

4.4.6.7 Sand Creek. The Sand Creek Focus Area encompasses approximately 2,873 acres in the southern portion of the City of Antioch.

This Focus Area is bounded by existing residential neighborhoods to the north, Black Diamond Mines Regional Preserve to the west, the city limits to the south, and the City of Brentwood to the east. Empire Mine Road and Deer Valley Road run in a general north-south direction through the Focus Area, dividing it roughly into thirds.

a. Purpose and Primary Issues.

Sand Creek, as well as natural hillsides and canyons within the Sand Creek Focus Area, contain habitats for sensitive plant and animal species, as well as habitat linkages and movement corridors. Overall, the western portion of the Focus Area is more environmentally sensitive than the eastern portion in terms of steep topography, biological habitats and linkages, the existence of abandoned coal mines, and proximity to public open space at Black Diamond Mines Regional Preserve. The west end of the Sand Creek Focus Area serves as a linkage between two regionally significant blocks of grassland. Decades of urban and agricultural use have greatly reduced the width of this linkage, substantially increasing the ecological importance of the remaining linkage within the Sand Creek Focus Area. Land has been preserved in regional parks and permanent open space, primarily in extensive grassland to the immediate west and northwest, as well as south of the Sand Creek Focus Area. These preserves represent a significant investment of public resources, and are a valued public asset.

Stream and riparian communities occupy a small portion of the Focus Area, but are widely distributed. Because of their high biotic value, stream and riparian communities within the Focus Area are considered to be a sensitive resource. The Focus Area also includes an oak woodland and savanna community, which, because of its high wildlife value, is considered to be a sensitive resource.

b. Policy Direction.

The environmental sensitivity of portions of the Sand Creek Focus Area has been recognized in the prior General Plans; however, policy direction was very general. The following policy discussion and policies for the Sand Creek Focus Area are intended to provide clear direction for the future development and environmental management of the area.

The Sand Creek Focus Area is intended to function as a large-scale planned community, providing needed housing and support services. Residential development within the Sand Creek Focus Area will provide for a range of housing types, including medium and large-lot single-family homes and senior housing.

The following policies apply to development within the Sand Creek Focus Area.

1. Development Yield

- a. The development yield for the Sand Creek Focus Area shall not exceed 4,000 dwelling units.
- b. The Total Development Yield for an individual development project shall be based on the Land Use Map for the Sand Creek Focus Area and the following policies:
 - i. The Total Development Yield establishes the maximum number of residential units that should be built over a specified geographic area or project site.
 - ii. The Total Development Yield is derived by multiplying the area, in acres, by the specified density for each land use area, or portion thereof, as presented on the Land Use Map for the Sand Creek Focus Area.
 - iii. The Total Development Yield for a project is the sum of the units derived from each land use area contained within the project site.
 - iv. The unit count resulting from the Total Development Yield are not required to be sited within the land use designation area from where they were derived, but may be located in any residential or mixed use land use area within the project site.
 - v. All units sited within a residential land use area must conform to the underlying minimum lot size and other development standards, if applicable, of that land use area.
 - vi. The following table contains the approximate acreage and anticipated development yield for the various Land Use Designations for the Sand Creek Focus Area. These figures are estimates only and may be evaluated with more precision with a project application. The conceptual number of units reflected in Table A are not assigned to or "owned" by any property owner or developer. Instead, the number of units assigned to a particular property will be determined by the City Council in connection with its approval of a particular development project.
 - vii. The Total Development Yield for lands designated SC-ZR, located west of Empire Mine Road, shall be developed on a project-specific basis through the Planned Development process. This determination shall be informed by detailed analysis of geological, topographical, biological, and any other constraints affecting the property. In no case shall the density exceed that of the SC-LD designation of 2.0 units per acre.

TABLE A: TOTAL DEVELOPMENT YIELD

Land Use Designation	Acres	Units	Density
Sand Creek – Vineyards (SC-V)	138	533	3.9
Sand Creek – Aviano (SC-AV)	108	641	5.9
Sand Creek – Medium Density (SC-MD)	54	324	6.0
Sand Creek - Medium Density – Hillside (SC-MD-H)	190	570	3.0
Sand Creek- Low Density (SC-LD)	93	140	1.5
Sand Creek- Low Density Hillside (SC-LD-H)	696	1,392	2.0
Sand Creek – Mixed Use (SC-MU)	201	201	1.0
Sand Creek – Zeka Ranch (SC-ZR)	206	To be determined with project-specific analysis	1.0-2.0
Sand Creek – Medical (SC-MED)	83	0	0.0
Sand Creek – Open Space (SC-OS)	958	0	0.0
Sand Creek – Open Space – Hillside (SC-OS)	56	0	0.0
Total	2,783	4,000 max.	1.4

2. Land Use Designations

- a. Land Use Designations are intended to provide a basic description of their purpose and basic development standards. The Planned Development (PD) process will determine project-specific standards. The designations are described in the following table:

TABLE B: LAND USE DESIGNATIONS	
Land Use Designation	Description
SC-V	The Vineyards at Sand Creek project was approved in 2016 and is designated as approved. Any changes to the project will require a General Plan amendment.
SC-AV	The Aviano project was approved in 2015 and is designated as approved. Any changes to the project will require a General Plan amendment.
SC-MD	These designations are intended for the development of single-family neighborhoods on mid-size lots with opportunities for clustering or condominium-style development.
SC-MD-H	
SC-LD	These designations are intended for the development of single-family neighborhoods on large lots with associated suburban neighborhood amenities.
SC-LD-H	
SC-ZR	The Zeka Ranch property is intended for development of single-family neighborhoods on relatively larger lots for estate or executive-style properties.
SC-MU	This designation allows for development of commercial and residential uses in a Town Center environment. Residential uses should occupy no more than 50% of the site, but may be built as attached condominiums,apartments, or similar higher density housing.
SC-MED	This designation reflects the existing Kaiser Permanent Antioch Medical Center and the adjacent medical high school.
SC-OS	These designations identify the various open space and protected natural areas, including the Sand Creek corridor, the sensitive habitat at the southwest corner of the site, the large drainage basin and future regional park, and protected hilltops.
SC-OS-H	

- b. Land Use Designations are assigned based on topography, natural features, and proximity to major transportation routes. These designations, and their corresponding maximum densities, allow for an equitable and predictable disbursement of units to ensure that the total development yield for the Sand Creek Focus Area does not exceed 4,000. As such, any proposed

amendment to the General Plan that increases the total development yield of the site will preclude other development sites from reaching their development potential. Such a practice is strongly discouraged and should only be accomplished if development rights are transferred from another parcel. Transferring units from one approved project to another will allow for greater creativity and consolidation of units. The following rules generally describe how a development transfer might occur:

- i. Owners of both properties must apply concurrently for the development transfer.
 - ii. A deed restriction or other legal notice assigned to the deed of the property must be recorded concurrently with the development transfer.
 - iii. The development transfer must be approved concurrently with the approval of the receiving project and the entire action must be considered during the environmental review process.
 - iv. The development transfer may not be used to transfer units obtained through the Density Bonus process. Similarly, the above rules do not preclude ordinary use of the Density Bonus process.
- c. Senior housing is strongly encouraged throughout the Focus Area.
- i. The Density Bonus process may be used to increase the density for applicable senior projects.
 - ii. Any project providing a minimum of 30% of the total units for Senior Housing shall be entitled to a 20% Density Bonus. Any project providing 100% Senior Housing shall be entitled to a 45% Density Bonus. For the purposes of this calculation, the “project” shall include the entire development under same ownership and under concurrent review. This Density Bonus shall only apply to senior housing units.
 - iii. Senior housing may be developed on smaller lots as described in the Land Use Designation Table for the Sand Creek Focus Area.
 - iv. Senior housing alternatives, such as assisted living facilities or multifamily senior residences, are encouraged throughout the Focus Area, including within residential land use designations. These facilities are not to be considered “units” and are not to be deducted from the Total Development Yield for a project if they are available exclusively for senior households, they are not made available as ownership units, they are complemented by on-site services, and they are licensed by the State of California Department of Social Services.
- d. The commercial component of the Mixed Use land use designation must conform to the land use standards of the Neighborhood Commercial (C-N) Land Use designation.
- e. Due to its unique geological, topographical, biological, and other conditions, a density range has been established for the property west of Empire Mine Road (SC-ZR). The lower end (1.0 units/acre) of this density range is intended to correspond to the hilled areas of the property, while the higher end (2.0 units/acre) is intended to correspond to the flat portions of the property. The exact delineation of these two density areas shall be determined by new precise topographical and related data through the

Planned Development process. Similarly, the lot sizes and other development standards shall be determined through the Planned Development process.

TABLE C: DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS		
Designation	Minimum Lot Size	Average Lot Size (sf)
SC-V	-	-
SC-AV	-	-
SC-MD	4,000 sf	5,000 sf
SC-MD-H		
SC-LD	5,000 sf	7,000 sf
SC-LD-H		
SC-ZR	To be determined through Planned Development process.	
SC-MU	-	-
SC-MED	1 acre	-
SC-OS	-	-
SC-OS-H	-	-
Senior Housing (all districts)	4,000 sf	-

3. Financial Analysis

- a. All non-public projects shall be demonstrated to be financially sustainable and not requiring ongoing expense to the City of Antioch that exceeds tax and other financial benefits from the project. A Fiscal Impact Analysis shall be provided that demonstrates sustainability over 10, 20, and 30-year timeframes.
- b. Private streets and utilities are encouraged to achieve financial sustainability.

4. Open Space and Recreation

- a. A minimum of 30% of the Sand Creek Focus Area shall be dedicated Open Space.
- b. A comprehensive trail system shall be installed throughout the Sand Creek Focus Area that connects to Black Diamond Mines Regional Preserve and, ideally, to other regional trails. The trail system should avoid roadway-adjacent sidewalks and connect neighborhood parks, communities, commercial centers, and other area features. The trail system should follow ridgelines and designated open space areas and should be open to the general public to the greatest extent possible. The trail system should also traverse the Sand Creek corridor.
- c. A public staging area shall be developed as near as possible to Black Diamond Mines Regional Preserve to allow for public access.
- d. All projects should provide full park acreage dedication requirements and in-lieu fees are strongly discouraged. Neighborhood parks should contain a variety of passive and active facilities and should be sited so as to have direct access to the trail system.
- e. The entire length of Sand Creek shall contain a minimum 125'-wide buffer. Development should be prohibited within this buffer area, with the following exceptions:
 - i. Bridges,
 - ii. Benches, shade structures, interpretive monuments, or similar park features,
 - iii. Minor grading or temporary encroachment necessary to serve development outside of the buffer, or
 - iv. Trails.
 - v. The 125-foot buffer shall not apply to land within the confines of the Contra Costa County Flood Control Basin or future regional park. An appropriate buffer shall be provided on a project-specific basis, and, in no case, shall the average buffer be less than 125 feet
- f. Careful attention should be given to the experience within the Sand Creek corridor and, especially, along the trails. One-sided residential streets with open views to the creek corridor and neighborhood parks are encouraged to be located adjacent to the Sand Creek corridor. Exceptions should be made when there is significant change in elevation or other features that visually disconnect the residential lots from the creek corridor. High traffic roadways, highly visible residential backyard fences, sound walls, the rear of commercial buildings, visible basins, or similar offensive features are strongly discouraged adjacent to the Sand Creek corridor.
- g. A viable, continuous grassland corridor between Black Diamond Mines Regional Preserve and Marsh Creek State Park shall be retained using linkages in the southwestern portion of the Lone Tree Valley (within the Sand Creek drainage area), Horse Valley, and the intervening ridge. The primary goal of preserving such a corridor is to allow for wildlife movement between Black Diamond Mines Regional Preserve and Marsh Creek State Park.

Completion of such a corridor is contingent upon the cooperation with the City of Brentwood and Contra Costa County, each of whom may have land use jurisdiction over portions of this corridor. To preserve this corridor and in view of other significant development constraints, certain lands in the southwestern portion of the Focus Area are designated as "Open Space," as depicted in the Land Use Map for the Sand Creek Focus Area.

- h. Each project must submit an Open Space management plan concurrent with the application indicating how open space lands will be owned, managed, and maintained.
- i. A large regional park or sports complex should be developed within the detention basin owned by Contra Costa County Flood Control District. The City of Antioch shall work with the District in its development, as provided in the approved Sand Creek Basin Master Plan.

5. Circulation

- a. The development of the Sand Creek Focus Area must contain the roadways identified on the Land Use Map for the Sand Creek Focus Area. The exact alignment of the identified roadways may be altered as long as important connections are ultimately made.
- b. The extension of Dallas Ranch Road should be called Sand Creek Road for continuity throughout the Focus Area.
- c. Sand Creek Road, Deer Valley Road, and Hillcrest Avenue, at minimum, should contain adequate turn-outs and similar facilities for bus systems.
- d. Sand Creek Road, Deer Valley Road, and Hillcrest Avenue shall all have paved Class I bike paths, unless an alternate nearby parallel path exists within the broader Open Space trail system.
- e. Sidewalks on Sand Creek Road, Deer Valley Road, and Hillcrest Avenue shall be separated from the back of curb by at least ten feet.
- f. Roundabouts and traffic circles should use wherever practical to avoid unnecessary stops.
- g. Upon full construction of Sand Creek Road to its ultimate width, Empire Mine Road should be limited to emergency vehicle access and use by pedestrians or cyclists and through traffic should be absolutely limited to property owners reliant on Empire Mine Road for access.
- h. Bridges over Sand Creek should be limited and used only where necessary. Consolidation of vehicle bridges is strongly encouraged and bridge locations should be limited to the following:
 - i. Empire Mine Road
 - ii. Southward from Sand Creek Road
 - iii. Deer Valley Road
 - iv. Hillcrest Avenue Extension
 - v. Southward from the intersection of Sand Creek Road and "B" Street as referenced in Project Specific Condition #98 of Resolution Number 2009/** approving the Aviano Adult Community Project.
 - vi. Additional bridges shall be considered on a case-by-case basis.

6. Community Design

- a. Neighborhoods, roadways, trails, medians, parks, commercial centers, and other features should reflect a cohesive design theme, which is unique to the Sand Creek Focus Area and reflective of its character.
- b. Individual projects should use similar or identical exterior treatments facing major roadways to avoid non-cohesive or trendy exterior designs.
- c. Drainage facilities should be designed to have a natural appearance and to avoid the appearance of heavy concrete structures.
- d. Water collection/detention basins shall be designed to resemble natural ponds or similar water bodies and shall have irregular shapes and complementary planting. The entire basin shall be designed such that any required fencing is minimally visible or screened by heavy planting.
- e. Chain link fencing may not be used for any purpose throughout the Sand Creek Focus Area. Split-rail or other rustic fencing may be an appropriate material.
- f. Existing stands of oak trees, individual oak trees, or other unique natural features, shall be retained and integrated into parks, medians, or similar public areas.
- g. Exotic landscaping, such as palm trees and large grass expanses (except for playfields), should be avoided in public areas. New landscaping should utilize native plant species, natural design, and water-efficient methods throughout.

7. Hillside and Hilltops

- a. Hilltop areas designated as Open Space on the Land Use Map for the Sand Creek Focus Area shall be retained in their natural condition. They may not be graded, used for crop production, or otherwise altered without specific approval based on unique conditions or compelling justification.
- b. The precise outlines of the protected Hilltops are provided herein and are approximations based on the best available information. The shapes represent the top 25% of the hill, which is derived from subtracting the base elevation of the hill from the uppermost elevation, finding the upper 25%, and tracing the corresponding topographic mark. More precise shapes may be considered during a project application.
- c. Hillside, designated with “-H”, are available for development subject to the following:
 - i. All grading and development should use a “landform grading” approach, whereby the terrain can be graded or modified, but the final appearance must be that of a natural hillside with organic contours, inconsistent slopes, curving topography, natural plantings.
 - ii. Disturbed hillsides must be treated with native grasses or similar treatment to avoid run-off or erosion.
 - iii. The planting of oak trees and other native plants is strongly encouraged for modified hillsides.
- d. Where retaining walls are used, the materials must be natural in appearance and stepped to prevent a severe drop-off. A maximum individual wall height of 6’ is recommended.

- e. Except where described in this section, the treatment of hillsides should generally adhere to the Hillside Design Policies contained in Section 5.4.14.
- f. Houses or other structures should not be sited so as to create an artificial skyline or profile visible beyond the ridgeline or hilltop.

8. Other

- a. All applications for development within the Sand Creek Focus Area are subject to review through the Planned Development District process, as described in Article 23 of the Zoning Ordinance. In approving a Planned Development, the Planning Commission and City Council shall find that the project meets the general spirit and intention of this section of the Land Use Element. Minor deviations to land use designation boundaries, roadway alignments, or other standards, as well as permissible land uses, may be considered as part of the unique provisions of the Planned Development District process.
- b. The maps contained within this General Plan are intended for general purposes and it is expected that future development applications will provide specific mapping, surveying, and analysis of geographical, biological, and other natural constraints. This specific mapping may be used to modify the boundaries of land use designations only if such a modification does not increase overall development yield for the Focus Area and is otherwise consistent with the General Plan. Further, individual applications may include provisions for enhanced clustering or increased densities as part of the Planned Development District process only if such provisions do not increase the overall development yield for the project site and are determined to be consistent with the overall purpose of the General Plan, except as noted in Section i. below.
 - i. Any boundary adjustments made to the area west of Empire Mine Road shall be minor and shall not create islands of residential development. These adjustments shall be based upon subsequently developed information and data relating to environmental conditions or public health and safety. It is presumed that these boundary adjustments may introduce additional land for residential development. In such a case, the additional land shall assume the SC-ZR land use designation and associated density allowances.
- c. The text contained in the General Plan, along with the maps and land use designations, is not a guarantee of development rights, but is intended to provide general guidance for future growth. The City of Antioch acknowledges that any development in this area will be subject to review and approval by other State and federal agencies and does not suppose in this General Plan that all areas designated for development will ultimately receive adequate approvals from all agencies to achieve the level of development suggested in this General Plan.

FIGURE 4.4.6.7

