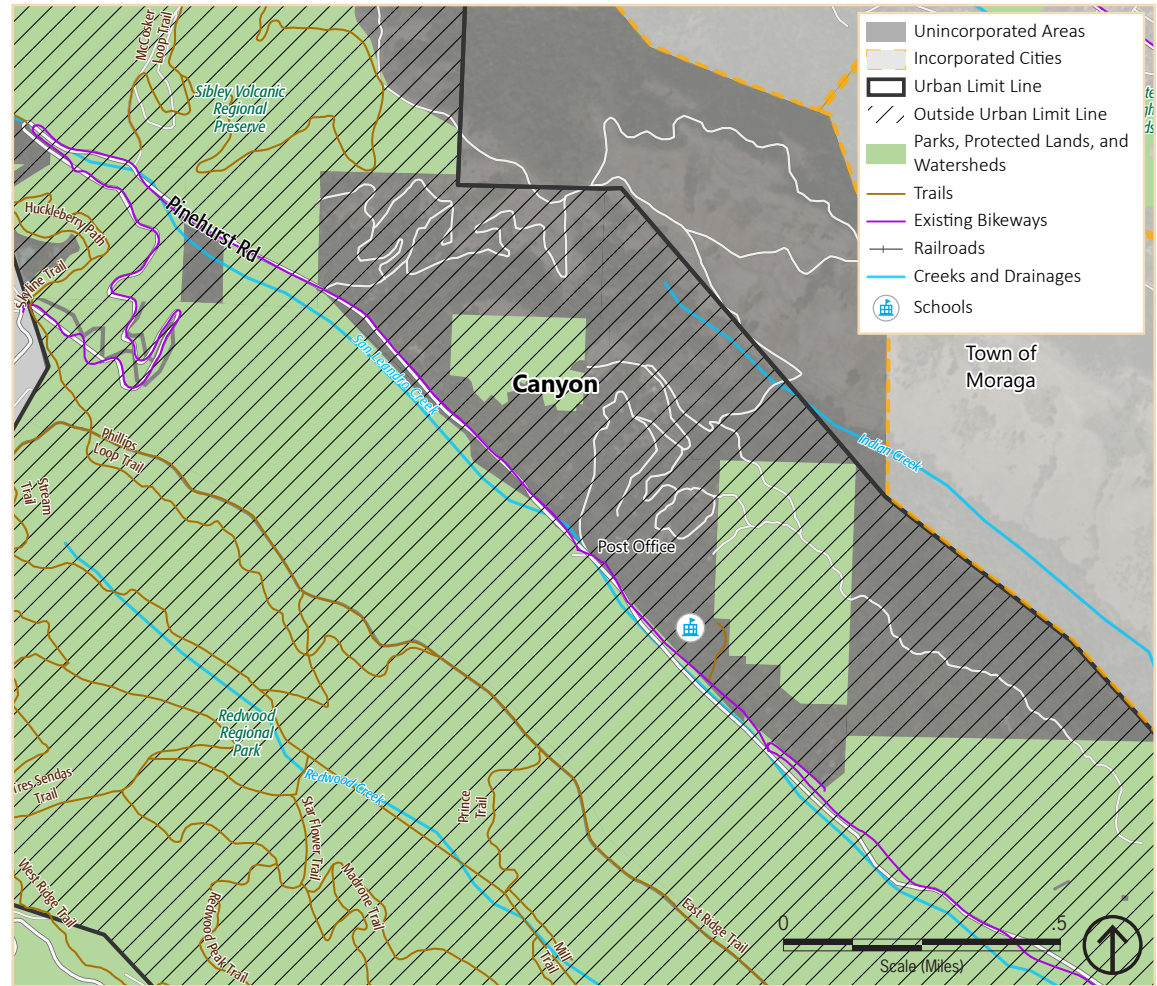


# CANYON | CONTEXT

Hidden in the redwood forests on the eastern slopes of the Berkeley Hills range in western Contra Costa County, Canyon's fiercely independent reputation precedes it throughout the Bay Area. A lumber mill and accompanying road was first constructed through the canyon in the 1850s. Approximately 50 years later, the Sacramento Northern Railway was extended to run through the community. Service ended in 1957 and the eastern portal of the railroad tunnel was buried in a landslide in 1980. With much of the land in the area owned by the East Bay Municipal Utility District (EBMUD) for watershed protection, early residents in Canyon enjoyed a secluded lifestyle in the hills. In the 1960s, young creatives seeking an alternative lifestyle were drawn to the area, and the community quickly grew into an anti-establishment enclave. Although Canyon is no longer a hotbed of political and social protest, many residents still value Canyon's non-conformist way of life.

Land uses in Canyon range from rural residential and a few public uses to agricultural and open space uses, with much of the area still owned by EBMUD. The post office and Canyon School are the two public buildings serving the community. Canyon School is a kindergarten through 8th grade school that guarantees a spot for each Canyon child, despite a long wait list of applicants from nearby communities. There are approximately 100 homes scattered among often unnamed roads. Many of those homes were constructed by residents themselves, creating unique structures comprised of salvaged materials. Homes are rarely sold and tend to remain within the same families that have occupied the land for decades.

The Canyon community is close knit and relatively closed off from outside influences due to the rugged terrain and limited roadway infrastructure. Residents enjoy informal trails through the towering redwood trees and value their uninhibited access to nature.





Source: Contra Costa County, 2018; PlaceWorks, 2020.

## WHO LIVES IN CANYON?

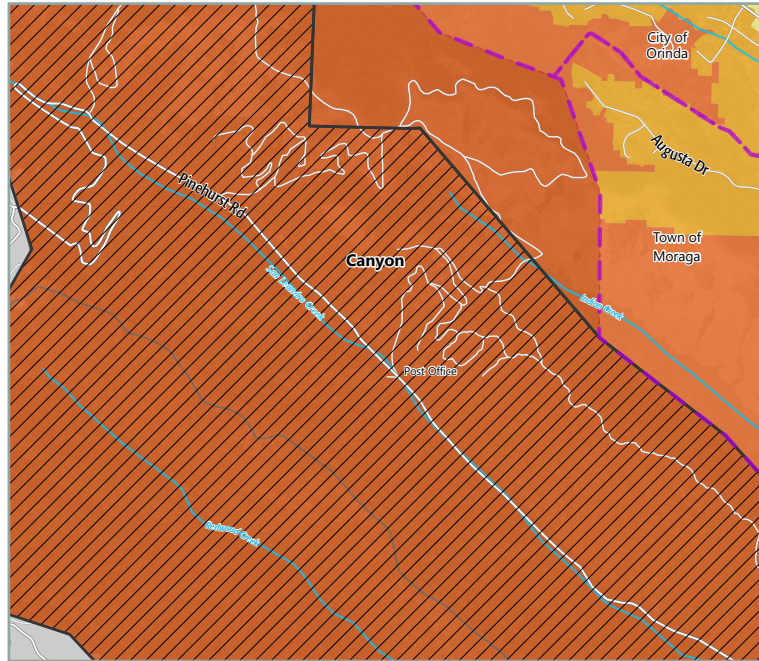
<p><b>Median Age</b> 49 years old in Canyon</p> <p><b>VS</b></p> <p>39 years old in Contra Costa County</p>	<p><b>Average Life Expectancy</b> no data in Canyon</p> <p><b>VS</b></p> <p>81 years old in Contra Costa County</p>	<p><b>Median Household Income</b> \$109,677 in Canyon</p> <p><b>VS</b></p> <p>\$88,456 in Contra Costa County</p>	<p><b>Race</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ 80% White</li> <li>▶ 25% Asian</li> <li>▶ 1% Black or African American</li> </ul> <p><b>Ethnicity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ 5% Hispanic or Latino</li> </ul>
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The information on this page presents a summary of hazards and vulnerabilities in Canyon based on the Contra Costa County Vulnerability Assessment; please see the [online Vulnerability Assessment](#) for a full description of these hazards and vulnerabilities.

Hazards	
	Drought
	Extreme heat
	Fog
	Human health hazards
	Landslides
	Seismic hazards
	Severe storms
	Wildfire

Major Vulnerabilities	
The entire community is on a single access road (Pinehurst Road), and thus is vulnerable to landslides and wildfire. These vulnerabilities are exacerbated by limited cell phone coverage, which can inhibit emergency response and communication during a Public Safety Power Shutoff or other event that results in a loss of power to the community.	
Children are vulnerable to extreme heat, human health hazards, and wildfire.	
Cost-burdened households are vulnerable to drought, extreme heat, landslides, seismic hazards, severe storms, and wildfire.	
Canyon Elementary School and the US Post Office are vulnerable to landslides, seismic hazards, severe storms, and wildfire.	
San Leandro Creek, an aquatic habitat, is vulnerable to drought, extreme heat, and landslides.	



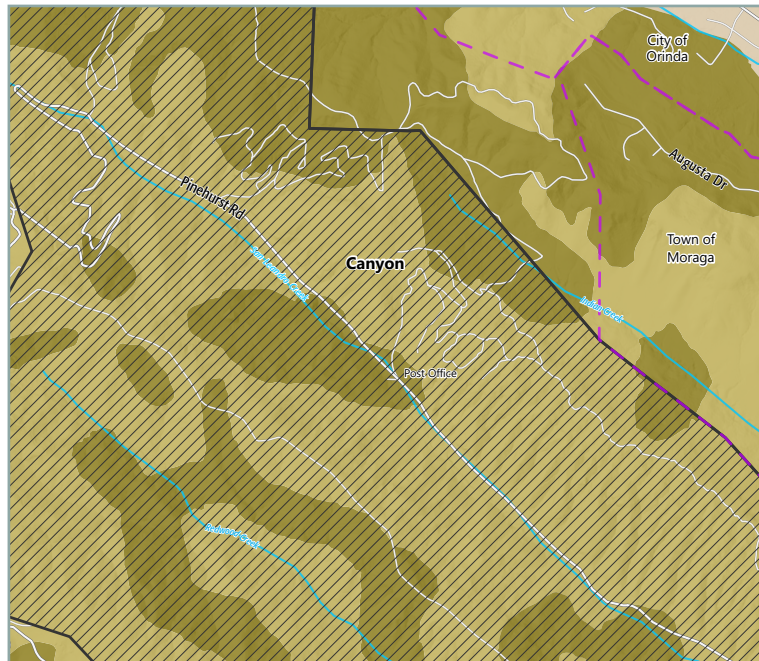
## WILDFIRE

### Wildfire Severity Zones

- Very High
- High
- Moderate
- Unincorporated Areas
- Incorporated Cities
- Urban Limit Line
- Outside Urban Limit Line
- Creeks and Drainages



Source: CAL FIRE, 2007; Contra Costa County, 2018; PlaceWorks, 2020.



## LANDSLIDES

### Landslides

- Mapped landslides
- Few large mapped landslides, but contains scattered small landslides and questionably-identified larger landslides
- Areas of gentle slope at low elevation that have little or no potential for landslides
- Incorporated Cities
- Urban Limit Line
- Outside Urban Limit Line
- Creeks and Drainages



Source: California Geologic Survey, 2008; Contra Costa County, 2018; PlaceWorks, 2020.



## Example Draft Guidance for Canyon Residents to Consider/Discuss

### DRAFT GUIDING PRINCIPLES

1. Residents identify their undeveloped surroundings as one of most valuable assets of this area. Preservation of the natural setting and wildlife habitat should be prioritized.
2. Residents enjoy informal trails through the redwood trees and value their uninhibited access to open space. These amenities should be preserved and protected.
3. Canyon's steep topography, secluded location, and singular access via Pinehurst Road expose the community to potentially severe impacts from wildfires, landslides, and earthquakes. The community should be protected from these hazards through proper planning and emergency response.

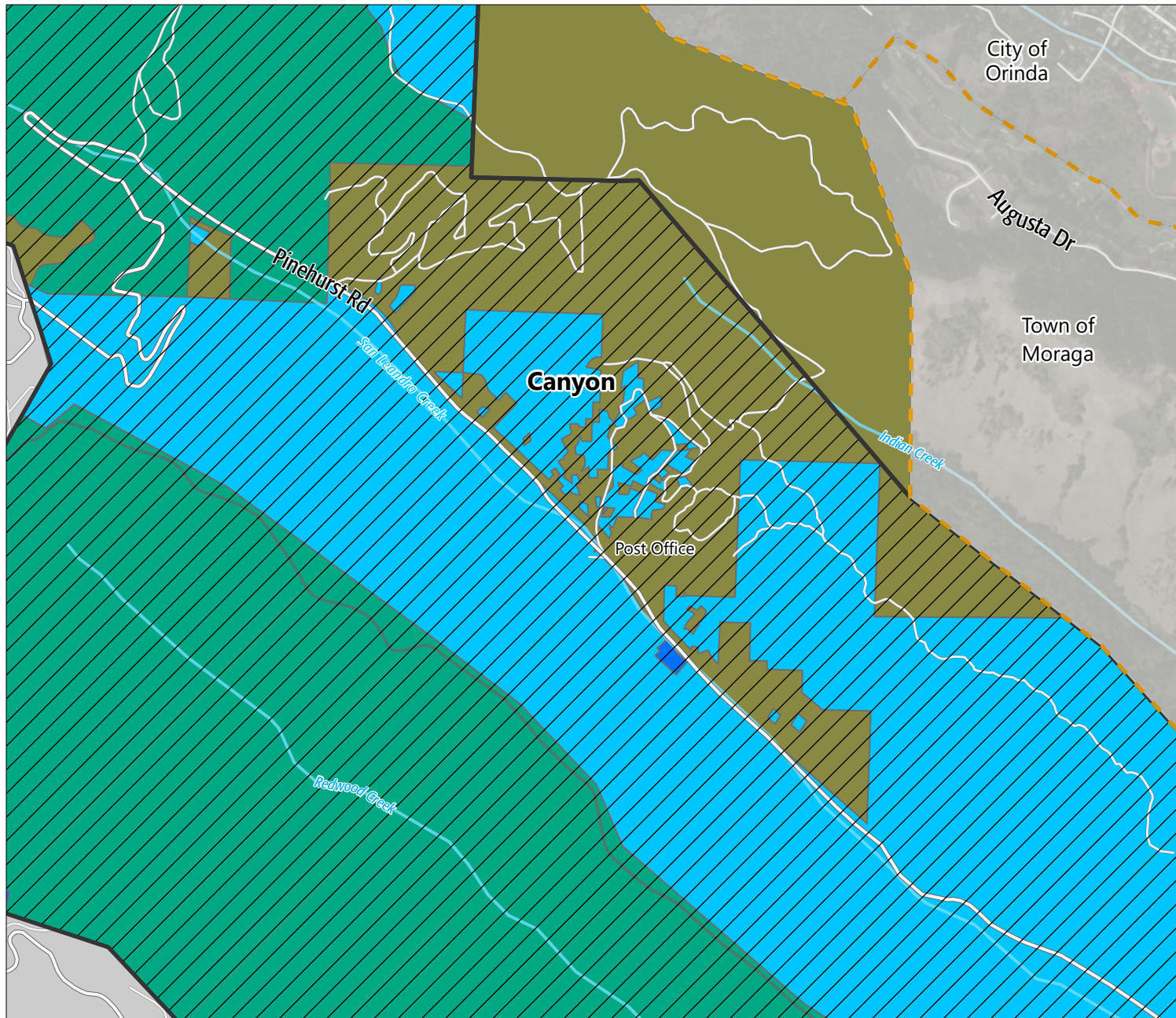
### DRAFT POLICIES








1. Prohibit development and land uses that disrupt Canyon's natural surroundings, negatively impact wildlife habitat, and/or compromise community values.
2. Improve pedestrian and roadway infrastructure in a way that balances public safety and the needs of users with the desire to maintain Canyon's character and privacy.

### DRAFT ACTIONS

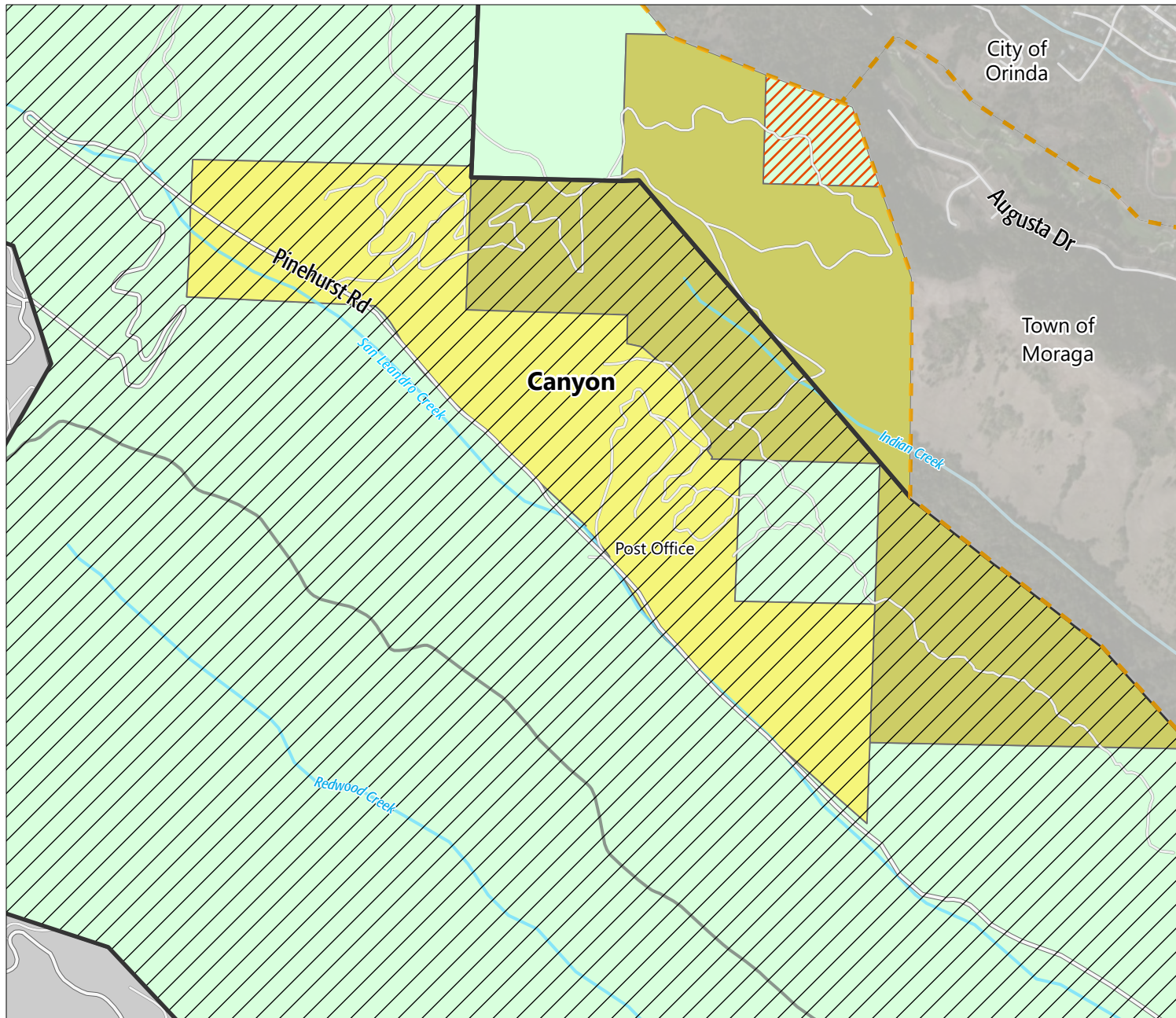
1. Coordinate with the Canyon community, public safety, and health agencies to create a comprehensive emergency plan, including establishing evacuation routes and an emergency shelter in Canyon.








The guidance section of the profile will also talk about the General Plan land use designations and zoning map for Canyon. As part of the General Plan Update, the County plans to fold the Watershed designation, which covers a portion of Canyon, into a larger Resource Conservation designation, but the intent of the designation and the allowed uses wouldn't change. The County also plans to change the R-20 zoning that covers a portion of Canyon to an Agriculture zoning designation, consistent with the Agriculture designation in the General Plan land use map, as required by State law and the voter-approved Urban Limit Line (ULL) policy in Contra Costa County.



-  Incorporated Cities
-  Urban Limit Line
-  Outside Urban Limit Line
- General Plan Land Use Designations**
-  AL (Agricultural Lands)
-  PR (Parks and Recreation)
-  PS (Public and Semi-Public)
-  WS (Watershed)

### Canyon General Plan Land Use Designations



-  Incorporated Cities
-  Urban Limit Line
-  Outside Urban Limit Line
- Zoning Designations**
-  A-2 (General Agriculture)
-  A-4 (Agricultural Preserve)
-  R-20 (Single Family Residential)
- Zoning Overlays**
-  Slope Density and Hillside Development Combining District

### Canyon Zoning Designations