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**To:** [Planning Division](#)  
**Subject:** Item 6-1 (Albers Ranch) for November 20 Planning Commission meeting  
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Dear Planning Commissioners and Staff:

I would like to see more than 70 percent plant species that are native to Antioch or California, with the majority of plants to be keystone species that are locally native, incorporated into the landscaping within parks, developed areas, and open space for the Albers Ranch project.

I would also like to see the development plans created to incorporate Sand Creek as an amenity. Similar to the developments in the City of Brentwood's Three Creeks project, where possible, face the houses toward the creek; provide trails from which people can view the creek; and incorporate parks, pocket parks, and/or picnic tables near the creek so people can enjoy the creek and its wildlife. See <https://www.ccrd.org/marsh-creek-watershed> for more information.

As you know, pollinators and insects are in trouble. And humans need pollinators to provide the majority of the food that we consume, and other insects are the foundation of the food webs and ecosystems that humans rely on.

Pollinators are required to grow cherries, peaches, tomatoes, avocados, apples, almonds, walnuts, oranges, peppers, potatoes, and so many other foods, all of which are grown either less than 100 miles of here or in the state of California.

Pollinators are also required to pollinate the forage that chickens and beef eat, too, so if we lose pollinators, we won't have chicken, beef, or dairy products to eat either. More information is available at <https://www.scientia.global/pollinator-decline-implications-for-food-security-environment/>.

Please shape the landscaping plans to include more than 70 percent native plants, with an emphasis on keystone native plants that support pollinators (butterflies, moths, bees, etc.), birds, and other wildlife (many of which need insects, etc. as a food source).

Wildlife in California has declined by 20 percent, and at least 600 species in California are endangered.

Two of the top reasons why pollinators and wildlife in general are in decline are habitat loss and pesticide use.

Why is it important to landscape with locally native plants that are keystone species? Because life depends on it. Local birds and pollinators need our help. They are in severe decline because "traditional" landscape that is filled with exotic ornamentals is a "dead zone" for nature. Why? Because most insects need the native plants they have evolved with to thrive and reproduce. Birds, in turn, need insects, especially caterpillars, to feed their young.

For more information on why it is critically important to use keystone plant species that are locally native in landscaping, please visit <https://www.bringingbackthenatives.net/douglas-tallamy-resources> and <https://www.bringingbackthenatives.net/keystone-species-signs>.

Please redo the landscaping plans so that they use locally native plants that are keystone species. You can find a list of what plants would be appropriate at <https://www.bringingbackthenatives.net/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Best-Plants-for-Bay-Area-Gardens-Marshall.pdf>.

You can also find out what plants are native to the project site and what types of wildlife each plant supports by visiting <https://calscape.org/>.

A City of Santa Monica nine-year study found that native plant gardens are cost-effective, environmentally beneficial, and easy to replicate. The city studied a native plant garden versus a traditional garden and documented that the native plant garden used 83 percent less water, generated 56 percent less green waste, and requires 68 percent less maintenance than the traditional garden. More information is available at <https://www.smgov.net/uploadedFiles/Departments/OSE/Categories/Landscape/garden-garden-2013.pdf>.

Antioch has a rich heritage of biodiversity and is worthy of our efforts to support and restore that biodiversity. The people of Antioch deserve projects that support pollinators, upon which we all depend, and other wildlife.

Thank you.

Laura Kindsvater  
Antioch resident