

CITY OF MERCED
Planning Commission

Resolution #4125 - Amended

WHEREAS, the Merced City Planning Commission at its regular meeting of December 6, 2023, considered the adoption of an amended resolution for **General Plan Amendment #17-02 and Site Utilization Plan Revision #12 to Planned Development (P-D) #42**, on behalf of Bellevue Merced, LLC, Baxter Ranches, LLC, and Stonefield Home, Inc. The General Plan Amendment and Site Utilization Plan Revision would amend the land use designation for approximately 156 acres of land within the Bellevue Ranch Master Development Plan (BRMDP) area including Villages 18B, 19A and 19B, 21A and 21B, 22A and 22B, R Street Multi-Family, 25A and 25B, 26, 28B, 34A and 34B, 35A, and 35B, Lots B, D1, D2, D3, F, G, H, and J. The Site Utilization Plan Revision would also amend Table 6.1 of the BRMDP related to required roadway improvements and the timing of said improvements. This property is generally bounded by Old Lake Road to the north, Cardella Road and existing urban development to the south, G Street to the east, and a mix of agricultural and urban uses to the west; also known as Assessor's Parcel Numbers (APN) 170-060-015, -018 to -021; 224-300-005, -007, -008, -010 to -012, -013, -017; and 230-010-012; and,

WHEREAS, the Merced City Planning Commission held a public hearing and considered General Plan Amendment #17-02 and Site Utilization Plan Revision #12 to Planned Development (P-D) #42; and

WHEREAS, the Merced City Planning Commission concurs with Findings/Considerations A through K of Attachment A of Staff Report # 23-979 (Exhibit B); and,

WHEREAS, at the Merced City Planning Commission meeting of November 8, 2023, information was provided in Staff Report #23-979 indicating the total acreage affected by General Plan Amendment #17-02, Site Utilization Plan Revision #12 to Planned Development (P-D) #42, and Environmental Review #17-07 was 238.86 acres. Information was also provided indicating the Villages and Lots affected were as follows: Villages 19A and 19B, 21, 22A and 22B, R Street Multi-Family, 25, 26, 28A, 28B, 30, a portion of Lot J, 34A, 34B, 35A, and 35B; and,

WHEREAS, subsequent to the Planning Commission meeting on November 8, 2023, staff determined that the acreage stated on the resolution adopted at that meeting, showed the gross acreage of the entire village or lot affected (238.86 acres), not just the acreage affected by the proposed change. The acreage affected by the change is 156 acres. In addition, it was determined that the villages and lots listed in the Table at Exhibit C of the resolution did not include all the villages and lots affected by the change; and,

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November 8, 2023/Amended December 6, 2023

WHEREAS, in order to clarify the record and the recommendation made by the Planning Commission, amendments have been made to this resolution to reflect the accurate acreage as well as the accurate list of villages and lots affected by the change.

NOW THEREFORE, after reviewing the Initial Study and Draft Environmental Determination, and fully discussing all the issues, the Merced City Planning Commission does resolve to hereby recommend to City Council adoption of an Addendum to the *Merced Vision 2030 General Plan* Environmental Impact Report (Environmental Review #17-07) and approval of General Plan Amendment #17-02 and Site Utilization Plan Revision #12 to Planned Development #42, subject to the Conditions set forth in Exhibit A and the Findings set forth in Exhibit B, attached hereto and incorporated herein by this reference.

Upon motion by Commissioner Gonzalez, seconded by Commissioner Delgadillo, and carried by the following vote:

AYES: Commissioner Delgadillo, Thao, Gonzalez, and Chairperson Harris

NOES: None

ABSENT: Commissioners Smith, Camper, and Ochoa

ABSTAIN: None

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November 8, 2023/Amended December 6, 2023

Adopted this 8th day of November 2023 and Amended this 6th Day of December 2023



Chairperson, Planning Commission of
the City of Merced, California

ATTEST:



Secretary

Exhibits:

Exhibit A – Conditions of Approval

Exhibit B – Findings/Considerations

Conditions of Approval
Planning Commission Resolution #4125
General Plan Amendment #17-02
Site Utilization Plan Revision #12 to Planned Development (P-D) #42

1. The General Plan and Site Utilization Plan designations shall be changed as shown on the map and listed in the table at Exhibit C of this resolution for Villages 18B, 19A and 19B, 21A and 21B, 22A and 22B, R Street Multi-Family, 25A and 25B, 26, 28B, 34A and 34B, 35A, and 35B, Lots B, D1, D2, D3, F, G , H, and J. .
2. All previously adopted conditions, mitigation measures, and guiding principles contained in Appendices D, E, and F of the Bellevue Ranch Master Development Plan (BRMDP) adopted by the Merced City Council on May 15, 1995, which are applicable to this project, shall apply to the current tentative map and all subsequent tentative maps, improvement plans, building permits, and discretionary approvals.
3. All other applicable codes, ordinances, policies, etc. adopted by the City of Merced shall apply.
4. Approval of the General Plan Amendment and Site Utilization Plan Revision is subject to the applicant's entering into a written agreement (Legislative Action Agreement) that they agree to all the conditions and shall pay all City and school district fees, taxes, and/or assessments, in effect on the date of any subsequent subdivision and/or permit approval, any increase in those fees, taxes, or assessments, and any new fees, taxes, or assessments, which are in effect at the time the building permits are issued, which may include public facilities impact fees, a regional traffic impact fee, Mello-Roos taxes—whether for infrastructure, services, or any other activity or project authorized by the Mello-Roos law, etc. Payment shall be made for each phase at the time of building permit issuance for such phase unless an Ordinance or other requirement of the City requires payment of such fees, taxes, and or assessments at an earlier or subsequent time. Said agreement to be approved by the City Council prior to the adoption of the ordinance, resolution, or minute action.
5. The developer/applicant shall indemnify, protect, defend (with counsel selected by the City), and hold harmless the City, and any agency or instrumentality thereof, and any officers, officials, employees, or agents thereof, from any and all claims, actions, suits, proceedings, or judgments against the City, or any agency or instrumentality thereof, and any officers,

officials, employees, or agents thereof to attack, set aside, void, or annul, an approval of the City, or any agency or instrumentality thereof, advisory agency, appeal board, or legislative body, including actions approved by the voters of the City, concerning the project and the approvals granted herein. Furthermore, developer/applicant shall indemnify, protect, defend, and hold harmless the City, or any agency or instrumentality thereof, against any and all claims, actions, suits, proceedings, or judgments against any governmental entity in which developer/applicant's project is subject to that other governmental entity's approval and a condition of such approval is that the City indemnify and defend (with counsel selected by the City) such governmental entity. City shall promptly notify the developer/applicant of any claim, action, suits, or proceeding. Developer/applicant shall be responsible to immediately prefund the litigation cost of the City including, but not limited to, City's attorney's fees and costs. If any claim, action, suits, or proceeding is filed challenging this approval, the developer/applicant shall be required to execute a separate and formal defense, indemnification, and deposit agreement that meets the approval of the City Attorney and to provide all required deposits to fully fund the City's defense immediately but in no event later than five (5) days from that date of a demand to do so from City. In addition, the developer/applicant shall be required to satisfy any monetary obligations imposed on City by any order or judgment. The developer/applicant shall construct and operate the project in strict compliance with the approvals granted herein, City standards, laws, and ordinances, and in compliance with all State and Federal laws, regulations, and standards. In the event of a conflict between City laws and standards and a State or Federal law, regulation, or standard, the stricter or higher standard shall control.

6. The developer/applicant shall construct and operate the project in strict compliance with the approvals granted herein, City standards, laws, and ordinances, and in compliance with all State and Federal laws, regulations, and standards. In the event of a conflict between City laws and standards and a State or Federal law, regulation, or standard, the stricter or higher standard shall control.
7. All development other than standard single-family homes, shall be subject to a Site Plan Review Permit prior to construction. This includes zero-lot line or small lot single-family homes.
8. The developer shall work with the City to implement the North Merced Major Roadway Improvement Impact Fee (NMMRIIF) (also referred to as a

Category II fee in the Bellevue Ranch Master Development Plan). The Developer shall provide any information necessary to allow the City to implement and administer this fee.

9. Community Facilities District (CFD) annexation is required for annual operating costs for police and fire services as well as storm drainage, public landscaping, street trees, street lights, parks and open space. CFD procedures shall be initiated before final map approval or issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy for any development that does not require a Final Map. Developer/Owner shall submit a request agreeing to such a procedure, waiving right to protest and post deposit as determined by the City Engineer to be sufficient to cover procedure costs and maintenance costs expected prior to first assessments being received. Bellevue Ranch West has already been annexed into the City's CFD for Services 2003-2. This condition shall apply only apply to the Bellevue Ranch North area that is not already annexed into the CFD.
10. Improvements that are eligible for reimbursement or credit through the Public Facilities Financing Program (PFFP) shall be subject to all requirements of City Administrative Police A-32 for reimbursement or credit. Reimbursement is available on a first in time basis and funds may not be available at the time of request. Credit may be given in lieu of reimbursement.
11. The developer shall provide all frontage improvements along all park sites as required by the City Engineer. The improvements shall be installed with the Village nearest the park site or at such time as required by the City Engineer. These improvements shall not be subject to reimbursement.
12. As allowed by the Bellevue Ranch Master Development Plan (BRMDP), full or partial fee credit of the park portion of the PFFP Impact Fee (or other park fee in effect at the time) shall be provided for linear parks.
13. All subsequent construction within the BRMDP area shall comply with Post Construction Standards in accordance with the requirement for the City's Phase II MS-4 Permit (Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System).
14. As subsequent development occurs within the BRMDP area, all storm water shall be retained onsite and metered out to the City's storm water system in accordance with City Standards.
15. All construction activity shall be conducted between the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m., Monday through Saturday.

16. The developer shall use proper dust control procedures during site development in accordance with San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District rules.

Findings and Considerations
Planning Commission Resolution #4125
General Plan Amendment #17-02
Site Utilization Plan Revision #12 to Planned Development (P-D) #42

FINDINGS/CONSIDERATIONS:

Bellevue Ranch Master Development Plan (BRMDP)

- A) The Bellevue Ranch Master Development Plan (BRMDP) was adopted in 1995. The Plan provides guidance on the development of over 1,300 acres of land. The Plan's concept is to develop a mixed-use development that would include single-family, multi-family, and commercial uses as well as schools, parks, and fire stations. The BRMDP divided the development area into three areas according to ownership at the time the plan was development (Areas 1, 2, 3, and 4). These areas are now known as Bellevue Ranch East (BRE), Bellevue Ranch West (BRW), and Bellevue Ranch North (BRN) (refer to the map at Attachment B for the boundaries of each area). The BRMDP identified development areas by villages and in some cases lots. As shown on the Table at Attachment I, which was excerpted from the BRMDP, the BRMDP shows a range for the number of residential units expected to be developed within the plan area. The range for single-family dwellings was between 4,084 and 4,979. The range for multi-family dwellings is between 759 and 1,669 units. This would provide a total range for residential units within the BRMDP of 4,843 to 6,648 units. The original master developers had planned to construct approximately 6,600 units in order to help pay for the infrastructure required within the BRMDP area.

The original Tentative Subdivision Map (TSM #1213) for Bellevue Ranch East and West is provided at Attachment J and shows the original design of these areas. Through the years, there have been changes made to the original design to accommodate needs that were not anticipated when the BRMDP was originally developed. These changes are not reflected on the Tentative Map at Attachment J. Some of the changes include the relocation of the high school site from the northeast corner of Cardella Road and M Street to the current location of the El Capitan High School located north of Bellevue Road and Farmland Avenue and G Street.

The Bellevue Ranch North (BRN) area was also identified the different development areas by villages and lots. A large lot tentative subdivision map (TSM #1280) was approved in 2006 and modified in 2022 (refer to the modified map at Attachment K). This map shows the villages and lots as they

are proposed to be developed today. The modifications made in 2022, reflect the changes necessary to accommodate the biological areas identified as being undevelopable.

Development within the Bellevue Ranch area began in the late 1990's and early 2000's with homes being constructed in the Bellevue Ranch East section of the master plan area. To date, the single-family residential areas have been completed within BRE area providing approximately 1,015 single family homes. There remains vacant area for multi-family and commercial development.

Most of the Bellevue Ranch West (BRW) area has also been developed or is approved for development, with the exception of Villages 18B, 19, 21, 22 A & B, and the R Street site referred to as Lot F on the original tentative map for Bellevue Ranch (TSM #1213 – Attachment J). Under the current land use designations, BRW would provide a total of 1,267 single family dwellings and approximately 340 multi-family units. There is also approximately 312,000 square feet of commercial uses designated for the BRW area.

Prior to Bellevue Ranch North being developed, a biological assessment was required. This assessment found areas of wetlands with sensitive biological species. Because of this, much of the Bellevue Ranch North area cannot be developed. Not only do the areas identified as wetlands have to be avoided, but a buffer area around the wetland areas must also be avoided. The map at Attachment D shows the areas identified as avoidance areas due to biological habitat. Due to the avoidance areas, the number of dwelling units that could be developed was reduced by approximately 1,500 units. This reduction is the catalyst for the proposed General Plan Amendment and Site Utilization Plan Revision. It should also be noted that as a result of the biological constraints identified on the map, Old Lake Road would not be able to be extended as originally proposed. A new alignment would have to be determined in the future to avoid these area. Due to the wetlands south of the current alignment of Old Lake Road, the new alignment would need to move the road to the north. In order to provide a connection to the Highway 59, Nevada Street (currently a County road that runs east of Highway 59) would be extended east to M Street (extended).

Proposed General Plan Amendment and Site Utilization Plan Revision Land Use Changes

- B) The applicant is requesting several changes to the existing General Plan and Site Utilization Plan land use designations as well as changes to Table 6.1 of

EXHIBIT B

OF PLANNING COMMISSION RESOLUTION #4125 - AMENDED

the Bellevue Ranch Master Development Plan (BRMDP) dealing with infrastructure and the timing for installing said infrastructure.

The proposed land use changes would amend the existing land use designations for several areas (villages) within the BRMDP area and re-configure several villages. The Villages affected include the following villages in BRW 19A and 19B, 21A and 21B, 22A and 22B, R Street Multi-Family. The Villages included in the proposed changes or reconfiguration in BRN include Villages 25, 26, 28A, 28B, 30, a portion of Lot J, 34A, 34B, 35A, and 35B (Attachment C).

The table below identifies the Villages included in the General Plan Amendment and Site Utilization Plan Revision, the current land use designation and the proposed land use designation. It is also noted if the change includes a reconfiguration of the village. Some of the Villages have been broken down into sub-villages (i.e., Village 19 A & 19 B) or remainder lots within a village (i.e. Village 30 – Lot D3) to differentiate the different land uses within the village.

Village	Acres	Current Land Use Designation	Proposed Land Use Designation
<i>Bellevue Ranch West (BRW)</i>			
18B	2.05	Park/Open Space	Low-Medium Density Residential
19A & 19B	10.55	Park/Open Space	High Medium Density Residential
21A & 21B	20.35	Regional/Community Commercial	Low Medium Density Residential
22 A & 22B	17.07	High Medium Density Residential	Low Medium Density Residential
R Street Multi-Family	5.81	Park/Open Space	High Medium Density Residential
<i>Bellevue Ranch North (BRN)</i>			
25A	<u>7.26</u>	School/Low Medium Density Residential	School
25B	<u>12.30</u>	Low Medium Density Residential	Park/Open Space
26	24.02	Low Medium Density Residential	Park/Open Space

Village	Acres	Current Land Use Designation	Proposed Land Use Designation
28B	6.77	Low Medium Density Residential	High Medium Density Residential
Lot B	1.46	Low Density Residential	Park/Open Space
Lot D1	1.21	Neighborhood Commercial	Park/Open Space
Lot D2	3.67	Low Medium Density Residential	Park/Open Space
Lot D3	1.16	Low Density Residential	Park/Open Space
Lot F	1.92	Low Density Residential	Park/Open Space
Lot G	9.42	Low Density Residential	Park/Open Space
Lot H	.70	Low Medium Density Residential	Park/Open Space
Lot J	1.45	Low Density Residential	Park/Open Space
34A & B	9.42	Village Residential	Low Density Residential
35A	3.73	High-Medium Density Residential	Neighborhood Commercial (13.65 acres) (Reconfigured)
35B	15.55	Neighborhood Commercial	Park/Open Space

Under the current General Plan land use designations, the following would be allowed: 1,816 dwelling units, 292,941 s.f. of Regional/Community Commercial, 301,653 s.f. of Neighborhood Commercial uses, and 5.81 acres of Open Space/Park.

With the proposed changes, the following would be allowed: 1,188 dwelling units, 161,934 s.f. of Neighborhood Commercial uses, and 52.5 acres of Open Space/Park.

The map and table at Attachment C shows the areas proposed to be changed with this request. The map at Attachment E shows the entire BRMDP area and includes the proposed land uses changes for the villages described in the table above. The map at Attachment F shows the BRMDP area with the proposed changes along with conceptual park and school designs, as well as conceptual landscaping throughout the area.

The table below shows the changes to the number of units by area (BRE, BRW, and BRN) between the approved BRMDP and the number of units proposed with the changes and existing units. The unit number includes both single-family and multi-family.

Area	Approved BRMDP	Proposed & Existing Units	Difference
BRE	1,375	1,429	+54
BRW	1,982	1,829	-153
BRN	3,305	1,814	-1,491
Total			-1,590

Although most of the proposed changes affect either open space or residential areas, the proposed changes to Village 21 A & B would change approximately 27 acres of land designated for Regional/Community Commercial to Low-Medium Density Residential. A discussion regarding this change is provided in Finding D. It should be noted that the land use plan for BRW included residential uses in Village 19 and the *Merced Vision 2015 General Plan* land use map showed this site as Low Density Residential. Because the plan to channelize Fahrens Creek on the west side of the BRMDP area was abandoned, a large portion of the site was designated by FEMA as a regulatory floodway which precluded development within that area. Recently a hydrology study was conducted and a Letter of Map Revision (LOMR) removing the floodway designation from the site was approved by FEMA. This change now allows the site to be developed. The LOMR also removed the R Street Multi-Family site from the floodway.

The proposed land use designations are the General Plan land use designations. The designations for the Site Utilization Plan would be as shown below to be consistent with the General Plan land use designations.

General Plan Designation	Site Utilization Plan Designation
Low-Medium Density (LMD)	Single-Family/Duplexes/Townhomes
High-Medium Density (HMD)	Multi-family

Proposed Site Utilization Plan Revision to Table 6.1

- C) The Site Utilization Plan Revision also includes changes to Table 6.1 of the BRMDP. Section 6 of the BRMDP addresses Phasing, Infrastructure Sequence, Facilities Benefits, and Financing Mechanisms. Table 6.1 of the BRMDP identifies the phasing of major infrastructure required with each village within the BRMDP area. The infrastructure phasing is only directed toward regional improvements such as arterial roads, intersection signalization, bridges, sewer lift stations, and water wells. Each village is responsible for the infrastructure within the village, such as interior roads, utilities, etc. The table is divided into 5 columns: Sub-phase (Village), Contiguous Improvements, Non-Contiguous Improvements, Interior Improvements, and Villages Able to Construct Out of Sequence with This Sub-Phase. The table with the proposed changes shown in green is provided at Attachment G. The proposed changes are also outlined in the table below.

Table 6.1 has previously been modified three times. The most recent changes in August 2008 were made to clarify some inconsistencies from the previous revision in June 2008.

The changes proposed for Table 6.1 would incorporate a North Merced Major Roadway Improvement Impact Fee (NMMRIIF) that would be assessed on certain construction within the BRMDP area to help pay for major roadway improvements. This fee was contemplated with the BRMDP and was referred to as Category II fees but was not implemented with the original plan. The improvements funded through the NMMRIIF would become City Capital Improvement Projects (CIP) which would be constructed when funds were available and when all right-of-way could be obtained (some of the roadway improvements are on land outside of the City Limits and out of the developer's control). The changes also identify the improvements that are eligible for reimbursement/credit through the City's Public Facilities Financing Program (PFFP) and improvements that would be made as part of a City Capital Improvement Project.

The proposed changes also include the elimination of certain bridges and a portion of roadway (Catherine A Hostetler Blvd.) that could not be installed due to the biologically sensitive areas in Bellevue Ranch North (refer to the map at Attachment H to see the proposed bridges and roadway to be eliminated).

To support the changes to Table 6.1, the applicant had an updated traffic study prepared for this project to reflect the reduction in units and the current level

of development. The study revealed that some improvements were not warranted as required by Table 6.1. Therefore, the requested update would modify the timing of some improvements as determined by the traffic analysis prepared by KD Anderson and Associates (KDA) and supplemented by a memo prepared by Fehr and Peers related to the Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) analysis (Appendix D of the Addendum to the *Merced Vision 2030* EIR at Attachment Q).

The proposed changes to Table 6.1 are outlined in the table below. Please note the following acronyms when reviewing the table: NMMRIIF – North Merced Major Roadway Improvement Impact Fee (proposed by developer); PFFP – Public Facilities Financing Plan (currently a City impact fee). Also, please note that the obligation for the development of the roadway segments would be as shown on the existing Table 6.1 (i.e., number of lanes required, etc.).

Village	Proposed Change
17	R St – Yosemite Ave. to Cardella Rd. to be funded through the NMMRIIF Cardella Rd. - Freemark Ave. to R St. to be funded through the NMMRIIF Fahrens Creek Bridge at Cardella Rd. to become a City Capital Improvement Project funded through PFFP. R St./Cardella Rd. Traffic Signal – to be installed when intersection is constructed. Signal is eligible for reimbursement through PFFP.
18	R St. – Cardella Rd. to Franciscan Dr. (now Arrow Wood) to be funded through the NMMRIIF R St. – Franciscan Dr. (now Arrow Wood) to Bellevue Rd. to be funded through the NMMRIIF Franciscan Dr. (Arrow Wood)/R St. Signal - to be installed when intersection is constructed. Signal is eligible for reimbursement through PFFP. R St./Bellevue Rd. Signal - to be installed when intersection is constructed. Signal is eligible for reimbursement through PFFP.

Village	Proposed Change
19	Responsible for Bellevue Rd. Frontage Franciscan Dr. (Arrow Wood) – from Freemark Ave. to R St. to be funded through the NMMRIIF Fahrens Creek Bridge at Francscan Ave. (Arrow Wood) - to be funded through the NMMRIIF
21	G St. – Bellevue Rd. to Merced College - to be funded through the NMMRIIF or Measure V funds G St. & Foothill Dr. Signal – to be installed as “warranted” per Traffic Study prepared by Traffic Engineering Consultant. PFFP Eligible.
24	Changed Old Lake Rd. to Nevada St. due to the fact that Old Lake Rd. can’t be extended to the west of G St. as originally planned.
25	Collector St./Fahrens Creek bridge – omit due to biological constraints (wetlands) preventing the construction of the bridge Collector St (Farmland Ave.)/Fahrens Cr Bridge (near Phase 30 – clarified that the Collector St is Farmland Ave.
26	Old Lake Rd (omit) due to biological constraints preventing the extension of road west of G St. Old Lake Rd/Fahrens Creek Bridge (omit) due to biological constraints preventing the extension of road west of G St. G St/Collector St (Farmland Ave) Signal – complete
29	N/S Collector /Fahrens Creek Bridge (between M & R St) – omit
30	R St: 2 lanes 1/ mile north of Bellevue to Bellevue Rd to be funded through the NMMRIIF Bellevue (changed from R St)/Fahrens Creek Bridge to become a City Capital Improvement Project funded through PFFP

As previously mentioned, the proposed changes to the timing of improvements are supported by a traffic analysis. Due to the reduction in the number of units, the infrastructure is not needed as originally planned.

General Plan Compliance and Policies Related to This Application

- D) The proposed General Plan and Site Utilization Plan Revision land use changes are shown on the map and table at Attachment C. The project would comply with the proposed General Plan and Site Utilization Plan land use designations if the requested General Plan Amendment and Site Utilization Plan Revision are approved.

The proposed land use changes also help provide areas for affordable housing potentially for homeownership rather than apartments for rent (additional information is provided in Finding E below).

Because the proposed changes would allow more housing units to be constructed than would currently be allowed due to the biological constraints in the Bellevue Ranch North area, the proposed General Plan Amendment and Site Utilization Plan Revision would achieve the General Plan Goals and Policies listed below:

Goal Area L-1: Residential & Neighborhood Development

- *A Wide Range of Residential Densities and Housing Types in the City*
- *Quality Residential Environments*

Policy L-1.2: Encourage a diversity of building types, ownership, prices, designs, and site plans for residential areas throughout the City.

Policy L-1.7: Encourage the location of multi-family developments on sites with good access to transportation, shopping, employment centers, and services.

Implementing Action 1.2.e Consider density increases for existing residential sites where the necessary conditions exist for higher densities.

Implementing Action 1.7a Designate areas adjoining arterial streets, major transportation routes, and commercial areas for multi-family development.

Housing Element Goal H-1: New Affordable Housing Construction

- *Increase the stock of affordable housing for very low, low, and moderate-income households.*

Policy H-1.2 Support Development of Affordable Housing.

Policy H-1.4 Provide Priority Review and Permitting for Affordable Housing Projects.

Policy H-1.8b Prioritize City efforts to encourage residential development by focusing on in-fill development and densification with the existing City Limits.

Housing Element Goal H-3: Housing Affordability

- *Increase Homeownership Opportunities for Low and Moderate Income Groups*

Urban Village Concept

The Urban Village Concept is the growth concept the City's General Plan has been based on for many years. This concept is based on mixed-use, pedestrian friendly and transit-friendly design principles. The BRMDP was based on this concept and the concept can clearly be seen when looking at the design of the BRMDP (i.e., the wagon wheel design at Bellevue Road and M Street).

Although the BRMDP was based on the Village Concept, the plan also realized that it may be necessary to make changes to the plan to accommodate specific needs in the future. Section 2.4 Commercial of the BRMDP describes the design of the commercial areas as being part of the Village core areas as described in the Village Concept. However, this section also states that "If necessary, these commercial areas may be redesignated to residential or office uses in the future."

As described in Finding A, the proposed change for Village 21A & B would change the land use designation from Regional/Community Commercial to Low-Medium Density Residential. It should be noted that there would still be approximately 21 acres of land on the east side of M Street that would have a Regional/Community Commercial land use designation which would still provide a large amount of commercial uses to the area. In addition, there is an approximately 8-acre Neighborhood Commercial site at the southeast corner of M Street and Cardella Road that would provide commercial uses for the area. North of Bellevue Road is approximately 23 acres of land designated as Commercial Office and at the north end of the BRMDP area, is an additional 13 acres of land (Village 35A) designated for Neighborhood Commercial uses. In addition to the commercial land use designations that would remain unchanged in the BRMDP area, the City is currently processing several annexations near the UC Merced campus that would include commercial uses, as well as the Rogina Annexation directly north of the

BRMDP area that would include a Neighborhood Commercial area. With the future improvements to Bellevue Road and the future transit system envisioned by the Bellevue Corridor Community Plan, the area near the UC Merced Campus would be easily accessible by alternative transportation. There is also commercial development at the corner of Yosemite and G Street that is easily accessible to the BRE and BRW areas.

Based on the discussion above, the change of the Regional/Community Commercial land use designation for Villages 21 A & in Bellevue Ranch West, would not violate the Village Concept of the General Plan or the BRMDP. In addition, the change would allow for much needed housing and the possibility of affordable single-family housing in this area.

Affordable Housing

- E) The BRMDP Environmental Impact Report (EIR) includes a mitigation measure that requires a total of 17.31% of all the units within the BRMDP area to be affordable. This requirement is substantially more than the RHNA Production Policy adopted by the City Council which required 12.5% of all units to be affordable (this requirement may be reduced in the near future depending on City Council action). The table below shows the affordable housing obligations by income level based on the range of total units proposed by the BRMDP.

Income Level	% of Project Housing
Very Low	4.33%
Low	6.63%
Moderate	6.35%
Total	17.31%

The obligation for affordable housing applies to the entire BRMDP area. However, the previous developers chose to defer the majority of the affordable housing development to a later time. Unfortunately, with the economic downturn in the early 2000's, the original developers abandoned the development and the majority of the affordable housing was never constructed. The exception was an 81-unit moderate-income subdivision at the northeast corner of M Street and Cardella Road, and an apartment project that was developed off-site to satisfy a portion of the affordable housing requirements. The apartment project was the Gateway Terrace Apartment

complex at 410 Leshar Drive in Merced. This complex provides 66 affordable housing units. This development was part of the obligation of the BRE area.

The current developer is committed to providing the affordable housing required by the mitigation measure for the areas he is developing (BRW and BRN). Based on the total number of units proposed for BRN and BRW, with the proposed land use changes, the total number of units constructed (single- and multi-family) would be 2,793. Based on the EIR mitigation measure, 485 affordable housing units would be required to satisfy the mitigation measure requirements. The developer has conceptually planned to provide affordable housing in the villages shown on the map at Attachment L. The City is currently working on an in-lieu fee program to allow a developer to pay a fee in-lieu of constructing the affordable units. The fee would go into the City's Housing Trust Fund. Although the developer has conceptually planned areas to provide affordable housing, he may opt to pay the in-lieu fee if that is an option based on the direction given by City Council in the near future.

One of the proposed land use changes as discussed in Finding B above is to change Villages 21A and B from Regional/Community Commercial to Low-Medium Density Residential. This change would allow for the development of approximately 60 zero-lot line townhomes that would be affordable to the moderate-income levels. This development would provide an opportunity for homeownership of these units. In addition, there would be an affordable component included in the multi-family developments within the areas designated as High-Medium Density (HMD) Residential which will incorporate low- and very low-income levels.

No Net Loss Finding (RHNA)

- F) Per California Government Code 65863, when a land use is proposed to be changed from residential to a non-residential land use or the density of the site is reduced, the City must demonstrate that sufficient residentially zoned land remains available to meet the City's Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA). According to Table 9.4.2 of the City's current Housing Element (adopted in 2016), the City has a total of 2,768 acres of planned residential vacant land within its limits. When analyzing sites that would accommodate the RHNA, the City considered those sites that would allow a minimum of 20 dwelling units per acre. These include land that has a General Plan designation of High-Medium Density (HMD) (allows 12-24 dwelling units/acre) and Village Residential (allows a minimum of 10 dwelling units/acre for an overall average of 30 dwelling units/acre). Villages 22 A and B are currently designated for High-Medium Density Residential (12-24

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units/acre). These parcels were included in the City's Housing Element as sites to meet the RHNA for affordable housing sites. Therefore, a change in land use, requires a finding of no net loss to confirm the City continues to have sufficient land zoned appropriately to meet the RHNA allocation.

The proposed General Plan Amendment and Site Utilization Plan Revision would change the land use designation for Villages 22 A and B (approximately 17 acres) from HMD Residential to Low-Medium Density (LMD) Residential (6-12 units/acre). While the change reduces the density for this site, there are other changes included in the project that would replace the sites lost through the proposed General Plan Amendment and Site Utilization Plan Revision. The Vacant Sites Analysis to accommodate the RHNA allocation for the City's 5th Cycle Housing Element (2016 to 2024) estimated that Villages 22 A and B would provide a realistic capacity of 256 units. As shown in the table below, there are four villages that are proposed to be changed to allow for High Medium Density Residential (12-24 units/acre). If approved the General Plan Amendment and Site Utilization Plan revision would change the land use designation for 23.3 acres of land as shown in the table below which would off-set the loss of Villages 22 A and B. The villages listed in the table below would provide approximately 466 housing units. This would be approximately 55% more units than would have been provided in Villages 22 A and B.

Village	Acres	Current GP Designation	Proposed GP Designation
19 A & B	10.55	OS/PK	HMD
R St.	5.81	OS/PK	HMD
28B	6.94	LMD	HMD

Additionally, as described in Finding E above, a minimum of 17.3% of all the units built in Bellevue Ranch West and Bellevue Ranch North are required to be affordable. Therefore, a total of 485 affordable housing units would be provided throughout the development.

Parks/Open Space

- G) Section 4 of the BRDP addresses Parks, Open Space, and Recreation. The amount of park land required was determined using the formula of 5 acres/1,000 population. Based on the original BRMDP, it was estimated that approximately 75 – 100 acres of park land would be required. This included a combination of neighborhood parks, minim parks, and community parks, as

well as linear parks and bike trails (refer to Conceptual Plan for Parks excerpted from the BRMDP at Attachment M). The proposed General Plan Amendment and Site Utilization Plan Revision includes changes to villages/lots designated for Open Space/Parks. As shown in the table in Finding E above, Villages 19 A and B and the R Street site are currently designated as Open Space/Park. These parcels are proposed to be changed to High Medium Density Residential. The map at Attachment M shows the land to be dedicated for open space/park use. The areas identified as wetlands on the wetland delineation map at Attachment D would be dedicated as open space. A portion of those areas could also be used as active park sites. The Table at Attachment O shows that with the existing open space/park land and the proposed open space/park land there would be approximately 293 acres of open space/park land within the BRMDP area. This total includes park/basin areas, linear parks, open space along Fahrens Creek, Cottonwood Creek, and the Parkinson Drain, and the parks previously dedicated in Bellevue Ranch East and West. Refer to the Conceptual Master Site Plan at Attachment F for park locations and conceptual park site designs.

Public Facilities

- H) Within the BRMDP area there are three school sites identified. The site where El Capitan High School is located within the BRN area, a site at the northwest corner of M Street and Arrow Wood Drive in BRW, and another site located northwest of El Capitan High School in the BRN area (refer to the map at Attachment P). There have also been sites dedicated for water well sites, sewer lift stations, and a site will be identified for a future fire station in the Bellevue Ranch North area.

Neighborhood Impact/Interface

- I) As previously discussed, much of the BRMDP area has already been developed with single-family housing in the BRE and BRW areas. The proposed changes in the BRW area include changing Villages 22 A and B from High-Medium Density (HMD) Residential to Low-Medium Density (LMD) Residential. This change would change the development for these villages from multi-family to single-family development (this could include duplexes, zero-lot-line townhomes, etc.). Multi-family development is proposed in Village 19 A & B and the R Street site south of Cardella Road.

The nearest occupied homes near Villages 22 A & B are at the corner of M Street and Barclay Way. There are houses under construction in Villages 17

and 18 west of M Street, but no occupied homes yet. Because most single-family neighborhoods do not favor having multi-family units nearby, the proposed change for Villages 22 A & B would most likely be welcomed by the existing and future residents in the area.

There are no occupied homes within the BRMDP area near Villages 19 A & B. There are ranchettes across Bellevue Road to the north. The impacts from multi-family on the ranchettes is expected to be minimal given the width of Bellevue Road and the requirement for a wall along Bellevue Road when Village 19 develops.

The R Street site is bounded by Fahrens Creek to the east and R Street to the west. There are existing single-family homes across Fahrens Creek to the east and across R Street to the west. These neighborhoods would be most likely to be impacted by the proposed land use changes. Approval of the General Plan Amendment and Site Utilization Plan Revision would allow the development of multi-family housing on this site which was previously designated as Open Space/Park. This site was originally designated as Open Space due to the flood hazard designation for the site. Prior to the recent approval of a Letter of Map Revision (LOMR) through FEMA for the Bellevue Ranch area which amended the flood zone designation for certain sites within the BRMDP area, this site was partially designated as a floodway which would not allow development. The recent changes to the flood zone removed this site from the floodway which would allow the site to be developed. Although the construction of a multi-family development would have some impact on the single-family neighborhoods, the fact that both neighborhoods have a buffer between the site (Fahrens Creek to the east and R Street to the west) reduces some of the potential impacts. Additionally, access to the site would not be through either neighborhood which would reduce any traffic-related impacts to the existing neighborhoods. Prior to development of the R Street site (as with the other multi-family sites), a Site Plan Review Permit would be required. Through this permit process, the impacts of development would be reviewed and conditions placed to reduce potential impacts.

The overall BRMDP area could be affected by the reduction of commercial land along Bellevue Road. The reduction of commercial land would reduce the amount of land available for the development of large retail centers that would be within walking/biking distance of most of the development. However, as discussed in Finding D, reduction in the amount of commercial land to allow for more residential development was contemplated by the

BRMDP. Additionally, there would still be over 20 acres of retail commercial land at Bellevue Road and M Street. In addition, based on the current trend, many retailers are reducing the number of brick and mortar buildings they have and rely more on online retail. Although the proposal includes the reduction of commercial land, the commercial development at Yosemite Avenue and G Street is within 2 miles or less of most of the development within the BRMDP area. It should also be noted that as the City continues to grow and the annexations near UC Merced develop, additional retail areas would develop that would be accessible by future bike/walking facilities and public transit.

Land Use/Density Issues

- J) The BRMDP area was intended to develop between 4,843 and 6,648 dwelling units (single-and multi-family). With the identification of the wetlands in the BRN area, the number of units that could be developed based on the current land use designations was reduced by approximately 1500 units. In order to offset that loss in units, the developer has requested the land use changes. The proposed densities and land uses remain consistent with the General Plan and BRMDP.

Environmental Clearance

- K) Pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the project was reviewed and an Addendum to the Environmental Impact Report for the *Merced Vision 2030 General Plan* (SCH #2008071069) was prepared. This Addendum is provided at Attachment Q of Planning Commission Staff Report #23-979. The Addendum concluded that no additional impacts would be caused by the proposed change.