



# NOTICE OF PREPARATION ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT WILLOW VILLAGE MASTER PLAN PROJECT CITY OF MENLO PARK

**Date:** September 18, 2019

<b>To:</b>	State Clearinghouse State Responsible Agencies State Trustee Agencies Other Public Agencies Interested Organizations	<b>From:</b>	Kyle Perata Principal Planner City of Menlo Park 701 Laurel Street Menlo Park, CA 94025
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**Subject:** Notice of Preparation (NOP) of the Environmental Impact Report for the Willow Village Master Plan Project

**Lead Agency:** City of Menlo Park Planning Division

**Project Title:** Willow Village Master Plan Project

**Project Area:** City of Menlo Park

Notice is hereby given that the City of Menlo Park (City) will be the lead agency and will prepare an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the proposed Willow Village Master Plan Project (Proposed Project). The EIR will address the Proposed Project's potential physical environmental effects on each of the environmental topics outlined in the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), with the exception of agricultural or forestry resources, mineral resources, and wildfire. The City of Menlo Park is requesting comments on the scope and content of this EIR.

A scoping session will be held as part of the Planning Commission meeting on **October 7, 2019, at 7:00 p.m.** at the Menlo Park City Council Chambers, located at 701 Laurel Street, Menlo Park, CA 94025. The scoping session is part of the EIR scoping process and is the time when the City solicits input from the public and other agencies on specific topics they believe should be addressed in the environmental analysis. The focus of the scoping meeting will be the content that will be studied in the EIR. Written comments on the scope of the EIR may also be sent to:

**Kyle Perata, Principal Planner**  
**City of Menlo Park**  
**Community Development Department, Planning Division**  
**701 Laurel Street**  
**Menlo Park, CA 94025**  
**ktperata@menlopark.org**  
**Phone: 650.330.6721**  
**Fax: 650.327.1653**

Comments on the NOP are due no later than the close of the NOP review period at 5:00 p.m. on **October 18, 2019**. However, we would appreciate your response as soon as possible. Please send your written comments to Kyle Perata at the address shown above or via email to [ktperata@menlopark.org](mailto:ktperata@menlopark.org) with "Proposed Willow Village Master Plan Project EIR" as the subject. Public agencies providing comments are asked to include a contact person for the agency.

**PROJECT LOCATION AND EXISTING CONDITIONS:** The approximately 59-acre Menlo Science and Technology Park (Project Site) is located north of US 101 in the City of Menlo Park. The Project Site is bounded by the currently inactive Dumbarton Rail Corridor to the north, an existing life science complex to the east and south (Menlo Park Labs Campus), the Hetch Hetchy right-of-way corridor and Mid-Peninsula High School to the south, and Willow Road to the west. North of the currently inactive Dumbarton Rail Corridor, across State Route (SR) 84, are tidal mudflats and marshes along San Francisco Bay, the Don Edwards San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge, and Ravenswood Slough. The Project Site is located within the vicinity of the existing Facebook campuses, which consist of the Classic Campus (East Campus) encompassing Buildings 10–19, located north of SR 84 on the former Sun Microsystems campus, and the West Campus encompassing Buildings 20, 21, 22 (expected to be operational by early 2020), and 23, located west of Willow Road on the former TE Connectivity campus. Figure 1 depicts the location of the Project Site.

The Project Site currently contains 20 buildings with a mix of office, research and development (R&D), and warehousing uses at the following addresses: 1350–1390 Willow Road, 925–1098 Hamilton Avenue, and 1005–1275 Hamilton Court. The existing site contains approximately 1 million gross square feet (gsf). Currently, Facebook occupies a number of the buildings for a variety of uses, including office space, employee amenities, research and development, and an employee health clinic. Other tenants occupy buildings pursuant to short-term leases, including the Menlo Park Fire Protection District (which uses an existing warehouse facility for storage and training), Satellite Healthcare (which operates a dialysis clinic), and Community Legal Services of East Palo Alto (which rents temporary office space). In total, approximately 3,500 people are currently employed at the Project Site.

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION:** The Proposed Project would demolish existing onsite buildings and landscaping and construct new buildings within a Town Square District, a Residential/Shopping District, and a Campus District. The Proposed Project would result in a net increase of approximately 1 million square feet (sf) of nonresidential uses (office space and non-office commercial/retail), for a total of approximately 2 million sf of nonresidential uses at the Project Site. In addition, the Proposed Project would include multi-family housing units, a hotel, indoor space dedicated for community facilities/uses, park building/improvements and open space.

The approximately 22-acre Residential/Shopping District would be located in the southwestern portion of the Project Site. The approximately 5-acre Town Square District would be located in the northwestern portion of the Project Site. Together, these two districts would include: approximately 1,735 residential units, which would include a minimum of 15 percent affordable/below market-rate units (approximately 261 units); up to approximately 200,000 sf of retail, including a grocery store, pharmacy, and restaurants (of which approximately 25,000 sf would be located on the ground floor along the east side of Main Street in the Campus District and would be open to the public); an approximately 175,000-sf hotel with 200-250 rooms and food services; an approximately 500 space parking structure intended to accommodate visitors/vendors to the office campus and hotel guests during normal business hours and provide retail overflow parking during evening and weekend time periods; and an approximately 10,000 sf indoor space dedicated to community facilities/uses adjacent to a 4-acre public park. In addition, an approximately 0.7-acre Town Square and 0.3-acre dog park would be accessible to the public.

The approximately 32-acre Campus District, located in the eastern portion of the Project site, would include approximately 1.75 million sf of office uses and employee-serving amenity space, along with two above-ground parking structures with approximately 3,100 parking spaces. Both parking structures would include

a ground-level Transit Hub to support private campus commuter shuttles and trams. Open spaces would include a chain of publicly-accessible spaces and gardens along Main Street, a landscaped area off O'Brien Drive, and various secure, interior open spaces for the Campus District users.

The Proposed Project is anticipated to be developed in three phases, with the first phase consisting of approximately 595,000 sf of offices, 767 residential units, and 3,000 sf of retail; the second phase consisting of approximately 633,000 sf of offices, 633 residential units, and 35,000 sf of retail; and the third phase consisting of approximately 522,000 sf of offices, 335 residential units, the hotel, and 137,000 sf of retail. The Project Site would generally be developed beginning along the southern portion of the site and moving north with the northwest portion being completed last.

The Project Site would be bisected by the proposed north-south Main Street, which would provide access to all three districts. The Project Site would include a circulation network for vehicles, bicycles, and pedestrians inclusive of both public rights-of-way and private streets, generally aligned in an east-to-west and a north-to-south grid. The exact amount of dedicated public rights-of-way will be determined through the City review process. Modifications to the total area of dedicated rights-of-way could affect the overall development potential at the Project Site and the Proposed Project would be adjusted accordingly.

**PROJECT APPROVALS AND ANALYSIS:** The Proposed Project would require a Zoning Map Amendment to modify the circulation within the Project Site and the proposed site connections to the surrounding roadway network. The Proposed Project would require a General Plan Amendment to the Circulation Element for the associated circulation changes. At the time of the release of this NOP, the City has received development applications for approximately 457 hotel rooms, which would exceed the development cap of 400 hotel rooms set by the General Plan; therefore, the Proposed Project could require a General Plan Amendment to the Land Use Element to increase the development cap for hotel rooms to accommodate the proposed 250 room hotel, unless the proposed hotel room count for this Proposed Project or the other projects are reduced. In addition, the following City discretionary approvals or analysis would be required prior to development at the Project Site:

- Conditional Development Permit
- Subdivision Map/Vesting Tentative Map
- Right-of-Way Abandonment
- Rezoning to Incorporate X Overlay
- Development Agreement
- Environmental Review
- Fiscal Impact Analysis
- Architectural Control/Future Design Review
- Tree Removal Permits
- Below-Market-Rate Housing Agreement
- Appraisal/Community Amenity Value Analysis

**RESPONSIBLE AND OTHER AGENCIES:** The agencies listed below are expected to review the Draft EIR to evaluate the Proposed Project:

- Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD)
- California Department of Transportation (Caltrans)
- California Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB)/San Mateo Countywide Water Pollution Prevention Program
- City/County Association of Governments (C/CAG)
- San Mateo County Transportation Authority (SMCTA)
- Department of Toxic Substance Control (DTSC)
- Menlo Park Fire Protection District
- San Mateo County Environmental Health Division
- West Bay Sanitary District

- Native American Heritage Commission
- San Francisco Public Utilities Commission (SFPUC)

**INTRODUCTION TO EIR:** The purpose of an EIR is to inform decision-makers and the general public of the environmental effects of a proposed project. The EIR process is intended to provide environmental information for evaluating a proposed project and its potential to cause significant effects on the environment, examine methods of reducing adverse environmental impacts, and identify alternatives to a proposed project. The Willow Village Master Plan Project EIR will be prepared and processed in accordance with CEQA and the State CEQA Guidelines in effect at the time of the release of this NOP. Where appropriate the EIR for the Proposed Project will incorporate by reference analyses, discussions and mitigation measures from the program EIR certified on November 29, 2016 by the City Council for the ConnectMenlo General Plan Update. The EIR will include the following:

- Summary of the Proposed Project and its potential environmental effects
- Description of the Proposed Project
- Description of the existing environmental setting, potential environmental impacts of the Proposed Project, and mitigation measures to reduce significant environmental effects of the Proposed Project
- Variants to the Proposed Project
- Alternatives to the Proposed Project
- Cumulative impacts
- CEQA conclusions

**PROBABLE ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS:** The EIR will analyze whether the Proposed Project would have significant environmental impacts in the following areas:

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

To help prepare several of these sections and analyze the impacts, a transportation study will be prepared. The transportation study will focus on intersections, residential and non-residential roadway segments, and Routes of Regional Significance.

**ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS NOT LIKELY TO REQUIRE FURTHER ANALYSIS:** The Proposed Project is not anticipated to result in significant environmental effects in the following areas:

- Agricultural or Forestry Resources
- Mineral Resources
- Wildfire

The Project site is fully developed in an urbanized area and located near SR 84 and US 101. As such, agricultural and mineral resources do not exist on the site and wildfires are not a concern. A detailed analysis of these topics will not be included in the EIR.

**VARIANTS:** The Proposed Project could include additional and/or alternative access to/from the Proposed Project Site, along with other onsite features than currently proposed. All potential variants to the Proposed Project will be analyzed in the EIR. Variants that could be analyzed currently include: realignment of Hamilton Avenue and relocation of the existing gas station; a grade-separated crossing over or under the currently inactive Dumbarton Rail Corridor/Willow Road for bicycles, pedestrians, and Facebook trams; an onsite emergency water storage tank; and a recycled water system for either public use or onsite use only. In addition, the EIR will analyze two housing variants: an increase in housing units up to a maximum of 2,000 housing units and a decrease in housing units to a minimum of 1,500 housing units. The ConnectMenlo program EIR analyzed up to 2,000 residential units at the Project Site; however, with the anticipated right-of-way dedication, the maximum number of residential units would be approximately 1,860 units. The analysis will also consider a variant to the programming of the proposed onsite park. The proposed 4-acre park is currently identified as being programmed with playing fields and a playground but could be programmed differently than currently proposed with potentially passive recreational uses instead of active uses. Any environmental impacts associated with the potential Proposed Project variants will be disclosed in the EIR.

**ALTERNATIVES:** Based on the significance conclusions determined in the EIR, alternatives to the Proposed Project will be analyzed to reduce identified impacts. Section 15126.6(e) of the State CEQA Guidelines requires the evaluation of a No Project Alternative. Other alternatives may be considered during preparation of the EIR and will comply with the State CEQA Guidelines, which call for a “range of reasonable alternatives to the project, or to the location of the project, which would feasibly attain most of the basic objectives of the project but would avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects of the project.” The EIR will analyze a Reduced Intensity Alternative, the No Project Alternative, along with any other feasible alternatives that are proposed during the scoping process.

**EIR PROCESS:** Following the close of the NOP comment period, a draft EIR will be prepared that will consider all NOP comments. In accordance with State CEQA Guidelines Section 15105(a), the draft EIR will be released for public review and comment for the required 45-day review period. Following the close of the 45-day public review period, the City will prepare a final EIR, which will include responses to all substantive comments received on the draft EIR. The draft EIR and final EIR and will be considered by the Planning Commission and City Council in making the decision to certify the EIR and approve or deny the Proposed Project.



Kyle Perata, Principal Planner  
City of Menlo Park

September 18, 2019

Date



**Figure 1**  
**Project Location**  
 Willow Village Master Plan Project



ICF Graphics 00000131 (4-1-2019)