

Town of Danville
Notice of Preparation and Notice of Public Scoping Meeting
Martin Hills Ranch Residential Project

Date: January 21, 2025

To: State Clearinghouse and Interested Public Agencies, Parties, and Organizations

From: David Crompton, Chief of Planning, Town of Danville Planning Division

Subject: Notice of Preparation of an Environmental Impact Report for the Martin Hills Ranch Residential Project and Notice of Public Scoping Meeting

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT the Town of Danville (Lead Agency and Town) will prepare a Draft Environmental Impact Report (Draft EIR) for the proposed Martin Hills Ranch Residential Project (proposed project). The Draft EIR will address the potential physical and environmental effects of the proposed project for each of the environmental topics outlined in the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Appendix G thresholds. The Town will use the Draft EIR when considering approval of the proposed project. Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15082, the project description, location, and potential environmental effects of the proposed project are described in the attached materials and available on the project website at <https://danilletowntalks.org/private-land-development>.

30-DAY NOTICE OF PREPARATION COMMENT PERIOD: The Town is soliciting comments from public agencies, organizations, and members of the public regarding the scope and content of the Draft EIR and the environmental issues and alternatives to be addressed in the Draft EIR. In accordance with the time limits established by CEQA, the Notice of Preparation (NOP) public review period will begin on **January 21, 2025**, and will end on **February 20, 2025**. Please provide your written/typed comments (including name, affiliation, telephone number, and contact information) to David Crompton via email at dcrompton@danville.ca.gov or mail to the address shown below by **5:00 p.m., on Friday, February 20, 2025**. If you wish to be placed on the notification list for this proposed project or need additional information, please contact:

David Crompton, Chief of Planning
Town of Danville, Planning Division
500 La Gonda Way
Danville, CA 94526
Phone: 925.314.3349
Email: dcrompton@danville.ca.gov

PUBLIC SCOPING MEETING: The Town will hold a Public Scoping Meeting to: (1) inform the public and interested agencies about the proposed project; and (2) solicit public comment on the scope of the environmental issues to be addressed in the Draft EIR as well as the range of alternatives to be evaluated. The meeting will be held on **Tuesday, January 28, 2025**, during the Town's regularly scheduled Planning Commission Meeting starting at **5:00 p.m.** The Planning Commission Meeting will be held at the following location:

Danville Town Meeting Hall
201 Front Street
Danville, CA 94526

Information regarding the Planning Commission meetings, agendas, and meetings as well as instructions for submitting public comments at in-person meetings is available at the following website: <https://www.danville.ca.gov/129/Meetings-Agendas-Minutes>. Please contact the City Clerk at 925.314.3401 or email cityclerk@danville.ca.gov with any additional questions.

MARTIN HILLS RANCH RESIDENTIAL PROJECT

Project Location and Setting

Location

Regional

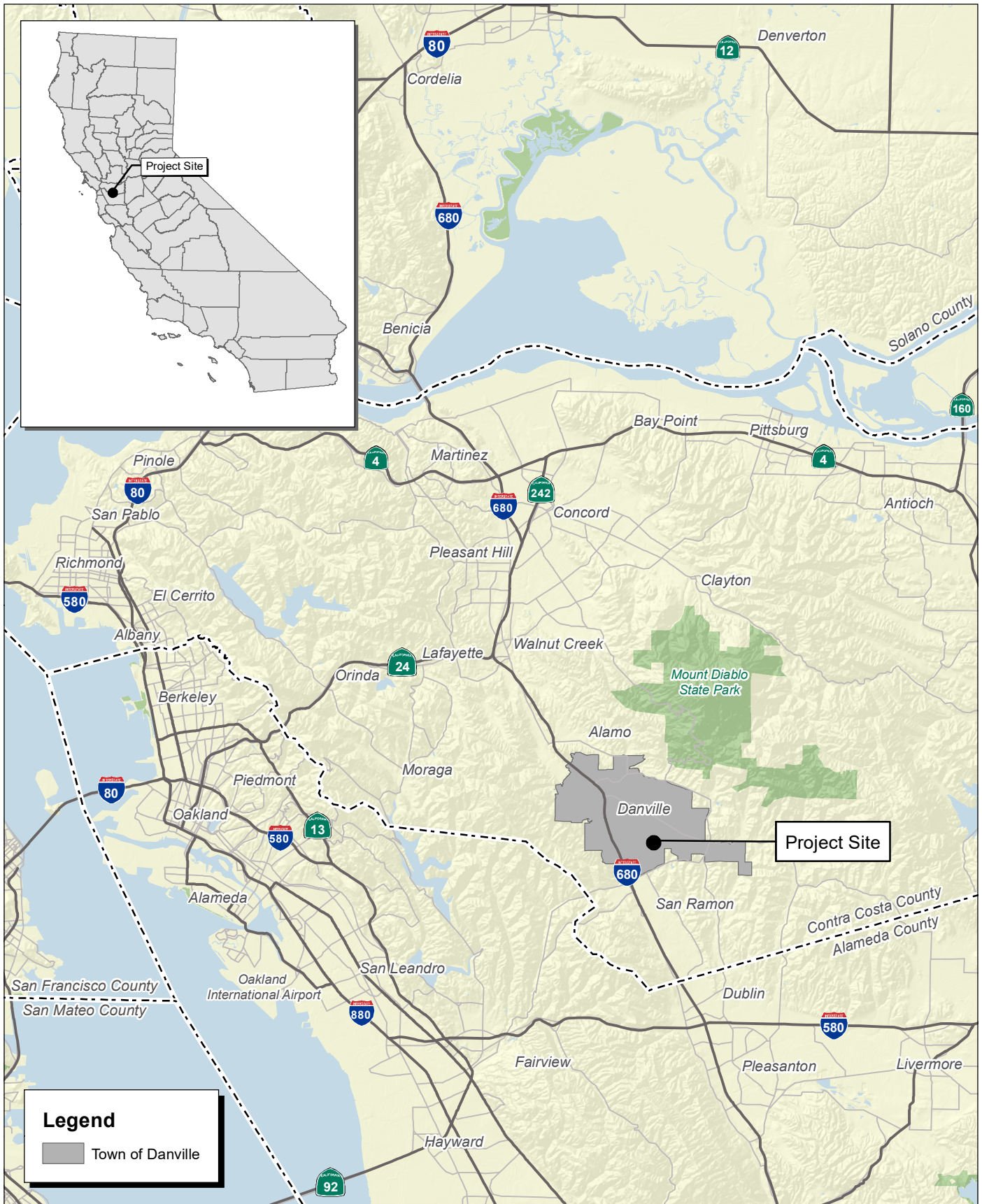
The Town is located in the eastern San Francisco Bay Area of Northern California. The Town is bordered to the north by the unincorporated community of Alamo, to the east by the unincorporated communities of Blackhawk and Diablo, to the south by the City of San Ramon, and to the west by the Las Trampas Regional Wilderness Park and unincorporated Contra Costa County (Exhibit 1). Located in southwestern Contra Costa County, the Town covers approximately 18 square miles and has historically been a suburban community serving major employment centers to the west (e.g., the City of San Francisco) and to the south (e.g., the City of San José). Regional access to the Town is provided by Interstate 680 (I-680) and State Route (SR) 24 to the west and I-580 to the south.

Local Setting

The approximately 102-acre project site is located off Borica Drive and Como Way; however, development under the proposed project would only occur within 29 acres in the southeastern portion of the site (Exhibit 2). The project site does not currently have a street address but can be accessed at the eastern ends of Borica Drive and Como Way. The project site consists of five Assessor's Parcel Numbers (APNs): 218-010-008, 218-010-009, 218-010-010, 218-010-011, and 218-010-012.

Presently, the project site is vacant and varies topographically. The northeastern and western portions of the project site are steep and hilly with a relatively flat plateau at the highest point of the project site. The northern and eastern portions of the project site contain some small ravines and natural drainage features following the natural drainage downward. Overall, the project site has a total elevation gain of approximately 165 feet from the lowest portion of the project site in the southeast, which is approximately 590 feet above mean sea level (AMSL) to the highest point of the project site, approximately 754 feet AMSL.

The project site is located within the *Diablo, California* United States Geological Survey (USGS) 7.5-minute Topographic Quadrangle Map (Latitude 37° 47' 54.15" North; Longitude 121° 57' 30.94" West).



Source: Census 2000 Data, The California Spatial Information Library (CaSIL).

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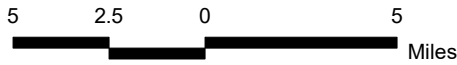
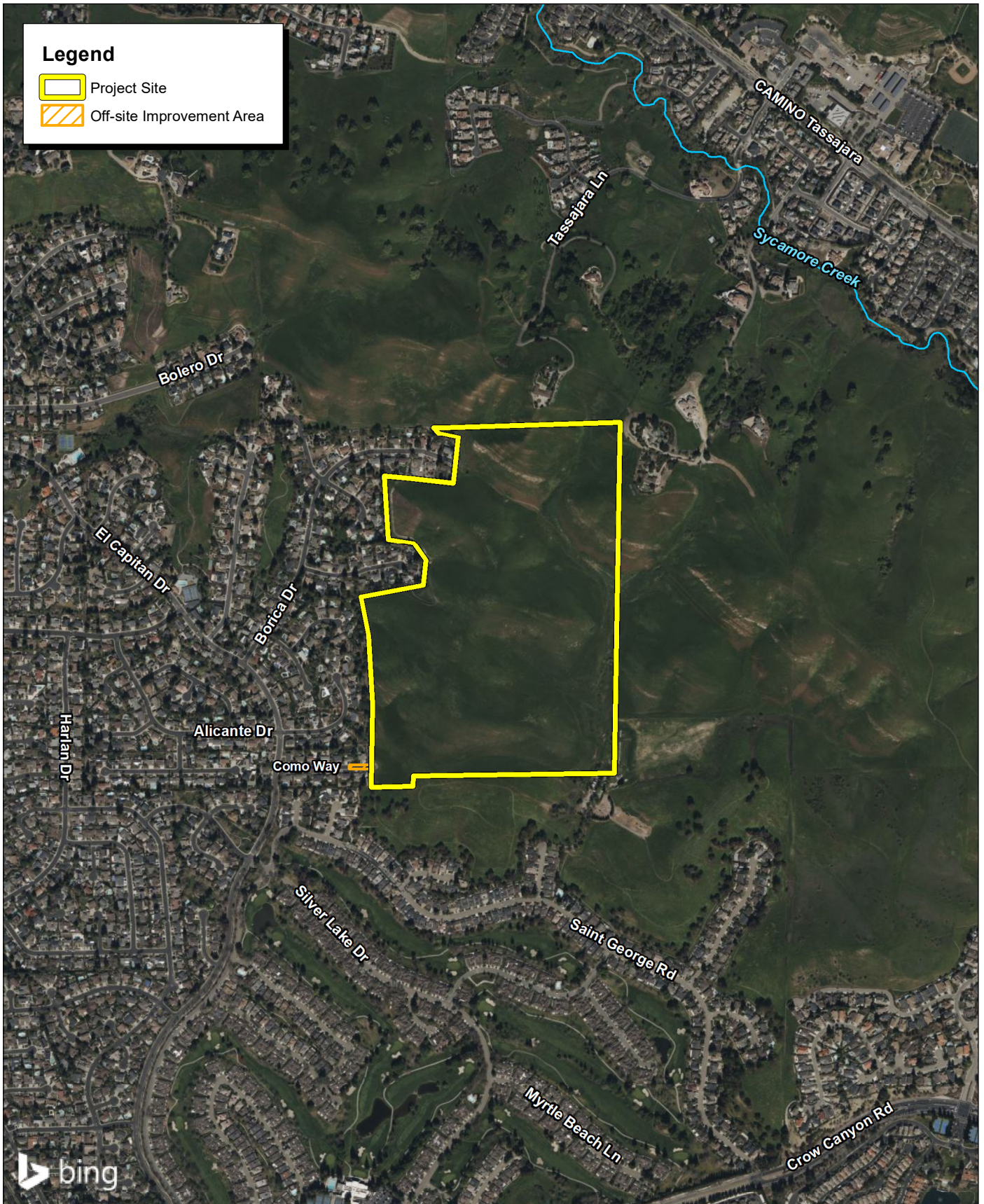


Exhibit 1 Regional Location Map



Source: Bing Aerial Imagery. County of Contra Costa. CBG Civil Engineers, January 2025



Existing Land Use Designation and Zoning

The project site is designated Agriculture by the Town of Danville 2030 General Plan (2030 General Plan). In 1997, the Williamson Act Contracts that applied to the project site expired and were not renewed. However, the expiration of the Williamson Act Contracts were not properly recorded; therefore, when the current General Plan was adopted, the properties under this land use designation were incorrectly identified as bound by Williamson Act Contracts to remain in agricultural use. The Town officially filed the expiration of the Williamson Act Contract on August 21, 2024.

While the property is still zoned A-4, because the project site's Williamson Act Contract has expired, the site is entitled to return to the A-2, General Agricultural Zoning District, which applied prior to the Williamson Act Contract. The A-2 district permits all types of agriculture, including farming, horticultural, and livestock production, other agricultural uses, such as sheds, warehouse, and granaries, and a detached single-family dwelling and accessory structures on each parcel. The A-2 district allows residential uses at a density of one unit per 5 acres.

Surrounding Land Uses

The project site is surrounded by the following land uses:

North

The General Plan designates the vacant land immediately north of the project site as Residential, Single-family—Rural Residential (Rural Residential), as well as General Open Space, and the existing single-family homes north of the project site as Residential, Single-family—Country Estate (Country Estate), and Residential, Single-family—Low Density (SFL).

South

The General Plan designates the vacant lands south of the project site as General Open Space and the existing single-family homes farther south of the project site as Residential, Single-family—Medium Density (SFM).

East

The General Plan designates the vacant lands east of the project site as Rural Residential and General Open Space.

West

The General Plan designates the existing single-family homes west of the project site as SFL and SFM.

Project Description

Proposed Residential Project

The project applicant proposes to construct 20 single-family homes, with approximately 25 percent (five homes) being designed with accessory dwelling units (ADUs) (Exhibit 3). The residential lots

would be clustered in the southeastern portion of the approximately 102-acre project site. The proposed project is expected to generate approximately 70 residents.^{1,2}

The 20 residential lots would range between 14,553 square feet and 25,387 square feet and the proposed project would also include several agricultural lots located north and west of the residences. Furthermore, the proposed project would construct project access off Como Way and internal streets to provide internal circulation within the project site.

Land Use Designation and Proposed Zoning

The proposed project includes the development of 20 residential lots and 5 ADUs. The site's General Plan land use designation is Open Space–Agricultural. The Town's A-2; General Agricultural District is listed as Consistent with this land use designation. As previously discussed, the project site's Williamson Act Contract was not renewed; therefore, its underlying zoning district would apply to the proposed project. The applicable A-2 District permits one dwelling unit per 5 acres. Given that the project site is approximately 102 acres, the existing zoning for the project site would allow up to 20 residential lots. However, because the project applicant proposes to cluster the residential lots in the southeast corner of the project site, the proposed project would require a rezone to Planned Unit Development District (P-1).

The Town's 2030 General Plan includes the subject "Elworthy East/Bolero" site as a Special Concern Area, and provides additional direction to guide development of the site. Language within the Special Concern Area acknowledges the limited development potential of the site, and requires that that steeper slopes and ridgeline areas be preserved as permanent open space.

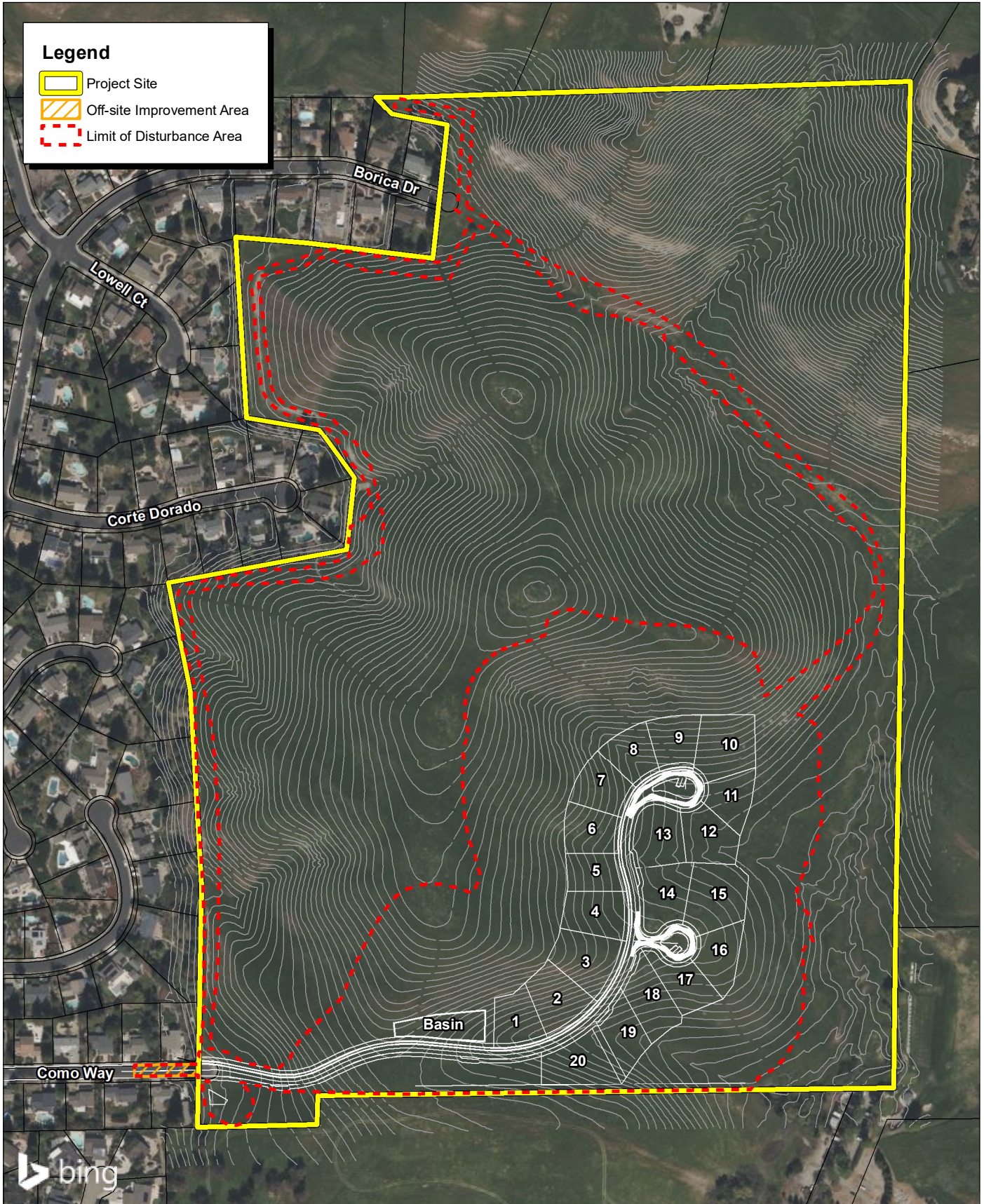
Site Access, Circulation, and Parking

Vehicle

The project site would be accessed via a proposed private extension of Como Way at the southwestern corner of the project site that would serve all of the proposed lots within the proposed project. There would be one cul-de-sac off the proposed Como Way extension that would serve Lots 13, 14, 15, and 16 (Court A). The proposed Como Way extension would terminate at the northeastern corner of the residential development area near Lots 9, 10, 11, and 12. In addition to the two- to three-car garages attached to each proposed single-family home and the parking available within the driveway, the proposed project would also provide 10 parking spaces on internal streets. Specifically, two on-street parking stalls would be provided in front of Lot 18, two on-street parking stalls would be provided in front of Lot 16, four on-street parking stalls would be provided in front of Lots 12 and 13, and two on-street parking stalls in front of Lot 8.

¹ Project population calculated by multiplying the total number of dwelling units (19 single-family homes and five ADUs) by the Town's average household size of 2.75 persons (24 x 2.75 = 66).

² United States Census Bureau. 2024. QuickFacts: Danville own, California. Website: <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/danvilletowncalifornia/INC110222>. Accessed July 11, 2024.



Source: Bing Aerial Imagery. CBG Civil Engineers, January 2025



**Exhibit 3
Site Plan**

Access for emergency response vehicles would also be provided by a fire trail extending from Borica Drive on the northwestern portion of the project site and from a proposed extension of Como Way on the southwestern portion of the project site. Additionally, in accordance with Fire Department requirements, fire apparatus roads with adequate width and turnaround provisions would also be provided on-site.

Transit

Bus

Bus transit services in the vicinity of the project site are provided by County Connection. County Connection provides bus service to and from the Dublin/Pleasanton and Walnut Creek Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) Stations to the Town, including the Sycamore Valley Park and Ride.

Rail

BART is a regional rail transit service that operates within the County and provides connections to Contra Costa, San Francisco, Alameda, and San Mateo counties. The nearest BART stations are the Dublin/Pleasanton BART Station, approximately 7.46 miles south of the project site, and the Walnut Creek BART Station, approximately 9.48 miles northwest of the project site.

Bicycle and Pedestrian

Currently, there are no existing bicycle lanes on Como Way adjacent to the project site. The nearest bicycle route to the proposed project is a Class III bicycle route along El Capitan Drive, connecting to Camino Ramon and Crow Canyon Road, approximately 700 feet west of the project site. In addition, the Iron Horse Regional Trail, which connects to the Class III bicycle route on El Capitan Drive, is located approximately 1 mile west of the project site. The Iron Horse Regional Trail provides a multiuse bicycle/pedestrian pathway, running from the City of Pleasanton to the City of Concord. Pedestrian sidewalks currently exist along Como Way and the streets in the project vicinity. No sidewalks would be provided along the proposed extension of Como Way.

Landscaping

The proposed project would plant a total of 137 trees, including 16 different tree species. Trees would be planted along the proposed extension of Como Way, including within the median of Court A and the terminus of the proposed extension of Como Way and along the edges of the proposed bioretention areas at the entrance to the proposed development. Landscaping alongside roadways would consist of drought-tolerant trees species requiring minimal irrigation, fertilization, and maintenance.

Utilities

Domestic Water

Water service to the project site would be provided by the East Bay Municipal Utility District (EBMUD). Water service to the project site would be provided by a connection to proposed off-site 8-inch diameter water lines in the southwest corner of the project site. Water service throughout the project site would be provided in 8-inch diameter water lines under the proposed internal streets.

Stormwater Drainage

The proposed project would connect to an existing 15-inch storm drain within Como Way. Storm drains would range from approximately 12 inches to 24 inches within the project site. The proposed project would include two drainage management areas (DMAs), including two bioretention areas, as stormwater treatment features:

- **DMA 1:** DMA 1 would include the residential lots and the majority of the internal roadways, totaling approximately 10.56 acres. DMA 1 would include one bioretention area (Bioretention Area 1) located along the north side of the proposed extension of Como Way, directly west of Lot 1, totaling approximately 10,560 square feet. DMA 1 would be routed to a new outfall in the eastern channel of the project site.
- **DMA 2:** DMA 2 would include an approximately 2.80-acre area just west of the existing terminus of Como Way. It would contain one approximately 1,140-square-foot bioretention area (Bioretention Area 2) located just south of the proposed Como Way extension at the entrance of the proposed development. DMA 2 would drain to an existing storm drain within Como Way.

Additionally, the proposed project would also construct a debris berm and V-ditch in the western boundary adjacent to existing homes.

Sanitary Sewer

Sanitary sewer service for the proposed project would be provided by Central Contra Costa Sanitary District (Central San). Sanitary sewer service to the project site would be provided by a connection to proposed off-site 8-inch diameter sewer lines in the southwest corner of the project site. Sanitary sewer service throughout the project site would be provided in 8-inch diameter sanitary sewer lines under the proposed internal streets.

Solid Waste and Recycling Collection

The proposed project would be served by Republic Services, which provides recycling and solid waste collection to the Town through Central Contra Costa County Solid Waste Authority (RecycleSmart). RecycleSmart provides solid waste services for Central Contra Costa County residents and businesses and is contracted with Republic Services for the collection, transfer, and disposal of garbage, recycling, and organics.

Power and Telecommunications

Electric and gas services for the proposed project would be provided by Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E). The proposed project would connect to existing utility lines in Como Way. AT&T would provide phone services, and Comcast would provide phone and high-speed internet services.

Phasing and Construction

The proposed project would be constructed in one phase beginning in Summer 2026 and would take approximately 12–15 months to complete, dependent on when the sale of proposed dwelling units

Project Objectives

The project objectives and underlying purposes of the proposed project are to:

- Convert a vacant, underutilized property into a residential development in alignment with the Town of Danville’s General Plan.
- Generate new, additional property tax revenues for the Town of Danville through the conversion of unused property.
- Provide high-end homes to create a move-up large lot community.
- Create a private community of homes nestled in a secluded environment surrounded by open space.
- Create a residential community surrounded by the site’s ridges, which will remain as open space or potentially be farmed to enhance the homes’ secluded location.
- Provide stormwater and residential water run-off consistent with the existing natural site drainage.
- Promote land use compatibility with neighboring residential uses by the development of compatible housing product density to nearby existing residential development.
- Provide a circulation system that minimizes the number of homes to lessen any traffic impacts to existing neighborhoods.
- Provide an infrastructure system, including sewer, water, and storm drain systems, that will adequately serve full buildout of the proposed project.
- Provide adequate off-street parking for all on-site uses so as not to impact the development’s neighbors.
- Provide for the development to have adequate separation from existing neighbors.
- Provide improved drainage and potential slide protection from the project’s property for the adjacent neighborhood.
- Meet the objectives of the Town of Danville for new housing.
- Provide affordable housing consistent with the Town of Danville’s affordable housing requirements by the use of Accessory Dwelling Units or Lock-off Units.
- Enhance the living experience in adjacent neighborhoods by use of an architectural character and style that is consistent with the character of neighboring communities and the Town of Danville.
- Provide additional character and sense of arrival to the community by providing a long (approximately 1,000 feet) landscaped entry road.
- Provide signage and entry monumentation and landscape feature to announce the entry to the development.
- Preserve Town of Danville’s protected ridgeline.

- Maintain the existing natural beauty by preserving the site’s existing creek and establishing grading setbacks to accomplish preservation.
- Avoid protected wetlands or provide wetland mitigation measures.
- Repair landslides on the project site.

Required Discretionary and Ministerial Approvals

Discretionary approvals and permits are required by the Town of Danville for implementation of the proposed project. The proposed project would require the following discretionary approvals and actions, including:

- Approval of the Final EIR
- Approval of a Development Plan application
- Approval of a Vesting Tentative Map
- Approval of Rezoning application, rezoning the site from A-4, Agricultural Preserve District, to P-1, Planned Unit Development District.

Subsequent ministerial actions would be required for the implementation of the proposed project including issuance of grading and building permits.

A number of other agencies in addition to the Town of Danville will serve as Responsible and Trustee Agencies, pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15381 and Section 15386, respectively. These agencies may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)
- California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW)
- EBMUD
- PG&E
- United State Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)
- California State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board)
- Central San
- San Ramon Fire Protection District (SRFPD)

Environmental Review

Following completion of the 30-day NOP public review period, the Town will incorporate relevant information into the Draft EIR, including results of public scoping and technical studies. Subsequently, the Draft EIR will be circulated for public review and comment for a 45-day public review period.

The Town requests that any potential Responsible or Trustee Agency responding to this notice do so in a manner consistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15082(b). All parties that have submitted their names and emails or mailing addresses will be notified throughout the CEQA review process.

A copy of the NOP (in full color) can be found on the Town’s website:
<https://danvilletowntalks.org/private-land-development>.

If you wish to be placed on the mailing list or need additional information, please contact David Crompton, Chief of Planning, Town of Danville Planning Division, at 925.314.3349 or dcrompton@danville.ca.gov.

Potential Environmental Effects

The Draft EIR will evaluate if there are potentially significant environmental impacts associated with approval and implementation of the proposed project. Consistent with the CEQA Guidelines (Appendix G), the Draft EIR will analyze the reasonably foreseeable direct, indirect, and cumulative effects of the proposed project on focused resources, including, but not limited to:

- Aesthetics, Light, and Glare
- Agricultural and Forestry Resources
- Air Quality
- Biological Resources
- Cultural Resources and Tribal Cultural Resources
- Energy
- Geology, Soils, and Seismicity
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- Hydrology and Water Quality
- Land Use and Planning
- Noise
- Public Services
- Recreation
- Transportation
- Utilities and Service Systems
- Wildfire

Potentially Significant Environmental Issues

In preparation of the NOP and the Project Description, the Town has found that the following topical areas may contain potentially significant environmental issues that will require further analysis in the Draft EIR. These topical areas are as follows:

- **Biological Resources**—The proposed project site contains an environment with ephemeral drainages and seasonal wetlands, which are protected by State and federal laws. Impacts to these aquatic features could be potentially significant unless fully mitigated through the implementation of mitigation measures or design features.
- **Geology, Soils, and Seismicity**—The proposed project site contains a documented history of landslides and differing elevations and slopes. Impacts related to geology and soils could be potentially significant unless fully mitigated through the implementation of mitigation measures or design features.
- **Transportation**—The proposed project includes the extension of Como Way to serve the proposed homes in addition to the existing homes along Como Way. Impacts related to traffic could be potentially significant unless fully mitigated through the implementation of mitigation measures of design features.

Effects Found not to be Significant

Unless specific comments are received during the NOP public comment period that indicate a potential for the proposed project to result in a significant impact, the following issues will be addressed in the Effects Found not to be Significant section of the Draft EIR.

- **Mineral Resources**—The 2030 General Plan Final EIR (2030 General Plan FEIR) identified that no portion of the Town is designated by the California Department of Conservation as having the potential to be a significant source of composite materials or industrial minerals. Additionally, there are no known locally important mineral resources within the Town. As such, the proposed project would have no impact related to mineral resources.
- **Population and Housing**—The proposed project would include 20 single-family homes and five deed-restricted ADUs. As such, the proposed project would be expected to generate approximately 70 residents. The current population of the Town is approximately 44,000 persons. The General Plan EIR projected an increase up to approximately 50,760 persons in the year 2030. As such, the increase of approximately 70 persons estimated under the proposed project would be well within the projected population increase of the General Plan EIR as the current population of the Town is approximately 42,299 persons. Therefore, the proposed project would not result in unplanned population growth. Additionally, the project site is currently vacant, containing no residential structures. Therefore, the proposed project would not displace existing persons or housing, and there would be no impacts related to displacement of persons or housing.