



**CITY OF HERCULES
PLANNING DEPARTMENT**

MEETING DATE: July 15, 2019

TO: Chair Galieva and Members of the Planning Commission

SUBMITTED BY: Holly Smyth, AICP – Planning Director
Robert Reber, AICP – Adjunct Planner
Jerry Haag, Urban Planning Consultant (SP2)

SUBJECT: “Sycamore Crossing,” a proposal to relocate existing utilities and easements and construct approximately 29,511 square feet of commercial space, a 105-room hotel, and up to 120 residential dwellings on an approximately 12.88- acre site bound by San Pablo Avenue, Sycamore Avenue, and Tsushima Streets, and consisting of:

- 1) CEQA Initial Study & Determination (IS 17-02);
- 2) General Plan Amendment (GPA 17-02);
- 3) Zone Amendment (RZ 17-02);
- 4) Vesting Tentative Tract Map #9477;
- 5) Initial/Final Planned Development Plan (FPDP 17-02)
(superseding FPDP 14-02);
- 6) Design Review Permit (DRP 17-04), including Master Sign Program;
- 7) Conditional Use Permit (CUP 17-04); and
- 8) Minor Exception (ME 19-02) for parking reduction.

APPLICANT: Sycamore Crossing Land Developers, LLC

LOCATION South side of Sycamore Avenue and northwest side of San Pablo Avenue east of Tsushima Street.
Assessor Parcel Numbers (APN) 404-020-094-3 and 404-020-095-0

RECOMMENDED ACTION: That the Planning Commission open the public hearing, invite the applicant to make a presentation, receive a presentation from City staff, receive any testimony from the public and the Commission, ask applicant team or city staff to answer questions, close the public hearing if ready to take action, and consider adopting Resolutions 19-05, 19-06, and 19-07 recommending the City Council approve various components of the project.

- Draft Resolution #19-05 (Attachment 1) recommends that the City Council approve General Plan Amendment (GPA 17-02).

- Draft Resolution #19-06 (Attachment 2) recommends that the City Council adopt an Ordinance approving the Zone Amendment (RZ 17-02).
- Draft Resolution #19-07 (Attachment 3) recommends that the City Council approve:
 - Initial/Final Planned Development Plan #17-02;
 - Design Review Permit #17-04, including the Master Sign Program;
 - Conditional Use Permit #17-04;
 - Vesting Tentative Map #9477, including relocation of existing utility easements; and
 - Minor Exception #19-02 for minimum parking reduction.

The project is subject to exhibits contained therein, including:

- Conditions of Approval (Exhibit A);
- Environmental Mitigations (Exhibit B);
- Complete project drawing set (Exhibit C);
- Master Sign Program (Exhibit D); and
- Findings with Facts (Exhibit E).

2. BACKGROUND

A. History. The Sycamore Crossing project comprises two separate parcels that were previously owned by the City's former Redevelopment Agency, when the properties were referred to as the Penterra–Poe site based on the names of two earlier owners. The two properties at the time were approximately a combined 11.44 acres with the property line legally separating the two parcels roughly along the center of Ohlone Creek, the natural drainage way that runs in a northeasterly direction across the Project Site from San Pablo Avenue to Sycamore Avenue. When the City (as Successor Agency to the former Redevelopment Agency) sold the property in 2016 to the Lewis Company, the City executed two partial street abandonments affecting portions of San Pablo Avenue and Sycamore Avenues. The City also abandoned a remnant piece adjacent to the one of the two project parcels such that the Project Site now totals approximately 12.88 acres. The City subsequently approved a lot line adjustment in 2017 forming a 1.77-acre lot and an 11.12-acre lot to accommodate the sale of the smaller parcel to a hotel developer.

The Project Site is located within the original 1,300-acre area originally owned by the California Powder Works. In the late 19th century, California Powder Works relocated from San Francisco to the Hercules–Pinole area. In the early 20th century, the company became the Hercules Powder Company which focused on the production of explosives. Primary operations of the Hercules Powder Company were located outside of the Project Site. However, portions of the Project Site were developed with structures that reportedly were used for storage and possible manufacturing of explosives, which continued as late as 1964 when explosives manufacturing ceased entirely. Between 1959 and 1966, facilities were constructed for the production of fertilizers which continued through the 1970s. However, the

specific locations of these operations are unknown. With changing ownership in 1976 and ultimate closure of the facility in 1977, the associated structures were removed, except for some remnant foundations that still remain on the site.

In 1979, Hercules Properties, Inc. (HPI) assumed responsibility for liquidating the excess lands associated with the historic California Powder Works operations. The two properties that make up the Project site eventually were sold to private interests. The western portion of the Project Site was developed and used as a Little League baseball field during the 1980s and 1990s. The ball fields were removed sometime before 2004. For the past 14 plus years, the Project Site has been used for temporary activities, such as a Christmas tree lot and pumpkin patch, and to stockpile soil generated by nearby construction properties.

B. Acquisition/Prior Project Approvals. The two properties originally acquired by the Hercules Redevelopment Agency were described as:

- Parcel C/Parcel 1 (formerly known as the Penterra site) – APN 404-020-057, 8.232 acres adjacent to Tsushima Street
- Parcel D/Parcel 2 (formerly known as Poe) – APN 404-020-058, 3.208 acres at the southwest corner of Sycamore Avenue and San Pablo Avenue.

After acquiring the properties, the RDA undertook a major planning effort to provide for a mixed-use project on the site described as a combination of approximately 140,000 square feet of retail commercial (including a 25,000-square-foot grocery store), 170,000 square feet of office space, a 180-room hotel, 170 residential apartment units, and structured parking. With the intention of marketing the site to a developer/builder with basic entitlements in place, the City in June 2010 added Chapter 29 to the City’s Zoning Ordinance, by adoption of Ordinance #459, entitled “Zoning Regulations and Development Standards for Sycamore Crossing,” with Initial Planned Development Plan IPDP #10-01 reflecting development standards for the proposed mixed-use project. Concurrent with adopting the land use regulations, the City certified the 2009 Updated Redevelopment Plan EIR, which provided the basis for the Sycamore Crossing IPDP as well as development of the Hilltown site.

In 2015, the City Council rescinded Ordinance #459 and removed Chapter 29 of the Zoning Code and approved a number of entitlements for this site to allow development of up to 135,250 square feet of retail commercial uses. This approved development included a 55,000-square-foot Safeway grocery and pharmacy, an 18-pump gasoline-dispensing station, a 37,000-square-foot fitness center, and other similar retail uses along with on-site parking and landscaping. Following project approval, the applicant notified the City that the center could not be leased, and the project was abandoned. A Safeway grocery store has subsequently been approved for the former Market Hall site on the northeast corner of Sycamore and San Pablo Avenues. The City (as Successor Agency to the Redevelopment Agency) retained ownership of the Sycamore Crossing site until selling the parcels in 2016 to Sycamore Crossing Land Developers, LLC.

C. Disposition. The Project Site was just one of a number of properties owned by the City of Hercules as Successor Agency to the Hercules Redevelopment Agency for non-housing assets. These properties were subject to liquidation following the State Legislature’s statewide dissolution of redevelopment agencies effective February 1, 2012.

In July 2016, the City as Successor Agency to the RDA, passed Resolution No. 16-085 approving the sale of the Sycamore Crossing properties in “as-is condition” to Sycamore Crossing Land Developers LLC (an affiliated entity of Lewis Operating Companies) for \$3,075,000 and completed the abandonments of portions of San Pablo and Sycamore Avenues and a remnant piece.

In May 2017, the City approved the Lewis Management Corporation’s request for a lot line adjustment between the two parcels (Parcels C and D on Parcel Map MS 476-97; Assessor Parcel Numbers 404-020-057-0 and 404-020-058-8) consisting of approximately 12.80 acres and resulting in two new parcels. Lot 1 (1.77 acres, now APN 404-020-094) fronts Sycamore Avenue and abut the west side of the creek. Parcel 2 (11.03 acres, now 404-020-095) extends from Tsushima Street on the west side of the site, across the creek, to the eastern tip at the intersection of San Pablo Avenue and Sycamore Avenue. The combined additional 1.45 acres added to the two resultant lots consist of lands along Sycamore Avenue and San Pablo Avenue previously vacated in February 2015.

In June 2017, the project applicants sold the smaller of the two Sycamore Crossing properties to William C. Herrick for \$2,313,000. Mr. Herrick is a co-applicant for the project and represents Hampton-by-Hilton’s interest in developing the hotel portion of the proposed project.

D. The Plan for Central Hercules. The Project Site is located in the Central Quarter planning area of the Plan for Central Hercules. This Plan includes three other sub-districts being: (1) the Waterfront Master Plan area (approved as Hercules Bayfront, with its own separate subdistricts); (2) New Town Center (formerly the Civic Center & Hospitality Corridor, which also identifies specific subdistricts or development parcels); and (3) Hilltown.

The *Regulating Code for the Central Hercules Plan* (CHP) (Chapter 28 of the Zoning Ordinance) was adopted in July 2001 and represents form-based zoning. This requires each development plan to be reviewed at a public hearing and processed as a Planned Development Plan pursuant to Chapter 48 of the Zoning Ordinance or as an amendment to the Regulating Code for the Central Hercules Plan and requiring a determination of consistency and conformity with the General Plan.

The proposed Project is in an area designated as Phase II/Permissive (as it is known as the Penterra/Albertson’s properties site) which means that the applicant has the discretion to adhere to the uses and intensity of development allowed under the Regulating Code. This document also establishes streetscape standards though the designation of a hierarchy of street types. These standards address right-of-way widths, travel lanes, parking lanes, bike lanes, medians, sidewalks, landscape strips, etc. for each type of street within the area. However, the street cross section standards of the CHP Regulating Code were preempted by

new cross sections and policies provided in the General Plan Circulation Element adopted in February 2018.

E. Planning Commission Workshops. The Planning Commission has held seven (7) workshops to review land uses and potential designs for the project. Workshops occurred on: October 17 and December 4, 2017, and January 16, June 25, August 6, September 17, and December 3, 2018. The Commission discussed the various options with the applicant and allowed public testimony. Generally, topics of Commission discussion included overall land use for the Project, desired residential types (apartments versus condominium versus single family), appropriateness of “tandem” parking, location and type of retail uses, proposed driveway locations, as well as various design attributes.

3. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

A. Project Location. As shown in Figure 1 below, the Sycamore Crossing project is located along the south side of Sycamore Avenue and on the northwest side of San Pablo Avenue, east of Tsushima Street, about 0.6-mile inland from San Pablo Bay and about 500 feet from Interstate 80 (I-80). The Project Site is within walking distance of several residential neighborhoods of Central Hercules, and portions of the Waterfront District, North Shore Business Park, the Safeway Center (currently under construction) and Hilltown are reachable within a larger half-mile area.

FIGURE 1 — Project Vicinity Map



B. Description of Project Site. The Project Site is generally three-sided with frontage on Sycamore Avenue along the north, San Pablo Avenue along the southeast, and Tsushima Street along its westerly boundary. Existing topography and elevations vary on the site, with the highest point being a natural knoll along the southeasterly edge of the site at approximately 58 to 60 feet above mean sea level (msl). The site currently drains into Ohlone Creek, which divides the Project Site and feeds ultimately into Refugio Creek. This natural drainage runs easterly along the south/southeasterly boundary of the Project Site parallel to San Pablo Avenue, turning northeast across the Project Site towards Sycamore Avenue. The bottom of the ravine created by the creek lies at approximately 30 feet above msl with the easterly bank rising approximately 15 feet from steep banks in sections of the channel. At Sycamore Avenue, a culvert runs under the street right-of-way and into a wetlands area of Refugio Creek at the east end of the Bayside single-family home subdivision.

The westerly portion of the Project Site previously has been graded but also contains some vegetation. A dense grove of eucalyptus trees is located along San Pablo Avenue north and west of Ohlone Creek along with a variety of other trees. Portions of the Project Site are accessible from either a gravel access road west of the channel or an asphalt surface east of the channel.

In addition to the remnant foundations and retaining walls from the past industrial uses mentioned earlier, the Project Site contains numerous utility lines within easements generally located parallel with San Pablo Avenue (some within the project site and some in existing right-of-ways to be abandoned), including an overhead power line and water main and gas line. A 20-inch sanitary sewer line and a 24-inch force main line serving the Pinole/Hercules wastewater treatment plant run inside the property line along Sycamore Avenue. Utilities will be relocated into a joint trench, some portions of which will remain on the Project site, and the rest of which will be within the City right-of-way on the San Pablo Avenue side of the Project.

As mentioned earlier, the site surface contains a variety of fill material brought from surrounding projects. In December 2018, the City issued the Applicant a preliminary grading permit (GP-18-04) to begin removing an estimated 125,000 cubic yards of previously placed soil, which the applicant began off hauling in May 2019. Approval of the Sycamore Crossing project will require the applicant submit an application for a final grading permit.

C. Surrounding Properties/Uses. Land uses surrounding the Project Site include:

- **North** (across Sycamore Avenue): The easterly section of the Sycamore frontage (proposed commercial area) faces a large wetland area east of Front Street, and the westerly portion faces the four-story mixed-use Aventine Project (apartments with some ground-floor commercial). A proposed pedestrian plaza planned for the Sycamore Crossing project lies directly across Sycamore Avenue from the Aventine Plaza. The proposed Sycamore Crossing project faces directly north across Sycamore Avenue towards portions of the Bayside single family residential subdivision project.

- ***South/Southeast*** (across San Pablo): The easterly portion of the Sycamore Crossing site lies across San Pablo Avenue from Hercules Retail Center, a small neighborhood shopping center with a gas station with car wash, branch bank, a drive-through fast food franchise, a local restaurant, and other small service commercial uses located at the southeast corner of the Sycamore Avenue/San Pablo Avenue intersection, backing on to the Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) Railroad right-of-way. Open space and the BNSF railroad right-of-way lie opposite the Southeast portion of the Project Site across San Pablo Avenue.
- ***East/Northeast***: A privately-owned parcel, formerly known as Market Hall, is located at the northeast corner of the Sycamore Avenue/San Pablo Avenue intersection, immediately west of Interstate 80 (I-80). A Safeway grocery store and fuel center and retail commercial center has been approved by the City and construction recently commenced.
- ***West*** (across Tsushima Street): A tract of 34 single-family detached homes, built as a phase of the Belle Terre neighborhood, is located west of the project. The homes are oriented inward, i.e., with only rear or side yards backing onto Tsushima Street, none of the homes directly face the Sycamore Crossing site.

D. Project Description. The 12.88-acre Project Site is proposed to be developed with the following uses: (a) approximately 29,511 square feet of retail commercial uses including a major drug store/pharmacy (13,111 square feet), with the remaining retail uses in three additional buildings with parking and landscaping located on the eastern portion of the site; (b) a four-story, 105-room hotel (approx. 63,163 square feet) with parking and landscaping in the approximate center of the site; and (c) up to 120 attached residential dwellings units on the western portion of the site. Figure 2 below shows the proposed development plan.

The current proposal requires the following actions for this application:

- Initial Study and CEQA Determination (IS #17-02);
- General Plan Amendment (GPA #17-02) to change the land use designation for the westerly portion of the Project Site from General Commercial (CG) to Planned Commercial–Residential (PC-R) and to change the 2.02-acre Ohlone Creek Open Space Corridor in the approximate center of the site from General Commercial (CG) to Public/Semi-Public—Open Space (P/SP-OS);
- Zone Amendment (RZ #17-02) for the westerly portion of the site, revising the zoning district designation from General Commercial (CG) to Planned Commercial Residential (PC-R) zoning for the hotel and multi-family residential parcels, and changing the open space area that traverses the site to Public/Quasi-Public—Open Space (P/QP-O);
- Vesting Tentative Map #9477 subdividing approximately 12.88 acres into seven (7) parcels and relocating utility easements;
- Initial and Final Planned Development #17-02 to allow the uses described above (this FPDP will supersede FPDP #14-01 that was approved for the site in 2015);

- Design Review Permit #17-04 (as required by Chapter 13-42 of the Municipal Code), including exterior color and materials, landscaping, lighting, and parking plans, as well as a Master Sign Program (in accordance with Chapter 13-34.400(R) of the Municipal Code);
- Conditional Use Permit #17-04 to allow: (a) retail stores greater than 2,000 square feet; (b) drive-through facilities for the pharmacy and for a food service pad building; (c) seasonal outdoor sales; (d) a hotel; (e) a shopping center; (f) multi-family residential uses; and (g) beer & wine and potential alcohol sales; and
- Minor Modification #19-02 to allow a reduced minimum number of on-site parking spaces for the proposed 105-room hotel.

Discussion of these applications will be grouped for description and analysis of similar aspects and requirements as follows: (A) General Plan and Zoning; (B) Vesting Tentative Map; (C) Planned Development Plan, Design Review, and Minor Exception for parking reduction; (D) Conditional Use Permit; and (E) Master Sign Program.

The proposed project requires City Council approval for most of the requested applications, including the adoption of an Ordinance. Therefore, as with other projects, the procedure that has been followed is to present all Planning Commission actions as recommendations to the City Council. Draft Resolutions recommending approval of the requested actions are attached (see Attachments 1–3).

4. DISCUSSION/ANALYSIS

The Proposed Sycamore Crossing Site Plan is shown in Figure 2, below.

A. General Plan Amendment (GPA #17-02) / Zone Amendment (RZ #17-02). As discussed earlier, the existing land use designation for the entirety of the Project Site is General Commercial (CG), as approved for the site in 2014–15 along with other entitlements for the previously approved Safeway Center. Prior to the 2015 entitlements, the entire project site was designated Planned Commercial Residential (PC-R).

The currently proposed Sycamore Crossing project reflects a mix of uses:

A.1. General Plan Amendment (GPA #17-02)

Planned Commercial Residential (PC-R): The General Plan describes the PC-R designation (which is proposed for the western portion of the Project Site) as intended to accommodate either residential or commercial uses in a well-planned, mixed-use development. Commercial uses allowed within this designation include retail businesses, professional offices, customer-oriented businesses, and hotels. Residential uses allowed in this designation include single- and multi-family dwellings with a maximum density of up to 40 units per acre and a height up to 65 feet for major frontages along Sycamore Avenue and San Pablo Avenue. Subdivision of land or development of property within this designation shall not be approved unless a planned development plan for the property is prepared and approved by the City.

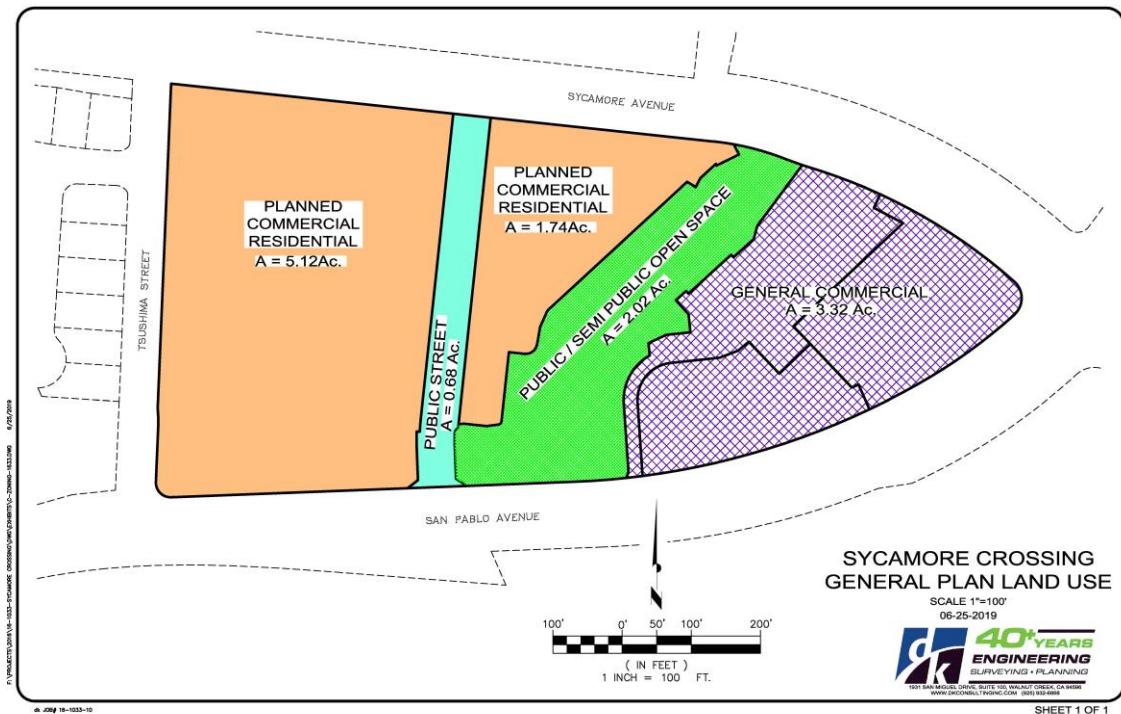
FIGURE 2 — Project Site Plan



The residential floor-to-area ratio (FAR) for this category shall range from 0.20 to 4.0, with a typical FAR for this category of 2.0. The project proposal would have FARs ranging from 0.21 for the commercial center to 0.81 for the hotel parcel, and a residential density of 23.44 units per acre.

The GPA (see Figure 3 below) also includes re-designating the 2.02-acre Ohlone Creek Open Space Corridor from Planned General Commercial (PC-R) to Public/Quasi-Public – Open Space (P/QP-O). This action would help protect this sensitive area from future development, though the Refugio Creek Overlay District also protects the creek.

FIGURE 3 — General Plan Amendment (Land Use)—GPA #17-02



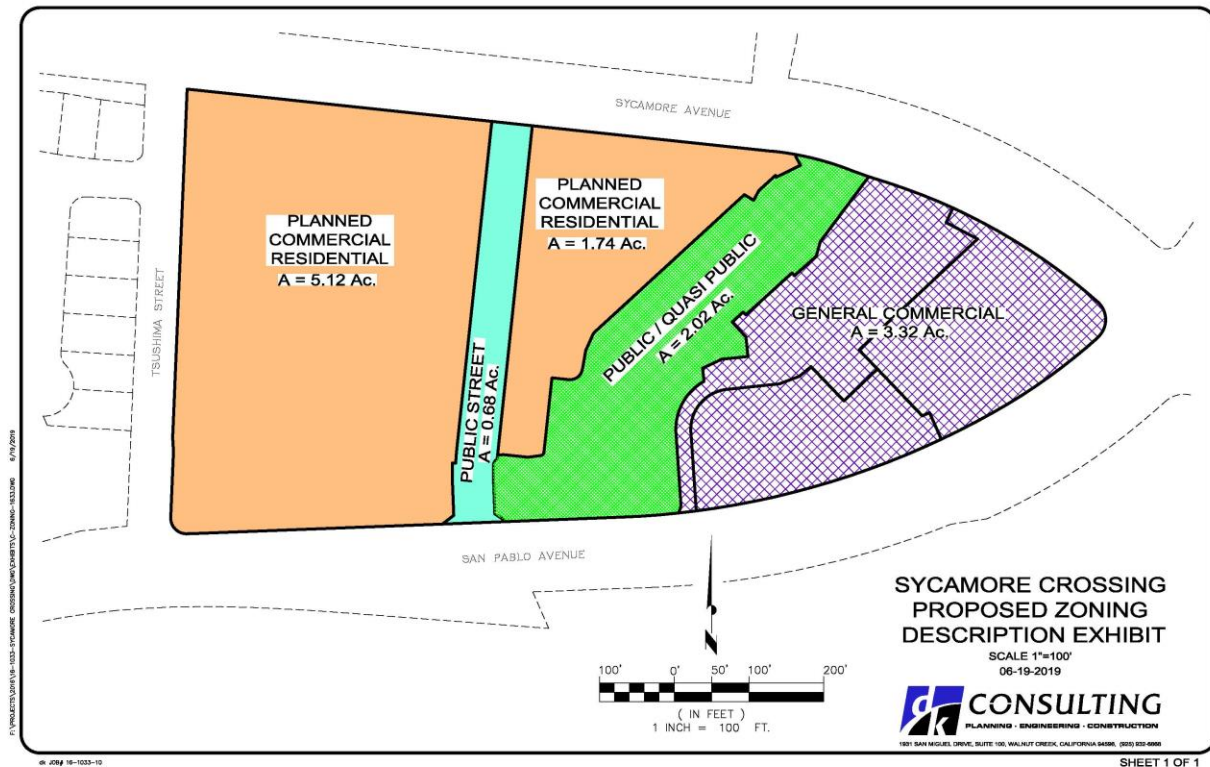
A.2. Zone Amendment (RZ #17-02)

The entire Project site was zoned General Commercial as part of the land use approvals for the 2015 Safeway center project, which was appropriate since that project included only commercial land uses. The current project includes a mix of retail commercial, hotel, and residential uses. Therefore, to be consistent with the requested General Plan Amendment, a rezoning has been requested for the westerly portion of the site from General Commercial (CG) to the Planned Commercial–Residential (PC-R) zoning district. See Figure 4 below that depicts the proposed rezoning.

The PC-R zoning is intended to provide locations for well-planned mixed-use developments and to encourage developments that reduce automobile use. Multi-family developments are allowed with a maximum height of 65 feet (allowed with a PDP for projects fronting onto either Sycamore or San Pablo Avenues), with a FAR of 0.20 to 4.00 (typical FAR of 2.0). The project proposal would have FARs ranging from 0.21 for the commercial center to 0.81 for the hotel parcel, and a residential density of 23.44 units per acre with maximum building heights of 37 ft.4 inches for the residences and 56 ft. for the hotel.

The Ohlone Creek Corridor that traverses the project site in an approximate north-south direction is proposed to be rezoned from General Commercial (CG) to Public/Quasi-Public—Open Space (P/QP–O). The proposed zoning allows for a range of open space uses, such as the Ohlone Creek corridor and would permanently protect the creek from development encroachment.

FIGURE 4 — Zone Amendment (RZ #17-02)



As stated above, within the *Regulating Code for the Central Hercules Plan* (Chapter 13-28 of the Municipal Code), the Project Site is listed therein as the Penterra/Poe property and classified as a Phase II/Permissive category, meaning that the applicant has the discretion to adhere to the uses and design standards of development allowed under the *Central Hercules Plan Regulation Code* rather than the standard City Zoning Code. The Applicant has opted not to pursue development according to the *CHP Regulation Code*.

The proposed Sycamore Crossing project as currently constituted would be consistent with the land use designations of General Commercial (existing) and Planned Commercial-Residential (proposed). Draft Resolutions are attached (see Attachments 1 and 2) recommending City Council approval of the requested General Plan Amendment (GPA #17-02) and Zone Amendment (RZ #17-02).

B. Vesting Tentative Map #9477. Vesting Tentative Map (VTM) #9477 divides the existing two parcels into seven parcels, provides minor dedications for right-of-way and utility easements, and subdivides the 12.88 site into seven parcels as shown below in Table 1:

TABLE 1: VESTING TENTATIVE MAP #9477

Parcel	Size in acres	Use	Description
A	5.12	Residential	up to 120 condominium attached dwellings, including parking, roads, open space and drainage facilities
B	0.68	Public road (proposed to be called Ohlone Creek Place)	Roadway
C	1.74	Hotel	Four-story 105-room hotel (Hampton Inn)
D	2.02	Ohlone Creek corridor	Permanent open space
E	1.19	Commercial	12,000 square feet of retail, plus landscaping and parking
F	0.94	Commercial	4,400 square feet of retail/restaurant with drive-through service
G	1.19	Commercial	CVS Drug Store Pharmacy (13,000 square feet) with drive-through service
Total	12.88+/-	Acres	120 dwellings/29,511 sf of commercial/105 hotel rooms

The preliminary title report and ALTA survey for the project includes the following existing public easements:

- a) a utility easement in favor of PG&E;
- b) a utility easement in favor of EBMUD;
- c) a sanitary sewer easement in favor of the City;
- d) a storm drain easement in favor of the City.

In order to accommodate the construction of the proposed project, all of the above existing easements will need to be quitclaimed, relocated, and/or abandoned with the exception of the storm drain easement. This storm drain easement is 25 feet wide and follows the centerline of Ohlone Creek.

The project as shown for FPDP #17-02 and Vesting Tentative Map #9477, subject to Conditions of Approval, will comply with those standards and adequately addresses drainage, water quality, utility connections, and construction easements, among other things.

Based on the project plans and Vesting Tentative Map #9477, East Bay Municipal Utility District (EBMUD) and the City of Pinole have agreed to provide water and wastewater services, respectively, to the Project Site. Copies of “will serve” letters are on file in the Hercules Planning Department.

C. Initial/Final Planned Development Plan and Design Review Permit. As stated above, a Planned Development Plan (PDP), in accordance with the Zoning Code contained within Section 13-48 of the Hercules Municipal Code (HMC), is required for projects of 10 acres or more in the CG zone. As provided in Section 13-48 of the HMC, Final Planned Development Plans also include design review approval. The Design Review Permit requirements are proposed to be conducted concurrently with the Initial/Final PDP. Initial and Final PDP's may be considered concurrently. Also, PDPs and subdivision maps may be processed concurrently. Early in the process the Applicant requested concurrent consideration of the Initial and Final PDP pursuant to Section 13- 48.300.

PDP applications and accompanying plans are required in sufficient detail for the Planning Commission and City Council to make findings according to the criteria outlined in Section 13-48 of the HMC. Exceptions from standard ordinance requirements can be granted through the PDP process if warranted by site design and amenities, subject to completion of a minor exception process outlined in Section 13-45 of the HMC.

Design Review Permit applications require sufficient information to review the site plan, building design, and landscaping and irrigation.

IPDPs generally are required to present:

- an engineer's survey;
- proposed uses and identification of surrounding uses;
- site design with access, circulation, grading, drainage, utilities, and landscaping;
- proposed parcelization (if applicable), including setbacks;
- number of units;
- parks and open space;
- parking;
- tabulated data;
- environmental information;
- estimated schedule; and
- additional information as needed to properly analyze the plan.

FPDPs generally are required to present:

- building design including floor and roof plans, building height, massing, elevations, color, and other architectural details;
- detailed site improvements including grading, access, vehicular and pedestrian circulation, drainage, utilities, easements, open space, street frontage, landscaping, irrigation, and plant palette;
- tabulations of acreage and proposed building areas for the project overall, by use, by density, for public areas, private areas, and building type;
- information pertaining to the assignment of fire zones including use, building type, occupancy, distance between buildings, and setbacks to property lines;
- exterior lighting plan;
- signage plan (if applicable);
- schedule for construction; and

- any other information to analyze the plan.

C.1. Initial/Final Planned Development Plan #17-02 and Design Review Permit #17-04

Site Design: The development plan is designed to unify the project with its surroundings, provide a mix of housing, lodging and retail opportunities, and complete an important component of central Hercules with public outdoor spaces.

Access: Regional access to the site is provided from State Route 4 (SR 4) and Interstate 80 (I-80), with the interchange located just northeast of the Project Site. Regional access is also provided via San Pablo Avenue serving as the southern frontage of the Project Site. Local access is provided from Sycamore Avenue and Tsushima Street.

Five (5) driveways are proposed into the site - two along San Pablo Avenue, one along Tsushima Street, and two along Sycamore Avenue (one of which is being adjusted from its current entry point). The eastern drive along San Pablo Avenue would provide major access to the commercial portion of the center. The second San Pablo drive (Ohlone Creek Place, a new public road) would provide access to the central portion of the Project with internal roadways to the proposed hotel and the residential neighborhood to the west. The fourth drive proposed for the development would provide access to the residential neighborhood from Tsushima Street. Two drives would be constructed along Sycamore Avenue. One of these would be the continuation of Ohlone Creek Place through the site; and a second smaller drive would be created by relocating the existing driveway east of South Front Street to access the retail component of the Site.

With the exception of the Ohlone Creek Place/San Pablo Avenue intersection (which would be right-in and right-out access), the drives would be full access (left and right turns allowed). Signals would be installed at the intersection of San Pablo Avenue at Tsushima Street and at the proposed commercial drive along San Pablo Avenue. All other intersections should be side stop-sign controlled.

On site, a private drive would be constructed within the residential subdivision and a number of interior private roads would serve the proposed residences. The proposed hotel would have two driveways from Ohlone Creek Place leading to the parking lot and hotel. The retail center would be served by two drives from San Pablo Avenue and Sycamore Avenue with full access.

Pedestrian access would be provided throughout the site, although pedestrians would not be able to cross in the center of the development directly from the hotel across the creek to the retail center. Instead, pedestrians would have to use sidewalks on both San Pablo and Sycamore Avenues around the perimeter of the proposed development.

Layout: Proposed retail buildings in the easterly portion of the site would consist of the main building, a CVS drug store and pharmacy located adjacent to the San Pablo/Sycamore intersection. Three smaller buildings would be located within the interior

area of the center with vehicular parking in the approximate center. The four-story hotel building and adjacent parking would be located in the approximate center of the development and up to 120 attached multi-family condominium buildings would be sited in the western portion of the development. A permanent open space/wetland area of approximately 2 acres would traverse the site in a north-south direction. Due to the presence of special-status species, no public access would be allowed in the creek. Storm water treatment areas are proposed to be located just to the west and east of the Ohlone Creek corridor, at the corner of Sycamore and San Pablo Avenue, within landscapes areas of the retail center, and parallel to Sycamore Avenue adjacent to the residences (as shown on Sheet C-1.0 of the drawings). Other open space and amenity features would include a small park in the approximate center of the residential neighborhood and enhanced plaza areas at the intersection of Sycamore Avenue and Ohlone Creek Place and along Sycamore Avenue at the northerly edge of the hotel. The park and plazas would be quasi-public spaces, generally open to the public but privately owned and maintained. A permanent wetland area would be preserved along the northwest corner of San Pablo Avenue and Ohlone Creek Place and within Ohlone Creek. A commercial plaza would also be constructed within the retail portion of the proposed development between Shops 1 and Shops 2.

Plotting for the proposed shopping center generally is shown in Figure 2 above; the five primary commercial structures are listed in Table 2 below.

TABLE 2: Retail/Hotel Summary

	Building	Location	Use	Size
1	Major Anchor	Corner of San Pablo & Sycamore Avenues	CVS drug store and pharmacy with drive-through window	13,111 sf
2	Shops Building 1	Within the Center, west of the CVS building	Retail	6,000 sf
3	Shops Building 2	Within the Center-west of the CVS building	Retail	6,000 sf
4	Pad 1	Northeast corner of San Pablo Avenue and proposed entrance drive	Retail/Restaurant, with drive-through service	4,400 sf
5	Hotel	Approximate center of the site	105-room, 4-story hotel (Hampton Inn)	62,531 sf
TOTAL				29,511 sf

Architecture/Building Exteriors: The Hercules Zoning Ordinance does not prescribe architectural styles but does have Architectural Regulations to guide design listed therein. An analysis of the design of the various project components is as follows:

Retail commercial: Proposed commercial buildings reflect a modern, contemporary design with a strong horizontal element. Exterior materials on major frontages would include a mix of plate glass with aluminum channels, dark composite wood-like siding

offset with metal panels with brick veneer. Side and rear portions of retail buildings would be exterior plaster painted white. The signature building in the retail component would be the CVS pharmacy on the apex of the corner. The eastern end of the building, facing the San Pablo Avenue/Sycamore Avenue intersection, would have a relatively tall “lantern” feature with plate glass featuring a solid, bright color behind the window, framed with white stone, red brick, and gray metal veneer. Renderings submitted by the applicant show a red/orange color.

Hotel: The four-story hotel building includes a mix of exterior plaster with accents of brick and composite material. Colors would be white and light taupe with a dark roof cap. The large expanse of the building would be softened by building off-sets and dark room windows and contrasting colors.

Residential Complex: Residences proposed for the Project reflect a modern, contemporary design with strong horizontal elements, a mix of materials, and varied rooflines. Exterior treatments would range from light to dark grey stucco. All roofs would be dark composition shingles with space for state-mandated solar collectors. Residences would be constructed in buildings consisting of either three, six, or nine attached units. All buildings would have three stories and would include a number of balconies and window canopies to add visual interest. Individual residences would range from 965 square feet with 2 bedrooms and 2 baths up to 1,445 square feet with 3 bedrooms and 2½ baths. A 2-car garage would be provided for each residence, although spaces would be in a “tandem” arrangement, where spaces would not be side-by-side, but with one space in front of another which has previously been discussed by Planning Commission over multiple prior meeting.

Landscape Design: The landscape design approach for the current Sycamore Crossing project effectively integrates the natural and built environments to achieve the following objectives:

- Create a sense of place through distinctive outdoor spaces and an integrated pedestrian system;
- Activate Sycamore Avenue—which is a newly developing link between built-out Hercules and the developing waterfront area—as much as possible given the wetland areas and grade separation; and
- Strengthen the community's natural resources by enhancing and restoring the Ohlone Creek Greenway and adjacent wetlands.

A master landscape plan has been submitted as Sheets L-1 through L-2 which shows on site landscaping within commercial parking areas, setback areas, and building perimeters. A hardscape plaza would be provided just north of the hotel along Sycamore Avenue to allow public use but also allow for emergency fire access point from the street next to the hotel. The residential component would be enhanced by a park in the approximate center of the neighborhood. Various landscaped plazas and open space areas would be provided at major intersections and would include hardscape, benches, bike racks and landscaping. Interpretive signage and public art highlighting City history and wetland functionalities

are proposed; at the hotel plaza; at the corner of Tsushima Street and Sycamore Avenue; at the corner of Sycamore Avenue and San Pablo Avenue; and near storm water and wetland areas. As proposed in the draft Conditions of Approval, final design of these features would be subject to City staff approval.

Landscaped elements would include: perimeter placement of trees, shrubs, and groundcover; placement of trees within the retail parking lot; trees, shrubs, and groundcover near the hotel and within the hotel parking lot; and landscaping within the residential neighborhood.

Irrigation of the planting areas will take into consideration drought tolerant varieties. By utilizing smart central controllers with weather-based and efficient water delivery systems, efficient water delivery systems would maximize and conserve water resources while keeping the planted areas vibrant.

Special, enhanced hardscape and landscape treatments should be provided at key locations around the site, including: a) the San Pablo Avenue/Sycamore Avenue intersection in front of the proposed CVS building (currently proposed for C.3 treatment; Planning Commissioners have previously expressed interest in “HERCULES” monument signage at this corner); b) a plaza area in front of the proposed hotel building; c) the major entrance at Sycamore Avenue and Ohlone Creek Place; d) at the Sycamore Avenue/Tsushima Street intersection; e) around the preserved wetlands in the southwestern portion of the site; f) around the proposed stormwater quality basin; and f) adjacent to the preserved Ohlone Creek Corridor.

Enhanced paving would be provided at project entry driveway aprons and along on-site pedestrian circulation routes and at key pedestrian crossings within the project site as delineated on the Site Plan to blend with the adjacent neighborhood, subject to approval by the City Engineer and Planning Director.

Given that much of the Project’s San Pablo Avenue frontage will be monolithic sidewalks without landscaped parkway strips, landscaping (including trees) shall be added to medians where possible for traffic calming. Additionally, Planning Commission should consider whether the proposed concrete bollards at the main corner intersection should be replaced with landscape planter boxes to soften the hardscape and provide a unique entry statement.

Ohlone Creek Greenway/Corridor and Wetlands Preservation Area: A 2.02-acre parcel would be reserved for the preservation of Ohlone Creek, a natural creek corridor and tributary of Refugio Creek that crosses the Project Site in a generally north-easterly direction, as well as an 0.11 acre, 425-ft.-long drainage area parallel to Sycamore Avenue. Presently, there are abandoned building foundations cluttering the creek, and views are obscured by dense bramble. The project proposes total avoidance of the creek and jurisdictional delineated wetland areas.

The natural creek corridor is approximately 100 feet wide and would be fenced with decorative fencing in a manner that retains the natural character of the wetland.

Interpretive signs will be provided near the creek, wetland areas, and nearby plazas. Pedestrian amenities would include shade, seating, and decorative paving to enhance a natural experience within the built environment mixed with a historic tale of the City's beginnings.

It is anticipated that the Creek Corridor, as well as wetland mitigation areas within the westerly portion of the Project Site, would be maintained jointly by the owners of the proposed shopping center through a maintenance agreement. This maintenance mechanism is included as a condition of approval (see Attachment 3, Exhibit A).

Tree Removal: The Project Site includes a number of mature trees, as defined in Section 4-15.02 of the Municipal Code as any living tree with a trunk diameter measuring twelve (12) inches or greater when measured at roughly four and one-half (4-½) feet above the surface of the ground. Mature trees may be removed in conjunction with a development as stated in the Hercules Municipal Code Section 4-15.05 or if determined to be diseased.

Many of the existing trees on site defined as "mature" are proposed for removal to allow for construction of the Project and are generally located within the dense foliage of the remaining non-native eucalyptus grove along San Pablo Avenue with avoidance of jurisdictional wetland areas as generally depicted on the plan drawings on Sheet C-5.1. (see Attachment 6 for July 2014 tree inventory). A tree replacement plan must be approved to fulfill a mitigation measure contained in the 2009 EIR. The proposed project would include planting of trees around the perimeter of the site in landscaped parkways, within parking lots, in landscaped planter areas, around the preserved wetlands and storm water treatment areas, within the Ohlone Creek Corridor area, and elsewhere on site, and within some of the medians islands along San Pablo Avenue.

Streetscape Design: The Circulation Element of the Hercules General Plan defines the street types and improvements standards for each category of street. The Project provides sidewalks a minimum 6 feet in width around the perimeter of the site and at least 4 feet wide in portions of the residential neighborhood. Sidewalks along portions of San Pablo Avenue are up to 12 feet wide (or 8-ft.-wide walks with 4-ft.-wide buffer zone area) to 14-ft.-wide sidewalks along Sycamore Avenue (with tree wells adjacent to the curb). All lighting would be hooded and downward directed. The streetscape design for the Sycamore Crossing project addresses three key areas:

- 1) **Sycamore Avenue:** Sycamore Avenue is a fundamental piece of the center of Hercules. Existing improvements at the Sycamore Avenue/San Pablo Avenue intersection have one in-bound and two out-bound through-vehicular travel lanes and bike lanes from San Pablo Avenue to South Front Street.

The existing sidewalk along Sycamore Avenue is generally 14-ft.-wide and incorporates brick accents throughout and trees in tree wells with iron grates adjacent to the curb and decorative single-headed copper-top street lights. Should the developer remove any portions of these improvements in this existing area, it shall be replaced back with brick accents to align with those on the opposite side of the road and large scale trees.

The proposed circulation layout incorporates two access points from Sycamore Avenue. A new drive would be constructed at the intersection of Ohlone Creek Place and Sycamore Avenue. This drive would allow for all-way access with one way (Ohlone Creek Place) stop-sign controlled. A full access drive (also stop-sign controlled) would be relocated along the retail portion of the project from the current driveway access point; the center median would be modified to accommodate 100 feet of vehicle stacking, which may also require relocating a street light. Minor improvements would also be needed to remove a small portion of the raised median in Sycamore Avenue near the proposed hotel to allow for emergency equipment to access the hotel plaza opposite South Front Street.

The new street level pedestrian plaza along Sycamore Avenue opposite the Aventine Plaza, the Ohlone Creek Place/Sycamore Public Open Space, is designed as an active urban edge with sidewalk seating, enhanced paving, site furnishings, an interpretative exhibit and pedestrian amenities. The Hotel Plaza would include enhanced paving shade trees, bike racks, seating opportunities and an interpretive exhibits describing the adjacent creek corridor. The corner of Tsushima Street and Sycamore Avenue will have an outdoor seat wall and shade trees, with a pedestrian connection into the residential area further east on Sycamore Avenue. A linear storm water treatment basin area would extend along the south side of Sycamore Avenue.

2. ***San Pablo Avenue:*** San Pablo Avenue is identified as a route of regional significance and serves as a truck route. The avenue directly adjacent to the project is currently constructed with two through lanes in each direction, a raised decorative colorized stamped concrete median along most sections with some channelizations, single-left turn lanes, right turn lanes, and several existing bus turnout areas. This roadway includes bike lanes but no parking lanes. Though there is an existing sidewalk on the south side of the street, no sidewalk exists on the north side of the street immediately adjacent the project site. The Circulation Element of the Hercules General Plan classifies San Pablo Avenue as a divided arterial street with a design standard calling for:

- Two 12-ft-wide lands in each direction;
- A 12–26-ft-wide median with trees;
- Either 5-ft-wide bike lanes or 8-ft-wide parallel parking on both sides of the street;
- Optional green strips, 5 ½ to 8 ft. wide;
- Sidewalks on both sides of the street, 4½ to 10 ft. wide.

As recommended in the *Sycamore Crossing Transportation Impact Assessment* report (see Attachment 4), City staff have included a condition of approval that the Applicant work with the City to evaluate adding a third through-travel lane to the northbound approach of the San Pablo Avenue/Sycamore Avenue intersection (as listed in the General Plan Circulation Element).

Given the width of the street, City staff also recommend that the median adjacent to signalized intersections be modified to include a pedestrian refuge island, and that key channelization areas add median trees, landscaping, and irrigation to meet design standard of the Circulation Element and to make a more pedestrian-friendly environment.

Two driveways are proposed along San Pablo Avenue: one accessing the central portion of the site (Ohlone Creek Place) and a second driveway to the east to access the retail center. The drive at Ohlone Creek Place would be stop-sign controlled with right-in, right-out access. The retail entrance would be signalized to allow full access and would align with the existing retail on the south side of the street to allow full turn movements to parties on both sides of San Pablo Avenue. This signalization would reduce average delay for vehicles exiting the existing shopping center, reduce potential traffic hazards, and create a more pedestrian-oriented environment by providing a cross walk in all directions. In order to provide improved access at the intersection, the drive approach on the south side of the street, owned by a different party, is also proposed to be widened to accommodate an additional travel lane to improve queuing (the owner has indicated in writing willingness to consent to such improvements). In the field, it appears that up to 15 feet of existing landscaping on the easterly side of the existing drive entrance can be converted into a widened asphalt drive entrance while avoiding relocation of the storm drain inlet in the street, onsite parking light pole, and other utility boxes. Because this signal and improvements to the existing adjacent drive approach is not included in a financial impact fee, the project developer will be fully responsible for the cost of these improvements within the City's right-of-way, on their site, and a portion of the adjacent property owner's drive.

While not a drive entrance, the existing Tsushima Street intersection is proposed to be signalize with the construction of the project, as it will provide additional access into the site via the drive entrance being constructed on Tsushima Street. Because this signal is included in the City's capital improvements listed in its 2019 Transportation Impact fee study, the developer may apply proportional costs of signal installation above their fair share towards payment of traffic impact fees.

All the above driveways and intersections, including curb returns and ADA curb ramps, shall be constructed to meet City standards, with enhanced drive entrances as generally shown on Sheet L-1.0 in coordination with the City Public Works Director/City Engineer and Planning Director and to meet the overall intent of the project and existing environmental documents.

Existing green-colored cobra-head style lights shall remain on the south side of San Pablo Avenue. The applicant shall install street lights on the north side of the San Pablo Avenue to the extent deemed necessary through a photometrics study.

- 3) ***Tsushima Street:*** The Circulation Element of the City's General Plan designates this street as a Collector, for which the design standard include one 12-ft-wide vehicular through lane in each direction, parallel parking on both sides of the street, optional 5½- to 8-ft-wide green strips and 4½-ft-wide sidewalks. The

existing built street section includes landscaping behind the City right-of-way on the easterly half of the street, a 4½-foot monolithic sidewalk on the westerly side of the street, approximately 36 feet of asphalt street paving, and no improvements on the easterly edge of the street abutting the Project. The proposed project designs this frontage as residential neighborhood, with a 6-ft-wide monolithic sidewalk between parallel parked cars and the residences' front yards, which would provide continuous pedestrian connection along both sides of Tsushima Street from the Bayside neighborhood (north of the Project) to San Pablo Avenue (south of the Project). This edge would provide a continuance of the treatment along the western side of Tsushima Street which also borders a residential area. Street lights shall be installed at appropriate spacing to provide adequate lighting based on a photometrics study. Additionally, the two existing wooden lantern-style light fixtures on the west side of Tsushima Street will need to be removed and replaced with the same light fixtures being installed along the project perimeter.

Transit: Western Contra Costa County Transit Authority (WestCAT) operates multiple local, regional, and Transbay routes in the vicinity of the Project site. The transit stops closest to the Project site are located on San Pablo Avenue, one near Tsushima Street (westbound/southbound) and one near Sycamore Avenue (northbound/ eastbound) where high frequency bus connections to BART, Contra Costa College, and the Hercules Transit Center are available. These transit stops consist of a sign and no other passenger amenities. Providing additional amenities would improve the attractiveness of transit to make trips to and from the Project site and reduce net new vehicle trips from the Project. Re-routing existing transit service from San Pablo Avenue to Sycamore Avenue and Tsushima Street, adjacent to the Project frontage, will improve access from the Project's residential, hotel, and commercial uses to WestCAT routes. The Project proposes the following transit improvements:

- Upgrade and enhance existing far-side bus stop on westbound/southbound San Pablo Avenue at Tsushima Street;
- Provide new bus stop on northbound/eastbound San Pablo Avenue at the far-side of the San Pablo Avenue/Tsushima Street intersection;
- Re-route existing transit routes that operate on San Pablo Avenue between Sycamore Avenue and Tsushima Street to Tsushima Street and Sycamore Avenue via San Pablo Avenue; the specific routes that would be re-routed have not yet been determined;
- Provide new bus stop on westbound Sycamore Avenue at the far-side of the San Pablo Avenue/Sycamore Avenue intersection;
- Provide new bus stop on eastbound Sycamore Avenue at the near-side of the Sycamore Avenue/South Front Street intersection.

To accommodate bus turning movements at the Sycamore Avenue/Tsushima Street intersection, the Project will modify the existing curb bulb-out on the southeast corner to ensure safe turning maneuvers for buses.

As a condition of approval for the project, the Applicant will provide shelter, seating, and real-time route information (at the discretion of WestCAT staff) for the 3 new bus stops on eastbound and westbound Sycamore Avenue, and northbound/eastbound San Pablo Avenue and at the existing stop being renovate and provide ADA path of travel.

Development Regulations: The Development Regulations for the CG and PC-R zones are established in Tables 13-8.2 and 13-15.2 of the City’s Municipal Code. However, the requirement for a Planned Development Plan provides flexibility for utilizing other standards. Table 4 below shows standards for: CG zone, PC-R zone, Central Hercules Plan Regulating Code, the Planned Development Plan standards to be adopted for the proposed project, and the standard as shown on the Plans. The resulting PDP standards for the Sycamore Crossing Project comply with either the CG zone or the PC-R (as applicable). Particular standards are discussed below.

- **Setbacks** – Setbacks near the property line appear only for specific structures and not for extended lengths along full dimension. The setback for the proposed pharmacy building at the intersection of Sycamore Avenue and San Pablo Avenue is approximately 15 feet. Retail Building 1 would be setback 10 feet from Sycamore Avenue, and Pad 1 Building would be setback 22 feet from Sycamore Avenue. The proposed hotel would have a setback of 25 feet from Sycamore Avenue.

Setbacks for the residential neighborhood would be a minimum of 50 feet along San Pablo Avenue, 10 feet along Tsushima Street and 30 feet along Sycamore Avenue.

- *The CHP form based codes show “build to” setback ranging from 0-10 feet from the property line with 6-10’ between buildings and 160 foot maximum building width. However, because the proposed Project is in an area designated as Phase II/Permissive, the applicant has the discretion to adhere to the uses and intensity of development allowed under the Regulation Code or include the standards within their approved Planned Development Plan, they can exceed these standards.*
- **Building Height:** The Planned Commercial–Residential zone allows for a maximum building height of 65 along Sycamore and San Pablo Avenues. The highest structure on site is the top of the proposed hotel, which would be 56-ft. tall. The tallest point of the proposed retail center would be 26-ft. to the top of the roof for the proposed CVS building. The highest point to the top of roof for residential buildings would be 37 ft. 4 inches. The four-story hotel would roughly reflect the height of the nearby Aventine building on the north side of Sycamore Avenue. All other proposed structures onsite generally range from 21–30 feet in height.

TABLE 3: Sycamore Crossing – PDP Development Regulations

Proposed Retail Center			
Standard	General Commercial ZO Table 8.2	Proposed Retail Center Plans	Does Project Meet Code Standard?
Site Area	n/a	3.32 ac	Yes
Density (FAR)	0.20 to 1.00	0.21	Yes
Lot Sizes	10,000 sf	144,619 sf	Yes
Lot Frontage	100 ft.	970 ft.	Yes
Lot Depth	100 ft.	>100 ft.	Yes
Setback – Front	20 ft. min.	~12 ft. (CVS building)	No (Set in PDP)
Setback – Rear	0 ⁽²⁾	~5 ft. (Building 1)	Yes (Set in PDP)
Setback – Side	5 ft. min.	~10 ft. (Building 2)	Yes (Set in PDP)
Setback – Corner Side	10 ft. min.	~12 ft. (CVS Building)	Yes (Set in PDP)
Landscaping Minimum	10% min.	28%	Yes
Building Height	3 stories / 35 feet maximum	26 ft. (CVS Building)	Yes
Parking	118 (4.0 spaces per 1,000 sf; see Table 4 below)	145 spaces	Yes
Signage	Per Chapter 34	Master Sign Program	Yes

Proposed Hotel			
Standard	Planned Commercial–Residential ZO Table 15.2	Proposed Retail Center Plans	Does Project Meet Code Standard?
Site Area	n/a	1.77 ac	Yes
Density (FAR)	0.20 to 4.0 (2.0 typical)	0.81	Yes
Lot Sizes	n/a	144,619 sf	Yes
Lot Frontage	n/a	320 ft.	Yes
Lot Depth	n/a	427 ft.	Yes
Setback – Front	n/a	15 ft.	No (Set in PDP)
Setback – Rear	n/a	>100 ft.	Yes (Set in PDP)
Setback – Side	n/a	8 ft.	Yes (Set in PDP)
Setback – Corner Side	n/a	>75 ft.	Yes (Set in PDP)
Max. Site Coverage	n/a	35%	Yes (Set in PDP)
Landscaping Minimum	10% min.	14.5%	Yes
Building Height	65 feet maximum	57 ft.	Yes
Parking	126 (1.2 spaces per room; see Table 4 below)	105 spaces	No
Signage	Per Chapter 34	Master Sign Program	Yes

Notes:

- Lesser setbacks, heights, and lengths may be approved as part of a Planned Development Plan.
- Signs to not exceed 10% of façade area. Subject to Design Review approval or Administrative Use permit for specifics.

Proposed Residential			
Standard	Planned Commercial–Residential ZO Table 15.2	Proposed Retail Center Plans	Does Project Meet Code Standard?
Site Area	n/a	4.89 ac	Yes
Density (Dwelling Units per Acre)	40 DUA max.	13.7	Yes
Lot Sizes	n/a	1,462 sf min.	Yes
Lot Frontage	n/a	29.25 ft. min.	Yes
Lot Depth	n/a	50 ft. min.	Yes
Setback – Front	n/a	10 ft. min.	No (Set in PDP)
Setback – Rear	n/a	3 ft. min.	Yes (Set in PDP)
Setback – Side	n/a	4 ft. min.	Yes (Set in PDP)
Setback – Corner Side	n/a	8 ft. min.	Yes (Set in PDP)
Max. Site Coverage	n/a	35%	Yes (Set in PDP)
Landscaping Minimum	10% min.	32%	Yes
Building Height	40 ft. max; 65 ft. max. @ Sycamore Ave.	37 ft.	Yes
Parking	126 1.5 space per unit + 0.5 guest spaces per unit	240 tandem garage spaces + 56 on-site guest spaces	Yes

- Parking:** The proposed Sycamore Crossing Project provides a total of 546 parking spaces on site (not including parking on new public street Ohlone Creek Place). The parking standards that have been applied to the commercial center are shown in Table 4 below. Overall, the Project exceeds City standards by 113 parking stalls. However, the proposed on-site parking for the hotel would be 21 stalls fewer than required by the Ordinance. The applicant has applied for a Minor Exception (as provided in Section 13-45.300 of the City’s Municipal Code) to reduce the minimum parking requirement for the hotel by up to 10% (12 spaces), leaving a shortfall of nine (9) spaces that could readily be met by the approximately 15 on-street parking spaces on the east side of Ohlone Creek Place, immediately adjacent the hotel. These spaces would count as on-site parking if the street were private; however, as an essential connection between Sycamore and San Pablo Avenues, the City will require that this street be public.

As previously discussed at Commission workshops, although each residential dwelling would have two spaces in a garage, all residential garages would be “tandem” garages in which would one space is directly in front of the other garage space. The applicant notes that each garage would have an outlet for electric vehicle recharging. Commissioners have previously raised concerns about the actual usability of the second space and potential for parking to spill over on to adjacent streets. To ensure that the adjacent vehicles from the Aventine Parking District do not spill into the new project site, and vice versa, the applicant has asked to form a preferential parking district (subject to subsequent City Council approval) to establish a combined parking management district for the hotel and residences (given their proximity to one another and similar peak time night parking). This parking district would include only public

streets parking, encompassing approximately 30 on-street spaces at Ohlone Creek Place, plus 14 on-street spaces on the east side of Tsushima Street, immediately adjacent the Project's residences. The total 44 parking district spaces, plus the 240 residential garage spaces, 56 on-site residential guest spaces, and 105 on-site hotel spaces would total 445 spaces, which would well exceed the adjusted combined (hotel and residential) minimum parking requirement of 354 spaces. Thus, staff believes that the on-site parking combined with nearby on-street parking (Ohlone Creek Place and Tsushima Street) would meet the intent of the City's parking requirement.

Additionally, the project provides bicycle racks accommodating 38 bike racks/lockers, well exceeding the CAL Green requirement for short- and long-term bike storage equal to 5% of all commercial vehicle spaces.

TABLE 4: Sycamore Crossing – Required Parking per City Zoning Regulation

Use	Size	Standard	Spaces Required	Spaces Provided
Retail	29,511 sf	4.0 space per 1,000 sf	118	145
Hotel	105 rooms	1.2 space per room	126	105
Residences	120	1.5 space per unit + 0.5 guest spaces per unit	240	296
Total			427 spaces	546

- **Landscaping:** The 10% landscaping requirement would be satisfied by the 2.02-acre creek corridor and wetlands mitigation measures representing at least 11% of the Project Site. In addition to this private open space area, the Project Site provides landscaping in all setback areas as well as landscape islands and pedestrian pathways throughout the parking area.
- **Trash Collection Areas:** Trash enclosures are provided at various locations through the Project Site and would be constructed per the approved Planned Development Plan in accordance with the solid waste provider's (Richmond Sanitary) and City's standards.
- **Loading:** Delivery truck access was reviewed for both the pharmacy and retail land uses on the west side of the Project Site. For the pharmacy, truck access would be provided via a loading dock located at the northerly side of the building, off of Sycamore Avenue. Delivery and unloading of goods for small shops would occur within the parking lot, likely during off-peak hours.

Design Review: The Sycamore Crossing Project has gone through various staff reviews, and seven presentations/community workshops before the Planning Commission between October 2017 and December 2018. Issues discussed at those meetings—among others—have included appropriate land use mix for the site, ideal residential types, potential traffic conflicts between on-site parking and access points, internal traffic circulation safety, transitions between the Aventine project and the Sycamore Crossing site, preservation of the Ohlone Creek drainage area, type of trees to incorporate into the main project entrance, use of tandem parking for residences, speed tables, and the incorporation of various plazas throughout the project to create a distinctive sense of

place. Many of the issues have been incorporated into the current FPDP plans and MSP. **Should Planning Commission desire further modifications, staff suggests that revisions be made to the FPDP before recommending the project for City Council's consideration.**

D. Conditional Use Permit #17-04. Requirements for Conditional Use Permits are identified in either Municipal Code Chapter 13-8 for General Commercial uses or in Municipal Code Chapter 13-15 for Planned Commercial–Residential uses.

TABLE 5: Sycamore Crossing – Conditional Use Permit

	Conditional Use	Municipal Code
1	Shopping Center	Table 13-8.1
2	Retail stores more than 2,000 square feet	Table 13-8.1
3	Beer & wine and/or liquor sales	Table 13-8.1
4	Restaurants/bars with liquor service	Table 13-8.1
5	Outdoor sales and services (permanent)	Table 13-8.1 in Chapter 13-35.290
6	Hotel	Table 13-15.1
<i>The following proposed uses require only an administrative use permit, not a conditional use</i>		
	Condominium dwellings	Table 13-15.1
	Drive-through sales & service	Table 13-8.1

For the purposes of this Application, all conditional uses will be considered collectively as one Conditional Use Permit. However, the Planning Commission has the flexibility of selecting all, parts, or none of the CUP request for approval, denial, or additional or modified conditions of approval.

Each of these uses generally is subject to performance standards in the Zoning Ordinance. For discussion purposes, certain conditional uses have been grouped.

- **Shopping Centers and Retail Stores More than 2,000 SF:** As shown on Table 13-8.1 of the Zoning Ordinance for general commercial zones, shopping centers and individual retail stores over 2,000 square feet are both subject to a Conditional Use Permit. Specific performance standards are not identified for these uses; however the intent is to provide for a comprehensive review. The Sycamore Crossing project is a mixed-use development with a shopping center including multiple retail stores more than 2,000 square feet. The project has been reviewed comprehensively for design and compliance with development regulations. Design standards and conditions of approval would apply to the applications incorporated within this project.
- **Liquor Sales & Liquor Service:** The proposed CVS pharmacy store would include a liquor department. Future tenants of the shopping center (as yet unknown or unconfirmed) may include restaurants that would serve either beer and wine or alcohol. Currently, four business within 1,000 feet of the Project Site operate with liquor licenses. Jumping Spoon (1375 Sycamore Avenue), Extreme

Pizza (3780 San Pablo Avenue), and Kinders BBQ (3600 San Pablo Avenue) are nearby restaurants licensed to sell beer and wine for on-site consumption. Shell (gas station & convenience store at 3900 San Pablo Avenue) is licensed to sell beer and wine for off-site consumption. In 2017, the City approved a conditional use permit (CUP 17-01) for the future Safeway grocery and gas station/convenience store (currently under construction at the corner of Sycamore and San Pablo Avenues) to sell alcohol (liquor license not yet issued). Staff recommends similarly granting the conditional use permit for the Sycamore Crossing project as it would not result in an over-concentration of alcohol sales, nor adversely affect any schools, places of worship, or parks and playgrounds. In addition to operating under the City's conditional use permit, all businesses wishing to sell alcohol will need to obtain individual alcohol licenses, issued by the State Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control (ABC) and subject to the ABC's regulations.

- **Drive-through Facilities and Fast Food Restaurants:** The Sycamore Crossing project proposes two buildings with drive-through facilities. A 4,400-square-foot pad building (Pad 1) is located along San Pablo Avenue just east of the proposed main retail driveway. It is anticipated this pad would be occupied by a fast-foot type restaurant. The CVS building also is proposed to have a drive-through pharmacy window near the San Pablo Avenue and Sycamore Avenue corner. Both sites are visible from San Pablo Avenue as a highway-related use, but are away from Sycamore Avenue

For General Commercial zones, the Zoning Ordinance allows approval of drive-through facilities with an Administrative Use Permit. A trellis and grade differentials has been added to partially screen vehicles in the drive-through lanes. Vehicle stacking or queuing are separate from the parking areas and designed to not create overflow that would obstruct parking circulation or cause a reduction in the function of adjacent streets. Stacking or queuing lanes must be a minimum of 10 feet wide and 20 feet in length with a capacity of eight vehicles. As the building pad with drive-through facilities are part of a shopping center, no direct access would be available to the stacking lane via a public street. As part of the shopping center, the buildings with drive-through facilities would be subject to maintenance standards along with the rest of the commercial structures.

- **Outdoor Sales (Permanent):** The CUP for outdoor sales is a permit for general promotional sales associated with the CVS pharmacy that are more permanent or ongoing in nature. The standards to be applied are found in Municipal Code Chapter 13-35.290 (Special Land Use Requirements). All sales must be on private property only and not obstruct parking spaces or drive aisles, parking lot landscaping, handicapped access, pedestrian crosswalks, or emergency exists. All outdoor sales activities would be maintained as hazard-free with minimum pedestrian passage of 4 feet. Other businesses within the shopping center wishing to conduct outdoor sales would require subsequent approval of individual temporary use permits.
- **Condominium Buildings:** The PC-R District requires an Administrative Use Permit for multi-family residences. Previous uses for this portion of the Sycamore

Crossing site were planned and approved in 2015 for commercial retail uses as part of the Safeway Project, but all retail uses did not prove consistent with the local and regional marketplace. Consistency of proposed multi-family dwellings on the site is analyzed in this report.

- **Proposed Hotel** – Table 13-15.1 requires a CUP for hotels and lodging facilities in the Planned Commercial–Residential zoning district. This staff report analyzes the various components of the proposed hotel, which is currently proposed as a Hampton Inn. Staff believes the proposed hotel complies with City requirements and would be a valuable addition to the City, including generating substantial revenue through Transient Occupancy Tax (see Attachment 5 for Fiscal Impact Analysis).

E. Master Sign Program. A Master Sign Program is required by Section 13-34.400(R) of the Hercules Municipal Code Zoning section when a building or group of buildings contains six (6) or more business or office uses. The proposed Sycamore Crossing project contains two multi-tenant commercial and three freestanding structures (hotel, CVS, and Pad 1) in addition to specific sign types subject to a Master Sign Program. In addition, these provisions state that a Master Sign Program shall be a condition of approval of any planned development, design review, use permit, or other application required by the City.

In accordance with the information requirements in the Zoning Ordinance, the Applicant has submitted a Master Sign Program (see Attachment 3, Exhibit D) as part of the Design Review Permit for the project. Three (3) freestanding monument signs are proposed in total. Two monument signs would identify proposed retail users, and the third would be associated with the Hampton Inn hotel. For the proposed retail development, one monument sign would be located adjacent to the main drive from San Pablo Avenue and would contain 60 square feet. This sign would have space to identify future retail users. The second monument sign would identify the proposed CVS Pharmacy and other tenants and would also contain 60 square feet. It would be located on the south side of Sycamore Avenue at the secondary entrance/exit for the retail center. The third monument sign would also be located on the south side of Sycamore Avenue at Ohlone Creek Place and would identify the hotel uses. The third sign would contain approximately 30 square feet. All monument signs would be “double faced” with sign copy mirrored on both sides of each sign.

Wall signs would also be attached to the CVS building, each measuring approximately 25-ft. long and 3-ft. high for a total of 75 square feet. Smaller wall signs (50 square feet) would be attached to the smaller building. Signs would be internally-illuminated, channel-letter type.

Additional signage is shown throughout the Master Sign Program, including window and door signs for pedestrian identification of tenants.

The Master Sign Program does not waive the permit requirements for individual signs or any sign not included with approval of this application.

5. CONSISTENCY & CONFORMITY WITH CONTROLLING PLANS

A. General Plan. The General Plan land use is proposed to be amended from its existing General Commercial (CG) land use on the west side of the Site to a combination of Planned Commercial-Residential (PC-R) and Public/Semi-Public Open Space (P/SP-OS) for the development of a mixed-use development composed of a 105-room hotel, 120 multi-family condominium dwellings, and a natural drainage channel. The existing General Commercial land use designation would remain in place on the east end of the project for the 3.3-acre retail center.

The PC-R land use category is intended to accommodate both residential and commercial uses in a well-planned, mixed-use setting with a wide variety of commercial uses that attract clientele from both a local and regional basis. The character of residential buildings within this land use category are anticipated to be up to three stories in height with a typical FAR of 2.0, though major frontages along Sycamore Avenue and San Pablo Avenue can go up to 65 feet. Uses may require additional conditions or measures to effectively mitigate any potential off-site impacts.

The proposed P/SP-OS land use designation for the Ohlone Creek Corridor that traverses the site would be consistent with protecting this sensitive natural resource from impacts and encroachments.

The proposed land use designation for PC-R for the western portion of the Sycamore Crossing project and the P/SP-OS designation for the creek corridor is consistent with other elements of the General Plan.

B. Zoning. The proposed PC-R zoning district for the western portion of the Site is consistent with the proposed PC-R land use designation of the General Plan. Section 13-15 of the Hercules Municipal Code Zoning portion lists five specific purposes for the PC-R zone. Of these five purposes, none are in conflict with the proposed project (as further substantiated in Attachment C, Exhibit D):.

- a. Provide the opportunity to accommodate both residential and commercial uses in a well-planned, mixed-use development.
- b. Provide an opportunity for an integrated mixture of residential and commercial employment-generating uses within the same structure or site.
- c. Allow lower-cost live-work opportunities for start-up commercial enterprises and other small-scale point-of-sale enterprises that are compatible with residential and commercial uses within the building or site.
- d. Provide the opportunity for upper floor residential over ground floor commercial uses.
- e. Encourage mixed-use development that could minimize vehicle use.

The P/SP-OS district was enacted to assist in preserving open space trails and other public amenities that benefit the quality of life in the community.

The proposed rezoning would be consistent with the General Plan, as amended, and would provide the community with a hotel, commercial shopping opportunities, and would increase the local housing stock near a transit corridor.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION

The Project Site is located within the development area evaluated in the *1995 City of Hercules General Plan Land Use and Circulation Element Update and Redevelopment Plan Amendments Environmental Impact Report* (State Clearinghouse (SCH) #1995033027) (the “1995 EIR”), which evaluated, among other things, the potential environmental effects from development of up to 167,925 square feet of commercial uses on the Project Site.

A programmatic environmental document pertaining to the Project Site is the *2009 Updated Redevelopment Plan Draft EIR* (2009 Redevelopment Plan EIR) (SCH #200112049, certified by the City Council on April 20, 2009), which identified and analyzed the potential environmental effects from development of approximately 58 acres, including the Hill Town site and the Sycamore Crossing site. The 2009 Redevelopment Plan EIR was used as the basis for consideration of a mixed-use project on the site described as a combination of approximately 140,000 square feet of retail, a 25,000-square-foot grocery supermarket, 170,000 square feet of office space, a 180-room hotel, 170 residential apartment units, and structured parking. These documents include mitigation measures which will be applicable as appropriate to the proposed Sycamore Crossing project currently proposed (see Attachment 3, Exhibit B).

Since the proposed project involves a General Plan amendment, an Initial Study dated June 2019 (IS 17-02) were prepared pursuant to Sections 15063 and 15168 of the California Environmental Quality Act (“CEQA”) Guidelines to determine the anticipated impacts resulting from the level of development for the proposed Sycamore Crossing project. The Initial Study found and determined that the land uses contained in the current Sycamore Crossing Project are within the scope of the development program evaluated in the Redevelopment Plan EIR. No new or more severe significant impacts would result to key environmental topics based on a number of technical environmental studies. Therefore, potential impacts of the current Project have been fully addressed and mitigated in previous CEQA documents and no additional CEQA documentation is required.

Technical reports prepared in support of the Initial Study have been peer reviewed and updated with respect to the Sycamore Crossing project currently proposed. The Technical Reports addressed in the Initial Study include: 1) Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Assessments; 2) Health Risk Assessment; 3) Biological Resources; 4) Wetland Delineation; 5) Phase I Hazardous Materials Assessments; 6) Environmental Noise Assessments (construction and operational noise); and 7) Traffic Analysis due to the change in the mix of uses and current approvals for surrounding development.

7. CONCLUSIONS / RECOMMENDATIONS

The Sycamore Crossing project will fulfill goals, objectives, policies, and programs of the Hercules General Plan by expanding and enhancing commercial opportunities and services in central Hercules, as well as adding a hotel component which is currently lacking in the City. The Project would also add to the housing mix near commercial destinations and near public transportation routes.

8. CONCURRENT AND FUTURE SUBMITTALS

The Sycamore Crossing project would not require any further Planned Development Plans pursuant to Section 13-48 of the Hercules Municipal Code Zoning provisions, but would be subject to Conditions of Approval. Further approvals would also include those related to the Vesting Tentative Map, including the Final Subdivision Map, grading permits, building permits, water and sewer hookups, and other ministerial approvals including compliance with any and all appropriate conditions of approval.

In addition to Building Safety permits and Certificates of Occupancy under Chapter 10-1.1601 *et seq.*, the Hercules Zoning Ordinance may require permits for any commercial establishments within the project (as with any party) to obtain an Administrative (A) Use Permit or other Conditional (C) Use Permit not contemplated in this approval.

9. ATTACHMENTS

1. Draft Resolution #19-05 recommending that the City Council approve General Plan Amendment #17-02.
2. Draft Resolution #19-06 recommending that the City Council adopt an Ordinance approving Zone Amendment RZ #17-02.
3. Draft Resolution #19-07 recommending that the City Council approve Initial/Final Planned Development Plan #17-02, Design Review Permit #17-04 including Master Sign Program, Conditional Use Permit #17-04, Vesting Tentative Map #9477, Minor Modification #19-02, subject to Conditions of Approval.

Exhibit A. Project Conditions of Approval

Exhibit B. Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program adopted with 2009 *Updated Redevelopment Plan Environmental Impact Report*

Exhibit C. Sycamore Crossing Development Plans (DRP/PDP), including Site Plan, Floor Plans, Elevations, and Color and Materials palette, Landscape Plans, Vesting Tentative Map #9477

Exhibit D. Sycamore Crossing Master Sign Program

Exhibit E. Findings with Facts

4. Sycamore Crossing Initial Study (IS 17-02) / Environmental Checklist and Transportation Impact Analysis
5. Fiscal Impact Analysis (September 2017)
6. Tree Inventory (July 2014)