Willow Village Draft Environmental Impact Report

Comprehensive Public Comments

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Willow Village Draft Environmental Impact Report

Kyle Perata
Community Development Dept., City of Menlo Park
701 Laurel Street, Menlo Park, CA 94025

4/17/22

cc: Planning Commission
Housing Commission
City Council members
Chamber of Commerce
Signature Development

SUB: Willow Village Master Plan Project - EIR

This submittal is in support of the Willow Village project and the EIR process, which will improve the final project as planned.

I have reviewed the EIR executive summary and significant-impacts summary.

Comments:

The modernization of this underutilized commercial area is an important move forward for the City of Menlo Park, especially for the neighbors who are immediately adjacent.

I am pleased with the response by the developer to the extensive community feedback:

Project goals include to minimize traffic, improve Willow Road transportation infrastructure, place all parking underground, and include connections to the Belle Haven neighborhood. A very important benefit to our region is the addition of 1730 units of housing, with over 300 affordable units. Other benefits include delivering needed neighborhood services in the first phase of the development, the creation of a 4-acre community park, and the use of 'mass timber' construction which greatly reduces climate impacts.

I note that the project will include an Impacts mitigating, monitoring, and reporting program.

The development team significantly improved the project design based on community feedback, following almost 170 meetings over the past half dozen years. This development also fits in with the Connect Menlo General Plan Amendment, which also was a very public process.

I am especially pleased to note the sustainability aspects of the project: 100% electrical, extensive use of solar and recycled water, and sustainable building materials.

This project is establishing a model for future construction projects for the development industry worldwide: human-scaled, modern, sustainable, cost-effective construction techniques.

We are lucky that the Meta Platforms company has decided to make this outstanding investment in community amenities and services in the Belle Haven neighborhood.

Thank you, Menlo Park, for working through all the details of the EIR and responses.

Clem Molony

Clem Molony
1966 Menalto Ave.
Menlo Park, CA 94025

Perata, Kyle T

From: Kimberly Baller <kimberlyballer@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 20, 2022 12:47 PM
To: _Planning Commission
Cc: connect@willowvillage.com
Subject: I support Willow Village

Dear Planning Commissioners,

I am writing to express my support for the Willow Village project. I urge you to advance the project through the EIR process and remaining steps toward approval.

I lived in East Palo Alto from 2015 - 2020 on Kavanaugh Dr. We loved being so close to Facebook, where I work, and our neighbors were wonderful. What was hard was not having a grocery store nearby, not having a nice park within walking distance, the sidewalks were awful (cracked, hard to walk with a stroller) and a closer movie theater would have been great. We had a dog and a toddler at the time and not having a park we felt safe enough to walk to was a real bummer.

I was so excited to hear about this project and cannot wait for it to get started. We ended up moving out of the neighborhood because it wasn't working for our family but we kept our property and rented it out. We would love to see this development continue as quickly as possible to improve the livability for future tenants.

Thank you for your consideration,
Kimberly Baller

Perata, Kyle T

From: Mark Baller <markballer@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 20, 2022 12:56 PM
To: _Planning Commission
Cc: connect@willowvillage.com
Subject: Please move forward with Willow Village

Dear Planning Commissioners -

I am writing to express my support for the Willow Village project. My wife Kimberly and I moved to East Palo Alto in 2014. Our son Jax was born in our home in 2016. We love the neighborhood in many ways, but community facilities, safe and aesthetic parks and commercial options are poor. Willow Village will provide both Menlo Park and East Palo Alto residents with what is missing from the area.

I urge you to advance the project through the EIR process and remaining steps toward approval.

Thanks for your time and consideration,

Mark Baller
1519 Kavanaugh Dr.
East Palo Alto, CA
94303

From: Kristen L
To: Perata, Kyle T
Subject: Willow Village will be a sea level rise victim
Date: Sunday, April 10, 2022 3:17:22 PM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Unless you recognize the sender's email address and know the content is safe, DO NOT click links, open attachments or reply.

I hope they will build whatever they want as long as they NEVER ask the city to pay for any climate change impact mitigation projects. The area is very low lying and very close to the water. Sea level rise will impact it. If there is any chance that Willow Village will ask for tax dollars to protect their project, nothing should ever be built. If they assume all the risk, I am all in favor.

Perata, Kyle T

From: Kristen L <leeping1@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, April 19, 2022 9:54 AM
To: Perata, Kyle T
Subject: Re: Willow Village will be a sea level rise victim

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Thank you. Even if the first floor is 2 ft above the current first floor, I'm assuming, that there's a basement. Is that just designed to flood? And what about things that are stored there? Will everything be designed for occasional soaking? And how will people get in and out of the raised first floor if it's surrounded by water? Or will they be stuck in or out?

Thanks!

Sent from my iPhone

> On Apr 19, 2022, at 8:25 AM, Perata, Kyle T <ktperata@menlopark.org> wrote:
>
> Kristen,
>
> Thank you for your email. I want to acknowledge receipt of your email. We will include this as part of the record on the project and attach it to the staff report to be reviewed by the Planning Commission as part of the public hearing on the EIR and study session on the project (scheduled for April 25). We will also review the comments and respond in the response to comments on the draft EIR (in the Final EIR).
>
> The project does include design aspects to reduce the impact of sea level rise on the project, such as raised first floor levels 24 inches above the current base flood elevation. I am happy to discuss further if you have any questions.
>
> Thanks,
>
> Kyle

Kyle T. Perata
Acting Planning Manager
City Hall - 1st Floor
701 Laurel St.
tel 650-330-6721
menlopark.org

Perata, Kyle T

From: Federico Andrade-Garcia <federico@liquilan.com>
Sent: Thursday, April 21, 2022 12:50 PM
To: _Planning Commission
Cc: connect@willowvillage.com
Subject: I support Willow Village

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Estimated Planning Commissioners,

I am a resident of East Palo Alto, living relatively close to the Willow Village project. As a nearby resident, I would like to express my support for the Willow Village project. The area it intends to be at, is currently only used for buildings, and this project would include not only that, but shared areas for community entertainment and housing, which should take some of the FB workers (And some other residents) out of the road, which would help traffic overall. Also, having retail and groceries nearby, will help the whole area East of 101, and bring some more tax revenue to MP, so everybody wins.

I urge you to advance the project through the EIR process and remaining steps toward approval.

Regards,

-Federico Andrade-Garcia

Perata, Kyle T

From: Vivian Wehner <veggieviv@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, April 21, 2022 5:21 PM
To: _Planning Commission
Cc: connect@willowvillage.com
Subject: I support Willow Village

Dear Planning Commissioners, I am writing to express my strong support for the Willow Village project. I support the advancement of the project through the EIR process and the remaining steps toward approval. I live in east palo alto and this project would be transformational for my quality of life (in a positive way). I support doing due diligence, but am very excited for this project to move forward.

Vivian

Perata, Kyle T

From: Bonnie Lam <bllam@ucla.edu>
Sent: Monday, April 25, 2022 12:05 PM
To: _Planning Commission
Subject: Planning Commision - Willow Village

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Dear Planning Commissioners,

As a Belle Haven resident, I am writing to express my support for the Willow Village project. I've been actively following and attending meetings regarding Willow Village and have been very impressed with the openness to feedback. The plans presented have been changed multiple times in order to accomodate our community's request and concerns.

I urge you to advance the project through the EIR process and remaining steps toward approval. Willow Village delivers to our neighborhood much needed amenities such as a full-service grocery store, pharmacy services, cafes and restaurants, publicly accessible park space, and community gathering spaces such as a town square. I look forward to having spaces that my neighbors and I can walk to.

Willow Village also delivers more than 300 units of affordable housing, which will help prevent displacement from our community. Affordable housing is needed more than ever, especially with the rising housing and rent prices. I urge you to support Willow Village as I do. This is a huge investment into the Belle Haven and neighboring communities and will add to the vibrancy of our beautiful community.

Thank you,
Bonnie Lam

Perata, Kyle T

From: Brian Henry <bhenry456@yahoo.com>
Sent: Sunday, April 24, 2022 10:44 AM
To: _Planning Commission
Cc: connect@willowvillage.com
Subject: I support Willow Village

Dear Planning Commissioners, I am writing to express my support for the Willow Village project. I urge you to advance the project through the EIR process and remaining steps toward approval.

Perata, Kyle T

From: Mack, Ed <emack@te.com>
Sent: Monday, April 25, 2022 10:21 AM
To: _Planning Commission
Cc: connect@willowvillage.com
Subject: I support Willow Village

Dear Planning Commissioners, I am writing to express my support for the Willow Village project. I urge you to advance the project through the EIR process and remaining steps toward approval. I feel that this project will be beneficial to East Menlo Park, as well as to East Palo Alto.

Thank You, Ed Mack

1483 Kavanaugh Drive

E. Palo Alto

650-704-3207

Perata, Kyle T

From: Luis Perez <luis.perez.live@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, April 25, 2022 10:06 AM
To: _Planning Commission
Cc: Willow Village
Subject: I support Willow Village

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Dear Planning Commissioners, I am writing to express my support for the Willow Village project. I urge you to advance the project through the EIR process and remaining steps toward approval.

Perata, Kyle T

From: Robert Ott <getrobertott@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, April 25, 2022 2:26 PM
To: _Planning Commission
Cc: connect@willowvillage.com
Subject: In support of Willow Village

Dear Planning Commissioners,

As a Belle Haven resident, I am writing to express my support for the Willow Village project. I urge you to advance the project through the EIR process and remaining steps toward approval. Willow Village delivers to our neighborhood much needed amenities such as a full-service grocery store, pharmacy services, cafes and restaurants, publicly accessible park space, and community gathering spaces such as a town square. This is important so we do not have to cross the highway to shop for groceries or pick up a subscription. Willow Village also delivers more than 300 units of affordable housing, which will help prevent displacement from our community. I urge you to support Willow Village as I do.

Thank you,
Robert

Perata, Kyle T

From: Romain Tanière <rtaniere@yahoo.com>
Sent: Sunday, April 24, 2022 3:32 PM
To: PlanningDept; Perata, Kyle T; Chen, Kevin; _Planning Commission; Wolosin, Jen; Taylor, Cecilia
Subject: [Sent to Planning]F1 & G1 Draft Environmental Impact Report Willow Village - 25 Apr 2022 Menlo Park Planning Commission

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Dear Menlo Park planning commissioners,

Nearby Kavanaugh East Palo Alto residents will benefit but also be affected by the new Willow Village/Meta Campus and we thank you for the opportunity to provide some feedback on the EIR and latest development proposal.

With Menlo Park's current city ordinance prohibiting nearby overnight parking and with the Willow Campus parking on the eastern side and the O'Brien/Willow connection next to the East Palo Alto Kavanaugh/Gloria neighborhood, residents have expressed concerns about increasing parking issues, speed/safety and nonresidential cut-through traffic between University, Willow and Bay corridors which need to be addressed now before construction begins. Therefore,

A. Nearby East Palo Alto city streets (Kavanaugh, Gloria, University, etc…) must be included in all current/future studies and some of the impact fees should go towards the city of East Palo Alto for safety and traffic mitigation measures such as:

1. To implement 2 new stop signs on Kavanaugh Drive at Gloria Way and Clarence Court.

2. To install digital driver's speed limit radar displays on Kavanaugh Drive and Gloria Way on both side of the street.

3. To perform an asphalt street resurfacing/reconstruction on Kavanaugh Drive with larger concrete sidewalks and rebuilt ADA compliant crosswalks/curbs/ramps, bury all overhead utility lines and install more lamp posts on all the electrical poles on Kavanaugh Drive, Gloria Way and all adjacent streets and courts to increase safety (Kirkwood, Clarence, Gertrude, Hazelwood, Farrington, Emmett, Ursula, Grace).

4. To conduct an engineering evaluation and implement the most appropriate and effective street traffic/speed calming devices (e.g. speed bumps, traffic circles at intersections, etc…) on Kavanaugh Drive (between O'Brien Dr and University Ave) and on Gloria Way (between Bay Rd and Kavanaugh Dr).

5. To include Notre Dame Ave / Kavanaugh Dr as a bike lane in the Bicycle Transportation Master Plan which would be a bicycle improvement/alternative to the busy Bay Rd / Newbridge St bike route to Willow Road.

6. To install lighting on University Avenue between Kavanaugh Drive and Bay Road either on the street side that has the existing sidewalk or on the median, lighting both side of the road like on the rest of University Avenue to increase safety (currently the side of the road that has lighting on this street portion is the one where there is no sidewalk).

7. To implement an all-red traffic light interval at the University/Kavanaugh/Notre Dame traffic light intersections.

8. To strengthen control and enforcement of speed/traffic/parking regulations.

B. To limit vehicle traffic, the Willow/O'Brien/University area should be redeveloped with pedestrian/bicycle traffic in mind. As such, sidewalks with ADA compliant crosswalks/curbs/ramps, which at present are mostly nonexistent, should be constructed on both sides all along O'Brien Drive (as a continuation and similarly to what has been done at 1035

O'Brien Drive for example when it was rebuilt) and Kavanaugh Way in Menlo Park to connect with existing sidewalks on Kavanaugh Drive and University Avenue in East Palo Alto. Better lighting should be installed and bicycle lanes should be also developed on O'Brien Drive.

C. Paseos and streets in the Willow Campus should better connect to O'Brien Drive. As such, we would like the developer to work with other nearby landowners and specifically CSBio (1075 O'Brien/Kelly Court), 1105-1165 O'Brien Drive, 1005 O'Brien Drive and 1320 Willow Road, and 1350 Adams Court which are currently redeveloping their properties and finalizing their designs. This would allow the possibility of new connections with O'Brien and the new Willow campus street/paseo grid proposal (for example utilizing the current drainage channel between 1075 and 1105 O'Brien Drive and the previous fenced off connections between 20 Kelly Court and 960/1350 Hamilton) and between Adams Court and Hamilton Court.

D. Other more direct bus/street connections from Willow/University to Willow Village should be considered to limit residential traffic and avoid O'Brien Drive/Kavanaugh Drive.

E. Meta should also consider the integration/planning of a Multi-Modal Transit Hub by the SamTrans corridor and keep pushing for the Dumbarton Rail Corridor to be reactivated. The plan should allow options to include and connect a future Dumbarton transit/commuting center to the Willow Village Campus.

F. The redevelopment of Hetch Hetchy right of way should be included in the project to increase greenery and connect the proposed south park crescent between Ivy/Willow and O'Brien Parks. The developer of this project should work with relevant parties such as the city, nearby other landowners, and the SFPUC, to increase park/playground options on Hetch Hetchy such as secured children/toddlers areas and tennis/basketball/football/soccer/bocce courts, etc... This would create an additional south paseo and increase community park amenities serving both future employees and local residents.

G. Re-including the initial proposal for a Community Center on ground level near the Ivy/Willow public park would be greatly beneficial. The Ivy/Willow park/open space should not be limited as a sport's/multi use field which will be only used by 1 or 2 leagues but should be planned as a full amenity community park such as the "awesome spot playground" (Modesto) or the "magical bridge playground" (Palo Alto). Hopefully the elevated park by the SamTrans corridor can also incorporate many great designs/features from the High Line New York city public park.

H. To mitigate traffic issues on the Willow Road/O'Brien Drive corridor, please also find down below some additional feedback/improvements (#1 to #11) that should be implemented as soon as possible in coordination with the appropriate agencies (Caltrans, AC Transit, etc…) in advance of the Willow Village/Meta campus:

1. No parking request in front of 965-985 O'Brien Drive, Menlo Park to ease the flow of vehicles to Willow Road. This would allow vehicles on O'Brien to be in 2 lines, up to the traffic light (right now the 2 lines, no parking zone is not even barely from 965 O'Brien to the light but just a few feet from the corner Willow/O'Brien intersection). Vehicles that are parked on the street around 965-985 O'Brien make the congestion even worse and the 2hr parking zone is not even enforced in this area. This should be very easy and fast to implement (just relocating the existing "no parking here to curb" further down the street and extending the painting strip to divide the lane further).

2. Installation of a new sign on the far right of the large overhang Newbridge traffic light mast arm coming from US101 towards O'Brien Drive with "lane ends - through traffic merge left" would ease the traffic for locals who make a right on Willow Road to Alberni Street and O'Brien Drive. At present, through traffic on Willow Road stay on the very right lane from US101 overpass to O'Brien Drive, blocking the lane for local traffic turning right. Having a "warning" early posted sign ahead of time will help vehicles merge ahead of time instead of seeing the signs too late and blocking the lanes where local residents need to exit/enter.

3. The Willow Road and side street traffic light synchronization needs to account and take place also East of US101 right away, not just West of US101. Vehicle counts and traffic patterns on O'Brien/Ivy/Hamilton should be done/included on the on-going synchronization (also on side streets such as Kavanaugh Way (Menlo Park) and Kavanaugh Drive (East Palo Alto) in anticipation of the FaceBook Willow Campus).

4. As a complement to #2, going East on CA 114 towards the Dumbarton bridge, the sign next to the sidewalk indicating that Willow through traffic must merge left near the intersection of Willow Road and O'Brien Drive is too close to the intersection/traffic light. It does not give cars enough distance to move to the left if going straight. This gives the impression that there are 3 lanes instead of 2 and at peak commute hour creates a bottle neck for people who want to turn right on O'Brien Drive. The "Through traffic must merge left" sign should be moved before Alberni Street EPA to give enough time for drivers to get off the right lane and not block it. Again, having a "warning" early posted sign ahead of time

will help vehicles merge ahead of time instead of seeing the signs too late and blocking the lanes where local residents need to exit/enter. Some additional “Right arrows” should also be painted just after Alberni Street EPA on the right lane to reinforce the message.

5. Similarly to #2, a new sign can be installed on the far right of the horizontal large overhang Newbridge traffic light mast arm coming from O'Brien Drive towards US101 "Right lane must turn right - US101 North SF only".

6. As a complement to #5, going West on CA 114 towards US 101, the new Willow configuration at/after Newbridge is a very nice improvement (except for the Dumbarton express bus stop footprint/location, see #7). However, the signs on the right side indicating that through traffic must merge left and that the right lane is for San Francisco US 101 are not really well placed and from a driver perspective cannot be seen very well (maybe OK if you see them from a pedestrian’s perspective or inspect the intersection on foot, but they are partially hidden by traffic light/trees if you see them from a driver’s perspective on the right or middle lane before the traffic light). May be the placement of the various sidewalk signs between Newbridge and US 101 can be revisited and also some “Right arrows” can be painted just before or after the “SF North” white road marking on the right lane.

7. Going West on CA 114 towards US 101, the Dumbarton Express bus stop on Willow Road, right at the corner of Newbridge MP is badly posted and very dangerous. Unlike the bus stop on the other Willow/Newbridge EPA side going East, and despite the new large sidewalk just been redone, no footprint/easement was accommodated for the bus to pull out of the "turn right 101 North Only" lane. Therefore, drivers following the bus on Willow and who are unaware of the bus stop corner location, get stuck in the middle of the Willow/Newbridge intersection until the bus moves out. Some drivers will then try to get out by partially moving in the middle lane by sharing lanes with cars currently on the middle lane and get into near accidents. At the same time there are also vehicles trying to make a right turn (on red) on Willow from Newbridge MP which makes the situation worse. The bus stop sign should be relocated in a more visible location and a pull out space should be accommodated on the large sidewalk to make a real bus stop aside from trough traffic. Relocating it before the Willow/Newbridge traffic light on the side of Mi Tierra Linda would be best. There is more space and it would be almost at the same location of the other bus stop on the opposite direction/side of the street. This is not simply a problem of responsible drivers but really a poor location of the current bus stop location.

8. In addition to the already difficult situation described on #7, and to avoid people coming from Newbridge MP from blocking Pierce Road and also creating accident situations with drivers coming from Newbridge EPA or Willow Road, there should be a “do not turn right on red” for the light at Newbridge MP. Cars should be forced to stop before Pierce Road and wait for the green light to turn right on Willow Road West.

9. Maintenance wise, several light bulbs are burned off at the O'Brien/Ivy traffic lights and many round shape light covers are missing at several location which makes some lights hard to see depending on the sun exposure. The "Do not block the intersection" sign facing O'Brien Drive at Willow Road fell of the middle traffic light and is now missing. Also the island traffic light to make a left on O'Brien from Willow has been missing and not replaced for several months.

10. Implementation of an all-red interval for vehicle clearance and traffic safety at all the Willow intersections traffic lights between US101 and Bayfront expressway (Newbridge, O'Brien, Ivy, Hamilton) to increase safety and prevent such dangerous/accident prone situations that happened previously on Kavanaugh/University and Willow/O'Brien (see examples here:

https://vimeo.com/231583589

https://vimeo.com/231583590

https://vimeo.com/231583682)

11. Repainting of all missing/faded directional doted lines at all the Willow intersections between US101 and Bayfront expressway (Newbridge, O'Brien, Ivy, Hamilton) to guide the vehicles turning.

Overall, we are very excited about this mixed used project with public access and amenities east of US101. We are looking forward for the city of Menlo Park, the planning commission and the developer to working together with the relevant stakeholders (e.g. the city of East Palo Alto, SFPUC, Meta, CSBio, etc...) to incorporate and implement these improvements so that this live/work/play development transforms the O’Brien business park area in a more lively community district integrated in the surrounding city neighborhoods and ultimately benefits everyone.

Thank you very much for your consideration.

Romain Taniere

East Palo Alto, Kavanaugh neighborhood resident.

Perata, Kyle T

From: Perata, Kyle T
Sent: Monday, May 9, 2022 12:53 PM
To: Perata, Kyle T
Subject: FW: Willow Village Master Plan Project EIR Comments

Kyle T. Perata
Acting Planning Manager
City Hall - 1st Floor
701 Laurel St.
tel 650-330-6721
menlopark.org

From: Romain Tanière [mailto:rtaniere@yahoo.com]
Sent: Thursday, April 28, 2022 6:17 PM
To: Perata, Kyle T <ktperata@menlopark.org>
Subject: Re: Willow Village Master Plan Project EIR Comments

Thank you Kyle.

I forgot to add if a red/no-parking zone could be also painted on both side of Kavanaugh Drive/Way and on both city sides at the curve junction between EPA and MP (from the Polytec driveway to the East Palo Alto city sign and from the 1395 Kavanaugh driveway where there is a bus stop sign to the Menlo Park city sign). With cars at high speed/low visibility, this curve is very dangerous when two cars are coming heads on as people almost drive on the middle of the road to avoid cars parked on the sides and at high speed most of the time.
See example here: https://vimeo.com/704367839 (if you just examine the section on foot you do not see what the problem may be).
It would also be great to add some botts' dots and/or rumble strips on the double divider lines to provide tactile and auditory feedback to alert drivers starting from the Polytec driveway to the 1396 driveway.

Romain Taniere

Perata, Kyle T

From: Perata, Kyle T
Sent: Monday, April 25, 2022 3:14 PM
To: Perata, Kyle T
Subject: FW: [Sent to Planning]Willow Village

Kyle T. Perata
Acting Planning Manager
City Hall - 1st Floor
701 Laurel St.
tel 650-330-6721
menlopark.org

From: victoria robledo [mailto:vbetyavr@gmail.com]
Sent: Monday, April 25, 2022 2:45 PM
To: PlanningDept <PlanningDept@menlopark.org>
Subject: [Sent to Planning]Willow Village

Good evening Planning Commission,

I am writing as a concerned resident of Belle Haven and the impact of traffic and pollution that will affect the air quality and safety of our residents. In addition, the following items I'm in opposition of due to its great impact on this tiny community.

Opposition to: Additional Hotel when there are already two large Hotels both off 101 (The Nia and Four Seasons).

Opposition to: Tearing down established trees

Opposition to : 1,900 units of housing to be reduced to 1,000 or less
Opposition to : Tearing down so many functioning buildings, trees and many other existing structures.

PROOF in writing that there will NOT be an impact on quality of air due to increase in cars, dust, dirt, noise.

I would also like to request that the Commission consider limiting all entries to these sites " NOT" be directly off of Willow as to prevent traffic jams and buckle up traffic.

Thank you,

Victoria Robledo

Perata, Kyle T

From: victoria robledo <vbetyavr@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, May 23, 2022 3:08 PM
To: Perata, Kyle T
Subject: Willow Village EIR Impact

Good afternoon Kyle,

As a resident of Belle Haven I would like to endorse and highly support the letter sent to you by Lynne Bramlett. As a resident, I have first hand experienced the impact currently of traffic, poor air quality, noise pollution and constant traffic as a result of these 18 wheeler trucks driving on Willow and Bayfront road.

One of my greatest concerns is the upcoming project of many projects that require tearing down older buildings and the possibility of lead and asbestos being released into the air. I'm also very concerned about the impact of our marsh lands and our native birds and animal habitats.

Willows Village EIR Specific Questions
1. What new and more stringent requirements exist for measuring the impacts of traffic, such as including reverse commutes and average daily traffic? How will these be reflected in the Willows Village EIR?
2. The number of birds in the air has also drastically declined as noted in a recent article in Science and also local newspapers. I've heard from avid birdwatchers that there are fewer total birds and types of birds in Menlo Park's Bedwell Bayfront Park than the amount seen in the nearby Palo Alto Baylands. What is the impact of development on birdlife in Menlo Park's Bayfront? What will help to increase birdlife in the Menlo Park's Bayfront? How specifically will Willows Village impact birdlife?
3. Fewer birds will also impact beneficial insects, flower pollination and other aspects of nature. What is the overall impact of development in District 1 on broader aspects of nature that also impact aesthetics?
4. What will be the impact to the current occupants of the buildings that Facebook proposes to demolish? Where will these businesses re-locate to? What will be the impact to their clientele? Where will these non-profits and local governmental services go?
5. What will be the impact of Willows Village to Menlo Park's goals of combatting global Climate Change as detailed in Council Resolution No. 6493?
6. What is the decision-making process currently being used for deciding the public amenities such as the proposed Community Facility and Public Park? How is the process consistent, or not, with the ConnectMenlo Program-level EIR promised benefit of delivering environmental justice to District 1?
7. What retail is being planned for the area? Specifically, what grocery store is being considered? What impact will a new grocery store have on the two existing grocery stores in District 1? What restaurants are being considered? What will be the impact of these restaurants on the existing restaurants in District 1?

3
8. What retail is being proposed, if any? How will Facebook help to ensure that this retail is successful?

9. What is the dollar value put on the proposed 10,000 community space? What is currently being discussed between Facebook and City Staff for this particular property? Please include all possibilities. Please also include anything that has been explicitly ruled out.
10. For the community space, instead of setting aside land in Willows Village for this purpose, could more housing be added and instead the dollar amount set aside for District 1 residents to decide how and where it will be spent? If not, why not? If yes, what will be the process to ensure that the District 1 community makes the decisions?
11. Where will trees be planted in District 1 to help provide a tree canopy to mitigate the overall impacts of development, and the additional impacts of Willows Village?
12. Into which landfills will the parts from the demolished buildings go? What will be the impact to these landfills? What efforts will be made to reuse parts of the demolished buildings?
13. Willows Village is proposed for a flood zone expected to be "under water" in perhaps as soon as 2060 due to global climate change. What are the justifications for building this project in a known flood zone? If built, when the flood occurs, what will be the plans to protect life and property?
14. The draft Willows Village master plan includes the evaluation of constructing an underground water reservoir beneath the proposed park/sports field on Willow Road. How will this water reservoir be protected should a major flood occur?
15. If the zoning map is changed, to accommodate Willows Village proposed site connections to the surrounding roadway network, what additional development might this trigger by property owners nearby? In other words, will adjacent property owners also be allowed to develop their properties into office complexes?
Question Pertaining to Regional, cumulative impacts
1) What is the current overall jobs/housing imbalance in Menlo Park, and in Santa Clara and San Mateo Counties? If all currently proposed regional development gets approved, how will this worsen the jobs/housing imbalance? What are the plans to increase housing, especially affordable housing?
2) What regional efforts exist, if any, to halt office development projects that
3) What is the cumulative environmental impact of the region's current and likely jobs/housing imbalance? This would include: noise, pollution, species decline, including birds.

Perata, Kyle T

From: Karen Grove <karenfgrove@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 4, 2022 7:03 PM
To: _CCIN; Noce, Michael R; _Planning Commission
Subject: Willow Village, Parkline, and BMR Guidelines for future projects

Dear City Council, Planning Commission, Housing Commission, and City Staff,

When I joined the Housing Commission four years ago, I joined the BMR ad-hoc committee to update our Below Market Rate Housing Program guidelines and requirements. While we made some incremental progress, we have not yet made the leveraged changes needed to ensure that our BMR requirements serve the needs of our most impacted residents.

Today, we are experiencing the consequence of our inaction. So many large housing developments are getting through the approval process and meeting the terms of our BMR Program without meeting the needs of our community. We need to prioritize updating our requirements, and until we do, we need to be asking developers to exceed our requirements.

For the Willow Village project, for example, I encourage the Housing Commission, Planning Commission and City Council to raise the bar for Below Market Rate Housing relative to what is being proposed. Specifically, our community needs more affordable homes, and deeper affordability, especially for people at the lowest incomes and most challenging circumstances (people with disabilities, with large families, extremely low income seniors, etc).

As a starting point for discussion, I encourage the city to ask the developer for:

- 15% inclusionary in the market rate developments
    - at a mix of Very Low, Low and Moderate Incomes, per our BMR guidelines.
    - *As a note for future BMR policy updates, a good example to follow is Redwood City, which uses a point system rather than an equivalent subsidy calculation to determine how many Very Low vs. Low vs. Moderate Income units are required.*
- In addition to the 15% inclusionary BMR homes, the developer of this nearly 70 acre property should donate 1-2 acres and partner with a nonprofit housing developer to produce 100% affordable homes on site (this should become part of our BMR policy going forward, for large-site projects, as a strategy to produce deeply affordable homes)
    - The population served could be seniors, or another high need group, such as large families, or people with disabilities.
    - Incomes served should align with other 100% affordable developments, and should include no income, acutely low income, extremely low income, very low income and low income (on a curious note, the

current proposal sets a minimum income requirement of 25% AMI for the proposed senior housing, which is not a threshold used by the County to delineate income bands).

- The Willow Village developer should make a significant financial contribution to the 100% affordable project on behalf of Menlo Park in such a way that Menlo Park is able to apply our BMR preferences to a portion of the units in the development.

    - Financing for such a project will come from several sources, and each funder can apply conditions to their funding in terms of who qualifies to apply for the homes.
    - In the absence of significant Menlo Park financing of the project, preferences will be set by other funding sources and could fail to meet the needs of our most vulnerable Menlo Park households.
    - Note that this is a very large project, and the developer has access to vast resources. They can afford to invest in meeting the most urgent and costly needs in our community.

- Set rents for the inclusionary units at 30% of the mid-range income level. Mountain View does this, and we have found that it is necessary to address a structural problem with the Income Limits as defined by the State and County.

    - The problem is that households with incomes at the low end of the range do not qualify as earning enough to pay rents set at 30% of incomes set at the high end of the range.
    - In effect, our program, as designed, does not serve households with incomes in the lower range of the income bands.
    - Setting rents at 30% of the mid-range income could solve the problem.

- We should NOT eliminate our policy that BMR rents may never exceed 75% of market rate rents, as has been requested by the developer.

    - The 75% BMR rent cap policy has been effective! Without it, BMR rents would have exceeded market rate rents during COVID and at other times in the past.

Ideally, we will expeditiously create a BMR policy that meets the housing security needs of our city and region. Until that happens, we must negotiate with each developer of large projects in our city and ask them to step up to meet the dire need of our most deeply impacted residents.

I'm hopeful that we have the will and the ability to do so, because at the Planning Commission study session for SRI/Parkline, the Planning Commission significantly raised the bar for BMR housing, and the developer was amenable to their request. Let's apply that higher bar – a bar that actually acknowledges and seeks to address the dire need in our community – to the Willow Village project too. And let's update our BMR policy so that future projects that follow the public meeting constraints of SB330 better serve our housing needs.

Karen Grove (she/her)

resident of Menlo Park and former housing commissioner

Perata, Kyle T

From: Christopher Kao <christopherkao@icloud.com>
Sent: Tuesday, May 17, 2022 10:41 AM
To: Perata, Kyle T
Subject: Willow Village Draft EIR Comments

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Hi,

I would like to submit my public comments for the Willow Village Draft EIR below:

My name is Chris Kao and I am a resident in East Palo Alto. I need to disclose that I am an employee at Meta, but my comments here are as a resident in East Palo Alto and do not consider that I am a Meta employee. I have read through the Willow Village Draft EIR and I am in support of this project. One of the things that I like the most about this project is that it connects the area that is the Willow Village campus to O'Brien Dr, hence creating a bike able pathway from East Palo Alto over to Belle Haven and the Bay Trail without having to take University Ave.

For context, I typically bike to work from the Ravenswood Business District to the Meta Menlo Park campus 5 days a week. I typically bike west along Bay Road and then north along University Avenue, then back southwest along the Bay Trail. This is an inefficient route because I am going further north and then biking back south. I had tried taking an alternative route north on University Ave, then west on O'Brien, but was disappointed to find that the former Prologis campus (where Willow Village is) is entirely separated from O'Brien Dr, so I ended up having to bike south west along O'Brien Dr and then back north east along Willow Road, which is an inefficient route.

I like how the Willow Village plan include bike lanes and I want to express support for bike lanes that would connect O'Brien Dr diagonally northwest up towards Willow Road.

Thanks,

Chris

Perata, Kyle T

From: Perata, Kyle T
Sent: Monday, May 23, 2022 12:45 PM
To: Perata, Kyle T
Subject: I support Willow Village - Belle Haven Resident

Kyle T. Perata
Acting Planning Manager
City Hall - 1st Floor
701 Laurel St.
tel 650-330-6721
menlopark.org

From: Chris Olesiewicz [mailto:colesiewicz@gmail.com]
Sent: Thursday, May 19, 2022 11:57 AM
To: _CCIN <city.council@menlopark.org>
Cc: Willow Village <connect@willowvillage.com>
Subject: I support Willow Village - Belle Haven Resident

Dear Council Members, as a 7+ year resident of the Belle Haven neighborhood, I am writing to express my support for the Willow Village project. I urge you to advance the project's Community Amenities package and the remaining steps toward approval. This will bring much-needed retail stores, such as the grocery store and pharmacy, to the Belle Haven side of Menlo Park.

Best regards,
Chris Olesieiwcz

Perata, Kyle T

Subject: I support Willow Village

From: Arturo Arias [mailto:arturoarias7@aol.com]
Sent: Friday, May 20, 2022 12:28 PM
To: _CCIN <city.council@menlopark.org>
Cc: connect@willowvillage.com
Subject: I support Willow Village

Dear Council Members,

I, Pastor Arias from Eternal Life Church in Menlo Park.
I`m writing to express my support for the Willow Village project.
This project will help bring our community together.
Our community is ready to embrace this project. The amenities and benefits the project brings will provide a safe haven for us all.
We need Willow Village in our community and city!
us a community faith leader for over 33 year here in menlo park.
I, urge you, to advance the project's Community Amenities package and remaining steps toward approval.

Kindest Regards!

- Pastor Arias
Eternal Life Church
Menlo Park

23 May 2022

RE: Willow Village Master Plan Project EIR

TO: Kyle Perata

FROM: Pam D Jones, Menlo Park resident

Here are my comments regarding Willow Village EIR:

1. The Air Quality District is initiating an update to its current California Environment Quality Act Guidelines. *"There have been substantive changes to the data and assumptions underlying the analytical methodologies, thresholds, and mitigation strategies since the last update of the CEQA Guidelines in June 2010 (revised May 2017)."*
2. There is has been no consistent monitoring or requirement to monitor air quality within the adjacent residential neighborhood of Belle Haven Menlo Park. Air quality monitoring be done on Willow Road and Hamilton Avenue MidPenisula School, Costano School, Willow Road and Ivy Drive
3. Failure to ensure an environmental justice approach as outlined by the United States Environmental Protection Agency. Although this project is under the November 30, 2016 laws, SB 1000 was effective January 1, 2017.
4. No publicly available count of the total number of Facebook and contract employees on their current fifteen (15) campuses in the Bayside area. Estimates run between 12,000 and 18,000 employees occupying over 3 million square feet of owned or leased property.
5. No publicly available of the number of people who will be working in the 1.25 million square feet of office space. This number should be added to the probable 4,000 residents who will be living in the 1,730 housing units. The total number of employees and estimate residents must be used for the following:
    1. Traffic
    2. Air quality
6. Failure to fully implement and assess current traffic congestion solutions for residents within District 1.
7. Failure to conduct a current housing displacement study that includes property ownership and list of LLCs.
8. Failure to conduct a current housing study that identifies number of apartments and homes unoccupied, reserved for Airbnb, reserved for corporations, or otherwise unavailable to the public.
9. Failure to address remedy for displacement of neighboring residents. The companies used to prepare the reports for development in the M2 area have consistently minimized the effect for the past ten year.
10. Failure to provide amenities other than what is part of the live/work/play as outlined in the General Plan. A town square and shopping district, dog park, elevated park, and other recreational areas are all part of the requirements to create a live/work/play "village."

Perata, Kyle T

From: Patti Fry <pattilfry@gmail.com> on behalf of Patti Fry <Patti.L.Fry@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, May 22, 2022 1:58 AM
To: Perata, Kyle T
Subject: Willow Village Draft EIR comments

The Draft EIR for the Willow Village and office park appears to assume a worker intensity of 217 sf per worker (reference page 3.13-15) in the offices calculated at 1.6 million square feet and 7354 workers. This assumption seems to underestimate greatly the potential new number of workers and associated impacts.
Facebook and other tech companies have used a range of 50-150 sf/ worker, which could yield 40%-400% more workers and corresponding additional needs for housing, water, and other infrastructure.
Also The DEIR compares the project population and housing impacts to area projections separately rather than comparing its impact of worsening the jobs/ housing ratio with no need for mitigation. Even with its questionable intensity assumptions, the DEIR states the project adds 4,332 employees and 1,730 housing units. That is a jobs:housing ratio of 2.5, much worse than the ConnectMenlo projection for Menlo Park's future. This Project with its enormous office park would worsen the jobs:housing balance unless approved with less non-residential space (or allowed through a General Plan change to add significantly more housing). The DEIR seems to ignore this and any related impacts.
Patti Fry
Former Menlo Park Planning Commissioner
Sent from my iPhone...pls excuse typos

Perata, Kyle T

From: Patti Fry <pattilfry@gmail.com> on behalf of Patti Fry <Patti.L.Fry@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, May 22, 2022 2:06 AM
To: Perata, Kyle T
Subject: Willow Village Draft EIR comments - water

The draft EIR seems to imply that the city has plans for water in dry years. That skirts the issue of the impact of this project that on the potential shortage and of its need to provide more water to support its impact on the need for water.
Patti Fry
Former Menlo Park Planning Commissioner
Sent from my iPhone...pls excuse typos

Perata, Kyle T

From: Lynne Bramlett <lynne.e.bramlett@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, May 23, 2022 2:48 PM
To: Perata, Kyle T
Cc: Lynne Bramlett; Taylor, Cecilia
Subject: Input into Willows Village Draft EIR
Attachments: Bayfront_Development_Projects.docx.pdf; Kyle Perata_WVEIR_May_23_2022.docx.pdf; WV_EIR_Scoping_V3.pdf; CM_Overriding_Considerations.pdf

Hello Kyle,

I'm attaching my input into the Willows Village EIR, which is due today by 5 PM. I will next walk over to 701 Laurel Street with a packet that includes the attachments. If the City Offices are not open, I will mail the packet to you. However, I point out here that I have met your deadline.

Attachments:

1. Letter with specific input
2. Bayfront Cumulative Development Projects
3. EIR Scoping Questions (from Sep 22, 2019)
4. ConnectMenlo Statement of Overriding Considerations

Lynne Bramlett
650-380-3028

Lynne Bramlett
1410 Mills Court
Menlo Park, CA 94025

May 23, 2022

Kyle Perata, Acting Planning Manager
City of Menlo Park
701 Laurel St.
Menlo Park, CA 94025

Subject: Willows Village Draft Environmental Impact Report

Dear Mr. Perata:

This letter is in response to the published 951-page Willows Village Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR). I've been a civically engaged resident for almost 10 years and I submitted input into topics I wanted to see studied in the EIR. I wanted them recorded, read and responded to. My primary concerns pertain to the need to consider development in District 1 holistically, and to re-evaluate the ConnectMenlo Program Level EIR or Resolution 6356. My concerns were not addressed. I will attach my Sep 22, 2019 comments for the record.

The City should impose development phasing requirements or adopt a moratorium until the cumulative impacts can be studied. The former City Attorney, Bill McClure, was quoted in a Nov 30, 2016 ("Menlo Park Adopts Big Changes to General Plan") *The Almanac* article as presenting this option (apparently to alleviate their concerns) to the then City Council.

The District 1 Development Cumulative Impacts Should be Considered. The City lacks a long-range planning department and an in-house geologist. The proposed Willows Village is located in a flood zone. The District 1 construction needs a comprehensive review, which it is not getting. We especially need to prioritize the health and safety of the City of Menlo Park residents over development interests. What information exists varies. For example, your March 14, 2022 presentation (Bayfront Development Projects) to the Planning Commission varied in the information I found at the City's website and also from what I read in Table 3.0-1 in the Willows Village Draft EIR. To me, this illustrates the rapidly changing projects and the lack of the City's ability to keep up. The lack of including lot size is troubling as this is one way of evaluating density. Please see my attachment with my table of the projects.

The public lacks meaningful opportunities to be kept appraised and to raise concerns. You told the Planning Commission, at their March 14, 2022 meeting, that your presentation was informational only. You clearly signaled that the meeting was not for the purpose of raising concerns about the pace of development. Instead, we need interactive forums where the public can ask questions and raise concerns. The City needs to provide a 3D model that depicts what District 1 will look like after construction of pipeline projects. Planning Commissioners, and others, have called for this model. A model should be on public display.

The ConnectMenlo program-level EIR (Resolution 6356) should be reviewed and updated. The program-level EIR "green lights" individual District 1 projects because they can "tier-off" the program-level EIR. The program-level EIR also inadequately projected environmental impacts and the 2040 build-out phasing projections.

The Planning Commission's annual review of the City's Capital Improvement Projects <u>for consistency with the City's General Plan</u> represents inadequate oversight. California State law (Government Code Section 65401) requires the City planning agency (Planning Commission) to review and determine that the projects are consistent with the City's General Plan. In the past, this reporting mechanism only included the CIPs that the City drives. However, it should include ALL development projects in District 1 allowed under ConnectMenlo. *After all, the City has positioned ConnectMenlo as its authentic General Plan Land Use Element*. Thus, all projects allowed due to ConnectMenlo should be on that report. The Planning Commission needs a complete list and the ability to meaningfully discuss the projects.

The City of Menlo Park should comply with legal requirements to annually report progress on ALL General Plan Elements, <u>not just the Housing Element</u>. All California jurisdictions are required to provide the Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR)m and the Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD), with *separate* General Plan and Housing Element Annual Progress Reports (APRs) by April 1 each year, per Government Code Sections 65400 and 65700. The General Plan APR submitted to OPR should outline the status of the General Plan and progress in its implementation over the previous year's 12-month reporting period.

The ConnectMenlo Guiding Principles should be measured and reported. The statements need revising into goals that can be measured. Then, they need metrics and an annual reporting. Right now, they are platitudes only.

The City's Environmental Justice Element should be completed *before* more District 1 development. The District 1 development project pipeline pace has greatly accelerated. The City is working at cross purposes by aiming to prepare an Environmental Justice Element while also rapidly increasing development in District 1. Projects should be put on hold until the Environmental Justice Element is completed.

Other Recommendations:

- **The City needs to provide training to residents on how to effectively respond to Environmental Impact Reports.** This training has been requested. The development should be slowed (or halted) until suitable training is provided. The pace should be slowed so that people have time to read the massive EIR reports and attend the meetings leading up to them (and after them).
- **The City should institute an annual report to the City Council for Developer Agreements**. The report should list each one, status of required mitigation, and the financial benefits. Council lacks adequate fiscal controls for developer agreements.
- **The City should post the Form 700s at a publicly accessible, and visible, section of its external website.** One can obtain a link, but one has to ask for the link. The Form 700s will show what gifts the City Staff, and the Council members, might be receiving from developers and other "special interests."

Broader changes, since the Willows Village project started, need to be considered. Covid-19 led to a new model of working from home. This model reduces traffic and pollutants that increase global climate change. Employees like it and the proposed new office space may not be needed. Facebook, or Meta Platforms, has seen declining revenues due to the younger generation shifting to social media platforms other than Facebook. Facebook's existing massive footprint in Menlo Park is considerable already. The pace of global climate change has accelerated and rising seas includes rising ground water tables, which levees cannot stop. The project should reflect these changes.

Instead of Willows Village, consider a floodplain buyout. According to the Cal OES My Hazards site, District 1 mostly lies in a flood plain and liquefaction zone. Flood buyouts can be funded by several federal programs. Buyouts reduce flood risk. A floodplain, in the form of a regional park, would be a nature-based solution to the increase in flooding risk due to global climate change and sea level rise.

Sincerely,

Lynne Bramlett (electronically signed)

Lynne Bramlett, District 3 Resident

ATTACHMENTS

1. Bayfront District 1 Cumulative Development Projects
2. May 22, 2019 Memo for topics studied in the Willows Village EIR
3. ConnectMenlo Statement of Overriding Considerations (from Resolution 6356)

"Bayfront" District 1 Cumulative Development Projets

Primary Sources (these often contained discrepancies)

- March 14, 2022 presentation to the Planning Commission
- City of MP Current and Pending Development website
- Project descriptions at City's Development website
- Constuction News Update (City of MP)
- Google research (lot size)
- Willows Village Draft Environmental Impact Review

COMPLETED or MOSTLY COMPLETED PROJECTS

Project Name	**Address**	**Lot Size**	**Summary**	**Status**	**MP Planner**
Facebook East Campus	1 Hacker Way	56.9-acres	9 buildings (approximately 1,035,840 sq. feet).	Completed	
Facebook West Campus	1 Facebook Way	22 acres	433,555 sq. foot building on top of surface parking	Completed	
Menlo Gateway Bohannon Development Company	100-190 Independence Drive & 101-155 Constitution Drive	15.9 acres	Hotel (171,563 sq. feet and 230 rooms), café/restaurant, retail. 3 Office and R&D buildings (694,669 sq. feet). 3 parking structures	? Willows Village draft EIR lists 105-155 Constitution as being "under construction"	
Tide High School	150 Jefferson Drive		Magnet high school for 9, 10, 11 grades initially	Willows Village Draft EIR lists this as "partially completed"	
1430 O'Brien Avenue	1430 O'Brien Avenue	About .25 acre		Completed	

UNDER CONSTRUCTION

Project Name	Address	Lot Size	Summary	Status	MP Planner
Facebook Campus Expansion	301-309 Constitution Dr.		2 new office buildings (962,400 square feet) plus publicly-accessible open space and a new pedestrian/bicycle bridge over Bayfront Expressway.	Under construction	Kyle Perata
Menlo Park Community Campus	100-110 Terminal Avenue		Development of a new community campus in the Belle Haven neighborhood. The facility would replace the existing Onetta Harris Community Center, Menlo Park Senior Center, Menlo Park Youth Center and Pool, and would include the Belle Haven branch library. The project would consist of a two-story building comprised of a gym, multi-purpose room, library flex space, as well as several outdoor terraces.	Under Construction	Theresa Avedian

UNDER CONSTRUCTION, cont.

Project Name	Address	Lot Size	Summary	Status	MP Planner
Gateway Housing Project (100% affordable Housing) (MidPen Housing	1345 Willow Road		4-story apartment building. The proposed project would be comprised of a 140-unit, 100 percent Below Market Rate (BMR) multifamily affordable housing complex consisting of 66 one-bedroom, 50 two-bedroom, and 24 three-bedroom units.	Under Construction	Theresa Avedian Eric Hinkley Matt Pruter
Menlo Portal (Greystar)	115 Independence, 104/110 Constitution Drive	3.20 acres	Redevelopment of three parcels with 335 multi-family dwelling rental units, 33,211 square feet of office, and 1,607 square feet of commercial space. Project would consist of a seven-story residential building and a three-story office building.	Under construction	Payal Bhagat
Menlo Uptown Greystar	141 Jefferson Drive & 180-186 Constitution Drive	4.83 acres	Redevelopment of three parcels with 483 multi-family dwelling units comprised of 42 for-sale condominium units and 441 rental units on a 4.83-acre site. The project would consist of two seven-story apartment buildings with rental units and six three-story buildings with townhome-style condominium units.	Under Construction	Tom Smith

PENDING CONSTRUCTION (APPROVED)

Project Name & Developer	Address	Lot Size	Summary	Status	City of MP Project Manager
111 Independence Drive (SP Menlo/LLC)	111 Independence Drive	0.94	Construction of a new eight-story residential apartment building with 105 dwelling units (95,371 square feet) and a community-serving retail space (713 square feet). The project would include a total of 14 residential units (15%) as below market rate (BMR) units.	Pending Construction	Payal Bhagat, contract principal planner
Citizen M Hotel	301 Constitution Drive (near Chilco Street and Bayfront Expressway)		The approximately 90,868 square foot, five-story hotel consists of 240 hotel rooms, a restaurant, and hotel amenities.	Pending construction	Ori Paz
1105-1165 O'Brien Drive Tarlton Properties	1105-1165 O'Brien Drive	Consists of Two parcels: 2.44 acres 1.68 acres	New 5-story R&D building (131,285 sq. feet in size), and surface parking lot. 2,760 sq. foot cafe	Pending Construction	
Sobrato Mixed Use (123 Independence Drive) Sobrato Organization	123 Independence Drive	0.9490 acres	Construction of 432 dwelling units across four parcels. The project would consist of 316 apartment units within one apartment building and 116 townhomes.	Pending Construction	Payal Bhagat, Contract planner

PENDING CONSTRUCTION, cont.

Project Name	Address	Lot Size	Summary	Status	MP Planner
1350 Adams Court Tarlton Properties	1305 O'Brien Drive OR 1315 0'Brien Drive	11.2 acres	New 5-story R&D building with an integrated parking structure. (Up to 260,000 sq. ft.in size.) Adjacent to Willow Village Project Site	Pending construction	Tom Smith
Commonwealth Building 3 Sobrato Organization	162-164 Jefferson Drive	Two Parcels: 1.767 acres (164 Jefferson) and 12.1 acres (162 Jefferson	New 4-story 249,000 sq. ft. office building. New 5-story parking structure with approximately 1,276 spaces. Publicly accessible park space. Two existing 4-story office buildings to remain (each approximately 130,000 sq. feet).	Pending Construction	Tom Smith
CSBIO Phase 3	1075 O'Brien Drive & 20 Kelly Court	0.7 acres	New 7-story office & R&D building. 10,000 sq. ft. ground floor restaurant space. Portion of 20 Kelly Court building to remain	Pending Construction	Tom Smith

Project Name	Address	Lot Size	Summary	Status	MP Planner
Hotel Moxy FBG Development Group	3723 Haven Avenue	0.76 acres	8-story 163-room hotel (58,000 sq. ft. in size). Coffee shop on first floor. Bar and restaurant areas/fourth floor. Publicly accessible outdoor rooftop garden. 3 stories podium parking.	Pending construction	Matt Pruter, Associate Planner | mapruter @menlopark.org | 650-330-6703
Menlo Flats Greystar	165 Jefferson Drive	1.38 acre	8-story apartment complex. Community amenity: payment of $4,840,000 in in-lieu fee proposed	Pending Construction	Payal Bhagat, Contract planning

UNDER REVIEW, cont.

Project Name & Developer	Address	Parcel Size	Summary	Status	City of MP Project Manager
1005 O'Brien Drive & 1320 Willow Road Tarlton Properties	1005 O'Brien Drive & 1320 Willow Road	4.22 acres	New 5-story R&D building (153,550 sq ft.), a new 4-story R&D building (73,500 sq. ft in size) and a parking structure with 505 spaces.	Under Review	Chris Turner
Willows Village Signature Development Group	1350-1390 Willow Road, 925-1098 Hamilton Avenue and 1005-1275 Hamilton Court	59 Acres	• 1,730 dwelling units • 1.6M sq feet office/accessory use • 200,000 sq. ft. retail/non office commercial • 193-room hotel] • Elevated park across Willow Road • Willow Road Tunnel • Bike/ped path (paseo) • Publicly accessible open space	Final EIR Comment Period ends May 23, 2022 @ 5 p.m.	Kyle Perata

To: Planning Commission

From: Lynne Bramlett

Date Sent: Sep 22, 2019 (date added on May 23, 2022)

Re: Environmental Impact Report for Willows Village

I will be traveling and so unable to attend your scoping session on October 7, 2019. Thus, I'm sending in my input as to what topics should be studied in the EIR. I will put background information at the end.

EIR Scoping Questions

In the Willows Village EIR, I would like it scoped so that it provides answers to the following questions. The relatively new Senate Bill 1000, Planning for Healthy Communities, act requires Cities such as Menlo Park to incorporate environmental justice into its General Plan when concurrently updating two or more elements. The idea of environmental justice is also included in Council's Resolution No. 6493, passed on Earth Day (April 22) 2019. I hope the Planning Commission will consider Council Resolution No. 6493 when considering topics to include in the Willows Village EIR as I did not have the time to do so before my trip.

ConnectMenlo Program-Level EIR (Resolution 6356) Related Questions

1) For the Resolution 6356 environmental impacts that could be (at least partially) mitigated, what is the current status of each? Who monitors and measures these, and how are they reported?
2) The program-level EIR based its 2040 build-out assumptions partly on the Plan Bay Area 2040 Regional Transportation/Sustainable Community Strategy assumptions. The latter plan's assumptions were not correct. What now needs revising in the ConnectMenlo Program-level EIR?
3) ConnectMenlo Resolution No. 6356 detailed multiple significant environmental impacts for the "Project" with the project being the zoning changes that led to the development in District 1. However, the Resolution asserted that overriding economic, environmental, and social benefits justified the impact. For each benefit listed on pages 57-59 of Resolution No. 6356, what is the status of each? If not met, what are the City's plans to achieve the benefit and by when?
4) What are the City's plans to revise the ConnectMenlo ordinances in light of Council's recent discussion of a development moratorium? What measures will the City institute so that development requires tangible transportation improvements before approving more development?
5) What will be the price tag for road infrastructure improvements needed to mitigate the increased traffic coming from regional and local development? Of the amount needed, what has Facebook funded? What will taxpayers need to pay? What does Facebook consider its responsibilities to mitigate traffic caused directly by its employees and construction projects?

Other Relevant Questions

1) What does Facebook plan to do should the U.S. Justice Department break up the company into smaller companies? (This could be an outcome of the Justice Department's investigation into tech monopolies.) Should this happen, how will the breakup impact Willows Village? Menlo Park?
2) What is the City's plan for emergency services in District 1, especially during commute hours?
3) What is the City's plan for disaster preparation for a major disaster, such as a major earthquake that also causes fire and flooding in District 1?
4) What is the status of Facebook's required mitigations for its other projects? What is the total of these and how are they tracked, measured and reported? What assurances do the public have that Facebook is honoring its agreements, and held accountable as necessary?
5) What is the sum total of Facebook's annual financial contributions to the City's annual revenue? That would include property taxes and annual amounts coming in via development agreements.

Willows Village EIR Specific Questions

1. What new and more stringent requirements exist for measuring the impacts of traffic, such as including reverse commutes and average daily traffic? How will these be reflected in the Willows Village EIR?
2. The number of birds in the air has also drastically declined as noted in a recent article in *Science* and also local newspapers. I've y heard from avid birdwatchers that there are fewer total birds and types of birds in Menlo Park's Bedwell Bayfront Park than the amount seen in the nearby Palo Alto Baylands. What is the impact of development on birdlife in Menlo Park's Bayfront? What will help to increase birdlife in the Menlo Park's Bayfront? How specifically will Willows Village impact birdlife?
3. Fewer birds will also impact beneficial insects, flower pollination and other aspects of nature. What is the overall impact of development in District 1 on broader aspects of nature that also impact aesthetics?
4. What will be the impact to the current occupants of the buildings that Facebook proposes to demolish? Where will these businesses re-locate to? What will be the impact to their clientele? Where will these non-profits and local governmental services go?
5. What will be the impact of Willows Village to Menlo Park's goals of combatting global Climate Change as detailed in Council Resolution No. 6493?
6. What is the decision-making process currently being used for deciding the public amenities such as the proposed Community Facility and Public Park? How is the process consistent, or not, with the ConnectMenlo Program-level EIR promised benefit of delivering environmental justice to District 1?
7. What retail is being planned for the area? Specifically, what grocery store is being considered? What impact will a new grocery store have on the two existing grocery stores in District 1? What restaurants are being considered? What will be the impact of these restaurants on the existing restaurants in District 1?

8. What retail is being proposed, if any? How will Facebook help to ensure that this retail is successful?
9. What is the dollar value put on the proposed 10,000 community space? What is currently being discussed between Facebook and City Staff for this particular property? Please include all possibilities. Please also include anything that has been explicitly ruled out.
10. For the community space, instead of setting aside land in Willows Village for this purpose, could more housing be added and instead the dollar amount set aside for District 1 residents to decide how and where it will be spent? If not, why not? If yes, what will be the process to ensure that the District 1 community makes the decisions?
11. Where will trees be planted in District 1 to help provide a tree canopy to mitigate the overall impacts of development, and the additional impacts of Willows Village?
12. Into which landfills will the parts from the demolished buildings go? What will be the impact to these landfills? What efforts will be made to reuse parts of the demolished buildings?
13. Willows Village is proposed for a flood zone expected to be "under water" in perhaps as soon as 2060 due to global climate change. What are the justifications for building this project in a known flood zone? If built, when the flood occurs, what will be the plans to protect life and property?
14. The draft Willows Village master plan includes the evaluation of constructing an underground water reservoir beneath the proposed park/sports field on Willow Road. How will this water reservoir be protected should a major flood occur?
15. If the zoning map is changed, to accommodate Willows Village proposed site connections to the surrounding roadway network, what additional development might this trigger by property owners nearby? In other words, will adjacent property owners also be allowed to develop their properties into office complexes?

Question Pertaining to Regional, cumulative impacts

1) What is the current overall jobs/housing imbalance in Menlo Park, and in Santa Clara and San Mateo Counties? If all currently proposed regional development gets approved, how will this worsen the jobs/housing imbalance? What are the plans to increase housing, especially affordable housing?
2) What regional efforts exist, if any, to halt office development projects that
3) What is the cumulative environmental impact of the region's current and likely jobs/housing imbalance? This would include: noise, pollution, species decline, including birds.

Additional comments – Regional Impact

Willows Village, if ultimately approved, will be the largest development project ever in Menlo Park. The proposal also joins two other proposed large development projects nearby:

1) Stanford's proposal for a 3.5 million square feet expansion and
2) Los Angeles developer Lowe Enterprises which the *Daily News* reported "wants to build 1.6 million square feet of office space, 175,000 square feet of retail space and 440 apartments across three parcels… the jobs-to-housing ratio for the entire project is 12 jobs to one home" (9/22/19).

These three projects alone will significantly worsen the area's jobs-to-housing imbalance.

The cumulative impacts of regional development should be considered in the Willows Village EIR. Tech companies continue to expand in cities from Burlingame to San Jose. For example, Facebook recently opened a new office complex in Sunnyvale with "enough space for potentially 5,300 employees" (Mercury News, Sep 20, 2019). The same article pointed out that Amazon and Google have also leased space nearby. Google has bought properties in San Jose for the purposes of expansion.

U**sing Descriptive Names**

A village is traditionally defined as "a settlement usually larger than a hamlet and smaller than a town." The name Willows Village suggests a small settlement of mostly housing. However, Willows Village is mostly office with a little housing, retail and public spaces.

It's important that the public be aware of just what is being proposed. Can the Planning Commission request that the City use more descriptive names when describing projects such as Willows Village. For this one, I suggest adding a descriptive tag line such as "Willows Village Office Park" when publishing EIR-related notice.

Below is a verbatim post to NextDoor by a resident in Vintage Oaks. He was alerting residents to what he considered a misleading Facebook sponsored poll designed to get answers that would help Facebook to demonstrate public support for Willows Village. I have no reason to doubt the veracity of the post. The general ethics of push-pull or misleading polls is very troubling to me and I think they should have no place in our City, or used by developers who want to build in our City. Would the Planning Commission consider adopting a general development code of ethics that would prohibit misleading or deceptive business practices such as described below?

Lynne Bramlett

****

NextDoor Post – Facebook Poll (from a Resident in Vintage Oaks)

Facebook and Signature Development Company are trying to get a huge development project built in Menlo Park, and it will impact public schools. It's estimated that the 1700+ housing units (and most certainly the 6000 jobs created, presumably mostly for Facebook), could increase the student body at Menlo Atherton High School alone by at least 300 students. This concern was raised by former Sequoia Union High School District Superintendent Mary Streshly In 2018 (see Almanac articles and references).

I'm posting, because I just got off the phone with a marketing company. They were obviously paid to do this 'neutral' questionnaire on behalf of the Willow Village (aka Facebook). It was a very vague, very biased, and very shady questionnaire. They'll probably be calling you on your mobile phone too!

I never talk to telemarketers, solicitors, etc., but I'm glad that I did tonight because now I smell something rotten growing off of Willow Road.

Does anybody else have information on this project? I haven't followed it, but noticed that this Willow Village Master Plan project is entering the environmental review phase this Wednesday, September 18, 2019. The City will release the notice of preparation (NOP) for the environmental impact report (EIR) for the approximately 59-acre mixed use Willow Village Master Plan project https://menlopark.org/CivicSend/ViewMessage/message/94238

They have a very convincing pitch focusing on the housing crisis, pulling obvious heart strings and alarms etc., but they offer no details, no real numbers, solid research or statistics on how they're going to impact Menlo Park schools, traffic, housing, or anything else for that matter. They do have some mighty pretty mockups though! Facebook is spending a lot of money to get this built!! https://www.willowvillage.com, do your homework, and please share what you learn!

# # #

XII. STATEMENT OF OVERRIDING CONSIDERATIONS

As set forth above, the City has found that the Project will result in project and cumulative significant adverse environmental impacts related to air quality, greenhouse gas emissions, population and housing, and traffic and circulation that cannot be avoided following adoption, incorporation into the Project, and implementation of mitigation measures described in the EIR. In addition, there are no feasible project alternatives that would mitigate or avoid all of the Project's significant environmental impacts. Section 15093(b) of the State CEQA Guidelines provides that when the decision of the public agency results in the occurrence of significant impacts that are not avoided or substantially lessened, the agency must state in writing the reasons to support its actions. See also Public Resources Code Section 21081(b). Having balanced the economic, legal, social, technological or other benefits of the Project, including region-wide or statewide environmental benefits, against its significant and unavoidable environmental impacts, the City finds that the Project benefits outweigh its unavoidable adverse environmental effects, and that the adverse environmental effects are therefore acceptable.

The following statement identifies the reasons why, in the City's judgment, specific benefits of the Project outweigh the significant and unavoidable effects. The City finds that each of the Project benefits discussed below is a separate and independent basis for these findings. The reasons set forth below are based on the Final EIR and other information in the administrative record.

ECONOMIC BENEFITS

1. The Project would promote a vibrant economy by supporting a diversity of business and employment opportunities.
2. The Project provides for the greatest and most balanced economic growth alternative by creating 2.3 million square feet of new employment-related land uses and allowing the City greater opportunities to remain a competitive and innovative business destination in the regional development environment, which would support increased property and sales tax revenues.
3. The Project plans for 400 additional hotel rooms that will generate transient occupancy tax revenue for the City.
4. The Project updates the Transportation Impact Fee (TIF) program to guarantee funding for bicycle and pedestrian facilities and roadway and infrastructure improvements that are necessary to mitigate impacts from future projects.

ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS

1. The Project is environmentally superior to the existing General Plan, as discussed in Draft EIR Chapter 5 and summarized above in Section VII(A).
2. The Project recognizes the importance of linking land use and transportation planning.
3. The Project concentrates growth in existing urbanized areas and thereby results in fewer impacts from the construction of new infrastructure, maximizes use of existing impervious surfaces, provides multi-modal transportation opportunities, and reduces vehicle miles traveled, which translates into air quality and greenhouse gas emissions benefits and increases in resources and energy efficiency.
4. The Project largely concentrates growth at locations with existing uses and, as a result, potential future development would consist largely of either redevelopment of existing buildings and/or sites, and selective demolition of existing structures and replacement with new construction.
5. The Project includes policies that encourage conservation of water and energy resources in conformance with the City's sustainability goals.
6. The Project includes policies and mitigation measures, enforceable through the MMRP, that protect the Don Edwards Bay National Wildlife Refuge and other sensitive habitat areas.
7. The Project is in conformance with the principles of planning sustainable communities by meeting both the present and future housing needs of the City.
8. The Project is consistent with Plan Bay Area, which is the Bay Area's Regional Transportation Plan (RTP)/Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS), as well as SB 375, the Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act.

SOCIAL BENEFITS

1. The Project plans for citywide equity by providing the greatest job and housing opportunities in the M-2 Area to support a greater balance of land uses in this area of the City.
2. The Project includes up to 5,500 new residential units of which 4,500 would be in the M-2 Area, which represent significant new housing opportunities and include built in incentives for affordable housing.
3. The Project would result in reduced environmental justice inequities by facilitating and promoting the abatement of incompatible land uses and providing an equitable distribution of public amenities.

4. The Project would encourage mixed-use development in the M-2 Area to help improve walkability and quality of life for Menlo Park residents and the region by providing the opportunity for a better jobs/housing balance.
5. The Project provides opportunities for increased building heights and makes additional building height and residential density increases contingent on future development projects in Menlo Park providing the City with community benefits through corporate contributions.
6. The Project plans for M-2 Area residents to receive community benefits through corporate contributions as a result of the live/work/play environment envisioned.
7. The Project maintains investment backed expectations for the community at large.
8. The Project includes goals, policies, and programs that encourage social (and health) benefits associated with improved multi-modal transportation enhancements.

XII. ADOPTION OF THE MMRP

The City Council hereby adopts the mitigation measures set forth for the Project in the Final EIR and the MMRP attached hereto as Exhibit A and incorporated herein by this reference.

VI. SEVERABILITY

If any term, provision, or portion of these findings or the application of these findings to a particular situation is held by a court to be invalid, void or unenforceable, the remaining provisions of these findings, or their application to other actions related to the Project, shall continue in full force and effect unless amended or modified by the City.

I, Pamela Aguilar, City Clerk of Menlo Park, do hereby certify that the above and foregoing Council Resolution was duly and regularly passed and adopted at a meeting by said Council on the 6th day of December, 2016, by the following votes:

AYES: Carlton, Keith, Ohtaki

NOES: None

ABSENT: Cline, Mueller

ABSTAIN: None

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed the Official Seal of said City on this 6th day of December, 2016.

_____
Pamela Aguilar, CMC
City Clerk

Nongovernmental Organizations Comments

Willow Village Draft Environmental Impact Report

April 21, 2022

Menlo Park Planning Commission
701 Laurel St.
Menlo Park, CA 94025

RE: Support for Willow Village Project

Dear Chair Doran and Members of the Planning Commission,

The Bay Area Council is a public policy advocacy organization working to support civic and business leaders in solving our regions most challenging issues. On behalf of the more than 300 members of the Council, I write in support of the proposed Willow Village development in Menlo Park.

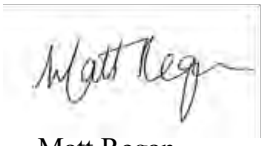
California is experiencing an unprecedented housing crisis that will worsen without significant intervention. The California Department of Housing and Community Development estimates that the state must build 180,000 new units of housing annually by 2025 to address the state's housing affordability crisis - over 100,000 more units than we are currently creating. This shortage will disproportionately impact low-income communities and communities of color that are being priced out of Bay Area communities from the lack of affordable housing options. To combat this, every county and city must do its part to produce more housing.

The Willow Village project will create 1,729 units in total, of which 320 units will be BMR at low-income and very low-income rent levels. Facebook is expected to invest $75 million in amenities into Menlo Park and its surrounding communities, which goes far beyond what developers are typically able to contribute to a project. In addition to residential, retail, and office space, this project contains substantial open space – including a two-acre elevated park and dedicated pedestrian paths and bike lanes that link to surrounding and regional trails. This is a massive opportunity for housing, economic, and community development in Menlo Park that should not be missed.

Since more than 50% of Facebook employees walk, bike, rideshare, or take public or company transit, access to public transportation will be an important asset for new community members which in turn will promote low carbon emissions. In addition to reduced transportation emissions, the project will be one of the most sustainable communities of its kind thanks to its integration of LEED Gold standards: all-electric buildings, recycled water, highly sustainable office building materials, increased photovoltaics and other environmental measures.

This project is an excellent opportunity for dense, mixed-use development directly adjacent to transit and within a downtown context to grow the supply of housing and reduce dependence on cars. This is a clear example of sustainable and inclusive growth for future generations and we encourage you to support it.

Sincerely,



Matt Regan
Senior Vice President, Bay Area Council

Perata, Kyle T

From: Vince Rocha <vrocha@svlg.org>
Sent: Thursday, April 21, 2022 1:28 PM
To: _Planning Commission
Cc: connect@willowvillage.com
Subject: Silicon Valley Leadership Group supports Willow Village

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Dear Planning Commissioners,

I am writing on behalf of the Silicon Valley Leadership Group to express our support for the Willow Village project. I urge you to advance the project through the EIR process and the remaining steps toward approval.

Regards,

Vince Rocha (he/him)
Vice President, Housing & Community Development
408.910.4616 | svlg.org
Connect with us: Twitter | LinkedIn | Facebook

YIMBY Law

57 Post St, Suite 908
San Francisco, CA 94104
hello@yimbylaw.org

YIMBY LAW

4/22/2022

Menlo Park Planning Commission
701 Laurel St.
Menlo Park, CA 94025

planning.commission@menlopark.org
Via Email

Re: 1380 Willow Road

Dear Menlo Park Planning Commission,

YIMBY Law is a 501(c)3 non-profit corporation, whose mission is to increase the accessibility and affordability of housing in California. YIMBY Law sues municipalities when they fail to comply with state housing laws, including the Housing Accountability Act (HAA). As you know, the Planning Commission has an obligation to abide by all relevant state housing laws when evaluating the above captioned proposal, including the HAA. Should the City fail to follow the law, YIMBY Law will not hesitate to file suit to ensure that the law is enforced.

Willow Village turns an inward-facing, 59-acre, 1970s low-density R&D site with endless surface parking into a community-serving, mixed-use project with parks, open-space, housing and affordable housing, and badly needed community-serving retail. The neighborhood of Belle Haven lacks basic amenities like a grocery store, pharmacy services and adequate open space. Willow Village delivers all of these amenities in one project. Moreover, once built, Willow Village will increase Menlo Park's existing rental affordable housing stock by more than 60%. Willow Village was designed around more than five years of neighbor and community input and shows what responsible, community-focused mixed-use development can look like.

California Government Code § 65589.5, the Housing Accountability Act, prohibits localities from denying housing development projects that are compliant with the locality's zoning ordinance or general plan at the time the application was deemed complete, unless the locality can make findings that the proposed housing development would be a threat to public health and safety.

The above captioned proposal is zoning compliant and general plan compliant, therefore, your local agency must approve the application, or else make findings to the effect that the proposed project would have an adverse impact on public health and safety, as described above. Should the City fail to comply with the law, YIMBY Law will not hesitate to take legal action to ensure that the law is enforced.

I am signing this letter both in my capacity as the Executive Director of YIMBY Law, and as a resident of California who is affected by the shortage of housing in our state.

Sincerely,

Sonja Trauss
Executive Director
YIMBY Law

MENLO TOGETHER

April 25, 2022

Re: Willow Village, items F1 and G1

Dear Planning Commission and City Staff,

Menlo Together is a group of Menlo Park and Peninsula residents who envision an integrated and diverse, multi-generational, and environmentally sustainable city. We advocate for an accessible and inviting Menlo Park with housing at all affordability levels, and with pedestrian and bike-friendly spaces, developed to be carbon-free. We value equity, sustainability, inclusion, health, and racial and economic justice.

We write with comments on the Willow Village project to inform your study session this evening.

We appreciate that the Willow Village commercial office project has designed homes and community service amenities into the overall proposal, and that the community amenities are included in the first phase of development. We ask that the Planning Commission study ways to improve the project's jobs/housing balance and fit, increase confidence in the long term viability of the community serving grocery and pharmacy, and improve circulation, pedestrian, and bike safety.

<u>BMR Housing:</u>

Menlo Together appreciates the plan for housing at all levels of affordability and ages in this proposal, and we would like to see a significantly higher number of affordable units at steeper affordability with preference for those most impacted by the project, who have greatest need.

1) **We value inclusion and feel strongly that the market rate apartment buildings should include at least 15% BMR homes at a range of affordability levels.** The city's BMR guidelines require market rate housing projects to provide 15% of the units at Below Market Rate (BMR) affordability. Specifically, the guidelines require all units to be affordable at low income, or a mix of affordability levels that is equivalent in terms of overall subsidy. We believe that the inclusionary BMR housing should include a relatively even

distribution of Very Low, Low, and Moderate income affordable units and propose that Meta increase their investment in our community to achieve this outcome.

2) We are glad to see that city staff is open to explore, but is not yet supporting the proposal to eliminate the 75% cap on moderate income rents. We believe the cap is an important tool to ensure that our "Below Market Rate" units do in fact maintain below market rate rents.
3) **In addition to the integrated 15% BMR units above, we support the proposal to produce 100% affordable housing on-site, and encourage doing so by donating land and finances and partnering with a non-profit housing developer.** Stand-alone 100% affordable housing is able to draw upon county, state and federal financing, and as such can be more deeply affordable. When produced and managed by a mission-aligned non-profit, the units are managed to support tenant success and perpetual affordability. We are glad to see that the developer is working with Mercy Housing to establish such a partnership.
    a) **A portion of the stand-alone affordable units should follow Menlo Park BMR preferences.** County, State, and Federal financing comes with rules about who can apply as tenants. To ensure that Menlo Park has priority to fill a portion of these units, Menlo Park must contribute financing to the project. We propose that the developer make a land *and* financial contribution to ensure that a good portion (30%?) of units can receive Menlo Park preference.
    b) We support age-restricted senior housing, and would also support multi-generational homes for extremely low income families, and/or people with disabilities.
4) Consider converting some rental units (including some BMR units) into ownership units to diversify the type of housing, offer residential stability, and wealth-building opportunities.
5) **Although not proposed by the developer, we would encourage the use of the density bonus to produce an additional 200 units (according to the option studied in the EIR) for additional units that are affordable to ELI/VL/LI households.** Menlo Park has a multi-year debt to the region in terms of housing to support the new jobs we have created. This debt has been and continues to be most strongly felt in Belle Haven through eviction, homelessness, displacement, overcrowding, and extreme housing cost burden. The impacted demographic is 50% Black and Hispanic and has a median income of $50-60,000/year. In addition, Belle Haven has carried a disproportionate impact of our city's growth. That is why we propose that we use the density bonus to produce an additional 200 units but do so in a way that meets the affordability needs of those most impacted by the job/housing imbalance who need housing affordable to households with extremely low, very low, and low incomes.

Circulation, Pedestrian and Bike Safety

We appreciate the focus of the project on improving circulation and safety, and have some concerns and suggestions.

Relating to circulation, the EIR identifies that the project will put pressure on the intersections of Willow and Bayfront and Willow and University. Would it be feasible to add a third entrance/exit to Bayfront from what is currently being proposed as a loop road? This could create a stronger "grid" with multiple options to enter and exit the area, relieving the pressure on the two other intersections.

The current proposal includes expanding the right of way to add a turn lane, which diminishes safety for people walking and bicycling.

With regard to Willow, we would like to see major improvements to pedestrian crossings at all of the intersections along the corridor, especially Hamilton as a major crossing for Belle Haven residents to access the services, and in addition, Park, Ivy, and O'Brien.

With regard to the details of pedestrian and bicycle circulation and safety, we would encourage the project to be reviewed by the Complete Streets Commission.

With regard to trip caps and vehicle parking, we would like to see analysis that is based on goals for mode share - what is the number of people who are expected for the various uses, and what percentage of them are expected to be driving vs. using transit, walking and bicycling. Mountain View has used these methods in its transportation for mixed use developments in the North Bayshore developments around Google's headquarters.

We are concerned that a trip cap focused primarily on peak commute hours may be less relevant in a post-covid era that may have persistently less peak travel. And we are concerned that the all-day trip cap may be equivalent to supporting driving by a very large share of users of the development, which would be unsupportive of the city's goals for sustainable transportation.

Sincerely,
The Menlo Together Team
info@menlotogether.org

Perata, Kyle T

From: Perata, Kyle T
Sent: Thursday, May 19, 2022 2:19 PM
To: Perata, Kyle T
Subject: FW: [Sent to Planning]Please vote in support of the Willow Village Project
Attachments: [Edited] HAC Letter of Support Willow Village.pdf; letter_report_223457_20220426_0212.csv

Hi Commissioners,

I'm writing on behalf of the Housing Action Coalition to express my support for a creative new project at Willow Village that would bring over 1,730 much-needed homes to Menlo Park and **urge you to approve this worthy project.**

The HAC is a member-supported nonprofit that advocates for creating more housing for residents of all income levels to help alleviate the Bay Area and California's housing shortage, displacement, and affordability crisis.

We have formally endorsed this project-- I have attached our letter of support for your reference.

Additionally, I am attaching letters of support from Menlo Park residents, and housing advocates; I believe due to a technical error these letters only went to the chair.

In solidarity,

Ali Sapirman

--

Ali Sapirman | Pronouns: They/Them

South Bay Organizer | Housing Action Coalition
95 Brady Street, San Francisco, CA 94103
Cell: (407) 739-8818 | Email: ali@sfhac.org | Web: sfhac.org

Kyle T. Perata
Acting Planning Manager
City Hall - 1st Floor
701 Laurel St.
tel 650-330-6721
menlopark.org

HOUSING ACTION COALITION

95 Brady Street
San Francisco, CA 94103
415 541 9001
bayhac@sfhac.org
www.sfhac.org/bayhac

To Whom It May Concern:

The Housing Action Coalition is pleased to endorse Signature Development's exemplary mixed-use project at Willow Village in Menlo Park. After a detailed presentation, the committee determined the project exceeds our high standards in addressing the regional affordability and displacement crisis.

The committee commends the excellent land use of the project, which replaces a 59 acre site of warehouses and office space with 1,729 new homes, over 1.2 million square feet of office space, 200,000 square feet of retail space, and significant public space in the forms of parklands, a town square, and public plazas. At 99 units per acre, Willow Village will offer much-needed dense housing to the Peninsula and justifies increased spending on local public transportation. The committee recommended the project team work with local elected leaders to bring more transit options to Willow Village.

The project site sits between the Belle Haven neighborhood and East Palo Alto, two historically underserved communities with relatively minimal public transit. Willow Village will include over 2,000 bike spaces and 6,000 car spaces, and while the committee would prefer less car parking to encourage alternate transit use, we understand feasibility concerns for this area. Additionally, the Committee recognizes that a large portion of the parking is dedicated for the new office spaces. Beyond the environmental benefits that increased housing density will bring, all of Willow Village's buildings will be built with LEED Gold certification. Buildings will be equipped with 100% electric power, and use recycled water, sustainable materials, and increased photovoltaics. Using mass timber as the primary structure material will also substantially reduce carbon emissions. Included in the project is a community space covered by a glass canopy, which the committee thought innovative and beneficial to the public. The committee also admired the project team's dedication to sustainability, and believes that Willow Village will be a model of sustainable development in the future.

Approximately 20% of Willow Village's homes will be subsidized affordable, equalling 320 homes. Of these, 120 will be reserved for very-low and extremely low-income seniors. The affordable count has increased in response to community input, and goes above and beyond local standards. In totality, Willow Village will be the largest market rate and affordable home project in Menlo Park.

The project team has been communicating with neighbors for almost four years, and has been responsive to community feedback. This has included prioritizing a grocery store affordable for all residents, reserving retail space for local businesses, adding more affordable homes, and decreasing office space to create a more balanced ratio of homes and offices. In response to concerns about physical and economic separation between Belle Haven and Willow Village, the project introduced an elevated parkway that will cross Willow Road, a major thoroughfare, to connect with Belle Haven. The project will also construct a tunnel under Highway 84 to provide safe access to miles of bayside trails. The committee applauds Signature's commitment to engaging with the community. At the same time, we would like to see

increased accessibility to the sky bridge, and also encourage additional connections on the south side of the site.

Overall, we appreciate the project team's commitment to alleviating the impact on the nearby community. The team has demonstrated continued community involvement by amending plans that achieve the best possible housing outcomes and community open space. We are excited that Signature has committed to union labor for a large portion of the project, and encourage them to continue conversations with labor groups.

The Housing Action Coalition applauds the project team for striving to achieve the best possible project for the community. Ultimately, we are proud to endorse Willow Village, which will provide well-designed and well-located homes that help address our region's ongoing affordability and displacement crisis.

Sincerely,

Todd David, *Executive Director*

Timestamp (EST)	First name	Last name	Email	Address	City	State/Province	State/Prov	ZIP code	Country	Language	Mobile Number	Mobile Op	Source	Referer	Target Name	Target State	Target District	Target OCDID	Letter Subject	Letter Body
2022-04-22 18:44:10 EST	Joanne	Wong-Lam	jwonglam@gmail.com		San Carlos	California	CA	94070-2820	US	en		0		group-greenbelt-alliance	Michael Doran	DC		ocd-division/country:us/state:vi/sldl:	Support homes at Willow Village!	Hello,
2022-04-22 18:47:06 EST	Ali	Sapirman	ali@housingactioncoalition.org		San Jose	California	CA	95130	US	en		0		group-greenbelt-alliance	Michael Doran	DC		ocd-division/country:us/state:vi/sldl:	Support homes at Willow Village!	Hello,
2022-04-22 22:37:45 EST	Bertha	Benton	Bertha.benton@yahoo.com		Palo Alto	California	CA	94303	US	en		0		group-greenbelt-alliance	Michael Doran	DC		ocd-division/country:us/state:vi/sldl:	Support homes at Willow Village!	Hello,
2022-04-23 03:57:45 EST	George	Ruiz	ruiz.george87@yahoo.com	1321 hull drive	San Carlos	California	CA	94070	US	en		0		group-greenbelt-alliance	Michael Doran	DC		ocd-division/country:us/state:vi/sldl:	Support homes at Willow Village!	Hello,
2022-04-23 21:07:22 EST	Caryn	Kali	Caryn@obrienhomes.net		Millbrae	California	CA	94030	US	en		0		group-greenbelt-alliance	Michael Doran	DC		ocd-division/country:us/state:vi/sldl:	Support homes at Willow Village!	Hello,
2022-04-24 19:25:49 EST	John	Paolini	johnpaolini@gmail.com		Burlingame	California	CA	94010	US	en		0	direct_link		Michael Doran	DC		ocd-division/country:us/state:vi/sldl:	Support homes at Willow Village!	Hello,
2022-04-24 21:59:02 EST	Justin	Lardinois	me@justinlardinois.com		San Jose	California	CA	95117	US	en		0		group-greenbelt-alliance	Michael Doran	DC		ocd-division/country:us/state:vi/sldl:	Support homes at Willow Village!	Hello,
2022-04-25 14:35:11 EST	Uma	Krishnan	umakrishnan@gmail.com		Brisbane	California	CA	94010	US	en		0		group-greenbelt-alliance	Michael Doran	DC		ocd-division/country:us/state:vi/sldl:	Support homes at Willow Village!	Hello,
2022-04-25 15:14:48 EST	Tim	Clark	tclark@factpoint.com	140 LUCERO WAY	Portola Valley	California	CA	94028	US	en	16502086997	0		group-greenbelt-alliance	Michael Doran	DC		ocd-division/country:us/state:vi/sldl:	Support homes at Willow Village	Hello,
2022-04-25 17:04:45 EST	Corey	Smith	corey@sfhac.org	74 Delmar Street, None	San Francisco	California	CA	94103	US	en		0		group-greenbelt-alliance	Michael Doran	DC		ocd-division/country:us/state:vi/sldl:	Support homes at Willow Village!	Hello,
2022-04-25 17:46:54 EST	Shirley	Liu	rabbit121208@yahoo.com	321 Commercial Ave #15	South San Francisco	California	CA	94080	US	en		0		group-greenbelt-alliance	Michael Doran	DC		ocd-division/country:us/state:vi/sldl:	Support homes at Willow Village!	Hello,

Perata, Kyle T

From: Carole Hyde <carole.hyde@paloaltohumane.org>
Sent: Monday, May 23, 2022 11:16 AM
To: Perata, Kyle T
Subject: Willow Village Draft EIR Comments
Attachments: ATT00001.htm; Feral cat management comments on EIR.docx

Dear Kyle,

I would like to comment on the provision that deals with feral cat management. (My comments are also included as an attachment.)

I'm a founding member of the Stanford Cat Network and helped negotiate an agreement with Stanford University on managing feral cats on the university campus. I'm on staff at Palo Alto Humane Society, where we operate a major spay/neuter support program for pets and feral cats.

1. I suggest that the agency receiving trapped cats should be identified specifically as Peninsula Humane Society (instead of the string of unspecified agencies and groups), thereby to avoid confusion on the disposition of trapped cats; and that

2. Peninsula Humane Society should be required to notify Palo Alto Humane Society of cats trapped in the area and brought to its facility for possible re-claim.

These provisions above will minimize the chances of accidental euthanasia of a pet or supervised cat. There are pets in the area (and there will be more pets after completion of the residential units), and there are cats under the management of the staff at the neighboring UPS facility as well as under the supervision of volunteers affiliated with Palo Alto Humane Society. Tame cats caught in traps are often indistinguishable from feral cats in their panic at being trapped.

I am proposing the following as a (slight) re-write:

"Feral Cat Management Program. The Project sponsor shall implement a feral cat management program, similar to the program developed in conjunction with the Peninsula Humane Society and the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals for the East Campus in 2013 *and with the Stanford Cat Network/Stanford University in 1989*. For one week every three months (i.e., each quarter), three live trap cages, designed to trap cats, shall be placed around the perimeter of the main Project Site in locations where feral cats could prey upon native wildlife species.

Each trap cage shall be monitored *daily* and maintained on a daily basis during the week when traps have been set to determine whether a feral cat has been caught and whether the trap has inadvertently captured a non-target species. If a feral cat is caught, a representative from the trapping company shall be dispatched to transport the trapped cat *on the same day to Peninsula Humane Society*. If an animal other than a feral cat is caught in one of the traps, it shall be released immediately at the trap location."

Thank you, Kyle. I am available for discussion if that is helpful to you. I'm a Menlo Park resident (675 Roble Avenue).

Carole (650-504-5898)

From Carole Hyde: I would like to add to the provision that deals with feral cat management.

I'm a founding member of the Stanford Cat Network and negotiated an agreement with Stanford University on managing feral cats on the university campus.

1. I suggest that the agency receiving trapped cats should be identified specifically as Peninsula Humane Society (instead of the string of unspecified agencies and groups), thereby to avoid confusion on the disposition of trapped cats; and that

2. Peninsula Humane Society should be required to notify Palo Alto Humane Society of cats trapped in the area and brought to its facility for possible re-claim.

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Suggested re-write:

> Feral Cat Management Program. The Project sponsor shall implement a feral cat management program, similar to the program developed in conjunction with the Peninsula Humane Society and the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals for the East Campus in 2013 and with the Stanford Cat Network/Stanford University in 1989. For one week every three months (i.e., each quarter), three live trap cages, designed to trap cats, shall be placed around the perimeter of the main Project Site in locations where feral cats could prey upon native wildlife species.
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CITIZENS COMMITTEE TO COMPLETE THE REFUGE

P.O. Box 23957, San Jose, CA 95153 650 493-5540 cccrrefuge@gmail.com www.BayRefuge.org

May 23, 2022

Kyle Perata, Acting Planning Manager
City of Menlo Park
Community Development Department, Planning Division
701 Laurel Street
Menlo Park, CA 94025
SUBMITTAL by Email: ktperata@menlopark.org

Dear Mr. Perata:

The Citizens Committee to Complete the Refuge respectfully submits the following comments regarding the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) of Willow Village Master Plan Project.

For decades the Citizens Committee has paid close attention to and submitted comments on projects in the ConnectMenlo area, including prior Meta projects. Always our intention is to seek the best outcomes for the environmental health of wildlife, their habitats, the Bay and the Don Edwards National Wildlife Refuge. Such is the thrust of our comments today.

In the discussion below, we address three areas of concern.

1. Issues of general concern about the DEIR.
2. Various Issues regarding Biological Resources specific to light pollution, bird safe design and shading.
3. The importance of and actions needed regarding the Willows Wetland.
4. Issues of Hydrology analysis that are significant to the Project's long term sustainability.

Issues of General Concern about the DEIR

The DEIR documents can be described as massive in size and extensive in detail, consistent with the size and complexity of the Project. While calling itself a "Master Plan", the Project is also described as tiering off the ConnectMenlo Update. As the document also describes phasing of its actions, time is then a factor in its decisions. Despite the depth of detail regarding the various aspects of development, time may uncover issues not anticipated and/or changes may occur in regulations. Such changes merit further environmental review and possible additional mitigation. As appropriate, public CEQA action, tiering off ConnectMenlo and, it appears, this "Master Plan" may be needed. The DEIR should describe these potential actions that may affect outcomes of the Project.

Biological Resources

While the role of the Project EIR is to analyze and define mitigation of biological resource impacts, it relies on three Biological Resource Assessments (BRA)(Appdx 3.9) as its primary source. Doing so, as discussed below, we note that the DEIR discussion sometimes ignores certain BRA findings that may be significant, the BRA conclusions may ignore its own findings and finally the BRA findings may need updating or inclusion of additional information. We address such issues here to prompt reconsideration of certain biological resource impacts and mitigations of the DEIR.

Light Pollution

<u>Night light pollution above and transmission out towards the Bay</u>**.**

While appreciating the specific attention given to bird-safe design in this document, It is a concern that issues raised in the Willow Village Master Plan are not addressed: "suggesting that increases in ambient light may interfere with these processes across a wide range of species, resulting in impacts on wildlife populations." (BSD BRA p. 47).

Artificial light at night (ALAN) from this Project and cumulatively may cause significant environmental impacts. Light disrupts the circadian rhythm and behavior of living beings which can impact mating, foraging, and migration behaviors, sometimes with lethal results. Light at night also attracts some species (especially birds and insects), resulting in disorientation and disruption of critical behaviors. As stated in the DEIR,Indeed, Artificial Light at Night has been implicated in ecosystem-wide disruptions in terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems. Light pollution

has also been correlated with increased cancer risks and hormone disruption in humans.

A primary impact of ALAN is its attractivity to insects, which form the major basis of the avian food chain. Light has been implicated as one of the drivers of the loss of the numbers and species of insects worldwide, with ecosystem level impact."[1]

Special attention is given to the Atrium and other areas that "have a greater potential to (1) spill northwards into sensitive habitats along the San Francisco Bay, and (2) attract and/or disorient migrating birds during the spring and fall". (BSD BRA p. 57). The following must be included in the environmental review of impacts.

- The DEIR, in addition to the light pollution analysis, include recognition that night lighting negatively alters behaviors of animals and provide measures that reduce this impact on insect and wildlife populations.
- The DEIR must identify, analyze and mitigate direct and indirect impacts on all wetlands to the north and east of the site (willow wetlands, CalTran's salt marsh harvest mouse mitigation site, south of the Dumbarton Corridor) for impacts of trespass that may be exacerbated by the proposed project, ambient nigh lighting, vehicle traffic, loop road fixtures, etc.
- The DEIR should analyze and mitigate all night lighting inclusive the impact of lighting sourced from the entire Project, not only the areas closest to habitat. Trespass and impact analysis should address any light visible from outside or above the project. We recommend using the most recent International Dark Association Guidance (amended June 2021), reflecting state of the art science, Analysis should consider including the five principles of responsible lighting[2] of the Guidance and the recommended ordinance[3] . These provide feasible, achievable and environmentally responsible best practices that should be adopted by the Project.
- Light trespass toward all habitats and the Bay should be considered on both a Project and Cumulative impact, inclusive of prior Meta development as well

[1] Owens AC, Cochard P, Durrant J, Farnworth B, Perkin EK, Seymoure B. Light pollution is a driver of insect declines. Biological Conservation. 2020 Jan 1;241:108259
https://www.science.org/doi/10.1126/sciadv.abi8322
https://www.science.org/content/article/can-scientists-help-insects-survive-their-fatal-attraction-light-night
https://www.smithsonianmag.com/smart-news/light-pollution-contributes-insect-apocalypse-180973642/
https://www.ipbes.net/events/launch-ipbes-ipcc-co-sponsored-workshop-report-biodiversity-and-climate-change IPBES-IPCC Co-Sponsored Workshop Report on Biodiversity and Climate Change (6/1/21) IPBES

[2] https://www.darksky.org/our-work/lighting/lighting-principles/

[3] https://www.darksky.org/wp-content/uploads/bsk-pdf-manager/2021/08/BOARD-policy-application-of-light-FINAL-June-24-2021.docx.pdf

as other shoreline development, proposed, in construction or completed along the City's Bay shoreline.

Light trespass in existing Bird Safe Design guideline:
Mitigation Measure 7 of the existing Bird Safe Design requirements states, " All lighting shall be fully shielded to block illumination from shining outward towards all Bay shoreline habitats to the north. No light trespass shall be permitted more than 80 feet beyond the site's northern property line (i.e., beyond the JPB rail corridor)." (BSD BRA p.58)

- As technology is available to limit light trespass so none escapes beyond a property. 80-ft trespass is unjustifiable, The DEIR analysis should be altered to prohibit light trespass toward habitats.
- The DEIR must include addition of a monitoring and management plan to ensure that light trespass performance is attained and maintained on an ongoing basis.

Light Pollution, additional ways to reduce

Given the significant biological resources that could be adversely impacted he DEIR should identify additional measures to improve light pollution impacts

- Analyze the effect of structure height and related light source elevation. Should higher standards (LZ-1) apply to floors above the first floor?
- Analyze timing for closing blinds. Why is 10 PM the standard for closing blinds? Given the large amount of glass and the height of the buildings a 9 PM closure of blinds would reduce light pollution. As the angle and time of sunset are in continuous change, can the standard for closing blinds adjust quarterly on dates of the solstices and.equinoxes?
- Revise the Visitor Center guideline which specifies 11 PM for blind closure.
- Evaluate night closure of the elevated park to help reduce light pollution
- Evaluate requiring use of motion-detected or other light avoidance technologies for exterior locations that have habitat impacts on the north and northeast wetlands.

Bird Nesting

<u>Impacts of Design and Materials on nesting</u>

The DEIR does not address the likely possibility that birds, wasps and possibly other species may be attracted to the buildings as nesting locations. **The DEIR should discuss, provide guidelines and mitigation to manage nesting** on the structures consistent with the International Migratory Bird Act and other law and

with the intention of not contributing an "ecological sink" e.g. reducing the breeding success of a migratory bird species.

Bird Safe Design Waivers

Discussion in the Bird Safe Design BRA reveals that the Project requests waivers for some of the most hazardous architectural elements. These waivers will relax the requirements of the City's Bird-Safe Design Mitigation Measure BIO-1 of the ConnectMenlo EIR. Waivers requested apply to these BSD requirements (BSD BRA p. 44):

- E. Glass skyways or walkways, free-standing (see-through) glass walls and handrails, and transparent building corners shall not be allowed; and
- F. Transparent glass shall not be allowed at the rooflines of buildings, including in conjunction with roof decks, patios and roofs with landscape vegetation.

It is worthwhile to further consider this BRA's discussion of waiver alternatives it proposes.(BSD BRA p.45):

> "Specifically, all glazing on free-standing glass railings in exterior areas adjacent to the atrium shall have a **Threat Factor** (see footnote 1 above) **less than or equal to 15**. This Threat Factor is relatively low (and the effectiveness of the bird-safe treatment correspondingly high) due to the relatively high risk of bird collisions with free-standing glass railings."
>
> And:
> "The only untreated glazing on the atrium will be located on the vertical façade beneath the elevated park, which **does not create a collision hazard due to landscape vegetation on roofs**."

The first statement applies a calculated risk assessment. We oppose a waiver on this basis and, **if issued**, **require that the railings at issue have continuous monitoring that assesses and reports the actual level of impacts compared to the risk assessment value used.**

The second statement provides no justification for its assumption that rooftop vegetation will keep birds from flying beneath the elevated park. We oppose this waiver on this basis and, **if the waiver is issued, continuous monitoring of bird presence and collisions under the elevated park must be provided and reported.**

Monitoring and reporting of BSD waivers issued that incorporate any expectation of impacting birds need to be included as a mitigation measure in the DEIR.

Trash pollution: Wind, trash and balloons

The elevated park is expected to attract people for many reasons. Given the exposure of its height and its location in Menlo Park's often windy shoreline area and deflection of winds by proposed taller buildings, the park could be a source of wind-scattered trash, food scraps, plastic bottles and any kind of balloon, Wind will be a concern anywhere in the project footprint but elevation will exacerbate it and impact habitats near and far, particularly helium balloons. Trash of all kinds, plastics and balloons are a known severe impact on habitat lands and on the species that use them.

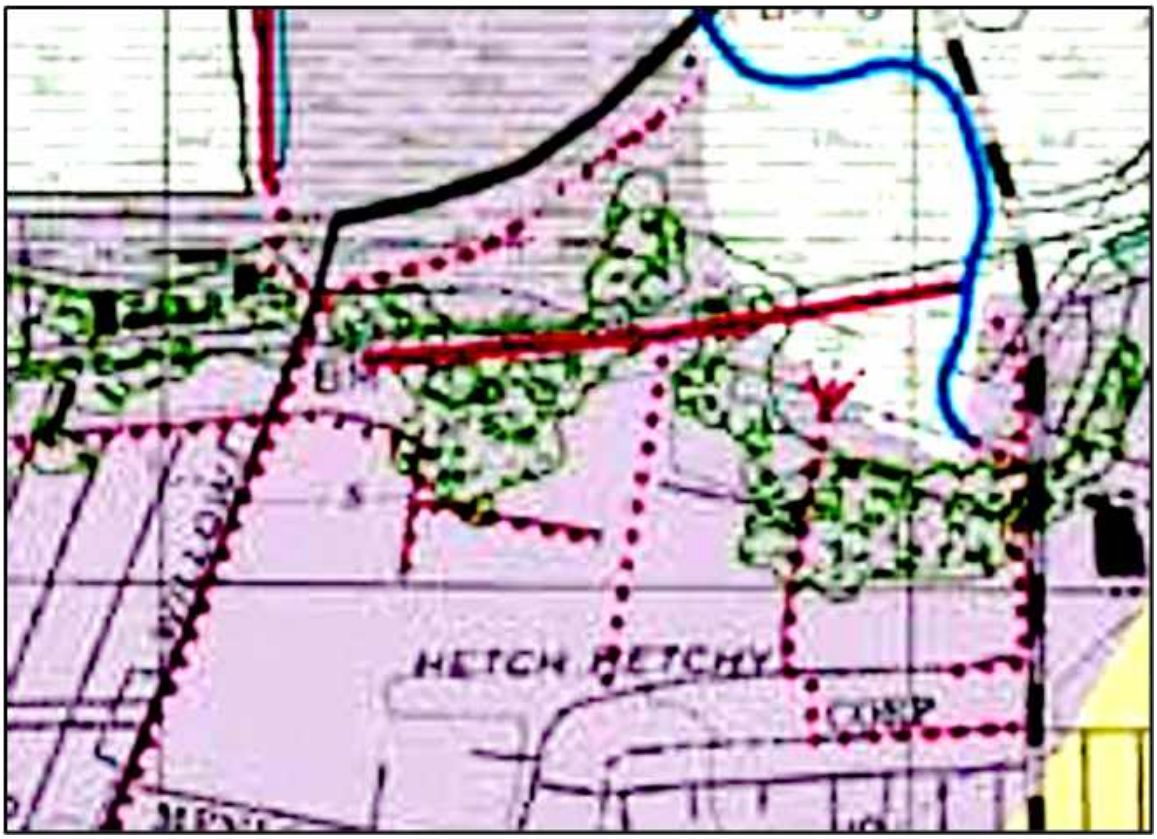
- Mitigations/Measures that provide maximum control of all forms of trash for public areas should be provided.
- Helium-filled balloons be prohibited anywhere on the Project site including the elevated park and Hamilton North and South.

Willow Wetlands

Biological Resource Assessment of the WVMP identified an ecologically rare, isolated, forested habitat dominated by Arroyo willows on and adjoining the north edge of the main Project site that is discussed in the DEIR. Historically a major habitat at the Project site, recognized in the name "Willow Road", even its small footprint here calls for efforts to avoid all impacts that threaten its survival. The excerpted image just below from the Baylands & Creeks of South San Francisco Bay map of the Oakland Museum of California[4] demonstrates the willows habitat on the site circa 1850. The bold red-black line shows the drainage ditch running along the north edge, just outside the Project site.[5]

[4] Oakland Museum of California, Baylands & Creeks of South San Francisco Bay, 2005; http://explore.museumca.org/creeks/1460-OMEPA.html#

[5] http://explore.museumca.org/creeks/1460-OMEPA.html#



From the Master Plan BRA, p. 50: "These wetlands are small and isolated, being in depressional areas, rather than having a surface connection to more extensive wetlands. Due to their small, isolated nature and lack of high-quality habitat for wildlife, these are not high-quality habitat features. Nevertheless, forested wetlands are relatively scarce along the edge of the bay, and seasonal wetlands along the edge of the bay have declined due to development and fill. Therefore, we consider these wetlands to be sensitive habitat areas." (emphasis added)

We agree that willow wetlands are sensitive habitat areas .Arroyo Willow is listed as a sensitive species by CDFW.[6] The fact that the habitat is "sensitive" and requires application of Menlo Park's a number of relevant BIO, LU, and OSC policies referenced in the ConnectMenlo EIR. We disagree with the DEIR finding (3.9-16) that "The wetlands are not associated with a stream and therefore would not constitute sensitive riparian habitat claimed by CDFW". The willows habitat, as a *unique* finding of this DEIR, requires substantive impact analysis of potential impacts and mitigations. Some of these issues are discussed in the WVMP BRA. Others are not or are insufficiently considered. We raise most such issues here:

[6] https://wildlife.ca.gov/Data/VegCAMP/Natural-Communities#natural%20communities%20lists

- Improve DEIR impact analysis by describing and explaining ecological relevance of historic conditions in determination of potential impacts of the project and inclusive protection of the existing willow habitat.
- Analyze the cumulative impact of bayside development on willow habitats in the area e.g the Redwood City through Palo Alto Bay shoreline.
- Describe more fully how the north edge of the property will interface with the existingt willow grove habitat, identify potential impacts to avoid or mitigate..
- Apply all applicable City conservation policies inclusive of effects on sensitive species and impacts on adjoining properties.

Shading by new construction should be considered an impact for the existing willows habitat. We ask for a more thorough analysis of this topic and calculation of the impacts from shading of the forested wetland:

> "The increased height of the proposed buildings is not expected to result in a substantial change in the ambient light reaching nearby wetlands. The isolated forested wetlands immediately north of the project boundary are currently bordered to the south by an area of tall trees that already provide some shade, and under the proposed project, regardless of the height of buildings that are constructed nearby, these wetlands would still have exposure to the eastern sky, unimpeded by new buildings. Thus, shading of this wetland under the proposed project is not expected to increase substantially over current levels." (WVMP BRA p.50)

The omitted analysis discussed here is how Project shading will affect the existing willows habitat. The Atrium dome that would be nearby would be ~120' tall, substantially taller than the existing trees. CalTrans studied the topic of shading and lists Arroyo willow (Salix lasiolepis) as Intolerant of shade.[7] The question is whether there is sufficient sunlight for Willow Habitat.

We ask that shading and other impacts of concern listed above are analyzed and avoided or mitigated.

[7] Pincetich C. Assessing Permanent Shading Impacts on Riparian Plant and Aquatic Species and Habitat. Caltrans Division of Research. Innovation and System Information. 2019.

Potential hydrological impact on the willows wetland.

Photo 4. Willow dominated isolated forested wetland located in the northern potions of the study area.

Willow Village DEIR Appendix 3.9, p. 25

In these comments we turn to focus on the water sources that have allowed these willows to survive and are requirements of survival.

Locations where willows occur are sometimes called "willow marshes" alluding to the moist ground on which they depend. Wetlands of that characteristic, sausals, acquire their fresh water supply from seasonal and pooled surface water and also from underground flow that may or may not be continuous from upland-sourced, subsurface flow. Given repeated years of drought, lack of seasonal rain and proximity to saline marsh, it appears likely these willows are fed by unidentified, underground freshwater flows.

Our concern is: **will any action of the Project disrupt or terminate these flows?** That concern needs to be addressed by impact analysis that:

- Identifies the willows' underground freshwater source, delivery direction and path.
- Identifies all Project action along the northern boundary that may interrupt the flows to the willows, temporarily or permanently.
- To the northwest and if underground flow comes from that direction, analyze whether construction and installation of the 18' high by 42'-50' wide Willow Road Tunnel would temporarily or permanently interfere with flow to the willows.

- If underground water is found to be sourced from ground saturation by nearby landscape irrigation that the Project will remove, identify options to replace that loss.
- Given that the Project site has a known history as a heavily-used site by local native people, it should be determined if willows have significant cultural meaning or value to them.
- Consult the Regional Water Quality Control Board, determine if this willow sausal qualifies as Waters of the State and requires State mitigation if disturbed.[8]

Willows Wetlands Summary

Where conditions allow, willows are a dominant, keystone species that creates a habitat that expands biodiversity wherever it occurs. Diverse species of wildlife benefit, providing foraging, nesting, resting, refuge for any species that depends on this kind of habitat. The Project has a significant ecological element present on its northern edge and beyond. It needs a dedicated effort to assure its survival and the possibility of expanding beyond its current edges as a historically important ecotone habitat along the South Bay edge.

We ask the Project to address the willows wetland and its place in Menlo Park's shoreline ecology.

Interrelated impacts of Hydrology on Water Quality, Geology, Soils, Hazardous materials and Biological Resources

The DEIR provides a thorough discussion of city-mandated and regulated issues of hydrology including sea level rise. In discussion here, we bring your attention to issues that emerging science has identified and may be significant to the Project site. Under CEQA these issues are not required analysis but may nonetheless be in the best interest of the lead agency and/or the project proponent.

Climate Challenge: Water above and below ground

Associated with climate change, meteorological shifts have already changed the local climate: extended periods of drought and less frequent but intense, major storms or sequenced storms such as last October's atmospheric river. Such storms test local stormwater systems and, by infiltration, sewer systems while producing surface ponding and localized flooding. Steadily, over the decades of usable life for

[8] Willow Village DEIR, Appendix 3.9, Sec. 5.3.3, p.38.

the Willow Village Project, rising groundwater (subsurface aquifers) will exacerbate the problem.

Sea level rise

While the DEIR fulfills City and FEMA requirements for sea level rise (SLR), it is a concern that the SLR standard used is already out of date especially for a Project that, at build-out, is expected to exist for 30 years or more. For SLR inundation, the DEIR uses 24" of SLR by 2050, common to data sourcing from the Ocean Protection Council's (OPC) 2018 Update of Sea-Level Rise Guidelines.[9] This document provides a range of risk-aversion data points from which jurisdictions can select. These data points are calculated from greenhouse gas emission levels based on data from 2014. In April 2020, the OPC published Principles for Aligned State Action[10] that proposed broad, regional planning using a standard of 3.5'(42") by 2050 and commitment to the "best available science". Those principles encourage regional commitment which is not binding but published due to increasingly serious SLR concerns. To our knowledge, One Shoreline, San Mateo County's regional SLR resilience agency, has not adopted the 3.5' by 2050 standard. **We would encourage the Project to take two actions: (1) Incorporate monitoring of the Principles and (2) adopt a dynamic updating standard that reassesses construction, operations and mitigation standards whenever the OPC releases updates of its Sea-Level Rise Guidance whether or not local jurisdiction requires it to do so**. The latter action is already used in Mountain View, embedded in its Public Works' North of Bayshore (shoreline) CIP requirements.

The OPC updates its documents periodically, after each release of new findings by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), most recently earlier this year. Updates of these OPC documents are expected, date or dates TBD.

Subsurface Groundwater

Unfortunately neither of those documents nor current inundation maps of BCDC and FEMA include rising groundwater consideration or guidance. SLR's inundation effects have long been widely discussed, during which time scientists understood that SLR would also produce lowland risk of rising groundwater (subsurface aquifer) but the best science available on the issue simply did not exist.

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[9] California Sea-Level-Rise Guidelines, Ocean Protection Council, 2018, https://opc.ca.gov/webmaster/ftp/pdf/agenda_items/20180314/Item3_Exhibit-A_OPC_SLR_Guidance-rd3.pdf

[10] California Sea-Level-Rise Principles for Aligned State Action,April 2020, http://www.opc.ca.gov/webmaster/_media_library/2020/05/State-SLR-Principles_FINAL_April-2020.pdf

Scientific studies take time but are finally producing verifiable information. For California and including the entire Bay Area shoreline, in 2020 Befus et al published groundwater studies including a Nature Climate Change article, "Increasing threat of coastal groundwater hazards from sea level rise in California"[11] and made a suite of data files available for local scientific study.[12][13][14] Those findings are not yet incorporated in risk assessment maps produced by BCDC, FEMA and others but they are incorporated in online risk evaluation tools published by the USGS[15] and Point Blue Conservation Science (ourcoastourfuture.org).

A revealing reference to consult is a technical addendum prepared by the San Francisco Estuary Institute (SFEI) and others for the City of Sunnyvale's upcoming Moffett Park Specific Plan Update DEIR: "Sea-level rise impacts on shallow groundwater in Moffett Park".[16] The addendum is specific to findings in Moffett Park but its analysis is useful, discussing potential impacts and adaptation action for development. As food for thought, we list the potential impacts of rising groundwater compiled in the Moffett Park report.

- Corrosion. Salinity impact on below-ground infrastructure due to age or materials use
- Buoyancy. Buoyant force impact on foundations, buried utilities and pipes, roads. Together corrosion and buoyancy pose risks onsite and to service delivery systems inbound to and outbound from the Project site.
- Seepage. Seepage into subsurface structures, floors, walls, construction weak points, flaws that destroyed the Surfside condominiums in Florida
- Infiltration: Infiltration into stormwater and sewage pipelines reducing capacity
- Liquefaction: Rising water tables can increase liquefaction risk
- Damage to vegetation: Saturated soils and/or higher salinity can impact vegetation

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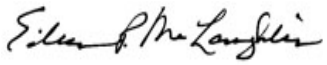
[11] Befus et al, "Increasing threat of coastal groundwater hazards from sea level rise in California, Nature Climate Change, 08/17/2020, Subscriber access only online, **Attached**.
[12] Befus et al, "Projected responses of the coastal water table for California using present-day and future sea-level rise scenarios" 08/11/2020, https://www.sciencebase.gov/catalog/item/5b8ef008e4b0702d0e7ec72b
[13] Befus et al, "Projected groundwater emergence and shoaling for coastal California using present-day and future sea-level rise scenarios",08/11/2020, https://www.sciencebase.gov/catalog/item/5bd9f318e4b0b3fc5cec20ed
[14] Befus et al, "Projected groundwater head for coastal California using present-day and future sea-level rise scenarios", 08/11/2020, https://www.sciencebase.gov/catalog/item/5bda14abe4b0b3fc5cec39b0
[15] US Geological Survey, Coastal Storm Modeling System (CoSMoS) for Central California, v3.1, https://www.sciencebase.gov/catalog/item/5b280118e4b0592076260491
[16] SFEI et al, "Sea-level rise impacts on shallow groundwater in Moffett Park",November 2021, https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5e38a3dd6f9db304821e8e5e/t/61a7b37743ec4b770e11ee73/1638380421678/Moffett+Park+Specific+Plan+Groundwater+Addendum.pdf

- Contaminant mobilization: Varying by location and contaminant type, movement vertically or laterally of existing remediation or of unknown contaminant
- Emergence flooding. Surfacing of groundwater; even non-emergent levels can exacerbate surface flooding by reducing depth to surface.

The DEIR discussion in Hydrology and Water Quality describes certain groundwater studies but, as it is not required, the risk potential of rising groundwater is not studied. But with seas notably rising, the best time to assess a groundwater baseline is now. The site has a history of fill, masking groundwater conditions across the full Project. **We recommend that the Project assess the subsurface groundwater status throughout the full site, setting a baseline for operations monitoring and adaptations to come.**

The Citizens Committee offers the comments of this letter with the intention of improving the environmental actions and values of the Willow Village Master Plan Project. Please contact us as and if desireed.

Yours truly,



Eileen McLaughlin
Board Member
Citizens Committee to Complete the Refuge

Rick Johnson
Conservation Advocate
Citizens Committee to Complete the Refuge

CC: Carin High, Co-chair CCCR
Gail Raabe, Co-Chair CCCR

ATTACHED: Befus et al, "Increasing threat of coastal groundwater hazards from sea-level rise in California", Nature Climate Change, 08/17/2020

nature climate change

ARTICLES

https://doi.org/10.1038/s41558-020-0874-1

Increasing threat of coastal groundwater hazards from sea-level rise in California

K. M. Befus[1,2]✉, P. L. Barnard[3], D. J. Hoover[3], J. A. Finzi Hart[3] and C. I. Voss[4]

Projected sea-level rise will raise coastal water tables, resulting in groundwater hazards that threaten shallow infrastructure and coastal ecosystem resilience. Here we model a range of sea-level rise scenarios to assess the responses of water tables across the diverse topography and climates of the California coast. With 1 m of sea-level rise, areas flooded from below are predicted to expand ~50–130 m inland, and low-lying coastal communities such as those around San Francisco Bay are most at risk. Coastal topography is a controlling factor; long-term rising water tables will intercept low-elevation drainage features, allowing for groundwater discharge that damps the extent of shoaling in ~70% (68.9–82.2%) of California's coastal water tables. Ignoring these topography-limited responses increases flooded-area forecasts by ~20% and substantially underestimates saltwater intrusion. All scenarios estimate that areas with shallow coastal water tables will shrink as they are inundated by overland flooding or are topographically limited from rising inland.

Over the next century, rising sea levels are predicted to cause widespread inundation of coastal terrestrial areas[1,2], wetland loss[3] and more severe nuisance flooding[4,5]. Relative sea levels are projected to increase for much of Earth's coastlines[6], presenting a wide range of coastal hazards for the ~1 billion people living in low-elevation coastal areas by 2050 (ref. [7]). Along with the increasing exposure of coastal communities to overland flood risk[1,8,9], rising sea levels will cause unconfined coastal groundwater levels (that is, water tables) to rise, leading to inland flooding hazards via subsurface connections to the sea[10]. An improved understanding of the physical controls on the severity of the groundwater hazards caused by sea-level rise (as opposed to human-induced controls, such as pumping causing saltwater intrusion) is therefore urgently needed.

Compared with the impacts of direct marine inundation, the responses of groundwater to sea-level rise may lead to earlier, more severe or longer-term[11] hazards to terrestrial water resources[1,12,13], ecosystems[14,15] and infrastructure[10,16–18] and could contribute substantially to the projected hundreds of millions of people displaced by climate change over the next century[19,20]. Coastal water tables are dynamically connected to sea levels, with inland spatio-temporal responses dictated by the frequency and magnitude of forcing events[21,22]. Unconfined aquifers in hydraulic connection with rising seas experience shoaling of water tables as the higher sea level and the intrusion of denser marine water force water tables higher[10,23]. As water tables rise, groundwater discharge to receiving drainage networks may initiate or intensify[24].

Groundwater systems respond hydraulically to sea-level rise over a continuum between two primary modes[12,13,23]: (1) water tables rise the same amount as sea levels where thick, overlying unsaturated zones can accommodate additional groundwater storage, termed the flux-controlled or recharge-limited mode; and (2) water tables rise less than sea levels and instead discharge some of the original storage to existing or new drainage networks as saline intrusion displaces the fresh groundwater, termed the topography-limited or head-controlled mode. The hydrogeologic setting, which combines geology and climate, controls the hydraulic mode[13] and the vulnerability of the aquifer to seawater intrusion[12,25], the amount of fresh groundwater flowing through the aquifer, and the rate of submarine groundwater discharge and its role in transporting terrestrial chemicals to marine waters[26]. At the global scale, it is estimated that 16–78% of coastal groundwater systems could be topography limited (using one-dimensional analytical solutions with coarse topographic and geologic data)[13], but these estimates have not been refined at smaller scales. Many analyses of coastal groundwater with future sea-level rise adopt the flux-controlled mode[10,16,27,28], but selecting one mode to represent all groundwater can bias the analysis[29], and the implications of this assumption have not been extensively tested.

Here, we use a numerical modelling approach to test how groundwater beneath diverse coastal landscapes responds to rising sea levels. In this initial application to coastal California, the first large-scale, high-resolution analysis of the groundwater hazards resulting from sea-level rise is presented. The extent of future groundwater shoaling along California's coast is forecast, and the prevalence of flux-controlled and topography-limited conditions is then identified. Finally, the relevance of these conditions for future coastal management decisions is discussed. The focus is on the California coast, but the modelling approach is flexible and can be applied to coastal settings worldwide.

Approach

Modelled forecasts for present-day and future equilibrium water-table depth conditions used both present-day local mean sea level (LMSL) and mean higher high water (MHHW) tidal datums as end members for the long-term position of the water table at the coast, with sea-level rise added to these datums for the analysed scenarios. Model hydrogeology was conceptualized in a simple manner, with uniform aquifer thickness along the coastline, a horizontal impermeable bottom at −50 m NAVD88 and homogeneous hydraulic conductivity (K). Given unknown aquifer properties, a different value of K (0.1, 1 and 10 m d^{-1}) was used for each of the models run for each tidal datum, allowing the generation of a

[1]Department of Civil and Architectural Engineering, University of Wyoming, Laramie, WY, USA. [2]Department of Geosciences, University of Arkansas, Fayetteville, AR, USA. [3]Pacific Coastal and Marine Science Center, United States Geological Survey, Santa Cruz, CA, USA. [4]Water Mission Area, United States Geological Survey, Menlo Park, CA, USA. ✉e-mail: kmbefus@uark.edu

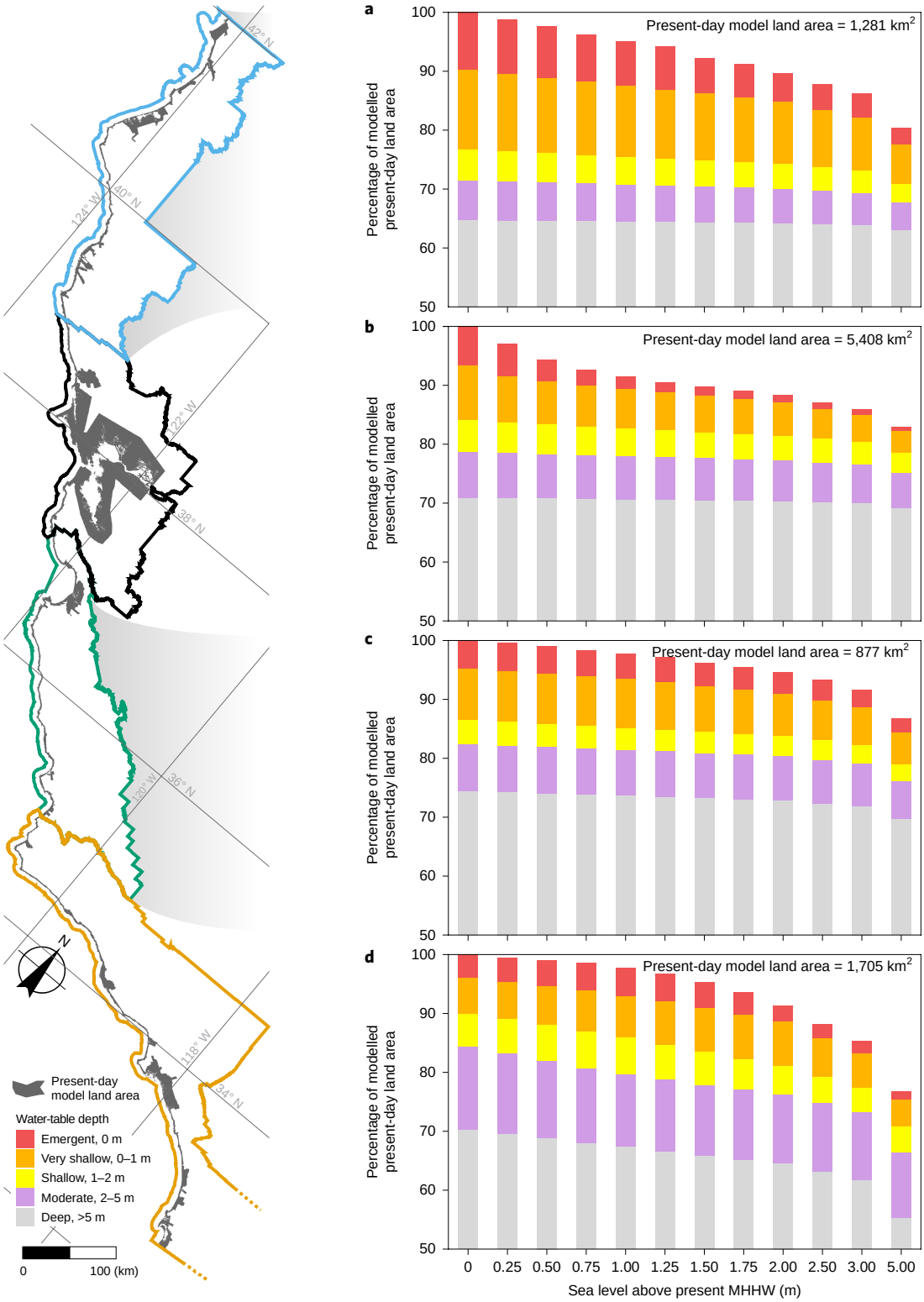


Fig. 1 | California's loss of shallow water tables with sea-level rise. a–d, Cumulative areal proportions of modelled water-table depths with higher sea levels for Northern California (**a**), the San Francisco Bay area (**b**), Central California (**c**) and Southern California (**d**). The regions are shown as merged county outlines around the much less extensive model land areas. The model results for $K = 1\,m\,d^{-1}$ and the MHHW tidal datum are shown. The loss of total area is caused by overland inundation with higher sea levels.

range of forecasts (see Methods for more details). Two modelling approaches were used to separate groundwater responses following the flux-controlled and topography-limited modes. MODFLOW (ref. [30]), a numerical model of groundwater flow, calculated the equilibrium water-table position for specific sea-level-rise scenarios, in a groundwater flow system that is in steady state with respect to the water budget enforced by present topography, present climate and a particular sea level. The base MODFLOW models

Table 1 | Percentages of populated areas exposed to shallow groundwater

	Areas exposed when using LMSL (%)			Areas exposed when using MHHW (%)		
Sea-level rise (m)	$K = 0.1\,m\,d^{-1}$	$K = 1\,m\,d^{-1}$	$K = 10\,m\,d^{-1}$	$K = 0.1\,m\,d^{-1}$	$K = 1\,m\,d^{-1}$	$K = 10\,m\,d^{-1}$
MODFLOW						
+0	43.9	25.0	13.8	43.7	25.4	15.3
+1	45.1	27.3	17.5	44.8	27.7	18.8
+2	46.2	29.5	20.9	45.6	29.4	21.5
+3	46.9	31.1	23.4	46.2	31.0	23.9
+5	48.2	34.5	28.2	47.7	34.5	28.8
Flux controlled						
+0	43.9	25.0	13.8	43.7	25.4	15.3
+1	49.0	31.4	18.9	48.5	31.4	20.0
+2	52.5	36.4	23.3	51.7	35.9	23.5
+3	55.0	40.3	26.7	54.1	39.6	26.7
+5	58.4	45.7	32.4	57.5	44.9	32.3

Percentages of present-day TIGER (ref. [31]) populated land areas in California exposed to emergent to shallow water tables (that is, 0–2 m depth) and flooding from below with sea-level rise within the model domains. Present-day populated land areas within the model domains varied by tidal datum (LMSL, 4,480 km^2; MHHW, 4,390 km^2).

were constructed independently of a groundwater response mode, thus allowing either mode to control the water-table position on the basis of the local hydrogeology. The second approach, referred to as the flux-controlled approach, strictly applied the flux-controlled mode by raising the MODFLOW water-table elevations modelled for present-day sea levels by a constant equalling the increase in sea level from the present day (Extended Data Fig. 1).

Seasonal, tidal and other high-frequency water-table fluctuations affect the annual and subannual coastal elevation patterns of water tables[21,22], but long-term groundwater-level responses are dominated by sea-level rise, climate change effects on recharge and human uses; steady-state analyses therefore provide a strong initial evaluation of these systems. In this analysis, the sea-level-rise-driven responses of groundwater were evaluated independently of other driving forces that may impact groundwater shoaling, such as future changes in recharge rates, ongoing human groundwater use (such as groundwater pumping) and replenishment operations. The approaches described here rely on a series of simplifying assumptions that estimate diagnostic ranges of groundwater shoaling and seawater intrusion. The differences between groundwater responses forecast by the two approaches indicate the local influences of coastal topography on the groundwater hazard resulting from sea-level rise, as only the MODFLOW simulations include the ability of groundwater to drain and adjust up-gradient water-table elevations.

Water-table response

Rising sea levels cause pervasive water-table shoaling along coastal California. Limiting the analysis to areas within 1 km of the present-day coastline (that is, 1 km inland from LMSL (3,240 km^2) or MHHW (3,300 km^2)), shallow to emergent groundwater (that is, within 2 m of the ground surface; the definitions are in Fig. 1) already exists beneath 981–1,450 km^2 for all model scenarios of tidal datums and aquifer geologies (Supplementary Tables 2 and 3). Using 1,500 km as a representative length of California's coastline, shallow to emergent groundwater conditions would be expected to exist today from the coast to 650–970 m inland on average across all scenarios. With 1 m of sea-level rise, the flux-controlled models forecast the shoaling of 124–190 km^2 of moderate to deep water tables into shallow to emergent water tables, encroaching an additional 80–130 m inland. The MODFLOW models forecast 60–169 km^2 of new areas with shallow to emergent water tables (Supplementary Tables 2 and 3), equivalent to moving the subsurface flooding hazard 50–90 m inland. However, the inland extent of shallow to emergent groundwater was spatially variable, so the averages and equivalents for the whole California coastline could misrepresent a local hazard. For example, some locations would experience almost no inland migration with 1 m of sea-level rise, and in other areas, measuring the distances between the present-day coastline and shallow water tables forecast more inland areas exposed for the MODFLOW (170–250 m) and flux-controlled (20–350 m) models than evenly distributing the hazard along California's coast (Supplementary Table 4).

Focusing on locations along the California coast where people live, we find that 13.8–43.9% of the areas defined as "populated places" by the Topologically Integrated Geographic Encoding and Referencing (TIGER) database[31] within the modelling domain face the hazards associated with emergent to shallow groundwater conditions today (Table 1, Supplementary Fig. 6 and Supplementary Tables 5 and 6). These at-risk areas grow by 1.1–3.7% with 1 m of sea-level rise in the MODFLOW simulations and by 4.7–6.4% in the flux-controlled forecasts (Table 1). Water tables rising due to sea-level rise will threaten larger areas of communities that could be beginning to experience shallow groundwater hazards today. Constraining the properties of the unconfined aquifer (that is, K and thickness) is critical for reducing the uncertainty of where these hazards will be the most severe.

Despite the net shoaling of water tables within the 1 km distance from the shoreline considered for this calculation, the modelled steady-state future water-table depths show a loss of areas with emergent to shallow coastal water tables (Fig. 1). This loss results from the inability of inland water tables to keep pace with sea-level rise across California (Supplementary Tables 7 and 8). This phenomenon is especially evident in the San Francisco Bay region (Fig. 1), where sea-level rise inundates low-lying areas with shallow water tables, and gentle topography with abundant topographic drainage features limits the rise of inland water tables that would create new shallow water tables. In Southern California, water tables shoal more consistently with sea-level rise, where water tables farther inland are more responsive and raise deep water tables to shallower categories, unlike in other regions (Fig. 1). Thus, areas with emergent to shallow groundwater today are the most sensitive to inundation with rising sea levels, as they occur most often in low-lying areas. In the MODFLOW forecasts, an additional ~10% of such areas along coastal California are lost to marine or tidal conditions with 1 m

Table 2 | Loss of coastal area with emergent to shallow water tables within 1 km of the present-day shoreline for 1 m of sea-level rise

	Present day	MODFLOW + 1 m sea-level rise		Flux controlled + 1 m sea-level rise	
Tidal datum	Total area (km²)	Area lost (km²)	Percentage lost (%)	Area lost (km²)	Percentage lost (%)
MHHW	1,310–3,170	376–520	16.4–28.8	197–270	8.5–18.4
LMSL	1,467–3,467	229–384	11.1–15.6	24–119	1.6–3.4

The ranges show the results for the three *K* scenarios.

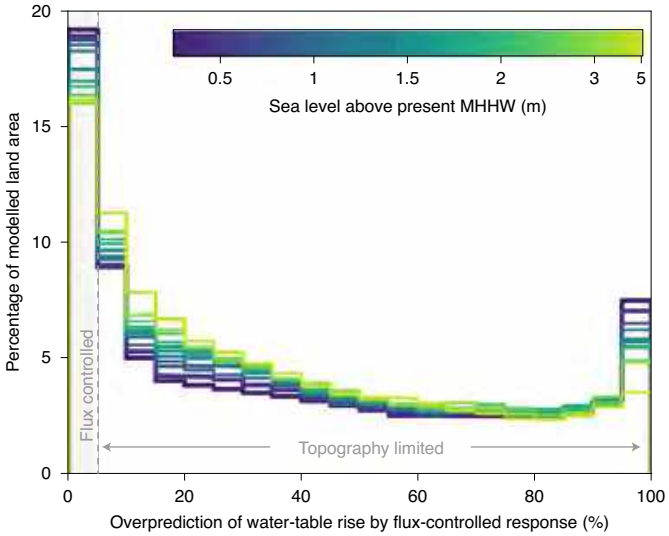


Fig. 2 | Distribution of flux-controlled and topography-limited groundwater conditions along coastal California for higher sea levels. The overprediction of the water-table rise by the flux-controlled response was calculated for the $K = 1\,m\,d^{-1}$ MHHW datum model using equation (1) to 1 km inland from the present-day coastline. Additional model results are provided in Extended Data Figs. 2 and 3.

higher seas compared with the flux-controlled results (Table 2). In fact, the flux-controlled scenarios indicate the growth of areas with emergent groundwater of up to 86% relative to present-day occurrence, but losses in shallow groundwater converting to emergent conditions and the inundation of low-lying emergent groundwater yield net losses of the combined areas (Supplementary Tables 7 and 8). Assuming flux-controlled water-table responses overpredicts the expansiveness of emergent water tables by not accounting for groundwater discharge to topographic lows, such as drainage networks (Extended Data Fig. 1).

The degrees to which unconfined coastal aquifer areas are forecast to be flux controlled or topography limited were calculated by comparing the MODFLOW-modelled water-table rise with the present-day water table increased by sea-level rise, which requires flux-controlled conditions (Fig. 2). First, areas with emergent groundwater in both modelling approaches were separated from the mode analysis, as water tables no longer respond to sea-level rise once they are emergent. Next, areas showing no notable difference (≤5%) between the two water-table responses were taken to represent where the flux-controlled mode was active, whereas greater differences identify increasingly topography-limited conditions. We find that <20% (15.0–19.2% with $K = 1\,m\,d^{-1}$ for all sea levels and tidal datums) of the California groundwater systems within 1 km of the coastline operated in the flux-controlled mode, where the water table responded linearly to sea-level rise (Extended Data Figs. 2 and 3). If the value of *K* for the California coastal aquifers was increased to $10\,m\,d^{-1}$, at least an order of magnitude higher than most of the coastal bedrock[32], flux-controlled areas increased to ~40% (38.8–47.1% for all sea levels and tidal datums) of the land area for each sea level (Extended Data Fig. 2). Much more of California's coastal areas were topography limited, as was separately calculated in a binary groundwater response analysis finding that 97.8% of the California coastal unconfined aquifers are topography limited[13] (Extended Data Fig. 4 and Supplementary Table 9). In our analysis, topography-limited conditions ranged from 68.9 to 82.2% of the modelled land areas with $K = 1\,m\,d^{-1}$ and 43.5 to 59.6% with $K = 10\,m\,d^{-1}$ for all sea levels and tidal datums, following the expectation for higher-permeability aquifers to be more frequently flux controlled[13]. By assuming that groundwater responds to sea-level rise under the flux-controlled mode only, as is common practice[10,16,27,28], models will overpredict water-table rises for a majority of California's coastal regions.

Saltwater intrusion

Water-table elevations represent the energy in an unconfined groundwater system, and higher water tables can provide a hydraulic defence against saline groundwater intrusion. By calculating the buoyancy of fresh groundwater overlying infiltrated seawater, we predicted the evolution of the freshwater–saltwater interface with sea-level rise for coastal California (Methods). We define the saline groundwater wedge footprint as the inland area where the freshwater–saltwater interface exists at an elevation of −50 m NAVD88, at the base of the modelled portion of the geologic units in the coastal region (Extended Data Fig. 5). This gives a relative measure of the saltwater intrusion that can be expected as the footprint migrates inland. With 1 m of sea-level rise, saltwater intrusion in the flux-controlled models will expand the wedge footprint inland to underlie ~50 km² of new areas on average (7–142 km² with $10^{\pm1}$ *K* and both datums, Supplementary Table 10), representing ~230–1,400 m of landward intrusion relative to the present-day wedge position. Allowing groundwater drainage at the land surface in the MODFLOW models resulted in 2.8–68 times more area of saltwater intrusion on average than the flux-controlled models predicted. In both models, the interface and footprint move inland, but the overall area of the footprint can shrink, as tidal and marine conditions may spatially outpace groundwater responses (Fig. 3b and Extended Data Fig. 6). The growth of the saline groundwater wedge footprint represents reductions in fresh groundwater storage, with topography-limited systems being the most vulnerable[13]. This analysis predicts conservative positions of the interface for the two tidal datums, as the groundwater flow models do not include the reduction in transmissivity created by a subsurface density interface that would push the interface farther seaward (Methods). Explicitly including the interface would lead to slightly higher water tables within the interface footprint and less saltwater intrusion, except where water tables are already forecast to be emergent, as water tables could not rise higher. In areas with emergent water tables, modelling the subsurface interface could result in more groundwater discharge to the coastal drainage network, raising the freshwater–saltwater interface and leading to more saltwater intrusion[33] and an even larger saline groundwater wedge footprint.

Discussion

While prior work projects that climate-change-driven overland flooding over the next century could threaten over 600,000

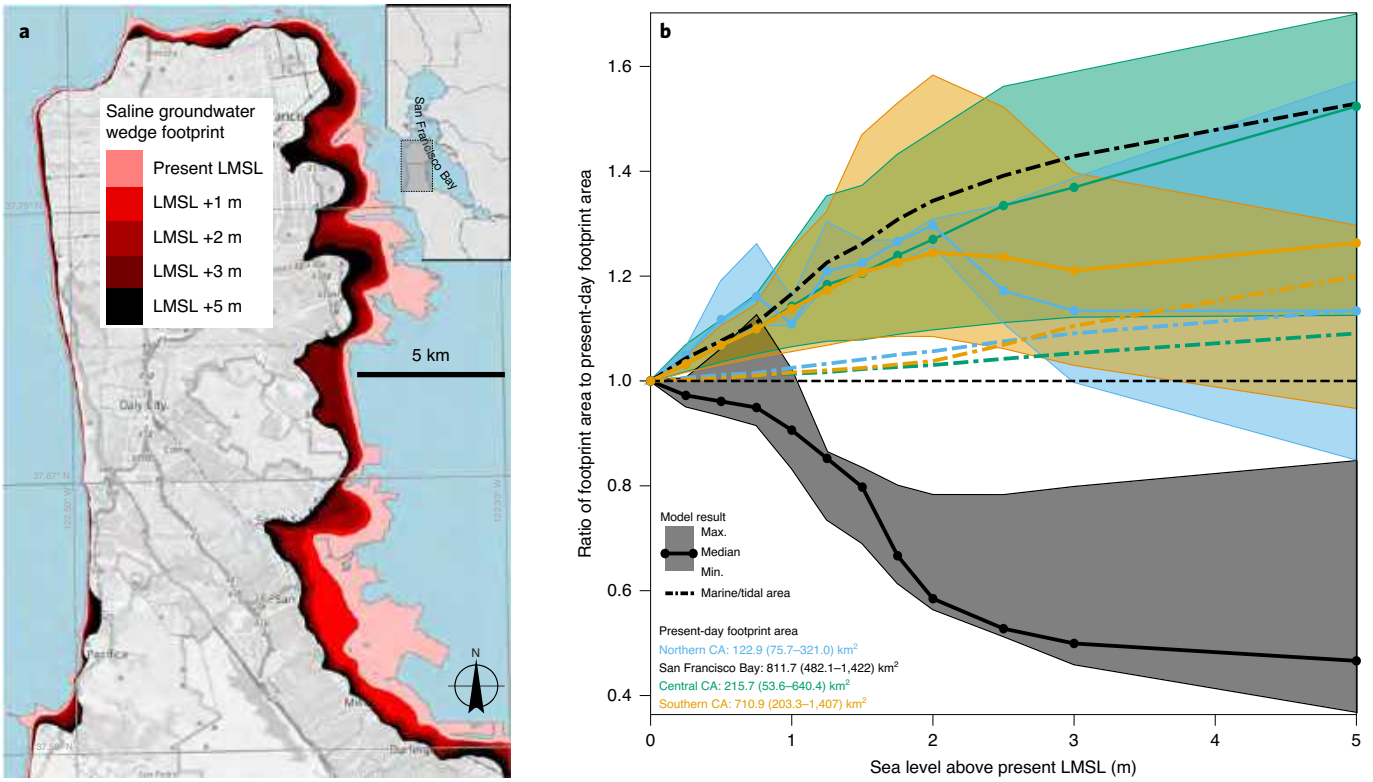


Fig. 3 | Saline groundwater wedge footprint in shallow coastal California groundwater. a, The groundwater saltwater–freshwater interface moves inland unevenly with water-table responses to sea-level rise in San Francisco and northern San Mateo counties. **b**, The growth of the saline groundwater wedge footprint across the coastal California regions (shown in Fig. 1) outpaces the growth of tidal and marine areas for all but the San Francisco Bay region until 3 m of sea-level rise. See Extended Data Fig. 6 for the MHHW datum and flux-controlled results. Credit for map in **a**: © OpenStreetMap contributors.

people and US$150 billion in infrastructure across the urbanized coast of California[9], our study focused on the complementary but as-yet unaccounted-for response of water tables to rising sea levels. Probabilistic predictions of median sea-level rise for California range from ~0.2 to 0.8 m by 2100 (66% likely range, 0.03 to 1.25 m across the state), with the variability driven primarily by tectonic setting and emission scenario, and with an extreme risk-aversion scenario (probability < 0.5%) of ~3 m (refs. [34–36]). While pervasive sea-level rise is expected for California, local areas of extreme tectonic uplift (such as Crescent City[36] and the Santa Ynez Mountains[37]) may lead to relative sea-level stability or a slight decrease by 2100. Therefore, our groundwater model projections in such areas would overpredict the rise of the water table. Nevertheless, ignoring vertical land motion, we project that >300 km² of land areas will be subjected to new groundwater emergence and on the order of 1 km of landward seawater intrusion (assuming 1 m of sea-level rise and aquifer geology represented by a K of 1 m d^{-1}), which considerably expands the coastal hazards related to overland flooding alone.

Our findings suggest that, as water tables shoal with sea-level rise, overland inundation in low-lying areas reduces the overall extent of shallow and emergent water tables. In these areas, groundwater shoaling occurs ahead of the inland movement of overland inundation, such that flooding from below precedes inundation. While this inundation occurs progressively inland with higher sea levels, topography-limited conditions farther inland in some areas restrict the shoaling of water tables, leading to a loss of emergent conditions relative to today. Our models could overestimate the relative shoaling where the land surface is rising, because the topography used in the models was static and ignored the future effects of the physical and biological engines that created the present-day coastal lowlands as well as any future human activities or development. Erosion and deposition on land and in coastal waters, in combination with biologically driven wetland accretion, could drastically change the topographic profile of California's coast over the timescales represented in the water-table scenarios under sea-level rise[9,38–40]. However, creating space for these landscape evolution mechanisms that would accommodate shallower water tables may be difficult to achieve or undesirable along heavily urbanized coastlines.

The increasing occurrence of shallow and emergent groundwater tables inland with sea-level rise represents a substantial hazard to coastal infrastructure for the active tectonic and often high-relief setting of the California coast. Our results identify numerous locations with low-lying topography and poor surface drainage along the California coast that could face substantial local threats from groundwater hazards today or in the near future (such as the Port of Los Angeles, Santa Barbara and the San Francisco Airport). Increased roadway fatigue[41], reduced sewer and septic drainage[16,17], and the potential for mobilizing contaminants in soils currently above the water table will eventually be triggered farther inland as the water table rises with higher sea levels. Such hazards from groundwater shoaling may be most destructive where the flux-controlled groundwater mode is active and flooding from below is not a current threat to coastal infrastructure, mainly occurring in areas with steep coastal topography. Globally, present-day coastlines with gently sloping, low topography are more likely to experience daily marine and tidal flooding, with the groundwater hazard of saltwater intrusion presenting the main threat[13]. Oft-cited examples where groundwater hazards are a major, short-term threat include Honolulu, Hawaii[10,42], and Miami, Florida[43–45]. These areas are protected from overland flooding by coastal defences but are exposed to groundwater flooding today in locations characterized by low-lying topography and well-developed, high-K subsurface

drainage systems. Furthermore, while flood defences may be employed to protect many coastal communities from the projected overland flooding, groundwater emergence and shoaling will still threaten these low-lying areas with flooding from below, and alternative measures will need to be deployed (such as pumps and subsurface barriers).

Worldwide, the threat of groundwater hazards with sea-level rise is widely unknown, especially for developing nations and rural areas. Our simplified modelling approach can be extended to provide forecasts of groundwater hazards for coastal areas globally. Because of the importance of topography to how groundwater systems respond to sea-level rise, the reliability of such groundwater-hazard predictions will be limited by the spatial resolution of the available topographic data combined with the availability of accurate climatic and hydrogeologic information.

In unconfined coastal aquifers, rising sea levels will ultimately trigger some combination of the two hydrogeologic responses: groundwater shoaling and saltwater intrusion. Geology, climate and topography will then determine the mode by which the groundwater could present future hazards to coastal communities, requiring the development of new datasets to make accurate predictions of the groundwater hazards. Although the hazards created by aggravated overland coastal storm-driven flooding are more immediate and represent substantial socio-economic risk for the California coast[5,9], the groundwater hazards from sea-level rise pose eventual, geographically expansive risks to people by threatening coastal infrastructure[16] and agricultural activities[15], and the short-term risk may be far higher in some hydrogeologic settings. Human intervention through defensive or adaptive planning can shift the groundwater response towards either the topography-limited or the flux-controlled mode, but the alternate mode may then present new challenges. Therefore, by not addressing projections of groundwater shoaling and emergence, coastal communities around the world could overlook or exacerbate future hazards related to sea-level rise.

Online content

Any methods, additional references, Nature Research reporting summaries, source data, extended data, supplementary information, acknowledgements, peer review information; details of author contributions and competing interests; and statements of data and code availability are available at https://doi.org/10.1038/s41558-020-0874-1.

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Methods

Groundwater model. The equilibrium water-table responses to sea-level rise were modelled using the modular groundwater flow software MODFLOW (ref. [30]) controlled by the FloPy Python library[46]. The California coast was divided into 57 overlapping spatial domains for modelling groundwater flow in one-layer models, with the intention of combining the results into a continuous dataset. Each domain edge extended beyond a major surface-water drainage divide and overlapped the adjacent domain by 1–2 km. These smaller domains reduced the computational demand for the models and allowed the extremely fine model resolution of 10 m by 10 m, which was needed to represent details of the topography. Each model was run by solving the steady-state groundwater flow equation with spatially variable recharge rates prescribed by the annual average effective recharge for 2000–2013 (refs. [47,48]), where evapotranspirative fluxes were already removed from the recharge rate. A combined recharge-drain boundary condition was applied to the top of all terrestrial model cells. Using a high conductance value for the drain, this condition restricts the water table to levels at or below the land surface elevation (that is, exactly at the prescribed depth of the modelled drain), and the top of the cell serves as either a groundwater recharge or discharge feature for levels below or at the land surface, respectively. To isolate the hydrologic effects of changing sea level, we did not consider changes in recharge due to climate change, land-cover or land-use change, groundwater pumping, or managed recharge activities in surficial water-bearing units.

The three-dimensional hydrogeologic framework of coastal unconfined groundwater systems in California is poorly constrained. Calibrated groundwater flow models have been developed in a few populated regions[49–55], but the focus of these models has mainly been to determine the effects of pumping on deep, confined aquifers that supply the bulk of the water resources. Similarly, global hydrogeologic datasets on permeability and porosity describe the shallow bedrock geology[32,56,57] and do not currently have the vertical structure resolved for coastal California. Estimating unconsolidated coastal aquifer thicknesses with the assumption that coastal topography controls the basin thickness is most appropriate for passive tectonic margins and probably fails for much of coastal California[58]. Given the uncertainty in the coastal hydrogeologic framework, we used a range of values of K (0.1, 1.0 and 10 m d^{-1}) to test the sensitivity of the sea-level-rise models to this parameter. These values span the more conductive end of permeability estimates for the study region[32,56,57] while also bounding the mean groundwater level measurements within the active model domains for the present-day mean conditions (Supplementary Discussion 1 and Supplementary Figs. 1–4). For simplicity due to the lack of consistent and comprehensive hydrogeologic data, the model bottom was set to a constant −50 m NAVD88 for all groundwater flow models (that is, a flat no-flow boundary), implying that groundwater flow is approximated to be horizontal at that elevation. The responsivity of the water table to sea-level rise would be set by integrating the thickness of the subsurface materials and K (that is, transmissivity). The model thickness at the coast was 50 m plus the elevation of the tidal datum relative to NAVD88, but the aquifer thickness inland was determined by the local topography, leading to variable transmissivities depending on location. The values of K set equivalent transmissivities that could also represent a three-order-of-magnitude change in model thickness rather than in K. By not keeping a constant aquifer thickness inland, the K sensitivity testing did not directly test the model sensitivity to transmissivity.

Digital topography, tidal water levels and groundwater recharge rates, as described earlier, comprised the spatial data inputs for the groundwater models. Seamless topography–bathymetry models spanning the California coast[59–61] to elevations of at least 10 m NAVD88 set the primary inland extent of the groundwater models, but all models extended to at least 1 km inland from the present-day coastline. In the San Francisco Bay region, the elevation dataset extended much farther inland (Fig. 1), and the model domains were extended inland to encompass most watershed divides that would drain to the bay or the outer coast. These topographic datasets had a cell resolution of 2 m by 2 m and were optimized for modelling by filling closed depressions above mean sea level with TauDEM (ref. [62]). Closed depressions in the topography–bathymetry data were filled only on land to an elevation where no additional closed depressions existed for a clear path to the edge of the dataset. This filling allows water tables to rise in the closed depressions above the original surface elevations, forming groundwater-fed water features. The calculations of water-table depth used the original topography–bathymetry data, allowing groundwater levels to be above the land surface (that is, in the filled depressions). The topographic data were upscaled to the 10 m by 10 m groundwater model resolution using bilinear interpolation. Either the extent of the available topographic data or the approximate positions of surface hydrologic divides set the inland model boundary, which was conceptualized as a groundwater divide (that is, no-flow boundary conditions). Similarly, the shore-perpendicular edges of each groundwater model were also set as groundwater divides (that is, no flow). MHHW tide levels relative to NAVD88 were derived from the VDATUM vertical transformation database and software[63] for the open ocean at variable ~250–2,000 m point spacings and for San Francisco Bay at ~4,000 m point spacing[64,65]. The tidal datums data were assigned to marine and tidal groundwater model cells using nearest-neighbour interpolation. Coastal water depths were assigned using the MHHW (arithmetic mean, 1.71 m; minimum, 1.55 m; maximum, 2.31 m NAVD88) or LMSL (arithmetic mean, 0.888 m; minimum, 0.764 m; maximum, 1.29 m NAVD88) level added to the amount of sea-level rise in each model scenario, and these water levels were set as the tidal and marine boundary conditions as constant heads. A general head boundary with a freshwater equivalent conversion[66] based on local salinity data was tested in model development but led to unrealistic landward head gradients and negligibly higher water tables (<2 cm).

To merge the modelled groundwater heads from the 57 overlapping models for continuous predictions[67], the data farthest from the no-flow boundary of each model in the overlapping area were weighted the most in the blending algorithm. An error function based on the distance from the no-flow boundary defined the weights for linearly combining the results from each model, where 25% of the overlap area farthest from the no-flow boundary of a model was assigned values directly from that model. All merge operations were performed only on the groundwater head data, which are spatially smooth; the water-table depths were then calculated by subtracting the head from the unfilled land surface elevation. The merged model results were compiled to county boundaries for post-processing[67] and data publication[68,69].

The modelled hydraulic heads for present-day sea levels were validated against 3,775 mostly urban wells with unconfined water-table observations (Supplementary Fig. 1). The mean, minimum and maximum water-table positions were calculated for wells with more than one observation to constrain the range of recorded water-table variability (Supplementary Figs. 2–4). Because homogeneous K values were used for the models, the aim of comparing the modelled and observed hydraulic heads was to test how well the K scenarios encompassed the observations and not to adjust the K values for specific regions, as is performed in the calibration of a model to observed data.

Groundwater analyses. In quantifying the degree to which coastal areas in California were topography limited or flux controlled, we compared the results of the numerical model, MODFLOW, with predictions of water-table responses under only flux-controlled conditions. The merged modelled water table for the present-day sea level using each model scenario (that is, each combination of tidal datum and K) separately for all of California served as the initial water tables for flux-controlled mode predictions. Thus, only the flux-controlled water tables for higher sea levels could be compared with the modelled water tables. At each higher sea level, the water table was raised by the same amount as the sea level, constant over the model domain (Extended Data Fig. 1), and areas where the water table exceeded the land surface were set as emergent (that is, water-table depth ≤ 0 m). Water-table depths increase as the water-table elevation lowers. The overprediction of the water-table rise by the flux-controlled mode was calculated for every active model cell as:

$$\text{Overprediction} = \frac{\text{Water-table depth}_{\text{MODFLOW}} - \text{Water-table depth}_{\text{flux-controlled}}}{\text{Sea level above present}} \times 100. \quad (1)$$

Model cells where the overprediction was ≤5% of the sea-level rise were assigned as flux controlled, and cells with an overprediction >5% were assigned as exhibiting some topography control. The choice of 5% as the boundary between the modes in the overprediction calculation allows very small differences (that is, ≤5%) in the modelled water-table depths in the numerator of equation (1) to be treated as representing a flux-controlled response. The uncertainty in water-table elevations introduced by the model convergence criterion set to be 0.01 m could lead to a maximum 8% overprediction in equation (1) for a sea-level rise of 0.25 m, reducing to 4% for 0.5 m. We therefore chose 5% instead of 0% as the overprediction threshold between flux-controlled and topography-limited conditions. Model cells with emergent groundwater no longer respond to sea-level rise until they become inundated and would yield an overprediction of 0%, suggesting flux-controlled conditions where water tables actually were limited by topography. Thus, all emergent groundwater cells were removed before calculating equation (1), as they would be erroneously considered flux controlled and can be interpreted alongside the two response modes (Extended Data Fig. 3). For Fig. 2, the areas of cells within each overprediction bin, representing 5% of the overprediction calculated in equation (1), were summed and represented as percentages of the total modelled land area, where the modelled land area decreases for models with higher sea levels as the tidal and marine areas grow.

For the saltwater intrusion analysis, the fresh–saline groundwater interface was calculated from the equilibrium groundwater models using the Ghyben–Herzberg relationship[70,71], whereby the interface depth, z, is:

$$z = \frac{h_f}{\delta} \quad (2)$$

where h_f is the elevation of the water table above sea level, and δ is the dimensionless water-density-difference ratio between fresh, ρ_f, and saline, ρ_s, groundwater:

$$\delta = \frac{\rho_s - \rho_f}{\rho_f}. \quad (3)$$

This relationship arises by approximating the interface as a steady-state, sharp boundary between the two fluids, which neglects mixing at the interface due to both diffusion and dispersion. The groundwater modelling described earlier provided spatial predictions of h_f. Surface water salinity data were extracted from 10-m-depth salinity data gridded at a resolution of 0.25 decimal degrees (~28 km × 28 km) for the open ocean[64] and from observational data collected between 1968 and 2015 at 51 sites in San Francisco Bay[65]. The salinity was assigned to marine and tidal groundwater model cells using nearest-neighbour interpolation. The salinity of coastal waters was then converted to density using the Thermodynamic Equation of Seawater 2010 (ref. [72]). In our analysis, we approximate z in equation (2) with the modelled h_f, a ρ_f of 1,000 kg m^{-3} and a ρ_s based on the average density of coastal and marine waters from the salinities by county (1,008.1–1,025.2 kg m^{-3}; Supplementary Table 11). In equation (2), h_f is the hydraulic head relative to sea level and not the NAVD88 datum, requiring the modelled heads to be converted to h_f by accounting for the sea-level position on the basis of the average elevations of the respective tidal datums added to the amount of sea-level rise in each scenario. The interface slope and position in unconfined aquifers are controlled by the hydrogeology, climate and transient marine conditions[33,70,71,73,74]. The extent of the coastal area where a saline–fresh groundwater interface exists within this unconfined groundwater system is referred to as the saline groundwater wedge footprint and is limited to areas where z is at or above −50 m NAVD88 (the lower boundary of the models). These footprints for specific sea levels overestimate the future encroachment of the saline–fresh interface with sea-level rise, as the steady-state assumption allows infinite time for inland migration of the interface. The true movement of the interface will depend on the rate of sea-level rise, and the degree to which the aquifer is confined or semiconfined will introduce additional time lags of years to decades[11]. Such relatively short transient effects will create impacts that will still manifest on management-decision timescales. Finally, the use of a homogeneous unconfined aquifer simplifies the location of the saline–fresh interface, as heterogeneity and anisotropy in K will lead to more interface complexity[75–78] than can be accounted for in the homogeneous models.

Data availability

Derived model outputs that were merged across overlapping model boundaries and compiled to county boundaries are available to download at https://doi.org/10.5066/P9H5PBXP. The available data include georeferenced rasters of hydraulic head (that is, water table elevation) and water table depth and georeferenced shapefiles of the water table depth categories. The saline groundwater wedge footprint shapefiles are available to download at https://doi.org/10.4211/hs.1c95059edcf041a0959e0b4a1f05478c. The other MODFLOW input, output and derived datasets are available upon request. All other input datasets are available from the original sources.

Code availability

The relevant portions of the pre- and post-processing functions and scripts used to develop the figures and datasets in this study are available at https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.3897502. All other codes are available upon request at the discretion of the authors.

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Author contributions

All authors participated in conceiving the study, developing the analyses and writing the paper. K.M.B. performed the modelling and analyses with input from all authors.

Competing interests

The authors declare no competing interests.

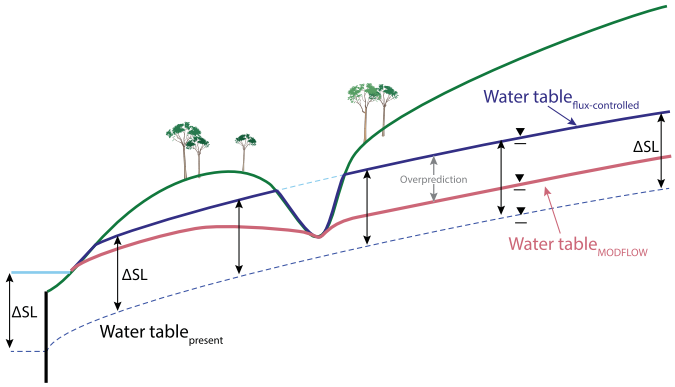
Additional information

Extended data is available for this paper at https://doi.org/10.1038/s41558-020-0874-1.

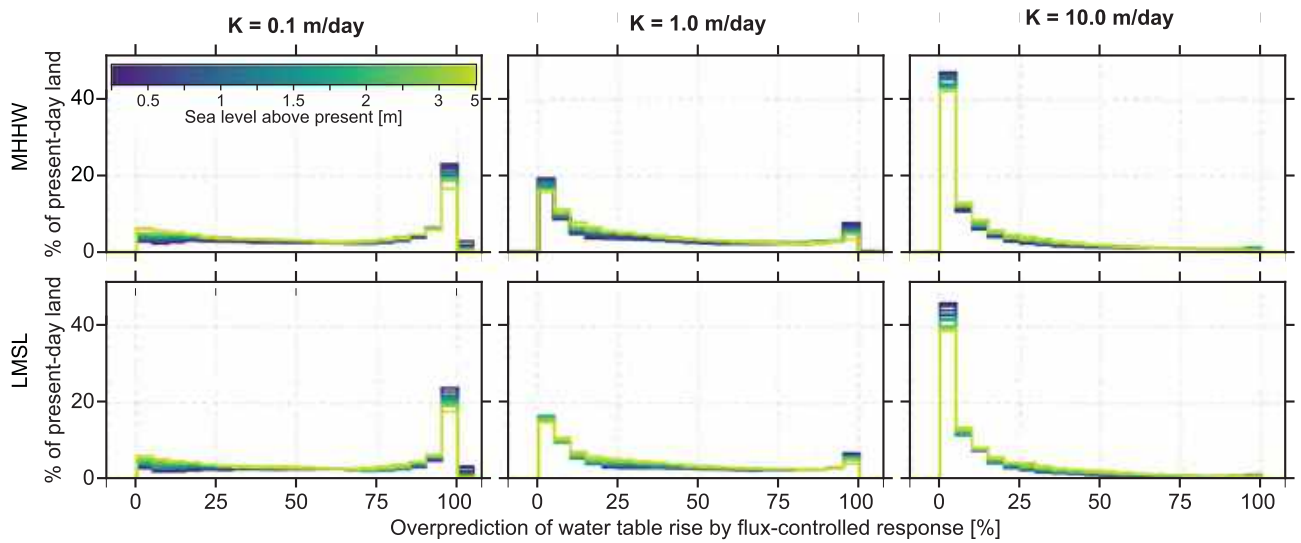
Supplementary information is available for this paper at https://doi.org/10.1038/s41558-020-0874-1.

Correspondence and requests for materials should be addressed to K.M.B.

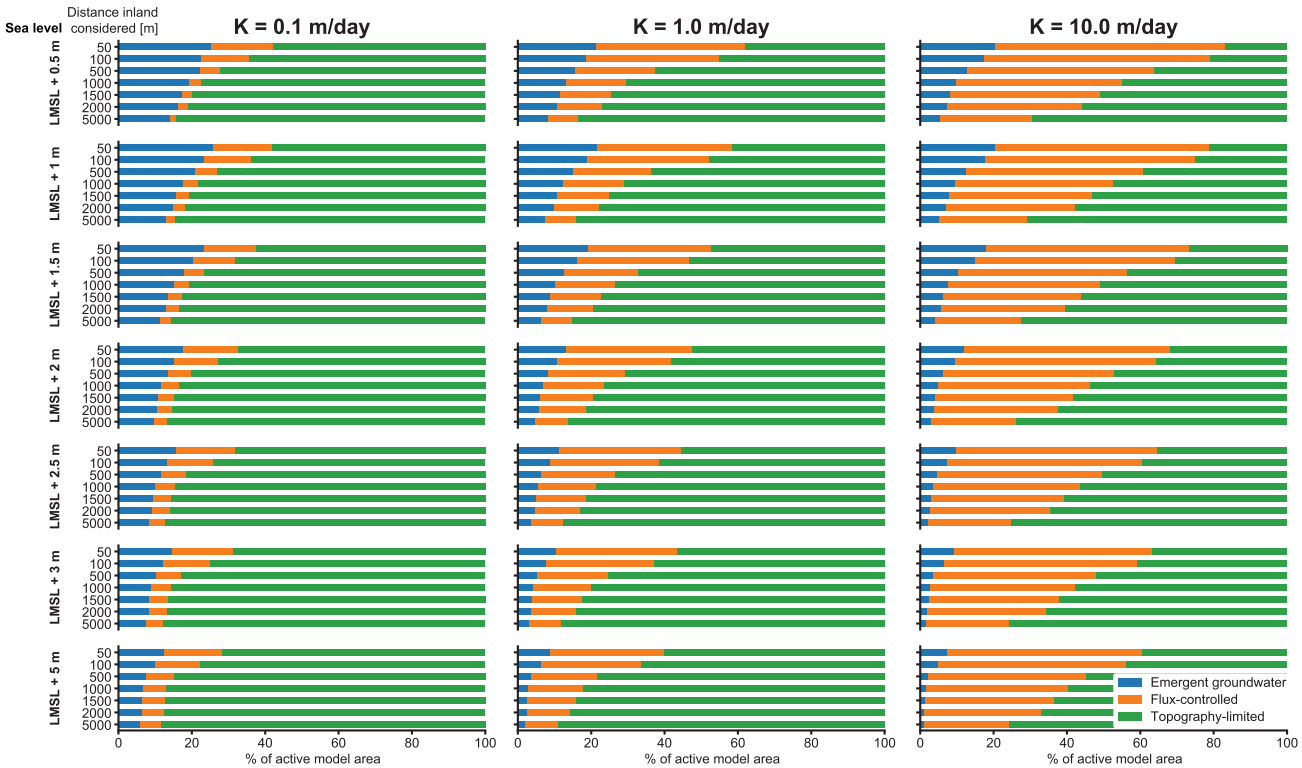
Peer review information *Nature Climate Change* thanks Chunhui Lu, Christine May and the other, anonymous, reviewer(s) for their contribution to the peer review of this work.



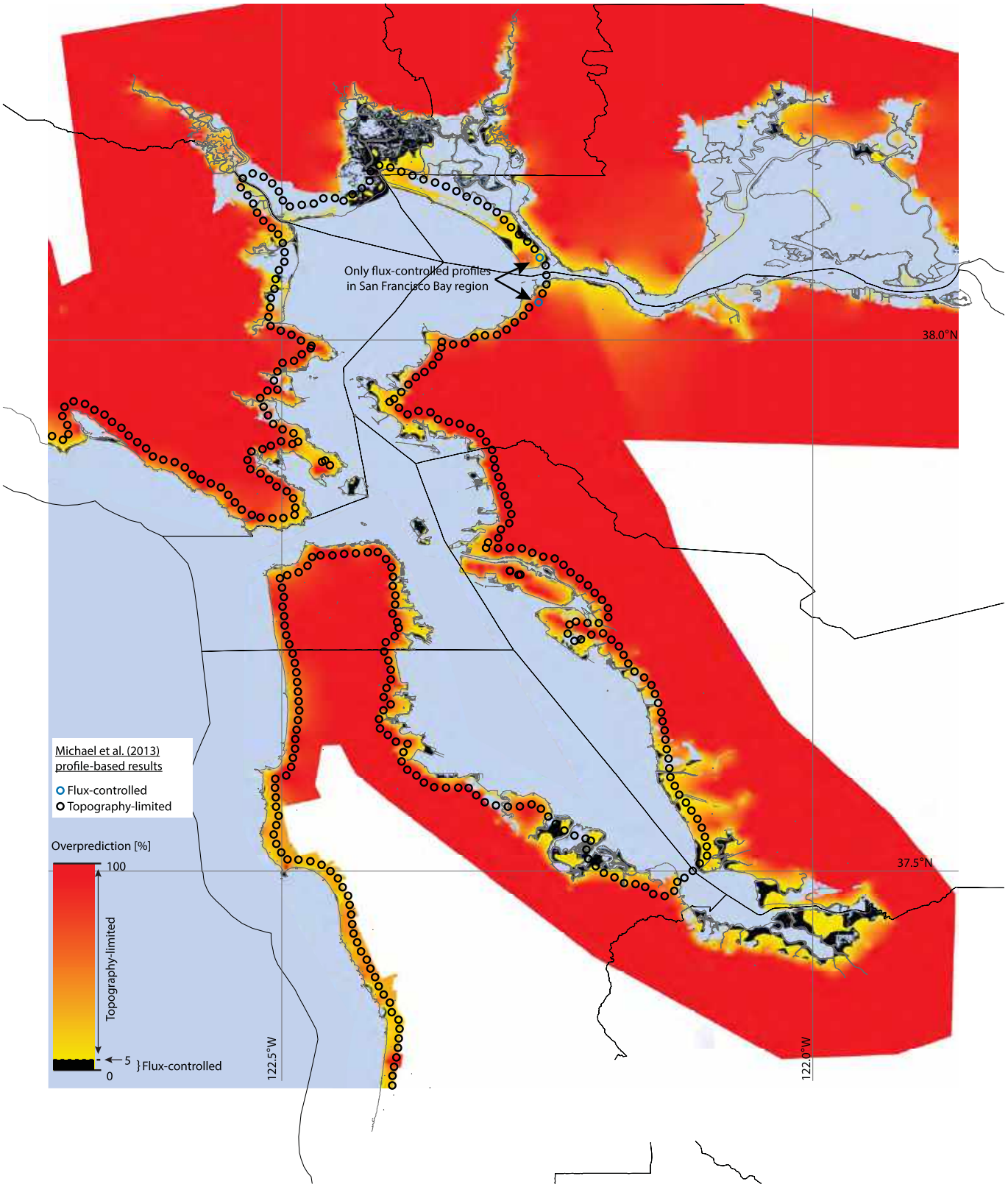
Extended Data Fig. 1 | Difference in model water table response behavior. Conceptual cross-section showing how the flux-controlled model can overpredict heads compared to the water tables that include the hydraulic conditions created by surface drains.



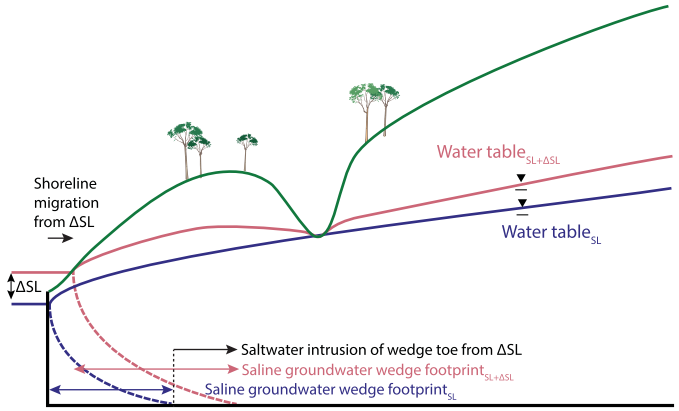
Extended Data Fig. 2 | Distribution of flux-controlled (≤5%) and topography-limited (>5%) groundwater conditions along coastal California for higher sea levels. The overprediction of the water table rise by the flux-controlled response was calculated for all K and tidal datum scenarios to 1 km inland with Methods Eq. 1.



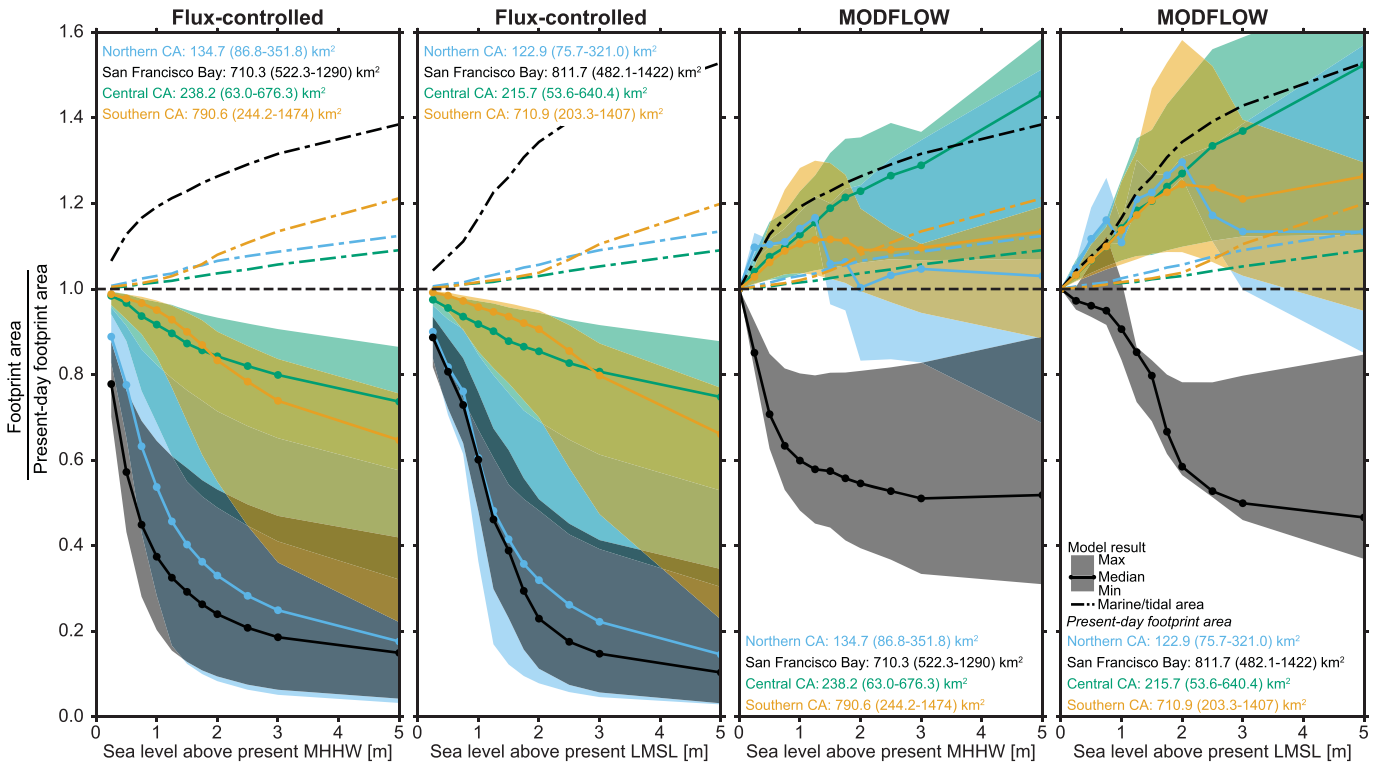
Extended Data Fig. 3 | Distribution of emergent groundwater, flux-controlled, and topography-limited conditions with increasing sea levels and varying the distance inland used in the analysis for the LMSL tidal datum scenarios. The MHHW distributions showed very similar distributions and were visually indistinguishable from the LMSL distributions in this figure. Note the irregular spacing on the vertical axes.



Extended Data Fig. 4 | Profile-based comparison with current analysis. Spatial comparison between the overprediction calculated in this study (Eq. 1; LMSL + 1 m, K = 1 m/d, MODFLOW forecast) and the delineation of flux-controlled (that is, recharge-limited) and topography-limited profiles from the "base case" of Michael et al.[13] for 1 m of sea-level rise.



Extended Data Fig. 5 | Graphical definition of the saline groundwater wedge footprint and saltwater intrusion.



Extended Data Fig. 6 | Growth of the saline groundwater wedge footprint across coastal California regions for the flux-controlled and MODFLOW model predictions.

April 22, 2022

RE: Endorsement of Willow Village

Dear Menlo Park Planning Commission,

For over 60 years, Greenbelt Alliance has helped create cities and neighborhoods that make the Bay Area a better place to live - healthy places where people can walk and bike; communities with parks, shops, transportation options; homes that are affordable - and defend the Bay Area's natural and agricultural landscapes from sprawl development. Greenbelt Alliance's "Grow Smart Bay Area" goals call for fully protecting the Bay Area's greenbelt and directing growth into our existing communities, and accomplishing both in a way that equitably benefits all Bay Area residents. Our endorsement program helps further these goals by providing independent validation of smart infill housing (development of vacant land within urban areas) and mixed-use projects (allowing for various uses like office, commercial and residential).

Greenbelt Alliance is pleased to conceptually endorse Willow Village

As a mixed-use development, Willow Village would bring housing, jobs, neighborhood-serving retail, and other community amenities including a 4.1 acre public park, 2.1 acre elevated park, dog park, plazas and 1.6 acre town square to a neighborhood without neighborhood-serving retail and service uses. This 1,735 unit, mixed-use development, proposed by Sunset Development will have a commitment for affordability. 18% of units across the project will be offered at Below-Market-Rate Rents (with 100 units reserved for very low income seniors) for households ranging from 30-120% of the Area Median Income (AMI).

This Project would reduce VMT by introducing neighborhood-serving retail, including a full-service grocery store and pharmacy, and other community amenities, to an existing neighborhood without such amenities. The addition of such amenities to the area would reduce the number and length of automobile retail trips of existing residents and employees. Willow Village is also located within 1/2 mile of Facebook's major employment center with bike, pedestrian and shuttle routes available so that employees do not have to drive. Similarly, the inclusion of retail in the Project causes the VMT from Project residents and employees to be lower than it would be if the Project did not include retail uses.

Approximately 1.25M square feet of traditional office space featuring next generation, LEED-Gold design and 500,000 square feet of accessory space that includes a public visitor center and flexible meeting, collaboration and conference space for employees and office guests. This is the kind of climate-smart development that we need in the Bay Area to meet our housing goals, reduce

greenhouse gas emissions, and make sure that local residents are able to grow and thrive in their own communities as housing costs rise.

This project will help the city of Menlo Park make significant progress towards its Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) goals. Every city in the Bay Area must play their part to increase their housing stock to make sure the local workforce can afford to live close to jobs, schools, and services — spending more time with family and friends and less time in traffic congestion — improving the social fabric of our communities and reducing the climate-damaging greenhouse gas emissions produced by driving.

We recommend the City of Menlo Park approve both of these projects. We hope its approval will resonate with other Bay Area cities, and encourage them to redouble their efforts to grow smartly.

Sincerely,
Zoe Siegel

Director of Climate Resilience, Greenbelt Alliance

Perata, Kyle T

To: Perata, Kyle T
Subject: Greenbelt Alliance supports Willow Village

From: Zoe Siegel [mailto:zsiegel@greenbelt.org]
Sent: Friday, May 20, 2022 3:00 PM
To: _CCIN <city.council@menlopark.org>
Cc: connect@willowvillage.com
Subject: Greenbelt Alliance supports Willow Village

Dear Councilmembers,

In advance of next weeks council meeting where Willow Village will be discussed, I would like to share that Greenbelt Alliance is pleased to endorse Willow Village. Please see our attached support letter.

Regards,

Zoe

--
Zoe Siegel (she/her/hers)
Director of Climate Resilience | **Greenbelt Alliance**
(510) 367-4464 | *Let's connect on LinkedIn* | @thezoesiegel
Schedule a meeting with me through Calendly

Check out my Chronicle Op Ed about why infill housing is a critical climate solution. greenbelt.org | Facebook | Twitter | Instagram

May 20th, 2022

RE: Endorsement of Willow Village

Dear Menlo Park City Council

For over 60 years, Greenbelt Alliance has helped create cities and neighborhoods that make the Bay Area a better place to live - healthy places where people can walk and bike; communities with parks, shops, transportation options; homes that are affordable - and defend the Bay Area's natural and agricultural landscapes from sprawl development. Greenbelt Alliance's "Grow Smart Bay Area" goals call for fully protecting the Bay Area's greenbelt and directing growth into our existing communities, and accomplishing both in a way that equitably benefits all Bay Area residents. Our endorsement program helps further these goals by providing independent validation of smart infill housing (development of vacant land within urban areas) and mixed-use projects (allowing for various uses like office, commercial and residential).

Greenbelt Alliance is pleased to conceptually endorse Willow Village

As a mixed-use development, Willow Village would bring housing, jobs, neighborhood-serving retail, and other community amenities including a 4.1 acre public park, 2.1 acre elevated park, dog park, plazas and 1.6 acre town square to a neighborhood without neighborhood-serving retail and service uses. This 1,735 unit, mixed-use development, proposed by Sunset Development will have a commitment for affordability. 18% of units across the project will be offered at Below-Market-Rate Rents (with 100 units reserved for very low income seniors) for households ranging from 30-120% of the Area Median Income (AMI).

This Project would reduce VMT by introducing neighborhood-serving retail, including a full-service grocery store and pharmacy, and other community amenities, to an existing neighborhood without such amenities. The addition of such amenities to the area would reduce the number and length of automobile retail trips of existing residents and employees. Willow Village is also located within 1/2 mile of Facebook's major employment center with bike, pedestrian and shuttle routes available so that employees do not have to drive. Similarly, the inclusion of retail in the Project causes the VMT from Project residents and employees to be lower than it would be if the Project did not include retail uses.

Approximately 1.25M square feet of traditional office space featuring next generation, LEED-Gold design and 500,000 square feet of accessory space that includes a public visitor center and flexible meeting, collaboration and conference space for employees and office guests. This is the kind of climate-smart development that we need in the Bay Area to meet our housing goals, reduce

greenhouse gas emissions, and make sure that local residents are able to grow and thrive in their own communities as housing costs rise.

This project will help the city of Menlo Park make significant progress towards its Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) goals. Every city in the Bay Area must play their part to increase their housing stock to make sure the local workforce can afford to live close to jobs, schools, and services — spending more time with family and friends and less time in traffic congestion — improving the social fabric of our communities and reducing the climate-damaging greenhouse gas emissions produced by driving.

We recommend the City of Menlo Park approve both of these projects. We hope its approval will resonate with other Bay Area cities, and encourage them to redouble their efforts to grow smartly.

Sincerely,
Zoe Siegel

Director of Climate Resilience, Greenbelt Alliance

Tribal Nations Comments

Willow Village Draft Environmental Impact Report

KRONICK

KRONICK
MOSKOVITZ
TIEDEMANN
& GIRARD

May 22, 2022

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL AND CERTIFIED MAIL – Return Receipt Required

Kyle Perata, Acting Planning Manager
City of Menlo Park Community Development Department
701 Laurel Street
Menlo Park, CA 94025
Email: ktperata@menlopark.org

Re: Tamien Nation Comment Letter on Willow Village Master Plan Project Draft EIR

Dear Mr. Perata:

I am writing to you on behalf of the Tamien Nation, a California Native American Tribe, in response to the Willow Village Master Plan Project ("Project") Draft Environmental Impact Report ("DEIR"). The Project is located on the ancestral and unceded aboriginal homeland of the Tamien Nation of the greater Santa Clara Valley. Tamien Nation has direct lineal descendancy to precontact Tamien speaking villages and districts including San Juan Bautista Rancheria, San Jose Cupertino Rancheria, San Carlos Rancheria, San Antonio Rancheria, Santa Ysabel Rancheria, Santa Clara Rancheria and San Francisco Solano Rancheria.

Although the Tamien Nation has been engaged with the City of Menlo Park ("City") in the government to government consultation process to address impacts to tribal cultural resources as required by the California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA") and Assembly Bill 52 (Gatto, 2014) ("AB 52"), we remain concerned because significant environmental impacts to tribal cultural resources are still unaddressed and unmitigated in the DEIR. We have provided substantial evidence of tribal cultural resources, a tribal cultural landscape, and the cultural significance of these resources to the City during consultation. We have also recommended appropriate mitigation measures, such as avoidance and preservation in place, which are preferred mitigation methods under AB 52. We hope that by providing this letter and continuing to engage with the City and the project applicant through the consultation process the final EIR will better address these concerns, but if not, we are prepared to take appropriate legal action against the Project to protect these significant tribal cultural resources, including the Tamien Nation's Ancestors and sacred sites.

The Project is a major redevelopment of a 59-acre industrial site and three additional parcels west of Willow Road in Menlo Park. The Project is a multi-phase, mixed use development. The Project overlaps with and will substantially impact Tamien Nation tribal cultural resources

including sacred burial grounds and cultural sites, specifically, a Shellmound burial site referred to as the Hiller Mound (CA-SMA-160/H (P-41-000160)). The Tamien Nation submits this comment letter to request that the City ensure environmental impacts to the Hiller Mound are fully identified, analyzed, and mitigated as required by CEQA. The Project must also be consistent with the Menlo Park General Plan and ConnectMenlo FEIR.

While the Tamien Nation is engaged in tribal consultation with the City pursuant to AB 52, the Tamien Nation's input has been ignored and not taken as a serious Project concern. The Tamien Nation wants to cooperate with the City, but the City's failure to reciprocate has resulted in this letter, which must be added to the administrative record for the Project. A key aspect of AB 52 is to enable California Native American tribes to manage and accept conveyances of, and act as caretakers of, tribal cultural resources. Further, it requires parties to act in good faith in developing mitigation measures. (Public Resources Code § 21080.3.2.) In passing AB 52, the legislature intended for lead agencies to recognize and respect that "California Native American prehistoric, historic, archaeological, cultural, and sacred places are essential elements in tribal cultural traditions, heritages, and identities." (AB 52 § 1.) Project proponents need to recognize and should give deference to California Native American tribes because they "have expertise with regard to their tribal history and practices, which concern the tribal cultural resources with which they are traditionally and culturally affiliated". Since CEQA "calls for a sufficient degree of analysis, tribal knowledge about the land and tribal cultural resources at issue should be included in environmental assessments for projects that may have a significant impact on those resources." (*Id*.)

The Tamien Nation has used, and continues to use, the natural setting of the Hiller Mound to conduct religious observances, ceremonies, and cultural practices; this sacred site ties the Tamien Nation to their native land and cultural heritage. The Tamien Nation has expertise and a deep connection with and understanding of the tribal cultural resources that are on the Project site. In order to comply with the legal requirements of AB 52 consultation, the City needs to engage in consultation in good faith and put forth reasonable effort to create effective mitigation measures – not dismiss, belittle, and disregard the concerns of the Tamien Nation in favor of the Project proponent's desire not to add appropriate mitigation measures, as has been done by City planning staff in consultation thus far. (See Public Resources Code § 21080.3.2.)

Environmental Impacts and Current Inadequate Mitigation Measures

The Project will lead to significant environmental impacts to tribal cultural resources, specifically causing disturbance to Ancestral human remains of the Tamien Nation. Overall, the analysis is inadequate, and the mitigation measures disregard the Tamien Nation's culture, traditional uses, and the deep importance of the Hiller Mound as a significant tribal cultural resource. The mitigation measures proposed in the DEIR are inadequate and do not reduce the level of significance of the environmental impact to tribal cultural resources.

Before delving into the Project DEIR's proposed mitigation measures, we would like to point out that the mitigation measures discussed in the DEIR only focus on the core of the Hiller Mound.[1] Yet, CEQA requires an EIR to provide the information needed to alert the public and the decision makers of the significant impacts a project would create and to discuss feasible mitigation measures. (Public Resources Code § 21100; *Sierra Club v. County of Fresno* (2018) 6 Cal.5th 502, 523.) To fulfill the EIR's informational role, the discussion of the mitigation measures must contain facts and analysis, not bare conclusions and opinions. (*Golden Door Properties, LLC v. County of San Diego* (2020) 50 Cal.App.5th 467, 544 citing to *King & Gardiner Farms, LLC v. County of Kern* (2020) 45 Cal.App.5th 814, 869.) The level of detail CEQA required in the EIR's discussion of facts and analysis of the mitigation measures depends on "whether the EIR includes enough detail 'to enable those who did not participate in its preparation to understand and to consider meaningfully the issues raised by the proposed project.'" (*Ibid.*) Here, the mitigation measures are blatantly insufficient because the EIR fails to adequately address **75%** of the sacred site.[2] The DEIR inaccurately describes the Hiller Mound Core as "the most culturally sensitive" archeological component of Hiller Mound and the proceeds to only focus on the Hiller Mound Core. (DEIR p. 3.8-24.) First, the Hiller Mound Core is culturally sensitive, as is the *entire* Hiller Mound area. Second, even for argument's sake if the Hiller Mound Core was more culturally sensitive than another area, it does not give license for the Project to disregard the environmental impacts to the rest of the sacred site. The DEIR's mitigation measures are inadequate.

Mitigation measures must be feasible and minimize the Project's significant impacts. (Public Resources Code §§ 21002.1(a), 21100(b)(3); CEQA Guidelines § 15126.4(a).) The EIR must also analyze any significant effects of the measures it describes. (CEQA Guidelines § 15126.4(a); see also *Stevens v. City of Glendale,* 125 Cal.App.3d 986, 995 (1981).) Mitigation measures for impacts to tribal cultural resources must be enforceable, related to the significant impact and culturally appropriate. (Public Resources Code § 21084.3; CEQA Guidelines §§ 15126.4(a)(2); 15126.4(a)(4).) Pursuant to AB 52, public agencies shall, when feasible, avoid damaging effect to any tribal cultural resource. (Public Resources Code § 21084.3.) As acknowledged in the DEIR, "[a]voidance and preservation in place are the preferable forms of mitigation for archeological sites." (DEIR p. 3.8-24.) Measures that may be considered to avoid or minimize significant adverse impacts include planning and construction to avoid the tribal cultural resource and protect the cultural and natural context or planning open space to incorporate the resources with culturally appropriate protection. To comply with AB 52, the lead

[1] The only measure the DEIR applies to the entire Hiller Mound as a whole is a mitigation measure to "note on any plans that require ground-disturbing excavation that there is potential for exposing buried cultural resources" and that "site information supplied to the contractor shall be considered and marked confidential." (DEIR p. 3.8-25, ES-33.) As discussed further in the letter, this proposed measure is unclear and does nothing to mitigate environmental impacts.

[2] The DEIR only addressed the Hiller Mound Core, which is 1.77 acres, while the entire Hiller Mound (referred to as "revised site boundary") is 7.03 acres.] The Hiller Core Mound is only 25% of the entire site. (1.77 / 7.03 = 0.2518.) The DEIR must analyze the entire Hiller Mound, and avoid it if feasible, in order to comply with CEQA. The City should choose an alternative that avoids this sacred site.

agency must treat tribal cultural resources with culturally appropriate dignity and take tribal cultural values and the meaning of the resources into account. This can be done by protecting the cultural character and integrity, traditional use, and confidentiality of the resource. (Public Resources Code § 21084.3.) We recognize there is some effort to mitigate significant impacts in the DEIR, but the measures need to consider and give greater deference to avoidance, adequate measures to provide preservation in place, and our cultural values.

Mitigation measures cannot be developed without first achieving a full understanding of the extent of a tribal cultural resource so as to properly identify the impacts on tribal cultural resources from a project. (See *Save the Agoura Cornell Knoll v. City of Agoura Hills* (2020) 46 Cal.App.5th 665, 686-689 where the City lost in court because it failed to determine the extent of tribal cultural resources or if the entire site could be avoided, or that it was impractical or infeasible for the City to make this determination as part of its initial review.) Mitigation measures should be described specifically and not deferred for future formulation. (Guidelines § 15126.4(a)(1)(B); see generally *POET, LLC v. Cal. Air Resources Control Board,* 218 Cal.App.4th at 681, where lead agency stated it would implement a measure to mitigate significant impacts but failed to specify compliance and monitoring requirements.) Specific details of mitigation measures may be developed after project approval only "when it is impractical or infeasible to include those details during the project's environmental review," and the agency "adopts specific performance standards the mitigation will achieve." (CEQA Guidelines, § 15126. subd. (a)(1)(B).) Therefore, mitigation of post-construction uses of the land use needs to be analyzed now, and those impacts must be addressed in the DEIR.

Here, the DEIR does not fully address mitigation measures related to the use of space above the Hiller Mound Core and only concludes that the Hiller Mound Core will be incorporated into open space to avoid construction of other structures. (DEIR p. 3.8-24.) While we recognize that the Project would incorporate the Hiller Mound Core into open space – the DEIR fails to specify how the open space will be used. (DEIR p. 3.8-24.) As already expressed, the entire Hiller Mound should be avoided, not just the core. If Hiller Mound is to be converted into open space, there must be additional restrictions regarding use of the open space above the Shellmound, which is a tribal cemetery and sacred site. It would be disrespectful and a complete divergence from our traditional cultural values if this open space is used for parks or recreational uses. The Hiller Mound meets the definition of a cemetery[3] – it would be difficult to fathom recreational activities taking place immediately above the graves of departed loved ones if those Ancestors were not Native American. This Project would not be allowed at Menlo Park's Holy Cross or Saint Patrick's Cemeteries, and we must ask why should Native American sacred places and Ancestral remains be treated any differently? The City would never contemplate designating these places as open space for the public to trample over their ancestors. Such cemeteries are only a few hundred years old as opposed to Shellmound, which date back over five thousand years. The Tamien

[3] See Health and Safety Code § 7003 which defines a cemetery as, "a place where six or more human bodies are buried." There are more than six human bodies in the Hiller Mound area and therefore the Hiller Mound is considered a cemetery.

Nation is merely asking for equality: for their Ancestors to be treated the same as those buried in other local cemeteries. The Hiller Mound is a Tamien Nation sacred site and anything other than complete avoidance preferably, or at a minimum non-destructive preservation in place, is unacceptable.

The DEIR must recognize and respect that the open space designation requires greater definition and use restrictions. We will not accept as consolation mere signage acknowledging the Tamien Nation's historical presence in the Hiller Mound area. This would be an unacceptable mitigation measure considering signage does nothing to mitigate the impacts to tribal cultural resources and only benefits and educates others who do not know the Tamien Nation's history. Therefore, we recommend establishment of a tribal cultural resources' conservation easement over the Hiller Mound. With the use of tribal cultural ecological knowledge and stewardship, the land could be landscaped with culturally relevant California Native plants and maintained by the Tamien Nation, creating a beautiful natural environment at the heart of the Project.

We recognize that the Project as proposed would add fill as a protective cover, thereby potentially preserving portions of the Hiller Mound in place. (Measure CR-2.1, DEIR p. 3.8-24.) However, the additional fill and concentrated pressure from compaction of the fill will damage and harm the Tamien Nation's Ancestors' remains and funerary and ceremonial objects. According to the DEIR, plans that require ground disturbing excavation note where there is the potential for exposing buried cultural resources and such information will be provided to the contractor and be marked confidential – yet it is unclear how this will prevent significant impacts to tribal cultural resources. (Mitigation Measure CR 2.1.) What does it mean for a contractor to *consider* the archeological site information? It is unclear how this measure will mitigate damage if the contractor merely *considers* location of human remains and proceeds anyway. Rather, a detailed and enforceable mitigation measure that includes tribal input and deference to tribal knowledge as expertise should be included as part of the Final EIR.

Other standard mitigation measures include cultural sensitivity training for workers and construction superintendents and development of an Archeological Monitoring Plan. (Mitigation Measure CR 2.2.) The Archaeological Monitoring Plan should be a Tribal Cultural Resources and Archaeological Monitoring plan and include substantial input from the Tamien Nation.

Furthermore, the Project and related construction activities will disturb known tribal cultural resources – specifically, the cumulative stresses induced by gravity load of construction of the estimated 40 scaffolding towers (for construction of a glass atrium within the Hiller Mound Core) along with the gravity load from the fill cap and existing soil. The DEIR notes that such concentrated pressure on the mound would be potentially significant. (DEIR pp. 3.8-24-25.) Additionally, there is anticipated leveling of the fill cap to install the scaffolding towers and potential for disturbance 12 inches <u>beneath the surface of the fill cap</u>. Construction activity above the Shellmound will cause destruction by crushing the Tamien Nation's Ancestors' remains and funerary objects, breaking them under the weight of compaction, thereby desecrating the Tamien Nation's sacred place.

It does not matter that there will be an archeological consultant on site to determine if they think protective measures should be required prior to boring into the ground – any contact with Hiller Mound should be completely avoided. To protect the cultural integrity of the Hiller Mound Core, the Final EIR must include 15 feet of engineered fill above the Hiller Mound Core to function as a protective cover for our Ancestors and the Hiller Mound Core. With an increased depth of engineered fill, Ancestral remains, funerary, burial and ceremonial items will be better protected from disturbance.

In addition, the DEIR recommends archeological data recovery when encountering archeological resources that cannot be avoided. This mitigation measure is inappropriate and fails to mitigate the significant impacts of the Project. It *worsens* the significant impact because it is culturally inappropriate and disrespectful to the Tamien Nation. (See Public Resources Code § 21084.3; CEQA Guidelines §§ 15126.4(a)(2); 15126.4(a)(4)).) Any form of archeological testing or data recovery fails to meet the standards of preservation with culturally appropriate dignity and consideration of tribal cultural values that are required by AB 52. In order to comply with the AB 52, any handling of human remains must include substantial input from the Tamien Nation. Mitigation measures must not themselves create environmental impacts. If mitigation measures do create additional impacts, those impacts must also be analyzed in CEQA. (See *Stevens v. City of Glendale* (1981) 125 Cal.App.3d 986.)

Because the Project will impact tribal cultural resources the City should consider how to support the tribal cultural preservation and restoration endeavors of California Native American Tribes whose tribal cultural resources are impacted by the Project. For example, this could include providing support for the Tamien Nation's goals of language preservation and land acquisition to protect our sacred sites, cultural resources, and manage the environment using tribal ecological knowledge.

Inadequate Analysis of Cumulative Impacts

The DEIR does not adequately discuss the cumulative impacts of the Project on tribal cultural resources and provides a conclusory analysis. "An EIR shall discuss cumulative impacts of a project when the project's incremental effect is cumulatively considerable," which means "that the incremental effects of an individual project are significant when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects." (14 C.C.R. § 15065; see also *Cleveland National Forest Foundation v. San Diego Assn. of Governments* (2017) 3 Cal.5th 497, 512.) It is improper for an EIR to conclude that a project's cumulative impacts are insignificant merely because the project contributes to an existing and unacceptable environmental condition. (See *Los Angeles Unified School District v. City of Los Angeles* (1997) 58 Cal.App.4th 1019, 1025-26; *Kings County Farm Bureau v. City of Hanford* (1990) 221 Cal.App.3d 692, 718.) Rather, in assessing cumulative impacts, the determination of whether the project's contribution is cumulatively considerable should take into account both the project's incremental effect and the nature and severity of the pre-exiting

significant cumulative effect. (*Communities for a Better Environment v. Cal. Resources Agency* (2002) 103 Cal.App.4th 98, 119-20.)

First, the DEIR fails to identify other Shellmound and describe previous and potential future damage to shellmounds within the San Francisco Bay Area that will likely impact Tamien Nation and other tribes' tribal cultural resources and the greater tribal cultural landscape. (Refer to "Attachment 1" for a map of shellmound locations in the San Francisco Bay Area.) Many of these shellmounds are older than the Egyptian pyramids and are historically significant for all Californians. They also remain culturally significant to Indigenous people today. This historical damage and potential for future damage to these shellmounds need to be included in the cumulative impacts assessment of the DEIR. Second, the DEIR merely concludes that the Project would not be a cumulatively considerable contributor to a significant cumulative impact on cultural and tribal cultural resources because Project-level and applicable ConnectMenlo mitigation measures are in place and future projects would be required to comply with existing federal, state, and local regulations. As described above, the mitigation measures proposed in the DEIR *will themselves cause significant impacts.* If the same mitigation measures are repeated for other projects, the incremental effect of the cumulative impact over time will be cumulatively substantial.

It is important to note a cultural distinction, the Hiller Mound does not lose significance and value to the Tamien Nation even though the Hiller Mound was previously damaged and disturbed. The damage and disturbance to the Tamien Nation's Ancestors' remains is extremely painful. This burial site carries deep cultural and spiritual meaning. It may seem to other cultures that, once damaged, the Hiller Mound would lose value, but it is still a part of the Tamien Nation's culture, and we will continue to protect the area to the best of our abilities.

CalNAGPRA and Repatriation to Tamien Nation

The Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act ("NAGPRA") provides a procedure for repatriation of human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects, or objects of cultural significance to the appropriate lineal descendant, Indian Tribe, or Native Hawaiian organization according to a statutory schedule of priority. (25 U.S.C. § 3002.) The California Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act of 2001 ("CalNAGPRA"), codified as Health & Safety Code section 8010, et. seq., requires agencies that have possession or control over Native American human remains to facilitate repatriation to the relevant Tribes. (Health and Safety Code § 8010 et. seq.) A lineal descendant or California Indian Tribe can claim relationship with Native American remains or cultural items and request repatriation (Health and Safety Code § 8014-8016.) Once applicable requirements are met, the agency must repatriate the requested human remains or cultural items to the requesting California Indian Tribe. (Health and Safety Code § 8016.) Disposition is according to the wishes of the lineal descendants or affiliated Tribe. The repatriation of human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects, or objects of cultural patrimony must be accomplished consulting with the Tribe to determine the place and manner of the repatriation. (43 C.F.R. § 10.10 (2015).)

Pursuant to NAGPRA and CalNAGPRA, we have the right to be consulted and decide the place and manner of repatriation of our ancestors' human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects, and objects of cultural significance. We strongly oppose excavated Native American human remains or associated funerary objects or ceremonial objects being curated and stored at Sonoma State University, or any other university or museum. We demand the Tamien Nation's Ancestors' remains, funerary objects, sacred objects, and objects of cultural significance be respectfully reinterred within the Hiller Mound area in a place not subject to further disturbance. The only culturally appropriate and acceptable option is to return the Tamien Nation's Ancestors back to their final and rightful resting place. The area shall not be subject to further disturbance and must be appropriately capped.

In closing, Chairwoman Geary provided the following statement regarding the Project and its devastating impact on the Tamien Nation:

> *"Shellmounds are not trash heaps. They are sacred spaces interweaving thousands of years of Indigenous culture, history, and religion. Today, the Hiller Mound is a Tamien Nation sanctified cemetery - our place of prayer where we honor and provide offerings to our deities and ancestors. Shellmounds have physical features that are both above and below the ground surface level and the entire space they occupy is sacred. Even Shellmounds that have been previously impacted are of great significance and continue to have cultural integrity to Tamien Nation.*
>
> *Before colonial contact, there were thousands of Shellmounds in California. The Hiller Mound is one of the few Shellmounds left that are still visible. Therefore, the Hiller Mound is not only significant to the Tamien Nation, but its protection should be important to everyone."*

I sincerely hope that we can work together to protect this sacred site and Native American burial ground through the ongoing government to government consultation process.

Very truly yours,

Holly A. Roberson
Shareholder
Kronick, Moskovitz, Tiedemann & Girard
A Professional Corporation

Enclosure: Map of San Francisco Bay Region Showing Distribution of Shellheaps. (Univ. of Calif. Publ. Am. Arch. Ethn. Vol. 7, Map 1)

MAP
of
SAN FRANCISCO BAY REGION
showing
DISTRIBUTION
of
SHELL HEAPS

LEGEND

- ● = MOUNDS STILL PRESENT
- ○ = MOUNDS DISAPPEARED
- ▲ MINOR CAMP SITES

NAPA
SHELLVILLE
PETALUMA
LAKEVILLE
San Antonio Cr.
PETALUMA CREEK
NOVATO
PETALUMA PT.
TOLENAS CR.
NAPA R.
VALLEJO
MARE ISL.
SAN PABLO BAY
FAIRFIELD
SUISUN
CORDELIA
NAPA JUNCTION
SUISUN BAY
BENICIA
CARQUINEZ STR.
CROCKETT
PORT COSTA
RODEO
Refugio Cr.
MARTINEZ
SACRAMENTO & SAN JOAQUIN RVS.
PINOLE PT.
PINOLE
CONCORD
SAN RAFAEL
SAN PEDRO PT.
SAN PABLO STRAIT
SAN PABLO PT.
Pinole Cr.
San Pablo Cr.
Wildcat Cr.
MT TAMALPAIS
RICHMOND
MILL VALLEY
TIBURON PEN.
BOLINAS BAY
RICHARDSON BAY
RACCOON STR.
ANGEL ID.
BROOKS ID.
BERKELEY
SAUSALITO
ALCATRAZ ID.
GOLDEN GATE
SAN FRANCISCO BAY
GOAT ID.
OAKLAND
ALAMEDA
San Leandro Cr.
CHABOT L.
SAN LEANDRO
HAYWARDS
S. P. R. R.
AVISADERO PT. (Hunters Pt.)
Merced
COLMA
MUSSEL ROCK
SOUTH SAN FRANCISCO
SAN BRUNO PT.
SAN BRUNO
MILLBRAE
SAN MATEO
Sanchez Cr.
Colma Creek
Alameda Cr.
MONTARA PT.
PILLAR PT.
HALF MOON BAY
SANTA CRUZ MTS.
BELMONT
REDWOOD
San Francisquito Cr.
PALO ALTO
MAYFIELD
COYOTE RY.
ALVISO
CASTRO
MOUNTAIN VIEW
Guadalupe R.
PACIFIC OCEAN

122°30' 25' 20' 15' 10' 05' 122°00' West of Greenwich
40' 35'
15' 10' 05' 50' 45' 40' 35'

MUWEKMA OHLONE INDIAN TRIBE

OF THE SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA REGION

'Innu Huššištak Makiš Mak-Muwekma *"The Road To The Future For Our People"*

June 21, 2022 Via Email: ktperata@menlopark.org

City of Menlo Park
Mr. Kyle Perata, Acting Planning Manager
701 Laurel Street
Menlo Park, CA 94025

RE: Willow Village

Horše Túuxi Mr. Perata:

On behalf of the Muwekma Ohlone Tribe of the San Francisco Bay Area, I am following up on the City of Menlo Park's consultation with the Tribe on Willow Village. We appreciated the opportunity to consult with the City of Menlo Park and Signature Development Group following our request for consultation under AB52.

As you may know, the present-day Muwekma Ohlone Tribe is comprised of all of the known surviving American Indian lineages aboriginal to the San Francisco Bay Region who trace their ancestry through Missions Dolores, Santa Clara, and San Jose; and who were also members of the historic Federally Recognized Verona Band of Alameda County.

The Tribe has consulted with both the City of Menlo Park and Signature Development Group on tribal cultural issues for Willow Village and on mitigation measures developed for the project. This includes avoidance, preservation and protection measures and requires archeological monitoring plans during construction and archeological treatment plans in the case where human remains, or artifacts are discovered during project excavations.

The Muwekma Ohlone Tribe supports the mitigation measures described in the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for Willow Village to protect and respect Tribal cultural resources. We look forward to continued consultation, coordination, and collaboration with both the City of Menlo Park and Signature Development Group as the project continues into construction.

Please don't hesitate to contact me via email monicavarellano@gmail.com or on my cell phone at 408-205-9714 if you have questions or need additional information.

'Úni ~ Respectfully,

Monica V. Arellano, Vice Chairwoman and MLD Representative
Muwekma Ohlone Tribe of the San Francisco Bay Area

Amah Mutsun Tribal Band of Mission San Juan Bautista

June 1, 2022

Kyle Perata, Principal Planner
The City of Menlo Park
Sent Via Email: ktperata@menlopark.org
Willow Village Master Plan Project

Dear Mr. Perata,

I am writing to thank the City of Menlo Park for its consultation with The Amah Mutsun Tribal Band of Mission San Juan Bautista regarding Willow Village under AB 52. The Tribe has been involved with the project since 2015 when we were appointed as the Most Likely Descendant for Native American burials associated with the archaeological site within the project by the California Native American Heritage Commission. In addition, the Tribe has been consulted by the project proponent in regard to Native American concerns regarding the potential project for many years.

The Amah Mutsun Tribal Band of Mission San Juan Bautista have been appointed by the Native American Heritage Commission as Most Likely Descendants for CA-SMA-160/H. The Tribe has provided recommendations for Native American burials exposed during construction and have participated in their recovery and reburial since 2013. We have worked with the archaeologists and owner to excavate and analyze the burials and artifacts to develop our tribal history. The Tribe has selected reburial locations within the property and ceremonially reburied the remains.

Most importantly the Tribe has been consulted by Facebook during the development process since 2017. We have participated in both archaeological monitoring by providing Tribal Monitors and in reviewing proposed project plans to provide Tribal input regarding Native American cultural resources.

3030 Soda Bay Road

Lakeport, CA 95453

650 851 7489

amtbinc21@gmail.com

Amah Mutsun Tribal Band of Mission San Juan Bautista

We were also consulted formally by the City of Menlo Park under AB52 related to the Draft Environmental Impact report for Willow Village, including the proposed Mitigation Measures for the project. The Amah Mutsun Tribal Band of Mission San Juan Bautista approves of the proposed Mitigation Measures for Willow Village related to tribal cultural resources and looks forward to continued consultation with both the City of Menlo Park and Facebook to ensure that Tribal Cultural Resources are protected.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the Tribe at the below contact information.

Sincerely,
Irenne Zwierlein Tribal Chief and Chairwoman
Amah Mutsun Tribal Band of Mission San Juan Bautista

3030 Soda Bay Road

Lakeport, CA 95453

650 851 7489

amtbinc21@gmail.com

Public Agencies Comments

Willow Village Draft Environmental Impact Report

CITY OF EAST PALO ALTO
Office of the City Manager

May 20, 2022

Kyle Perata, Acting Planning Manager
Community Development Department
City of Menlo Park
701 Lauren Street
Menlo Park, CA 94025

Subject: Notice of Availability for the Facebook Willow Master Plan Project

Dear Mr. Perata:

This letter is provided in response to the Notice of Availability (NOA) for the Facebook Willow Master Plan Project. Thank you for providing an opportunity to comment. East Palo Alto values its relationship with Menlo Park and we hope to continue to work cooperatively on the many issues common to both of our communities.

The City commented on the Notice of Preparation on October 17, 2019, and incorporates those comments by reference.

Proximity to East Palo Alto Residential Neighborhoods
The project site is in very close proximity to East Palo Alto residences, specifically three single family residential neighborhoods: Kavanaugh, University Village and Palo Alto Park. In some instances, the residences are within 300 feet of the site. Given the size of the project and the five-year construction time period, the City requests that equal consideration be given to these neighborhoods as Menlo Park neighborhoods. In some cases, these East Palo Alto neighborhoods would be more impacted by this project. The City has concerns about various impacts (described below) as well as air quality, biological resources, energy, geology and soils, greenhouse gas emissions, hazards and hazardous materials, and hydrology and water quality.

Proximity to the Ravenswood Priority Development Area and the Ravenswood/Four Corners Specific Plan Update
The project site is located less than 2,000 feet from the Ravenswood Business District (RBD), which is a priority development area and an important jobs center for East Palo Alto. The City is in the process of updating the Specific Plan, which may include increasing the amount of both nonresidential and residential square footage. The Notice of Preparation for the update was released on May 9, 2022; however, the update has

been in process, including multiple public hearings, since mid-2020. While the Draft EIR includes the four projects proposed for the RBD area, the text does not acknowledge or discuss the RBD Specific Plan update. The Draft EIR should explicitly include in its analysis the RBD Specific Plan Update. Given the importance of the RBD area for East Palo Alto, that it is a designated priority development area and the pending update, the City is very concerned about the potential impact of the Willow Village project on the ability to develop the RBD area. Specifically, traffic impacts from the Willow Village would directly impact the RBD area.

Jobs Housing Ratio

The City of East Palo Alto provides a significant amount of housing stock in Silicon Valley. East Palo Alto has more housing units than jobs, the lowest market rate prices in the region, and approximately 30% (or 2,405 of 7,759 units) of the total housing units are currently registered (non-exempt) in the Rent Stabilization Program. The City is concerned that the proposed development of a significant amount of nonresidential square footage would exacerbate the existing housing crisis in East Palo Alto.

Cumulative Impacts

The Draft EIR tiers off the ConnectMenlo EIR prepared for the General Plan update. ConnectMenlo did not include East Palo Alto projects in the cumulative scenario due to a water moratorium that paused projects in East Palo Alto during the preparation of the DEIR. This DEIR includes a list-based approach for the cumulative analysis. The list used for the cumulative analysis is incomplete. It does not include two projects that were approved but not yet constructed (Clarum University and Sobrato Phase II) nor the RBD Specific Plan Update. Clarum University, located at 2331 University, was approved for the construction of a 47,594 square foot four-story mixed-use building with retail space and parking on the ground level and 33 residential dwelling units on the levels above the ground floor. The Sobrato Phase II project was approved for the demolition of two existing buildings and construction of an eight-story structure with approximately 231,883 square feet of office space and a five-story, 284,094-square-foot parking structure. The City respectfully requests that the DEIR analyze these three projects for cumulative and traffic impacts.

Aesthetics

The Aesthetics analysis included the viewsheds from two locations within the City of East Palo Alto. The DEIR included a photosimulation which simulated potential views from the Kavanaugh View shed, one of three single family neighborhoods located within 300 feet of the project site. The photosimulation clearly shows the project will significantly alter middle ground views. Buildings over 70 feet in height would clearly be visible from the neighborhood. Although there are no identified scenic vistas, the project would change the character of the area with a significantly taller structures both for the project and cumulatively. The Draft EIR should be revised to incorporate mitigation to reduce the impacts on the viewshed to a less than significant impact.

Construction and Air Quality
The DEIR identifies three significant unavoidable impacts for air quality. There are a significant number of sensitive receptors within the three East Palo Alto single-family neighborhoods near the perimeter of the project site. The DEIR states that extended construction hours are proposed over the five-year construction period. Work is proposed between 7:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. Monday through Saturday. Construction is also proposed on Sunday from 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Although it is recognized that air quality issues are beyond the control of any one jurisdiction, the City is significantly concerned about the extended construction hours and five-year time period and the potential impact on East Palo Alto residents and sensitive receptors.

Mitigation Measures AQ 1.1, AQ 2b2 require that prior to the issuance of a building permit that the applicant provide a supplemental analysis by a qualified air quality specialist that the construction would not create air quality impacts that exceed Bay Area Air Quality Management District regulations and CEQA guidelines. Due to the potential direct impacts on East Palo Alto residents, the City requests that the mitigation measure also require submittal of the construction air quality analysis that includes analysis for East Palo Alto impacts be submitted for East Palo Alto review.

Construction and Noise/Vibration impacts
The DEIR identifies three significant unavoidable impacts related to noise and vibration. As described above, there are three neighborhoods in the City of East Palo Alto that will be directly impacted. The City is significantly concerned due to the proximity of East Palo neighborhoods to the project.

Noise 1.1 and 2a require a construction noise control plan and a noise and vibration analysis to assess and mitigate potential noise and vibration impacts. The plan and analysis should be evaluated to prevent noise impacts on East Palo Alto neighborhoods. Activities that cannot comply with the noise limit of 60dBA at the residential or noise sensitive land use or exceed maximum level of 0.2 in/sec for vibrations should not be permitted. The City also requests to review the noise control plan and noise/vibration analysis prior to the issuance of a building permit.

Settlement Agreement
Pursuant to Section 2.6 of the Menlo Park General Plan Settlement Agreement, when the preparation of an EIR is required, concurrent with the preparation of the EIR, Menlo Park will conduct a Housing Needs Assessment (HNA). The scope of the HNA, to the extent possible, shall include an analysis of the multiplier effect for indirect and induced employment by the development project and its relationship to the regional housing needs market and displacement. The DEIR includes a HNA in the appendix. The discussion in the DEIR should be consistent with all relevant terms of the Settlement Agreement. The City requests that a summary of the required analysis be incorporated into the DEIR

Population and Housing
According to the DEIR main report and Housing Needs Assessment Appendix, the growth in units from the Proposed Project is estimated to result in a housing unit deficit of 815 regionally. The DEIR notes that because ABAG and MTC Plan Bay Area Projections 2040 incorporate growth under ConnectMenlo, cumulative impacts related to population and housing are less than significant. The ABAG/MTC housing projections are based on all future housing development, not concurrent development (to the Proposed Project), within Menlo Park and in the region. The regional balancing of jobs and housing from the Proposed Project and other similar projects will only occur if neighboring jurisdictions, including East Palo Alto, but also Palo Alto, Redwood City, and other cities within the commute area keep up with planned housing production, the evidence for which is lacking.

Of particular concern in the Housing Needs Assessment is the estimated number of Extremely-Low, Very-Low, and Low-Income units included in the net decrease in available housing in the region as a result of the Proposed Project: 127 Extremely Low, 270 Very Low, and 727 Low. Given that lower-income housing units have been, and continue to be, produced at much lower levels than above-moderate housing, with most jurisdictions in the region not meeting their lower-income Regional Housing Needs Allocations (RHNA), the deficit from this Proposed Project deserves particular attention.

Since not all new employees will seek housing in Menlo Park, it is estimated that induced employment from the Proposed Project will lead to employees seeking housing elsewhere, with an additional 26 employee households ultimately living in East Palo Alto. This very low number, particularly in combination with findings of the HNA that, "on balance, the analysis suggests the proposed Project would likely, at most, represent a minor contributing factor to the substantial pre-existing displacement pressures in East Palo Alto and Belle Haven," should be viewed with scrutiny to ensure that it is accurate.

Public Services
East Palo Alto has significant concerns regarding the ability to provide public safety services. Traffic is already having an impact for public safety services post pandemic. Since returning to "normal" following the pandemic, and people returning to work, traffic has increased during commute hours, thus creating congestion throughout the city with traffic coming from Highway 84 to SR 101 in the morning and from SR 101 to Highway 84 in the afternoon. The traffic typically lasts for approximately 3 hours during the morning and afternoon. However, commuter traffic doesn't remain on University Avenue. The traffic spills into our neighborhoods which isn't fair to our residents who live and work in this area, as they must negotiate and navigate through traffic just to get home, pick up children from school or just conduct their daily lives.

During the afternoon, commuters use Pulgas Avenue, Clarke Avenue and Cooley Avenue as a cut through to Bay Road. They also use Euclid Avenue, to Glen Way via Runnymede Street to Bay Road as a cut through, and Dumbarton Avenue to Bay Road during the afternoon. The City already have narrow streets due to a high volume of parked vehicles and it is already difficult to navigate through these streets during peak commute times

while performing normal patrol duties. When an emergency occurs during commute times, getting the necessary emergency apparatus to the scene when time is of the essence always is a difficult task because of heavy traffic. There have been at least two occasions when a life flight (helicopter) had to be requested to transport trauma patients to Stanford Hospital (less than 5 miles away), because the commute traffic was so congested an ambulance couldn't get to the scene soon enough. Willow Village Project will add to the traffic congestion and traffic issues we already have with our existing commute traffic. With the potential of increased traffic resulting from this project, this will negatively impact our ability to provide efficient public safety services in a timely manner and thus negatively impact the safety and security of our residents.

TDM and TMA

The City understands that the project will be required to prepare and implement a Transportation Demand Management program designed to reduce the number of vehicular trips. As noted above, traffic impacts are a regional issue that extend beyond individual city borders. The City of East Palo Alto recently adopted a TDM ordinance requiring that average daily trips be reduced by 40% and has been exploring the formation of a Transportation Management Association (TMA). There is an economy of scale for TDM measures and TMAs. The City requests that the project applicant be required to consult with the City of East Palo Alto to find opportunities to pool resources where feasible to reduce vehicular trips. This can include the formation of a TMA or measures such as coordinating or sharing shuttles or rideshare programs. This would benefit both the City of East Palo Alto and Menlo Park.

Transportation

East Palo Alto's General Plan identifies a vision for University Avenue which is to transform it from a regional cut-through corridor to a mixed-use boulevard with high density housing and multi-model transportation options. The goal is to reduce traffic volumes, reduce traffic speeds, make the area desirable for pedestrians with wide sidewalks, streetscape improvements such as signage and street trees, and add multi-modal transportation options. The proposed Willow Village project will add a significant amount of traffic onto University Avenue - intersections will be beyond acceptable levels of service; there will be congestion during AM/PM peak hour, significant impacts at interchanges. These issues can be mitigated by design and construction of the University Avenue Improvements project (Grand Corridor) in East Palo Alto. Improvements along University Avenue will be vital and should be constructed alongside the Willow Village project.

Impacts at Kavanaugh Drive/O'Brien Drive should be studied further and a traffic signal/roundabout analysis should be performed. Any necessary improvements to this intersection should be a part of the Willow Village project.

Modification of existing dead-end cul-de-sacs into through streets will increase cut through traffic onto University Avenue. This will impact both O'Brien Drive, Kavanaugh Drive, Gloria Way, and Bay Road. Traffic safety and traffic calming improvements along these roads should be a part of the Willow Village project. These improvements may

include roundabouts at intersections, radar speed feedback signs, lighting, ADA improvements, signage and striping, and bulb-outs.

In order to enforce traffic related impacts in the City of East Palo Alto, a traffic enforcement officer should be budgeted for the City of East Palo Alto for a few years upon project completion to ensure effectiveness of traffic controls.

The EIR should clearly identify show all of the fair-share calculation formulas for affected East Palo intersections.

Because several Menlo Park streets adjacent to the proposed project have restricted parking and Kavanaugh street in East Palo Alto does not, there is concern that overflow parking will spill into East Palo Alto streets. The applicant shall work with the City of East Palo Alto to address potential solutions to prohibit overflow parking onto City of East Palo Alto city-streets, primarily within the Kavanagh Drive/Gloria Way neighborhoods.

In order to ensure bike trail connectivity from the proposed project onto the Bay Trail as well as other trails in East Palo Alto, an analysis of bike trail connectivity should be performed and bike trails should be striped as a part of this project.

Cut through traffic along City of East Palo Alto city streets is a major potential concern with the implementation of this project. A cut-through traffic analysis should be performed and measures should be implemented to discourage cut through traffic within City of East Palo Alto neighborhood streets. Measures can include signage in both cities of Menlo Park as well as East Palo Alto.

Utilities and Service Systems
Because the Kavanaugh Drive/Gloria Way neighborhoods in East Palo Alto are adjacent to the proposed project site, these streets should be improved aesthetically. Undergrounding of power lines in these neighborhoods can significantly improve aesthetics in and around the proposed project site.

There are drainage issues in the vicinity of the proposed project site that can be improved. Primarily, at the north end of Ralmar Avenue to 1170 O'Brien Drive, Menlo Park. There is occasional flooding of Ralmar street in East Palo Alto due to an inadequate drainage system. Collaboration is needed between Menlo Park and East Palo Alto to ensure a storm drain system can be constructed through 1170 O'Brien Drive to avoid flooding in the City of East Palo Alto.

Hydrology
A detailed hydrology plan would show existing and proposed storm drain systems and drainage areas around the vicinity of the proposed project. This information would be useful to verify whether any of the storm drain systems in the City of East Palo Alto would be impacted. This information should be shared with the City of East Palo Alto when available.

Project Considerations and Concerns

Since its incorporation in 1983, the City has struggled to achieve economic growth and financial sustainability, especially in comparison to other nearby communities. To address this reality, the City's leadership has ensured a strong focus on actions that strengthen the City's economic profile, with the ultimate goal of improving the lives and enhancing the well-being of East Palo Alto residents.

Staff is concerned that the Project may result in unintended financial consequences for the City of East Palo Alto. For example, it is expected that the Project will include a large grocery store, which is a beneficial amenity for the Belle Haven neighborhood and Menlo Park as a whole, but it is unclear how this store will benefit East Palo Alto. If a significant number of residents shop at this new store, the few smaller grocery stores in East Palo Alto may experience negative impacts to their businesses, and the City will receive decreased sales tax revenues. In addition, increased traffic created by East Palo Alto residents traveling to the new store will only worsen current traffic concerns.

Staff is also concerned that the East Palo Alto Police Department could be impacted by an increase in calls for service, which would require the City of East Palo Alto to fund more police officers during a time when the City has a significant budget deficit.

The Facebook/Meta expansion is located just feet away from the Cesar Chavez Ravenswood Middle School, which already experiences traffic congestion during common drop-off and pick-up hours. Staff hopes that Facebook/Meta and the City of Menlo Park will develop strategies to ensure that the Project does not impact the students, staff, and other community members connected to the middle school campus. It is not that long ago a tragic schoolgirl fatality occurred in this area.

The greatest areas of concern for staff are the related issues of traffic and air quality, resulting from increased vehicle travelling through East Palo Alto to access to future Project. Staff hopes that Facebook/Meta and the City of Menlo Park will acknowledge these realities and partner with the City of East Palo Alto to consider necessary infrastructure projects that may be of mutual benefit.

The City of East Palo Alto has a critical need for emergency-access water storage locations. As such, staff hopes that Facebook/Meta and Menlo Fire will collaborate to determine if water storage may be included in the Project's design, thus offering support to East Palo Alto residents during a potential emergency.

In conclusion, the City values its relationship with the City of Menlo Park and Facebook/Meta, yet many aspects of the Project raise concerns that may impact the City of East Palo Alto's goal of achieving financial self-sufficiency and economic growth for our residents. However, an effective partnership between the City of Menlo Park, Facebook/Meta, and the City of East Palo Alto may successfully mitigate these concerns, thus ensuring that all three entities thrive in the future. The City would be eager to engage in these discussions.

Sincerely,

Patrick Heisinger
Interim City Manager

Perata, Kyle T

From: Wilson, Joanne <jwilson@sfwater.org>
Sent: Tuesday, May 17, 2022 11:52 AM
To: Perata, Kyle T
Cc: Natesan, Ellen; Wayne, Lisa B; Russell, Rosanna S; Rando, Casey; Read, Emily; Herman, Jane; Feng, Stacie
Subject: FW: Willow Village Master Plan Project EIR
Attachments: FINAL Interim Water Pipeline Right of Way Policy.pdf; FINAL-Amended Right of Way Integrated Vegetation Management Policy.pdf

To: Kyle Perata
Acting Planning Manager
Community Development, City of Menlo Park
701 Laurel St., Menlo Park, CA 94025
ktperata@menlopark.org

Hello Mr. Perata: Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on the above-referenced draft environmental impact report (Draft EIR) on behalf of the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission (SFPUC).

The proposed project includes the construction of a roundabout on the SFPUC's right-of-way (ROW) property and is described in the Draft EIR as follows: *At the southeast corner of the main Project Site, the Proposed Project would create a new four-legged roundabout at O'Brien Drive to accommodate site access and area circulation. This intersection would require realignment of O'Brien Drive where it passes through the roundabout. The southern half of the roundabout would then overlay the Hetch Hetchy right-of-way. The new roundabout would provide direct access to Main Street and East Loop Road.*

The Draft EIR states that the intersection design is still being developed; it may include a four-way signal-controlled intersection. Further, the Draft EIR states that the SFPUC must approve the use of its fee-owned ROW and the design of the intersection would be subject to review and approval by the City of Menlo Park and the SFPUC. Because this element of the proposal requires the approval of the SFPUC for the use of its ROW, the Draft EIR identifies the SFPUC as a "Responsible Agency".

In its analysis of potential land use impacts, the Draft EIR states that through adherence to the SFPUC's approval process, the Proposed Project would be consistent with SFPUC's "Right-of-Way Encroachment Policy" and result in a less-than-significant impact.

Thank you for disclosing this information; the SFPUC generally agrees with the Draft EIR analysis. For further clarification, the SFPUC provides the following comments:

1. Rather than "SFPUC Right-of-Way Encroachment Policy", the Draft EIR should reference the following two policies (attached) regarding the SFPUC ROW:
    a. SFPUC Interim Water Pipeline Right of Way Use Policy for San Mateo, Santa Clara, and Alameda Counties (Approved January 13, 2015)

b. Amendment to the Right of Way Integrated Vegetation Management Policy (Approved January 13, 2015)

2. Please be advised that pursuant to the above-referenced SFPUC ROW policies, the SFPUC does not allow third-parties to use SFPUC lands to fulfill any third-party development requirements or to use SFPUC lands to mitigate third-party project impacts. If the use of the SFPUC ROW were to be approved for the proposed project, the authorization would be through a revocable license or other agreement that the SFPUC could revoke if necessary for utility purposes. In addition, the SFPUC charges fair market value for the use of its ROW property by third parties.
3. The SFPUC's approval process referenced in the Draft EIR is called Project Review. For more information about Project Review and to submit a Project Review Application, the Project Sponsor may visit the SFPUC's website: https://sfpuc.org/construction-contracts/lands-rights-of-way/project-review-and-land-use-bay-area

Again, thank you for the opportunity to comment on the environmental review document for the proposed project.

If you have any questions or need further information, please contact me.

Sincerely,

Joanne Wilson

Joanne Wilson
Senior Land and Resources Planner
Natural Resources and Lands Management Division
Water Enterprise
1657 Rollilns Road
Burlingame, CA 94010

Please consider the environment before printing this email.

Hetch Hetchy Regional Water System
Operated by San Francisco Water, Power and Sewer | Services of the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission

Hetch Hetchy
Regional Water System
Services of the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission

SFPUC Interim Water Pipeline Right of Way Use Policy for San Mateo, Santa Clara, and Alameda Counties

Approved January 13, 2015

by

SFPUC Resolution No. 15-0014

as an amendment to the SFPUC Real Estate Guidelines

SFPUC Water Pipeline Right of Way Use Policy for San Mateo, Santa Clara, and Alameda Counties

As part of its utility system, the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission (SFPUC) operates and maintains hundreds of miles of water pipelines. The SFPUC provides for public use on its water pipeline property or right of way (ROW) throughout Alameda, Santa Clara, and San Mateo counties consistent with our existing plans and policies. The following controls will help inform how and in which instances the ROW can serve the needs of third parties—including public agencies, private parties, nonprofit organizations, and developers—seeking to provide recreational and other use opportunities to local communities.

Primarily, SFPUC land is used to deliver high quality, efficient and reliable water, power, and sewer services in a manner that is inclusive of environmental and community interests, and that sustains the resources entrusted to our care. The SFPUC's utmost priority is maintaining the safety and security of the pipelines that run underneath the ROW.

Through our formal Project Review and Land Use Application and Project Review process, we may permit a secondary use on the ROW if it benefits the SFPUC, is consistent with our mission and policies, and does not in any way interfere with, endanger, or damage the SFPUC's current or future operations, security or facilities.[1] No secondary use of SFPUC land is permitted without the SFPUC's consent.

These controls rely on and reference several existing SFPUC policies, which should be read when noted in the document. Being mindful of these policies while planning a proposed use and submitting an application will ease the process for both the applicant and the SFPUC. These controls are subject to change over time and additional requirements and restrictions may apply depending on the project.

The SFPUC typically issues five-year revocable licenses for use of our property, with a form of rent and insurance required upon signing.[2]

Note: The project proponent is referred to as the "Applicant" until the license agreement is signed, at which point the project proponent is referred to as the "Licensee."

[1] SFPUC Guidelines for the Real Estate Services Division, Section 2.0.
[2] SFPUC Guidelines for the Real Estate Services Division, Section 3.3.

I. *Land Use, Structures, and Compliance with Law*

The following tenets govern the specifics of land use, structures, and accessibility for a project. Each proposal will still be subject to SFPUC approval on a case-by-case basis.

A. SFPUC Policies. The Applicant's proposed use must conform to policies approved by the SFPUC's Commission, such as the SFPUC's Land Use Framework (http://sfwater.org/index.aspx?page=586).

B. Americans with Disabilities Act Compliance. The Applicant must demonstrate that a Certified Access Specialist (CASp) has reviewed and approved its design and plans to confirm that they meet all applicable accessibility requirements.

C. Environmental Regulations. The SFPUC's issuance of a revocable license for use of the ROW is subject to compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The Applicant is responsible for assessing the potential environmental impacts under CEQA of its proposed use of the ROW. The SFPUC must be named as a Responsible Agency on any CEQA document prepared for the License Area. In addition, the Applicant shall provide to SFPUC a copy of the approved CEQA document prepared by the Applicant, the certification date, and documentation of the formal approval and adoption of CEQA findings by the CEQA lead agency. The SFPUC will not issue a license for the use of the ROW until CEQA review and approval is complete.

D. Crossover and Other Reserved Rights. For a ROW parcel that bisects a third party's land, the Applicant's proposed use must not inhibit that party's ability to cross the ROW. The Applicant must demonstrate any adjoining owner with crossover or other reserved rights approves of the proposed recreational use and that the use does not impinge on any reserved rights.

E. Width. The License Area must span the entire width of the ROW.
   - *For example, the SFPUC will not allow a 10-foot wide trail license on a ROW parcel that is 60 feet wide.*

F. Structures. Structures on the ROW are generally prohibited. The Licensee shall not construct or place any structure or improvement in, on, under or about the entire License Area that requires excavation, bored footings or concrete pads that are greater than six inches deep.

   i. Structures such as benches and picnic tables that require shallow (four to six inches deep) cement pads or footings are generally permitted on the ROW. No such structure may be placed directly on top of a pipeline or within 20 feet of the edge of a pipeline.

   ii. The SFPUC will determine the permitted weight of structures on a case-by-case basis.

- *When the SFPUC performs maintenance on its pipelines, structures of significant weight and/or those that require footings deeper than six inches are very difficult and time-consuming to move and can pose a safety hazard to the pipelines. The longer it takes the SFPUC to reach the pipeline in an emergency, the more damage that can occur.*

G. Paving Materials. Permitted trails or walkways should be paved with materials that both reduce erosion and stormwater runoff (e.g., permeable pavers).

H. License Area Boundary Marking. The License Area's boundaries should be clearly marked by landscaping or fencing, with the aim to prevent encroachments.

I. Fences and Gates. Any fence along the ROW boundary must be of chain-link or wooden construction with viewing access to the ROW. The fence must include a gate that allows SFPUC access to the ROW.[3] Any gate must be of chain-link construction and at least 12 feet wide with a minimum 6-foot vertical clearance.

II. *Types of Recreational Use*

Based on our past experience and research, the SFPUC will allow simple parks without play structures, community gardens and limited trails.

A. Fulfilling an Open Space Requirement. An applicant may not use the ROW to fulfill a development's open space, setback, emergency access or other requirements.[4] In cases where a public agency has received consideration for use of SFPUC land from a third party, such as a developer, the SFPUC may allow such recreational use if the public agency applicant pays full Fair Market Rent.

B. Trail Segments. At this time, the SFPUC will consider trail proposals when a multi-jurisdictional entity presents a plan to incorporate specific ROW parcels into a fully connected trail. Licensed trail segments next to unlicensed parcels may create a trail corridor that poses liability to the SFPUC. The SFPUC will only consider trail proposals where the trail would not continue onto, or encourage entry onto, another ROW parcel without a trail and the trail otherwise meet all SFPUC license requirements.

III. *Utilities*

A. Costs. The Licensee is responsible for all costs associated with use of utilities on the License Area.

[3] SFPUC Right of Way Requirements.
[4] SFPUC Guidelines for the Real Estate Services Division, Section 2.0.

B. Placement. No utilities may be installed on the ROW running parallel to the SFPUC's pipelines, above or below grade.[5] With SFPUC approval, utilities may run perpendicular to the pipelines.

C. Lights. The Licensee shall not install any light fixtures on the ROW that require electrical conduits running parallel to the pipelines. With SFPUC approval, conduits may run perpendicular to and/or across the pipelines.

- Any lighting shall have shielding to prevent spill over onto adjacent properties.

D. Electricity. Licensees shall purchase all electricity from the SFPUC at the SFPUC's prevailing rates for comparable types of electrical load, so long as such electricity is reasonably available for the Licensee's needs.

IV. *Vegetation*

A. The Applicant shall refer to the SFPUC Integrated Vegetation Management Policy for the *minimum* requirements concerning types of vegetation and planting. (http://www.sfwater.org/index.aspx?page=431.) The Licensee is responsible for all vegetation maintenance and removal.

B. The Applicant shall submit a Planting Plan as part of its application.

(Community garden applicants should refer to Section VII.C for separate instructions.)

i. The Planting Plan should include a layout of vegetation placement (grouped by hydrozone) and sources of irrigation, as well as a list of intended types of vegetation. The SFPUC will provide an area drawing including pipelines and facilities upon request.

ii. The Applicant shall also identify the nursery(ies) supplying plant stock and provide evidence that each nursery supplier uses techniques to reduce the risk of plant pathogens, such as Phytophthora ramorum.

V. *Measures to Promote Water Efficiency*[6]

A. The Licensee shall maintain landscaping to ensure water use efficiency.

B. The Licensee shall choose and arrange plants in a manner best suited to the site's climate, soil, sun exposure, wildfire susceptibility and other factors. Plants with similar water needs must be grouped within an area controlled by a single irrigation valve

[5] SFPUC Land Engineering Requirements.
[6] SFPUC Rules and Regulations Governing Water Service to Customers, Section F.

C. Turf is not allowed on slopes greater than 25 percent.

D. The SFPUC encourages the use of local native plant species in order to reduce water use and promote wildlife habitat.

E. Recycled Water. Irrigation systems shall use recycled water if recycled water meeting all public health codes and standards is available and will be available for the foreseeable future.

F. Irrigation Water Runoff Prevention. For landscaped areas of any size, water runoff leaving the landscaped area due to low head drainage, overspray, broken irrigation hardware, or other similar conditions where water flows onto adjacent property, walks, roadways, parking lots, structures, or non-irrigated areas, is prohibited.

VI. *Other Requirements*

A. Financial Stability. The SFPUC requires municipalities or other established organizations with a stable fiscal history as Licensees.

   i. Applicants must also demonstrate sufficient financial backing to pay rent, maintain the License Area, and fulfill other license obligations over the license term.

B. Smaller, community-based organizations without 501(c)(3) classifications must partner with a 501(c)(3) classified organization or any other entity through which it can secure funding for the License Area over the license term. Maintenance. The Licensee must maintain the License Area in a clean and sightly condition at its sole cost.[7] Maintenance includes, but is not limited to, regular weed abatement, mowing, and removing graffiti, dumping, and trash.

C. Mitigation and Restoration. The Licensee will be responsible, at its sole cost, for removing and replacing any recreational improvements in order to accommodate planned or emergency maintenance, repairs, replacements, or projects done by or on behalf of the SFPUC. If the Licensee refuses to remove its improvements, SFPUC will remove the improvements I at the Licensee's sole expense without any obligation to replace them.

D. Encroachments. The Licensee will be solely responsible for removing any encroachments on the License Area. An encroachment is any improvement on SFPUC property not approved by the SFPUC. Please read the SFPUC ROW Encroachment Policy for specific requirements. If the Licensee fails to remove encroachments, the SFPUC will remove them at Licensee's sole expense. The Licensee must regularly patrol the License Area to spot encroachments and remove them at an early stage.

[7] SFPUC Framework for Land Management and Use.

E. Point of Contact. The Licensee will identify a point of contact (name, position title, phone number, and address) to serve as the liaison between the Licensee, the local community, and the SFPUC regarding the License Agreement and the License Area. In the event that the point of contact changes, the Licensee shall immediately provide the SFPUC with the new contact information. Once the License Term commences, the point of contact shall inform local community members to direct any maintenance requests to him or her. In the event that local community members contact the SFPUC with such requests, the SFPUC will redirect any requests or complaints to the point of contact.

F. Community Outreach.

i. Following an initial intake conversation with the SFPUC, the Applicant shall provide a Community Outreach Plan for SFPUC approval. This Plan shall include the following information:

1. Identification of key stakeholders to whom the Applicant will contact and/or ask for input, along with their contact information;

2. A description of the Applicant's outreach strategy, tactics, and materials

3. A timeline of outreach (emails/letters mailing date, meetings, etc.); and

4. A description of how the Applicant will incorporate feedback into its proposal.

ii. The Applicant shall conduct outreach for the project at its sole cost and shall keep the SFPUC apprised of any issues arising during outreach.

iii. During outreach, the Applicant shall indicate that it in no way represents the SFPUC.

G. Signage. The SFPUC will provide, at Licensee's cost, a small sign featuring the SFPUC logo and text indicating SFPUC ownership of the License Area at each entrance. In addition, the Licensee will install, at its sole cost, an accompanying sign at each entrance to the License Area notifying visitors to contact the organization's point of contact and provide a current telephone number in case the visitors have any issues. The SFPUC must approve the design and placement of the Licensee's sign.

VII. *Community Gardens*

The following requirements also apply to community garden sites. As with all projects, the details of the operation of a particular community garden are approved on a case-by-case basis.

A. The Applicant must demonstrate stable funding. The Applicant must provide information about grants received, pending grants, and any ongoing foundational support.

B. The Applicant must have an established history and experience in managing urban agriculture or community gardening projects. Alternatively, the Applicant may demonstrate a formal partnership with an organization or agency with an established history and experience in managing urban agriculture or community gardening projects

C. During the Project Review process, the Applicant shall submit a Community Garden Planting Plan that depicts the proposed License Area with individual plot and planter box placements, landscaping, and a general list of crops that may be grown in the garden.

D. The Applicant shall designate a Garden Manager to oversee day-to-day needs and serve as a liaison between the SFPUC and garden plot holders. The Garden Manager may be distinct from the point of contact, see Section VI.E.

E. The Licensee must ensure that the Garden Manager informs plot holders about the potential for and responsibilities related to SFPUC repairs or emergency maintenance on the License Area. In such circumstances, the SFPUC is not liable for the removal and replacement of any features on the License Area or the costs associated with such removal and replacement.

F. The Licensee must conduct all gardening within planter boxes with attached bottoms that allow for easy removal without damaging the crops.

Hetch Hetchy
Regional Water System
Services of the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission

AMENDMENT TO THE

RIGHT OF WAY INTEGRATED VEGETATION MANAGEMENT POLICY

Approved January 13, 2015

by

SFPUC Resolution No. 15-0014

12.000 RIGHT OF WAY INTEGRATED VEGETATION MANAGEMENT POLICY

12.001 General

The San Francisco Public Utilities Commission ("SFPUC") is responsible for the delivery of potable water and the collection and treatment of wastewater for some 800,000 customers within the City of San Francisco; it is also responsible for the delivery of potable water to 26 other water retailers with a customer base of 1.8 million. **The following policy is established to manage vegetation on the transmission, distribution and collection systems within the SFPUC Right of Way ("ROW") so that it does not pose a threat or hazard to the system's integrity and infrastructure or impede utility maintenance and operations.**

The existence of large woody vegetation[1], hereinafter referred to as vegetation, and water transmission lines within the ROW are not compatible and, in fact, are mutually exclusive uses of the same space. Roots can impact transmission pipelines by causing corrosion. The existence of trees and other vegetation directly adjacent to pipelines makes emergency and annual maintenance very difficult, hazardous, and expensive, and increases concerns for public safety. The risk of fire within the ROW is always a concern and the reduction of fire ladder fuels within these corridors is another reason to modify the vegetation mosaic. In addition to managing vegetation in a timely manner to prevent any disruption in utility service, the SFPUC also manages vegetation on its ROW to comply with local fire ordinances enacted to protect public safety.

One of the other objectives of this policy is to reduce and eliminate as much as practicable the use of herbicides on vegetation within the ROW and to implement integrated pest management (IPM).

12.002 Woody Vegetation Management

1.0 Vegetation of any size or species will not be allowed to grow within certain critical portions of the ROW, pumping stations or other facilities as determined by a SFPUC qualified professional, and generally in accordance with the following guidelines.

1.1 Emergency Removal

SFPUC Management reserves the right to remove any vegetation without prior public notification that has been assessed by a SFPUC qualified professional as an immediate threat to transmission lines or other utility infrastructure, human life and property due to acts of God, insects, disease, or natural mortality.

1.2 Priority Removal

Vegetation that is within 15 feet of the edge of any pipe will be removed and the vegetative debris will be cut into short lengths and chipped whenever possible. Chips will be spread upon the site where the vegetation was removed. Material that cannot be chipped will be hauled away to a proper disposal site.

[1] Woody vegetation is defined as all brush, tree and ornamental shrub species planted in (or naturally occurring in) the native soil having a woody stem that at maturity exceeds 3 inches in diameter.

If vegetation along the ROW is grouped in contiguous stands[2], or populations, a systematic and staggered removal of that vegetation will be undertaken to replicate a natural appearance. Initial removal[3] will be vegetation immediately above or within 15 feet of the pipeline edges; secondary vegetation[4] within 15 to 25 feet from pipelines will then be removed.

1.3 Standard Removal

Vegetation that is more than 25 feet from the edge of a pipeline and up to the boundary of the ROW will be assessed by a SFPUC qualified professional for its age and condition, fire risk, and potential impact to the pipelines. Based on this assessment, the vegetation will be removed or retained.

1.4 Removal Standards

Each Operating Division will develop its own set of guidelines or follow established requirements in accordance with local needs.

2.0 All stems of vegetation will be cut flush with the ground and where deemed necessary or appropriate, roots will be removed. All trees identified for removal will be clearly marked with paint and/or a numbered aluminum tag.

3.0 Sprouting species of vegetation will be treated with herbicides where practicable, adhering to provisions of Chapter 3 of the San Francisco Environment Code.

4.0 Erosion control measures, where needed, will be completed before the work crew or contractors leave the work site or before October 15 of the calendar year.

5.0 Department personnel will remove in a timely manner any and all material that has been cut for maintenance purposes within any stream channel.

6.0 All vegetation removal work and consultation on vegetation retention will be reviewed and supervised by a SFPUC qualified professional. All vegetation removal work and/or treatment will be made on a case-by-case basis by a SFPUC qualified professional.

7.0 Notification process for areas of significant resource impact that are beyond regular and ongoing maintenance:

7.1 County/City Notification – The individual Operating Division will have sent to the affected county/city a map showing the sections of the ROW which will be worked, a written description of the work to be done, the appropriate removal time for the work crews, and a contact person for more information. This should be done approximately 10 days prior to start of work. Each Operating Division will develop its own set of guidelines in accordance with local need.

[2] A stand is defined as a community of trees possessing sufficient uniformity in composition, structure, age, arrangement, or condition to be distinguishable from adjacent forest communities to form a management unit.
[3] Initial removal is defined as the vegetation removed during the base year or first year of cutting.
[4] Secondary vegetation is defined as the vegetative growth during the second year following the base year for cutting.

7.2 Public Notification – The Operating Division will have notices posted at areas where the vegetation is to be removed with the same information as above also approximately 10 days prior to removal. Notices will also be sent to all property owners within 300 feet of the removal site. Posted notices will be 11- by 17-inches in size on colored paper and will be put up at each end of the project area and at crossover points through the ROW. Questions and complaints from the public will be handled through a designated contact person. Each Operating Division will develop its own set of guidelines in accordance with local needs.

12.003 Annual Grass and Weed Management

Annual grasses and weeds will be mowed, disked, sprayed or mulched along the ROW as appropriate to reduce vegetation and potential fire danger annually. This treatment should be completed before July 30 of each year. This date is targeted to allow the grasses, forbs and weeds to reach maturity and facilitate control for the season.

12.004 Segments of ROW that are covered by Agricultural deed rights

The only vegetation that may be planted within the ROW on those segments where an adjacent owner has Deeded Agricultural Rights will be: non-woody herbaceous plants such as grasses, flowers, bulbs, or vegetables.

12.005 Segments of ROW that are managed and maintained under a Lease or License

Special allowance may be made for these types of areas, as the vegetation will be maintained by the licensed user as per agreement with the City, and not allowed to grow unchecked. Only shallow rooted plants may be planted directly above the pipelines.

Within the above segments, the cost of vegetation maintenance and removal will be borne by the tenant or licensee exclusively. In a like fashion, when new vegetative encroachments are discovered they will be assessed by a SFPUC qualified professional on a case-by-case basis and either be permitted or proposed for removal.

The following is a guideline for the size at maturity of plants (small trees, shrubs, and groundcover) that may be permitted to be used as landscape materials. Note: All distance measurements are for mature trees and plants measured from the edge of the drip-line to the edge of the pipeline.

- Plants that may be permitted to be planted directly above existing and future pipelines: shallow rooted plants such as ground cover, grasses, flowers, and very low growing plants that grow to a maximum of one foot in height at maturity.
- Plants that may be permitted to be planted 15–25 feet from the edge of existing and future pipelines: shrubs and plants that grow to a maximum of five feet in height at maturity.
- Plants that may be permitted to be planted 25 feet or more from the edge of existing and future pipelines: small trees or shrubs that grow to a maximum of twenty feet in height and fifteen feet in canopy width.

Trees and plants that exceed the maximum height and size limit (described above) may be permitted within a leased or licensed area provided they are in containers and are above ground. Container load and placement location(s) are subject to review and approval by the SFPUC.

Low water use plant species are encouraged and invasive plant species are not allowed.

All appurtenances, vaults, and facility infrastructure must remain visible and accessible at all times. All determinations of species acceptability will be made by a SFPUC qualified professional.

The above policy is for general application and for internal administration purposes only and may not be relied upon by any third party for any reason whatsoever. The SFPUC reserves the right at its sole discretion, to establish stricter policies in any particular situation and to revise and update the above policy at any time.

DISTRICT 4
OFFICE OF TRANSIT AND COMMUNITY PLANNING
P.O. BOX 23660, MS–10D | OAKLAND, CA 94623-0660
www.dot.ca.gov

May 24, 2022

SCH #: 2019090428
GTS #: 04-SM-2019-00431
GTS ID: 17175
Co/Rt/Pm: SM/ 114/ 5.765

Kyle Peralta, Planning Manager
City of Menlo Park
Community Development – Planning Division
701 Laurel Street
Menlo Park, CA 94025

Re: Willow Village Master Plan Project Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR)

Dear Kyle Peralta:

Thank you for including the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) in the environmental review process for the Willow Village Master Plan Project. We are committed to ensuring that impacts to the State's multimodal transportation system and to our natural environment are identified and mitigated to support a safe, sustainable, integrated and efficient transportation system. The following comments are based on our review of the April 2022 DEIR.

Project Understanding

The proposed Project would demolish all existing onsite buildings and landscaping and construct new buildings and site improvements. 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. The nonresidential sf would include approximately 1,750,000 sf offices, up to 200,000 sf retail/non-office commercial uses, and approximately 10,000 sf community serving space. In addition, the Proposed Project would include multi-family housing units (approximately 1,735 units), a hotel (approximately 200-250 rooms), an approximately 4-acre park, and other public open space. The Project Site would include a circulation network for vehicles, bicycles, and pedestrians inclusive of both.

Travel Demand Analysis
With the enactment of Senate Bill (SB) 743, Caltrans is focused on maximizing efficient development patterns, innovative travel demand reduction strategies, and multimodal improvements. For more information on how Caltrans assesses Transportation Impact Studies, please review Caltrans' Transportation Impact Study Guide (*link*).

Caltrans' acknowledges that the project Vehicle Miles Travelled (VMT) analysis and significance determination are undertaken in a manner consistent with the Office of Planning and Research's (OPR) Technical Advisory. Per the DEIR, this project is found to have significant VMT impacts. Caltrans supports the Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Program and encourages yearly monitoring to evaluate the effectiveness of the TDM measures proposed, in conjunction with the City of Menlo Park and C/CAG.

Regarding the Transportation Impact Analysis (TIA), please consider the following:

- Include the Hamilton North and Hamilton South redevelopment sites in all Figures in the TIA depicting the proposed project;
- To fully understand the movement of the Bayfront Expressway between Marsh Road and University Avenue, include a typical field observation day, instead of the atypical observation day (page 44);
- Clarify the method and tools used for the Freeway Analysis. Note that the Freeway Analysis should be conducted for the 2040 Cumulative Conditions;
- Provide details of freeway analysis to substantiate information in Table 23 (i.e., demand volumes, capacities that reflect field conditions). Also, clarify if demand volumes or count volumes are used in the analysis;
- Clarify if the Traffic Volumes of both existing and near term plus project conditions used in the Ramp Capacity Analysis are count volumes or demand volumes. The analysis should be based on demand volumes; and
- The notes in Table 26 in the TIA indicated the existing volumes referenced intersection counts collected in 2019. Provide said traffic counts for review (Appendix A: Traffic Counts is missing from the TIA). Also, provide the calculation of demand volumes for review.

Environmental Analysis- Cultural Artifacts
Should ground-disturbing activities take place within Caltrans' Right-of-Way (ROW) and there is an inadvertent archaeological or burial discovery, in compliance with CEQA, PRC 5024.5, and the SER, all construction within 60 feet of the find shall cease and the Caltrans District 4 Office of Cultural Resource Studies (OCRS) shall be immediately contacted at (510) 847-1977.

Hydraulics and Maintenance
Please note the following:

- Coordinate with Caltrans to review the proposed development, as Caltrans is responsible for design and maintenance of pump stations along State Route (SR)- 84. The entire project area and surrounding areas drain to a major trunk line that leads to the Caltrans Ravenswood Pump Station. The pump station pumps the stormwater trunk line to Ravenswood Slough in San Francisco Bay on the north side of SR- 84.
- As part of a holistic approach to understanding existing conditions and impacts from proposed flood protection measures being considered, Caltrans encourages the Project development staff to coordinate with the Strategy to Advance Flood Protection, Ecosystems and Recreation (SAFER) Bay project. The proposed flood protection measures from both projects may impact the tailwater conditions, potential conflicts, flood-related design objectives due to sea level rise and other factors.

Equitable Access
If any Caltrans facilities are impacted by the project, those facilities must meet American Disabilities Act (ADA) Standards after project completion. As well, the project must maintain bicycle and pedestrian access during construction. These access considerations support Caltrans' equity mission to provide a safe, sustainable, and equitable transportation network for all users.

Encroachment Permit
Please be advised that any permanent work or temporary traffic control that encroaches onto Caltrans' ROW requires a Caltrans-issued encroachment permit. As part of the encroachment permit submittal process, you may be asked by the Office of Encroachment Permits to submit a completed encroachment permit application package, digital set of plans clearly delineating Caltrans' ROW, digital copy of signed, dated and stamped (include stamp expiration date) traffic control plans, this comment letter, your response to the comment letter, and where applicable, the following items: new or amended Maintenance Agreement (MA), approved Design Standard Decision Document (DSDD), approved encroachment exception request, and/or airspace lease agreement. Your application package may be emailed to D4Permits@dot.ca.gov.

Please note that Caltrans is in the process of implementing an online, automated, and milestone-based Caltrans Encroachment Permit System (CEPS) to replace the current permit application submittal process with a fully electronic system, including online payments. The new system is expected to be available during 2022. To obtain information about the most current encroachment permit process and to download

the permit application, please visit https://dot.ca.gov/programs/traffic-operations/ep/applications.

Thank you again for including Caltrans in the environmental review process. Should you have any questions regarding this letter, or for future notifications and requests for review of new projects, please email LDR-D4@dot.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

MARK LEONG
District Branch Chief
Local Development Review

c: State Clearinghouse

Perata, Kyle T

From: Johnston, Jon <JonJ@MenloFire.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 25, 2022 4:39 PM
To: Perata, Kyle T
Cc: Lorenzen, Mark; Johnston, Jon
Subject: Willow Village EIR comments

Kyle,

Please find the Menlo Park Fire District response to impacts from the Willow Village proposed project.

We find that Menlo Park Fire District responses in the ConnectMenlo Final EIR are still applicable to this project.

The water infrastructure at this location currently cannot meet the demand for this buildout. Water infrastructure improvements are needed to be able to build and meet Fire supply requirements of the CA Fire Code.

This project is located within current adopted time standards for our required resources. However as traffic demands increase on continued narrowed roadways, increased development, and massive pass through traffic on Willow Rd and other pass through roads to the Dumbarton Bridge, response times to this project area continue to diminish. Cumulative projects along with increased traffic and decreased road arteries and decreased road capacities will delay emergency response times.

Meta/Facebook as the largest employer in Menlo Park is also one of our largest call volumes. Moving from warehouse buildings with very little occupancy, to a development of major business and residential component will draw increased daily work time emergency response, but also 24/7 response due to the housing element that did not exist before.

The Willow Village project is also causing a demand for PGE to increase capacity in the area. This has an impact to our Urban Search and Rescue/Menlo Park Fire District Rescue Training Site located at the PGE station located near the Dumbarton Bridge.

The site has been in use since the late 1980's when location looking for a place to train an Urban Search and Rescue Team as part of our FEMA proposal package.
We would estimate that we over time have spent upwards of $250k for fencing, concrete and the construction of rescue and training props. The burn props cost $750,000 and the rest of the site is an estimated total of 1.5 million in total costs invested over time.
Per contract, Menlo Park Fire would need to return the site to original condition prior to PGE utilizing the site for growth.

The Menlo Park Fire District and USAR TF3 has trained people from all over the world, Country, State, Region and our own agency. From FDNY to Mexico, Japan, Taiwan, China, to every FEMA Task Force, State Task Force, every Bay Area Fire Department and the list goes on. The site trains multiple law enforcement agencies, FBI, Sheriff, local law enforcement including Menlo Park PD, various government agencies, fire investigations for the region and scientific research companies from both sides of the bay.
The site is used regularly for training with multiple fire agencies in San Mateo County as this is the only live fire props. Also the site has the only west coast dog training site for search and rescue.

The debris plies made of wood and concrete are some of the largest in the western United States. They provide a very specific real world training experience needed to practice and perfect critical search, rescue and recovery skills, joint operations and highly scarce and rare skills needed to train people and animals.

Other training props are designed to support shoring, lifting and moving of heavy objects, crane operations, technical rope rescue and other related specialized search and rescue skills needed for very specific specialized trainings for National Security and Response in support of Urban Search and Rescue Task Force's to be able to effectively operate on a National stage during a significant emergency like the collapse of the World Trade Center, or the Oklahoma City Bombing.

We are also central to the Bay Area, and being near the Bay for joint water or bridge operations and specifically removed from populated areas allows us to conduct burns and noisy operations like breaching and breaking of concrete that also can create some dust.

Recognized Monuments and historical pieces at this site.
We have a singular inspirational "monument" specifically made from the ruins of the Oklahoma City Bombing and dedicated to all the rescuers who come to be trained to deal with similar, horrific and unimaginable situations.
In addition, we have a concrete column from the Embarcadero Expressway that shot out during demolition. It's the last know piece of the SF Embarcadero Freeway and we also have the Missile prop that was located outside the Commanders Office at the Contra Costa Naval Weapons Station.

This site has provided a pivotal opportunity to simulate, train and test tens of thousands of first responders in specialized skills needed to ultimately save life and property under the most difficult of conditions.

Jon Johnston
Division Chief/Fire Marshal
Menlo Park Fire Protection District | 170 Middlefield Road | Menlo Park, CA 94025
(650) 688-8431
jonj@menlofire.org
Mission Statement: To protect and preserve life and property from the impact of fire, disaster, injury and illness.
menlofire.org

Community Development & Transportation Department

Planning Division
1017 Middlefield Road
Redwood City, CA 94063

(650) 780-7234
planning@redwoodcity.org
www.redwoodcity.org

May 26, 2022

Kyle Perata
Community Development, City of Menlo Park
701 Laurel Street
Menlo Park, CA 94025

Dear Kyle,

Thank you or the opportunity comment on the Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the Willow Village Master Plan Project. The City of Redwood City has reviewed the EIR and has the following comments to offer:

We have reviewed the Traffic Impact Analysis (TIA) and EIR findings. No intersection within Redwood City were studied, with Marsh Road intersections being the closest ones to our jurisdiction. As mentioned in the recommended improvements (multiple locations in TIA including Table ES-6), the mitigation measure related to road widening to mitigate the traffic impact is not feasible. The recommendation for a contribution to TIF (Transportation Impact Fee) program for future alternative modes (bike and pedestrian) improvements would be our recommendation as well.

Sincerely,

Brandon Northart
Contract Associate Planner

Cc: Mark Muenzer (mmuenzer@redwoodcity.org), Sue Exline (sueexline@redwoodcity.org)