

# Express

## Editorial: Vote Yes on Measure Y in Danville to approve Magee Preserve project

Danville voters will get their opportunity to directly weigh in on -- and potentially settle -- the years-long debate over residential development on Magee Ranch property south of Diablo Road in the northeastern part of town.

We recommend a Yes vote on Measure Y on March 3, in favor of the Magee Preserve residential development with 69 houses clustered strategically on smaller portions of the property and the remaining 381 acres reserved as permanent open space.

The project, championed by Davidon Homes and approved by the Danville Town Council, would accomplish key community goals around hillside preservation, bicycle safety, emergency access and development in line with Danville's character, as well as position public agencies well for future traffic improvements.

We recognize the project is a tough sell among the many no-growth residents in Danville, but Magee Preserve represents the best outcome for development that will inevitably occur on this coveted property.

Yes, the project is spearheaded by developer Davidon Homes, but there is a broad coalition of local residents and organizations backing Magee Preserve -- namely Save Mount Diablo, East Bay Parks, Bike East Bay and Mount Diablo Cyclists.

These are not groups that endorse development projects

every day, so their support carries weight.

We encourage Danville voters to seek out accurate information and fair perspectives when researching Measure Y. And we hope they can see through misleading information presented by project opponents.

For example, we find disingenuous the claim that the project isn't expanding open space while actually rezoning existing open space.

Sure, the Magee property includes undeveloped agricultural land, but agriculturally zoned land under private ownership and permanent open space under public control are two totally different situations. This project would designate hundreds of acres as open space in perpetuity.

Plus, we take to heart the argument that the property, as currently designated under the town's General Plan, could be developed with up to 78 homes at a ratio of one home per 5 acres under the general agricultural district (A-2) zoning.

We see similar faults in the No campaign's hollow arguments on evacuation safety, negative school impacts and bike safety.

We agree the Magee Preserve development plan does not solve the traffic congestion problems on that narrow stretch of Diablo Road, but this project would never be meant to correct it all, with just 69 houses (and resulting new car trips).

The two key traffic signal improvements are positive incremental steps. Davidon would also provide land and public easement that would facilitate the town completing short- and medium-term bicycle and pedestrian upgrades through the area while also putting the town and county in better position for larger roadwork in the future if regional funding is secured.

The easement is a great public benefit, as are the preserved 381 acres of open space, planned public trails, creek and wildlife protection, and improved emergency access -- not to mention the well-designed neighborhood Davidon proposes.

That all goes away if Measure Y fails, and who knows what would come forward in its place -- especially in the context of potential piecemeal projects under A-2 zoning or in light of the state's desire to address the housing shortfall. That's the reality.

Magee Preserve is a good project that exemplifies the type of measured growth with strong public benefit that the town of Danville strives for.

Vote Yes on Measure Y.

Editor's note: Our editorial board reached its decision after meeting with representatives of the declared campaigns on both sides.

# YES on Y Restricts Housing, Limits Development & Adds 381 Acres of Public Open Space at No Cost to Taxpayers.

YES on Y is endorsed by *Save Mount Diablo, East Bay Regional Park District, the San Ramon Danville Express, the Town Council, the San Ramon Valley Democrats, the Contra Costa Republican Party, and Contra Costa County Supervisor Candace Andersen.*



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**VOTE YES ON MEASURE Y BY MAIL OR ON TUES., MARCH 3. IT’S YOUR CHOICE FOR THE FUTURE OF DANVILLE.**