

# **SECTION ONE**

## ***Introduction***

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## SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

### A

#### *Prologue*

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Stock Ranch is the largest remaining undeveloped property in the City of Citrus Heights. Over the years, it has been planned for a variety of commercial, industrial, and residential uses.

Stock Ranch is an important site not only because of its size, but also due to its location and characteristics. It is located on an important transportation corridor, surrounded by residential neighborhoods, traversed by a habitat-rich stream corridor, and occupied by occasional oak tree clusters and wetlands.

Development of Stock Ranch provides the opportunity to create a distinct activity place: one that balances physical development with the conservation and enhancement of the site's valuable natural resources. It marries private commercial and residential uses with public access and spaces; creates buildings and landscaped public places of distinctive quality and fits within and subservient to the natural tree canopy and riparian habitats. The site creates internal activity by linking it to surrounding neighborhoods and pedestrian and bicycle pathways. It stimulates economic activity which contributes to the long-term revenue to the City, while protecting critical resources and committing these to the long-term benefit of all Citrus Heights residents.

### B

#### *Purpose of the Stock Ranch Guide For Development*

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The *Stock Ranch Guide for Development* (Guide) implements the objectives and policies of the Citrus Heights General Plan by setting forth a vision, standards, and guidelines that will ensure high quality development of Stock Ranch. The Guide provides the opportunity to plan, coordinate, implement, and monitor development in a comprehensive manner in accordance with common expectations and understandings developed during the planning process. The *Stock Ranch Guide for Development* contains a land use concept, infrastructure and service plans, roadway improvements, design guidelines, and development regulations for approximately 129 acres of vacant land.

The guide contains the following components:

Section 1	Introduction
Section 2	Summary of Existing Site Conditions and Issues
Section 3	Vision, Objectives, and Principles
Section 4	Development Plan
Section 5	Development Standards and Guidelines
Section 6	Implementation Plan

### C

#### *Project Location*

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Stock Ranch consists of approximately 129 acres of vacant land located in the City of Citrus Heights. The site is situated in northeast Sacramento County, about two miles south of the Placer County line.

Stock Ranch is located in the central portion of the City and is bounded to the north by Auburn Boulevard, Sylvan Road to the east, Greenback Lane to the south, and Van Maren Lane to the west. Access to the project site is available via Stock Ranch Road and Auburn Boulevard.

### D

#### *Project History*

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The City of Citrus Heights was incorporated in 1997 and until that time, the Stock Ranch was under the jurisdiction of the County of Sacramento's General Plan and Zoning Ordinance. The current plan for development described in this Guide is reflected in the City's General Plan.

Over the past twenty years, a number of land use actions have established existing land use patterns and shaped potential land uses for the site. In the late 1960s and early 70s, the property was zoned for agricultural use. In 1978, the current owner of Stock Ranch, Mr. John Stock, Sr., inherited the property, which was originally part of the larger Van Maren Ranch. Stock Ranch was, at the time,

SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

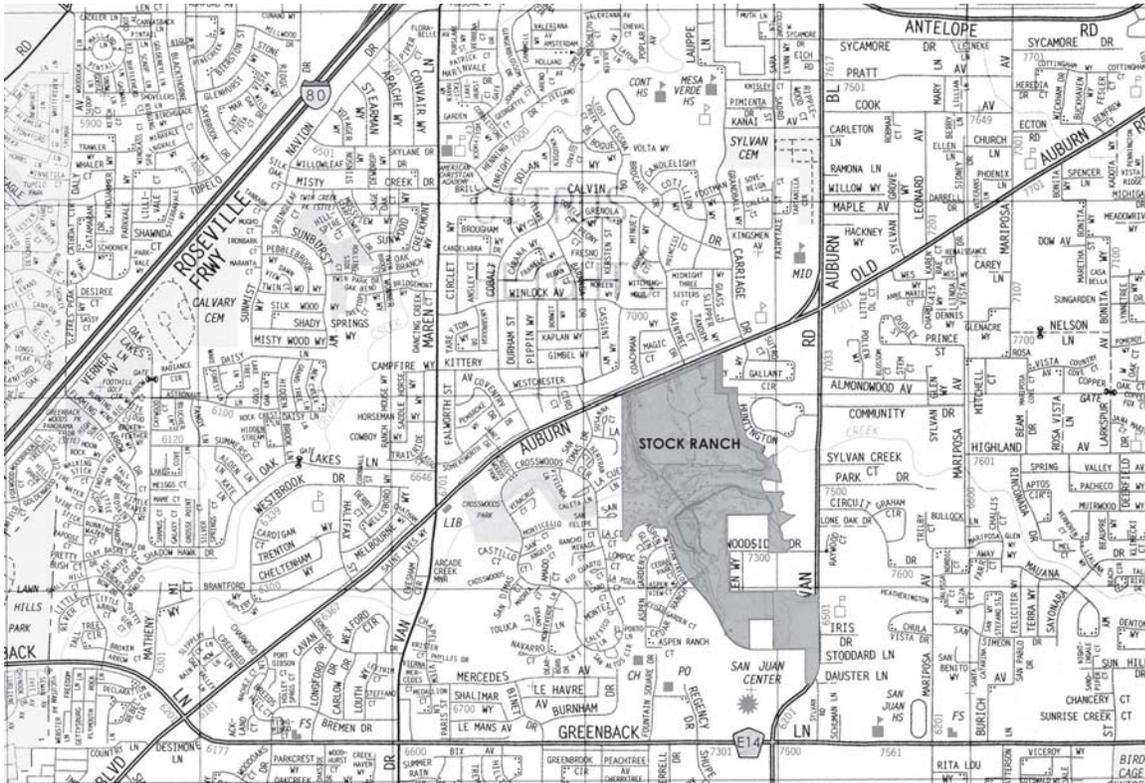


Figure 1-1  
Project Vicinity

and is still, the largest tract of vacant lands in Citrus Heights. Historically designated for agricultural uses, the site had the potential for other uses to provide the potential for capturing some of the residential and office market growth.

Responding to the request for new zoning, the Sacramento County Board of Supervisors approved a rezoning to redesignate the site as a “Special Planning Area” with a mix of MP (industrial-office park) and residential uses.

Most of Stock Ranch was planned again in 1992. This re-planning effort made major changes to the primarily business park-oriented plan which had failed to attract any new office development in the eight years since it was approved. In 1992, single family residential uses were designated for the area adjacent to Fountain Square Drive and multi-family and commercial uses were introduced. The 1992 zoning on the site allowed approximately 458,000 square feet of commercial/office/industrial uses, up to 796 dwelling units, and approximately 32 acres of parks and open space.

With zoning and a land use plan in place that provided land use designations for uses supported by market demands, development began to occur. This period saw the development of several projects in the Stock Ranch including senior apartments on the south side of Stock Ranch Road (1993), the Merrill Gardens senior care facility (1997), an Alzheimer’s care facility (1997), and the Beazer Homes’ residential subdivision (1998).

The property’s General Plan designations are consistent with the project described in this Stock Ranch Guide For Development.

For a historical understanding of previous zoning, please refer to Appendix A, which summarizes pre-General Plan zoning with current zoning.

**E** ***Project Characteristics and Opportunities***

The Guide provides for development of a mix of commercial, residential, and open space uses that are integrated to create a cohesive, well-planned, and distinct place within Citrus Heights. The Stock Ranch Development Plan is organized by an open space and natural resources network consisting of Arcade Creek, riparian corridors, storm water retention facilities, a neighborhood-serving park, and a trail system inter-connecting the site's uses and Stock Ranch's residential neighborhoods.

The site's characteristics provide significant opportunities that can be reflected in land use development. Arcade Creek is both a resource and amenity within walking distance of the site uses and adjoining neighborhoods. Buildings will be designed and the site landscaped to ensure compatibility with Arcade Creek.

Although Arcade Creek provides a natural barrier in linking land uses in the northern and southern portions of the site, it provides the opportunity to serve as a land use buffer and a visual amenity to attract pedestrian activity. The Creek has the potential to buffer land uses that would pose challenges if located adjacent to one another, such as commercial and single-family residential uses.

North of Arcade Creek, the development is intended to create a community-serving commercial core integrated with open space, wildlife habitat areas, and trails adjacent to the creek.

The southern portion of the site is intended to create a residential community with opportunities for a diversity of lot sizes, densities, scales, and housing types. Opportunities for high quality, large lot housing will be among the options provided. This community will be sited to take advantage of the creek and the park. The periphery of the site, northwest of the intersection of Sylvan Road and Stock Ranch Roads, will be additional community-serving commercial/office/multi-family space. This flexibly zoned space is close to and accessible from City Hall, police service center, and the post office as well as the surrounding neighborhoods.

Landscaping and the use of native plant materials at project entries, in the park and open spaces, and along the streets will create a shady haven that will feel like this community has always been a part of its environment. The riparian forest of Arcade Creek and the oak forests of the open space network cradle the community and creates the image the new landscape and community will emulate.

**F** ***Relationship to the General Plan***

The City of Citrus Heights General Plan (November, 2000) includes a Community Development component that addresses future land uses throughout the City. The land area considered in the *Stock Ranch Guide for Development* is designated in the General Plan for three land uses:

- General Commercial

General Commercial uses are designated in two sites: one large site north of Arcade Creek and south of Auburn Boulevard and the other site on the southwest and northwest corners of Stock Ranch and Sylvan Roads.

- Low Density Residential (1 to 8 units per acre)

Low Density Residential uses are shown south of Arcade Creek and north of Stock Ranch Road.

- Open Space

Open space uses are shown adjacent to Arcade Creek and in a finger jutting south of Arcade Creek, east of Stock Ranch Road, and north of Arcade Creek on the western boundary.

The City's core values of safe neighborhoods, controlled traffic, rural setting, and economic opportunity are the foundation of the City's General Plan and are the underlying basis for the General Plan's goals and policies. The development proposed for the Stock Ranch incorporates many of the City's goals and policies as basic tenets and strives to address pertinent goals in the areas of community development, resource conservation, and community health, as described in the General Plan.

## SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION



*Vegetation At Arcade Creek*

The City's General Plan includes goals and policies that influence the overall land use strategy for the Stock Ranch Plan Area. Goal 17 and its associated policies provide a specific directive for the Stock Ranch Area:

**Goal 17:** Develop the Stock Ranch property with a mix of uses that enhance the City's economic base, are compatible with surrounding land uses and are sensitive to natural resources.

**Policy 17.1** Use a flexible planning approach for Stock Ranch to allow a variety of uses and to respond to evolving market conditions and community needs.

**Policy 17.2** Promote uses in Stock Ranch that can be economically supported, are financially feasible and self-sustaining, and maximize fiscal benefits to the City.

**Policy 17.3** Promote development in Stock Ranch in a manner that creates an attractive, distinct, cohesive, high-quality place. Features shall include: recognition of site and City history, good automobile and pedestrian connection, compatibility with surrounding land uses, avoids cut-through traffic, and maintains open space.

**Policy 17.4** Incorporate trail, park, open space and public access along Arcade Creek.

**Policy 17.5** Provide adequate infrastructure concurrent with development of Stock Ranch.



**G**

***The Planning Process***

**Identification of Vision and Planning Principles**

The Stock Ranch planning process began with the formulation of the vision and a set of planning principles for the development of the property. The enunciation of the vision and the development of the planning principles became the framework for the *Stock Ranch Guide for Development*.

The process of enunciating the vision and enumerating the planning principles was accomplished through a facilitated workshop with City of Citrus Heights staff, City Council, and the planning team. From that facilitated process, the City refined the planning principles and presented them to Council for comment and approval. The planning principles, as approved by the City Council, are listed in Section 3 of this document.

**Technical Studies**

The City initiated a process intended to identify opportunities and constraints to the development of the Stock Ranch property. The process involved research on existing site conditions, context, and regulatory conditions that may affect development. Those physical elements include on-site biological and habitat review and evaluation. To determine the context of the site, the team examined infrastructure (water, sewer, electricity, and gas), site drainage, surrounding circulation, and surrounding land use. Regulatory conditions include zoning and general plan land uses and permitting requirements. Each item was studied and from these studies, important issues were identified.

**Public Process**

The City of Citrus Heights held two facilitated community meetings for the purpose of gathering public input on the proposed development on the Stock Ranch. These meetings were held in January and April, 2000 and were attended by more than 150 people at each meeting.

At those meetings citizens had the opportunity to comment on the vision and planning principles and to voice their concerns and hopes for the site. Public comment

was recorded and that served as valuable input into the planning process. Additionally, the City met with adjacent neighborhood groups to learn more about their specific concerns. That input was also valuable to the planning process.

**H**

***Planning and Related Documents***

The planning process, described in the section above, resulted in a number of documents that will guide the future detailed planning, design, and development of Stock Ranch. These documents are discussed below.

**Stock Ranch Guide to Development**

The *Stock Ranch Guide to Development* is a comprehensive guide that describes what Stock Ranch should look like, what uses are appropriate for this land, what measures should be taken to preserve and mitigate the loss of sensitive habitat, and how to make future development compatible with the surrounding neighborhoods. The elements of the Guide include a Vision Statement, Development Plans (land use, open space, circulation, drainage, infrastructure, and landscape), Development Standards and Design Guidelines & Implementation Strategy.

Development Plans

The Development Plan Section (Section 4) addresses how the property will be developed, at what intensity, in which areas, and describes the supporting services that are required to support that level of development. The section includes the following topics: Land Use; Circulation; Infrastructure and Service; Public Service and Utility Providers.



## SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

### Development Standards and Guidelines

Development Standards and Guidelines for the Stock Ranch have been created for the purpose of giving detailed direction for future development on this site. The Standards and Guidelines are intended to supplement the City of Citrus Heights Zoning Ordinance and other various codes which govern the development of commercial, office, and residential projects. The Standards and Guidelines also implement the planning concepts discussed in the Vision and Development Plan chapters of this document.

Where the provisions of the Stock Ranch Development Standards and Guidelines are either more restrictive or inconsistent with other City codes, the Standards and Guidelines contained herein are to govern the development within the plan area. The Standards and Guidelines are intended to encourage appropriate design solutions while maintaining sufficient flexibility to accommodate realities of the market place. Development Standards and Guidelines are found in Section Five (5) of this document.

### **Environmental Impact Report (EIR)**

The Stock Ranch Environmental Impact Report (EIR) certified in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) examines the environmental impacts of the plan described in this Guide and focuses on changes in the environment that would result from its implementation. The EIR examines all phases of the project including planning, construction, and occupancy. The EIR serves as an environmental analysis for purposes of evaluating future requests for use permits, amendments, and variances, if necessary.

Development in the Stock Ranch area is planned as a multi-phased project. Future applications for development plans or amendments to the Guide that are determined by City staff to be consistent with the Guide and that fall within the scope of the EIR prepared for the Guide, will require no further environmental review. If development plans or amendments to the Guide are determined by the City to fall outside the scope of the EIR prepared for the Guide, or if there are potential significant effects peculiar to the project or its site, further environmental review may be necessary.

### **Development Agreement**

The property owner, subject to the provisions of the *Stock Ranch Guide for Development*, will execute a Development Agreement in accordance with the Citrus Heights Municipal Code. The project development agreement sets forth needed infrastructure improvements, the timing and method for financing improvements and other specific performance obligations of the property owners and the City of Citrus Heights as it relates to the development of the Stock Ranch area. The Development Agreement serves as a legal and binding contract between the City of Citrus Heights and the developers of this plan, and provides vested rights to develop this property.