



**NOTICE OF PREPARATION  
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT  
MENLO PORTAL PROJECT  
CITY OF MENLO PARK**

**Date:** November 16, 2020

**To:** State Clearinghouse  
State Responsible Agencies  
State Trustee Agencies  
Other Public Agencies  
Interested Organizations

**From:** Payal Bhagat  
Consulting Planner  
City of Menlo Park  
701 Laurel Street  
Menlo Park, CA 94025

**Subject:** **Notice of Preparation of an Initial Study and Environmental Impact Report for the Menlo Flats Project**

**Lead Agency:** City of Menlo Park, Planning Division  
**Project Title:** Menlo Flats Project  
**Project Area:** Bayfront Area, City of Menlo Park

Notice is hereby given that the City of Menlo Park (City) will be the lead agency and will prepare a focused environmental impact report (EIR) for the proposed Menlo Flats Project (project). An Initial Study has been prepared along with this Notice of Preparation (NOP), which scopes out several environmental topics from further review. The focused EIR will address potential physical environmental effects of the proposed project that have not been scoped out, as outlined in the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The City is requesting comments on the scope and content of this focused EIR.

A scoping session will be held as part of the Planning Commission meeting on **December 7, 2020 at 7:00 p.m.** In response to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the Planning Commission meeting will be held remotely via Gotowebinar, which can be accessed at: [menlopark.org/PlanningCommission](https://menlopark.org/PlanningCommission). The scoping session, which is part of the focused EIR process, is the time when the City solicits input from the public and agencies on specific topics they believe should be addressed in the environmental analysis. The scoping process is designed to enable the City to determine the scope and content of the focused EIR, identify the range of actions, and identify potentially significant environmental effects, alternatives, and mitigation measures to be analyzed in the focused EIR. Written comments on the scope of the focused EIR may also be sent to:

**Payal Bhagat**  
**City of Menlo Park**  
**Community Development Department, Planning Division**  
**701 Laurel Street**  
**Menlo Park, CA 94025**  
[PBhagat@menlopark.org](mailto:PBhagat@menlopark.org)  
**Phone: 650.330.6702**

Comments on the NOP are due no later than the close of the NOP review period (5:00 p.m. on **December 21, 2020**). However, we would appreciate your response at the earliest possible date. Please send your written comments to Payal Bhagat at the address shown above or by email to [PBhagat@menlopark.org](mailto:PBhagat@menlopark.org) with “Menlo Flats Project EIR” as the subject. Public agencies that provide comments are asked to include a contact person for the agency.

The Initial Study is available online at: <https://www.menlopark.org/1537/CEQA-documents>. Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, paper copies are not currently available for review. If you require additional assistance, please contact Payal Bhagat at [PBhagat@menlopark.org](mailto:PBhagat@menlopark.org).

**PROJECT LOCATION AND EXISTING CONDITIONS:** The project site is located east of US Highway 101 (US 101) in the City of Menlo Park, San Mateo County, as shown in Figure 1. The approximately 1.38-acre project site is located at 165 Jefferson Drive and is generally surrounded by a mix of uses, including older buildings and new construction. The project site is bordered to the north by the Synergy Badminton Club, to the east by two light industrial buildings, to the south by Jefferson Drive, and to the west by a single-story light industrial building.

The project site is designated Mixed Use Residential within the Bayfront Area on the City’s General Plan Land Use Designations Map and is within the Residential-Mixed Use-Bonus (R-MU-B) Zoning District. The generally-level project site is currently developed with a single-story, approximately 24,311-square-foot commercial office building, as shown in Figure 2. The existing building on the project site was constructed in 1964 and is currently occupied by a commercial tenant. A total of 40 surface parking spaces are provided on the project site. Vegetation on the project site consists of small landscaped areas along the southern border and includes a total of 11 mature trees, 4 of which are Heritage Trees.

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION:** The proposed project would result in demolition of the existing office building and associated improvements and redevelopment of the project site with an approximately 253,702-gross-square-foot, eight-story mixed-use building with approximately 158 dwelling units and approximately 15,000 square feet of commercial space, as well as associated open space, circulation and parking, and infrastructure improvements, as shown in Figures 3, 4, and 5. The project sponsor is currently proposing that 15 percent of the units would comply with the City’s Below Market Rate (BMR) Housing Program Ordinance, Chapter 16.96, and the City’s Below Market Rate Guidelines (Guidelines). The proposed allotment and mix of affordable housing units would continue to be refined with the City.

The ground floor of each building would be raised approximately 5 feet above grade to accommodate flood plain design requirements. The proposed residential building would be a maximum of 84 feet, 11 inches and would front to Jefferson Drive. The proposed building would include an at-grade, three-level, approximately 81,988-square-foot, 176-space parking garage.

A total of approximately 20,929 square feet of open space would be provided across the entire project site, including private residential open space, common open space, and an approximately 1,647-square-foot public plaza located at the southeast corner of the building and a 3,375-square-foot publicly-accessible pedestrian paseo along the eastern boundary of the project site.

**PROJECT APPROVALS:** The following City discretionary approvals would be required prior to development at the project site:

- EIR Certification
- Use Permit
- Architectural Control
- Heritage Tree Removal Permit
- Below Market Rate Housing Agreement
- Building Permit
- Encroachment Permit

There will be a fiscal impact analysis conducted regarding the proposed project. In order to qualify for bonus-level development within the R-MU-B zoning district, the proposed project will also be required to complete an appraisal process to identify the value of the community amenities to be provided in exchange for the opportunity to develop at the bonus level.

**RESPONSIBLE AGENCIES:** The agencies/entities listed below are expected to review the draft focused EIR to evaluate the proposed project:

- Pacific Gas & Electric
- California Department of Transportation
- California Department of Toxic Substances Control
- California Regional Water Quality Control Board/San Mateo Countywide Water Pollution Prevention Program
- Native American Heritage Commission
- City/County Association of Governments
- Bay Area Air Quality Management District
- San Mateo County Transportation Authority
- San Mateo County Environmental Health Division
- West Bay Sanitary District
- Menlo Park Fire Protection District

**INTRODUCTION TO EIR:** ConnectMenlo, which updated the City’s General Plan Land Use and Circulation Elements and rezoned land in the M-2 Area (now referred to as the Bayfront Area), was approved on November 29, 2016. Because the City’s General Plan is a long-range planning document, the ConnectMenlo EIR was prepared as a program EIR, pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15168. The City certified the program EIR for ConnectMenlo on November 29, 2016. Section 15168(d) of the CEQA Guidelines provides information for simplifying the preparation of environmental documents by incorporating by reference analyses and discussions from the program EIR. CEQA Guidelines Section 15162(d) states that where an EIR has been prepared and certified for a program or plan, the environmental review for a later activity consistent with the program or plan should be limited to the effects that were not analyzed as significant in the prior EIR or susceptible to substantial reduction or avoidance.

An Initial Study for the proposed project, which is available for review online, has been prepared to evaluate the potential environmental impacts of the proposed project and determine what level of additional environmental review is appropriate. In accordance with the requirements outlined in Section 15168 of the CEQA Guidelines, the Initial Study has been prepared to disclose the relevant impacts and mitigation measures covered in the certified program-level ConnectMenlo Final EIR and discuss whether the proposed project is within the parameters of the certified ConnectMenlo Final

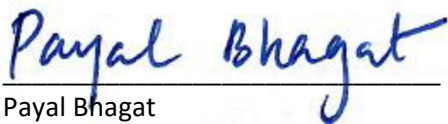
EIR. In addition, as a result of the settlement agreement between the City of Menlo Park and the City of East Palo Alto regarding the ConnectMenlo Final EIR, certain topics are required to be analyzed. Based on the findings of the Initial Study, a focused EIR will be prepared for impacts that need further discussion and/or mitigation beyond that provided in the certified ConnectMenlo Final EIR. The focused EIR for the proposed project will be prepared and processed in accordance with CEQA and the CEQA Guidelines.

**PROBABLE ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS:** Based on the conclusions in the Initial Study, the following topics will be scoped out of the EIR: aesthetics; agriculture and forestry resources; biological resources; cultural resources; energy; geology and soils; hazards and hazardous materials; hydrology and water quality; land use and planning; noise (construction-period); mineral resources; public services; recreation; utilities and service systems; and wildfire. These topic areas were adequately analyzed in the ConnectMenlo Final EIR and no additional potential impacts or mitigation measures have been identified in the Initial Study. Therefore, the focused EIR will analyze whether the proposed project would have a significant environmental impact in the following areas:

- Air Quality;
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions;
- Noise (traffic noise);
- Population and Housing; and
- Transportation.

**ALTERNATIVES:** Based on the significance conclusions determined in the focused EIR, alternatives to the proposed project will be identified and analyzed to reduce identified impacts. Section 15126.6(e) of the 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 CEQA Guidelines, which call for a range of reasonable alternatives to the project, or 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.

**EIR PROCESS:** Following the close of the NOP comment period, a draft focused EIR will be prepared that will consider all NOP comments. In accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15105(a), the draft focused EIR will be released for public review and comment for a 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 focused EIR. The draft focused EIR and final EIR will be considered by the Planning Commission in making the decision to certify the EIR and approve or deny the project.



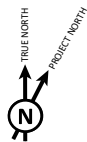
Payal Bhagat  
City of Menlo Park

November 16, 2020



FIGURE 1

LSA



 Project Site

Menlo Flats Project NOP

Project Location and Regional Vicinity Map

SOURCES: GOOGLE EARTH 8/9/18; LSA, 2020

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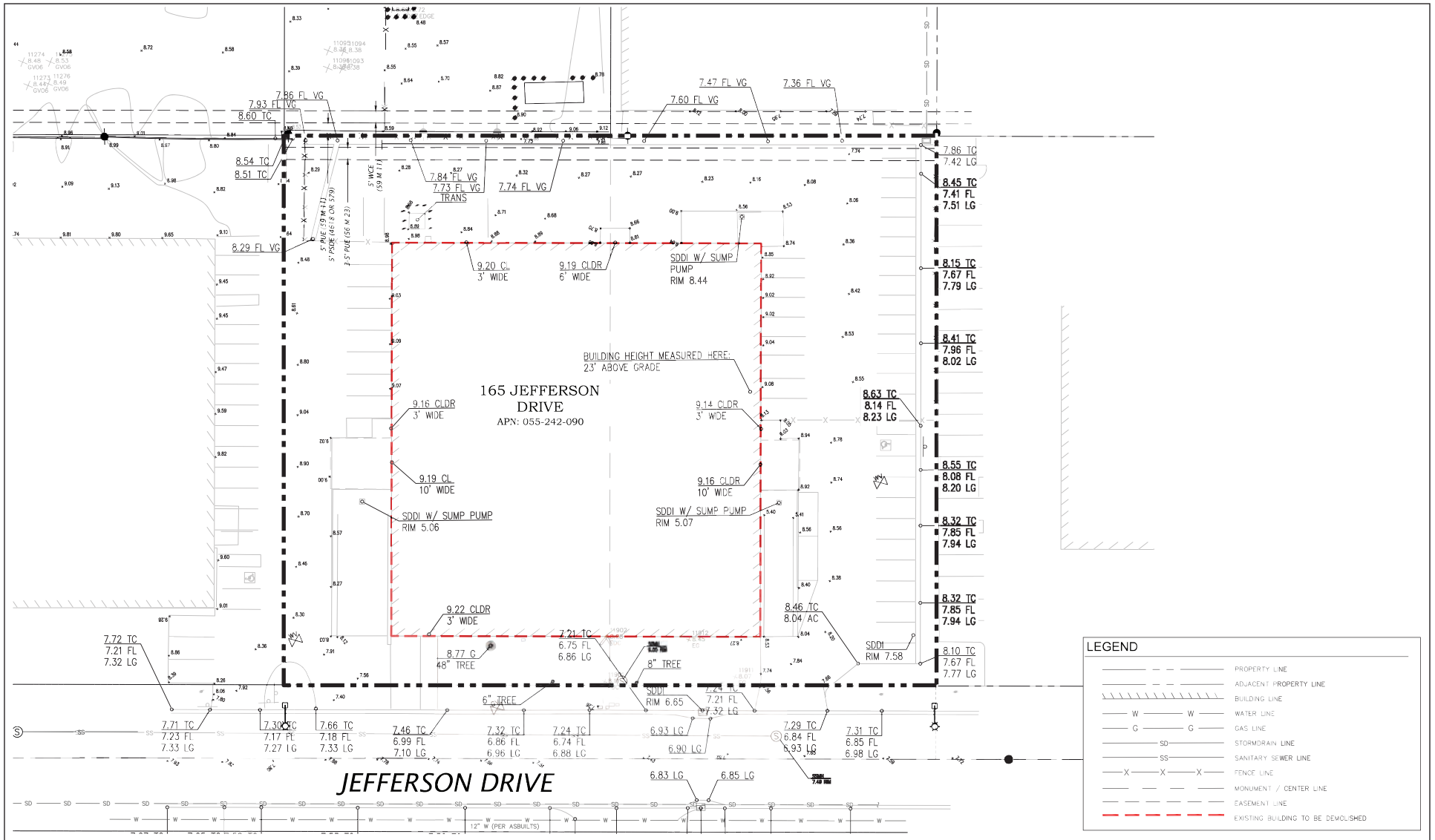
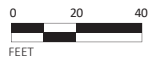


FIGURE 2

L&A



Project Boundary

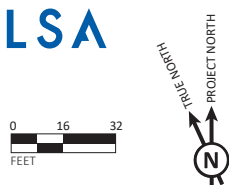
SOURCE: Greystar; HM; BKF, 7/21/2020

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Menlo Flats Project NOP  
Existing Site Conditions

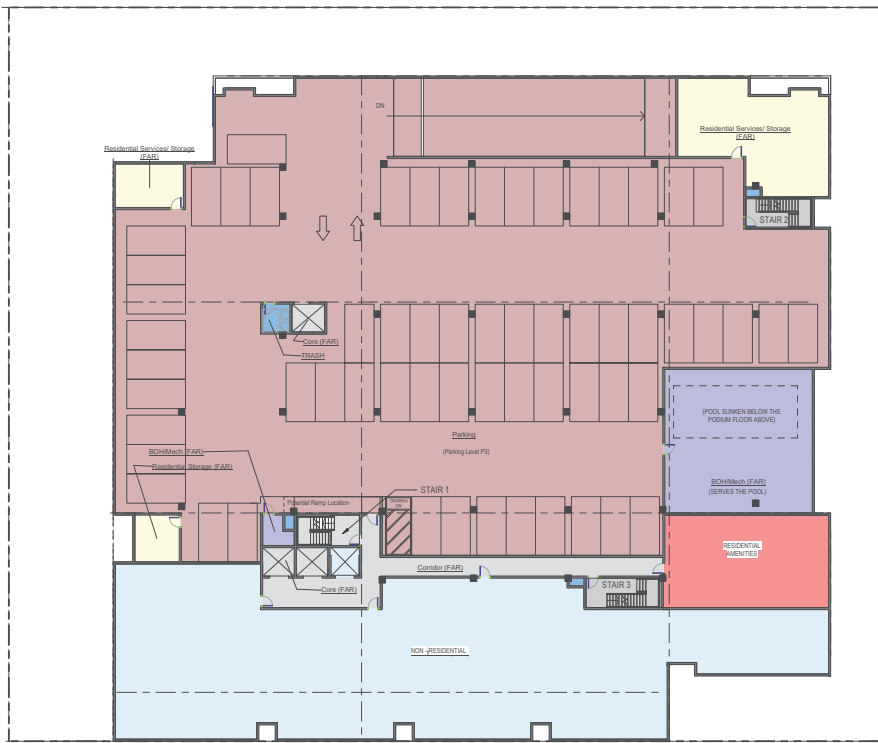


FIGURE 3



SOURCE: Greystar; HM; BKF, 7/21/2020

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AREA SUMMARY - LEVEL 02 AND PARKING LEVEL P3

Level	RESID. UNITS (FAR)	RESID. AMENITIES (FAR)	RESID SERVICES/ STORAGE (FAR)	RESID. COMMON (FAR)	RESID. UTILITIES (FAR)	RESID. GSF (FAR)	NON-RESIDENTIAL GSF (FAR)	RESID. COMMON (NOT INCL. IN FAR)	UTILITIES (NOT INCL. IN FAR)	PARKING GSF (NOT INCL. IN FAR)	TOTAL BLDG GSF	PROJECT OPEN SPACE (NOT INCL. IN FAR)
Level 02	0.0 SF	1,490.3 SF	1,902.5 SF	1,944.3 SF	2,147.9 SF	7,485.1 SF	9,172.3 SF	0.0 SF	130.6 SF	25,603.4 SF	42,391.4 SF	0.0 SF
Grand total	0.0 SF	1,490.3 SF	1,902.5 SF	1,944.3 SF	2,147.9 SF	7,485.1 SF	9,172.3 SF	0.0 SF	130.6 SF	25,603.4 SF	42,391.4 SF	0.0 SF

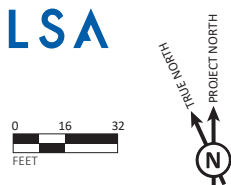
FLOOR PLAN - LEVEL 02 AND PARKING LEVEL P3



AREA SUMMARY - LEVEL 03

Level	RESID. UNITS (FAR)	RESID. AMENITIES (FAR)	RESID SERVICES/ STORAGE (FAR)	RESID. COMMON (FAR)	RESID. UTILITIES (FAR)	RESID. GSF (FAR)	NON-RESIDENTIAL GSF (FAR)	RESID. COMMON (NOT INCL. IN FAR)	UTILITIES (NOT INCL. IN FAR)	PARKING GSF (NOT INCL. IN FAR)	TOTAL BLDG GSF	PROJECT OPEN SPACE (NOT INCL. IN FAR)
Level 03	23,220.9 SF	1,111.3 SF	643.2 SF	3,911.0 SF	182.2 SF	29,068.5 SF	0.0 SF	0.0 SF	220.8 SF	0.0 SF	29,289.4 SF	11,375.4 SF
Grand total	23,220.9 SF	1,111.3 SF	643.2 SF	3,911.0 SF	182.2 SF	29,068.5 SF	0.0 SF	0.0 SF	220.8 SF	0.0 SF	29,289.4 SF	11,375.4 SF

FLOOR PLAN - LEVEL 03

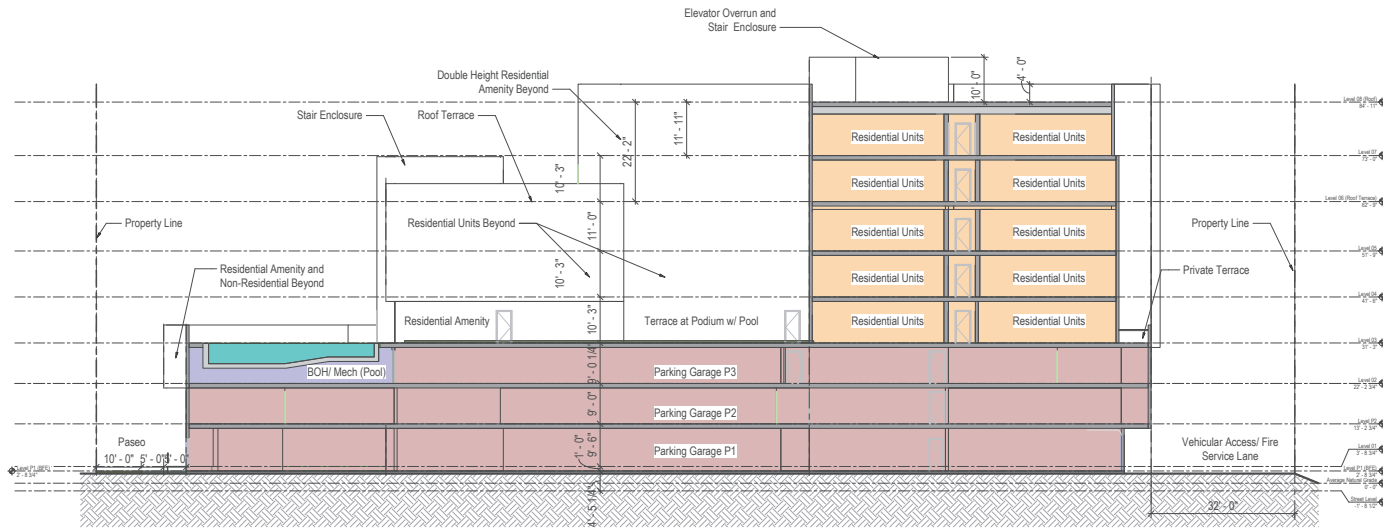


SOURCE: Greystar; HM; BKF, 7/21/2020

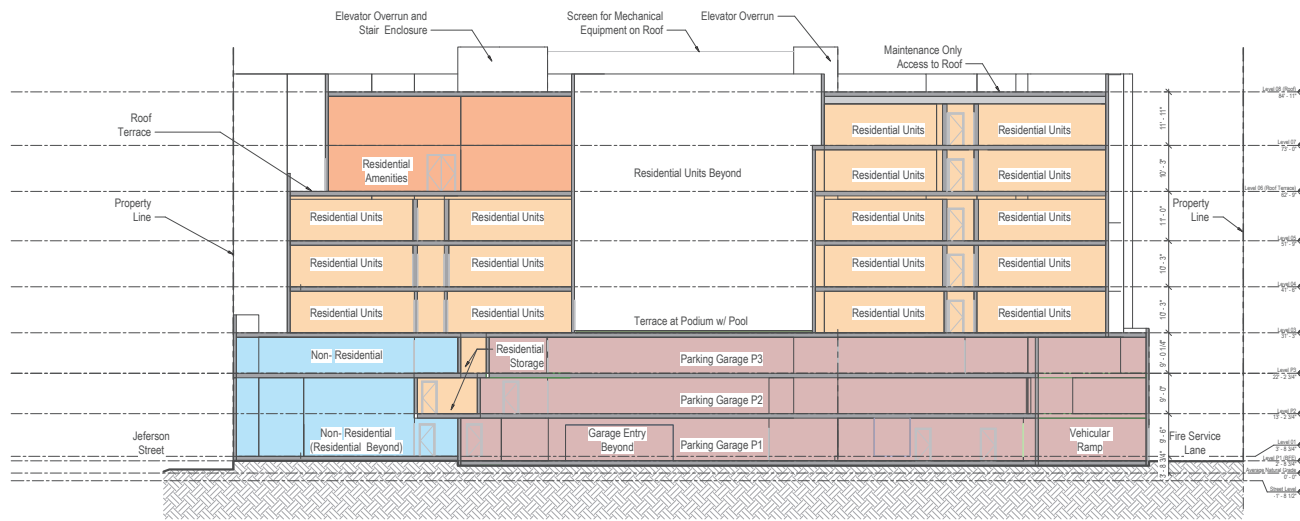
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FIGURE 4





EAST WEST BUILDING SECTION



SOUTH NORTH BUILDING SECTION

LSA

FIGURE 5

