

SECTION 3: PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This section describes the proposed San Ramon City Center Project (proposed project) that is evaluated in this Draft Subsequent Environmental Impact Report (DSEIR). Descriptions of the proposed project’s regional and planning context, objectives, and background are included, in addition to a discussion of required project approvals and entitlements. The City of San Ramon and Sunset Development Company are the co-proponents of the proposed project, and the City is the lead agency with discretionary authority over the proposed project.

3.1 - Project Location and Setting

3.1.1 - Location

The proposed project is located within the City of San Ramon in Contra Costa County, California (Exhibit 3-1). The project site is composed of four parcels totaling 43.65 acres¹ located on all four quadrants of the intersection of Bollinger Canyon Road and Camino Ramon (Exhibit 3-2). The four parcels that constitute the project site and their characteristics are summarized in Table 3-1.

Table 3-1: Parcel Summary

Parcel No.	Acreage	Existing Uses	Parcel Boundaries
1A	14.27	Undeveloped land; surface parking area for Bishop Ranch 1	Bishop Ranch 1 entrance road (west), Bollinger Canyon Road (north); Bishop Ranch 1 East roadway (east and south)
1B	3.52	Surface parking area for Bishop Ranch 1	Chevron Park (west), Bollinger Canyon Road (north); Bishop Ranch 1 entrance road; Bishop Ranch 1 structure (south)
2	14.57	Bishop Ranch 2	Sunset Drive (west); Bishop Drive (north); Camino Ramon (east); Bollinger Canyon Road (south)
3A	11.29	Undeveloped land	Camino Ramon (west); Bishop Ranch 3 parking structure (north); Iron Horse Trail (east); Bollinger Canyon Road (south)
	43.65		

Source: Sunset Development Company, 2007.

Sunset Development Company owns the entirety of Parcels 1B and 2 and 6.71 acres of Parcel 1A; the City of San Ramon owns Parcel 3A and 7.56-acres of Parcel 1A. Sunset Development Company has an option to repurchase and develop the City-owned 7.56 acres of Parcel 1A.

¹ The 43.65 acres includes 4.56 acres of internal roadways and driveways; the actual developable area is 39.09 acres. For the purposes of this DSEIR, 43.65 acres will be used as the project site acreage; however, for the purposes of calculating Floor Area Ratio, 39.09 acres will be used.

The Assessor's Parcel Numbers for the project site are 213-133-063, 213-133-086, 213-120-010, -011, -012, -013, and -014. The project site is located on the Diablo, California, United States Geologic Survey 7.5-minute topographical map, Township 2 South, Range 1 West, Unsectioned.

3.1.2 - Existing Conditions

The existing conditions of each individual parcel are described below. Photographs of the use of each parcel are shown in Exhibits 3-3a through 3-3e.

Parcel 1A

Parcel 1A consists of 14.27 acres of undeveloped land and developed parking areas associated with Bishop Ranch 1. The northern portion of Parcel 1A contains approximately 7.56 acres of undeveloped City-owned, rectangular-shaped property. This land contains ruderal vegetation, with ornamental landscaping surrounding the property on all four sides. This portion of the parcel contains fill imported from other nearby parcels that have been developed. The southern 6.71-acre portion of Parcel 1A contains parking areas associated with Bishop Ranch 1. The parking areas are characterized as at-grade, asphalt-paved with landscaped islands and freestanding lighting. Sidewalks are present along its frontages with Bollinger Canyon Road and the Bishop Ranch 1 East roadway.

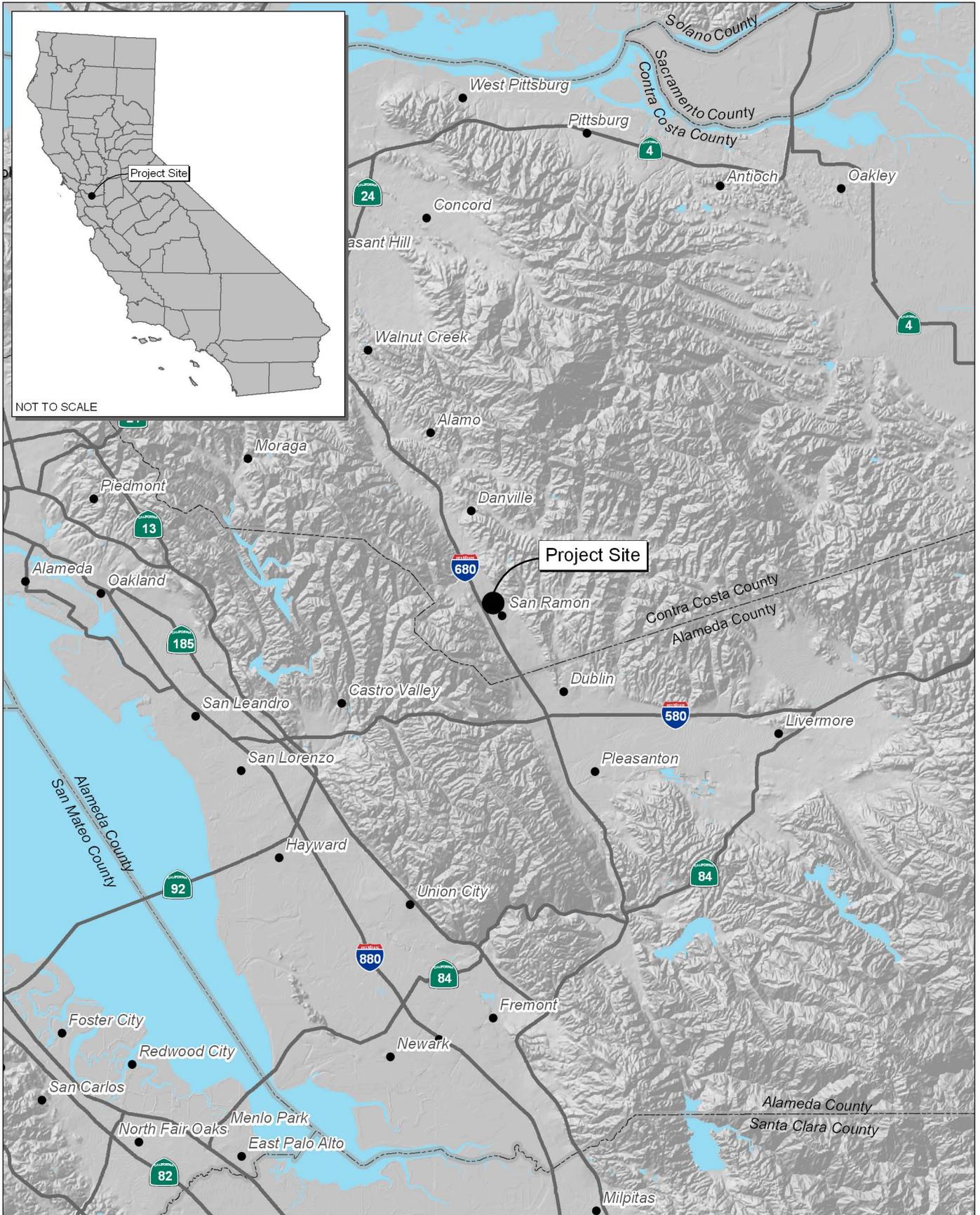
Sunset Development has an existing entitlement to develop its portion of Parcel 1A as a 328,220-square-foot office complex in accordance with the previously approved Chevron Park Annexation and Development Agreement. This entitlement was originally granted to Chevron Corporation, the previous owner of the property. Sunset Development subsequently acquired the entitlement when it purchased the Bishop Ranch 1 property.

Parcel 1B

Parcel 1B consists of approximately 3.52 acres of a developed parking area associated with Bishop Ranch 1. The parking area is characterized as at-grade, asphalt-paved with landscaped islands and freestanding lighting. Ornamental landscaping surrounds the parcel on the west, north, and east sides. Sidewalks are present along its frontages with Bollinger Canyon Road and the Bishop Ranch 1 entrance road.

Parcel 2

Parcel 2 consists of the existing 14.57-acre Bishop Ranch 2 office complex. Bishop Ranch 2 contains 194,652 square feet of office space spread among four multi-story office structures with an interior turf courtyard landscaped area. Parking areas are located around the perimeter of the parcel and are characterized as at-grade, asphalt-paved areas with landscaped islands and freestanding lighting. Ornamental landscaping is present along its frontages with Sunset Drive, Bishop Drive, Camino Ramon, and Bollinger Canyon Road. Sidewalks are present along its entire frontage with Sunset Drive and portion of its frontage with Bishop Drive.



Source: Census 2000 Data, The CaSIL, MBA GIS 2007.



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Exhibit 3-1 Regional Location Map



Source: Terraserver.



Exhibit 3-2 Local Vicinity Map Aerial Base



Parcel 3A with Chevron Park in background.



Eastern portion of Parcel 3A and Iron Horse Trail.



Western portion of Parcel 3A.



Parcel 3A as viewed from Camino Ramon.

Source: Michael Brandman Associates, 2006.



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Exhibit 3-3a Site Photographs

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Parcel 3A as reviewed from northeastern corner.



Parcel 3A as viewed from southeastern corner.



Bishop Ranch 2 as viewed from Bishop Ranch 3 parking structure.



Southwestern portion of Bishop Ranch 2.

Source: Michael Brandman Associates, 2006.



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Exhibit 3-3b Site Photographs

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Northwestern portion Bishop Ranch 2.



Northern portion of Bishop Ranch 2.



Bishop Ranch 1 Entrance at Bollinger Canyon Road.



Bishop Ranch 1 parking area on Parcel 1B.

Source: Michael Brandman Associates, 2006.



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Exhibit 3-3c Site Photographs

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Bishop Ranch 1 parking area on Parcel 1B.



Bishop Ranch 1 parking area on Parcel 1B.



Undeveloped portion of Parcel 1A and the Bishop Ranch 1 perimeter road.



Undeveloped portion of Parcel 1A with Bishop Ranch 1 in the background.

Source: Michael Brandman Associates, 2006.



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Exhibit 3-3d Site Photographs

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Undeveloped portion of Parcel 1A.



Undeveloped portion of Parcel 1A with Bishop Ranch 3 in the distance.



Bishop Ranch 1 parking area on Parcel 1A.



Bishop Ranch 1 parking area on Parcel 1B.

Source: Michael Brandman Associates, 2006.



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Exhibit 3-3e Site Photographs

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Parcel 3A

Parcel 3A is an undeveloped, 11.29-acre, City-owned parcel containing ruderal vegetation. The parcel contains fill imported from other nearby parcels that have been developed. Ornamental landscaping is present along its frontage with Camino Ramon. Sidewalks are present along its frontages with Camino Ramon and Bollinger Canyon Road. The site is used for temporary parking and special events such as car shows and festivals.

3.1.3 - Surrounding Land Uses

A summary of surrounding uses for each parcel is provided in Table 3-2.

Table 3-2: Surrounding Land Use Summary

Parcel No.	Surrounding Land Uses			
	West	North	East	South
1A	Bishop Ranch 1 office structure and Bishop Ranch 1 entrance road; Parcel 1B	Bollinger Canyon Road; Parcel 3A	Iron Horse Trail; Market Place commercial uses (i.e., Marriot Residence Inn and Orchard Supply Hardware); Reflections Condominiums	Bishop Ranch 1 East roadway; Bishop Ranch 1 surface parking area; single-family residential uses
1B	Chevron Park	Bollinger Canyon Road; Parcel 2	Bishop Ranch 1 entrance road; Parcel 1A	Bishop Ranch 1 office structure; Bishop Ranch 1 surface parking areas
2	Sunset Drive; Shops at Bishop Ranch	Bishop Drive; AT&T campus	Camino Ramon; Parcel 3A	Bollinger Canyon Road; Chevron Park; Parcel 1B
3A	Camino Ramon	Bishop Ranch 3 parking structure; Bishop Ranch 3 office structure	Iron Horse Trail; Watson Canyon Drainage; Central Park	Bollinger Canyon Road; Parcel 1A; Bishop Ranch 1 office structure

Source: Michael Brandman Associates, 2007.

3.1.4 - Land Use Designations

The City of San Ramon General Plan and San Ramon Zoning Ordinance govern land use on the four parcels comprising the project site. The General Plan and Zoning Ordinance designations for each parcel are summarized in Table 3-3. The existing uses of each parcel are consistent with the applicable General Plan and Zoning Ordinance designation. The Administrative Office zoning district has a height limit of 55 feet; however, the Height Overlay allows for a maximum height of 75 feet if building architecture incorporates a varying roof plane to add variation to the structure’s appearance.

Table 3-3: Land Use Designation Summary

Parcel No.		General Plan Designation	Zoning Ordinance Designation
1A	7.56 acres*	Mixed Use	City Center Mixed Use (CCMU)
	6.71 acres**	Office	Administrative Office, Height Overlay (OA-H)
1B		Mixed Use	City Center Mixed Use (CCMU)
2		Mixed Use	City Center Mixed Use (CCMU)
3A		Mixed Use	City Center Mixed Use (CCMU)
* City-owned portion ** Sunset Development-owned portion Source: Michael Brandman Associates, 2007.			

3.2 - Project Characteristics

3.2.1 - Project Background

The concept for a “City Center” project dates back to the mid-1980s during the early years of the City of San Ramon. The City’s first General Plan, adopted in November 1986, included what was referred to at that time as the San Ramon Downtown Specific Plan. The Downtown Specific Plan focused on the Crow Canyon Redevelopment Area, located northwest of the intersection of Crow Canyon Road and San Ramon Valley Boulevard. Both the General Plan and the Downtown Specific Plan included policies that identified the need for a downtown and called for establishing “a sense of place” by providing a center for daytime, nighttime and weekend activities and sustaining a profitable economic climate.

Several years after adoption of the Downtown Specific Plan, the City received a proposal to redevelop a significant amount of land in the Crow Canyon Redevelopment Area. That particular proposal was a mixed-use project that included major retailers, office uses, civic/public uses, and residential uses. However, the project failed to proceed because of the lack of unanimity by the policy makers at that time, since the project would have required a significant amount of land to be assembled.

In 1991, the City initiated its update to the General Plan that was adopted in 1995. That 1995 General Plan continued to include policies that referenced the need for a City Center but changed the location to the area along Bollinger Canyon Road.

Sunset Development submitted a proposal to develop a City Center on approximately 40 acres of land around the intersection of Camino Ramon and Bollinger Canyon Road in early 1997. The proposed project would have provided a mixed-use development that included retail, office, civic, and cultural uses. For various reasons, that concept failed to materialize. A subsequent proposal was made and approved that resulted in the City acquiring Parcel 3A, the approximately 11-acre parcel at the northeast quadrant of Camino Ramon and Bollinger Canyon Road.

In 2000, the City processed and approved the development of Bishop Ranch 1, south of the intersection of Camino Ramon and Bollinger Canyon Road. As part of that approval, the City was able to acquire 7 acres of Parcel 1A at the southeastern quadrant of the intersection with the intent of developing a City Center on the site. With the acquisition of this parcel, the City had ownership of 18 acres of undeveloped land in central San Ramon on a major arterial corridor close to Interstate 680 (I-680).

The City embarked on a visioning process to create a plan for the City Center. The City hired a consultant and appointed an 18-member citizens task force to work with its staff and the consultant. After numerous public workshops and plan options, the process resulted in a new and more detailed vision for the creation of a City Center. In early 1999, the City initiated a design competition to implement this new vision. A team of architectural firms, including a construction management firm, was contracted to aid the City in implementing its new vision. Public workshops were held to solicit ideas; plan alternatives were generated; and, ultimately, a preferred plan was selected. Again, as with previous efforts, the project failed to proceed.

In March 2002, City voters approved the General Plan 2020, which identified a City Center project at the intersection of Camino Ramon and Bollinger Canyon Road and set forth a number of policies reaffirming previous policies intended to guide the development of the project. Relevant policies include:

- Policy 2.4-I-13, which calls for the development of the City Center area as a cultural, recreational, and compatible retail center. Additional supporting language contemplates the City Center as a vital, vibrant gathering place containing civic, recreational, and commercial opportunities that would attract the community throughout the day and week
- Policy 4.7-I-5, which envisions the City Center has a cohesive mix of civic, compatible retail, open space uses, with an arts and entertainment focus. Additional supporting language anticipates the City Center as a vital core, with a performing arts center, library, and small scale retail
- Policy 4.8-I-17, which exempts the City Center project from height restrictions and set back requirements for vertical wall dimensions and upper stories.
- Policy 7.1-I-1, which supports the development of a City Center. Additional supporting language envisions the City Center as a “civic hub” containing a City Hall, community theater, and other public buildings, as well as compatible private buildings

The City of San Ramon General Plan EIR considered the development of a City Center-type project containing civic and commercial uses. Shortly thereafter, the City Council hired a new architectural firm and charged it with developing plans for a project known as the “City Civic Center,” which, after many public workshops and the consideration of numerous plan options, ultimately ended up being primarily a civic center focused on public facilities that would have been entirely publicly financed. As formally proposed, the City Civic Center project called for a total of 276,000 square feet of

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primarily civic and small scale commercial uses, including City offices, Council Chamber, a library, a children's museum, a 1,200-seat performing arts center with a smaller 300-seat theater, 40,000 square feet of retail on Parcel 3A, and an aquatic center on Parcel 1A. A project-level Draft EIR for the project was issued in September 2003. The City Council certified the Final EIR in December 2003, but did not grant entitlements for the project concept because the City would have borne a significant financial burden that was viewed as unacceptable. (As postscript to the demise of the City Civic Center project, the City and the San Ramon Valley Unified School District joined to develop a 600-seat performing arts facility and aquatics center at Dougherty Valley High School that will be available for community use during non-school hours when the school opens at the start of the 2007–08 academic year. Additionally, a site for the Children's Discovery Museum has been identified in the City of Dublin.)

In February 2004, City staff presented options regarding the City Center as part of a budget workshop. At the end of the workshop, the City Council directed staff to explore a public-private partnership option. The consensus was that there would be more advantages than disadvantages through a partnership, particularly in terms of providing public facilities and combining resources. As part of this action, the City Council formed an oversight subcommittee to work with City staff on implementing this new direction.

To realize the public-private partnership, the City determined it was necessary to make certain amendments to the General Plan and concurrently create a new zoning district: City Center Mixed Use (CCMU). The amendments included provisions that would allow for flexibility in the design of the City Center, and they were put forth before the Planning Commission and City Council in June 2005. The Planning Commission, the City Council oversight subcommittee, and the City Council approved the amendments, which were formally adopted in October 2006.

During this process, City staff also discovered that there was an opportunity to include approximately 3.5 acres of additional land to the City Center Mixed Use area, which provided more flexibility and options in the design of the City Center. City staff also solicited Sunset Development's interest in participating with the City in designing a new City Center because of its ownership of property within the City Center Mixed Use area. Sunset Development showed a strong desire to work collaboratively with the City in generating concept plans. The City also conducted exploratory meetings with other nationally recognized retail developers such as Caruso Affiliated, Federal Realty Investment Trust, the DeBartolo Company, and others.

The City Center project analyzed in this DSEIR is the culmination of the City and Sunset Development's joint efforts.

3.2.2 - Proposed Project Overview

The City of San Ramon and Sunset Development are co-applicants for the proposed mixed use project. The project consists of 2,168,466 square feet of new construction of retail, hotel, residential,

office, and civic uses on the project site. Included in this total 194,652 square feet of existing office space will be demolished, and the project will utilize a vested un-built office entitlement of 328,220 square feet. This existing entitlement is for Parcel 1A in accordance with the terms and conditions of a Development Agreement originally granted to Chevron, and assumed by Sunset Development Company. In summary, the total square footage to be built is 2,168,466 square feet; however, the needed entitlement for the project is for a “net” of 1,645,594 square feet of mixed uses.

The intent and design of this infill project is to create a vibrant destination and promote the use of public transportation and pedestrian and bicycle modes of transportation. The proposed project consists of three components: a Plaza District on Parcels 2 and 3A, the Bishop Ranch 1A office complex on Parcel 1A, and a City Hall and Transit Center on Parcel 1B. A summary of the project components is provided in Table 3-4. Each component is described in further detail below. A context plan for the proposed project is shown in Exhibit 3-4. An illustrative site plan for the proposed project is provided in Exhibit 3-5. The tentative parcel map for the proposed project is provided in Appendix L.

Table 3-4: Project Components

Component	Use	Square Footage	Notes
Plaza District	Retail	635,042	Includes a cinema, two anchor stores, and restaurants
	Office	50,142	Space can developed as either office or retail (i.e. retail/office flex)
	Hotel	139,867	Consists of 169 rooms
	Residential	550,669	Consists of 487 high-density residential units
Bishop Ranch 1A Office Complex	Office	681,769	Three 7-story, Class A office buildings
City Hall and Transit Center	Civic	110,490	Includes a City Hall with Council Chamber, City offices, library, and police station, as well as transit center
New Construction Subtotal		2,168,466	
Bishop Ranch 2		(194,652)	City/Sunset Annexation and Development Agreement amended to allow development of Plaza District in place of Bishop Ranch 2
Office Entitlement		(328,220)	Amendment to City/Chevron (Sunset Assumption) Annexation and Development Agreement amended to allow development of Bishop Ranch 1A in place of office entitlement
Reductions Subtotal		(522,872)	
Net Project Square Footage		1,645,594	
Source: Sunset Development Company, 2007.			

3.2.3 - Project Components

Plaza District

The Plaza District would be the largest component of the proposed project, both in terms of footprint and square footage. The Plaza District would occupy Parcels 2 and 3A and would consist of seven City blocks: A, B, C, D, E, F-G, and H. Blocks A through D would be located on Parcel 2, and Blocks E through H would be located on Parcel 3A. The Plaza District would be organized around Center Street, the principal east-west roadway that would bisect the district. Three north-south streets would intersect with Center Street—West Street, Camino Ramon, and East Street—and would create three internal intersections in the Plaza District. In addition, the existing Bishop Drive would be extended from its current terminus at the Bishop Ranch 3 parking structure to loop around the east side of the Plaza District and intersect with Bollinger Canyon Road. With the exception of Camino Ramon, all streets would be private.

The heart of the Plaza District would be centered around a large pedestrian plaza, located in front of the hotel on the south side of Center Street, between West Street and Camino Ramon. The plaza would be used for seasonal programs, such as farmer’s markets during the warmer months and outdoor ice skating during the winter months. Exhibit 3-6 provides a site plan of the Plaza District. Exhibits 3-7a through 3-7h provide individual depictions of the seven blocks (A through H) within the Plaza District.

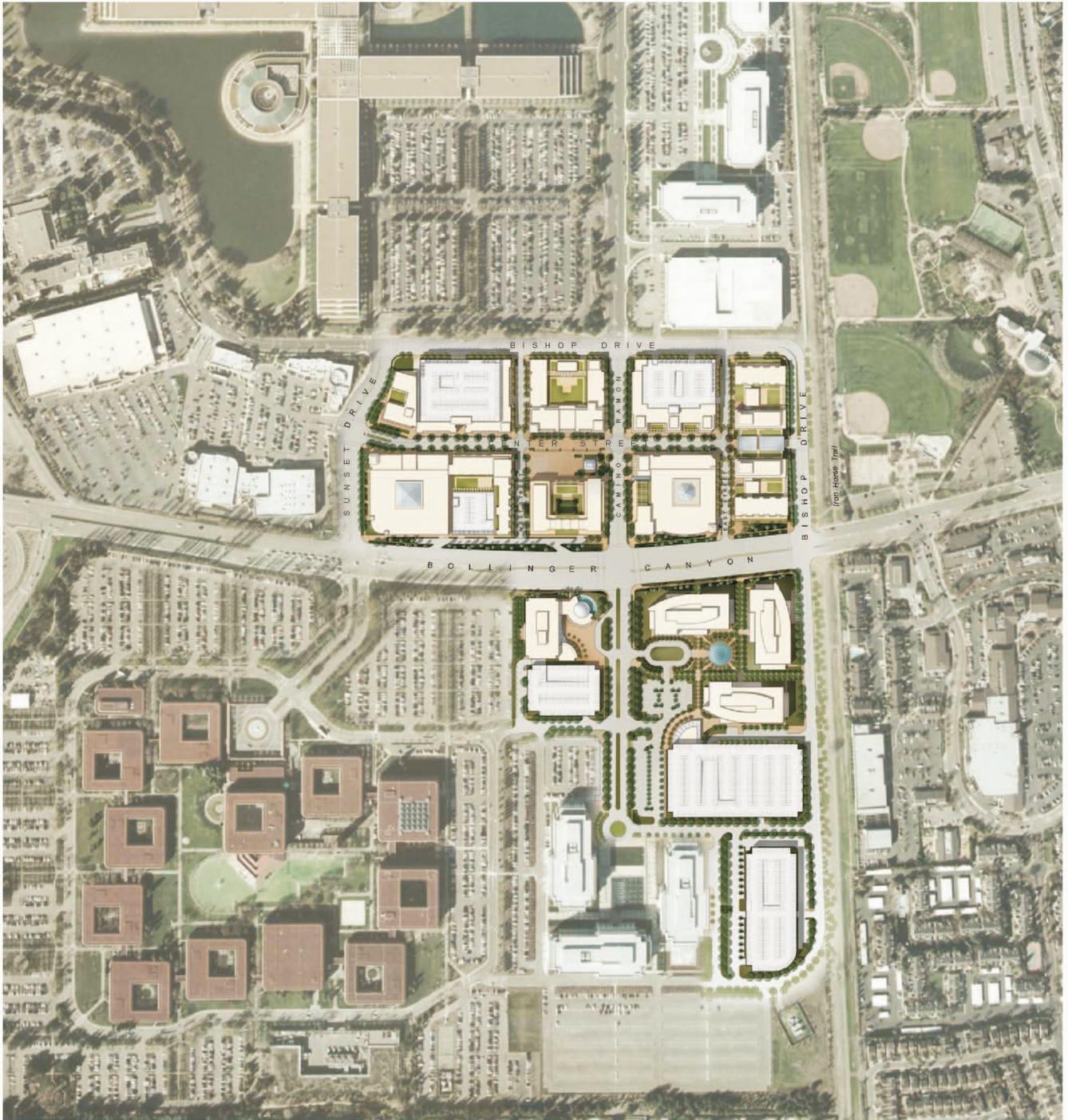
Within the Plaza District would be retail, residential, office, and hotel uses. Each is discussed in detail below.

Retail

Retail uses within the Plaza District would total 635,042 square feet and consist of two possible anchor stores, a six-screen arts cinema, and smaller inline retail uses such shops, restaurants, and spa/fitness/wellness. Table 3-5 provides a summary of the retail square footage for each of the seven Plaza District blocks.

Table 3-5: Plaza District Retail Uses Summary

Block	Retail Use	Square Footage
A	Inline Retail	65,160
B	Cinema/Inline Retail	79,525
C	Inline Retail	25,961
D	Anchor Store 1/Inline Retail	193,385
E	Inline Retail	67,440
F and G	Inline Retail	44,215
H	Anchor Store 2/Inline Retail	159,356
	Total	635,042
Source: Sunset Development Company, 2007.		



Source: Sunset Development Company, April 30, 2007.

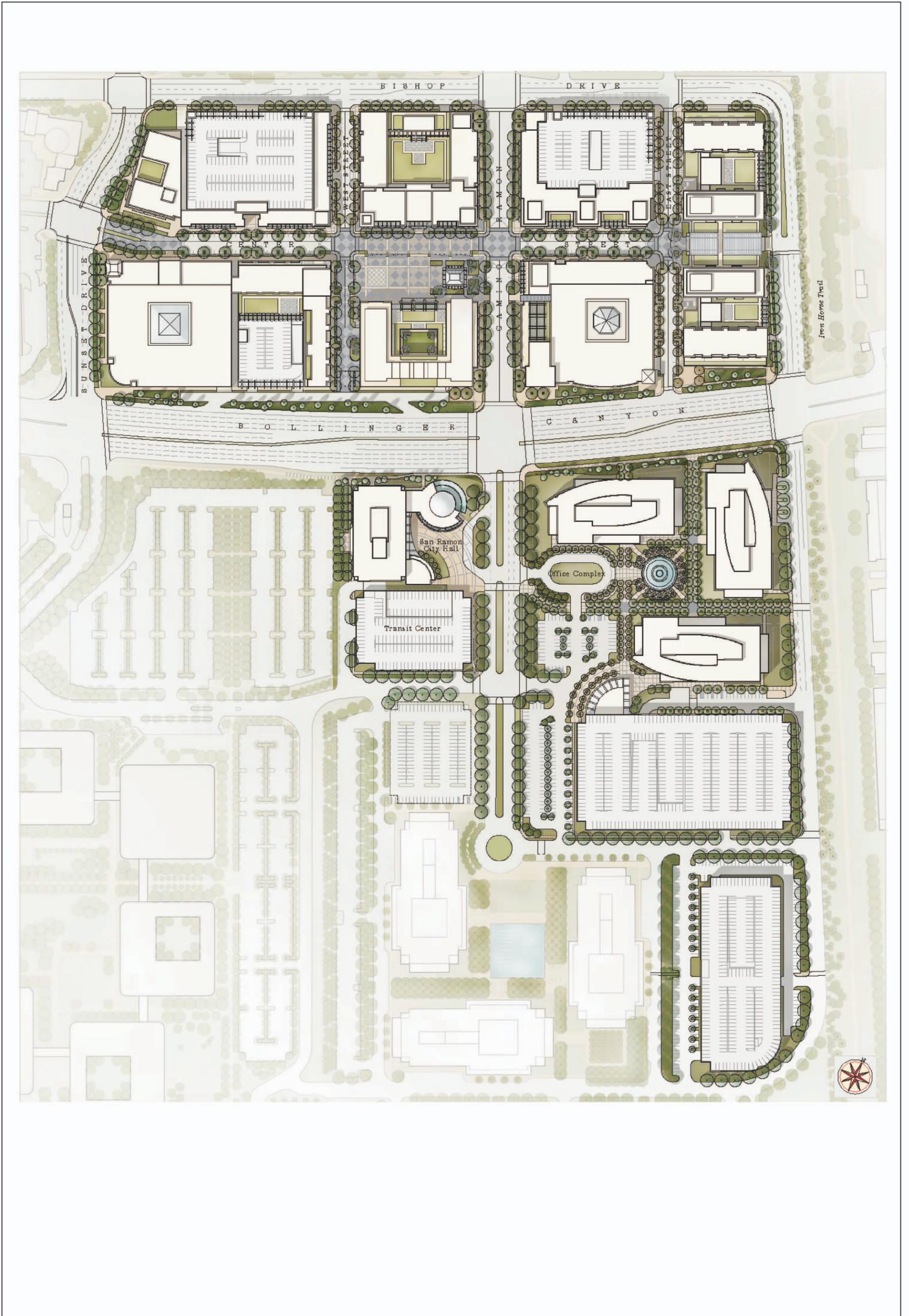


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Exhibit 3-4 Context Plan

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Source: Sunset Development Company, April 30, 2007.



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Exhibit 3-5 Illustrative Site Plan

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