



**COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT**

CITY HALL

10300 TORRE AVENUE • CUPERTINO, CA 95014-3255

(408) 777-3308 • FAX (408) 777-3333

**Notice of Preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Report**

**Vallco Special Area Specific Plan**

File Number EA-2017-05

**February 9, 2018**

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**To:** State Clearinghouse, Responsible Agencies, Trustee Agencies, Other Public Agencies, Interested Parties, and the County Clerk of Santa Clara

**From:** City of Cupertino, Community Development Department  
10300 Torre Avenue  
Cupertino, CA 95014  
Contact: Piu Ghosh, Principal Planner ([piug@cupertino.org](mailto:piug@cupertino.org), 408-777-3308)

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Notice is hereby given that the City of Cupertino (“City”), as the Lead Agency, will prepare an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the Vallco Special Area Specific Plan (hereinafter referred to as the “project”). This Notice of Preparation (NOP) has been prepared in compliance with California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines §15082. The purpose of this NOP is to solicit comments from the public and public agencies on the scope and content of the EIR for the project.

The City has determined that a Draft EIR will be prepared for the Vallco Special Area Specific Plan. An EIR is a detailed statement prepared under CEQA describing and analyzing the significant environmental effects of a project and discussing ways to mitigate or avoid the effects. Consistent with CEQA Guidelines §15206, the project is considered of statewide, regional, or areawide significance.

Members of the public and public agencies are invited to provide comments on the scope and content of the EIR to the City. The City would like to know the views of your agency as to the scope and content of the environmental information germane to your agency's statutory responsibilities in connection with the proposed project. Your agency may use the EIR prepared by the City when considering your permits or other approvals for the project.

Due to the time limits mandated by state law, **your response must be sent** at the earliest possible date, but **no later than** the close of the 30-day NOP review period on **Monday, March 12, 2018 by 4:30 p.m.** Please send your responses to the City at one of the following addresses below. Please include the name of a contact person for your agency.

You are encouraged to email your comments to: [planning@cupertino.org](mailto:planning@cupertino.org). As an alternative, you may submit written comments to the following address:

City of Cupertino, Community Development Department  
Attention: Piu Ghosh, Principal Planner  
10300 Torre Avenue  
Cupertino, CA 95014

If you submit comments on the scope and content of the EIR, you will automatically be added to the City's distribution list for future notices and information about the environmental review process for the project. If you do not wish to submit comments on the scope of the EIR, but would like to receive updates on the project, please sign up to receive e-updates at [www.envisionvallco.org](http://www.envisionvallco.org) or submit your mailing address to receive mailed notices.

In addition, the City will hold a **Public EIR Scoping Meeting** to receive comments regarding the scope and content of the EIR on **Thursday, February 22, 2018** from **6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.** at the **Cupertino Community Hall** (10350 Torre Avenue, next to the library). An Open House will be hosted immediately prior to the EIR Scoping Meeting **between 6:00 p.m. and 6:30 p.m.** to help interested persons learn more about the environmental review process. Members of the public and public agencies are welcome to attend.

The proposed project, its location, and potential environmental effects are described on the following pages.

## Introduction

The purpose of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) is to inform decision makers and the public of the significant environmental effects of a proposed project. The EIR process is intended to provide environmental information sufficient to evaluate a project and its potential for significant effects on the environment; discuss methods of reducing or avoiding adverse environmental impacts; and consider alternatives to the project. Prior to taking any action on the proposed Specific Plan, the City Council must, at a public hearing, certify that the EIR has been completed in compliance with CEQA, and reflects the independent judgment of the City.

## Project Location

The project site/Specific Plan area comprises approximately 70 acres of which approximately 58-acres is developable. The developable area consists of multiple parcels (Assessor Parcel Numbers: 316-20-080, -081, -082, -088, -092, -094, -095, -099, -100, -101, -103, -104, -105, -106, and -107) and is located on both sides of North Wolfe Road between Vallco Parkway and Interstate 280 (I-280) on the east side and between Stevens Creek Boulevard and Vallco Parkway on the west side in the City of Cupertino. Most of the project site (approximately 50 acres) is developed with the Vallco Shopping Mall and associated parking facilities, and the remaining acres are developed roadways, a hotel (currently under construction), and a surface parking lot. Regional and vicinity maps of the project site are shown on Figures 1 and 2, respectively.

An aerial photograph of the project site and the surrounding land uses is shown on Figure 3. The surrounding land uses include residential and commercial uses to the west; a freeway (I-280), hotel, residential, and office uses to the north; commercial, office, and residential mixed-uses to the east; and commercial uses to the south.

## Background

The City of Cupertino is organized into 21 General Plan “Planning Areas,” consisting of nine “Special Areas” and 12 “Neighborhoods.” The project site is the Vallco Shopping District Special Area (Vallco Special Area). The Vallco Special Area is designated Commercial/Office/Residential in the City’s General Plan Land Use Map.<sup>1</sup> Development, both residential and non-residential, is subject to the numerical limits and other policies in the City’s General Plan. The Vallco Special Area is also identified as a Priority Housing Element Site (Site A2) with a realistic capacity of 389 units in the General Plan Housing Element.

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<sup>1</sup> The Commercial/Office/Residential land use designation applies to mixed-use areas that are predominantly commercial and office uses. Supporting residential uses may be allowed to offset job growth, to better balance the citywide jobs to housing ratio, and when they are compatible with the primarily non-residential character of the area (source: City of Cupertino. *Cupertino General Plan Community Vision 2015-2040*. Appendix A: Land Use Definitions, Page A-7. October 15, 2015.).

As shown in General Plan Table LU-1, the General Plan development allocation for the Vallco Special Area is as follows: approximately 1.2 million square feet of commercial uses (minimum 600,000 square feet of retail uses with a maximum of 30 percent of entertainment uses, pursuant to General Plan Strategy LU-19.1.4), 2.0 million square feet of office uses, 339 hotel rooms, and 389 residential dwelling units.<sup>2</sup> Pursuant to General Plan Strategy LU-1.2.1, development allocations may be transferred among Planning Areas provided no significant environmental impacts are identified beyond those already studied in the Cupertino General Plan Community Vision 2015-2040 Final EIR (SCH#2014032007).<sup>3</sup>

## Project Description

The City of Cupertino is currently undertaking a community-based planning process to develop a Specific Plan for the Vallco Special Area. The proposed project is the adoption of the community-developed Vallco Special Area Specific Plan.

As defined in by state Government Code §65450, a specific plan is a tool for the systematic implementation of the general plan. It establishes a link between implementing policies of the general plan and the individual development proposal(s) in a defined area. Consistent with the adopted General Plan, the Specific Plan would facilitate the development of 600,000 square feet of commercial uses, 2.0 million square feet of office uses, 339 hotel rooms, and 800 residential dwelling units onsite. The proposed Specific Plan would include text and diagrams which specify all of the following in detail:

1. The distribution, location, and extent of the mix of land uses, including open space, within the project site.
2. The proposed distribution, location, and extent and intensity of major components of public and private transportation, sewage, water, drainage, solid waste disposal, energy, and other essential facilities proposed to be located within the area covered by the plan and needed to support the land uses described in the plan;
3. Standards and criteria by which development will proceed, and standards for conservation, development, and utilization of natural resources, where applicable; and
4. A program of implementation measures including regulations, programs, public works projects, and financing measures necessary to carry out points 1-3 above (Government Code §65451(a)).

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<sup>2</sup> City of Cupertino. *Cupertino General Plan Community Vision 2015-2040*. Table LU-1: Citywide Development Allocation Between 2014-2040. October 15, 2015. Page LU-13.

<sup>3</sup> Community Vision 2040 Final EIR analyzed the development of up to 1.2 million square feet of commercial uses, 2.0 million square feet of office uses, 339 hotel rooms, and 800 residential dwelling units within the Vallco Special Area. Residential allocation is available in other Planning Areas that may be transferred to the Vallco Shopping District without the need to amend the General Plan.

In addition, the Specific Plan shall include a statement of the relationship of the Specific Plan to the City's General Plan (Government Code §65451(b)). The project may include the extension of existing recycled water infrastructure to the site.

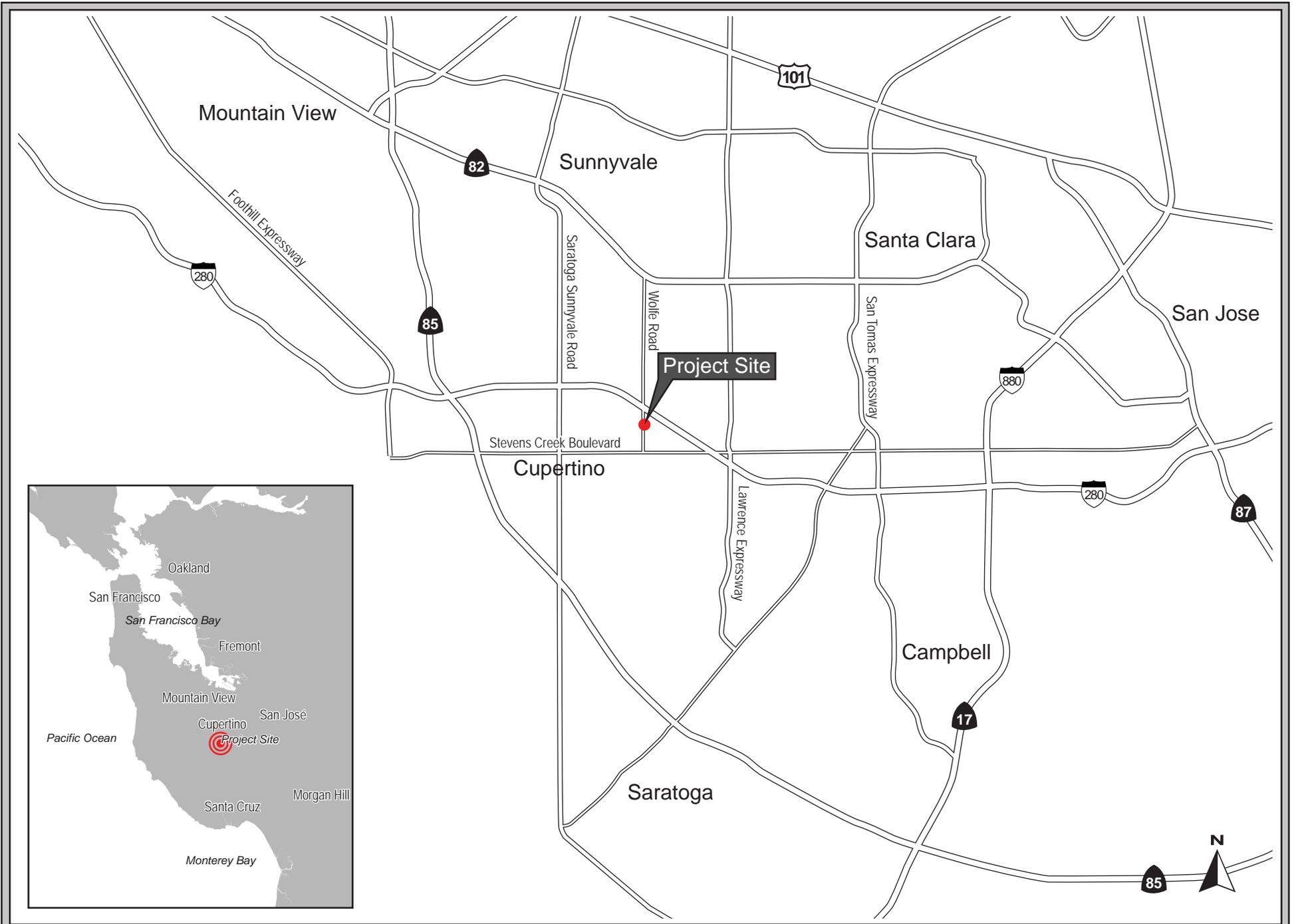
## **Probable Environmental Effects of the Project**

The EIR will describe the existing environmental conditions on the project site and will identify the significant effects on the environment ("impacts") that may result from implementation of the project. Where potentially significant environmental impacts are identified, the EIR will identify mitigation measures to avoid or reduce those impacts, as feasible. The EIR also will discuss a reasonable range of alternatives to the project that could reasonably attain most of the basic objectives of the project and would avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant environmental effects of the project (CEQA Guidelines §15126.6(a)). The EIR will discuss the project's significant environmental impacts in the topic areas described below.

- **Aesthetics** – The EIR will describe the existing visual character of the site area and the projected changes resulting from implementation of the project. Visual impacts resulting from the proposed project would include any significant adverse environmental effects resulting from building mass and height, lighting, and possible glare to adjacent land uses.
- **Agricultural and Forestry Resources** – The project site is located in an urban and developed area. The project site is not used for agricultural or forestry uses. The EIR will discuss the project's impact on existing farmland, forest land, and timberland.
- **Air Quality** – The EIR will describe the regional air quality conditions of the San Francisco Bay Area and will evaluate air quality impacts to and from the project, in conformance with the criteria identified by the Bay Area Air Quality Management District. The project's consistency with the 2010 Bay Area Clean Air Plan will also be discussed.
- **Biological Resources** – Given the urban and developed nature of the project site, the primary biological resources on-site are existing trees. The EIR will evaluate the project's impact on biological resources, such as removal of trees and impacts on nesting birds that may be present.
- **Cultural Resources** – The project site is designated a City of Cupertino Community Landmark (Cultural Resource Site 68) in the City's Community Vision 2040. The EIR will evaluate the potential for the project to impact historic, as well as pre-historic, resources on-site.
- **Energy** – The EIR will examine the potential for the project to result in excessive or inefficient use of energy and will discuss the energy conservation measures included in the project.

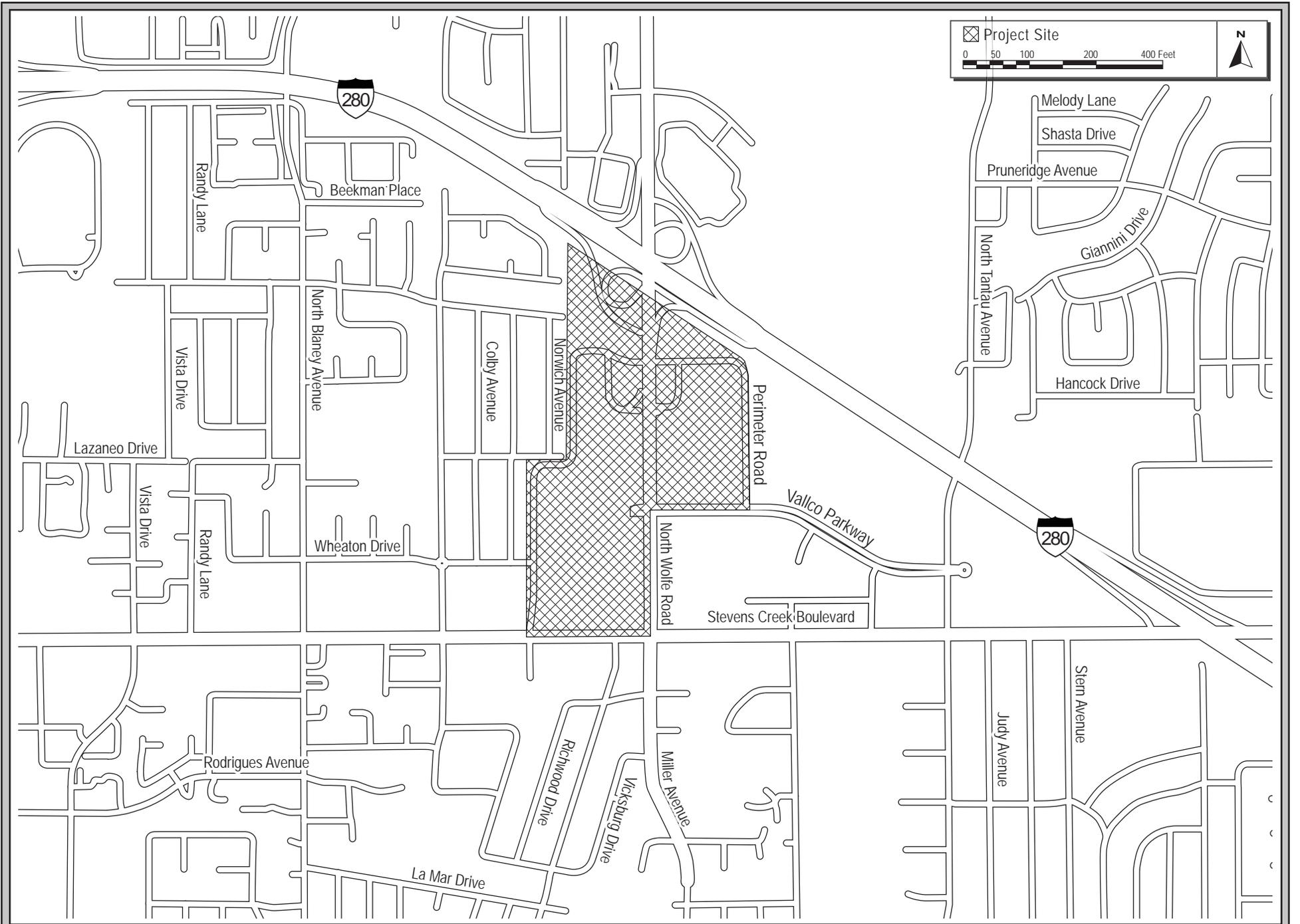
- **Geology and Soils** – The existing geologic and soil conditions at the project site will be described in the EIR. The EIR will evaluate impacts to persons or property likely to result from the existing geologic conditions, including seismic and seismic-related hazards.
- **Greenhouse Gas Emissions** – The EIR will discuss the project’s consistency and conformance with applicable plans, policies, and/or regulations adopted for the purpose of reducing greenhouse gas emissions, including the City’s Climate Action Plan, and assess whether the project’s greenhouse gas emissions would have a significant impact on the environment.
- **Hazards and Hazardous Materials** – The EIR will evaluate the potential for hazardous materials contamination on and near the project site which could be affected by site demolition, grading, or excavation. The EIR will discuss the potential for hazardous material contamination to impact construction workers or future occupants at the site.
- **Hydrology and Water Quality** – The EIR will describe the existing hydrologic and drainage conditions (including flooding) at the project site, as well as any changes in site drainage and hydrological conditions resulting from the implementation of the proposed Specific Plan and development project. Water quality impacts during and post-project construction will also be addressed.
- **Land Use and Planning** – The EIR will describe the existing land uses on and adjacent to the project site, and discuss the project’s conformance with relevant land use plans, policies, and regulations including the City’s General Plan and Zoning Ordinance. The EIR will evaluate the proposed land uses and the relationship between the proposed uses to existing development in the area. Land use conflicts between the proposed uses and existing surrounding uses will be identified.
- **Mineral Resources** – The EIR will describe if the project would result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource or locally-important mineral resource recovery site.
- **Noise and Vibration** – The existing, predominant noise sources in the project vicinity are traffic on I-280, Stevens Creek Boulevard, and Wolfe Road. The EIR will describe the existing noise conditions in the project area and will address noise and vibration impacts from the project (including noise from project-generated traffic and project demolition/construction).

- **Population and Housing** – The proposed project includes new housing (as well as office and commercial uses) onsite. The EIR will discuss if the project would induce substantial population growth in the area, displace substantial numbers of existing housing units, or displace a substantial number of residents.
- **Public Services** – The EIR will discuss the availability of public services (e.g., fire and police protection, schools, and parks and recreational facilities) in the project area and the potential for the project to require the expansion or construction of those facilities.
- **Transportation** – The EIR will describe the existing transportation network serving the project site and will evaluate the traffic impacts resulting from the proposed project (including impacts to intersection and freeway segment levels of service, as well as transit, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities). The project’s effect on vehicle miles travelled will also be discussed.
- **Utilities and Service Systems** – The EIR will describe the existing sanitary sewer, storm drain, water, and solid waste services in the project area. The EIR will address the ability and capacity of the existing utilities to serve the project and will describe any utility improvements (and the impacts from those improvements) proposed by the project, including the possible extension of recycled water infrastructure.



REGIONAL MAP

FIGURE 1



VICINITY MAP

FIGURE 2



AERIAL PHOTOGRAPH WITH SURROUNDING LAND USES

FIGURE 3