

**City of Walnut Creek**  
**Notice of Preparation and Notice of Public Scoping Meeting**  
**Mitchell Townhomes Project**

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**Date:** November 22, 2024

**To:** Public agencies and interested parties

**From:** Simar Gill, Senior Planner, City of Walnut Creek

**Project :** Mitchell Townhomes

**Subject:** Notice of Preparation of an Environmental Impact Report and Public Scoping Meeting

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The City of Walnut Creek (City) will be the Lead Agency evaluating a request by Signature Development Group, Inc. (applicant) to develop the Mitchell Townhomes Project (proposed project), a new 422-unit multi-family townhome condominium development. FirstCarbon Solutions (FCS) will prepare an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the City regarding environmental impacts for the proposed project pursuant to requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

The Project Description, location, and probable environmental effects of the proposed project are described in this Notice of Preparation (NOP) for the purposes of environmental review. An initial Study for the proposed project is not being provided as part of the NOP. The City is soliciting comments from public agencies, organizations, and members of the public regarding the scope and content of the environmental information to be addressed in the EIR for the proposed project. Public agencies may need to rely on the EIR when considering whether to issue discretionary permits or other approvals in connection with the proposed project.

Because of time limits mandated by California law, public agencies must submit any comments in response to this notice at the earliest possible date but no later than 30 days after receipt of this notice. The City will also accept comments from other interested parties regarding this notice during that same time period. Accordingly, please provide your written response, along with the name of the relevant contact person, to the address shown below by **5:00 p.m., December 23, 2024**. If you wish to be placed on the notification list for this proposed project, or if you have any questions or need additional information, please contact the person below.

Simar Gill, Senior Planner  
City of Walnut Creek–Community Development Department  
1666 North Main Street, Walnut Creek, CA 94596  
Phone: 925.943.5899, ext. 2115/Email: Gill@walnut-creek.org

**Public Scoping Meeting**

Consistent with Public Resources Code Section 21083.9, a public scoping meeting will be held in person, on **Wednesday, December 11, 2024**, starting at **5:00 p.m.** The meeting will take place in the **Council Chambers at 1666 North Main Street, 1st Floor, Walnut Creek, California.**

At this meeting, public agencies, organizations, and members of the public will be able to provide oral and written comments on the scope and content of the environmental information to be addressed in the EIR for the proposed project.

x

*Simar Gill*

Simar Gill, Senior Planner  
Community Development Department

## MITCHELL TOWNHOMES PROJECT

### Project Location

The approximately 22.2-acre project site is located in the City of Walnut Creek (City), in Contra Costa County (County), California; refer to Exhibit 1 (project site). The project site consists of a total of three parcels with Assessor's Parcel Numbers (APNs) 143-040-079, 143-040-099, and 143-040-100. The project site is located at 2775–2855 Mitchell Drive, 2730–2880 Shadelands Drive, and a portion of 2125 Oak Grove Road. The area in and around the project site is within the Shadelands Business Park. The project site is located on the *Walnut Creek, California* United States Geological Survey (USGS) 7.5-minute Topographic Quadrangle Map, Township 1 North, Range 1 West (Latitude: 37°55'48" North, Longitude: 122°01'14" West).

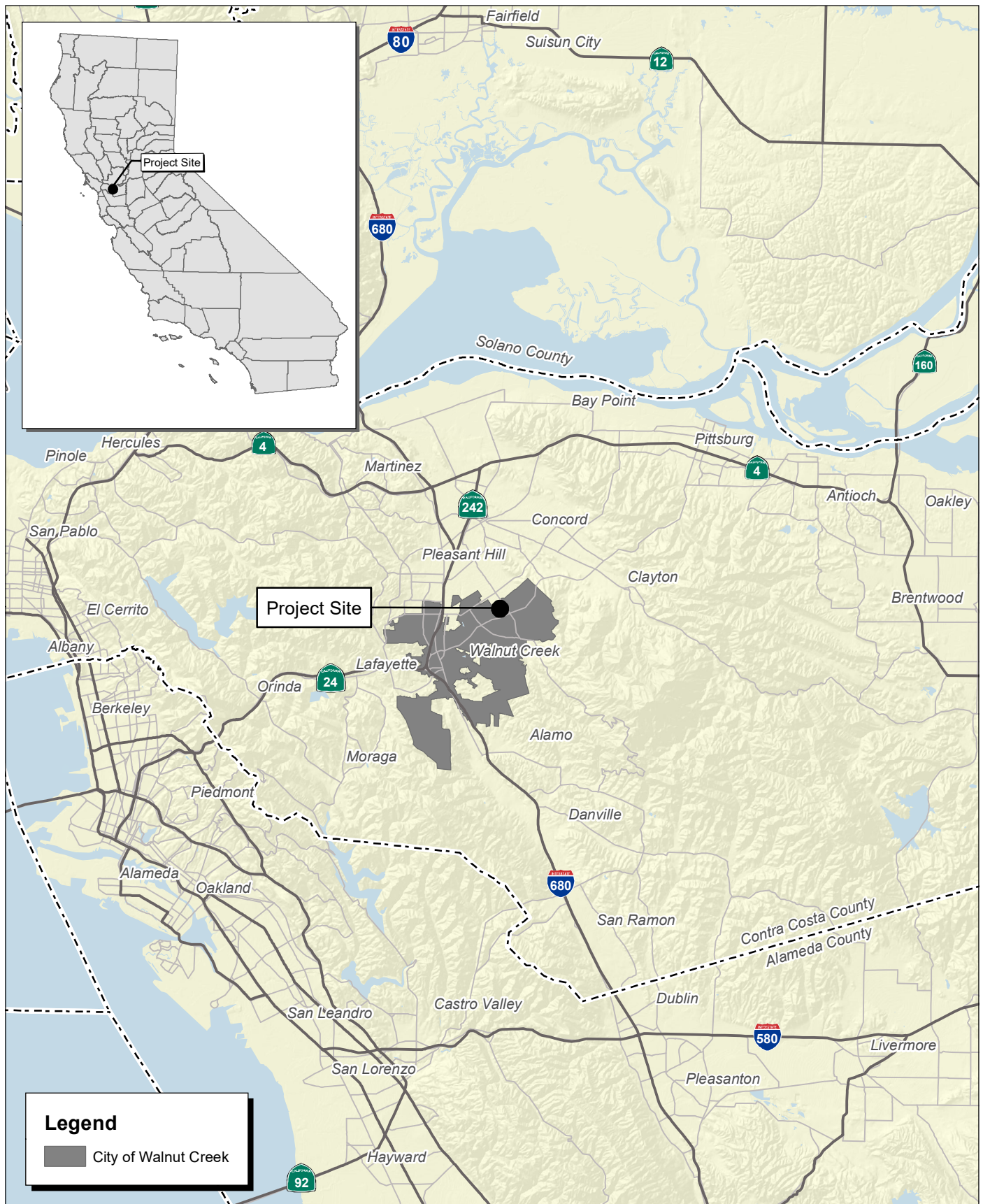
### Existing Conditions

#### Land Use Activities

The project site is currently occupied by a business park comprised of 11 office buildings between 30,000–36,000 square feet in size (built between 1973–1986) and approximately 1,481 parking stalls in a paved surface parking lot with ancillary landscaping (Exhibit 2).

Vehicular access to the project site is provided via Mitchell Avenue to the north and Shadelands Drive to the south. The project site is also accessible via adjacent commercial parking lots to the east.

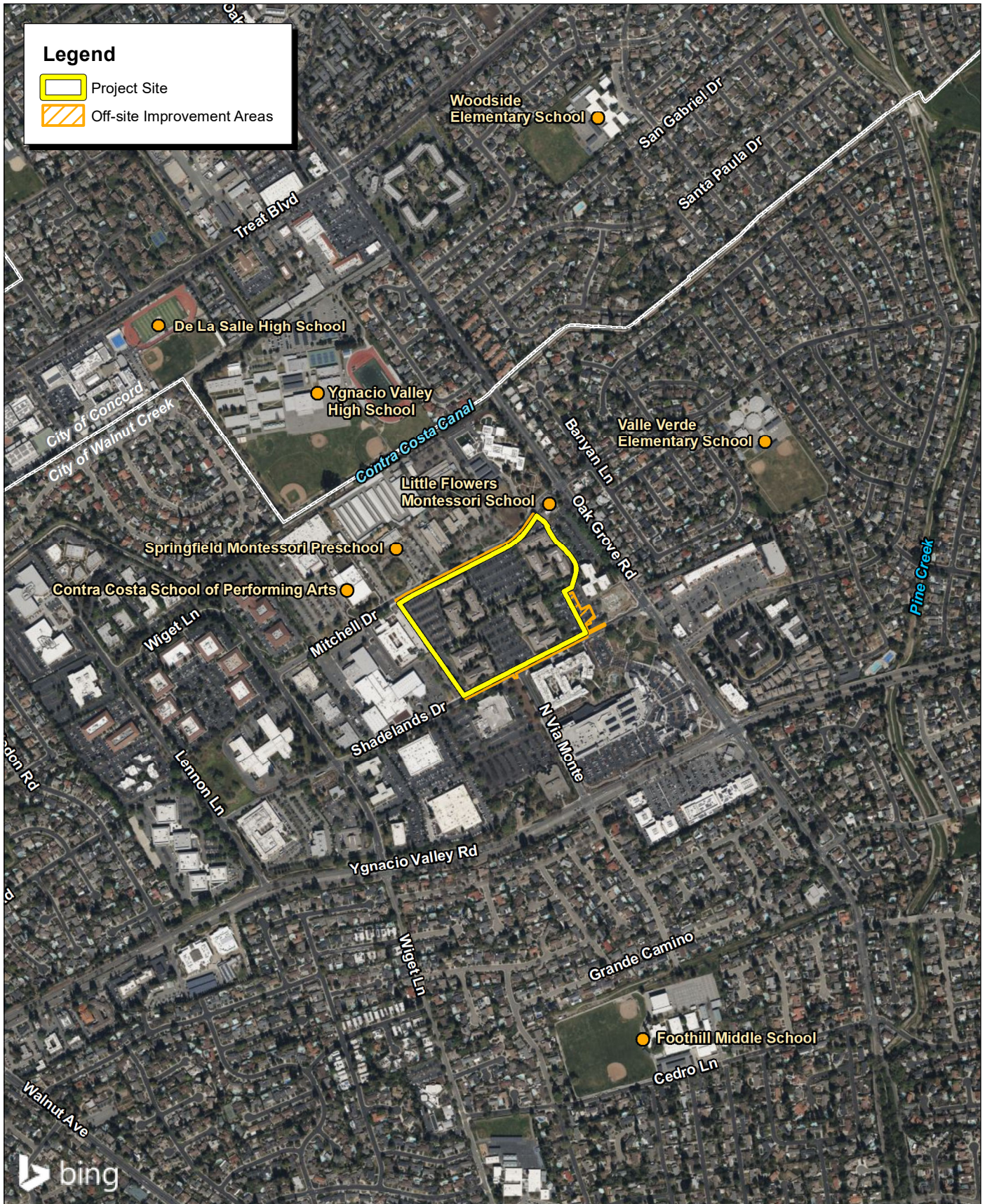
Stormwater runoff from the project site drains into the City's municipal storm drainage system. The project site is served with potable water service provided by Contra Costa Water District (CCWD) and is served with wastewater collection and treatment service provided by Central Contra Costa Sanitary District (Central San). The project site's electricity and natural gas service is provided by Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E).



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







Source: Bing Aerial Imagery. Carlson, Barbee & Gibson, Inc. (CBG), September 2024.



## Exhibit 2 Local Vicinity Map



## Surrounding Land Uses

The project site is adjacent to Mitchell Drive to the north, with Little Flowers Montessori School daycare adjacent to the project site's northeastern corner. The project site is also adjacent to the Springfield Montessori Preschool and the Contra Costa School of Performing Arts to the northwest. Further north of the project site is the Ygnacio Valley High School. The project site is also adjacent to commercial and office uses directly to the east, with a residential neighborhood further east, beyond Oak Grove Road. To the south, the project site is adjacent to Kaiser Permanente medical offices, retail commercial uses, and a retirement community. To the west, the project site is adjacent to a nursing home as well as a shopping center containing retail, recreational, and office uses.

## Land Use Designations

The project site is designated in the General Plan as Business Park (Exhibit 3). The Business Park designation is limited to a building intensity of up to 0.5 floor area ratio (FAR). Land uses allowed within this designation include employment-based businesses including administrative, professional office, and research uses.<sup>1</sup>

Additionally, the project site is also located in Specific Plan No. 2, Shadelands Administrative, Professional, Research District, which is henceforth named as SP-2 Shadelands Business Park. SP-2 Shadelands Business Park extends north to south from the Contra Costa Canal to Ygnacio Valley Road and east to west from Oak Grove Road to the Contra Costa Canal and Amberwood Lane crossing to the northwest and the Brampton Road eastern cul-de-sac to the southwest.<sup>2</sup>

Finally, according to the City of Walnut Creek Zoning Map, the project site is zoned Planned Development (PD) (PD No.1543, Exhibit 4). PD zoning districts are intended to allow diversification in the relationship of various buildings, land uses, structures, and open spaces in order to be relieved from the rigid standards of conventional zoning. PDs generally establish zoning use and development capacity regulations separate from that of the City's Zoning Ordinance/Municipal Code but may also refer to development standards taken from the Zoning Ordinance to apply them to developments therein. For this particular PD No. 1543 covering the project site, the district designates the area to be Business Park uses and refers to the Business Park zoning district in the Zoning Ordinance for applicable development standards.

## Project Description

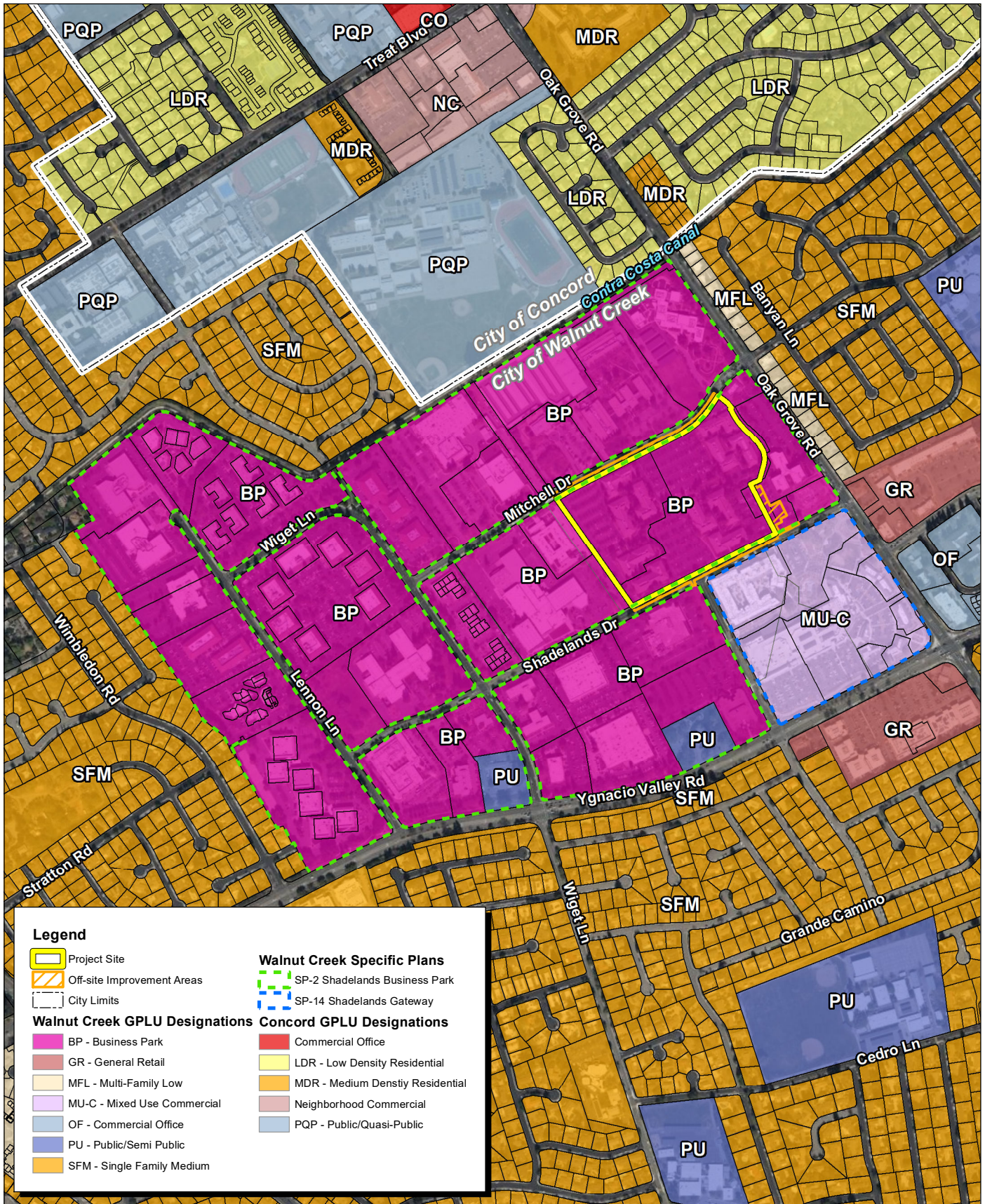
### Proposed Project

The proposed project includes the construction of 422 3-story multi-family dwelling units in townhome-style condominium configuration within approximately 83 buildings, totaling approximately 841,764 gross square feet of buildings (Exhibit 5). The building groups would consist of two building styles, N1 Townhouse and N2 Townhouse, and four building plans per style, identified in Table 1.

<sup>1</sup> City of Walnut Creek. 2006. General Plan 2025. Website: <https://www.walnutcreekca.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/24827/637388110158900000>. Accessed September 5, 2024.

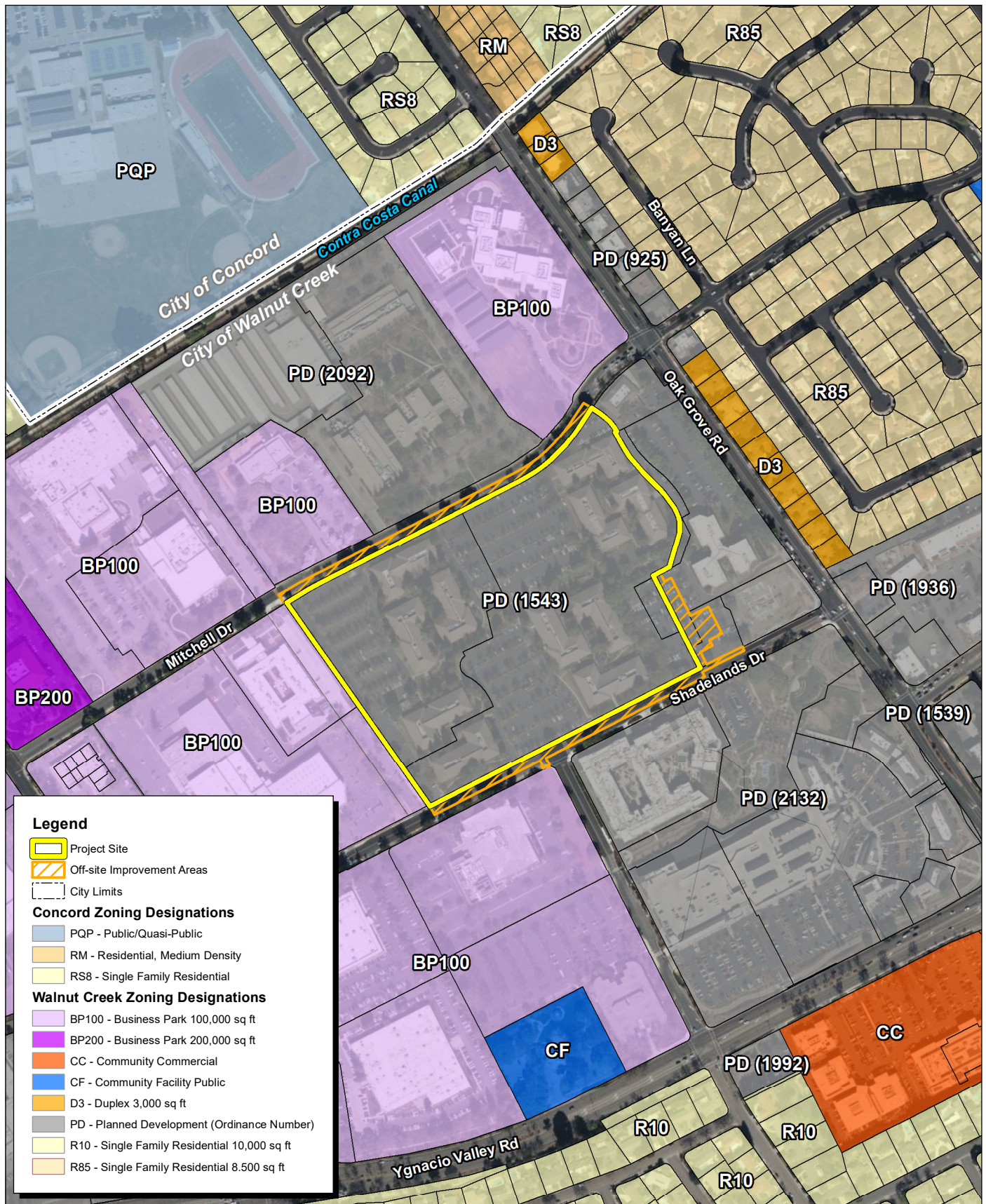
<sup>2</sup> City of Walnut Creek. 1971. Resolution No. 2686. August 16.





Source: Bing Aerial Imagery. Carlson, Barbee & Gibson, Inc. (CBG), September 2024. County of Contra Costa. City of Concord. City of Walnut Creek.





Source: Bing Aerial Imagery. Carlson, Barbee & Gibson, Inc. (CBG), September 2024. County of Contra Costa. City of Concord. City of Walnut Creek.





Source: Signature Development Group; Carlson, Barbee & Gibson; KTG Group, Inc; The Guzzardo Partnership, Inc, August 23, 2024.



**Table 1: Proposed Building Summary**

Building Style	Unit Plan	Number of Bedrooms per Unit	Number of Bathrooms per Unit	Approximate Net Square Footage	Total Dwelling Units	Approximate Total Net Square Footage
N1 Townhouse	Plan 1	2	2.5	1,463	64	93,632
	Plan 2	3	3	1,560	76	118,560
	Plan 3	3	2.5	1,663	19	31,597
	Plan 4	3	2.5	1,688	63	106,344
N2 Townhouse	Plan 1	3	2.5	1,288	38	48,944
	Plan 2	3	3.5	1,774	38	67,412
	Plan 3	3	3.5	1,929	48	92,592
	Plan 4	4	3.5	2,132	76	162,032
<b>Total</b>	–	–	–	–	<b>422</b>	<b>721,113</b>

Source: Signature Development Group. November 7, 2024.

Units inside of the proposed buildings would be constructed in accordance with four floor plans under the N1 Townhouse building style and four floor plans under the N2 Townhouse building style. Residential units would occupy a total of approximately 721,113 net square feet of construction. The remaining construction area from the total approximately 841,764 gross square feet of construction includes covered garages, covered decks, porches, and exterior walls.

The proposed project would also include an approximately 0.7-acre central common open space area, a rain garden common area, a dog park, and various paseo walking areas. Additionally, the proposed project would include landscaping, stormwater detention, utilities, internal streets, pedestrian paths and seating, and other infrastructure improvements.

The proposed project is a housing development project covered by the Housing Accountability Act (HAA) (Government Code § 65589.5) and has sought to utilize the provisions of Section 65589.5(d), commonly known as the Builder's Remedy. The project applicant is also seeking to utilize the State Density Bonus Law (SDBL) (Government Code § 65915, *et seq.*). These State law provisions have various impacts on the applicability of local General Plan, applicable specific plan, and zoning requirements and would allow the proposed project to exceed use and development standards thereunder, provided that certain statutory requirements are met. The Walnut Creek Municipal Code Article 10-2.3.9, Inclusionary Housing, requires that new for-sale condominium developments include seven percent of the dwelling units as low-income dwelling units. The proposed project would designate a sufficient number of dwelling units for lower-income households to satisfy the requirements of the City's Municipal Code, Builder's Remedy, and the SDBL.

### **Vehicular Access**

A total of approximately 959 parking spaces would be provided as part of the proposed project, with approximately 844 spaces located in private garages and approximately 115 spaces located on proposed internal roadways.

Primary vehicular access to the project site would occur via a network of proposed internal streets that would be developed with two points of access from Mitchell Drive in the north and two points of access from Shadelands Drive in the south. Access to the project site from adjacent parking lots to the east would be removed. The proposed internal roadways would be 20 feet wide at minimum throughout the site and would provide emergency vehicle access to all parts of the project site. In addition, the proposed internal roadways would provide standard fire apparatus turnarounds per Contra Costa County Fire Protection District (CCCYPD) requirements.

## **Landscaping**

The project site contains 457 existing trees on-site, and there are 31 trees off-site that overhang the property. The proposed project would preserve approximately eight existing on-site trees in the central open space of the project site. In addition, trees within the proposed off-site disturbance areas would be preserved. Trees within the existing parking lots would be removed and subsequently replaced by new neighborhood residential trees along the proposed private internal roadways. Overall, the proposed project would replace the existing tree count on the project site by a greater than 1:1 ratio. In total, approximately 449 of the 457 existing on-site trees and 12 off-site trees would be removed and replaced by approximately 519 new proposed trees.

The proposed project would also include multiple private and common landscaped areas, summarized in the following approximate square footages:

- 122,297 square feet of low-water-use paseo gardens;
- 56,585 square feet of medium-water-use paseo gardens;
- 43,216 square feet of bioretention treatment areas;
- 13,729 square feet of oak woodland;
- 11,587 square feet of lawns, play areas, and/or dog parks.

The proposed project would also include improved sidewalks and frontage landscaping along Mitchell Drive and Shadelands Drive.

## **Off-site Improvements**

The proposed project would include approximately 2.23 acres of off-site improvements, including, but not limited to, streetlighting, striping, signage and improvements for both Shadelands Drive and Mitchell Avenue pursuant to the Shadelands Multi Modal Plan. In addition, the project proposes to restripe the adjacent parcel to the east to accommodate required parking for the existing office buildings and commercial uses directly adjacent to the east of the project site and to construct necessary trash facilities. Off-site improvements would extend to the areas shown in Exhibit 2.

## **Storm Drainage**

The proposed project would be separated into eight Drainage Management Areas (DMAs) (City staff foresees that the eight proposed DMAs may have to be subdivided into a much greater number) and would include approximately 43,216 square feet of bioretention areas dispersed throughout the project site as well as a network of storm drains and low flow water quality pumps. Stormwater runoff would be collected by the proposed stormwater drainage collection system and subsequently routed into one of eight proposed bioretention areas. Following treatment in the proposed



bioretention areas, stormwater runoff would be drained into the City's existing stormwater collection system via pipelines in adjacent properties to the east and west, as well as the existing stormwater line in Mitchell Drive.

## Utilities

The project site would receive potable water services from CCWD, wastewater treatment services would be provided Central San, power would be supplied by PG&E, and solid waste and recycling services would be provided by Republic Services, Inc. The proposed project would construct internal utility lines throughout the project site and connect to existing utility lines within Mitchell Drive. Power lines would additionally be connected to Shadelands Drive in addition to Mitchell Drive.

## Phasing and Construction

Construction of the proposed project components and off-site improvements would occur in two phases over a period of approximately 4.5 years, starting in April 2026 and ending in December 2030. All site preparation and grading for the entire project site would also be completed at this time. Grading and site preparation would include the import of approximately 1,000 cubic yards and no materials export.

## Required Discretionary Entitlements

The proposed project requires the certification of the EIR and the following discretionary approvals from the City of Walnut Creek:

- Design Review
- Vesting Tentative Map
- Findings under the Housing Accountability Act and State Density Bonus Law, including density bonus waivers and incentives/concessions
- Tree Removal Permit
- Lot line adjustment
- Density Bonus/Inclusionary Housing Agreement

Subsequent ministerial actions would be required for the implementation of the proposed project, including issuance of one or more final maps and site development, grading, encroachment, and building permits.

## Responsible and Trustee Agencies

A number of other agencies in addition to the City of Walnut Creek will serve as Responsible and Trustee Agencies, pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15381 and Section 15386, respectively. The Draft EIR will provide environmental information to these agencies and other public agencies which may be required to grant approvals or carry out the proposed project, as part of project implementation. These agencies may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Contra Costa Water District (CCWD)
- Central Contra Costa Sanitary District (Central San)

- Contra Costa County Fire Protection District (CCCYPD)
- San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board (San Francisco Bay RWQCB)
- Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD)

### Other External Agencies

In addition to the Responsible and Trustee public agencies identified above, the Draft EIR will also reference the following agencies due to their involvement in or relation to the proposed project. These private and/or public agencies could include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Republic Services
- Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E)
- Transportation Partnership and Cooperation (TRANSPAC)
- Mt. Diablo Unified School District (MDUSD)
- Central Contra Costa Transit Authority (County Connection)

## Environmental Review

### Potential Environmental Effects

The Draft EIR will evaluate whether the proposed project (as described herein) may potentially result in one or more significant environmental effects, which will be evaluated in the relevant Draft EIR sections listed below in accordance with the following sections.

- |                                   |                                 |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| • Aesthetics, Light, and Glare    | • Hydrology and Water Quality   |
| • Air Quality                     | • Land Use                      |
| • Biological Resources            | • Noise and Vibration           |
| • Cultural Resources              | • Population and Housing        |
| • Energy                          | • Public Services and Utilities |
| • Geology, Soils, and Seismicity  | • Recreation                    |
| • Greenhouse Gas Emissions        | • Transportation                |
| • Hazards and Hazardous Materials | • Tribal Cultural Resources     |

### 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 significant impacts, the following issues will be addressed in the Effects Found not to be Significant section of the Draft EIR. An overview of the bases for determining a lack of significance is presented below with additional details to be discussed in the Draft EIR, as necessary.

### Agriculture and Forestry Resources

The project site is located in an urbanized area and has been developed for more than 60 years with urban uses. No agricultural or forest uses occur on-site. The project site is zoned Business Park, a nonagricultural and non-forest zoning district. The proposed project would have no impact on agriculture or forestry resources.



## Mineral Resources

The project site is located in an urbanized area and has been developed for more than 40 years with urban uses. No mineral extraction activities occur on-site. In addition, the project site is not a designated mineral resource zone by either the State of California or the City of Walnut Creek. The proposed project would have no impact on mineral resources.

## Wildfire

The project site is located in an urbanized area and has been developed for more than 40 years with urban uses. The project site is not located in a Fire Hazard Severity Zone in a State Responsibility Area or a Very High Fire Hazard in a local, State, or federal responsibility area. In addition, the proposed project would not interfere with any local emergency response or evacuation plan, including the City's Emergency Management Plan. The proposed project would have no impact on wildfire hazards.

## Scoping Meeting

As mentioned above and consistent with Public Resources Code Section 21083.9, a public scoping meeting will be held in person, on **Wednesday, December 11, 2024**, starting at **5:00 p.m.** The meeting will take place in the **Council Chambers at 1666 North Main Street, 1st Floor, Walnut Creek, California.**

At this meeting, agencies, organizations, and members of the public will be able to provide comments on the scope and content of the environmental information to be addressed in the Draft EIR for the proposed project.