JOINT CITY COUNCIL/PLANNING COMMISSION WORKSHOP

Meeting Date: March 13, 2007

Subject/Title: Joint Workshop with City Council and Planning Commission regarding proposed land uses for the Sciortino Ranch Property with the Brentwood Boulevard Specific Plan (BBSP) Area

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BACKGROUND

The 65-acre Sciortino Ranch site is located in a prominent location at the center of the City's Brentwood Boulevard Specific Plan (BBSP) Area. A number of joint City Council and Planning Commission workshops have been held to date to discuss the need and goals for a Specific Plan for this portion of Brentwood Boulevard in order to create a comprehensive and logical plan for its revitalization. These efforts culminated in a draft land use plan for the entire Specific Plan Area presented at a joint City Council and Planning Commission workshop on February 27, 2007. Staff is currently reviewing the comments received at that workshop and revising the draft Plan to address that feedback and return to an upcoming joint City Council and Planning Commission workshop to present the changes.

Due to scheduling difficulties of the Sciortino Ranch property owners, DeNova Homes presented their desired land use plan for their site at a joint City Council and Planning Commission workshop on February 13, 2007. At that meeting, they presented their desired land uses for the draft Plan which included 31 acres of retail, 8 acres of retail/ office, 13.5 acres of light industrial/ flex office, and 7 acres of Very High Density residential. This proposal included two big-box retail establishments on the 31-acre retail portion, two-story retail and office buildings along Brentwood Boulevard, flex office/ industrial buildings, and a Very High Density housing development. No park or open space was included in this proposal.

Comments on DeNova Homes' plan by residents and several members of the City Council and Planning Commission at this workshop included concerns with traffic, noise, adjacency of retail uses to residential homes, crime, desire for amenities and parks in this area, impact on property values, impacts on existing commercial development in the area, and the desire for attractive architectural and landscape design. An idea was introduced by Councilmember Becnel to reduce the retail component to one big-box retailer and move its location away from the homes and towards the center of the site. Councilmember Becnel felt that this would minimize impacts on the adjacent residences and still provide an impetus for the revitalization of this area. However, given the limited time at the workshop and the amount of public comment provided, all City Council members and Planning Commissioners did not have an opportunity to provide their input on the proposed land uses for the property. Thus, a follow-up workshop was scheduled for March 13, 2007 to allow a continued discussion regarding this property. DeNova Homes and staff desire to receive guidance on both the land uses desired for this site, as well as

DeNova Homes' request that this property be removed from the BBSP Area and processed as a stand-alone project independent from the on-going BBSP project. No formal action will be taken tonight.

EXISTING GENERAL PLAN LAND USES FOR THE SITE

The Sciortino Ranch property is designated as special planning area (SPA) A in the City's General Plan. A copy of the relevant General Plan text is attached. The mix of desired land uses for this property includes 7 acres of Very High Density Residential (VHDR), 13 acres of General Commercial (GC), and 47 acres of Business Park (BP). The 7 acres of VHDR was approved for this site in 2005 as part of the City's Housing Element implementation plan required to comply with the State law. If these 7 acres of VHDR are removed from this property, state law requires they be replaced elsewhere in the City. In order to minimize the impact of this VHDR development on the adjacent single-family neighborhoods, its location was placed along the site's Brentwood Boulevard frontage, away from the adjacent neighborhoods.

The current land use for this property is predominantly Business Park (BP). This land use allows for integrated clusters of business and research parks, large individual corporate establishments, and other office uses, as well as selected complementary commercial activities and limited residential uses. Design objectives include the siting of the uses in a campus setting with coordinated architecture and lush landscaping to ensure compatibility with the existing residential land uses to the north and south.

The 13 acres of General Commercial (GC) land use on the site allows for mixed commercial and service type businesses to serve specific areas of the City and neighborhoods adjacent to State Route 4 and major arterials. These uses, according to the General Plan, are those that do not lend themselves to being located in regional commercial centers. Rather, a regional-serving big-box store, as proposed, which would serve the needs of Brentwood residents, as well as those residents of neighboring communities would, in staff's opinion, be more in keeping with the General Plan's Regional Commercial land use designation than the General Commercial designation.

PROPOSED LAND USE PLANS

Currently, there are two alternative land use plans being proposed for discussion and consideration. The first is a plan submitted by DeNova Homes at the February 13, 2007 City Council and Planning Commission work session and the second is a plan prepared by staff as part of the Brentwood Boulevard Specific Plan process. While there has been discussion between DeNova Homes and staff subsequent to the February 13th work session regarding an alternative land use plan, the developer has expressed concerns regarding the economic viability of the residential uses on the site unless concessions are made to the City's RGMP requirements for this site.

DeNova Homes Plan

As stated above, DeNova Homes presented its plan for their 65-acre property at the February 13th work session. That plan included 31 acres of retail land use to accommodate two big-box retail stores both of which were shown on their conceptual site plan (see attached) with the stores facing Sand Creek Road.

Subsequent to the workshop, DeNova Homes indicated that it would modify the building orientations to address the neighbors' desire for a buffer between the retail store and their rear lot lines. This modification would rotate the northern retail store 90 degrees so that the front of the store faces Brentwood Boulevard. The parking lot would then be located between the front of the store and Brentwood Boulevard and an entrance to the store would be located on Brentwood Boulevard. A buffer, such as landscaping, masonry wall, etc., could then be constructed between the side of the store and the rear yards of the adjacent residences and the loading area at the rear of the building would be further away from the residences.

Two-story mixed-use, retail and office buildings were shown along Brentwood Boulevard in the Office & Retail Mixed Use Commercial designation at the last workshop. DeNova Homes, however, does not want to preclude its option to construct single-story pad buildings, such as restaurants, banks, etc., in lieu of two-story mixed use buildings given that this is prime roadway frontage. This orientation of a big-box store in the center of the project with single-story pad buildings at the front and adjacent to the street would be more in keeping with a traditional shopping center layout, similar to the Winco center. Other in-line retail shops would be constructed either along Brentwood Boulevard and/ or on the south side of Sand Creek Road. No changes have been proposed to the big-box retail store on the southern side of the proposed Sand Creek Road extension.

Draft BBSP Plan for Sciortino Ranch Property

In its preparation of draft land uses for the Sciortino Ranch portion of the BBSP, staff considered the attached goals and objectives developed for the Plan Area. These goals include reducing the amount of existing highway-oriented commercial land to enhance quality of life in existing and new neighborhoods, limiting new commercial land to local-serving retail nodes at intersections, improving the City's jobs/housing balance by adding office/ industrial workplace districts. Also, there is a desire to protect and enhance the economic viability of existing neighborhood commercial centers such as the City's Downtown, Brentwood Center, Sunset Plaza and Safeway Town Centre by limiting the amount of retail-designated land in the Plan Area and replacing it with office, residential, and mixed use zoning.

As stated above, staff has developed a proposed land use plan for this 65-acre property in accordance with the goals and objectives for the Plan Area. As in other areas within the Plan Area, the amount of retail component was reduced from 13 acres to 2 acres and located at the intersection of Brentwood Boulevard and Sand Creek Road. Fourteen acres of the current 42 acres of office (an assumption was made that 5 acres of the office designation was removed to provide for the extension of Sand Creek Rd.) would be maintained to create a workplace district similar in size to the Sand Creek Business Park. The remaining 38 acres was allocated to residential and park uses in order to provide an extension of the existing residential neighborhoods and provide adequate parks for the planned new residential units on this site. This plan would, in staff's opinion, comply with the goals and objectives of the Specific Plan, consistent with the proposed land use plans for other parcels in the Plan Area.

COMPARISON OF POTENTIAL LAND USES IN TWO PLANS

The approximate acreage of the two land use plans and estimated building area and number of dwelling units that could be anticipated in each is as follows:

	Draft BBSP Land Use Plan		DeNova Homes Proposal	
Land Use Category	*Acreage*	*Building Area (Sq. Ft.)/ No. of Dwelling Units*	*Acreage*	*Building Area (Sq. Ft.)/ No. of Dwelling Units*
Retail	2	17,424	31	278,784
Office/Retail	---	---	8	4 AC Retail- 26,136 4 AC Office- 48,787
Office	14	170,755	14	170,755
Medium Density Residential	12	96	---	---
Neighborhood Density Residential	16	208	---	---
Very High Density Residential	7	210	7	210
Parks/ Open Space	9	---	---	---
Roadway	5	---	5	---
Totals	**65**	**514 Dwelling Units, 17,424 Sq. Ft. Retail 170,755 Sq. Ft. Office**	**65**	**210 Dwelling Units, 304,920 Sq. Ft. Retail, 219,542 Sq. Ft. Office**

Notes: BBSP Economic Study assumptions of 20% FAR for Retail Uses and 28% FAR for Office Uses used to calculate Building Area. Residential densities are calculated at the midrange of 8.0 dus/ac for Medium Density Residential and 14 dus/ac for Neighborhood Boulevard Residential.

DISCUSSION OF LAND USES AND POTENTAL IMPACTS

Based on the comments received at the February 13, 2007 workshop, staff has prepared some information for the CC and PC to use in their deliberations of the two proposed alternate land use proposals for the site.

Big-box Retail Use

A number of comments were given concerning the big-box component of DeNova Homes' plan and the desire to exclude specific retailers. Large-scale retail stores, commonly referred to as "big-box" retail, are comprised of four types of store categories. These include large general merchandise stores, such as Target, Walmart, and Kmart. Superstores are a subset of the large general merchandise store and are distinguished by the inclusion of a grocery store. Specialized product stores are a second category and include retail tenants, such as Best Buy, Home Depot, and Staples. A third category is the outlet store, such as Big Lots, Burlington Coat Factory, and Nordstrom Rack, and the fourth category is the warehouse club store, such as Sam's Club and Costco. These big-box retail stores generally range in size from 20,000 to 260,000 sq. ft., are generally single-story and rectangular in design, and are generally a stand-alone building with either a large parking lot or are part of a larger shopping center.

Although it is not possible for a community to exclude a specific retailer from locating in a zoning district designated for retail use, a number of communities have adopted zoning regulations to exclude one or more of the above-mentioned categories. Zoning regulations utilized to achieve this purpose may utilize size limits on buildings, "stock-keeping units", or SKUs, and percentage of floor area dedicated to groceries, and adoption of design standards. However, retailers have responded by modifying their facilities to address these regulations, such as separating garden

centers from the main store and adapting the design of the store to adhere to design regulations. Therefore, in response to the comments made at the workshop, it should be noted that should the City desire to approve a land use plan with a large commercial component, it can not differentiate between or exclude any particular retailer, although it could consider precluding some specific categories of big-box uses.

Traffic

Another issue raised at the workshop was potential impacts on traffic in the area. While particular traffic impacts would be reviewed as part of any subsequent development proposal, the proposed land uses included in the two alternative land use plans would generate significantly different volumes of traffic. The following table provides some general assumptions concerning the amount of vehicle trips that could be anticipated to be generated by both alternatives.

	Draft BBSP Land Use Plan			**DeNova Homes Proposal**		
		Average Daily Trips (ADT)			**Average Daily Trips (ADT)**	
Land Use	*Acres*	*Weekday*	*Saturday*	*Acres*	*Weekday*	*Saturday*
Retail	2	748	871	35	14,803	18,009
Office	14	2,179	437	18	2,801	562
MDR	12	919	970	--	--	--
NDR	16	1,219	1,179	--	--	--
VHDR	7	1,411	1,342	7	1,411	1,342
Totals		**6,476**	**4,799**		**19,015**	**19,913**

Note: The eight acres of Mixed Use in the DeNova Homes Proposal was assumed to be 50% Retail and 50% Office. Fifteen acres of the DeNova Homes' retail portion calculated as a free-standing discount store and the remaining 20 acres as shopping center.

As shown in the above table, the anticipated average daily vehicle trips, or ADT, would be anticipated to be more than double for DeNova Homes' proposed plan with predominantly commercial uses versus the draft BBSP plan with primarily office and residential uses given the difference in trip generation rates for these uses and the floor area ratio or density of the respective land use per acre.

Noise

Comments were made concerning the proposed noise impacts that may arise from the proposed retail uses. One of the greatest contributors of noise from new development is vehicle traffic. Given the above projected vehicle trips resulting from the two land use scenarios, DeNova Homes' proposed land use alternative would generate more noise from vehicle traffic. However, mitigation, such as soundwalls adjacent to existing residential development, special noise-reducing pavement, etc., could be used to reduce these impacts. If a big-box retail use is desired for the site, the hours of operation could be limited to address potential noise impacts during the evening hours given that a number of large general merchandise retailers have extended hours, with some desiring 24-hour operations. Late night noise has a propensity to impact nearby residential uses to a greater degree given the lower ambient, or background, noise levels during the quieter evening hours.

Amenities and Parks

The draft BBSP land use plan for this site includes approximately 9 acres of parks while the DeNova Homes proposal does not include any. The General Plan requires 5 acres of park land for each 1,000 residents. The City normally calculates park land requirements based on 3.0 persons per dwelling unit. The City also has required additional park land in the past in order to exceed the mid-range density within residential areas to ensure adequate recreation areas are included in new residential areas and ensure that a wider range of open space amenities can be provided during the design of future parks.

Infrastructure amenities, such as utility extensions and frontage improvements, are anticipated to be constructed as part of both plans. DeNova Homes believes that commercial uses are currently more economically viable than the draft Plan's office and residential uses. They also believe that utilities and other infrastructure could be provided to this area in a shorter timeframe if their plan is adopted.

Impacts on Existing Commercial Developments

There has been some concern about the potential impact that could result through the addition of such a large amount of retail in this area, both on existing commercial developments in the area and on the overall revitalization efforts for this portion of Brentwood Boulevard and the entire BBSP Area. One of the major strategies and recommendations of the economic analysis prepared for the BBSP was to reduce the retail land uses along the corridor and limit retail to the intersection nodes. The introduction of between 31 to 39 acres of retail on this site would seem to potentially undermine that goal. Additionally, the construction of one or two big-box retailers on this site would also potentially adversely impact the economic viability of the existing commercial development in the Downtown, Town Centre development, Brentwood Center, and newer Sunset Plaza. In order to assess the impacts on existing commercial development, some communities have required an economic impact analysis be prepared to analyze both the short- and long-term impacts of a proposed development meeting certain criteria. Several studies indicate that the retail sales gains generated by big-box stores may be offset by sales losses at existing, often locally owned, retail stores. The trade area, or distance from the store that people will travel to shop at the store, is generally assumed to be 3 to 5 miles for big-box retail uses. Therefore, it could be anticipated that existing commercial stores within a 3 to 5 mile radius may lose some of their customer base to these proposed big-box retail stores. The distance to the site from existing large general merchandise retail stores is approximately 2 ½ miles to the Antioch Target store and is approximately 3.7 miles to the Antioch Walmart.

PROCESSING OF GENERAL PLAN CHANGES FOR SCIORTINO RANCH

DeNova Homes has requested that review of their project site be evaluated separately from the BBSP to expedite development of their site. Staff was not supportive of this request. DeNova Homes has requested that staff present this issue to City Council to provide guidance. The Sciortino Ranch site comprises Special Planning Area (SPA) A within the City's General Plan. Page II. 1-19 of the General Plan describes the three planning process components for development within a SPA. The State Government Code provides extensive regulations for the preparation of a Specific Plan that cities must adhere to.

The second General Plan process component for SPA development allows for the preparation of multiple specific plans or planned development zone districts for a single SPA if the City finds that this would be in the public interest due to ownership pattern, size of the SPA, timing of

development, or other similar factors. This process component also specifies that if multiple Plans are desired for a single SPA, each Specific Plan must address no less than 50 acres or include at least 25% of the developable acreage of SPA. The City is already preparing a Specific Plan for approximately 440 acres rather than the 65-acre Sciortino Ranch site in order to comprehensively evaluate this portion of the City, anticipate the jurisdictional transfer from Caltrans to City control of Brentwood Boulevard, plan future infrastructure needs, and consider existing public concerns in the area.

The third General Plan process component for SPA development specifies that discretionary approvals (such as subdivision maps, rezoning or design review) may be granted by the City once a Specific Plan or Planned Development Zone (which meets the content requirements of a specific plan) is adopted. This component and the other two mentioned above convey the City's intent to plan large geographic portions of the city prior to approving discretionary land use requests.

Staff recommends that the Sciortino Ranch site be reviewed concurrently with and included within the BBSP Area because it is an integral component of the Specific Plan, there is a public necessity to complete the Specific Plan in a timely fashion to plan for anticipated changes, and that by doing so it makes the BBSP more effective and provides for orderly development within the entire Brentwood Boulevard Specific Plan corridor.

The Sciortino Ranch site is the largest property that directly abuts the Brentwood Boulevard Corridor. All vacant developable properties along Brentwood Boulevard between Delta Road and Second Street have been included within the BBSP. Future land uses on Sciortino Ranch property will directly affect the mix of land uses along the Corridor as a whole and the appearance of the longest undeveloped stretch of Boulevard frontage in the Specific Plan. For example, the amount and type of retail development on the site will affect the viability of existing and future retail development along the Corridor for consideration at major intersections. Due to the economic and physical significance of the Sciortino Ranch site, the property needs to be considered in conjunction with and as part of the Specific Plan.

The Sciortino Ranch property owner has discussed a wide variety of land use patterns with staff and has filed an application to rezone and subdivide the property. This area has been included in the BBSP Area prior to submittal of the development applications and numerous public workshops have been held to discuss the plan before the Sciortino Ranch applications were submitted. In addition, the property owner was aware that a Specific Plan affecting the property was underway prior to purchasing the property. The effectiveness of the BBSP depends on a logical and comprehensive boundary area. The City has initiated the Specific Plan process prior to submittal of this individual site development proposal. The BBSP includes the Sciortino site to ensure the concerns of nearby neighborhoods and similarly situated properties along the Corridor are considered in an even-handed objective manner. Inclusion of the Sciortino Ranch site within the BBSP will facilitate a more effective plan and provide for more orderly and equitable future development along the Brentwood Boulevard Corridor by considering future land uses and infrastructure needs at the same time as part of the same process.

The BBSP work plan includes preparing an EIR to analyze all required General Plan Amendments and zone changes needed to change current land designations and regulations. EIRs include the analysis of alternatives and provide the opportunity to compare a wide range of land use options at the same time. Completion of the BBSP is one of the Community Development Department's highest priorities. Administration of two separate EIR processes for the BBSP and for the Sciortino Ranch project is far less efficient than having one process where

all impacts can be analyzed simultaneously. Separating the Sciortino Ranch site from the BBSP increases the likelihood of inconsistencies between the two EIRs. EIR timing differences can result in different existing condition assumptions and different project objectives. Two processes with similar steps will slow the preparation of the required environmental documents given the limited staff resources to administer two related environmental review processes, edit two related sets of documents, prepare separate notices, and separate staff reports

A combined process enables decision-makers and the public to review the Brentwood Boulevard Corridor land use relationships at one time rather than shifting attention between the Sciortino Ranch site and the BBSP Corridor. The overall land use mix and traffic conditions can be monitored together to provide a more comprehensive and accurate assessment of future conditions. One process will be more efficient and equitable to all property owners along the Brentwood Boulevard Corridor because it will help prevent confusion about how the information affecting the Corridor fits together. One process also provides a more level playing field where all property owners have the same opportunity to express their land use preferences in the same planning context and at the same points in time. A separate process to review the future land uses for the Sciortino Ranch site could create a perception of special treatment for larger properties and will require interested members of the public to follow two processes to get information needed to evaluate future land uses that affect them.

FISCAL IMPACT

As no formal action is being requested, there would be no fiscal impact resulting from this workshop discussion.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff requests that the City Council and Planning Commission provide guidance to staff on the following two items:

1. The desired land use mix for the Sciortino Ranch property; and

2. Whether the Sciortino Ranch property should be removed from the proposed boundaries of the Brentwood Boulevard Specific Plan Area and processed as an independent project.

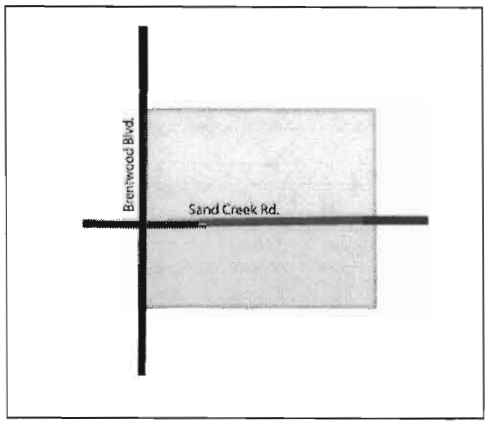
ATTACHMENTS:

1. Special Planning Area A General Plan Text
2. BBSP Land Use Plan for Sciortino Ranch
3. DeNova Homes Land Use Plan for Sciortino Ranch
4. DeNova Homes – Proposed Site Plan
5. Brentwood Boulevard Specific Plan Goals and Objectives

Special Planning Area A

BACKGROUND

This special planning area, approximately 67 acres in size, is bounded by the existing Havenwood single family subdivision on the north, approved mixed use development of retail commercial and medium density residential on the south, State Route 4 on the west and vacant, formerly agricultural land on the east that is planned for low density residential. Future plans call for the planning area to be bisected by the easterly extension of Sand Creek Road to Sellers Avenue. Several factors that provide the guiding focus for a future policy direction for the development of this SPA include: Brentwood Center across State Route 4 to the west, the area's proximity to downtown Brentwood, and the existence of existing commercial uses to the west and south of the area.



Policy Direction

The policy direction for SPA A is to provide a mixed use business park or retail development along with very high density residential development consisting of primarily professional office, and/or retail commercial, limited light industrial uses with complementary commercial services, and multi-story multi-family housing in close proximity to complementary commercial services and employment opportunities. The intent of the office, retail, multi-family residential land uses and related commercial services is to take advantage of the State Route 4 and Sand Creek Road frontages, integrate complementary commercial and residential uses, and ensure that new development shall complement the existing Brentwood Center commercial and office developments along the west side of State Route 4. The light industrial uses shall be separated from nearby developed or approved residential uses and the very high density residential uses planned within this SPA, through wide densely landscaped buffers and on-site roadway corridors.

The suggested mix of Business Park land uses is as follows:

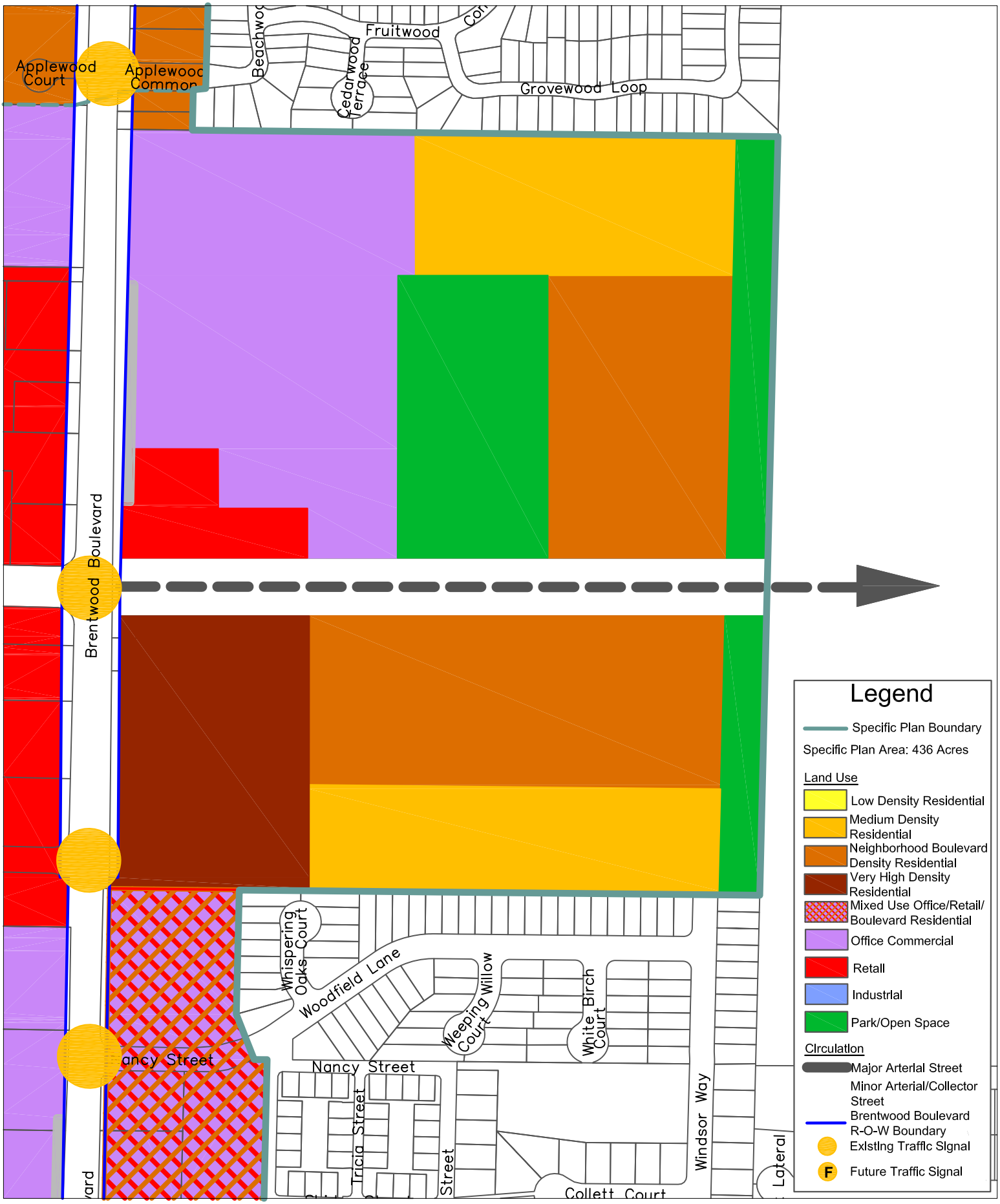
- General Commercial – 13 Acres
- Very High Density Residential – 7 acres
- Business Park – 47 Acres

DESIGN OBJECTIVES FOR THIS SPECIAL PLANNING AREA:

- Develop a coordinated circulation system that provides access to the various land uses from Sand Creek Road with minimal or no driveways opening directly onto State Route 4.
- Include a median landscaped buffer in the design of the Sand Creek Road extension.
- Design the light industrial uses as a campus setting with coordinated architecture, lush landscaping around building perimeters, within street medians / traffic circles, courtyards, and parking areas to ensure compatibility with the existing/approved residential land uses to the north and south.
- Design the multi-family residential uses to provide a range of unit sizes, buffered from Brentwood Boulevard and Sand Creek Road, with extensive residential amenities and architectural features that provide opportunities for socializing and promote an active and less auto-dependent lifestyle in close proximity to jobs and complementary commercial services.
- Design the Business Park with significant high quality design amenities and a distinct architectural theme.
- Design and orient buildings greater than two stories high in a manner that minimizes obstruction of scenic views of Mt. Diablo and the foothills west of the City.

Attachment #2

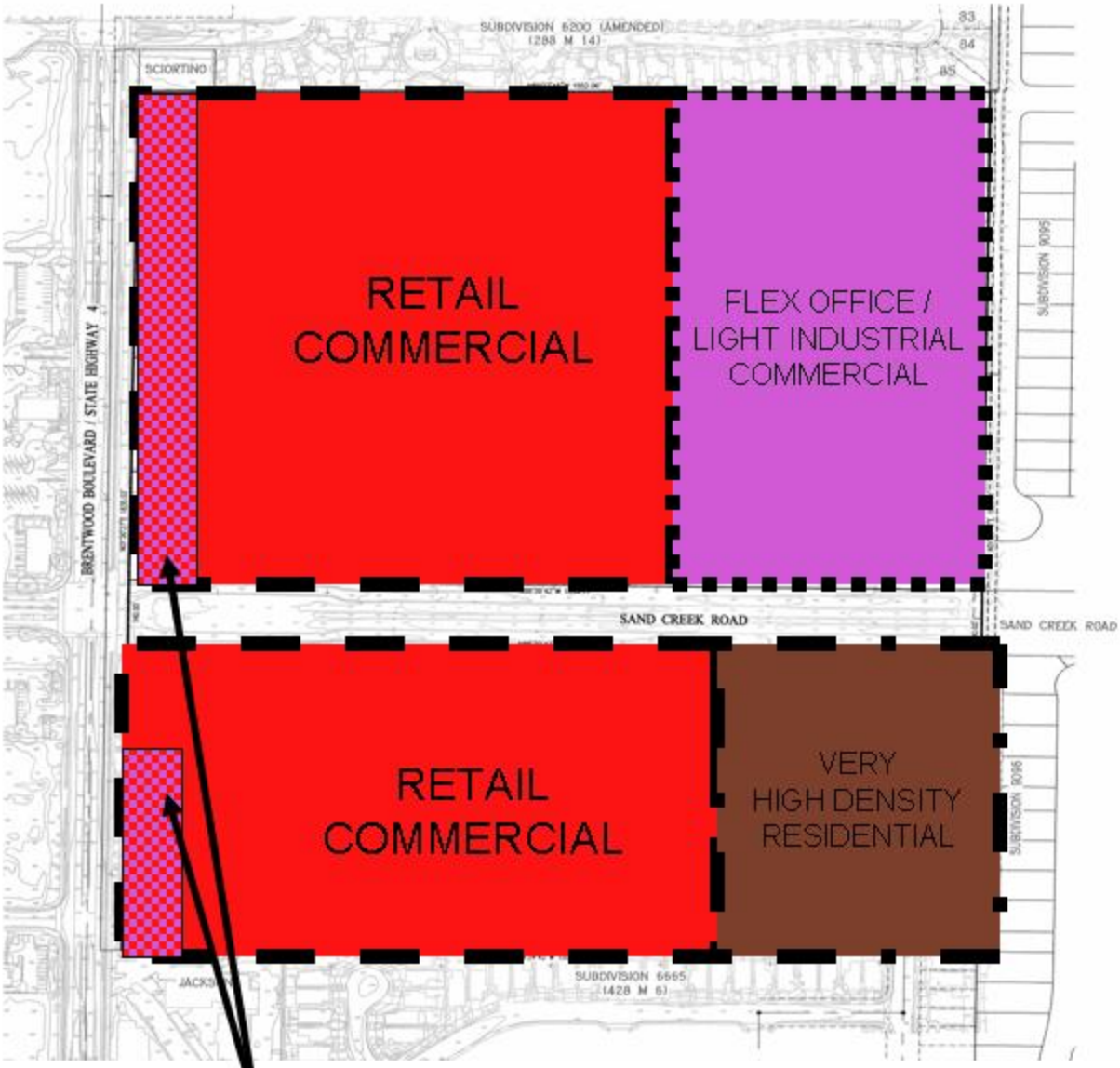
BBSP Land Use Plan for Sciortino Ranch



Scale: 1 inch = 300 feet

Prepared 3-13-2007

DeNova Homes Land Use Plan for Sciortino Ranch



OFFICE &
RETAIL
MIXED USE
COMMERCIAL

Land Use Acreage Summary

Retail:	31.62
Mixed Use Office & Retail:	8.33
Office:	13.56
Very High Density Residential:	7
Sand Creek ROW:	5
Total Acres:	**65.51**

ILLUSTRATIVE SITE PLAN
THE MARKET PLACE
AT
SCIORTINO RANCH
SUBDIVISION 9152

CITY OF BRENTWOOD CONTRA COSTA COUNTY, CA

0' 60' 180' 240'

SCALE: 1"= 60'
JANUARY 24, 2007

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BRENTWOOD BOULEVARD SPECIFIC PLAN
GOALS & OBJECTIVES (DRAFT)

(1) Create and implement a “grand boulevard” corridor along a former state highway characterized by a vibrant mix of complementary land uses, distinctive architecture, lush mature landscaping, infrastructure improvements, and streetscape enhancement features.

(2) Create an attractive and inviting link between the northeast entrance to the City and the City’s Downtown area.

(3) Improve the quality of life for existing residential neighborhoods in the Specific Plan area by paying close attention to such things as public services, infrastructure, parks, access to schools, and traffic safety.

(4) Address the existing auto-oriented “strip commercial” land use patterns within the Specific Plan area by prohibiting that type of development in the future.

(5) Improve circulation along the Specific Plan corridor and connecting streets, including the development of new roadways, in order to promote enhanced access and level of service for pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders and motor vehicles.

(6) Enhance the compatibility and transitions between existing and future land uses both in and around the Specific Plan area to promote harmonious and prosperous live/work areas.

(7) Stimulate the revitalization and/or improvement of existing land uses, including buildings, landscaping, access points, and parking areas.

(8) Ensure consistency with other adopted citywide policy documents, including the General Plan, the Parks, Trails & Recreation Master Plan, the Infrastructure Master Plans, and Redevelopment Plan etc.

(9) Create conditions that will attract economic investment within the Specific Plan area.

(10) Create a unique area which provides a blend of new employment and housing opportunities serving City residents and visitors.