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MARTINEZ GENERAL PLAN

**CITY OF MARTINEZ
MARTINEZ, CALIFORNIA**

Please refer to the Appendix in the back of this booklet for General Plan Map Amendments from 1973 to January 2010.

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1973

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10.1 PREFACE

The General Plan of the City of Martinez is organized into three sections. The first section introduces the premises which guided the formation of the plan. It explains the legal authority under which the plan was executed and presents the particular format selected to organize the plan.

The second section – The General Plan Elements – contains subsections summarizing individual planning elements as authorized under Article 5 of the California Planning and Zoning Law. (Cal. Govt. Code 65300) Although most of these are required by law for all cities and counties, other elements are included which in the judgment of the city relate to its physical development and welfare. Each element of the plan defines the broad goals of the city within that realm and sets policies to achieve those goals. Policies are both general and specific, aimed at promoting balanced, safe and integrated development throughout Martinez.

The third section is entitled Specific Area Plans. As its name suggests, this section treats selected areas of the city in greater depth. Although based on the policies of the General Plan Elements, these plans express refinements warranted by specific sub-area planning needs. Specific area plans govern land use and resource conservation, site design, building, development phasing, circulation, community services, and public facilities. They should also include all detailed regulations, conditions, and programs necessary to implement General Plan policies at the sub-area level.

Both the General Plan Elements and the Specific Area Plans are accompanied by maps and charts which give a graphic representation of the policies as stated. Reference to these charts will aid in visualizing the regulations and changes proposed by this document.

The loose leaf format for the General Plan is designed to facilitate updating of the Plan without the need to reproduce portions not amended. In this way the General Plan becomes a flexible document, one that can reflect changes in conditions and values as they occur. Since this General Plan will undergo periodic reviews, all users should consult with the City prior to using this document for official or legal purposes in order to ascertain all approved changes. Individuals on the City's mailing list will receive amendments as they are made available.

10.2 INTRODUCTION

As a city grows over time, it faces new problems and new situations. Some of these are clearly affairs internal to the city. More likely than not, they are matters which involve the city in a network of influences and forces extending to surrounding regions. And although cities of similar size, age and location may share a certain commonality of concerns, nevertheless, each city treats its concerns according to its own scheme. By evaluating past and present strengths and weaknesses and articulating its aspirations for the future, each city lays an individual foundation for the pattern of things to come. What to retain, encourage or prevent, where to restrict, when to promote, how to improve are all decisions which must be made.

The formulation of a city's general plan provides the opportunity to make those decisions and shape development for the future. Through the process of citizen participation, proposals and ideas are entertained, discussed and refined until a set of acceptable recommendations is achieved. The plan has several characteristics. It is a tightly structured framework of goals, policies and programs which fosters maintenance and rational use of the plan because the success of programs can be directly tested against the goals they are meant to achieve. It is continuous, for goals and policies are reviewed and adjusted as community values and needs change over time. It is comprehensive because it seeks to integrate all community needs and basic aims with which local government is concerned. And it should be internally consistent in defining relationships and advocating courses of action.

In combination with appropriate zoning ordinances to enforce the policies, the General Plan represents the community's power to insure that its concerns are addressed. The quality of the natural environment, the character of the older sections of the city, the availability of choices for employment, recreation and housing, the role of the city as county seat, the efficiency and safety of circulation are all issues of concern to citizens of Martinez which are presently dealt with in this General Plan.

Of course the plan must remain flexible, capable of reflecting changes in population, knowledge and technology. Above all, it must continue to be responsive to a changing citizen conception of the best interest of the city.

10.3 FORMAT

The format selected for the presentation of the Martinez General Plan and Specific Area Plans is designed to make it manageable and useful to the diverse public which will consult it. The document is laid out so that its organization will read clearly. Each of the three major sections is identified by a decimal number. The introductory section is given in the 10 series; the General Plan Elements are listed in the 20 series; Specific Area Plans appear in the 30 series.

Within each of the three major series the organizational breakdown is made evident by the numbering system. General Plan Elements are each assigned a number of equal weight within the 20 series. For example, Land Use appears as 21, Housing appears as 25. Sub-sections of the different elements are ordered and numbered correspondingly. Statements about purposes, goals, policies and programs are distinguished with sub-statements presented hierarchically according to their referents. Maps and charts which pertain to the various sections appear in the appropriate sequence and are numbered and indexed in a fashion similar to the written text. The 30 series of Specific Area Plans parallels the General Plan series in organization. Each of the Specific Area Plans constitutes a separate sub-system within which goals, policies and programs are arranged by the indexing system.

This system of organization establishes an immediate coherency and internal consistency for the document. It makes for particular ease in locating the City's policy on a given issue, for not only is each element of the General Plan and Specific Area Plans clearly listed in the Table of Contents, but policies are also indexed by topic in the Policy Index found at the end of the document.

In addition, the format allows for amendments and expansions. New plan elements or policy statements can be added in the appropriate position simply by assigning them a number in sequence. A continual and accurate updating of the document is made possible by a method which dates policy entries. The date appearing on the bottom right hand corner indicates the most recent date of all policies and amendments contained on a particular page.

20 GOVERNMENTAL JURISDISTION

20.1 PURPOSE

The geographical extent of local government interest and influence must be clearly expressed to facilitate sound government practices. Actual municipal boundaries must be viewed in terms of both the local sphere of interest and local sphere of influence when formulating rational goals and policies and programs for their effectuation, as well as when promoting efficient intergovernmental coordination.

F20.1 The Governmental Jurisdiction map is shown in Figure F20.1.

20.2 SPHERE OF INTEREST

The Martinez sphere of interest encompasses a broad area highly important to goals for environmental quality and the policies of the Open Space and Conservation Element of the Martinez General Plan. This boundary is indicated on Figure F20.1 and is generally defined as follows: On the west and southwest by the drainage shed of the Alhambra Creek Drainage Basin; at its northwestern extent by a line described as the eastern drainage boundary of "Little Bull Valley" and follows to its termination with the Carquinez Straits shoreline. This shoreline continues eastward as the northern boundary and ends generally at the confluence of the Pacheco Creek. The eastern boundary passes through the general vicinity of the lowlands just east of Interstate Route 680, and continues southerly until Highway 4. Along the balance of the eastern boundary and southern boundaries the respective city boundaries of Concord and Pleasant Hill generally form the boundary with an indefinite line linking Taylor Boulevard to the southernmost tip of the Alhambra drainage basin in the vicinity of Briones Regional Park serving as the balance of the southern boundary.

20.3 SPHERE OF INFLUENCE

The Martinez sphere of influence as defined by the Local Agency Formation Commission approximates the probable ultimate physical boundaries and service area of the city of Martinez and is intended to facilitate the orderly formation and development of local agencies and their service areas. This boundary should provide guidance in matters related to the annexation of territories and the formation of special districts. The sphere of influence boundary is depicted on Figure F20. 1. It aligns with the sphere of interest boundary except along the western boundary as shown.

20.4 POLICIES

20.41 All developed, but presently unincorporated areas within the sphere of influence should be annexed to the City of Martinez to ensure an equitable tax distribution and cohesive neighborhood units for public service purposes.

20.42 All new development within the sphere of influence should be required to annex to the City of Martinez prior to development and development allowed only where provision of necessary public services can be provided without adverse fiscal effects on the City. For example, construction in areas with severe geologic constraints resulting in excessive ongoing public maintenance cost should not be permitted. Similarly, development should be directed towards those areas in which there already exists unused capacity in various public services such as water supply facilities, sewer collection facilities and schools. In outlying areas whose existing levels of public facilities are inadequate, new development should be permitted only at a scale sufficient to economically support major extensions or expansions of public service and facilities.

20.43 Land remaining in major open space use, where not an integral part of contiguous urban development, should continue to be under county jurisdiction, provided that the county shall prohibit any use of the land inconsistent with the Martinez General Plan. It shall be the intent of the City Council to establish a joint City-County planning agreement to achieve this end and seek new state legislation to ensure implementation of the City's open space policy in adjoining and presently urbanized lands.

20.44 Water service and sanitary sewer service should not be extended to development which does not conform to the General Plan and growth staging conditions therein.

20.45 Water service shall not be extended to out-of-City properties unless the environmental and land use impacts of the provision of that water and of the development to be served on the City and its residents are adequately mitigated through conditions imposed by the jurisdiction having land use control over said properties, and if such impacts are not so mitigated, then the City shall impose such conditions on the provision of such water so as to satisfactorily reduce or eliminate said impacts, or deny water service altogether.

21 LAND USE ELEMENT

21.1 PURPOSE

The Land Use Element represents the pattern of uses established by the other general plan elements and policies. It serves as the primary means of ensuring integration of these policies with land use policies relating to residential, commercial and industrial facilities and their land, locational and public service needs. The Land Use Policy Map designates the location of the major land uses components. Complementary policies are set forth below.

21.1 The Land Use Policy map is shown in Land Use Map 1.

21.2 OPEN USE AREAS

21.21 Land to remain for open uses is designated Public Permanent Open Space or Open Space/Conservation Use Land. These designations shall apply where the following conditions are prevalent: natural conditions such as steep or potentially unstable slope, hazardous geologic conditions, watershed stability and floods hazard, seismic hazard, and fire hazard, which constitute major constraints to development or threats to life and property, where soils, land forms, vegetation, watersheds, creekways, and water bodies combine to provide either a significant habitat for wildlife or agricultural resource and where land forms, vegetation, waterways and surfaces constitute a major scenic and recreational resource which should be preserved either for purposes of public use or protection and shaping of the scenic setting of the community.

21.22 Zoning and other regulatory powers shall be used to maintain open space use where there are substantial threats to life and property or where private open space uses are appropriate. Appropriate private open space uses include agricultural, grazing, open space recreational uses such as camp facilities, or residential uses where such uses and related facilities such as roads and parking areas constitute less than two percent of the entire land area where the balance of the land is retained in a natural state or agricultural state.

21.23 Dedication shall be required for open spaces having scenic, recreation or habitat value where natural and man-made conditions permit economic use of a sufficient portion of the land holding with lower open space values. The balance shall be developed in accordance with other general plan policies.

21.24 Public acquisition shall be used to obtain lands intended primarily for community-wide or regional recreational needs when the lands intended for these public purposes constitute either the major portion or substantial share of the readily buildable land within an individual property holding.

21.25 A community-wide public trail system shall be provided for as shown in the Land Use Policy Map.

21.26 It is the policy of the City of Martinez to recognize the Briones Agricultural Preserve which includes all lands to the west of the Martinez City limits. The Briones Agricultural Preserve recognizes the agricultural, grazing, open space and parkland uses of this area within the Briones Hills between the west county communities and the central county communities and in order to retain these lands for agricultural and open space uses the City agrees to a policy of non-annexation to urban services and non-annexation to City incorporation which would lead to urban development. The City supports the County and other Cities in requesting the Local Agency Formation Commission of Contra Costa County to continue to act in a manner consistent with the preservation of these lands for agricultural and other open space purposes. This policy is not intended to affect the property rights of land owners under the existing General Plan and zoning, including the right to apply for subdivisions of 5 acres or greater.

21.3 RESIDENTIAL USES

Four types of residential areas are established by the Land Use Policy Map. Gross residential land use densities as related to dwelling unit site area requirements are shown in F21.2.

21.31 PROTECTED NEIGHBORHOODS

21.311 Existing neighborhoods shall retain their present housing roles and the existing residential character preserved and enhanced. Non-residential uses, other than those providing services primarily to residents within the neighborhoods, shall be prohibited.

21.312 To respect the established physical patterns of these neighborhoods, new residential structures should be similar in scale and type of accommodations to existing units.

21.32 HILL RESIDENTIAL AREAS

21.321 All land designated for residential use with slopes in excess of ten percent shall be developed in a manner which respects the site's natural features and protects against natural hazards common to most hill area sites in Martinez. Allowable residential density shall be governed by the City's slope density ordinance. Use of planned unit development approach is made mandatory in order that conditions unique to each site can be considered.

21.322 A wide variety of housing types shall be permitted.

21.323 The final selection of the housing type shall be determined on the basis of best preserving the scenic quality of these hill areas and protecting against hazards. Within hill residential areas, the residential structures themselves should be visually subordinate to the natural setting.

21.324 Land pockets with slopes from 0-10% shall be R-1 designated for development at a density of 4 to 6 dwelling units per gross residential acre until such time as more definitive studies can be undertaken for these areas.

F 21.2 RESIDENTIAL LAND USE DENSITIES AS RELATED TO DWELLING UNIT SITE AREA REQUIREMENTS

Dwelling Units per Gross Acre

Required Site Area per Dwelling Unit

Residential Use Areas:

1 to 6 units	40,000 to 6,000 square feet per unit
6 to 12 units	6,000 to 3,500 square feet per unit
12 and over 12 units	less than 3,500 square feet per unit

Open Space/Conservation Use or Environmentally Sensitive Lands:

0 to 1 units	Within the Alhambra Creek Watershed 40,000 square feet per unit or greater with larger site area requirements typical of the zone, unless otherwise specified in a Specific Plan.
0 to 2 units	Outside the Alhambra Creek Watershed 20,000 square feet per unit or greater.

21.33 MEDIUM DENSITY RESIDENTIAL AREAS

21.331 Residential development with densities up to twelve dwelling units per gross acre shall be permitted in portions of the community not constrained by existing residential development or natural conditions. The primary purpose shall be to promote a citywide housing stock which provides for a range in housing cost and type.

21.332 The allowable density of the Medium Density Residential Area shall permit townhouses or garden apartments.

21.34 HIGH DENSITY RESIDENTIAL AREAS

21.341 Residential development of up to twenty units per gross acre shall be permitted in appropriate areas close to shopping, transportation and other public services. In the Downtown Specific Plan area up to forty-three dwelling units per gross acre shall be permitted. The primary purpose is provision of housing accommodations to serve the needs of Martinez residents.

21.342 A supply of moderate income housing shall be made available.

21.4 COMMERCIAL USES

21.41 The city should provide adequate land area of appropriate type and location to meet the marketing requirements of the merchant and the shopping needs of the community and central Contra Costa County. All commercial development, both present and future, must meet the highest standards of design, safety and convenience.

21.42 Convenient neighborhood commercial facilities should be provided at a scale consistent with contemporary merchandising practices.

21.43 Additional commercial development should be permitted in neighborhood centers only when it adds to the convenience of living in that neighborhood. New commercial areas should be designated only where such use is essential to the convenience of neighborhood residents.

21.44 Expansion of existing centers or additions of new centers beyond that which can be supported by local market conditions should be prevented.

21.45 Professional and business services which complement the health service role performed by Martinez should be accommodated. Adequate locations for the many

professional and business functions needed to support the City's population and work force must be available.

21.46 Professional and Administrative Office uses may be located as transition areas between Commercial—Retail and Service areas and other less intense land uses, such as Residential. These uses may also be located along major thoroughfares on sites in residential areas which are unsuitable for residential use. When a Professional and Administrative site adjoins a residential area, special attention shall be given in the Design Review process to ensure compatibility with the residential area.

21.5 INDUSTRIAL USES

21.51 Expansion of the petroleum refining and related industries must proceed in an orderly fashion and be consistent with protection of the community's air, water, scenic and fiscal resources.

21.6 COMMUNITY FACILITIES USES

21.61 Residential growth should be channeled in a manner which promotes the best utilization of existing public facilities, but only in those areas where new residential development is compatible with the open use policies of this plan.

21.7 MIXED USE DISTRICTS

21.71 There are three mixed use districts designated on the General Plan. All are located within the Central Martinez Planning Area. In each case the designation indicates that there are mixed uses existing within the districts, and that the uses are, or can be compatible. As with other designations within the Central Martinez Planning Area, the thrust of these designations is to preserve the existing character of the area and of the community, while allowing a gradual conversion to more feasible or more beneficial uses. Each area mixes residential reflecting the older predominant use of the area, with more intensive uses, such as offices, commercial, or both.

21.72 The keys to successful mixing of land uses in these areas will be providing compatibility with the existing lower intensity uses (principally residential) and preserving as many of the older residential structures as feasible.

21.73 Non-residential uses in mixed use districts should be limited to those which do not generate significant vehicular traffic. Such additional traffic would both make the area a less desirable place to continue to live and would create the need for larger parking areas, not aesthetically compatible with the residential uses.

21.74 Essential parking should be provided in any new use or change in use. Persons employed on the site should be able to park on the site; otherwise employees will contribute to heavy on-street parking, further detracting from the residential quality. Likewise, visitor parking should be provided to the extent necessary for the same reason. Parking areas, however, should be restricted to the minimum necessary for the conduct of the business, consistent with Section 21.73.

21.75 To the extent feasible existing residential structures should be preserved and renovated with changes in use, for it is these structures which give the districts their character and charm. New structures should be of residential scale, both size and materials. Materials for new buildings, therefore, should be wood, stucco, or similar. The institutional effect of concrete and masonry block or brick should be avoided. Buildings should have appropriate glazing areas, both because exterior light has energy and psychological benefits to interior users and because windows are part of a residential scene.

21.76 Parking areas should be treated as to not detract from the residential scene. This requires minimum-sized area, and maximum setbacks from the street. Setbacks should not be less than the front or side yard setbacks of the neighboring structures. Setbacks should be planted with residential-type ground covers, trees and shrubs. Shrubs should be used to conceal, or at least soften views of the parked cars and parking areas from the street and from neighboring properties.

21.77 Signs for non-residential uses should be of minimum necessary size, low height, subtle colors, and utilize wood materials in its construction. Signs should be located in a manner to provide the necessary notice, without detracting from the residential scene.

21.8 RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT USES

21.81 Research and Development shall be planned in such a manner so as to be as compatible with existing residential development as possible.

21.82 High quality “campus” type design shall be utilized in any Research and Development use.

21.83 Any plan shall be consistent with Open Space policies of this plan and shall use open space to provide adequate buffering to any adjacent land use.

22 OPEN SPACE ELEMENT

22.1 PURPOSES

Natural resources and processes are highly interrelated. The elements which deal with the natural resource system have therefore been integrated into a single section of the general plan. The purposes served by the individual elements as mandated by state law have been incorporated into policy which considers their systemic nature. Open Space policies must assure the continued availability of land for the production of food and fiber, the enjoyment of scenic beauty, recreation and for the use and protection of natural resources. Conservation policies are meant to assure the conservation, development and utilization of natural resources including water, forests, soils, rivers, harbors, fisheries, wildlife, minerals and other natural resources. A complete discussion of the supporting material upon which these policies are based is found in the Open Space and Conservation Plan.

This policy framework details the Open Space and Conservation Policy Zones which have been adopted on an area-wide basis and sets the policies which apply to specific locations and environments.

F 22.1 The Open Space and Conservation Policy Zones map is shown in Figure F22.1.

22.2 POLICY ZONES

22.21 The Alhambra Valley Conservation Zone should remain essentially devoted to open space land use. Agriculture, especially rangeland, recreation and low density residential uses subordinate to the landscape are appropriate. This area is potentially hazardous with respect to landslides, earthquakes and fires. It is important to watershed conservation and the control of flooding along the Alhambra Creek and possesses natural vegetation and wildlife habitat resources, valuable scenic amenity and agricultural land value.

22.22 The Franklin Canyon Conservation Zone should remain essentially devoted to open space land use. Agriculture, especially rangeland, recreation and low density development where appropriate to the setting are all appropriate uses. This area is potentially hazardous with respect to landslides, earthquakes and fires. It is important to watershed conservation and the control of flooding along the Alhambra Creek and possesses natural vegetation and wildlife habitat resources, valuable scenic amenity and agricultural land value.

22.23 The North Contra Costa Waterfront Zone should remain essentially unimproved and devoted to open space land use. Recreation and limited industrial development compatible with the wetland habitat and other natural conditions present are appropriate uses. Land use within this zone is also governed by the regulations of other governmental agencies. Most of this area is comprised of the marshes and mudflats of the waterfront area which have high value as natural habitats and as scenic and recreational areas.

22.24 The Hidden Lake Hills-Alhambra Hills Zone requires the application of the Planned Unit development approach in order to provide residential open space and services in a manner compatible with the natural landscape. Slope instability and steep slopes are present while the natural landform is the primary environmental asset.

F 22.2 The specific Open Space and Conservation Policies map is shown in Figure F22.2.

22.3 PERMANENT OPEN SPACE LANDS POLICIES

22.31 Land within the Franklin fault zone (Calaveras Fault) should be dedicated to open space use such as Briones Regional Park and the Williamson Act Agricultural Preserve Lands which presently occupy portions of the fault zone.

22.32 The Creekway of the Alhambra Creek should be dedicated to public open space land use.

22.33 Land subject to landslide hazard or of excessively steep slope should be dedicated to public or private permanent open space use.

22.34 The area within the Briones Agricultural Preserve should be dedicated to open space land use.

22.4 CONSERVATION LANDS POLICIES

22.41 Large scale alteration of the topography to accommodate incompatible development patterns is prohibited to prevent severe erosion and hydrologic hazard.

22.42 In all hilly areas, grading practices for drainage purposes should restore natural patterns of surface water run-off with respect to volume of flow.

22.43 Grading alterations should not induce or accelerate natural channel grading, sheet erosion, gullying and other forms of erosion.

22.44 All woodlands and marshes should be conserved and protected from degradation, destruction or deleterious encroachment. Where development occurs, site plans should be required to maximize retention and preservation of these vegetative resources.

22.45 Any tree removal required by development should be based upon a selective thinning program utilizing the principles of natural plant succession.

22.46 Development within areas dominated by oak species should avoid damage to their sensitive root crowns by grading practices.

22.47 The riparian vegetation of the Alhambra Creek is an important community as set and must be preserved and enhanced.

22.48 Within the Alhambra Creek Drainage Basin factors which could contribute to increased run-off rates of surface water should be prevented or regulated. Such factors include overgrazing, logging, clearing, burning and other activities which could reduce vegetation cover, as well as the construction of impermeable surfaces over permeable soil and geologic areas or the removal of permeable soils by extensive grading and scraping practices.

22.49 Within the Alhambra Creek Basin, sites in the first and second order tributary sub-basins should be developed for flood retention purposes and for additional recreation or livestock watering uses where appropriate. Retention dam sites should be chosen with due consideration to soil and geologic conditions related to slide hazard.

22.50 All other waterways and their banks should be protected from encroachment and degradation and restored or enhanced visually through appropriate landscaping where deemed necessary. Integration of these into park or trail systems and other common open spaces should be required as a condition for development of adjoining lands.

22.51 Hill areas greater than 30% slope shall not be developed, except as set forth in A & B below, and except on an existing lot of record where only one single family house is proposed and there is no building site under 30% slope. In such cases, development shall only be allowed if it can be demonstrated that significant alteration of the topography will be minimized and that hazards to public safety will not be incurred. This prohibition will protect public safety and soils, safeguard watershed areas and waterways, and preserve the natural scenic setting of the community as determined by its landforms. This policy shall be applied as part of all specific area plans, area plans, and/or specific plans adopted as part of, or pursuant to, this general plan, and need not be restated or repeated in such plans.

- A. Where no alternative exists, roads connecting development area may pass over areas of over 30% slope, subject to approval by the Planning Commission. Grading shall be limited to that necessary for the road or the minimum amount which will create the most natural appearing contours. If such grading creates buildable areas, residential development fronting the road may be permitted subject to approval by the Planning Commission.
- B. Small areas of 30% and over slope entirely surrounded by areas under 30% slope may be developed. Small infringements on areas of over 30% slope may be permitted where the existing topography of the majority of the building area and area to be graded are under 30% slope.

22.A ALHAMBRA CREEK ENHANCEMENT PLAN

Pursuant to Resolution No. 160-92, adopted by City Council October 26, 1992, the Open Space/Conservation Element of the General Plan is amended by: a) adding the “Alhambra Creek Enhancement Plan – The Greenways” and b) adopting the remainder of the Alhambra Creek Enhancement Plan, bound separately, as a guideline for in implementation of the goals and objectives identified in the Integrated Greenway Plan below:

INTEGRATED GREENWAY PLAN

The Draft Enhancement Plan reflects an integrated approach to the design of a creekside greenway. The trails, habitat enhancements and bank stabilization designs proposed have been developed together so that each individual element supports the other. The greenway will unite the City with its creek and reestablish a natural, self-sustaining landscape. A continuous trail system will connect the neighborhoods with downtown, schools, parks and with the regional recreational trail network. People will be encouraged to walk or bicycle in safety to the downtown, with opportunities to stop and enjoy the restored natural setting. Educational exhibits will be available to describe the natural processes of the creek, its historic importance and the process of habitat restoration and bank stabilization. The improved habitat will bring a rich biological diversity into the center of Martinez. Stabilization treatments for the channel, its banks and the adjacent properties will work in concert with habitat restoration and will accommodate trail construction.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The City of Martinez has gathered the community, consultants and staff to create a vision for the creek. One of the first steps was to develop the goals and objectives to guide the process of creating this vision. The goals and objectives were developed from the record of citizen input on past and current creek planning, from consultation with the City Staff, and after a thorough analysis of the existing conditions within the study area.

The goals and objectives provide a summary of the desires of the community and the recommendations of the consultants with regard to enhancement of Alhambra Creek. Each goal has been listed here accompanied by related objectives and a discussion of the way in which the Enhancement Plan responds to that goal.

Goal 1: Create a greenway corridor along Alhambra Creek which balances the community desires for public access, natural area restoration, wildlife habitat value enhancement, flood protection and bank stabilization.

Objectives:

- Develop a planting program along the riparian corridor that will support wildlife and fish habitat restoration.
- Develop a tree planting program consistent with the riparian corridor planting for streets and other open spaces adjacent to the creek, to visually enhance the spaces, provide shade and widen the riparian corridor.
- Limit and control public access in sensitive wildlife habitat areas.
- Provide natural and artificial barriers to habitat impacts in high public use areas.

Alhambra Creek is a prime candidate for creation of a restored greenway corridor in the one mile

stretch of the study area. Restoration and wildlife value enhancement can be achieved with some modification of the creek banks, removal of invasive exotic vegetation, and revegetation with native plants. Public access has been carefully integrated with the goals of bank stabilization, revegetation and wildlife protection. Where the disturbance to wildlife would be excessive, public access is restricted or curtailed. A continuum of natural and urban experiences is provided within the greenway corridor.

Goal 2: Create an access and enhancement plan which maintains the privacy and security of creekside properties and residents and the safety of those using the creek.

Objectives:

- Develop a public access system which is easily monitored for the safety of the users.
- Develop a public access system which encourages active use by residents and visitors, and minimal conflict with property owners.
- Develop measures to secure the safety and privacy of residents, students and property owners where a public trail or overlook occurs near a residence or school.

To protect the privacy and security of property owners, access to the banktop is primarily restricted to existing public property. The few parcels where access is recommended on private property occur mainly in the downtown area where owners may benefit commercially from the presence of trail users or an enhanced creek environment.

Providing for the safety of those visiting the creek is an important security concern. The recommended trail system can be monitored from public streets or populated areas.

Goal 3: Improve the habitat values for wildlife in the riparian corridor and for fish in the creek.

Objectives:

- Preserve the existing healthy riparian habitat.
- Establish an overall vegetation management plan that supports the habitat restoration, bank stabilization, flood capacity, and aesthetic enhancement goals.
- Enhance and restore fish habitat values in the creek.
- Widen the riparian and marsh zones beyond the narrow channel corridor wherever possible, creating buffer/transition zones between the creek and urban areas.
- Buffer fish and wildlife habitat from public use and other urban adverse impacts.
- Create guidelines for consistent bank stabilization treatments for public and private land along Alhambra Creek. Treatments should improve habitat values and aesthetic quality of the creek.
- Improve water quality, minimize water quality hazards and protect public safety.

The riparian corridor is currently quite narrow and isolated from surrounding habitats. Improving habitat values for fish and wildlife can be accomplished primarily by reestablishing and expanding the layered vegetation canopy of the riparian corridor. This revegetation provides habitat for animals, with a variety of native plants offering shelter and food. In addition, trees will provide a

dense canopy over the creek, shading it and reducing water temperatures for fish. In many stretches of the creek, where natural banks have been stabilized with manmade structures and the vegetation removed, alternative means of bank stabilization which include revegetation and wildlife enhancement are recommended. Hazardous waste sites which could potentially leak into the creek, affecting water quality and public safety have been identified in the Plan. In the downstream reaches, alternative means of expanding the wetland habitats are explored.

Goal 4: Create an access and enhancement plan that maintains or improves, where possible, the existing level of flood protection along the creek.

Objectives:

- Conduct a detailed hydraulic study of the project area to ensure that the treatments recommended as part of this Enhancement Plan do not alter existing flood levels.
- Develop a monitoring and maintenance program of the enhancement work for Alhambra Creek for debris and silt build-up and invasive vegetation in conjunction with the City maintenance program.
- Where possible, widen the creek to increase the flood capacity without decreasing minimum summertime depth critical for fish.
- Reduce the flood potential of constrained reaches or “bottlenecks” such as the Southern Pacific Railroad bridge.
- Create a flexible Enhancement Plan to accommodate possible future flood control projects.

The detailed hydrologic study and monitoring and maintenance programs mentioned in the objectives are not a part of this project and should be conducted separately.

As a part of this project, the existing flood hazard has been reviewed. The Plan is not intended to create new solutions to the flooding problem, but should maintain or improve, where possible, the existing level of flood protection. This issue comes into play where revegetation is suggested in the creek channel, reducing the flood capacity. When revegetation is suggested it should be balanced by increasing the flood conveyance.

At the Southern Pacific Railroad bridge, where the creek’s flow is most constricted, several alternatives are suggested for improving the flow capacity to at least equal that of the new upstream bridges.

Goal 5: To the extent consistent with wildlife habitat, flood protection and public safety, create a safe route for pedestrians and bicyclists along the greenway corridor linking the neighborhoods, existing trails, public open spaces and the downtown commercial core of the City of Martinez.

Objectives:

- Create a publicly accessible trail system which follows the creek where possible.
- Where the creekside trail cannot accommodate bicycles, develop a separate trail adjacent to the creek for cyclists.

Because the creek runs through the center of town, it forms a natural link between the residential area, the downtown and the waterfront, providing an excellent opportunity for a pedestrian corridor. Since the creek corridor is too narrow to accommodate a combined bicycle/pedestrian

trail, it is recommended that bicycle trails be developed in city streets, reserving the creekside trail for pedestrians.

Regional bicycle routes and hiking trails such as the Bay Area Ridge Trail pass through Martinez. Connections between these regional trails and the greenway corridor are recommended along City streets, encouraging visitors to explore the downtown area.

Goal 6: Create public, creek related educational options throughout the greenway corridor.

Objectives:

- Near the Junior High School, provide secured access to the streambed, thereby creating an outdoor laboratory for use in public school and adult education.
- Where appropriate, and consistent with wildlife habitat goals, create overlooks at the banktop with educational exhibits explaining the history and ecology of the creek.
- Develop methods to increase community awareness of the creek.
- Where possible, provide a banktop trail which will allow pedestrians to stroll along the creek corridor without disturbing the riparian habitat.

Along the creek, as it moves from freshwater stream to brackish and saltwater marsh, alternative locations for educational exhibits are suggested at special stations or overlooks. At the upstream end of the study area, on the Junior High School property, an outdoor classroom is suggested in the hillside above the top of bank, with a trail leading into the creek (with a locked gate for security), continuing up the stream to provide direct views of aquatic life. The outdoor classroom and trail are intended to be used by the school or other organized groups on a closely monitored basis. The process of restoration itself can be educational, as Martinez residents witness and participate in the revegetation and bank stabilization efforts.

Goal 7: Enhance the economic health of the downtown area through the creek enhancement process.

Objectives:

- Promote creek related uses which will attract visitors to the downtown area, such as restaurants, shops and parks.
- Encourage the modification of existing creekside buildings and outdoor spaces, where appropriate, to improve their relationship to the creek. Improvements could include new doors and windows to provide views and access to the creek, and creekside patios.
- Encourage creek-related development of under-utilized public and private creekside parcels. Appropriate improvements would include the development of creek-related open spaces such as parks, markets or landscaped parking lots. All development should include wildlife habitat enhancements of the riparian zone.

Creation of a greenway can stimulate further revitalization of the downtown. Bicycle and pedestrian trails will provide a new transportation corridor drawing people to the downtown commercial area. As shown in the plan, modification of creekside buildings and properties can stimulate more commercial activity. For example, at the old theater property at Ward and Ferry Streets, the owner could renovate the existing building and create a plaza-like open space near the creek, encouraging pedestrians to pass along the creek while visiting the theater. Similarly

the auto showroom on Ward Street and the south side of the Old City Hall building could be renovated to take advantage of the sunny open areas overlooking the creek.

MAINTENANCE AND MONITORING

An important issue implicit in the goals above is that of maintenance and monitoring of the creek, keeping it free of debris, maintaining the existing and future bank stabilization structures, as well as the vegetation along the corridor and the future trails and overlooks. The greenway and trail will be a new open space resource of the City requiring ongoing maintenance. In the Hydrology and Bank Stabilization and the Habitat Restoration and Enhancement sections of this report, maintenance and monitoring recommendations are made.

PHASING AND PRIORITIES

The Enhancement Plan is a vision for the creek which will be realized in phases over a period of time. The Plan can be broken down into discrete projects which may be funded individually and taken through the steps of design refinement, construction documents and implementation. In general, first priority projects should be high visibility improvements on public land. Such projects can be completed without the need for land purchases. Fortunately, a good deal of property along the creek is owned by the City, County, or the school district.

Because the Enhancement Plan is integrated in its approach to access, habitat enhancement and bank stabilization, improvements to each segment of the creek should incorporate all of those aspects at once. Construction of trails or overlooks should occur along with changes to the creek banks and revegetation, as recommended by the Plan.

Access improvements can occur in two overall phases. The first phase would include all sidewalk improvements and street tree planting for the trail, as well as the high visibility improvements to the City-owned parking lots with corresponding development of the areas adjacent to the creek. In addition, the changes recommended on school district property, such as the outdoor classroom and the trail in the creekbed could be part of the first phase. These enhancements should be comprehensive and include educational exhibits, bank stabilization and revegetation as recommended in the Plan. The second phase of access improvements would involve projects where private ownership of creekside property or privacy of adjacent residents may be an issue. The trail behind the Senior Housing connecting the Senior Center with the existing and proposed housing, would be second phase projects. Also in this category are the recommended changes to the land around the Southern Pacific railroad.

In the areas of hydrology and bank stabilization, two top priorities will be to adopt a creek ordinance, and to conduct hydraulic studies to establish the existing channel capacity in Alhambra Creek. Information on existing channel capacity will be necessary before any modifications in the channel configuration or any significant revegetation within the channel can occur. In addition, water quality testing should be conducted, and sources of pollution, including the hazardous waste sites mentioned above, should be fully identified, investigated and removed. Along the banks where there is no access proposed, bank stabilization improvement will occur as the need arises or as funds become available.

Habitat restoration, like bank stabilization, should occur in tandem with access improvements in the same area. In other areas where there are no access improvements on public property, revegetation may occur as funding becomes available. Where revegetation is recommended on private property adjacent to the creek, planting must occur with concurrence (and participation) of the owner and technical assistance from the City.

Implementation of the Enhancement Plan will require the ongoing commitment of volunteers and staff to continue their involvement as "creek keepers". Ultimately the creation of the greenway as envisioned in the goals must be a cooperative venture among the public entities, dedicated citizens and staff, and the private property owners along the creek.

23 PARKS AND RECREATION ELEMENT

23.1 PURPOSE

The Parks and Recreation element establishes a comprehensive system of areas and public sites for diverse forms of recreation. Policies guiding the location, acquisition and development of suitable sites within the City seek to ensure that a balanced system of park and recreational facilities is available to all residents.

23.2 POLICIES

23.21 Recreation-park sites should be multiple use facilities which provide educational, recreational and park opportunities for all residents.

23.22 Both beauty and efficient use should be major considerations in the design of recreation-park areas in order to encourage maximum use of these centers and to improve the physical environment of the community.

23.23 Each recreation-park site should be centrally located within the area it is planned to serve and should be accessible to all residents in the area.

23.24 Recreation-park sites should be acquired adjacent to existing and proposed school sites.

23.25 Recreation-park sites should be selected so as to be adaptable to changing recreational requirements of the users.

23.26 Recreation-park sites acquired by the City should be dedicated and protected from diversion to non-recreational purposes.

23.27 Recreation-park sites should be acquired or reserved well in advance of the development of the area even if at present they do not lie within existing City boundaries.

23.28 Recreation-park standards should be met by acquiring sufficient land even if present financial resources limit early development.

23.29 The waterfront should be further developed to take advantage of its potential as a shoreline recreation area where a variety of outdoor recreational activities can take place in a protected setting.

23.30 It is the policy of the City of Martinez to provide a variety of parks and recreational facilities to meet the recreational needs of the community through the development of a well-balanced park and trail system. It is recognized that new development will increase the need for park and recreational uses. Therefore, it is the policy of the City of Martinez to ensure that new development shall be responsible for providing facilities to serve this new growth. In order to implement this policy, the City

shall require new development to finance the full cost of park and recreational improvements required as a result of such development. Fees may be accepted by the City to finance the required improvements in-lieu of construction of those improvements.

24 SAFETY ELEMENT

24.1 PURPOSE

Two safety elements are required by law to safeguard the community. The seismic safety element specifically identifies and appraises areas subject to earthquake hazards and sets forth appropriate regulations. Factors such as susceptibility to surface rupture, ground shaking and ground failures and effects of seismically induced flooding must all be taken into account.

The overall safety element complements the seismic safety element by identifying hazards due to landslides, fire, flooding and other geological factors and by requiring emergency services to relieve and withstand these hazards.

F 24.1 The Seismic and Geologic Hazards map is shown in Figure F24.1.

24.2 POLICIES

24.21 SEISMIC HAZARDS

24.211 Development shall be barred from the Franklin Fault Zone, which includes traces of the main fault, branches, and secondary sub-parallels, a one thousand foot band centering on the contiguous adjacent, north-south trending Briones Fault, the Concord Fault zone, and all slopes indicated to possess severe landslide potential which fall within this corridor and would thus be subject to intense disturbance.

24.212 Development shall be precluded along any fault trace where surface rupture is deemed possible. Fault traces which are considered to be inactive should be evaluated for special foundation problems prior to the construction of any buildings, utilities, roads, or paving on or across their trace.

24.213 The City shall adopt structural design criteria and codes and other programs applicable to other seismic effects, specifically, liquefaction of ground materials, seismic response of such unconsolidated geologic formations as alluvial deposits and collapse-hazard buildings and other seismic-induced failures of existing structures.

24.22 OTHER GEOLOGIC HAZARDS AND CONSTRAINTS

24.221 Construction of buildings, roads and utilities in landslide prone hillsides should be prohibited.

24.222 All slopes which are over 30% in grade shall be precluded from development except as stated in Section 22.51.

24.223 Construction in areas containing soils with high "shrink-swell" properties will require employment of special foundation techniques to offset these effects.

24.224 The use of septic tanks, tile filter fields, or sewerage ponds in areas where soil conditions constitute a severe limitation for such practices should be precluded for reasons of public health.

24.225 Areas where moderate soil limitations are present must be studied on a site specific basis with respect to technique and density suitability.

24.23 FIRE HAZARDS

24.231 The build-up of scrub type plant communities (Chaparral and Northern Coastal Scrub) should be cleared or thinned periodically to curb the fire threat they pose.

24.232 Scrub vegetation should be especially cleared from woodlands to remove this cause of major woodland fire.

24.233 The invasion of grassland by "Baccharis" (a highly fire prone plant community) should be prevented by retaining grazing on rangelands and integrating grazing practices within developed areas.

24.24 FLOOD HAZARDS

24.241 Programs for flood control of Alhambra Creek should treat problems of public safety and natural conservation in an integrated approach. All of the following are appropriate measures for controlling flooding: upstream land use controls, preservation of vegetation and woodlands, creekside parks and trail systems, preservation of the water way's natural features where possible, channel and embankment improvements in reaches where channel capacity is restricted, diversion of flood waters through drainage improvements, upstream flood detention dams and flood water diversion.

25 HOUSING ELEMENT

The 2001-2007 Housing Element is separately bound; approved by the City Council on July 20, 2005; Resolution No. 085-05.

26 CIRCULATION ELEMENT

The 1992 Circulation Element is separately bound; approved by the City Council on February 24, 1992; Resolution No. 28-92.

26A GROWTH MANAGEMENT ELEMENT

The 1992 Growth Management Element is separately bound; approved by the City Council on May 18, 1992; Resolution No. 73-92.

27 SCENIC ROADWAYS ELEMENT

27.1 PURPOSE

The Scenic Roadway Element provides for the establishment and development of scenic roads and regulates the enhancement and protection of their scenic appearance. Actions to implement the scenic roadway element include regulation of land use, landscaping and architectural design, detailed land site planning, control of outdoor advertising, and coordination of roadway, drainage, lighting, traffic signals, and road sign improvements.

27.2 SCENIC ROADWAYS

The following roadways are designated as scenic roadways for Martinez.

27.21 Extension of the existing Crockett to Martinez waterfront scenic drive from its present terminus and the western City boundary to a new terminus at the junction of Marina Vista Drive and Route 680. Continued eastward extension of this Route along the Carquinez Straits should be given further consideration by the County and State.

27.22 California State Highway Route 4, from its eastern junction with Route 680 to its western terminus with Interstate 80 should be developed to scenic highway standards. The visual quality of the portion of the highway within the City will aid greatly in distinguishing Martinez from the subregion.

27.23 Alhambra Avenue from its junction with Taylor Boulevard to its intersection with California State Highway Route 4. This main north-south arterial is an important gateway to the City deserving special attention in order to retain and enhance its scenic qualities. Extension of the scenic roadway designation through the urban area to a junction with the waterfront scenic drive should be evaluated further.

27.24 Alhambra Valley Road from its junction with Alhambra Avenue westward to its junction with Interstate 80. A low capacity scenic rural roadway is appropriate and compatible with the scenic amenities along this east-west Coast range road. Treatment of the roadway through the Alhambra Valley is especially crucial to the overall visual quality of this scenic resource.

27.25 Reliez Valley Road from its junction with Alhambra Valley Road, southeast to its junction with Grayson Road, through to the junction with Taylor Boulevard. The pastoral qualities of this road should be preserved with special regard to the scenic unity of the Alhambra Valley.

27.3 POLICIES

27.31 All billboards shall be prohibited along scenic roadways.

27.32 Scenic roadways shall be assigned the highest priority for utility under grounding funds.

27.33 Curbside parking should be prohibited wherever feasible to eliminate disruption of the visual scene caused by parked vehicles.

27.34 Sides of the roadway should be fully landscaped in accordance with the established character of the areas. In non-urbanized areas, plant materials and placement of these materials should be consistent and integrated with the native vegetation. Within urbanized areas more formal landscaping and use of exotic or introduced plant species is appropriate.

27.35 Where luminaries are provided they should be consistent in scale with neighborhood buildings or landscape features. The basic intent shall be to subordinate these vertical elements to surrounding conditions.

27.36 Buildings sited along the scenic roadways shall be placed at a sufficient distance from the roadway to ensure retention of the major scenic attributes associated with the respective roadway section. The selection of building materials, colors and signing shall also be consistent with this aim.

28 NOISE ELEMENT

The 1985 Noise Element is separately bound; approved by the City Council on November 20, 1985; Resolution No. 194-85.

29 COMMUNITY FACILITIES ELEMENT

29.1 CHILD CARE COMPONENT

Child Care Policy Statement

It is the policy of the City of Martinez to assist and encourage the development of adequate, affordable and quality child care. It is recognized there is a need for child care for all age groups, however the City recognizes the special need for infant and after-school care. The City recognizes that the provision of child care requires a public-private partnership and that the role of the City is to establish land use policies to promote the establishment of child care facilities. It is the developers' role to address the child care impact caused by development. It is the policy of the City to require developers to mitigate their development's impacts through the provision of capital facilities or in some special circumstances, through fees in lieu of providing facilities. Further, it is the policy of the City to support the principle of parental choice for child care and the need for a variety of options available in the community, including schools, child care centers, family day care homes, employment sites and along or near transit routes. The City of Martinez encourages the participation of parents, providers, public officials and employers in the planning and decision-making process relating to the provision of child care facilities.

29.2 DRAINAGE COMPONENT

Drainage Policy Statement

It is the policy of the City of Martinez to protect and enhance the natural resources associated with creeks and their riparian zones without jeopardizing the public health, safety and welfare. It is recognized that new development may increase the amount of storm water runoff and/or create new drainage patterns. Therefore, it is a policy of the City of Martinez to ensure that new development pays its fair share of the costs related to increased runoff created by development. In order to achieve this policy, the City shall require new development to finance the full costs of drainage improvements necessary to accommodate projected peak flows due to development. Mitigation fees may be required by the City to finance the required improvements in-lieu of construction of those improvements.

30 CENTRAL MARTINEZ SPECIFIC AREA PLAN

30.1 INTRODUCTION

Central Martinez maintains an “old town” character which distinguishes it from outlying suburbs. The special problems of this district, in terms of housing, circulation, the nature of the commercial center and County seat, also set the Central Area apart from other sections of the City. The Specific Area Plan for Central Martinez formulates goals and policies expressly designed to guard the character of the City’s older sections while guiding the evolution of the functions at the City core.

F30.1 The Central Martinez Specific Area Plan map is shown in Land Use Map 1.

30.2 GOALS

30.21 Preserve and enhance the environment, physical structures and services in a manner which respects the special small town character, quality, and amenity of “old” Martinez.

30.22 Limit the development of available land and new structures in accordance with the express policies of the general plan for Central Martinez and the predominant character of surrounding uses.

30.23 Establish adequate controls for the location, function and design of structures and facilities required to improve the economic and social life of the community.

30.24 Secure open space and conservation areas both around and within the urbanized area of Central Martinez, afford relief from the urban environment, ensure neighborhood identity, protect scenic vistas and provide for active and passive recreation.

30.25 Guarantee all citizens physical well-being, intellectual, social and cultural development, and a choice of stable residential neighborhoods and personal privacy.

30.26 Achieve a visually pleasing community in which structure and surroundings are related in a harmonious and functional pattern while eliminating unattractive elements and arresting deterioration.

30.27 Strengthen essential municipal services and consolidate the civic, commercial and recreational roles now played by Central Martinez to make optimum use of land and to increase resident and regional use of community facilities and the natural assets of the area.

30.3 COMMERCIAL AND CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT

30.31 PURPOSE

Varied commercial activities are vital not only to the economic health but also to the quality of life in a city. Direct benefits are realized by community residents who are employed by local retail, service and wholesale commercial establishments. Needed goods and services are made available and accessible. Tax revenues produced by commercial establishments contribute to and can finance improved levels of service for the entire community.

Opportunities for employment and tax revenues can be increased by expanding the industrial base in Martinez. Since, however, indiscriminate industrial growth can jeopardize the quality of the environment, careful guidance and proper siting of industries is imperative to promote a better life for residents.

The central business district has been profoundly affected in recent years by the continuing expansion of County government. Hosting the seat of County government for Contra Costa has brought a sharp rise in government land use and employment, but has created problems as well. Any further expansion of County facilities must be closely evaluated to ensure that it conforms to environmental, residential and commercial objectives set by the community. The commercial and central business district section of the Specific Area Plan oversees these concerns.

30.32 COMMERCIAL POLICIES

30.321 The City and the business community should capitalize on the emerging specialty nature of existing Martinez outlets by aggressively encouraging further specialty-retail, professional, financial and government service establishments and by providing public amenities to complement these service functions.

30.322 A sign ordinance with a reasonable amortization provision should be prepared and design and landscaping criteria for all future commercial development should be applied to all proposals.

30.323 Loading docks, trash collection areas, open storage lots and other unsightly areas should be concealed and screened from view.

30.324 The central business district should be strengthened by consolidating retail and service establishments while discouraging additional development of strip facilities along Alhambra Avenue.

30.325 Additional commercial development should be permitted in neighborhood convenience centers only when it adds to the convenience of living in that neighborhood and when the design features and traffic patterns of the center will not detract from the neighborhood. New commercial areas shall similarly be designated only where they are essential to the convenience of neighborhood residents.

30.326 Future commercial development should be located where it will best serve the convenience of shoppers and the needs of the surrounding trade areas.

30.33 CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT POLICIES

30.331 A program to beautify and bring focus to the central business district should be undertaken. Market conditions, investment constraints and aesthetic considerations all suggest that the unique quality, potential attractiveness and special amenity offered by the Central Martinez downtown area can be enhanced through programs of limited scale which capitalize upon the recreation/leisure/visitor trade.

30.332 Broad scale clearance programs aimed at eliminating commercial blight and "importing" substantial members of new residents into the central business district cannot be justified in market terms and would tend to impair the very qualities which distinguish Martinez from other commercial centers. Attention should be focused upon the commercially blighted blocks which encircle the core central business district, for the purpose of containing incompatible commercial and industrial uses and consolidating and upgrading parcels now badly deteriorated.

30.333 Main Street and the immediate vicinity should be improved by sponsorship of a program which emphasizes increased off-street parking, the establishment of greenways and possible street closures. The overall thrust should be to improve the attraction of the area to pedestrian shoppers, and to subordinate the emphasis on vehicles that now exists.

30.334 The strong market support for increased specialty goods and service outlets, for expansion of first class eating and drinking establishments, and for the growth of related leisure-based commercial activity within the central business district is reinforced by park and recreational uses at the waterfront. Merchants should organize and sponsor a study of consumer preferences based upon forecasted increases in visitor days to the Central Martinez area.

30.335 Expansion of community and cultural facilities adjacent to and within the central business district should be planned.

30.34 COUNTY GOVERNMENT POLICIES

30.341 The City and the County should keep mutually informed about significant planning decisions and other proposed public actions which affect Martinez.

30.342 An agenda of current unresolved planning problems including, but not limited to, parking, traffic circulation, and current County space requirements should be developed and discussed by City and County staff for the purpose of arriving at mutually acceptable solutions. Other actions which may affect the City of Martinez can be anticipated.

30.343 The County should be discouraged from encroaching further into developed residential neighborhoods or taking any action that threatens the stability and value of privately owned parcels.

30.344 The viability of the County Master Plan and existing County policy toward creation of a concentrated civic center complex should be examined and prevailing plan assumptions reviewed.

30.345 Any future expansion of County government shall respect the need to upgrade and consolidate uses within the central business district through careful site selection of professional and office space.

30.346 Height, bulk and uses of proposed governmental structures shall conform to the character of the community.

30.35 INDUSTRIAL POLICIES

30.351 Adequate land for industrial growth and development should be provided. It is the policy of the City to encourage and assist existing industry to relocate away from the southern perimeter of the waterfront.

30.352 The City should consider further annexation to the east of the current Martinez City Limits to provide space for expansion of industry.

30.353 Industrial expansion accompanied by adverse environmental impact will not be permitted.

30.354 Acceptability of any industry shall be based upon its demonstrated ability to conform to performance standards set by the City.

30.355 Architecture of some merit and landscaping of building sites and parking areas should be required; according to design and landscaping criteria for industrial sites.

30.356 Industry should be located in a manner that protects both the adjacent land uses and the industry itself.

30.3561 Industrial areas should be located close to major traffic arteries to minimize heavy traffic through the urban area.

30.3562 Health, safety and maintenance standards should be vigorously enforced against industrial concerns whose practices endanger the community.

30.3563 Industrial areas which front directly on residential areas should be landscaped and screened.

30.3564 Industrial activities commonly considered undesirable, but necessary, should be identified. These may be located with minimum public exposure, but with direct access to major arterials.

30.4 CIRCULATION

30.41 PURPOSE

The major thoroughfares in Central Martinez serve mainly to transport traffic between residential areas and the surrounding regional highways, and between the county facilities and the regional highways.

30.42 POLICIES

30.421 Transportation planning should be undertaken as an integral element of the General Plan, in accordance with stated community goals, and for the benefit of the City as a whole.

30.422 The Martinez circulation system should provide a network for all types of movement, including automobile, bicycle, pedestrians, and equestrian routes. Martinez should be provided with an efficient vehicular circulation system with a variety of streets designated according to primary use.

30.423 Street capacity should be restricted in areas designated for retention in open space use, and thereby aid in discouraging further urbanization.

30.424 Existing and planned residential areas should be protected from intrusion by major traffic movements.

30.425 Adjustments to the General Plan are shown in Land Use Map 1 and are enacted as follows:

30.4251 The proposed construction of a four lane thoroughfare along the east side of the County building at Willow Street is deleted due to incompatibility with the quality and stability of the adjacent residential area. If necessary and appropriate for local circulation in this area, 2-lane streets might be provided on property presently owned by the County.

30.4252 The Pine Street connection between California State Highway Route 4 and Marina Vista should be decreased from a proposed 4 lanes to 2 lanes to protect the stability and residential amenity of the Pine Street area. The extension of Pine Street from Shell Avenue to Vista Way should be considered during the environmental impact review for development in this area.

30.4253 The planned connection between Pine Street and Court Street at Brown Street should be deleted, and Pine Street north of Brown Street utilized as the more heavily traveled north-south street of the pair.

30.4254 The F Street extension into the Franklin Hills should be deleted from the Circulation Element.

30.4255 A joint organization of City and County representatives should investigate the opportunities of providing parking in the waterfront General

Development Area connected to downtown by an overpass over the Southern Pacific railroad tracks with provision for 2 vehicular lanes, and a pedestrian path. This project could provide long-term parking for County use on weekdays, weekend and evening parking for recreation users, and a safe, reliable means of access to the waterfront.

30.426 A trail for pedestrians and bicyclists should extend along Alhambra Creek and link the waterfront recreation and parks area to a number of community facilities including the Martinez Primary and Junior High Schools, the proposed park and community center at "A" Street, the County Public Housing Area and Montecito Elementary School. The trail should extend along Alhambra Way to the PG&E right-of-way. This will establish a trail connection to Canyon Way on the west, will lead on to the California Riding and Hiking Trail at the John Muir Home and will provide a continuous trail into the Franklin Hills.

30.427 The City should support the efforts of the Local Mass Transit Agency to implement a public transit system connecting to BART. A large section of Central Martinez should be included in any program linking downtown Martinez to the BART station in Concord. Major destinations should include the Shell Company industrial area, the County office complex and the downtown commercial areas, the County Hospital and the Veteran's Hospital. Local Mass Transit Agency service will consist of fixed-route buses, "dial-a-bus" or both.

30.43 PROGRAMS

30.431 A regularized program of traffic measurement should be established, at least for the major thoroughfares, to provide a basis for rational planning of the Martinez traffic system.

30.5 HOUSING

30.51 PURPOSE

The housing stock in the central area of the City provides a stable supply of units for a number of fixed or limited income persons, most of them long-time residents of Martinez. Although essentially sound, the supply of housing needs to be improved, in quantity as well as quality.

30.52 POLICIES

30.521 A program of selective restoration and rehabilitation should be undertaken given the condition of existing housing in Central Martinez.

30.522 Areas which encircle the central business district, now underutilized or in light industrial and commercial use, may be converted to residential use of appropriate density and structure type. This should increase the housing supply and should eliminate the threat of visual and structural blight to adjacent residential neighborhoods.

30.523 Existing neighborhoods shall retain their present housing roles and their existing residential character shall be preserved and enhanced. Dissimilar building types shall not be permitted.

30.5231 The amenity of areas made up largely of single family structures should be preserved.

30.5232 Incremental replacement or repair of structures in poor condition should be provided for.

30.5233 Upgrading of selected blighted blocks now principally in nonresidential use, but owned by Martinez residents, should be encouraged.

30.5234 Future residential construction within neighborhoods shall be based upon controls on the number of units allowed per parcel, maximum lot size and structure height.

30.524 New construction of multi-family housing should be encouraged to meet the present demand and to "reconstruct" blighted areas, where such construction will not threaten the character of existing neighborhoods. An incentive system offering bonuses in exchange for larger site area, landscaping and special architectural quality should be adopted.

Figure F. 30.2 Regulations of Planned Residential Groups versus Existing Zoning

PLANNED RESIDENTIAL GROUPS						EXISTING ZONING					
Residential Group	No. of Units Per Site	Minimum Site Area sq. ft.	Required Site Area Per Unit sq. ft.	Maximum Height	Zone Designation	No. of Units Per Site	Minimum Site Area sq. ft.	Required Site Area Per Unit sq. ft.	Maximum Height		
1	SF	6,000	6,000	2 stories	R-1-40,000	1	40,000	40,000	30'		
					R-1-20,000	1	20,000	20,000	30'		
					R-1-10,000	1	10,000	10,000	30'		
					R-1-7,500	1	7,500	7,500	30'		
					R-1-6,000	1	6,000	6,000	30'		
2	SF MF	4,000 7,000	4,000 3,500	2 stories 2 stories	R-1-4,000*	1	4,000	4,000	30'		
					SF MF	2-3	7,000	3,500	30'		
3	SF MF	6,000 6,000	6,000 3,000	2 stories 2 stories	R-D	1	7,500	7,500	30'		
					SF MF	2	7,500	(3,750)	30'		
4	SF MF	10,000	1,500**	2 (with parking under)	R-2	1	6,000	2,500	30'		
					SF MF	2 or more	6,000	2,500	30'		
					R-3	1	6,000	1,250	75'		
					SF MF	2 or more	6,000	1,250	75'		

SF = Single-Family Dwelling Units
 MF = Multi-Family Dwelling Units
 * Recommended new zone designation
 ** 1,250 sq. ft. if bonus conditions are met

30.53 PROGRAMS

30.531 Voluntary programs of upgrading are urged. Neighborhood homeowner groups would form the backbone for self-help programs assisted by the City. Technical assistance, bulk purchase of building supplies, low interest loan guarantees and other support should be provided by the City.

30.532 New construction should be reviewed to ensure its compatibility with the neighborhood. The following guidelines are applicable.

30.5321 Provide a variety of housing types in selected areas where proposed new construction can be tied to surrounding use.

30.5322 Prohibit the construction of apartment units in neighborhoods where single family homes predominate.

30.5323 Set ceilings for permissible lot coverage in residential areas to prevent crowding units on small parcels and loss of open areas.

30.5324 Set height restrictions to prohibit two-story structures over parking facilities in any, but the most densely developed areas.

30.5325 Protect the integrity of central neighborhoods by permitting only new construction which respects the scale of existing housing.

30.533 The following classification system of residential areas is adopted to safeguard neighborhoods and regulate new construction. (See Figure F30.2)

30.5331 Group 1 designation allows only single family structures on sites of 6,000 square feet or more. This designation shall apply to existing residential areas which match these conditions and to new development in some areas on the east and south sides of the Central Martinez Planning Area.

30.5332 Groups 2 designation sets a minimum lot size of 4,000 square feet/unit for all future construction, but permits flexibility to allow incremental growth. This designation shall apply to housing in the northwest section of the Central Martinez Planning Area where smaller sites and greater densities are common. (See Land Use Map 1)

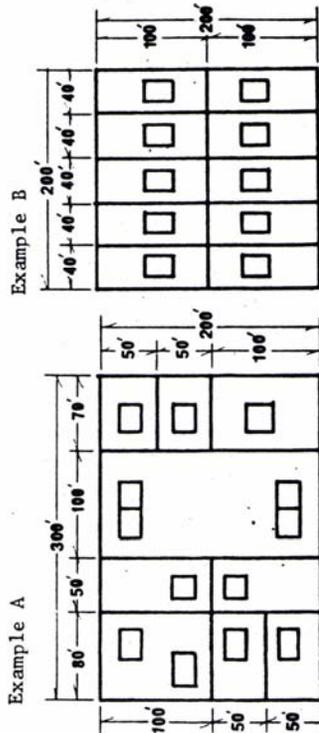
30.5333 Group 3 designation provides for multi-family structures within a restricted range of units per lot where minimum requirements of square footage of site per unit are met. This designation shall apply to the area around City Hall and elsewhere as shown on the Central Martinez Specific Area Plan map, Land Use Map 1.

30.5334 Group 4 designation defines multi-family areas where there is a special need for market inducements to aid reconstruction or where it is desirable to

permit additional development in more recently developed sections of the Planning Area, as in the area east of Alhambra Avenue near California State Highway Route 4.

30.5335 The City may consider through a Planned Unit Development (P.U.D.) process up to 40 units per acre for low/moderate income Senior housing in locations where it can be accommodated without imposing adverse impacts to the existing area.

Figure F.30.3 Examples of Existing and Maximum Development in Residential Group 2



This chart represents two typical, existing blocks of residential units within the area designated as Residential Group 2 on the General Plan Revision Map. As shown, existing sites of single family residences range from 3,500 square feet to 5,000 square feet--this is less than the minimum site area allowed in any existing residential zone. Although the small sites of the Group 2 residential areas are no longer acceptable for development today, realistic policy must be set for these areas. The minimum site areas and maximum number of units per site provided by Group 2 offer limited flexibility for rebuilding or consolidating small sites while restricting Group 2 policy to those areas where relatively high densities already exist.

The two examples, A and B, portray the permitted units per block if the entire block was rebuilt; as a practical consideration, the maximum number of units in example A are not expected. Under Group 2 policy, construction of a triplex would require a minimum of 10,500 square feet--in both examples this is only possible if existing lots are consolidated or modified. Construction of a duplex would require a minimum of 7,000 square feet--the 70'x100' lot in example A is the only site where this could occur without consolidation or modification of the existing site pattern.

Total Site Area of Block		60,000 sq. ft.	40,000 sq. ft.
Total Dwelling Units	13	10	
Sq. Ft./Lot	3,500 to 20,000 sq. ft.	4,000 sq. ft.	
Existing Units/Acre*	9	11	
Maximum Permitted No. Single-Family Units per Block	$\frac{60,000 \text{ sq.ft.}}{4,000 \text{ sq.ft.}} = 15.0$	$\frac{40,000 \text{ sq.ft.}}{4,000 \text{ sq.ft.}} = 10.0$	
Maximum Permitted Single-Family Dwelling Units/Acre*	11	11	
Maximum Permitted Development Multi-Family Units per Block	$\frac{60,000 \text{ sq.ft.}}{3,500 \text{ sq.ft.}} = 17.1$	$\frac{40,000 \text{ sq.ft.}}{3,500 \text{ sq.ft.}} = 11.4$	
Maximum Permitted Multi-Family Dwelling Units/Acre*	12.5	12.5	

* Expressed to nearest unit.

30.6 OPEN SPACE/ CONSERVATION

30.61 PURPOSE

Open Space/Conservation lands of Central Martinez are defined on the same basis as the Open Space Conservation lands of the General Plan. Lands within these categories are subject to various regulations which safeguard their value as natural resources. Within the Central Area of Martinez, controls over the use and disposition of the land take the form of selective development standards, dedication requirements and outright public acquisition.

30.62 POLICIES

30.621 The Franklin Hills sub-area, extending from the Carquinez Straits to California State Highway Route 4 between urban Martinez and the western edge of the study area, are designated Environmentally Sensitive Lands or Public Permanent Open Space as shown in Land Use Map 1. Most of the area is composed of slopes that exceed a 30% grade and are either too steep for development or would require extensive study and careful design to ensure safe development. Ridge areas of less than 30% slope are either isolated from reasonable street access or are of major visual importance to the Downtown. The Franklin Hills sub-area of the Central Martinez Specific Area Plan is shown in Land Use Map 1.

30.621.1 In this area limited residential development on an individual site basis may be appropriate if certain environmental impacts can be mitigated. Each application for residential development shall be accompanied by the following items:

- A. Applications for rezoning and development plan approval shall be processed concurrently. Each application shall contain documentation by the appropriate professionals hired by the applicant that each and every significant environmental impact (including cumulative impacts) identified in the Franklin Hills Environmental Impact Report (EIR) has been thoroughly investigated for the site in question and can be mitigated to an insignificant level. Site-specific and cumulative mitigation measures shall be designed in sufficient detail to allow preliminary cost estimates to be also included in the application.
- B. Prior to acceptance of the application as complete, all portions of this application shall be reviewed for completeness and accuracy by City staff and appropriate City consultants. The cost of this review shall be paid by the applicant.
- C. No application shall be accepted for a proposal which exceeds a density of one unit per half-acre of land under 30% slope and under 350 ft. elevation, and one unit per ten acres over 350 feet elevation. A slope density map meeting Zoning Ordinance requirements shall be submitted with each application.

- D. No application shall be accepted for a site which does not have, or provide as part of the development proposal, access to a fully-improved public street meeting all City requirements including those relating to length and number of lots served by a cul-de-sac.

30.621.2 All of the Franklin Hills sub-area shall be zoned to a zone district consistent with this Plan.

30.622 Two small areas of slopes of 30% or greater grade are designated Open Space lands, namely that parcel of land in the center of the study area but outside the city limits between Shell Avenue and Alhambra Creek and that parcel immediately north of California State Highway Route 4 and east of Alhambra Way.

30.623 The city should acquire a 6.3 parcel of land bordered on the north by Soto Street, on the south by Arch Street, on the west by Alhambra Creek and the east by a steep slope in its natural state. Renovation of the existing structure as a community center should be undertaken.

30.624 Open Space and Conservation Zone lands within the Central Martinez Specific Plan Area will be governed by one or more of the following procedures.

30.6241 Zone for private agricultural or grazing land.

30.6242 Permit selective development which would prohibit construction in specified areas where there is a demonstrable hazard to public safety, potential drainage and erosion problems or potentially adverse impacts of development upon the environmental or economic balance and character or other area. Any developer should be required to assume the costs of necessary engineering, environmental, economic and other studies to validate the suitability of the proposed development in light of these factors.

30.6243 Require dedications for those portions of developable land which have special open space/conservation value.

30.6244 Acquire land for public use when the benefits of open space/conservation land are not available through other means or where intensive public use is expected.

30.6245 The developer shall bear the costs of added services and utilities whenever possible.

30.625 All privately-owned land formerly designated as Open Space, Parks and Recreation land shall be redesignated as Environmentally Sensitive Lands. All publicly-owned land in the same category shall be redesignated as Permanent Public Open Space

30.7 WATERFRONT

30.71 PURPOSE

The Martinez waterfront is a singular natural asset which can play a significant role as a major recreation and conservation area for local residents and the region. By arresting gradual deterioration of the waterfront and realizing its full potential, the city can re-establish a focal point of historical importance to the community and provide an impetus for a range of civic improvement projects.

30.721 POLICIES

The waterfront lands require a comprehensive planning approach. Public decisions affecting the waterfront should be guided by respect for the integrity and compatibility of uses permitted and maintained at this location.

30.722 The highest priority should be assigned to conservation, park and recreational uses at the waterfront. Contemplated uses should include: an expanded and improved boat marina, fishing pier(s), water-oriented commercial/recreational establishments, scenic routes, hiking and bicycling pathways, and areas for both active and passive recreational pursuits.

30.723 Marshes and mudflats along the waterfront should be maintained and reconditioned to conserve wildlife and flora, to abate air and water pollution and to afford recreational opportunities.

30.724 Existing industrial and non-water-related commercial activities should be concentrated, attractively maintained and screened from view. Ultimately, incompatible waterfront uses should be relocated to other suitable locations.

30.725 Acreage of suitable stability and location should be placed in a general development area for uses including expanded active recreation, the relocation of compatible commercial or parking.

30.726 Obnoxious practices and uses which are inconsistent with the proposed waterfront should be discontinued and made illegal. All waterfront lessees and owners should be required to adhere to appropriate design and maintenance standards. All planned uses should conform to a unified design and development guide.

30.727 Public access to the waterfront should be expanded through the provision of well-designed and safe pedestrian elevated crossings, and, if indicated, vehicular crossings.

30.728 Sponsors of public and commercial recreational facilities should be clustered and concentrated to permit joint use of facilities, preserve open space and provide a greater range of choice for users.

30.729 The City should aggressively seek financial support and cooperation from public agencies and qualified private investment to realize the objectives set forth in the proposed waterfront plan.

30.73 PROGRAMS

30.731 Conservation and Parks

30.7311 Marshes of the waterfront should be joined with other areas which are generally unstable and of poor quality as foundations for construction to form a conservation area.

30.7312 Properties with relatively stable foundation or capable of fill at a reasonable cost, both vacant and in use, should be designated for further special study.

30.7313 Natural screening should be provided around the C.C.C.S.D. pumping station, across the north side of the Telfer Tank Line property, along the east side of North Street to screen in the General Development Area at this point, along the Shell property line and the Southern Pacific railroad tracks.

30.7314 The existing outdoor recreation area and baseball field at Embarcadero and North Court Street occupies Reclamation Area VI and should remain to form the southern boundary of the conservation area at this point. The desirability of expanding recreational uses across North Court Street into a wider perimeter of active areas should also be considered.

30.7315 The waterfront should provide a point of intersection for regional hiking, horseback riding and bicycling trails. Trailhead facilities, such as parking, restrooms, picnic tables, etc. should be provided on adjacent land.

30.7316 Fishing piers on piles or floats should be built to increase the attractiveness of the regional recreation area.

30.7317 Additional outdoor recreation uses, for bocci courts, picnic areas, playing fields, etc. and public facilities, should be sited in relation to conservation lands to ensure a permanent, natural environment for these activities.

30.732 Upgrading the Waterfront and Marina Environments

30.7321 Non-marine oriented commercial establishments located along North Court Street should upgrade their sites to conform to the park and recreational uses planned for the waterfront and/or relocated and set back from the marina access road within the General Development Area adjacent to the railroad tracks. Ultimately, non-compatible commercial uses should be relocated away from the waterfront entirely. Use of spoils basins should be carefully managed and grading carried out to conceal the visual blight caused by roadside dumping.

30.7322 Further development of the properties west of Alhambra Creek should be discouraged. Properties adjacent to the Southern Pacific right-of-way presently support developments of one type or another that are unsuitable for conservation generally. These properties are Reclamation Areas I, V, and VI, the Cannery property and the property on North Berrellessa.

30.7323 All structures on the cannery property should be removed, excepting the three warehouses. This land area should be used to provide a paved parking area for users of a regional trail system. The three warehouses to be retained have vaulted wooden ceilings and house expansive floor space, both features offer great potential for public use, including regional fairs, indoor sports, etc.

30.7324 Marina-related uses should be consolidated in an intensive Marina Development Area immediately adjacent to the Marina.

30.7325 Pine Street or North Court Street should be extended to connect directly with the Marina.

30.7326 The visual identity of the Marina Development Area should be bolstered by fixing its boundaries and carrying through a unifying paving and landscaping scheme. This will ensure an obvious east west connection of marshlands in conservation use and will strengthen the concept of the Marina complex as a "island" for boating and fishing activities within the conservation area.

30.733 Improving Access

30.7331 A railroad crossing with gate should be provided at Pine Street or North Court Street. The present Ferry Street Crossing should be closed. This change would improve general accessibility to the marina and commercial areas and would discourage development in the western section of the waterfront. Joint use parking by the County in Reclamation Areas I and V should be undertaken in connection with this crossing.

30.7332 An elevated auto access route to the waterfront will not be necessary if the waterfront is to be used primarily for conservation and recreational purposes, and Reclamation Areas I and V are to accommodate uses of a low intensity. However, if increased automobile use will be generated by Marina expansion or joint-use parking, an elevated crossing may be required and desirable.

30.7333 For the safety and convenience of users of waterfront conservation land and the continuity of a regional trails system, elevated crossing of the railroad for pedestrians, equestrians and bicyclists should be provided.

30.8 MIXED USE DISTRICTS

30.81 There are three mixed use districts designated on the General Plan. All are located within the Central Martinez Planning Area. In each case the designation indicates that there are mixed uses existing within the districts, and that the uses are, or can be compatible. As with other designations within the Central Martinez Planning Area, the thrust of these designations is to preserve the existing character of the area and of the community, while allowing a gradual conversion to more feasible or more beneficial uses. Each area mixes residential; reflecting the older predominant use of the area, with more intensive uses, such as offices, commercial, or both.

30.82 The keys to successful mixing of land uses in these areas will be providing compatibility with the existing lower intensity uses (principally residential) and preserving as many of the older residential structures as feasible.

30.83 Non-residential uses in mixed use districts should be limited to those which do not generate significant vehicular traffic. Such additional traffic would both make the area a less desirable place to continue to live and would create the need for larger parking areas, not aesthetically compatible with the residential uses.

30.84 Essential parking should be provided in any new use or change in use. Persons employed on the site should be able to park on the site; otherwise employees will contribute to heavy on-street parking, further detracting from the residential quality. Likewise, visitor parking should be provided to the extent necessary for the same reason. Parking areas, however, should be restricted to the minimum necessary for the conduct of the business, consistent with Section 21.73.

30.85 To the extent feasible existing residential structures should be preserved and renovated with changes in use, for it is these structures which give the districts their character and charm. New structures should be of residential scale, both size and materials. Materials for new buildings, therefore, should be wood, stucco, or similar. The institutional effect of concrete and masonry block or brick should be avoided. Buildings should have appropriate glazing areas, both because exterior light has energy and psychological benefits to interior users and because windows are part of a residential scene.

30.86 Parking areas should be treated as to not detract from the residential scene. This requires minimum-sized areas, and maximum setbacks from the street. Setbacks should not be less than the front or side yard setbacks of the neighboring structures. Setbacks should be planted with residential-type ground covers, trees and shrubs. Shrubs should be used to conceal, or at least soften views of the parked cars and parking areas from the street and from neighboring properties.

30.87 Signs for non-residential uses should be of minimum necessary size, low height, subtle colors, and utilize wood materials in its construction. Signs should be located in a manner to provide the necessary notice, without detracting from the residential scene.

31 ALHAMBRA HILLS SPECIFIC AREA PLAN

NOTE: Pursuant to Resolution No. 56-87, adopted by the City Council on May 6, 1987 approving the 1987 Alhambra Hills Specific Plan, “properties within the 1973 Alhambra Hills Specific Area Plan and not within the new Specific Plan Area shall remain with the jurisdiction of this 1973 Alhambra Hills Specific Plan.”

31.1 INTRODUCTION

The natural form of the Alhambra Hills site features a hilltop plateau concealed from below by a series of lower ridgelines. This situation provides a unique opportunity for hilltop development which does not intrude on the visual character of the surrounding area. The purpose of the Alhambra Hills Plan is to specify policies for conservation and development which will permit development to occur without diminishing the natural form or scenic attributes of the hill.

F31.1 The Alhambra Hills Specific Area Plan map is shown in Land Use Map 1.

31.2 GOALS

31.21 TO PRESERVE THE NATURAL FORM AND VISUAL QUALITY OF THE HILL.

31.22 TO INSURE THAT FUTURE DEVELOPMENT WILL ENHANCE THAT FORM AND QUALITY.

31.3 POLICIES

31.31 HILL SLOPES IN RELATION TO SURROUNDINGS

31.311 Retain major tree and vegetation masses. These occur, for the most part, along drainage channels and ravines in the steeper sections of the site, in what would not normally be considered developable areas.

31.312 Retain the upper grassy slopes which form a natural part of the typical California hill and provide a contrast to wooded areas.

31.313 Retain ravines and natural water drainage channels, wherever possible.

31.314 Preserve as much of the natural crestline as possible. Roads and buildings should be located so that they are not silhouetted against the sky, either back from, or below, the natural crest as viewed from below. Because the interface of woodland and meadow is an ecologically delicate area, care must be taken to safeguard, or re-establish, the balance between the two when sitting structures.

31.315 Retain or provide for corridors or channels of trees and greenery leading up from peripheral roads to hilltops. These are necessary to provide unifying visual links between the low, flat areas and the hilltop, and to prevent a hilltop projecting out of a sea of rooftops.

31.316 Locate roads and building sites to cause as little disturbance as possible to existing topography and vegetation. Extensive grading, such as would be required for roadways on steep grades, should be avoided.

31.317 Provide for a future link-up through the site to the Briones Regional Park and the State hiking and riding trail systems.

31.318 Retain or provide for selected scenic viewing points especially of Carquinez Strait and Mount Diablo. Any development should take advantage of this resource.

31.32 HILLTOP PLATEAU

31.321 Retain as much of the hilltop meadow as possible.

31.322 Preserve trees surrounding the hilltop meadows, important to the natural crestline and essential to the isolated character of the upper meadows. These trees are not only an important part of the natural crestline, but are essential to the pleasant sense of isolation, so much a part of the quality of the upper meadows.

31.323 Preserve individual high points or knolls along the spine of the hill as viewing points and as landmarks on the relatively undifferentiated upper meadows.

31.33 HOUSING DENSITY

31.331 The required site area per dwelling unit in the 0-10% slope category is to be 7,500 square feet per unit.

31.332 The allowable residential density as determined by the proposed slope-density formula should be modified further to consider accessibility factors. Lands which can be served only by cul-de-sac in excess of 1000 feet, or roadways traversing slopes in excess of 30%, should be excluded from the slope-density calculations. For example, an isolated plateau which can be served only by a cul-de-sac longer than 1000 feet or a roadway requiring cut-and-fill on slopes in excess of 30%, would be considered unbuildable. Thus, the allowable density as calculated from the slope-density formula could not be transferred to another portion of that site. Similarly, slopes in excess of 40% are considered unbuildable and excluded from the slope density calculations.

31.333 Incentives to provide higher open space and recreation standards, and other public benefit should be considered. For example, on the Alhambra Hills site a maximum overall development of approximately 1,300 dwelling units is suggested if developed totally in traditional single-family detached homes. An increase up to a maximum density of approximately 1,800 units is recommended, if an improved site plan and improved public open space and recreation facilities can be provided by clustering of development.

31.34 LAND USE

31.341 The site should be largely limited to residential uses.

31.342 The small scale neighborhood convenience shopping facility is a suitable and desirable use in the hilltop area.

31.343 Small scale retail facilities at the Reliez Valley and Alhambra Avenue entry points to the site should be permitted only if development of a hilltop convenience center is unfeasible.

31.344 Small scale professional office uses are acceptable at the entry points to the site, if sited so as not to restrict traffic movement and designed to fit into the natural setting and the residential character of the area.

31.345 Private recreational facilities, such as tennis and/or swim club are compatible uses in the residential area.

31.35 LAND MANAGEMENT

31.351 Adequate provisions should be made for management and maintenance of the natural areas, specifically dedication and maintenance by the city, by a homeowner's association or by a special park assessment district.

31.352 Management practices should include provisions for fire protection sensitive to the value of the natural setting and maintenance programs for the grasslands once grazing is eliminated.

31.36 SITE AND BUILDING DESIGN

31.361 Consistency in development should be sought together with variation in the design of individual units. Common building materials, colors, and landscape materials should be used for groups of structures which are seen as a unit. Such visual units usually consist of structures fronting on a common roadway or greenway or areas which are seen as a group when viewed from a higher elevation. Within such visual units variations in the structural forms, e.g., height, roof shape, etc. should be permitted but minimized.

31.362 Building materials and colors used in a visual unit should either be of natural materials and earth colors so as to blend into the natural setting or be of lighter colors, which provide a contrast with the natural setting. Bright colors whether warm or cool, should be confined to small detail elements or reserved for use in identifying specific elements of special community importance. In the Alhambra Hill site, use of natural materials and earth colors is recommended for the upper meadow and crestline areas, to reduce the visual impact of development as seen from below.

31.363 Low and moderate height luminaires should be employed throughout the area to help retain a sense of the natural features. This is especially critical in the hill and upper meadow portions of the site. The quality of nighttime lighting may be color differentiated, with warm lighting used in primarily pedestrian areas, and color corrected white lighting for more auto oriented corridors.

31.364 A clear demarcation should be provided where private open space adjoins common open space preserved in natural greenery and planting. Walls, fencing, or hedges may be used for this purpose. This permits the individual home dweller to exercise whatever landscaping creativity he may possess while still preserving the natural appearance of the overall setting. When fencing is used, it should be of some natural material rather than of such obtrusive materials as chain link or overly patterned concrete blocks.

31.365 Building groups should be sited to provide the maximum direct exposure of residents to common open spaces free from traffic. There should be as direct a relationship as possible between building groups and common open spaces, so that pedestrian movements from homes to open spaces do not conflict with or cross auto traffic movements.

31.366 Common open spaces should be designed as part of an overall greenway system, providing easy and generally traffic-free pedestrian access to all parts of the site.

31.367 The visual impact of parking areas should be minimized by accommodation of parking in small lots, incorporating parking in buildings, use of paving materials which blend into the overall site design, use of changes in level, abundant landscaping, earth berms, and other similar visual devices.

31.368 Where building forms such as townhouses or garden apartments are used, uninterrupted facades in excess of 75 feet should be avoided by providing variations in the building alignment.

31.369 Hillside and crestline building should be sited, designed and landscaped so that, when viewed from below, the supporting columns, piers and building undersides are not visually dominant.

32 HIDDEN LAKES SPECIFIC AREA PLAN

32.1 INTRODUCTION

The Hidden Lakes area consists of 565 acres of undeveloped pasture lands largely surrounded by subdivisions. With its natural knolls and ridges on the south and southwest and its unique “hidden valley” running through the eastern portion, the study area includes areas of open space well suited for preservation. The specific area plan responds to this opportunity by setting forth the methods and policies to guide preservation. The plan includes sections devoted to Land Use and Development, Open Space and Conservation, Housing, Circulation and Trails. Aspects of the natural terrain and vegetation of the site, the impact of the existing developments upon the study area and the impact of the development of the Study Area upon existing developments are considered. In addition, consideration is given to existing and proposed traffic circulation networks, water and sewer systems and school district facilities.

F 32.1 The Hidden Lakes Specific Area Plan map is shown in Land Use Map 1

32.2 GOALS

32.21 TO PRESERVE LARGE MASSES OF NATURAL PERMANENT OPEN SPACE AREAS FOR THEIR ECOLOGICAL, ENVIRONMENTAL, AESTHETIC AND RECREATIONAL VALUE TO THE HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELFARE OF PRESENT AND FUTURE RESIDENTS.

32.22 TO CONSERVE THE NATURAL FORM AND VISUAL QUALITY OF THE LAND AND VEGETATION.

32.23 TO INSURE THAT FUTURE DEVELOPMENT WILL PRESERVE AND ENHANCE THESE QUALITIES, WHILE MEETING NEEDS FOR HOUSING.

32.3 LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT POLICIES

32.31 The major portion of the site area shall be retained for open space use, primarily preserved as public open space, with a portion preserved in private ownership.

32.32 The existing golf course is an appropriate use within the Plan area.

32.33 Clustered residential developments of regulated densities are appropriate for a portion of the plan area.

32.34 Proposed development must be compatible with the Specific Area Plan with respect to natural terrain and vegetation, architectural and site design quality, adequacy of access and traffic impact.

32.341 Roads and buildings should be located in a manner which minimizes disturbance of the natural terrain and vegetation.

32.342 Architecture should be of high quality. Building designs consistent with the nature of the area and which provide maximum flexibility in the site and grading should be utilized.

32.343 Designs for the development areas should include facilities to assure that the existing ponds are not polluted from surface runoff from the developments during construction, and their early years, before an adequate and complete ground cover has been reestablished. Geologic analysis of each development area should be required to assess its role in recharging the subsurface water supply serving the springs which supply the ponds with essential fresh water. Necessary steps and precautions should be required to assure that this water source is not threatened or diminished.

32.344 Densities higher than R-1-7500 should be granted only for proposed developments which meet, or exceed the open space and conservation goals and policies recommended in this report. Increased zoning densities should not be granted for the construction of traditional detached single-family homes in a manner inconsistent with the Specific Area Plan.

32.4 HOUSING

32.41 GENERAL POLICIES

32.411 Essential open space masses and vital elements of the terrain should be protected while still allowing development densities reasonably consistent with the patterns established on adjoining properties.

32.412 Densities shall be determined by the Density Transfer Acquisition Method.

32.4121 A base density shall be calculated by extending the existing zoning patterns for the area. A density increase shall be permitted to compensate for the dedication of public open space and for conformance with this Specific Area Plan.

32.4132 The resulting density should be transferred to a small portion of the total site and will require the use of building types other than those found in traditional subdivisions.

32.42 SPECIFIC POLICIES

32.421 Housing Types

32.4211 Consistent with the trends in the adjoining lands, as well as with the Martinez General Plan, the housing units should be single family sale units to the extent feasible.

32.4212 The recommended primary unit type is the townhouse or attached single family house; the remaining units may be traditional detached single family houses.

324213 Utilizing the Density Transfer Acquisition method, the housing mix should be nearly half townhouse or attached single family, nearly half apartments, with the remainder detached single family houses.

32.4214 The condominium sale of apartment units should be encouraged where feasible.

32.422 Housing Needs

32.4221 Housing to meet the needs of all segments of the population should be provided within the Study Area.

32.4222 All properties shown on the Specific Area Plan Map as yielding 100 or more dwelling units shall provide a minimum of 10% and a maximum of 20% of all the dwelling units to accommodate low and moderate income residents. These units must be distributed throughout the development and be indistinguishable from the majority. Owners of these units should have full

fledged membership in any owners corporation or association.

32.423 Densities

32.4231 The base density for the Plan area shall permit one dwelling unit per 7,500 square feet of site area as allocated under a R-1 Zoning classification.

32.4232 An incentive increase of 20% over the base density shall be permitted as a means of compensating developers who dedicate land for public open space and of encouraging development consistent with the Plan. However, where any development whatsoever is deemed undesirable, the properties in question should be acquired by the city for open space purposes.

32.4233 A sliding density increase above the 25% increase shall apply in order to make more realistic the requirement that developers provide low and moderate income units that are indistinguishable from the majority. A 2% increase above base density is permissible when 10% of the desired housing is provided, sliding up to 4% allowable increase where the maximum 20% is provided.

32.4234 Granting a 2-4% density increase should only occur in cases where the developer adequately demonstrates that the increase in value of the property due to the density increase is entirely used to increase the quality of lower and moderate income housing without increasing its cost.

32.4235 Where development areas are capable of absorbing additional density and where properties recommended for open space cannot be purchased, Density Transfer is recommended. The base density with an incentive increase of 100% of the base may be transferred to other properties thereby encouraging developers to take on the cumbersome task of property assemblage. Other means of acquisition are preferable, however, Density Transfer arrangements are preferable to utter loss of open space to development.

32.4236 Additional density increases may be permitted if necessary to facilitate the extension of Concord Avenue to the study area to provide the additional access at an earlier date than would otherwise occur. This may also apply to the extension of Morello Avenue into Pleasant Hill.

32.4237 Higher densities than those shown on the plan map or discussed as density transfers should only be considered if the developer can show that he meets all the goals and policies of the Open Space and Conservation Elements, provides equal or larger open space areas, achieves better design or substantially benefits the community.

32.5 CIRCULATION

32.51 POLICIES

32.511 Major arterial and collector streets essential for safe and convenient traffic flow to, from and through the Study Area are identified as follows:

32.5111 California State Highway Route 4 developed as a freeway

32.5112 Full connection of Center Avenue between California State Highway Route 4 and Pacheco Boulevard.

32.5113 Completion of Morello Avenue between California State Highway Route 4 and Taylor Boulevard

32.5114 Full connection of Concord Avenue between Morello Avenue and Contra Costa Boulevard.

32.5115 Any connector between Morello Avenue and Alhambra Avenue

32.512 Development of the study area should be carefully phased to maximize access routes other than California State Highway Route 4 and to minimize adverse traffic impact on any one route.

32.6 PARK DEDICATION

32.61 Full park land or full payment of fees shall be charged against such development in the planning area. No credits for the provision of private recreational facilities shall be granted against park dedication fees.

32.62 The proposed 25% density increase allowance, designed to encourage compliance with the plan and to compensate for the dedication of public open space, shall be the only compensation awarded for preserving and dedicating areas for public open space.

32.7 TRAILS

32.71 POLICIES

32.711 A system of riding and hiking trails should be established in the study area linking the California Riding and Hiking Trail in the southern and western portions of the area with various other open space areas, including the proposed open space areas, Briones Regional Park, and the Contra Costa Canal.

32.712 The city should assure that trail systems started in this study area continue to other destinations.

32.8 PLAN REVIEW

32.81 POLICIES

32.811 The Planning Commission should create a Neighborhood Planning Committee comprised of representatives from the Scenic Highlands Improvement Association, Muir Meadows Homeowners Association, any future homeowners' association or corporation which may be created in the areas, Hidden Valley School, other public or quasi-public agencies or organizations and other interested residents who would be willing to participate on a regular basis.

32.812 A designated representative from the Planning Commission should sit on the Neighborhood Planning Committee.

32.813 The Planning Committee should review and/or propose changes to the General Plan or Specific Area Plans, review proposed developments and major rezoning for compatibility both with the City's master plans and with neighborhood goals and resolve conflicts between proponents of the projects and area residents immediately affected by them.