

2.0 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

2.1 SUMMARY OF PROPOSED PROJECT ELEMENTS

The project area is located within the city limits of Hercules, California (see **Figure 2.0-1, Regional Location Map**). The proposed project consists of the following:

1. An amendment to the Hercules Redevelopment Agency's currently adopted redevelopment plan known as the *Amended and Restated Redevelopment Plan for the Merged Dynamite and Project Area No. 2 Project Areas* (Redevelopment Plan). The amendment to the Redevelopment Plan is referred to as the "Updated 2009 Redevelopment Plan" and would replace the existing Redevelopment Plan. The amendments consist of
 - adding the Sycamore Crossing and Hill Town sites, approximately 58 acres of territory (Added Area). The Added Area is located within the City of Hercules west of Interstate 80 and adjacent to San Pablo Avenue. See **Figure 2.0-2, Proposed Updated 2009 Redevelopment Plan Area**.
 - extending the time limit on the effectiveness of the Redevelopment Plan as it pertains to the Dynamite Project Area portion for 10 years. This extension will allow the Redevelopment Agency greater financial flexibility and capacity to implement redevelopment activities.
 - reinstating eminent domain powers on limited portions of the Dynamite Project Area for a period of 12 years.
2. Amending the *City of Hercules General Plan* land use designations for Hill Town from Industrial to Planned Commercial-Residential, and Sycamore Crossing from General Commercial to Planned Commercial-Residential.
3. Amending the City's zoning designations for Hill Town from Industrial to PC-R Planned Commercial Residential Mixed Use District, and Sycamore Crossing from General Commercial to PC-R Planned Commercial Residential Mixed Use District.
4. Amending the City's Zoning Ordinance, Chapter 15, "PC-R Planned Commercial Residential Mixed Use District," to include "hotel" as a conditional use.

The proposed project seeks to amend the Redevelopment Plan and replace it with the Updated 2009 Redevelopment Plan, which would include the Sycamore Crossing and Hill Town sites in the redevelopment area. The proposed project further seeks to amend the *General Plan* and *Zoning Code* with respect to the two sites to ensure consistency among all City regulating documents.

The Added Area is within the boundaries of the Central Hercules Plan Area; following approval of the proposed project, it will be part of the Redevelopment Plan Area as well. Uses allowed and planned in the remainder of the Redevelopment Plan Area would remain unchanged from those foreseen under the Redevelopment Plan as adopted and subsequently revised. Some of the existing Redevelopment Plan

Area has already been redeveloped as envisioned in the current Redevelopment Plan, and additional projects in this area are planned or approved for development. The land use designations and planned uses for this area, other than the Added Area, would not be altered by the proposed Updated 2009 Redevelopment Plan.

2.1.1 Project Area History

The City of Hercules originated in 1881 as a company town for the Hercules Powder Company, and was incorporated in 1900. The company produced dynamite at its plant on Hercules Point until the early 1960s, when it transitioned to fertilizer production. The City was created on company land outside the plant. After dynamite production ceased, the City adopted a plan for residential development on the adjacent land. The plant closed in 1977 and Hercules Properties Ltd. purchased the plant site in 1979.

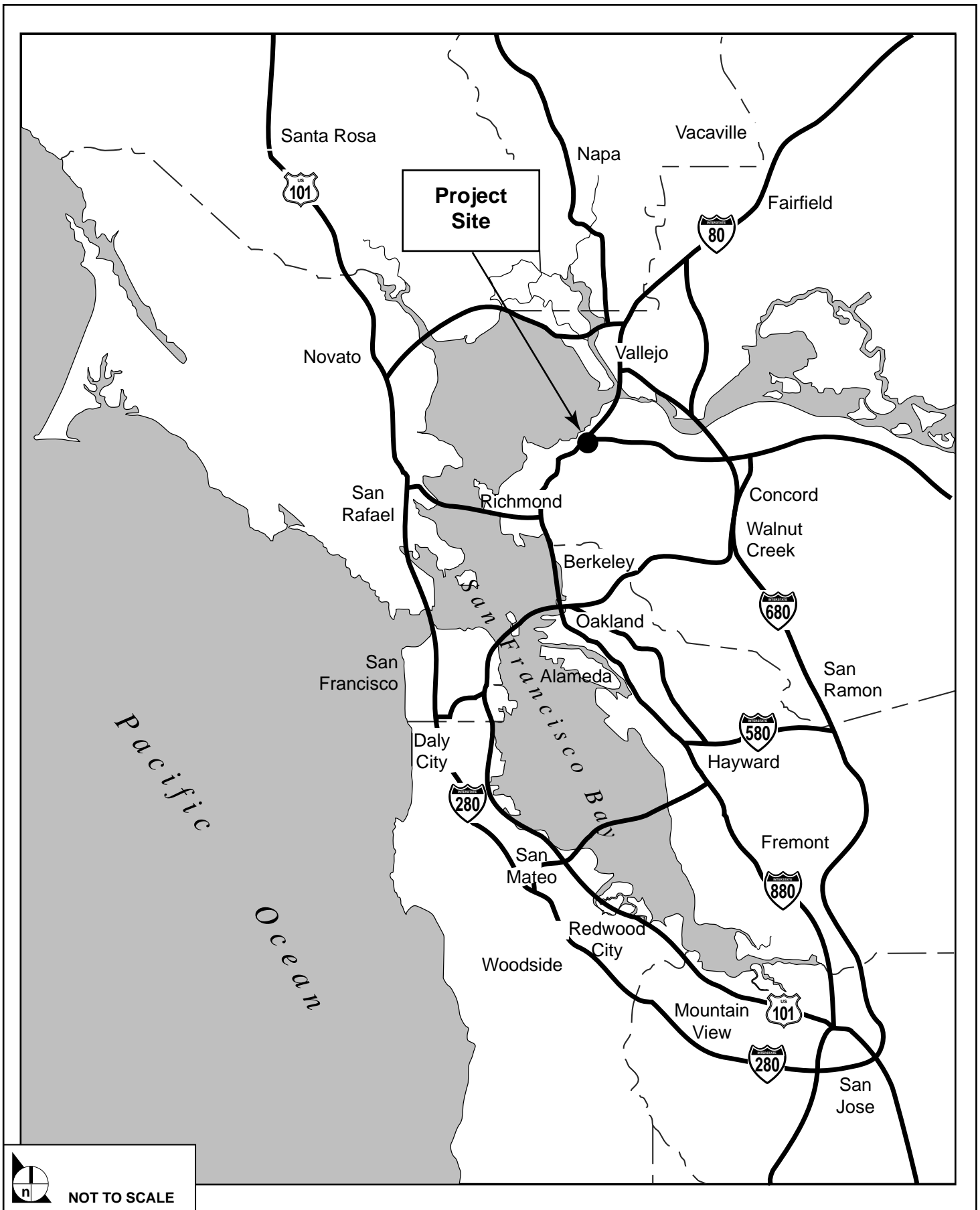
To stimulate redevelopment of the vacated manufacturing facilities, the City of Hercules established a redevelopment agency and redevelopment project areas. The original redevelopment project area, the “Dynamite Redevelopment Project Area” (Project Area 1), was adopted on November 30, 1983 by Ordinance No. 181, and was amended on two separate occasions: on April 26, 1994, by Ordinance No. 325, and on February 27, 1996, by Ordinance No. 333. Project Area No. 2 was originally adopted on April 13, 1999, by Ordinance No. 351. In 2005, Project Area 1 and Project Area 2 were merged, resulting in the present Redevelopment Plan (dated March 2005).

As part of the Redevelopment Agency’s and City’s ongoing efforts to address the elimination of blight, the Sycamore Crossing and Hill Town sites are proposed to be added as redevelopment areas in the Updated 2009 Redevelopment Plan. Both sites are located within the incorporated city limits of the City of Hercules (see **Figure 2.0-2**).

2.2 PROJECT LOCATION

2.2.1 Regional Vicinity

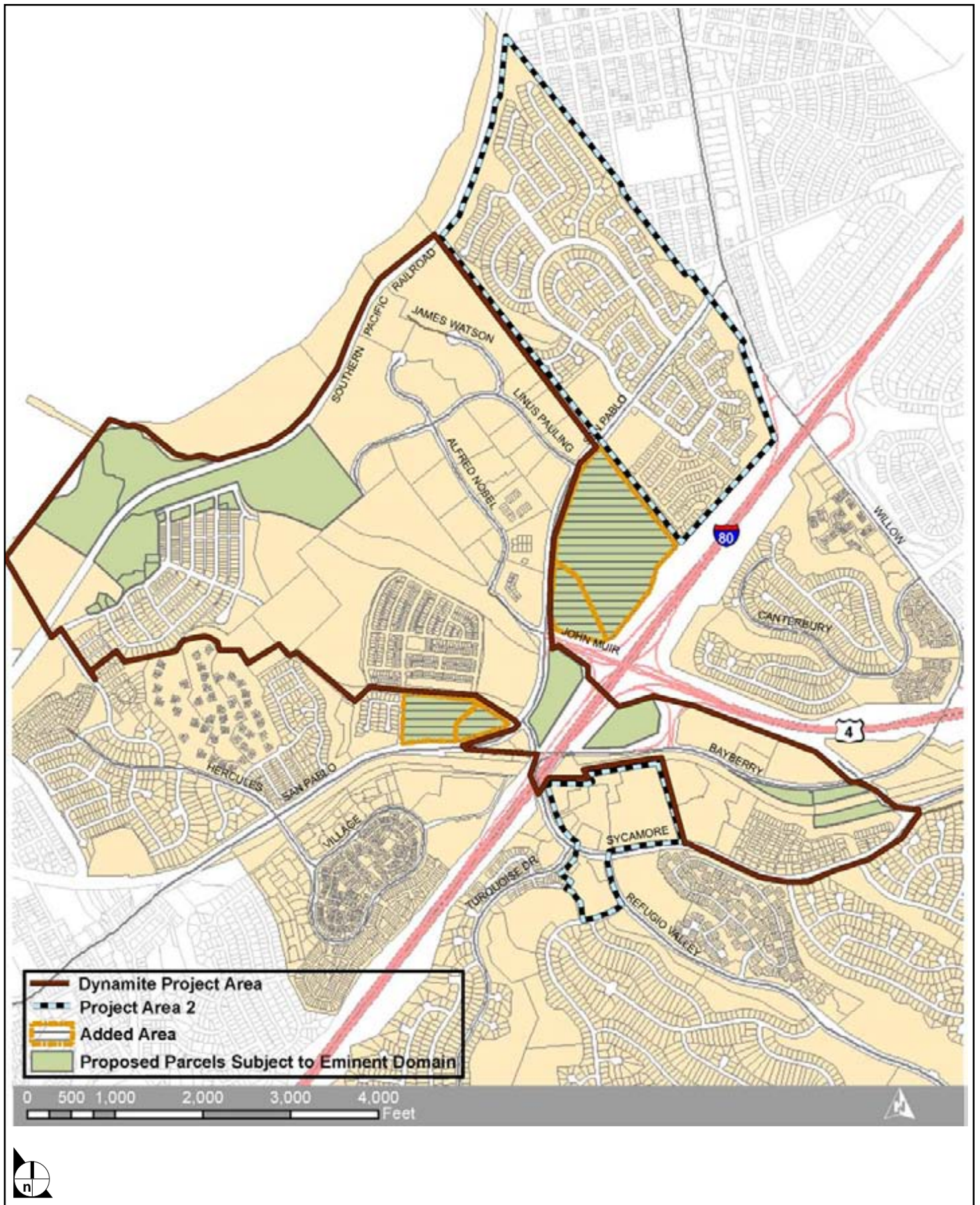
The City of Hercules is located in Contra Costa County in the San Francisco Bay Area (see **Figure 2.0-1**). The City lies along the I-80 corridor, approximately 22 miles northeast of San Francisco and 57 miles southwest of Sacramento. Hercules is generally bounded by the unincorporated Town of Rodeo to the north, the City of Pinole to the south, unincorporated Contra Costa County land to the east, and the southeast shoreline of San Pablo Bay to the west.



SOURCE: Impact Sciences, Inc. – December 2008

FIGURE 2.0-1

Regional Location Map



SOURCE: Impact Sciences, Inc. – December 2008

FIGURE 2.0-2

Proposed Updated 2009 Redevelopment Plan Area

2.2.2 Project Area Location

The boundaries of the Updated 2009 Redevelopment Plan Area, including the Added Area, are shown on **Figure 2.0-2**.

Sycamore Crossing

Sycamore Crossing is a vacant 14-acre site located adjacent to and south of Sycamore Avenue (see **Figure 2.0-3, Aerial Photograph of the Sycamore Crossing Site**). The roughly triangular site is bounded by Sycamore Avenue on the north and northeast, Tsushima Street on the west, San Pablo Avenue on the south and southeast, and the intersection of San Pablo Avenue and Sycamore Avenue on the east. This site comprises two assessor's parcels—404-020-057 and 404-020-058—and is located in Township 2N, Range 4W of the Mare Island 7.5-Minute United States Geological Survey (USGS) Quadrangle (Mare Island Quadrangle). The Sycamore Crossing site is within the low-lying Refugio Valley, approximately 0.6 mile upland from San Pablo Bay.

Hill Town

Hill Town is a 44-acre site located east of and adjacent to San Pablo Avenue. The property consists of an abandoned petroleum tank farm and a storm water treatment facility with detention basins, a cell tower site, and vacant lands. The site is bounded by the Victoria by the Bay residential development on the north, by John Muir Parkway and a Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) Park and Ride lot on the south, by I-80 on the east, and by San Pablo Avenue and the North Shore Business Park on the west (see **Figure 2.0-4, Aerial Photograph of the Hill Town Site**).¹ The Hill Town site includes one assessor's parcel (404-040-064) and is located in Township 2N, Range 4W of the Mare Island Quadrangle.

The Hill Town site lies on the west-facing slopes of a ridge that forms the eastern boundary of Refugio Valley. The site lies approximately 0.5 mile from San Pablo Bay and overlooks both the Bay and Refugio Valley.

1 As of the date of the Notice of Preparation (November 13, 2008), three of the four tanks shown in this photo had been removed, and only the tank closest to San Pablo Avenue remained on site.

2.3 SITE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE ADDED AREA

2.3.1 Land Use Designations

Sycamore Crossing

The existing *General Plan* land use and zoning designations for the Sycamore Crossing site are General Commercial (GC). The proposed project seeks to change the *General Plan* land use designation to Planned Commercial Residential and the zoning designation to PC-R Planned Commercial Residential Mixed Use District. **Table 2.0-1, Hercules Zoning Code Land Use Regulations**, identifies the allowed and conditional uses in the GC zone and the corresponding development regulations.

Hill Town

The *General Plan* land use and zoning designations for the Hill Town site are Industrial (I). The proposed project seeks to change the land use designation to Planned Commercial-Residential and the zoning to PC-R Planned Commercial Residential Mixed Use District. **Table 2.0-1** identifies the allowed and conditional uses in the Industrial zone and the corresponding development regulations.

The Sycamore Crossing and Hill Town sites are located within the *Regulating Code for the Central Hercules Plan*, dated July 16, 2001 (*Regulating Code*). The parcels are designated as "Phase II Permissive," which allows the property owner to decide whether to adhere to the uses of the *Regulating Code*. The Initial Planned Development Plan (IPDP) for Hill Town is consistent with the *Regulating Code*. As mentioned in **Section 1.3.1**, no plans have been submitted for Sycamore Crossing; however, conceptual plans are consistent with the *Regulating Code*. At the time specific development applications are filed and processed on these sites, the respective property owners decide whether to adhere to the *Regulating Code*. The *Regulating Code* establishes urban design conventions based on location, land use, and street and neighborhood type. It primarily addresses project design as it relates to form and appearance (building styles, heights, setbacks, and proportions, street and driveway widths, etc.). The *Regulating Code* is available for review at the City of Hercules, 111 Civic Drive, Hercules, California 94547.



SOURCE: Impact Sciences, Inc. - November 2008

FIGURE 2.0-3

Aerial Photograph of the Sycamore Crossing Site



Note: As of November 2008 (the filing date of the Notice of Preparation), three of the four storage tanks shown have been removed. The tank nearest San Pablo Avenue is the only remaining tank at this time.

SOURCE: Impact Sciences, Inc. - November 2008

FIGURE 2.0-4

Aerial Photograph of the Hill Town Site

**Table 2.0-1
Hercules Zoning Code Land Use Regulations**

EXISTING ZONE DISTRICT REGULATIONS FOR ADDED AREA							
General Commercial District (CG)				Industrial Districts (I)		General Commercial District (CG)	
Commercial Uses		Commercial Uses (cont'd)		Industrial Uses		Property Development Regulations	
Retail Sales		Medical		Business Industrial Services	A	Site Area (sf)	
Auto, Mobile Home, Equipment Sales/Rental	C	Medical and Dental Clinics and Services	A	Heavy Manufacturing	C	Density (FAR)	
Auto Fuel and Service, Carwash, Minimarts	C	Hospitals and Laboratories	C	Light Manufacturing	A	Range	0.20 to 1.00
Building Material Sales	C	Veterinary Clinics and Hospitals	C	Refineries	C	Typical	0.30
Convenience stores	C	Offices and Banks		Research and Development	C	Lot Size (sf)	10,000
Drive in and Drive through Sales and Services	A	2,000 sq ft or less	A	Warehouses, Distribution, and Storage Facilities	A	Lot Frontage (ft)	100
Dry Cleaners and Laundries	C	More than 2,000 sq ft	C	Commercial Uses		Lot Depth (ft)	100
Furniture, Furnishings and Hardware Stores	C	Personal Services	A	Retail Sales		Setbacks	
Grocery and/or Liquor	C	Repair and Maintenance	C	Auto, Mobile Home, and Parts Sales	C	Front	25
Mail Order Sales and Vending	A	Vehicle Repair and Maintenance	C	Auto fuel, Service, and mini marts	C	Rear	0
Outdoor Retail Sales and Services		Video/Media Rentals-	C	Building materials sales	C	Side	5
Permanent	C	Warehouses and Storage Facilities	C	Equipment sales and rentals	C	corner Side	10
Temporary	A	Wholesale Sales	C	On-site sales of manufactured product	A	Landscaping minimum	10%
Recreation and Entertainment	C	Residential Uses		Restaurants and delicatessen	C	Building height	3 stories or 35 ft.
Restaurants, Delicatessens and Bars	A	Caretaker and Employee Housing	A	Services and offices		Industrial Districts (I)	
With liquor service	C	Senior Congregate Care	C	ambulance and emergency services	A	Property Development Regulations	
Retail Stores		Senior Housing	C	storage and mini storage	C	Site Area (sf)	20,000
2,000 sq ft or less	A	Public and Quasi-public Uses		vehicle repair and maintenance	A	Density (FAR)	
More than 2,000 sq ft	C	Clubs and Lodges	C	Vehicle body shop and painting	C	Range	0.30 to 0.50
Shopping Centers		Day Care Facilities	A	Residential Uses		Typical	0.40
Recreational Facilities		(for employees and visitors)	C	Caretaker and Employee Housing	A	Lot size (sf)	20,000
Athletic Clubs	A	Day care - General-	A	Public and Quasi-public Uses		Lot frontage (ft)	100
Clubhouse	NA	Governmental Offices-	A	Day Care Facilities	C	Lot depth (ft)	100
Batting Cages	C	Libraries, Museums and Galleries	A	for employees and visitors		Setbacks	
Tennis Facility	C	Park and Recreation Facilities-	A	Governmental offices	C	front	25
Golf Course/Driving Range	NA	Public Safety Facilities	A	Park and Recreation Facilities	A	rear	20
Other Commercial Athletic Facilities	C	Religious Assembly	C	Public Safety Facilities	A	side	20
Services and Offices		Schools, Public or Private	C	Urgent Medical Care	C	corner side	25
Amusement Centers/Arcades	C	Urgent Medical Care	A	Utility Facilities	C	Maximum site coverage	50%
Ambulance and Emergency Services	A	Utility Facilities	C	Accessory Uses and Structures	A	Landscaping minimum	10%
Business Support Services	A	Accessory Structures	A			Building height	35 ft
Hotels, Motels, and Inns	C						
Mortuaries, Columbariums, and Cemeteries	C						

Note:
A: Administrative Permit Required
C: Conditional Use Permit Required
NA: Use not allowed

2.3.2 Topography

Sycamore Crossing

The Sycamore Crossing site lies in the low-lying Refugio Valley about 0.6 mile inland from San Pablo Bay. Overall, the site slopes from south to north toward the bay. The site is bisected by a north-south trending canyon/ravine, which contains the West Branch of Refugio Creek. The ravine formed by the West Branch of Refugio Creek is generally "V" shaped, with the western bank notably steeper and taller than the eastern bank. The bottom of the ravine lies at approximately 30 feet above mean sea level (msl) on the project site, with the eastern bank rising approximately 15 feet at approximately a 5:1 slope (horizontal to vertical). The western bank is less defined than the eastern bank with elevation rising approximately 5–10 feet at slopes approximately ranging from 6:1 to 16:1 (horizontal to vertical).

To the west of the ravine, the site is dominated by a stockpile composed of fill material generated from the grading of surrounding parcels and intended for use in the development of the Sycamore Crossing site. The top elevation is approximately 58–60 feet msl, with the surrounding slopes trending steeply downward to Sycamore Avenue, San Pablo Avenue, Tsushima Street, and the on-site ravine. To the east of the canyon/ravine lies a natural knoll in the southeast portion of the site. This knoll rises to an elevation of 65 feet msl, with the surrounding slopes trending downward gently to Sycamore Avenue and the on-site ravine and steeply to San Pablo Avenue. Approximate elevations of the surrounding roadways are Sycamore Avenue, –30 feet msl; San Pablo Avenue, –38 to 53 feet msl sloping down to the West Branch of Refugio Creek; and Tsushima Street, –31 to 54 feet msl sloping south to north.

Hill Town

The Hill Town site lies on the west-facing slopes of a ridge that forms the eastern boundary of the Refugio Valley. Overall, the site slopes from northeast to southwest toward the Refugio Valley, with elevations varying dramatically from approximately 30 to 240 feet msl. The topography of the site is characterized by a relatively level, low-lying area in the southern portion of the site and another relatively level, elevated portion in the northern portion of the site, separated by a steep north-to-south trending slope.

The low-lying area in the south contains two detention basins that are formed by man-made berms approximately 65 and 55 feet msl in height, respectively. Down slope from these berms lies a drainage swale that traverses the southern boundary of the site from east to west at an elevation of approximately 30 feet msl.

The elevated area in the northern portion of the site contains a large graded area for the former on-site tank farm, a man-made berm surrounding the tank farm location on the south and east, and a natural knoll near the northeast corner of the site. The graded tank farm area slopes from northwest to southeast from approximately 140 to 175 feet msl. The surrounding berm rises to an elevation of 215 feet msl and the knoll rises further to approximately 240 feet msl.

2.3.3 Site Cover

Sycamore Crossing

Sycamore Crossing consists of remnant foundations, building pads, and retaining walls from past industrial uses, as well as utility improvements associated with a utility right-of-way (ROW) along the site's southern boundary. The remnant foundations, building pads, and retaining walls appear in three locations: (1) at the southern boundary of the site, just east of the West Branch of Refugio Creek, (2) atop the knoll in the southeastern portion of the site; and (3) along the east side of the creek channel near Sycamore Avenue. The utility ROW along the site's southern boundary is 45 feet in width and consists of adjacent 20-foot East Bay Municipal Utility District (EBMUD) and 25-foot PG&E easements. EBMUD maintains a 24-inch water transition (main) pipeline through its easement on site, and PG&E maintains a 12-kilovolt (kV) overhead power line through its easement on site. An access road/path also exists along the southern portion of the site and primarily within the utility ROW. This access road/path has a gravel surface west of the creek channel and an asphalt surface east of the creek channel. A 20-inch sanitary sewer line and a 24-inch force main line serving the Pinole/Hercules wastewater treatment plant run inside the property line along Sycamore Avenue.

Figure 2.0-3 depicts current conditions. **Figures 2.0-5 and 2.0-6, Sycamore Crossing Photographs**, show photographs of the Sycamore Crossing site and surroundings.

Hill Town

The Hill Town site was developed by PG&E in the late 1970s as an oil storage, heating, and pumping station in connection with a PG&E pipeline from Richmond to eastern Contra Costa County (a 12-inch pipeline from Richmond and a 16-inch pipeline to Pittsburg that terminate in the extreme northern corner of the project site). These facilities were used to supply heavy fuel oil to power-generating facilities in Pittsburg. The more stringent environmental regulations enacted in the late 1970s limited the sulfur content in heavy fuel oil, thus rendering the facility essentially obsolete by the early 1980s.

Historically, the site contained four large storage tanks, two smaller tanks, a concrete block control building and office, a metal building to house safety equipment, an entry driveway from San Pablo

Avenue, heaters, and other industrial equipment and associated piping. The stormwater treatment facility in the lower portion of the site was developed to pretreat runoff from the tank farm. This facility consists of two detention basins and associated equipment on an approximately 50-foot-by-160-foot asphalt pad. Demolition of the PG&E improvements began in April 2008 and continues as of filing the Notice of Preparation in November 2008.

The site also contains a cellular telephone tower (cell tower) and other utility improvements. The cell tower is located in the northeast portion of the site and occupies an approximately 30-foot by 50-foot pad, which also includes a structure and ground-level equipment. A 30-foot utility ROW bisects the site from north to south and consists of adjacent 20-foot EBMUD and 10-foot ConocoPhillips easements. EBMUD maintains a 24- to 36-inch water transition pipeline through its easement, and ConocoPhillips maintains a petroleum pipeline through its easement. PG&E also maintains easements on site. These easements consist of an approximately 65-foot-by-390-foot area in the northwest corner of the site that contains two sets of electrical power line towers and an access easement that follows the site's northern boundary. Finally, an easement owned by the San Pablo Bay Pipeline Company extends from the existing San Pablo Avenue entrance at the northwest corner of the site southward for a distance of about 220 feet, and includes a 15-foot pipeline easement and a 60-foot temporary construction easement.

The facilities and utility improvements on site are accessed by a network of paved roads and drives. A paved access road extends from the western edge of the former tank farm site, crosses at the base of the earthen berm, and travels in a loop around the southwestern quadrant of the site, encircling the western detention basins. A turn-off from the northern side of this looped road provides access to the stormwater treatment facility. Where the looped road branches off from the main access road, a second branch forks toward the northeast and leads to the cell tower facility.

More than half of the Hill Town site is undeveloped, including the majority of the central and northeastern portions of the site and the area around the detention ponds in the southern portion. The central portion consists of an undeveloped and steep north-to-south slope that separates the tank farm site and detention basins; the northeast portion of the site contains an undeveloped knoll. The undeveloped portions of the site are primarily covered with non-native grassland that is studded with eucalyptus groves and oak trees. In addition to this upland vegetation, the swale along the site's southern boundary supports a small patch of wetland vegetation.

Figure 2.0-4 depicts recent conditions on the Hill Town site; although, it should be noted that three of the four tanks visible in the aerial photo have since been removed. The tank nearest to San Pablo Avenue remains at this time and it is not known when it will be removed. **Figures 2.0-7 and 2.0-8, Hill Town Photographs**, are photographs of the Hill Town site and surroundings.

2.3.4 Surrounding Land Uses

Figure 2.0-9, Surrounding Land Uses, is an aerial photograph that depicts the land uses surrounding the Sycamore Crossing and Hill Town sites.

Sycamore Crossing

The Sycamore Crossing site is surrounded by residential neighborhoods, commercial development, and vacant land. A vacant 1.8-acre parcel planned for mixed-use commercial retail and residential development is located immediately to the north across Sycamore Avenue. Bayside, a 400-unit residential community, is located adjacent to the north and northwest of this parcel. Residential development is also located to the west across Tsushima Street. The Burlington Northern and Santa Fe Railway, a multi-use trail, and residential development are located to the south across San Pablo Avenue. Retail commercial development and a BART Park and Ride lot are located to the east across San Pablo Avenue; the BART parcel is planned for mixed-use commercial retail and residential development. Open land, including a segment of Refugio Creek and adjacent wetlands, are located to the northeast across Sycamore Avenue. The seasonal creek located on the Sycamore Crossing site flows under Sycamore Avenue and across the open space parcel into Refugio Creek.

Hill Town

The Hill Town site is bordered by the Victoria by the Bay development to the north and northeast and the North Shore Business Park to the west. The Victoria by the Bay is a master-planned community that consists of residential areas, park facilities, and a vacant commercial lot. The North Shore Business Park consists of professional office and light industrial uses along the west side of San Pablo Avenue. The BART Park and Ride lot scheduled for mixed-use commercial retail and residential development is located southwest of the Hill Town site across John Muir Parkway. The I-80/SR-4 interchange is located to the southeast, and residential developments are located across I-80 to the east.



1. View northeast with Sycamore Crossing site in foreground and Hill Town site in background



2. View north across Sycamore Crossing site with nearby business park and Hill Town site in background.



3. View south from Sycamore Crossing site with eucalyptus and San Pablo Avenue in background



4. Ravine on Sycamore Crossing site with soil mound at left

SOURCE: Impact Sciences, Inc. - December 2008

FIGURE 2.0-5

Sycamore Crossing Photographs



5. View northwest across Sycamore Crossing site with nearby condos across Sycamore Avenue.



6. View north with Sycamore Crossing at right and Tsushima Street and nearby residences at left.



7. View southwest with Sycamore Crossing site at right and San Pablo Avenue with adjacent retail center at left



8. View north from Sycamore Crossing site to vacant land and Refugio Creek area north of Sycamore Avenue

SOURCE: Impact Sciences, Inc. - December 2008

FIGURE 2.0-6

Sycamore Crossing Photographs



1. Hill Town site - view north from San Pablo Avenue



2. Central area of Hill Town site



3. Southern area of Hill Town site with paving remnants and detention basin berm



4. View west across Hill Town site with petroleum storage tank area

SOURCE: Photo Source - Willdan

FIGURE 2.0-7

Hill Town Photographs



5. View north from Hill Town site with adjacent residences in background



6. View northwest from Hill Town site with adjacent business park across San Pablo Avenue



7. Low-lying area with riparian vegetation on southern portion of Hill Town site



8. Detention basins on Hill Town site

SOURCE: Photo Source - Willdan

FIGURE 2.0-8

Hill Town Photographs



SOURCE: Impact Sciences, Inc. - November 2008

FIGURE 2.0-9

Surrounding Land Uses

2.4 PROPOSED PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The goal of the Updated 2009 Redevelopment Plan is to eliminate blight on the Sycamore Crossing and Hill Town sites. The updated plan would also extend the time limit of the effectiveness of the plan in the Dynamite Project Area as well as reinstate eminent domain powers on certain parcels of land in Dynamite Project Area. Additionally, the purposes of including the Added Area are to expand the supply of low- and moderate-income housing; expand job opportunities for the jobless, underemployed, and low-income persons; and provide an environment for the social, economic, and psychological growth and well-being of the residents of Hercules. Through *General Plan* and zoning changes, the Updated 2009 Redevelopment Plan is intended to protect and promote the sound development of the entire redevelopment area and the general welfare of the residents in the adjacent and surrounding neighborhoods by remedying blighting conditions through the implementation of all appropriate programs and measures as identified in the proposed Preliminary Plan and in California Community Redevelopment Law (CRL).

The City of Hercules and the Redevelopment Agency have adopted goals and policies for the improvement and sustainability of the community as a whole. Some of these goals and objectives are included in the City's existing *General Plan* and some are included in the Redevelopment Agency's *Amended and Restated Redevelopment Plan for the Merged Dynamite and Project Area No. 2 Project Areas* (Redevelopment Plan). Some of these goals overlap and some are specific to a certain geographic location in the City or a specific improvement necessary to further the health and safety of the general public. They include, but are not limited, to the following:

2.4.1 City's General Plan, Land Use Element Goals, Policies and Objectives

Goals

- Preserve and enhance the community's quality of life with well-balanced growth and development.
- Enhance and create a community with a wide range of choices, services, and amenities.

Objectives

- Develop a community that balances housing, jobs, and commercial opportunities (Objective 2).
- Ensure the provision of public facilities and services needed to support growth that balances jobs, commercial, and housing opportunities, and also protects the quality of life in the community (Objective 3).
- Attain new development with residential and employment mixed uses (Objective 12).

2.4.2 Hercules Redevelopment Agency's Amended and Restated Redevelopment Plan for the Merged Dynamite and Project Area No. 2 Project Areas

The goals of the Redevelopment Agency's Redevelopment Plan are consistent with the goals of the Updated 2009 Redevelopment Plan. The goals are to

- eliminate blighting influences and correct environmental deficiencies;
- assemble land into parcels suitable for modern, integrated development with improved pedestrian and vehicular circulation;
- replan, redesign, and develop portions of the project area, which are stagnant or improperly utilized;
- strengthen retail and other commercial functions in the project area;
- strengthen the economic base of the project area by installation of needed site improvements to stimulate new commercial/industrial expansion, employment, and economic growth;
- strengthen and diversify housing opportunities at all economic levels through the development of housing of high aesthetic and environmental quality;
- provide adequate land for parking and open spaces; and
- expand and/or improve the community's supply of housing available to low-and moderate-income persons and families.

2.4.3 Updated 2009 Redevelopment Plan (Proposed Project)

In addition to the broad Citywide goals, policies, and objectives listed above, the specific objectives for the proposed project are to

- facilitate the reuse of abandoned industrial properties in a manner that complements the surrounding land uses, and
- attain consistency among the land use designations for the subject sites in the City's *General Plan* and Zoning Ordinance.

2.5 DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT

2.5.1 Establishing the Updated 2009 Redevelopment Plan

Redevelopment Intent and Implementation

Redevelopment is intended to improve physical and economic conditions in blighted areas. The California CRL states, "[It is] the policy of the State ... to protect and promote the sound development

and redevelopment of blighted areas and the general welfare of the inhabitants of the communities in which they exist by remedying such injurious conditions through the employment of all appropriate means.”

The Redevelopment Agency uses public investment to assist the City with revitalization efforts consistent with CRL. Current provisions of CRL give authority to the Redevelopment Agency to fund the principal and interest on indebtedness, bond issues, borrowed funds, or advances from tax increment revenue and any other funds available to the Redevelopment Agency. To the extent it is able to do so, the Redevelopment Agency may also provide assistance through loans or grants for various public facilities, and redevelopment activity costs. Financing methods and sources available to the Redevelopment Agency are anticipated to include any or all of the following:

- Tax increment revenues in accordance with the provisions of CRL
- Redevelopment Agency bonds supported by tax increment revenues
- Notes, interim certificates, debentures, or other obligations issued by the Redevelopment Agency
- Loans, grants, or other financial assistance from the City of Hercules, the State of California, the federal government, or other public entities
- Loans, advances, or other assistance from private sector sources and financial institutions
- Sale or lease of property owned or controlled by the Redevelopment Agency
- Public/private partnerships with developers or other private interests
- Partnerships with other public entities
- Interest income
- Gifts or donations
- Other legally available public or private sources

Using these financing methods and sources, the Redevelopment Agency strives to make improvements to public facilities, commercial and industrial property, and the housing stock within redevelopment project areas. The net effect of these redevelopment activities is intended to be a reduction in blighting conditions, a decreased demand for emergency services, and an increase in the capacity of taxing entities.

The Redevelopment Agency implements a range of redevelopment activities to improve and alleviate physical and economic blight associated with commercial and industrial properties and to provide financial assistance and incentives to attract and expand business activity within the redevelopment

project areas. Industrial and commercial areas and business activity deficiencies can be addressed through programs and activities that include owner-initiated building rehabilitation, preservation, and facade improvements; cleanup and rehabilitation of vacant, obsolete, deteriorated, and contaminated brownfield sites; selective use of eminent domain authority; revitalization of commercial corridors; and business attraction and retention programs.

Certain redevelopment activities are intended to correct infrastructure deficiencies, modernize old systems, improve the overall functioning of the area, improve public safety, make public facilities more accessible, and improve the overall public quality of life in the redevelopment project areas. In doing so, the Redevelopment Agency strives to enhance the attractiveness of the redevelopment project areas as places to live and work. Improvements to infrastructure and facilities are used to encourage investment and new development.

Extension or exercise of the City's eminent domain authority could result in a transfer of ownership of the affected parcels. However, an ownership transfer would not in itself result in any physical impacts. This issue is therefore not discussed further in this environmental impact report (EIR). Development proposals for parcels subject to eminent domain would be required to undergo California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) analysis as appropriate.

Anticipated Redevelopment Activities

The Redevelopment Agency proposes to alleviate and prevent the spread of blight and deterioration in the Redevelopment Plan Area through the following potential actions:

- Acquiring, installing, constructing, reconstructing, redesigning, or reusing streets, utilities, curbs, gutters, sidewalks, traffic control devices, flood control facilities, and other public improvements.
- Rehabilitating, remodeling, demolishing, or removing buildings, structures, and improvements.
- Developing, rehabilitating, preserving, or constructing affordable housing in compliance with state law.
- Providing opportunities for participation by owners and tenants presently located in the project area and extending preferences to occupants desiring to remain or relocate within the redeveloped project area.
- Providing relocation assistance to displaced occupants in accordance with applicable state law.
- Developing or redeveloping land by private enterprise or public agencies for purposes and uses consistent with the objectives of the Updated 2009 Redevelopment Plan.

- Acquiring real property by purchase, gift, devise, or any other lawful means, or, where it is deemed necessary, by the exercising the power of eminent domain in conformance with state law.
- Combining parcels or properties, performing site preparation, and constructing necessary off-site improvements for development and construction of residential, commercial, and industrial facilities.
- Making provisions for open space.
- Managing all property acquired by the Redevelopment Agency.
- Assisting in providing financing for the construction or rehabilitation of commercial and industrial facilities to increase the economic base of the redevelopment area and the City and the number of permanent and temporary jobs.
- Disposing of property, including the lease or sale of land at values determined by the Redevelopment Agency, for reuse in accordance with the Updated 2009 Redevelopment Plan.
- Providing for the retention of controls, and the establishment of restrictions or covenants running with the land, so that property will continue to be used in accordance with the Updated 2009 Redevelopment Plan.
- Closing or vacation of certain streets and dedication of other areas for public purposes.
- Applying for, receiving, and using grants and loans from federal or state governments or any other source.²

Table 2.0-2 is an overview of potential implementation projects that the Redevelopment Agency may undertake with tax increment financing to enhance the attractiveness of the redevelopment areas and encourage investment and new development.

**Table 2.0-2
Implementing Programs and Projects**

Program	Types of Projects	Example Projects - actual projects may include but are not limited to:
Economic Development Program		
Improve and enhance economic base through business attraction, expansion and retention, through continued marketing, tracking, technical business assistance, public/private partnerships and development agreement negotiation	Specific Plan Implementation; Site Assemblage; Community Marketing; Owner Participation Agreements and Disposition and Development Agreements	Land Acquisition and Relocation; Hazardous Materials Remediation; Demolition; Grading & Site Preparation;

² 2005 Amended and Restated Redevelopment Plan for the Merged Dynamite and Project Area No. 2 Project Areas.

Program	Types of Projects	Example Projects - actual projects may include but are not limited to:
<p>Capital Planning Program</p> <p>Improve the community through programs that require extensive and long-term financial planning</p>	<p>Sewer Capacity Expansion; Inter-modal Transit Station</p>	
<p>Capital Improvement Program</p> <p><i>Infrastructure</i></p> <p>Improve pedestrian, bicycle and vehicular traffic flows, upgrade utilities and drainage systems, and enhance public safety</p>	<p>Street, drainage, and other off-site and on-site improvements</p>	<p>Refugio Creek Improvements; San Pablo Avenue/Route 4 Intersection Improvements; Sewer Lift Station and Force Main; I-80 Off Ramp Improvements; Sycamore Avenue, San Pablo Avenue, Willow Avenue, Franklin Canyon Road, John Muir Parkway, and Tsushima Improvements including traffic signals, realignments, intersection improvements, sidewalks, curbs & gutters, medians, street trees & hardscape; EBMUD and other Utility Line Relocations; Water and Sewer Line Improvements; Point Overpass; Willow Avenue Underpass; Utility Relocation & Undergrounding</p>
<p>Public Facilities</p> <p>Develop and renovate community facilities and promote recreational opportunities that meet the needs of project area residents and businesses</p>	<p>Educational facilities, parks & recreation facilities, public safety, and public works facilities</p>	<p>Parking Structures; Rail Stations; Bridges; Water Ferry Terminal; Corporation Yard; Cultural Arts Facility; Wastewater Treatment Facility; Parks & Recreation Facility; Community Center; Wetland Habitat and Creek Restoration</p>
<p>Affordable Housing</p> <p>Improve and expand the supply of affordable housing to very low, low, and moderate income persons and households</p>	<p>Assisting in development of affordable housing; purchase of covenants to assure long-term affordability restrictions</p>	<p>Land assemblage; construction or rehabilitation of qualified units; silent seconds; down-payment assistance; rental assistance.</p>

Program	Types of Projects	Example Projects - actual projects may include but are not limited to:
Administrative and Planning Program Long-term community planning through preparation of Specific Plans and other planning tools; Administrative activities to support redevelopment efforts	Financial Reporting; Board Meetings & Agendas; Project Administration; Community Planning	Five-year implementation Plans; Annual Budget and Work Program; Board Agendas; State Controller Report and Financial Statements; Statements of Indebtedness

2.5.2 Sycamore Crossing Site

Based on preliminary concepts for the Sycamore Crossing site, the proposed project includes an amendment to the existing *General Plan* land use designation from General Commercial (GC) to Planned Commercial-Residential and a change to the site's zoning from GC to P-CR Planned Commercial Residential Mixed Use District. The proposed general plan amendment and zone change would establish new allowed and conditional uses for the site along with corresponding new property development regulations. In addition, by incorporating the site into the Redevelopment Project Area, the full range of agency tools would be available to reduce blighting conditions and foster redevelopment.

Under the proposed Updated 2009 Redevelopment Plan, the allowed and conditional uses for each site's proposed zoning would change from those identified in **Table 2.0-1** to those shown in **Table 2.0.3, Hercules Zoning Code Land Use Regulations (Planned Commercial-Residential) and Figure 2.0-10, Allowed and Conditional Uses of the Central Hercules Plan Regulating Code**. The proposed zoning differs from the existing zoning mainly in that the proposed zoning includes single- and multi-family residential uses as well as a range of retail and other commercial uses. The proposed zoning also includes "hotel" as a conditionally permitted use.

Based on the proposed zoning designation, general development concepts are anticipated for the Sycamore Crossing site. The uses contemplated for the Sycamore Crossing site include, but are not limited to, a combination of some or all of the following:

- 140,000 square feet (sf) of retail commercial space;
- 25,000-sf supermarket;
- 170,000 sf of office space;
- 180-room hotel;
- 170 attached residential units; and
- 2 parking garages.

The anticipated residential units would be a component of mixed-use structures along the south side of Sycamore Avenue, with commercial on the ground floor and up to 110 residential units above. This part of the site is intended to mirror the future uses on the opposite side of Sycamore Avenue (the planned Sycamore Downtown Project). The additional residential units would be scattered throughout the site to balance the retail/commercial activities.

2.5.3 Hill Town Site

With respect to the Hill Town site, the proposed project includes an amendment to the *General Plan* land use designation from Industrial (I) to Planned Commercial-Residential and a rezoning from I to PC-R Planned Commercial Residential Mixed Use District. The proposed general plan amendment and zone change would establish new allowed and conditional uses for the site along with new corresponding property development regulations. In addition, by incorporating the site into the Redevelopment Project Area, the full range of agency tools would be available to reduce blighting conditions and foster redevelopment.

Table 2.0.3, Hercules Zoning Code Land Use Regulations, and **Figure 2.0-10** identify the allowed and conditional uses in the site's proposed zone, which would replace the site's currently allowed and conditional uses, as identified in **Table 2.0-1**. The proposed zoning for the Hill Town area differs significantly from the existing zoning in that the proposed zoning would change from generally industrial, manufacturing, and public-safety-related uses to a range of single- and multi-family residential, retail, and other commercial uses.

In 2007, a conceptual IPDP was approved for the Hill Town site. This IPDP is consistent with the uses that are contemplated under the proposed project; it consists of

- a multi-family residential community containing 640 dwelling units on approximately 28 acres,
- approximately 4,000 square feet of retail commercial,
- passive open spaces and recreational spaces (13 acres), and
- approximately 2.5 acres set aside for major roadways.

Central Hercules Plan Regulating Code Land Uses

Hercules Crossing (CQ) Central Quarter District		Hill Town (HT) Hill Town District	Hercules Crossing (CQ) Central Quarter District		Hilltown (HT) Hill Town District
	Professional Offices			Professional Offices	
A	Architects, Certified Public Accountants, Lawyers, Medical and Dental Offices of less than 5000 square feet. If less than 5000 square feet, an off-street parking is required.	A	C	Veterinary Clinics of less than 2,000 square feet. Board and care facilities for domesticated animals must be associated with a veterinary clinic.	F
C	Architects, Certified Public Accountants, Lawyers, Medical and Dental Offices of more than 5,000 square feet.	C	C	Veterinary Clinics of less than 2,000 square feet. Board and care facilities for domesticated animals must be associated with a veterinary clinic.	C
	Public/Civic Uses			Commercial Services/Retail Uses	
A	Churches	A	C	Alcohol beverage sales establishments (stand-alone or within a hotel, restaurant or grocery store)	C
A	City Hall	A	A	Adult companion care facility/nursing home	A
A	Convention center	A	C	Adult novelty establishments	F
A	Day care facilities ⁽¹⁾	A	A	Alterations/Tailoring	A
A	Hospitals	C	C	Amusement and Private Commercial Enterprises (bowling alleys, skating rinks, driving ranges, miniature golf, batting cages, movie theatres, etc.)	C
A	Information kiosks	A	A	Antique and Gift Shop	A
A	Parks, recreation areas, local and regional trails	A	A	Appliance, sales and service	C
A	Parking garages	A	A	Art galleries	A
A	Post Office	A	A	Artist studios	A
A	Public Safety (police dispatch, fire substations)	A	A	Astrology & related practices (hypnotism, palm readers, etc.)	C
C	Public restrooms	C	A	Automotive accessories sales	C
C	Private schools, religious, K-12	C	C	Automotive repair shops	C
A	Public school ⁽²⁾	A	A	Banks, savings and loans	A
A	Public transportation (bus, train, inter-city rail)	A	A	Bakery/cake/coffee shop	A
A	Public utilities and service structures	A	C	Barber	C
A	Recreation centers	C	A	Bed and breakfast	A
	Office/Professional Uses			Bookstores, newsstands, stationary store	A
A	Advertising Agencies	A	A	Butcher shop	C
A	Employment Agencies	A	F	Car sales, new or used (outdoor showrooms)	F
A	House Occupations	A	A	Car sales, new or used (indoor showrooms)	C
	Residential Uses			Cellular transmission facility: transmission apparatus (antennas, poles, panels, tower, etc.) or associated equipment structures	C
A	Residential, single and multi-family (attached and detached)	A	A	Clothing, related accessories, retail	A
A	Secondary or carriage units ⁽¹⁾	A	A	Coal dealers	A
A	Live Work	A	A	Computer sales and service	A

Legend
A Allowed
C Conditional
F Prohibited

Footnotes
 1 Refer to definitions regarding the number of children allowed pursuant to state law
 2 A secondary or carriage unit shall be a maximum of 600 sf, as stated within Chapter 35, Section 320, Second Residential Units of the Specific Land Use Requirements Ordinance

Note: The Community Development and Public Services Director reserves the right to determine the best fit for the proposed use that does not appear on the list. If the applicant disagrees with the determination, they may appeal this interpretation to the Planning Commission.

Central Hercules Plan Regulating Code Land Uses

Hercules Crossing (CQ) Central Quarter District		Hill Town (HT) Hill Town District	Hercules Crossing (CQ) Central Quarter District		Hilltown (HT) Hill Town District
	Commercial Services/Retail Uses			Commercial Services/Retail Uses	
A	Radio and TV sales and service	C	A	Flower and gift shop	A
A	Restaurants (and on-site alcohol sales with consumption of meals)	A	A	Furniture, retail, new and used	C
C	Schools, service and vocational	C	A	Gasoline station (no convenience store, sales or car wash)	F
A	Shoe repair	A	C	Gasoline station (with convenience store, sales or car wash)	F
A	Sidewalk cafe	A	C	Gun sales	F
A	Snack shops	A	C	Grocery store, more than 20,000 sq. feet (including alcohol sales)	C
A	Sporting goods, retail	C	A	Hair salons	A
C	Storage facilities	F	C	Hardware	C
A	Tandemsters	A	A	Health foods	A
A	Theater, performance space	A	A	Hobby and craft shop	A
A	Toile companies	A	A	Home furnishing stores	C
A	Tobacco shops	A	A	Hotel	A
A	Toy stores	A	A	Ice cream parlor	A
A	Travel agencies	A	A	Interior decorating	A
A	Video, sales and rentals	A	A	Jewelry stores	A
A	Copy centers	C	A	Loan/mortgage companies, realty office	C
A	Dance studios	A	A	Lackware	A
C	Drug stores	C	A	Luggage shops	A
A	Electronics, sales and service (includes sales of cell phones)	A	C	Manufacturing and assembly	C
A	Fast food restaurant (without drive-thru)	F	F	Mini	F
C	Fast food restaurant (with drive-thru)	F	C	Mortuary, columbaria, cemetery	C
A	Floor coverings	C	A	Nail salon	A
C	Convenience store	C	C	Neighborhood market	C
A	Photo studios	A	C	Nightclub	C
A	Physical fitness and health clubs	A	A	Paint store	C
C	Plant nurseries, retail and wholesale	C	C	Party shop	F
C	Petite clothing and lodges	C	A	Pet shops and grooming facilities	C
C	Public utilities and service structures	C	A	Radio and TV broadcasting studios, excluding towers	A

Legend
A Allowed
C Conditional
F Prohibited

Footnotes
 1 Refer to definitions regarding the number of children allowed pursuant to state law
 2 A secondary or carriage unit shall be a maximum of 600 sf, as stated within Chapter 35, Section 320, Second Residential Units of the Specific Land Use Requirements Ordinance

Note: The Community Development and Public Services Director reserves the right to determine the best fit for the proposed use that does not appear on the list. If the applicant disagrees with the determination, they may appeal this interpretation to the Planning Commission.

SOURCE: Central Hercules Plan Regulating Code – December 2008

FIGURE 2.0-10

Allowed and Conditional Uses of the Central Hercules Plan Regulating Code

Design Concept and Layout

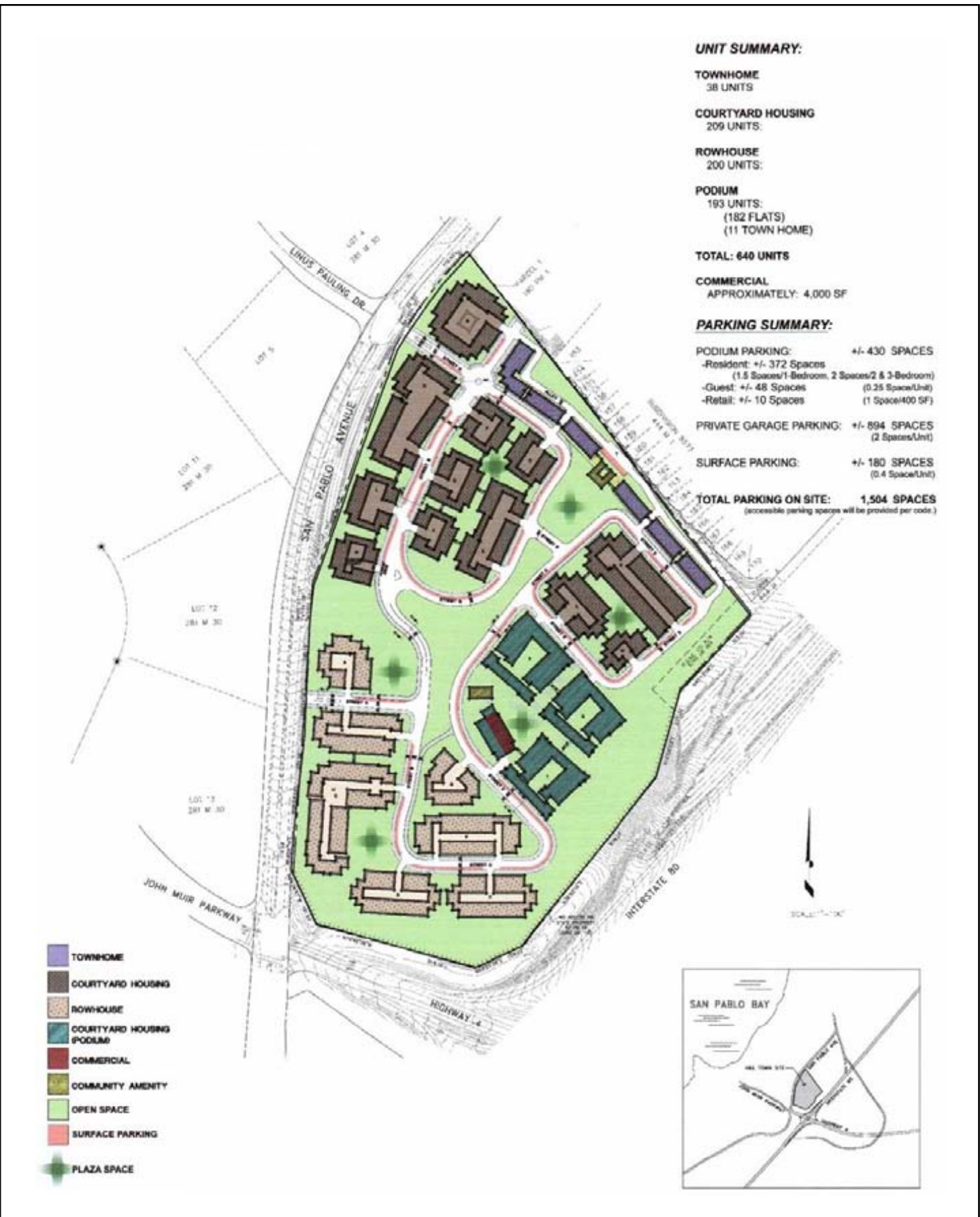
The proposed Hill Town development is designed at relatively high density compared to surrounding uses, and includes a small amount of commercial space. The applicant's conceptual plan proposes to take advantage of the hilly and visually prominent site by developing a high-density, pedestrian-oriented master-planned community. The pedestrian experience would be focused around public plazas, with stairways, other pedestrian corridors, and internal streets oriented, where feasible, along view corridors oriented toward San Pablo Bay or to the east, as well as to on-site features such as plazas with fountains. Five public plazas would be dispersed around the site. **Figure 2.0-11, Hill Town Conceptual Land Use Plan**, shows the proposed site layout and access.

Buildings are proposed to wrap around interior motor courtyards, with these courtyards providing access to private parking garages that would be obscured from public view. The buildings would be oriented onto the plazas, public open space, or pedestrian ways.

Residential Density and Mix

The proposed residential development would include four basic types of attached housing: 38 townhouses in six multi-story buildings, 200 row houses in 11 multi-story buildings, 209 courtyard units in 16 multi-story buildings arranged around internal plazas, small motor courtyards (or interior pedestrian courtyards), and 193 units of "podium" housing over commercial spaces or parking structures in 3 multi-story buildings. No detached single-family residences are planned for the project. The proposed residential designs are intended to serve a mix of incomes, ages, and household types. They incorporate a range of square footage, with one to four bedrooms.

The two-story attached townhouses would extend along the north side of the site and would be stepped up and down the hillside, providing articulated roof lines. A rear alley would provide garage access at the rear of the residences. The garages would be cut into the slope such that the two stories of living space over parking would present a two-story front façade. The courtyard housing, also located in the upper (northern) portion of the site, would be configured as single buildings with essentially square footprints; each building would have an interior courtyard providing garage access from the rear, with vehicle access provided from an entrance on one side or corner of the building. Parking would be largely obscured from view along pedestrian ways and from other public rights-of-way. The courtyard housing would be arrayed on sloped sites such that building elevations would range from one to two stories, while floor plans would consist of ground-level parking with living space either on the same level with second-level bedrooms, or with two stories of living space on top of parking.



SOURCE: KTGy Group – March 2007

FIGURE 2.0-11

Hill Town Conceptual Land Use Plan

The row houses would be similar to the courtyard housing in that they would provide interior motor courtyards, thus obscuring garage parking from view, and would be integrated with the sloped topography of the site. They would have rectangular footprints and would be predominantly three stories, with two-story elements at each end. On one long side of each building, the first-level living space (living room, dining room, kitchen) would be on the ground level with the two-car garages; on the other side of each building, both living levels would be above the garage, resulting in a three-story structure on one side.

The podium housing would be centrally located on the site and would have the largest massing of the four housing types. Three buildings with square footprints and one smaller rectangular building would be oriented around a large two-level plaza. A “public amenity” building (a specific use has not yet been identified) would also be included in the grouped buildings oriented around the plaza. The buildings would surround interior landscaped pedestrian courtyards, with upper-story residential balconies overlooking the courtyards. Plaza-level commercial space may be oriented outward to the street or inward, facing the plaza. The buildings would be four stories above grade, with parking provided in underground garages. Articulated façades and rooflines would be used to break up perceived building mass. The buildings would be arrayed across and down the existing site slopes, which would provide additional articulation to the building massing. Details on the configurations of living space in the residential units would be developed in connection with an application for Final Planned Development Plan and Design Review.

Architecture

The developer’s proposed plan shows the buildings on the site in a single architectural style, with distinctive façade treatments such as fenestration, arcades, or balconies used to create variation for certain buildings in prominent locations on site or to denote building uses. Project buildings would have simple stucco façades interspersed with stone veneer elements. Entry doors would be recessed, many within arched openings. Arches would be repeated along single-story arcades defining narrow porches running along the front of a portion of the courtyard housing. Red tile roofs would be used throughout the site.

Retail Component

The proposed Hill Town project would include approximately 4,000 square feet of neighborhood retail uses located adjacent to the public plaza are near the podium buildings. The design features of this component have not been established.

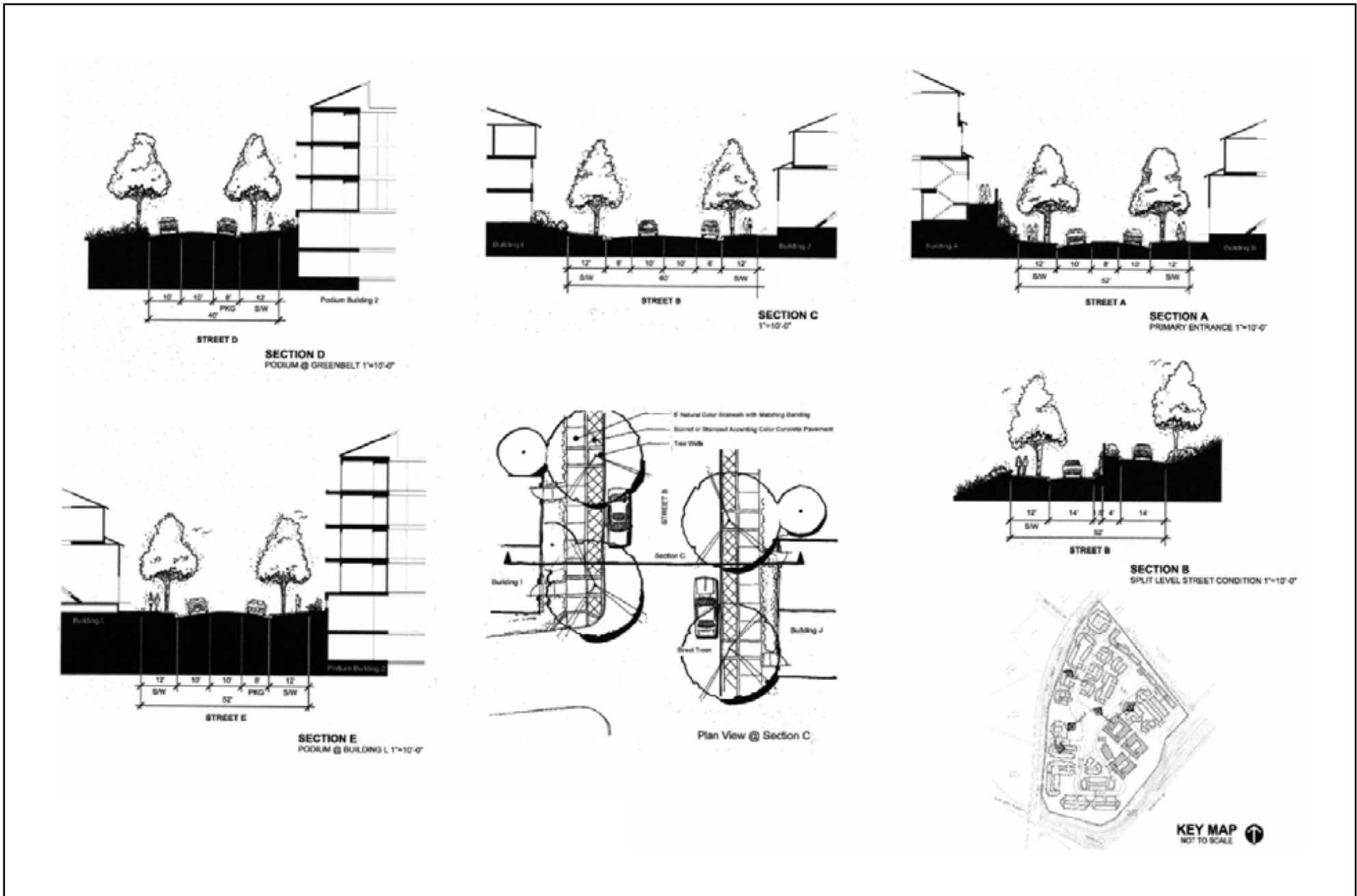
Access and Circulation

Access to the Hill Town site would be via two new intersections on San Pablo Avenue: a northern entrance at Linus Pauling Drive and a southern entrance approximately 800 feet north of the intersection of San Pablo Avenue and John Muir Parkway (see **Figure 2.0-11**). Internal site circulation would be provided by a combination of public and private roads, with alleys providing access to the internal courtyards and parking garages. **Figure 2.0-12, Hill Town Conceptual Street Sections**, shows typical street cross sections.

2.6 INTENDED USES OF THE EIR

This EIR will be used by the City of Hercules when deciding whether to grant the following discretionary approvals:

- Adoption of a resolution by the Redevelopment Agency to approve the Updated 2009 Redevelopment Plan.
- Adoption of an ordinance by the City Council to adopt the Updated 2009 Redevelopment Plan.
- Approval of a general plan amendment to change the *General Plan* land use designations of the Added Area as follows:
 - Sycamore Crossing: General Commercial to Planned Commercial-Residential
 - Hill Town: Industrial to Planned Commercial-Residential
- Approval of a zone change to convert the zoning designations of the Added Area as follows:
 - Sycamore Crossing: General Commercial to PC-R Planned Commercial-Residential Mixed Use District
 - Hill Town: Industrial to PC-R Planned Commercial-Residential Mixed Use District.
- Approval of an amendment to Chapter 15, “PC-R Planned Commercial-Residential Mixed Use District of the Zoning Ordinance,” to allow “hotel” as a conditionally permitted use.
- Adoption and/or confirmation of any disposition and development agreements, owner-participation agreements, and other land use entitlements that may be used to carry out the purposes of the Updated 2009 Redevelopment Plan.
- Various related subsequent approvals required by California Redevelopment Law.
- Approval of the Final Plan Development Plan for the Hill Town project.



SOURCE: KTGy Group – January 2007

FIGURE 2.0-12

Hill Town Conceptual Street Sections