



Housing Element Update: Draft Subsequent Environmental Impact Report released

Friday, Nov. 4, 2022, the City released the notice of availability and draft subsequent environmental impact report for the City of Menlo Park 6th Cycle Housing Element Update, Safety Element Update, and a new Environmental Justice Element for the City's General Plan, as well as associated General Plan, Zoning Ordinance and El Camino Real/Downtown Specific Plan amendments. Collectively, these are referred to as the Housing Element Update project. The release of the draft subsequent environmental impact report begins the 45-day comment period required by the California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines §15105.

The draft subsequent environmental impact report analyzes up to 4,000 net new housing units to meet the City's regional housing needs allocation during the eight-year planning period from 2023 to 2031. The Project identifies 69 potential housing opportunity sites made up of 83 parcels, plus a number of areas within the city, as candidates for housing development. It is possible that one or more of these locations are on a toxic site list pursuant to Cal. Gov. Code §65962.5, but the question is not addressed in the draft subsequent environmental impact report. The matter is more appropriately considered if and when future development applications for specific sites are submitted. The housing sites would be geographically dispersed throughout the city, primarily located in City Council Districts 2, 3, 4 and 5, and could be produced through a combination of rezoning, increased densities, and/or updates to the zoning ordinance and El Camino Real and Downtown Specific Plan. The subsequent environmental impact report also analyzes approved and pending housing developments in the "pipeline" and the development of projected accessory dwelling units through 2031, which are permitted to count toward the City's regional housing needs allocation. The Project analyzed in the subsequent environmental impact report includes adoption of General Plan amendments that would add or modify goals, objectives, policies, and implementation programs related to housing, safety, and environmental justice that would apply citywide.

The document is a subsequent environmental impact report to the City's 2016 General Plan environmental impact report (State Clearinghouse No. 2015062054). The subsequent environmental impact report relies on and incorporates information contained in the 2016 General Plan final environmental impact report where that information remains relevant, and provides additional

information and analysis where warranted. The subsequent environmental impact report is a program environmental impact report, as provided for in CEQA Guidelines §15168. Future discretionary actions that would be facilitated by the project's adoption, particularly those related to the development of housing, would require additional assessment to determine consistency with the analysis and mitigation provided in the subsequent environmental impact report. The potential future actions would be subject to the mitigation measures and the performance criteria established in the subsequent environmental impact report, or as determined in the subsequent environmental document if it is found that future actions could result in environmental impacts not foreseen in the subsequent environmental impact report.

The draft subsequent environmental impact report was prepared to address potential physical environmental effects of the proposed project in the following areas: aesthetics, air quality, biological resources, cultural resources, energy, geology and paleontological resources, greenhouse gas emissions, hazards and hazardous materials, hydrology and water quality, land use and planning, noise and vibration, population and housing, public services and recreation, transportation, tribal cultural resources, utilities and service systems, and wildfire. The topic areas of agricultural and forestry resources and mineral resources were scoped out of review and not anticipated to require further analysis. The draft subsequent environmental impact report identifies significant and unavoidable environmental impacts from the proposed project in the following areas: air quality, cultural resources and transportation.

The City of Menlo Park requests comments on the draft subsequent environmental impact report within the 45-day comment period starting Friday, Nov. 4, 2022, and ending at 5 p.m., Monday, Dec. 19, 2022. Copies of the [draft subsequent environmental impact report](#) and [notice of availability](#) are available on the city website at menlopark.gov/housingelement.

Notice of Availability and opportunity to submit written comments

This email is meant to notify you of the [notice of availability](#) of the [draft subsequent environmental impact report](#) for the proposed Housing Element Update project as you or your agency may be interested in reviewing and commenting on the environmental review. This email is not intended to confer responsible agency status to you or your agency.

Written comments should be submitted through the web form located at menlopark.gov/HousingElementDEIRComments or by letter to:

Tom Smith
Community Development
701 Laurel St.
Menlo Park, CA 94025

The Planning Commission is scheduled to hold a [public hearing](#) on the draft environmental impact report and a study session on the project via Zoom, on Monday, Nov. 14, 2022, at 7 p.m. During the meeting, staff will request comments on the draft subsequent environmental impact report from members of the public and the Planning Commission.

Following the Dec. 19, 2022, close of the draft subsequent environmental impact report public review period, staff will prepare a final subsequent environmental impact report that will include responses to all substantive comments received on the draft subsequent environmental impact report.