

# NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY

## ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

WILLOW VILLAGE MASTER PLAN PROJECT

SCH NO. 2019090428

CITY OF MENLO PARK



April 8, 2022

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

**From:** Kyle Perata  
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City of Menlo Park  
701 Laurel St.  
Menlo Park, CA 94025

**Subject:** Notice of Availability of a Draft 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:** Bayfront Area, City of Menlo Park

### Purpose of Notice and Public Review Period

Notice is hereby given that the City of Menlo Park (City), as the lead agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), has prepared a Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the proposed Willow Village Master Plan Project (Proposed Project). In accordance with Section 15087 of the CEQA Guidelines, the City has prepared this Notice of Availability (NOA) to invite agencies, organizations, and interested parties to provide comments on the Draft EIR.

The 45-day comment period required by CEQA Guidelines Section 15105 for the Draft EIR has been set from Friday, April 8, 2022 through Monday, May 23, 2022. Written or emailed comments on the Draft EIR are due no later than the close of the Draft EIR review period (5 p.m., **Monday, May 23, 2022**). However, we would appreciate your response at the earliest possible date.

The Draft EIR is available online at [menlopark.org/willowvillage](http://menlopark.org/willowvillage). Printed copies of the Draft EIR are available for review at the Menlo Park Library at 800 Alma St. and the Belle Haven Branch Library at 413 Ivy Drive.

### Project location and existing locations

As shown in Figure 1, the Project Site is north of US 101 in Menlo Park and generally bounded by the currently inactive Dumbarton Rail Corridor to the north, an existing life science complex (Menlo Park Labs Campus) to the east, the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission (SFPUC) Hetch Hetchy utility right-of-way to the south, and Willow Road to the west. The Project Site comprises an approximately 59-acre industrial site (main Project Site) plus three parcels within two sites (Hamilton Avenue Parcels North and South) west of Willow Road.

The main Project Site is zoned O-B (Office Bonus) and R-MU-B (Residential Mixed-Use Bonus). It encompasses the Menlo Science and Technology Park, which, historically, supported industrial uses. In 1998, Prologis acquired the land and used it primarily for industrial, research-and-development (R&D), and office uses. Warehouse and storage facilities were also present. In 2015, a Meta Platforms, Inc. (Meta), affiliate purchased the entire site. Meta occupies several of the buildings for a variety of uses, including office space, R&D, dining facilities/employee amenities, and an employee health clinic. Other onsite occupants include various non-Meta tenants, including a dialysis center. Existing development on the main Project Site includes 20 buildings with employee amenities/support services (for Meta) and a mix of office, R&D, and warehousing uses at the following addresses: 1350–1390 Willow Road, 925–1098 Hamilton Avenue, and 1005–1275 Hamilton Court.

Hamilton Avenue Parcels North and South are zoned Neighborhood Commercial District, Special (C-2-S). Hamilton Avenue Parcel North, the approximately 1.8-acre block at the northwest corner of Willow Road and Hamilton

Avenue, consists of two legal parcels It is currently owned by LLBG Properties, Inc., and developed with approximately 16,000 square feet (sf) of retail uses, including the Belle Haven Retail Center and a Jack in the Box restaurant. Hamilton Avenue Parcel South, an approximately 1.3-acre parcel at the southwest corner of Willow Road and Hamilton Avenue, is owned by Chevron USA. It includes a service station with approximately 4,500 sf of retail space and a car wash. Hamilton Avenue Parcel South is addressed 1399 Willow Road and Hamilton Avenue Parcel North is addressed 1401 Willow Road and 871-883 Hamilton Avenue.

### **Project description**

At the main Project Site, the Proposed Project would demolish approximately 1 million sf of nonresidential uses and construct approximately 1.8 million sf of nonresidential uses (excluding a proposed hotel), for a net increase of 800,000 sf in nonresidential uses. The new nonresidential uses would be composed of up to 1.6 million sf of office and accessory uses<sup>1</sup> in the Campus District (i.e., up to 1.25 million sf of office space, with the balance [e.g., space for accessory uses, including meeting and collaboration space totaling 350,000 sf if the square footage for office use is maximized] in multiple buildings) and up to approximately 200,000 sf of commercial/retail space in the Residential/Shopping District and Town Square District. Some of the commercial/retail square footage would be on the east side of Main Street, within the Office Campus, and accessible by the public from Main Street. The Proposed Project would also include up to 1,730 multi-family residential units, up to 193 hotel rooms, and, assuming full buildout, approximately 20 acres of open space, including approximately 8 acres of publicly accessible parks, bike paths, and trails.

The three proposed districts within the main Project Site would be situated as follows: the approximately 17.7-acre Residential/Shopping District in the southwestern portion of the main Project Site, the approximately 4.3-acre Town Square District in the northwestern portion of the Project Site, and the approximately 32-acre Campus District in the eastern portion of the main Project Site.<sup>2</sup> The Campus District would include office uses and amenity space, accessory uses,<sup>3</sup> publicly accessible retail space, and a publicly accessible elevated park (i.e., the Elevated Park) that would connect the main Project Site to the adjacent Belle Haven neighborhood via an overpass at Willow Road. The Proposed Project would also include an undercrossing (Willow Road Tunnel) to provide tram and bicyclist/pedestrian access to the neighboring Meta campuses from the Campus District.

The main Project Site would be bisected by a new north–south street (Main Street) as well as an east–west street that would provide access to all three districts. The Proposed Project would include a circulation network for vehicles, bicycles, and pedestrians, inclusive of both public rights-of-way and private streets, that would be generally aligned to an east-to-west or a north-to-south grid. The Proposed Project would alter parcels west of the main Project Site, across Willow Road, on both the north and south sides of Hamilton Avenue (Hamilton Avenue Parcels North and South) to support realignment of the Hamilton Avenue right-of-way and provide access to the new Elevated Park. The realignment of Hamilton Avenue would require demolition and reconstruction of an existing Chevron gas station (with a potential increase in area of approximately 1,000 sf) at Hamilton Avenue Parcel South and enable the potential addition of up to 6,700 sf of retail uses at the existing neighborhood shopping center (Belle Haven Retail Center) on Hamilton Avenue Parcel North. In addition, offsite transportation and utility improvements would be constructed to serve the Proposed Project. These would include various intersection improvements, which may be required to bring intersection congestion back to pre-Project conditions per the City's transportation impact analysis guidelines; expansion of the Pacific Gas and Electric Company Ravenswood substation; installation of a new conduit to connect the Ravenswood substation to the main Project Site; construction of a sanitary sewer force main and recycled waterline in the same trench in Hamilton Avenue; and an extension to the sanitary sewer line in Willow Road from O'Brien Drive to the proposed southwest sanitary sewer pump station.

<sup>1</sup> Accessory uses could include the following types of spaces: meeting/collaboration space, orientation space, training space, event space, incubator space, a business partner center, an event building (including pre-function space, collaboration areas, and meeting/event rooms), a visitors center, product demonstration areas, a film studio, gathering terraces and private gardens, and space for other Meta accessory uses. Accessory uses could occur in spaces located anywhere throughout the Campus District.

<sup>2</sup> The Proposed Project also includes approximately 5.6 acres of land that has been designated as a public right-of-way.

<sup>3</sup> Accessory uses are defined in footnote 1, above.

## Project approvals

The following analysis and discretionary approvals by the City would be required prior to development at the Project Site:

- Certification of the EIR
- General Plan Circulation Map and Zoning Map Amendment
- Rezoning to Incorporate an X Overlay for the Project Site
- Conditional Development Permit
- Vesting Tentative Subdivision Maps
- Architectural Control Approval
- Tree Removal Permits
- Fiscal Impact Analysis
- Housing Needs Assessment
- Below-Market-Rate Housing Agreement
- Appraisal/Community Amenity Value Analysis
- Development Agreement
- Use Permit (Hamilton Avenue Parcels)

## Responsible agencies

The City requests that the following agencies review the analysis within the Draft EIR regarding information relevant to your agency's statutory responsibilities in connection with the Proposed Project, pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15086. Your agency may need to use the EIR prepared by the City when considering any permits or other approvals that your agency must issue for the Proposed Project. This list is not intended to confer responsible agency status to each listed agency.

- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
- Federal Emergency Management Agency
- Bay Area Air Quality Management District
- California Department of Transportation
- California Regional Water Quality Control Board
- California Department of Fish and Wildlife
- California Department of Toxic Substances Control
- City/County Association of Governments
- San Mateo County Transportation Authority
- Menlo Park Fire Protection District
- San Mateo County, Environmental Health Division
- West Bay Sanitary District
- Native American Heritage Commission
- San Francisco Public Utilities Commission
- Pacific Gas and Electric Company
- California Public Utilities Commission

## Introduction to EIR

The Project Site is within the General Plan and M-2 Area Zoning Update (ConnectMenlo) study area. 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 Final EIR was prepared as a program EIR, pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15168. Section 15168(d) of the CEQA Guidelines provides information for simplifying the preparation of subsequent environmental documents by incorporating by reference analyses and discussions. 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 effects that were not analyzed as significant in the prior EIR or susceptible to substantial reduction or avoidance. The Draft EIR was prepared in accordance with the terms of the settlement agreement between the cities of Menlo Park and East Palo Alto, which allows for simplification in accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15168 for all topic areas, except housing and transportation. The analysis provided in the Draft EIR tiers from the ConnectMenlo Final EIR, as appropriate.

## Significant environmental effects

The Draft EIR finds that impacts related to air quality and noise would be significant and unavoidable. The Proposed Project would result in potentially significant impacts related to transportation, air quality, energy, greenhouse gas emissions, noise, cultural and tribal cultural resources, biological resources, geology and soils, hydrology and water quality, and hazards and hazardous materials, but these impacts would be reduced to a less-than-significant level with implementation of identified mitigation measures. Impacts related to land use, aesthetics, population and housing, public services and recreation, and utilities and service systems would be less than significant.

## Hazards materials and hazardous waste sites

The Cortese List is a compilation of several different lists of hazardous material release sites that meet the criteria specified in Section 65962.5 of the California Government Code. Although there are documented releases of hazardous materials on the Project Site, there are no hazardous material release sites on the Project Site that meet the criteria for inclusion on the Cortese List.

## EIR process

In accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15105(a), the Draft EIR will be available for public review and comment during a 45-day review period. Following the close of the public review period on May 23, 2022, 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 will be considered by the City Council in making the decision to certify the EIR and taking final action on the Proposed Project.

## Public hearing meeting

The City of Menlo Park is hosting a public hearing for the EIR during the NOA public comment period on **April 25, 2022**, during a regularly scheduled Planning Commission meeting beginning at **7 p.m.** or as near as possible thereafter via a virtual meeting.

The meeting link would be available with publication of the Planning Commission agenda and staff report on the City's website at [menlopark.org/planningcommissionagenda](http://menlopark.org/planningcommissionagenda), not less than 72 hours in advance of the meeting.

All interested parties are invited to attend the meeting and provide input on the EIR. Written comments should be provided as indicated below.

## Submittal of comments

Comments on the Draft EIR are due no later than the close of the Draft EIR review period (5:00 p.m. on **Monday, May 23, 2022**). However, we would appreciate your response at the earliest possible date. Please send your written comments to Kyle Perata at the address shown above or email them to [ktperata@menlopark.org](mailto:ktperata@menlopark.org) with "Willow Village Master Plan Project EIR" as the subject. Public agencies that provide comments are asked to include a contact person for the agency.

If you have any questions regarding the proposed Project or the EIR process, please contact Kyle Perata at the contact information listed below.

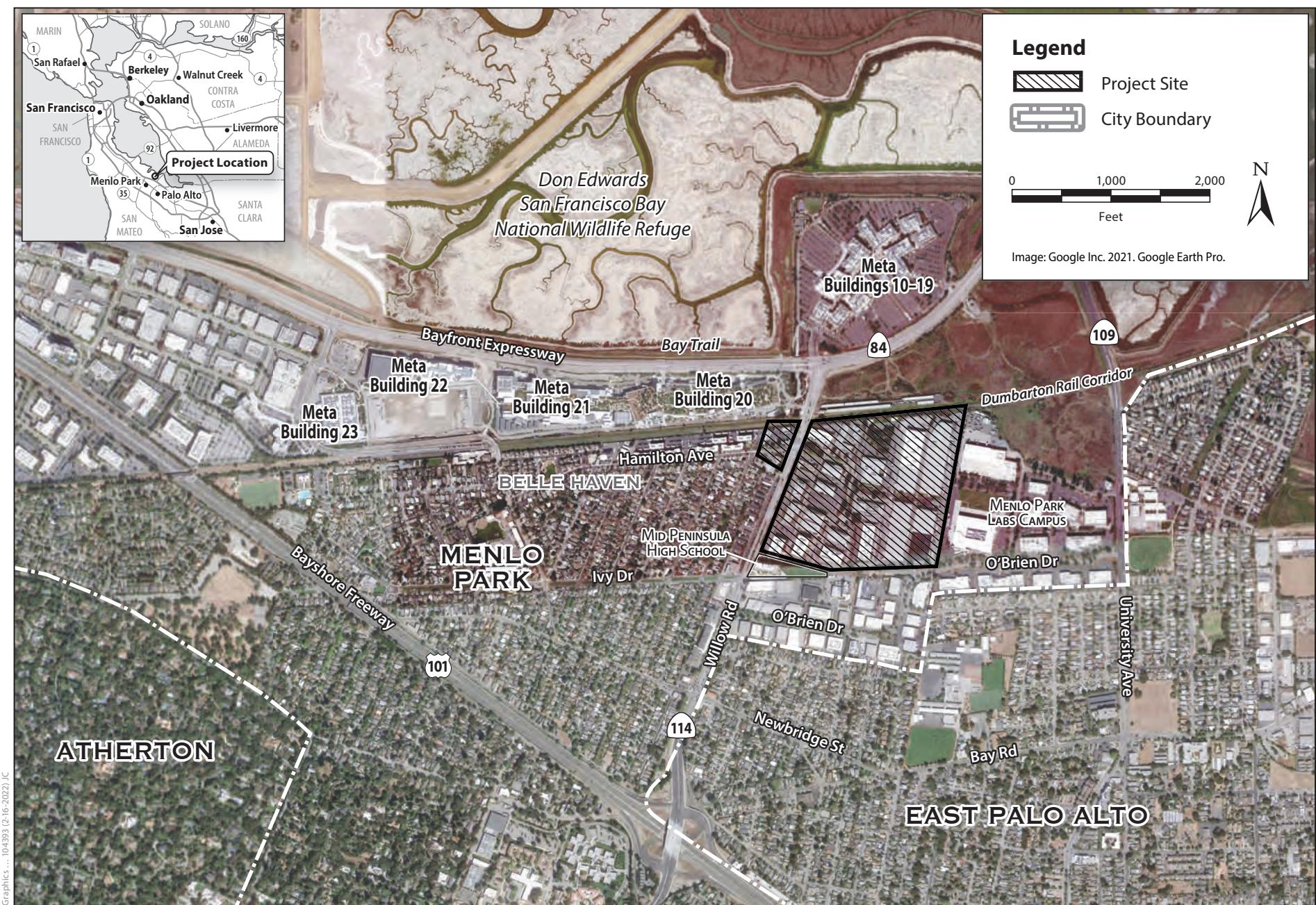
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Kyle Perata  
City of Menlo Park

April 8, 2022



**Figure 1**  
**Project Location**