods community. During the rainy season, the water running in the creek disrupts pedestrian traffic across the site, particularly for the students traveling

between the neighborhoods to the south and the school to the north.

Arcade Creek impedes vehicular circulation between the areas north and south of the creek and its irregular floodplain dictates the shape of developable areas adjacent to the creek.

Detention ponds shall be constructed onsite to accommodate runoff from the project area. Detention facilities, if poorly designed, can detract from the natural beauty of the creek corridor, but, if properly designed, can become important and complementary visual elements of the developed Stock Ranch.

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*Trail Near Creek*

### **B**

#### **Context**

##### **Surrounding Land Uses**

The property is surrounded by residential land uses that have traditionally enjoyed the unspoiled vistas and open space provided by this parcel. The unspoiled vistas and most of the natural open spaces will diminish with the development of the property.

- The Crosswoods residential master-planned subdivision in the RD-5 (PD) zone north of Arcade Creek and the Beazer Homes single-family residential subdivision in the RD-7 zone south of Arcade Creek to the west
- Large-lot residential uses in the Woodside Special Planning Area; the oaks of Huntington Square in the RD-20 zone; and duplexes in the RD-10 zone to the east
- Merrill Gardens senior care facility, Manor Care Health Alzheimers's care facility, Vintage Oaks Senior Apartments in the RD-20 zone to the southeast
- City of Citrus Heights City Hall, the Police Service Center, and a U.S. Post Office create a civic center along Fountain Square Drive, immediately north of Greenback Lane and south of the Plan Area. In 1997, the City of Citrus Heights incorporated and located its City Hall on Fountain Square Drive, north of Greenback Lane. A post office is located across from City Hall. Together, City Hall, the Police Service Center, and the post office along Fountain Square Drive create the Citrus Heights civic center and an activity hub for residents
- A shopping center and a former United Artists theater complex in the SC zone are to the south, east of Fountain Square Drive
- Single-family residential subdivisions in the RD-5 zone across Auburn Boulevard to the north
- A vacant multi-family site in the RD-20 zone across Stock Ranch Road southwest of the project.



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*Residential Uses Along Stock Ranch Road*

### Transportation Network

Auburn Boulevard is an important regional thoroughfare and provides the only vehicular access to the commercial district north of Arcade Creek. Currently Auburn Boulevard is four lanes in width. Future development on the parcel north of Arcade Creek will generate increased traffic on Auburn Boulevard and will require improvements in association with development. The other roads that abut the site include Sylvan Road on the east and Stock Ranch Road on the south. No roads currently bisect the site.

Sylvan Road contains a Class II Bike Route while other surrounding streets are designated future bike routes in the General Plan. Auburn Boulevard is proposed to have a Class II Bike Lane. Bus service is available on Auburn Boulevard.

### C

### Issues

Four major issues related to development surfaced during the site analysis and public input portions of the planning process. The four primary issues are drainage and flooding along Arcade Creek; traffic and circulation issues, including pedestrian safety, particularly along Auburn Boulevard; on-site natural resources; and compatibility with adjacent uses. Additional, more specific issues were raised by community members during the public input process and summaries of those specific issues are available from the City of Citrus Heights Community Development Department.

#### Drainage and Flooding

During periods of heavy or prolonged rains, Arcade Creek, below Stock Ranch, reaches levels that cause flooding to streets and structures. Of particular interest to the residents of Crosswoods, the housing development west of and downstream from the Stock Ranch, is how development will impact them.

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*Auburn Boulevard View to the North*

During the public input process, many residents recounted personal tales of flooding and asked if the development of Stock Ranch could help reduce their problem. Currently all storm water run-off from the vacant Stock Ranch flows uncontrolled into Arcade Creek. As a result of development and the removal of permeable surfaces, the amount of run-off will increase. A drainage plan to capture all on-site run-off is presented in Section 4.

### **Traffic and Circulation**

Locating a large commercial center in an area proximate to neighborhoods creates the potential for conflicts between users of the commercial area and local residents. Traffic and circulation issues consist of increases in traffic along Auburn Boulevard in the vicinity of the commercial development proposed for the northern portion of the site, potential for intrusion into residential neighborhoods, and pedestrian and school children crossing Auburn Boulevard and traversing the site.

As traffic volumes increase along Auburn Boulevard, conflicts will be created by the need to make left-hand turns in and out of the site. Related to this concern is the additional concern of pedestrian safety and school crossings across Auburn Boulevard. Currently school children from the neighborhood south of Auburn Boulevard cross to attend school north of Auburn Boulevard. Residents are concerned that pedestrians and children will be hurt crossing the street if proper pedestrian safety measures are not incorporated into the plan.

In recognition of these concerns, a circulation plan has been prepared and is presented in Section 4 of this document.

### **On-Site Natural Resources**

Field surveys of the Stock Ranch site identified 3.52 acres of Jurisdictional waters (waters that fall under the jurisdiction of the Federal Government) that are on the site. These waters are primarily located north of Arcade Creek and are comprised of waters of Arcade Creek, tributary drainages, San Juan Creek, and vernal pools.



## SECTION 2: SUMMARY OF EXISTING SITE CONDITIONS AND ISSUES

There are minor drainage courses within the site that are tributary to Arcade Creek. Development within any of these drainages would destroy them and the wildlife habitat they provide. Several stands of native oaks dot the site. There is a potential that development would eliminate some oaks.

A natural resources plan is presented in Section 4 of this document.

### **Compatibility with Adjacent Uses**

The biggest issue of compatibility with adjacent uses is the development of the commercial district on Stock Ranch north of Arcade Creek. The property is surrounded by existing residential uses on three sides. Residents are concerned about issues associated with commercial uses, such as noise, traffic, trash disposal, and truck activity.

