# 3 Project Description

### 3.1 Introduction

The Sobrato Organization has submitted an application to the City of Menlo Park (City) requesting approval of various discretionary entitlements in support of the proposed 123 Independence Drive Residential Project (proposed project). As described in more detail in Section 3.4, Proposed Project, the project would include the demolition of existing office and industrial buildings on the project site and construction of 316 residential apartments and 116 residential townhomes. The reasonably foreseeable and potentially significant adverse environmental effects of the proposed project are evaluated in this environmental impact report (EIR). Consistent with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines Section 15124, the project description provided in this chapter includes the location and boundaries of the proposed project site, as shown on a project location map and regional map; a statement of the objectives sought under the proposed project; a general description of the project site's environmental characteristics and supporting public utilities facilities; a statement briefly describing the intended uses of this EIR, including a list of the agencies that are expected to use the EIR in their decision making; and a list of permits and other approvals required to implement the project.

Information has been provided by The Sobrato Organization as the project sponsor and by City planning staff. The following project description serves as the basis for the environmental analysis contained in this EIR. As discussed in Chapter 2, Introduction, the City will serve as the lead agency with final decision-making authority relative to the proposed project and certification of the EIR.

## 3.2 Project Site

#### Location and Surrounding Land Uses

The approximately 8.15-acre project site (355,185 square feet on Assessor's Parcel Numbers [APNs] 055-236-140, 055-236-180, 055-236-240, 055-236-300, and 055-236-280) is located in the Bayfront Area of the City, as shown in Figure 3-1, Project Location. The Bayfront Area is generally bounded by San Francisco Bay to the north; Redwood City to the west; East Palo Alto to the southeast; and Bay Road and the Menlo Park neighborhoods of Belle Haven, Flood Triangle, Suburban Park, and Lorelei Manor to the south. The Bayfront Area has historically been developed with industrial, warehousing, and office uses.

The project site extends northwest from the intersection at Independence Drive and Chrysler Drive, and a portion of the site is bounded on the north by Constitution Drive. The site is north of US 101, south of Bayfront Expressway (State Route 84), and east of Marsh Road. Flood Slough is approximately 884 feet northwest of the project site; Ravenswood Slough is 0.5 miles east of the project site.

As shown on Figure 3-2, Project Vicinity, adjacent land uses include a variety of offices, commercial business parks, and public facilities along Constitution Drive and Chrysler Drive. A mix of commercial business, including several Meta buildings, are located south of the project site along Independence Drive. At the time the environmental review for the 123 Independence Drive project began, several commercial buildings and hotels were under construction west of Chrysler Drive between Constitution Drive and Bayfront Expressway.

As shown on Figure 3-3, Project Site Existing Conditions, the project site spans five existing adjacent parcels bounded by Chrysler, Independence, and Constitution Drives. The five parcels describe a T-shaped site oriented with the top of the T along Independence Drive and the leg of the T extending northward to Constitution Drive. The parcels consist of the following:

- APN 055-236-180 contains the building at 119 Independence Drive and includes approximately 1.07 acres (46,669 square feet). This parcel forms the western boundary of the project site.
- APN 055-236-140 contains the building at 123 and 125 Independence Drive and includes approximately 0.94 acres (41,052 square feet).
- APN 055-236-240 contains the building at 127 Independence Drive and includes approximately 1.10 acres (47,842 square feet).
- APN 055-236-300 contains the building at 1205 Chrysler Drive and includes approximately 2.41 acres (104,911 square feet). This parcel forms the southwestern boundary of the project site.
- APN 055-236-280 contains the building at 130 Constitution Drive and includes approximately 2.63 acres (114,710 square feet). This parcel forms the northern leg of the project site.

The San Francisco Bay is located north of the project site, with the entrance to Bedwell Bayfront Park located approximately 0.3 miles north of the project site. Bedwell Bayfront Park consists of approximately 160 acres and is surrounded on three sides by the Don Edwards San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge. Other land uses in the vicinity of the project site include Hotel Nia, approximately 0.08 miles to the south; TIDE Academy (Sequoia Union High School District), approximately 0.20 miles to the east; Boys and Girls Club and Belle Haven Branch Library, approximately 1 mile to the east; Belle Haven School, approximately 1 mile to the southeast; Flood Park, approximately 0.7 miles to the southeast; and Kelly Park and Beechwood School approximately 0.5 miles to the southeast. The site of the Menlo Park Community Campus is also located approximately 0.5 miles to the southeast.

#### City of Menlo Park General Plan and Zoning Designations

The Menlo Park City Council adopted an update to the Menlo Park General Plan that modified the Land Use and Circulation Elements (referred to herein as ConnectMenlo) (City of Menlo Park 2016a) and certified the ConnectMenlo Final EIR on November 29, 2016 (City of Menlo Park 2016b). ConnectMenlo included changes to the City's zoning map that rezoned specific properties to reflect the General Plan updates, including the new land uses within the Bayfront Area. ConnectMenlo identifies new development potential within the Bayfront Area of up to 2.3 million square feet of non-residential space, 400 hotel rooms, 4,500 residential units, 11,570 residents, and 5,500 employees. It also recognizes the potential for development of 150 additional residential units in areas that were not affected by the zoning changes adopted under ConnectMenlo. The ConnectMenlo EIR analyzed the potential development of a total of 4,650 residential units, with an assumption that these would include 150 residential units as the potential development that remained under the existing General Plan plus 3,000 new residential units and 1,500 corporate campus units. Prior to submittal of the 123 Independence Drive project applications, the City had already received applications for projects that would construct 2,816 residential units. The 123 Independence Drive project would increase the total number of proposed residential units to 3,248, which would exceed the maximum residential unit development potential evaluated in the ConnectMenlo EIR. The ConnectMenlo EIR also identified that the buildout potential for future development was expected to occur over a 24-year buildout horizon (from approximately 2016 to 2040) (City of Menlo Park 2016b); however, the City is currently processing applications that would result in a much faster buildout of the anticipated maximum number of residential units.

As shown in Figure 3-4, General Plan and Zoning Designations, the project site is designated as Mixed-Use Residential on the ConnectMenlo land use map presented in Figure 5 of the ConnectMenlo General Plan Update (City of Menlo Park 2016a). The purpose of this land use designation is to create live/work/play environments by encouraging office, research and development, residential, commercial uses, and hotels in proximity to or integrated with one another in the Bayfront Area.

Figure 3-4 also shows that the project site is within the Residential Mixed-Use Bonus (R-MU-B) zoning district (City of Menlo Park 2016c). Thus, development of the project site is subject to the requirements of the Menlo Park Municipal Code Chapter 16.45, R-MU Residential Mixed-Use District. The maximum base residential density is 30 units per acre, a floor area ratio (FAR)¹ of up to 90 percent for residential uses, and a building height of up to 40 feet. The bonus-level zoning standard allows for a density of up to 100 dwelling units per acre, a FAR of up to 225 percent for residential uses, and a building height of up to 85 feet in exchange for providing community amenities. The project proposes to use the bonus-level development provisions in exchange for community amenities.

The General Plan and zoning designations applied to the project site extend to all properties in the same block as the project site (bounded by Independence Drive on the south and west, Constitution Drive on the north, and Chrysler Drive on the east). These designations also extend to the properties on the east side of Chrysler Drive and north of Jefferson Drive. Properties to the north and south of the project site are designated as Light Industrial under the General Plan and zoned Commercial Business Park (M3-X). Surrounding areas predominantly carry the General Plan Office designation, with zoning designations that include Office-Bonus (O-B), Office-Hotel (O-H), and Public Facility (PF) (City of Menlo Park 2016a).

#### **Project Site Characteristics**

#### Existing Uses and On-Site Characteristics

The 8.15-acre site is currently developed with five existing single-story office and light industrial buildings totaling 103,983 square feet of building space. The buildings were all built between 1961 and 1968. The westernmost building on Independence Drive, 119 Independence Drive, is a concrete building approximately 16 feet in height and 12,996 square feet. To the west, at 123 and 125 Independence Drive is a concrete building that is approximately 20 feet in height and approximately 12,335 square feet. The building at 127 Independence Drive is approximately 19 feet in height and approximately 13,822 square feet. To the west of 127 Independence Drive, at the corner of Independence Drive and Chrysler Drive, is 1205 Chrysler Drive. The building at this address is approximately 17 feet in height and approximately 39,302 square feet. Finally, 130 Constitution Drive is located to the north of 127 Independence Drive. This building is approximately 25 feet in height and approximately 25,528 square feet.

In addition, there are three public light poles at the boundaries of the existing project site—one each on Independence Drive, Chrysler Drive, and Constitution Drive—and a fourth light pole set back several feet from the public right-of-way lighting the parking lot entrance/exit on Independence Drive near Chrysler Drive. Additional lighting is provided around building entrances and perimeters and in landscaped areas. The existing project site contains several decorative landscape areas along each parcel's frontage on the adjacent public street and around building perimeters. A total of 47,859 square feet of landscaping is present on the existing project site, including 85 trees. Of these trees, 56 are non-heritage trees and 29 are heritage trees as defined within Menlo Park Municipal Code Chapter 13.24, Heritage

Floor area ratio is the ratio of residential square footage of the gross floor area of all buildings on a lot to the square footage of the lot.

Trees (Appendix D3). The interior of the existing site is almost exclusively hardscape, consisting of 307,326 square feet of impervious surfaces, including parking lots, streets, and walkways (Appendix G2).

The topography of the project site is generally flat and approximately 7 to 9 feet above mean sea level. The project site is currently within the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Zone AE (FEMA 2019), indicating it is likely to be subject to inundation during a 100-year flood.

#### Circulation and Parking

The five parcels within the project site currently contain approximately 280 existing parking spaces, with vehicle access from Independence, Chrysler, and Constitution Drives. There is limited pedestrian infrastructure in the project area. Sidewalks exist on the east side of Chrysler Drive, but on the west side a sidewalk is present only along the southern portion of 1205 Chrysler Drive. Similarly, there are sidewalks along the south side of Independence Drive, but none are present on the north side, adjacent to the project site. A short segment of sidewalk is present along the frontage of 110 and 120 Constitution Drive, but no sidewalks are present at 130 Constitution Drive or farther east along Constitution Drive.

#### **Utilities and Services**

#### Water, Sewer, Storm Drainage

Potable water service to the project site is provided by Menlo Park Municipal Water and sewage collection and conveyance is provided by West Bay Sanitary District. There are existing water lines, sewer lines, and storm drain lines located in Constitution Drive (adjacent to the northern boundary of the project site), Independence Drive (adjacent to the southern boundary of the project site), and Chrysler Drive (adjacent to the eastern boundary of the project site). Additionally, the project site contains an existing drainage system that collects runoff from the parking areas, roof, and hardscape areas and discharges directly to existing storm drain mains.

#### **Electrical and Communication Utilities**

There are existing overhead telecommunications and Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E) power lines that run through the middle of the project site, starting at Chrysler Drive and running northwest. When viewed from Independence Drive and Constitution Drive, the lines are located at the rear of those properties and within an existing public easement.

### 3.3 Project Objectives

CEQA requires an EIR to include a statement of objectives for the proposed project, including the underlying purpose of the project. As noted in the CEQA Guidelines, these objectives help the lead agency to determine which project alternatives to evaluate in the EIR (14 CCR 15124[a]). The overarching intention of the proposed project is to deliver a mix of housing types that would enhance the environment of the Bayfront Area and balance the existing office uses as set forth in the City's General Plan. More specifically, the objectives for the proposed project are to do the following:

- Provide a mix of housing types.
- Help the City and region achieve a better jobs/housing ratio by replacing office space with housing.
- Provide a pedestrian connection between Constitution Drive and Independence Drive to improve pedestrian circulation in the area.

- Alleviate traffic by providing housing close to a jobs center and public transit such as buses and shuttles.
- Develop the site at a sufficient density and intensity to provide the City with community benefits, including affordable housing.
- Provide enough market-rate residential units to have an economically viable and feasible project.
- Provide for-rent and for-sale affordable housing, where the for-sale affordable housing is organized to permit the use of tax-exempt bond financing.
- Support the City's sustainability goals by complying with the Building Energy Efficiency Standards in the California Building Code (Title 24, Parts 6 and 11) and local energy efficiency requirements and contributing to reduced mobile emissions by siting residential uses in a job-rich area.
- Provide residential and recreational uses in the Bayfront area consistent with the City's General Plan policies that promote residential development in the area.

## 3.4 Proposed Project

The proposed project would include demolition of five existing office and industrial buildings (a total of approximately 103,983 square feet of building space); alteration of the existing parcel boundaries to create five new lots, including four building lots (A, B, C, and D) and one open space lot (Lot 1); construction of 116 for-sale townhomes and 316 rental apartments, along with associated parking and landscaping; and provision of a wide pedestrian walkway (referred to in the site plans and throughout this EIR as a "paseo") from Constitution Drive to Independence Drive, as shown on Figure 3-5, Proposed Site Plan. The complete plan set for the proposed project is provided in Appendix B.

The townhomes would be constructed on the southern half of the project site, adjacent to Independence Drive, to be located on Lots B, C, and D. These lots would contain a total of 116 three-story townhomes with one or two-car garages that would be oriented to public streets, internal streets, and internal pedestrian pathways. On Lot A, which would comprise the northern portion of the project site, the proposed project would construct a five-story apartment building fronting on Constitution Drive. This building would include 316 apartments providing approximately 224,863 gross square feet of residential uses. The ground floor level of the apartment building would also include a leasing office. two mail rooms, a co-working space, a pet spa, and two lobbies. The second floor would include a fitness room and clubhouse. The third floor would include an approximately 648-square-foot amenity space, for which the specific use or function has not yet been defined. The fifth floor would include an approximately 588-square-foot lounge. The total size of the building, excluding parking, would be 289,223 square feet. Parking for residents would be provided in a parking structure located interior to the building, with one level of parking on the ground-floor level and one level below grade. Two interior courtyards would be placed at the second-floor level, above the parking structure. The parking structure would contain 128,880 square feet of vehicular parking space and have a total of 151,626 square feet (inclusive of bicycle parking, trash enclosures, fans, and other mechanical space). See Table 3-1 for a list of the proposed project land uses and Sheet A002 of Appendix B for the breakdown of square footage in the apartment and townhome buildings.

Table 3-1. Project Land Uses, Acreage, and Size

| Project<br>Parcels | Number of<br>Residential<br>Units | Type of Unit or Lot | Approximate<br>Acreage | Total<br>Residential<br>Unit Gross<br>Square<br>Footage <sup>1</sup> | Building Gross<br>Square Footage <sup>2</sup> |
|--------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------|------------------------|--|---|
| Lot A              | 316 units                         | Apartments          | 2.55 +/-               | 224,863  | 289,223                                       |
|                    | N/A                               | Parking Structure   |                        | N/A  | 151,626                                       |
| Lot B              | 26 units                          | Townhomes           | 1.27 +/-               | 44,102   | 44,249  |
|                    | N/A                               | Parking Garages     |                        | N/A  | 12,097  |
| Lot C              | 18 units                          | Townhomes           | 0.61 +/-               | 25,281   | 25,369  |
|                    | N/A                               | Parking Garages     |                        | N/A  | 5,013   |
| Lot D              | 72 units                          | Townhomes           | 3.13 +/-               | 117,685  | 118,121                                       |
|                    | N/A                               | Parking Garages     |                        | N/A  | 33,787  |
| Lot 1              | 0 units                           | Open Space          | 0.59 +/-               | N/A  | N/A   |
| Total              | 432 dwelling units                | N/A                 | 8.15                   | 411,931  | 679,485³                                      |

Source: Appendix B.

#### Notes:

<sup>1</sup> Total residential building space included in the Floor Area Ratio.

N/A = not applicable.

Roof heights for the townhouse buildings would reach approximately 43 feet and 7 inches, while the apartment building roof would be 68 feet at the top of the ridge and approximately 67 feet around the perimeter, with rooftop elevator overruns reaching 73 feet and penthouse stairways reaching 75 feet. The proposed buildings and vehicle circulation improvements would result in approximately 64.16 percent lot coverage for Lots A, B, C, and D. Building footprints would total approximately 151,554 square feet (Appendix G2), with a total of approximately 679,485 square feet of building space, including the apartment parking structure consisting of approximately 151,626 square feet, the townhouse garages consisting of approximately 50,897 square feet, and townhouse decks consisting of approximately 9,143 square feet (Appendix B). Of this total, approximately 476,962 square feet would be counted toward the project's FAR, resulting in a FAR of 134 percent. With building heights greater than 40 feet, the project requires approval of bonus-level development allowed by the Zoning Ordinance, which provides for an increase in density, gross floor area, and/or height in exchange for the provision of community amenities.

The project would include approximately 61,454 square feet of vehicle circulation and parking facilities and approximately 87,579 square feet of paths and patios. There would be a total of approximately 300,587 square feet of impervious surfaces on site, representing a 6,739-square-foot decrease compared to existing impervious surfaces (Appendix B, Sheet C5.1, and Appendix G2).

#### Residential Uses

The proposed project would include 316 for-rent apartments and 116 for-sale townhomes. As shown in Table 3-2, Proposed Residential Unit Breakdown: Lot A Apartments, the apartments would consist of 88 studio units with an average size of 539 square feet, 185 one-bedroom units with an average size of 725 square feet, and 43 two-bedroom units with an average size of 1,006 square feet. As shown in Table 3-3, Proposed Residential Unit

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Total building space, including common areas, decks and other elements not included in the Floor Area Ratio.

The total gross square footage includes 476,962 square feet in the residential structures and 202,523 square feet within the parking structure and garages.

Breakdown: Lots B, C, and D Townhomes, the townhomes would all be a mix of two-, three-, and four-bedroom units ranging in size from 958 to 2,052 square feet and an average size of 1,613 square feet (Appendix B).

Because the project is site is designated under the R-MU-B zoning district, development of the project site is subject to the requirements of the Menlo Park Municipal Code Chapter 16.45. Section 16.45.070 of the Menlo Park Municipal Code requires that community amenities be provided in exchange for bonus-level development that includes increased density, FAR, and/or building height. A project sponsor requesting bonus-level development must provide the City with a proposal indicating the specific amount of bonus development sought, the specific proposed amenities, and the value of both the bonus-level development and the amenities. The Municipal Code requires that the value of the community amenities must be equal to 50 percent of the fair market value of the bonus-level development portion of the project, as demonstrated by an appraisal performed by a licensed appraisal firm.

To meet the requirements of Municipal Code Chapter 16.96, Below Market Housing Program, the proposed project would designate 15 percent of the residential units (48 units) as Below Market Rate (BMR) housing, and would provide an additional 8 BMR units as a community amenity. As outlined in Tables 3-2 and 3-3, the BMR units would include both the for-sale townhomes and for-rent apartments, resulting in 74 BMR units consisting of 18 BMR townhomes and 56 BMR apartments. All BMR units would be affordable to low income households. The apartment BMR units would be mixed in throughout the apartment building, indistinguishable from the exterior, and would contain standard appliances common to new units. All of the affordable townhome units are proposed to be located in Lot C. The applicant has requested deviations from the City's BMR Program Guidelines to place all of the affordable townhomes on a single parcel to allow a non-profit affordable housing developer with expertise in affordable, for-sale housing to oversee that portion of the project, and allow the BMR townhomes to be developed on their own schedule Construction of the apartment BMR units would be phased commensurate with the phasing of the overall project construction, such that for every 20 residential units constructed in a given phase, at least 15 percent of those units shall be BMR units. Pursuant to State Density Bonus Law, the project applicant has requested concessions and waivers from the City's BMR Guidelines that allow the affordable housing developer to provide the BMR townhomes. If approved, the BMR townhome units would proceed on their own construction schedule and would have a comparable average size to the market-rate units. However, the BMR townhomes are designed to include more bedrooms for larger families. and have some other differences from the market-rate townhomes. The BMR units would be open to income-qualified households as defined in the City's Below Market Rate Housing Program Guidelines (City of Menlo Park 2018).

**Table 3-2. Proposed Residential Unit Breakdown: Lot A Apartments** 

| Residential Unit Type  | Average Square<br>Footage | Total Number of<br>Unit Type | Total Number of Below<br>Market Rate Units |
|------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------|--|
| Studio                 | 539                       | 88                           | 16   |
| One-Bedroom            | 725                       | 185                          | 33   |
| Two-Bedroom            | 1,006                     | 43                           | 7  |
| Total/Weighted Average | 712                       | 316                          | 56   |

Table 3-3. Proposed Residential Unit Breakdown: Lot B, C, and D Townhomes

| Lot                    | Residential<br>Unit Type | Number of<br>Bedrooms | Average<br>Square<br>Footage | Total Number<br>of Unit Type | Total Number<br>of Below<br>Market Rate<br>Units |
|------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|--|
| B and D                | TH 1                     | 3                     | 1,749                        | 34                           | 0  |
| B and D                | TH 2                     | 2                     | 1,199                        | 34                           | 0  |
| B and D                | TH 3                     | 3                     | 2,052                        | 10                           | 0  |
| B and D                | TH 3.1                   | 3                     | 2,052                        | 20                           | 0  |
| С                      | TH 4                     | 4                     | 1,480                        | 6                            | 6  |
| С                      | TH 4.1                   | 4                     | 1,514                        | 3                            | 3  |
| С                      | TH 4.2                   | 4                     | 1,416                        | 3                            | 3  |
| С                      | TH 4.3                   | 2                     | 958                          | 3                            | 3  |
| С                      | TH 5                     | 4                     | 1,581                        | 3                            | 3  |
| Total/Weighted Average |                          | N/A                   | 1,613                        | 116                          | 18   |

**Note:** TH = townhome; N/A = not applicable.

As discussed further in Section 4.1, Aesthetics, the architectural language of the apartments and townhomes would be a warm color scheme and a modern architectural style. Building orientation would create an urban relationship to the street, as envisioned in the City's General Plan, with more than 60 percent of build-to-area for all street frontages.

#### Vehicle Circulation

The proposed project would provide for vehicular circulation system within each of the four proposed building lots, as shown on Figure 3-6, Proposed Circulation. Lot B would be accessed from Independence Drive and streets within this lot would not be connected with the adjacent Lot C other than by an emergency vehicle access route crossing the paseo. Lot C and Lot D would share one 26-foot-wide access driveway off Independence Drive and Lot D would have one 26-foot-wide access driveway off Chrysler Drive. Streets within Lots C and D would be interconnected. Lot A would have a single driveway off Constitution Drive providing access into the parking garage. Emergency vehicles would have access through the project site from Constitution Drive into the site, then along Street A located at the northern end of Lots C and D, connecting to Chrysler Drive. Internal streets that would provide emergency vehicle access would be 26 feet wide; the westernmost internal street would be 23 feet wide to accommodate surface parking in addition to access to townhome garages; all other internal streets and driveways would be 20 feet wide.

#### **Parking**

The project would include a total of 552 parking spaces; 510 spaces for residents and 42 spaces for guests. Lot A would be developed with 316 apartments and would offer 336 parking spaces (330 residential spaces and 6 guest spaces) in a parking structure with a single level below grade and a single level at grade. Eight of the residential spaces and one guest space would be Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessible. At the time of construction, 15 percent of the parking stalls in the apartment garage would be equipped with an electric vehicle (EV) charging station and one parking stall per residential unit would be "EV Ready," meaning that conduits would be installed to facilitate adding a charging station in the future.

Each townhome unit would have either a one- or two-car garage. Lot B would be developed with 26 townhomes and would include 73 total parking spaces, 8 of which would be tandem spaces and therefore are not counted toward

the number of parking spaces required under the Municipal Code. There would be 44 non-tandem residential parking spaces and 21 guest spaces. The guest spaces would be provided as surface parking along the western site boundary and south of buildings 1 and 2. Lot C would be developed with 18 townhomes and would offer 24 parking spaces (18 residential spaces and 6 guest spaces provided as surface parking within and adjacent to buildings 6 and 7). Lot D would be developed with 72 townhomes and would offer a total of 153 parking spaces (118 residential non-tandem spaces, 26 residential tandem spaces, and 9 guest spaces). Guest spaces would be provided as surface parking in the northeast corner of this lot and north of building 14 as well as the southeast corner of this lot across from building 20 (Appendix B). Under Menlo Park Municipal Code Section 12.18.050, each townhome would be required to be prewired for one EV charger and EV charging stations must be installed in 15 percent of the required parking spaces. The City's requirements are more stringent than the EV requirements under 2022 Title 24 for low-rise multifamily developments. Specifically, 2022 Title 24 requires that 10 percent of parking spaces "EV Capable" by including conduit, breaker space, and a junction box and that 25 percent of total parking spaces be "EV Ready" by including electrical infrastructure and a wired outlet receptacle.

#### Landscaping and Lighting

The project site currently contains 47,859 square feet of existing landscaping. The proposed project would include approximately 25,580 square feet of landscape zones, approximately 23,577 square feet of landscaped areas along street frontages, approximately 15,518 square feet of common green spaces between townhomes, and an approximately 23,360 square-foot common landscape area in the apartment building courtyard (Appendix B). The proposed project would also include approximately 2,125 square feet of pervious (permeable, specifically to water and other liquids) paving. This would represent an increase of approximately 6,739 square feet in pervious surfaces (Appendix G2).

As shown on Figure 3-7, Proposed Open Space, a publicly accessible paseo (approximately 14,209 square feet) and park (approximately 11,945 square feet) would be provided within Lot 1, which would include approximately 0.60 acres located generally between Lots A, B, and C. The park would provide opportunities for passive recreation and would serve as a community gathering space. The paseo would be at least 20 feet wide and would extend between Independence Drive and Constitution Drive along the west side of the park and apartment building. Landscape zones would be placed along the western and southern edges of the apartment building, between the building and Lot 1, and along the eastern edge of the apartment building. The park would be located south of the southwest corner of the apartment building, between the northern portions of Lots B and D and north of Lot C.

The northern leg of Lot 1, west of the apartment building, would have a total width of 26 feet and would serve as an emergency vehicle access. A second 26-foot-wide emergency vehicle easement would extend east from the park to Chrysler Drive along the northern edge of Lot D. This emergency vehicle easement would also serve as a pedestrian pathway. The paseo extending across Lot 1 and additional pathways would establish pedestrian connections to the greater neighborhood network and to the publicly accessible open space within Lot 1. The project proposes a total of approximately 135,385 square feet of open space, including the landscape and common green space areas noted previously as well as approximately 26,154 square feet of public open space within the paseo and park, and approximately 21,196 square feet of private open space within balconies, decks, and patios (Appendix B). All public frontages would be improved with sidewalks and would include residential stoops, lobbies, the apartment building leasing office (located at the northeast corner of the ground floor), and residential amenities. The public frontages, paseo, and pedestrian pathways would incorporate bioswales to capture and filter stormwater before discharging to the storm drain system.

Project site landscaping is required to comply with the City's Landscape Design Standards ordinance (Municipal Code Section 16.45.120) for the R-MU District. The design standards provide criteria for landscape and hardscape within the site. The proposed landscaping is shown in Figure 3-8, Schematic Landscape Plan. Additionally, project site lighting is required to comply with the City's Lighting Design Standards (Municipal Code Section 16.45.120), which require that lighting be designed to a pedestrian scale, that light fixtures be placed no more than 40 feet apart, that parking areas be well lit for safety, and that lighting fixtures and sources be energy efficient.

The project arborist's report presents an inventory of 85 trees, 29 of which meet the definition of "protected" trees under the City's Heritage Tree Ordinance (Municipal Code Chapter 13.24, Heritage Trees). Trees identified as heritage trees include coast live oak (*Quercus agrifolia*), valley oak (*Quercus lobata*), bottlebrush (*Callistemon* spp.), sweetgum (*Liquidambar styraciflua*), coast redwood "Aptos blue" (Sequoia sempervirens), coast redwood "Soquel" (S. sempervirens), Italian stone pine (*Pinus pinea*), camphortree (*Cinnamomum camphora*), and Chinese elm (*Ulmus parvifolia*) (Appendix D3). As discussed further in Section 4.3, Biological Resources, the project is proposed under the Housing Crisis Act of 2019, which provides that the standards and regulations to which the project is subject are those that were adopted at the time that the Preliminary Application for this project was submitted, which was February 26, 2020. Thus, this project is subject to the City's Heritage Tree Ordinance as it existed on at that time, which is provided in Appendix D3. Under that version of the ordinance, the project is required to replace each heritage tree that is removed due to project development at a 1:1 ratio. The proposed project would involve removal of all 85 existing trees located within the project's landscape area and proposes planting 353 new trees, as shown in Figure 3-9, Tree Planting Plan.

#### **Public Infrastructure and Services**

The project site is located in an urban area with existing utilities and infrastructure. The proposed project would be required to install utility connections in compliance with City and provider specifications to serve the residential development with water, wastewater, stormwater drainage, natural gas, electricity, and telecommunications services. Connections to existing infrastructure would extend from the public right-of-way to the proposed private drive aisles and open space areas within the project site. Additional discussion of public infrastructure and services is provided in Section 4.16, Utilities and Service Systems.

#### Water Supply

The project site is currently served by Menlo Park Municipal Water. The proposed project would tie into existing 8-inch water lines located in Constitution Drive adjacent to the northern boundary of the project site and located in Independence Drive adjacent to the southern boundary of the project site. Potential environmental effects associated with providing water supply to the proposed residences are evaluated in Section 4.16 of this EIR.

#### Wastewater Service

The West Bay Sanitary District provides wastewater service to the City and would convey sewage from the project to the Silicon Valley Clean Water wastewater treatment plant for treatment and discharge to the San Francisco Bay. Collection and conveyance of stormwater drainage would be provided by the City. The proposed project would connect to existing 8-inch sanitary sewer lines located in Constitution Drive and Independence Drive and an existing 10-inch sanitary sewer line in Chrysler Drive. Potential environmental effects associated with wastewater collection and treatment for the proposed residences are evaluated in Section 4.16 of this EIR.

#### Storm Drainage and Stormwater Quality

The City provides stormwater drainage and management services in the project area. The redeveloped site would be drained by a new on-site storm drain system, which is required to meet stormwater quality control requirements outlined in the C.3 Regulated Projects Guide of the San Mateo County Water Pollution Prevention Program. The system would collect runoff from the parking, roof, and hardscape areas and convey it to biotreatment ponds/planters for stormwater treatment (Appendix G2). After treatment, stormwater would be routed to the existing storm drain network at the associated project frontages in Independence Drive, Constitution Drive, and Chrysler Drive. The existing mains that would receive stormwater runoff from the project site are a 24-inch-diameter line on Constitution Drive, an 18-inch-diameter line on Independence Drive, and a 54-inch-diameter line on Chrysler Drive. As discussed further in Section 4.9, Hydrology and Water Quality, and in Section 4.16, the proposed project would reduce the amount of impervious surfaces within the project site and thus would slightly reduce stormwater runoff.

#### Electricity

There are existing overhead electrical lines that run through the middle of the project site, within an existing public easement that starts at Chrysler Drive and runs northwest. When viewed from Independence Drive and Constitution Drive, the lines are located at the rear of those properties. The project would include relocating existing overhead electrical lines within the project limits underground. The lines would remain within a public easement and continue to serve the properties beyond the project site to the northwest. The joint pole lines beyond the project site's property limits would remain in their current condition. Potential environmental effects associated with providing electrical service to the proposed residences are evaluated in Section 4.16 of this EIR.

#### Solid Waste Disposal

Most residents in the City are served by Recology San Mateo County for solid waste, recyclables, and composting collection, and businesses may also elect to contract with Recology, although other providers are available for business contracts. Solid waste generated in the City is disposed of at a number of local landfills.

#### Police and Fire Services

The project site would be served by the City of Menlo Park Police Department from the Menlo Park Police Station, approximately 3.2 miles south of the project site, at 701 Laurel Street in Menlo Park. Fire protection would be provided by the Menlo Park Fire Protection District. The closest fire station to the project site is Station 77, approximately 1.2 miles east, at 1467 Chilco Street in Menlo Park. The fire district will review the proposed residential site plan, including fire hydrant placement and emergency vehicle access, prior to issuance of building permits. Potential environmental effects associated with providing police and fire services to the proposed residences are evaluated in Section 4.13, Public Services and Recreation.

#### Schools

The project site is located within the Menlo Park City School District. The closest schools to the project site are TIDE Academy Sequoia Union High School, Beechwood School, Encinal School, Laurel Lower Campus, Mid-Peninsula High School, and Peninsula School. Potential environmental effects associated with providing public education services to the proposed residences are evaluated in Section 4.13 of this EIR.

#### Sustainable Project Features

The project would comply with Section 16.45.130 of the City's Zoning Ordinance, which requires development projects within the R-MU zone district to attain the following green building requirements:

- 100 percent of the project's energy demand be met through on-site generation and/or renewable energy sources or be offset through the purchase of certified renewable energy credits;
- Construction of at least 100,001 square feet meet Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED)
   Gold standards;
- Construction of at least 100,001 square feet enroll in EPA Energy Star Building Portfolio Manager and submit documentation of compliance;
- Attain indoor and outdoor water use efficiency standards and be dual plumbed for the internal use of recycled water; and
- Prepare and implement a zero-waste management plan.

In addition, the following sustainable features would be included in the project design:

#### **Apartments**

- All electric buildings to reduce greenhouse gas emissions
- On-site solar photovoltaic arrays to offset energy use and cost
- Electric vehicle charging stations
- Bike facilities for residents and visitors
- Water use reduction through efficient plumbing fixtures
- Use of native/adapted species to reduce irrigation needs
- Dual plumbing for recycled water reuse for building
- Recycled water reuse for irrigation
- Enhanced ventilation and carbon dioxide monitors for better indoor air quality
- Enhanced combustion ventilation and garage pollutant protection

#### **Townhomes**

- All electric buildings to reduce greenhouse gas emissions
- On-site solar photovoltaic arrays to offset energy use and cost
- Electric vehicle charging stations
- Water use reduction through efficient plumbing fixtures
- Use of native/adapted species to reduce irrigation needs
- Recycled water reuse for irrigation
- Enhanced ventilation and carbon dioxide monitors for better indoor air quality
- Enhanced combustion ventilation and garage pollutant protection

#### Construction Details, Phasing, and Timeline

The proposed site design accommodates sea-level rise, and all proposed ground-level residential units would be raised 2 feet above the 5-foot FEMA floodplain, per the requirements of Menlo Park Municipal Code Section 16.45.130(4).

#### Demolition, Grading, and Construction

All five existing buildings on the project site would be demolished, and the entire 8.15-acre project site would be graded. Construction debris, such as building foundations, pavements, and structures, would be collected and hauled off site for disposal. It is estimated that project demolition would require approximately 200 total one-way hauling trips to remove demolition waste from the approximately 103,983 square feet of existing buildings, approximately 193,784 square feet of asphalt and concrete from streets and parking, and approximately 9,559 square feet of patios and walkways (Appendix C).

Up to 32,000 cubic yards of soils would be removed from the project site for excavation, utility trenching, and foundations. A total of 5,260 cubic yards of soils would be imported to the project site to raise the building grade to meet FEMA requirements. Excavation depths would be a maximum of 3.5 feet below grade for the proposed buildings, parking garage, and bioretention areas. Foundation footings may extend up to 42 inches below grade, with up to an additional 5 feet for an elevator pit. Impact pile driving would not be required because a mat slab foundation would be used.

#### Construction Phasing and Timeline

If approved, construction of the project is anticipated to begin in 2023 and would occur over a 50-month period in a single, continuous building phase. It is anticipated that the project would be under construction with simultaneous activity on each of the residential lots. Construction staging would take place within the confines of each respective component; however, if a portion of the project is not under construction, that component would be used for staging, which would include material and equipment storage, and construction trailer parking.

Demolition activities are anticipated to occur over a 13-week period. Site preparation and grading would occur over a 10-week period. Exterior work, such as foundation installation, building construction, and architectural coating, is expected to occur over a 3.75-month period (which would be from September 2024 through May 2028 if demolition begins in September 2023). Paving of the entire site would occur over a 2-month period after the initial exterior work is completed and concurrent with early stages of building construction (generally between November 2024 and January 2025 based on the anticipated September 2023 start of demolition). Residential buildings would be occupied by the end of 2028.

Construction fencing would be installed around the perimeter of the entire project site during construction to prevent pedestrian and non-construction-related vehicle access. As aspects of the project are completed, the construction fencing may be reduced to encompass only the parts of the site that remain under construction.

# 3.5 Discretionary Actions and Use of This EIR

#### City Approvals

As lead agency for consideration of the proposed project, the City would be responsible for many of the approvals required for project development. As part of the approval process, the Menlo Park Planning Commission would be

required to exercise its independent review to determine whether to certify this EIR as adequate under CEQA, adopt CEQA findings and a Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program, and to approve the requested Use Permit, Architectural Control, Below Market Rate Housing Agreement, and Heritage Tree Removal Permit. Approval of the Vesting Tentative Subdivision Map would be at the discretion of the City Council. Brief descriptions of each of these discretionary approvals are provided in Chapter 2.

In addition, a Housing Needs Assessment (Appendix I) and a Fiscal Impact Analysis have been prepared for informational purposes. Finally, to qualify for bonus-level development within the R-MU-B zoning district, the proposed project would be required to complete an appraisal process to identify the required value of the community amenities and a financial analysis of the sponsor's proposed community amenities to determine the value of the amenities proposed.

#### Responsible, Trustee, and Reviewing Agencies

This EIR will be used by responsible agencies and trustee agencies and other reviewing agencies that may have some approval authority or non-approval input related to the proposed project (i.e., to issue a permit), as listed below. The project sponsor would obtain all permits, as required by law.

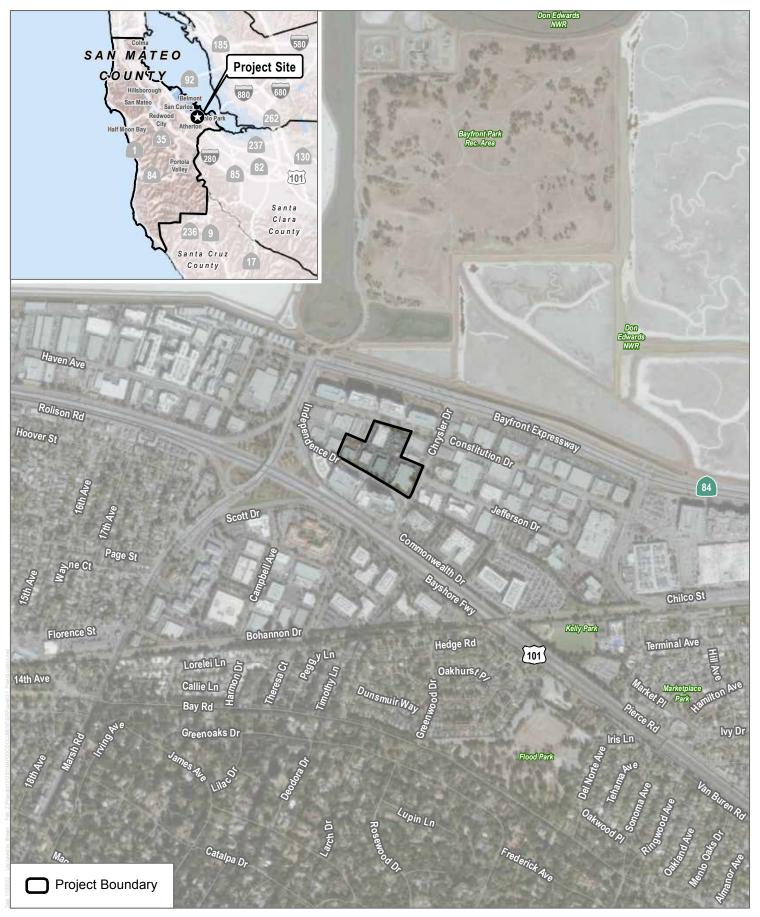
The project would require the following approvals from other agencies and service districts:

- Bay Area Air Quality Management District: Job Number (J) Permit for asbestos removal during demolition;
   permits for on-site generators, boilers, and other utility equipment
- California Department of Transportation: Review of traffic circulation effects and consultation on potential traffic improvements that may affect state highway facilities, ramps, and intersections
- California Regional Water Quality Control Board/San Mateo Countywide Water Pollution Prevention
   Program: Approval of National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permit for stormwater discharge
- City/County Association of Governments of San Mateo County: Review of potential effects on Routes of Regional Significance
- Menlo Park Fire Protection District: Residential Site Plan Review
- Menlo Park Municipal Water: Approval of water hookups
- PG&E: Approval of connection permits
- San Mateo County Environmental Health Services Division: Review of on-site generators
- San Mateo County Transportation Authority: Review of potential effects on public transit
- San Mateo County Water Pollution Prevention Program: C.3 and C.6 Development Review Checklist
- West Bay Sanitary District: Approval of wastewater hookups

### 3.6 References Cited

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- FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency). 2019. FEMA Flood Map Service Center: Search By Address: Menlo Park. Effective April 5, 2019. https://msc.fema.gov/portal/search?AddressQuery= 123%20independence%2C%20menlo%20park%2C%20ca#searchresultsanchor.



SOURCE: ESRI Basemap 2022, San Mateo County 2020

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FIGURE 3-1
Project Location



SOURCE: ESRI Basemap 2022, San Mateo County 2020

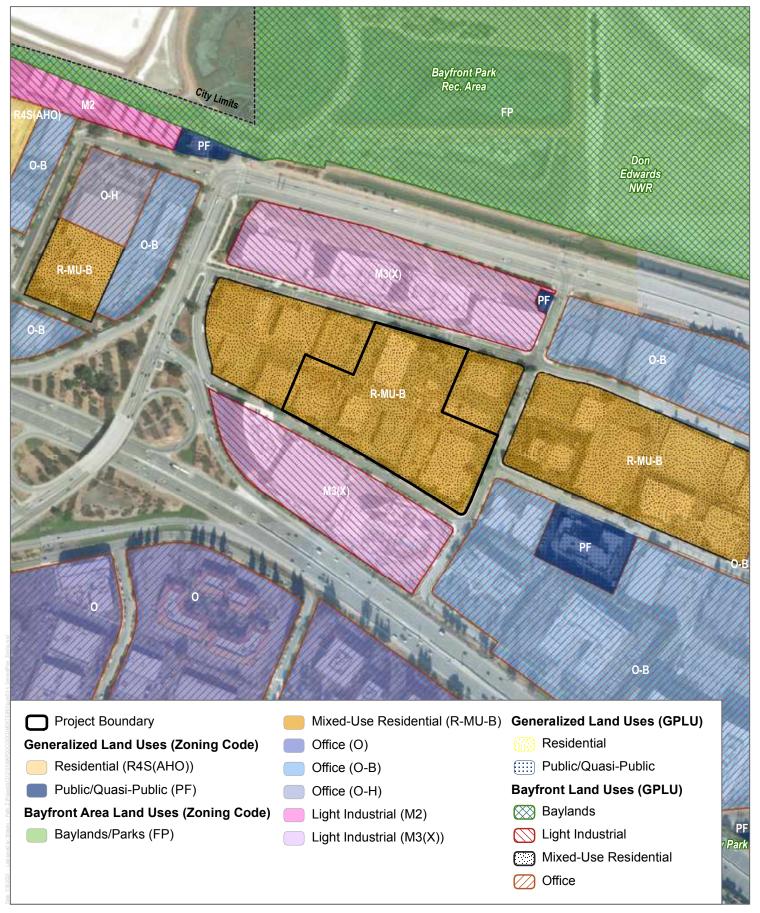
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FIGURE 3-2
Project Vicinity



SOURCE: ESRI 2022, San Mateo County 2020

FIGURE 3-3 Existing Site Conditions



SOURCE: ESRI Basemap 2022, City of Menlo Park 2022

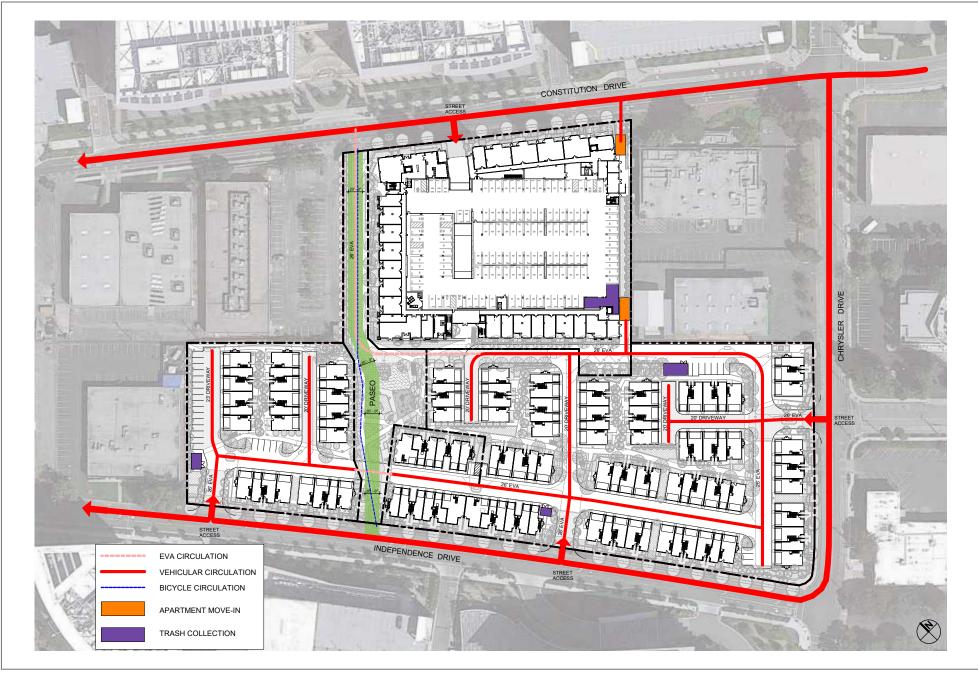
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FIGURE 3-4



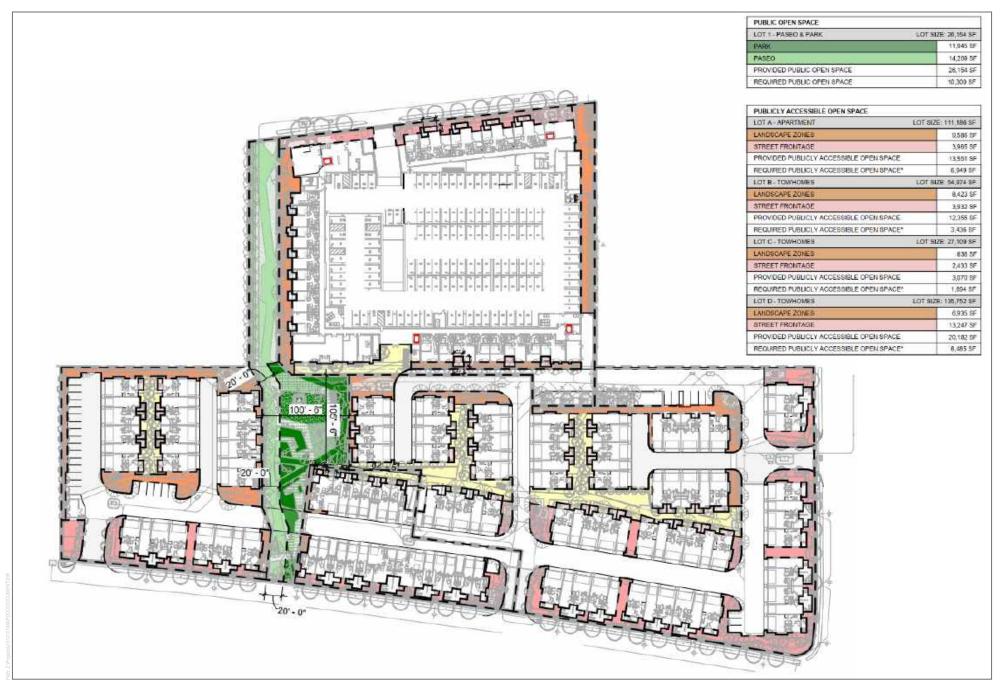
Source: T Square Studios 2021

FIGURE 3-5
Proposed Site Plan



SOURCE: T Square Studios 2022

FIGURE 3-6 Proposed Circulation



SOURCE: T Square Studios 2022

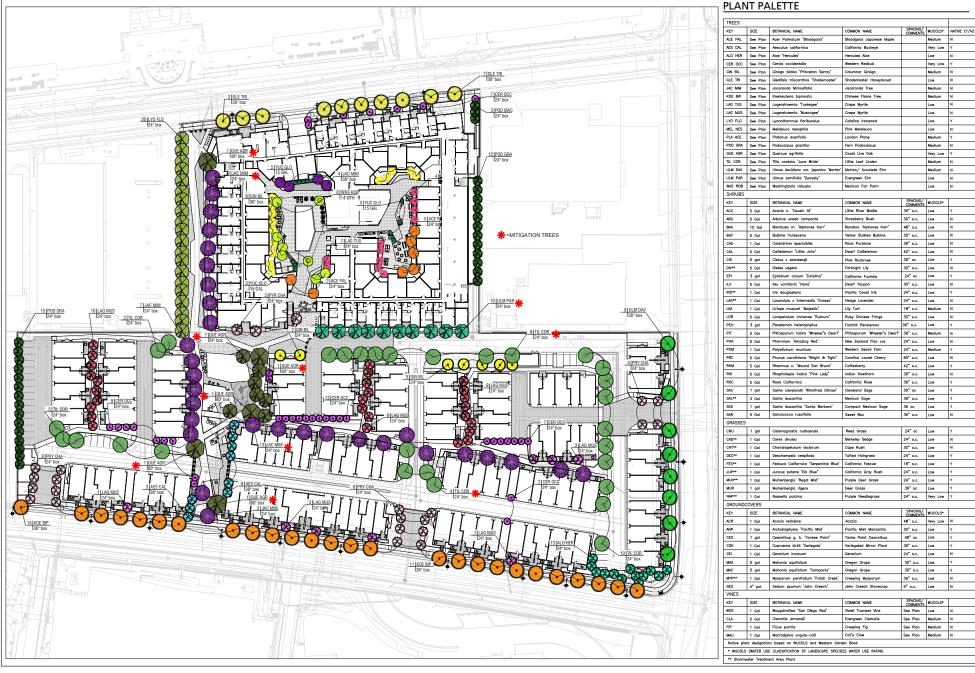






SOURCE: T Square Studios 2022





SOURCE: T Square Studios 2022

