

NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

PARKLINE MASTER PLAN PROJECT
SCH NO. 2022120058
CITY OF MENLO PARK



June 20, 2024

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

From: Corinna Sandmeier
Principal Planner
City of Menlo Park
701 Laurel Street
Menlo Park, CA 94025

Subject: Notice of Availability of a Draft Environmental Impact Report for the Parkline Master Plan Project

Lead Agency: City of Menlo Park, Planning Division

Project Title: Parkline Master Plan Project

Project Location: 333 Ravenswood Avenue, City of Menlo Park (Assessor's Parcel Numbers 062-390-660, 062-390-670, 062-390-730, 062-390-760, 062-390-780, and 062-390-050)

Purpose of Notice and Public Review Period

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

The 45-day comment period required by CEQA Guidelines Section 15105 for the Draft EIR has been set from Thursday, June 20, 2024 through Monday, August 5, 2024. Written or emailed comments on the Draft EIR are due no later than the close of the Draft EIR review period (5:30 p.m. on **Monday, August 5, 2024**). However, we would appreciate your response at the earliest possible date.

The Draft EIR is available online at menlopark.gov/Parkline. Printed copies of the Draft EIR are available for review at the Menlo Park Library at Menlo Park Library at 800 Alma Street and the Belle Haven Library at 100 Terminal Avenue.

Project Location and Existing Uses

As shown in Figure 1, the Proposed Project is located on a 63.2-acre site between El Camino Real and Middlefield Road, near the City's downtown area and within ½ mile of the Menlo Park Caltrain station, at 333 Ravenswood Avenue. The vicinity of the Proposed Project generally consists of residential neighborhoods and public facilities. To the north, along Ravenswood Avenue, are single-family and multi-family residences. To the east are Menlo-Atherton High School, single-family residences, and a mix of office buildings, including the United States Geological Survey (USGS) Geological Survey offices on Middlefield Road. To the south are a mix of offices, single-family residences, and multi-family residential units in the Linfield Oaks neighborhood and immediately adjacent to the southwest is the Classics of Burgess Park neighborhood. To the west, across Laurel Street, are city hall, Burgess Park, and a childcare facility; and farther to the west is the downtown area and Menlo Park Caltrain station. To the northeast is the property at 201 Ravenswood Avenue, which is surrounded on three sides by the Project Site; this property includes buildings affiliated with First Church of Christ, Scientist and Alpha Kids Academy. (As discussed below, the Project Site for the Project Variant studied in the EIR also includes the property at 201 Ravenswood Avenue.)

The Project Site serves as SRI International's research campus, which consists of 38 existing buildings totaling approximately 1.38 million gross square feet (gsf) of mostly research and development (R&D) and office space, as well as supporting uses. Existing uses include a mix of amenity, office, R&D, laboratory, and supporting uses. Onsite laboratory uses include dry labs, wet labs, and specialty labs to accommodate evolving scientific research at the Project Site. The buildings range in height from approximately 12 to 48 feet above the finished grade.

The Project Site is designated Commercial under the General Plan Land Use Element. The Project Site is zoned “C-1(X)” (Administrative and Professional District, Restrictive) and a small portion of the Project Site at the northeast corner is zoned “P” (Parking). The Project Site is currently governed by a Conditional Development Permit (CDP) approved in 1975, and subsequently amended in 1978, 1997, and 2004. The CDP permits up to 1,494,774 sf of gross floor area but restricts the maximum building coverage to 40 percent of the site, maximum height to 50 feet, and maximum number of employees to 3,308, along with other restrictions. Residential uses are conditionally allowed in the C-1 district, although the CDP does not currently authorize residential uses.

Project Description

The Proposed Project would redevelop the SRI International Campus by creating a new office/R&D campus with no increase in office/R&D square footage; up to 550 new dwelling units within a new residential area at a range of affordability levels; new bicycle and pedestrian connections; and open space. The Proposed Project would organize land uses generally within two areas within the Project Site, consisting of 1) an approximately 10-acre residential area in the southwestern portion of the Project Site and 2) an approximately 53.2-acre office/R&D area in the remainder of the Project Site. The Proposed Project would demolish 35 of the 38 existing buildings on the Project Site and a 6-megawatt natural gas cogeneration plant that generates power and steam energy for the SRI International Campus would be decommissioned. The entire Project Site would be converted to an all-electric design with limited exceptions for operational energy needs, consistent with the intent of the city’s adopted Reach Code. Existing Buildings P, S, and T, comprising approximately 286,730 sf, would remain onsite and continue to be operated by SRI International and its tenants. In total, the Proposed Project would result in approximately 1,768,802 sf of mixed-use development, including approximately 1,093,602 sf of office/R&D uses and approximately 675,200 sf of residential uses. Approximately 26.4 acres of open space areas and supporting amenities would be developed at the Project Site, including a network of publicly accessible bicycle and pedestrian trails, open spaces, and active/passive recreational areas that would be available to the public. In addition, the Project Site would include community-oriented amenities, such as a community playing field and a children’s playground area. The conceptual site plan for the Proposed Project is shown in Figure 2.

As part of the Proposed Project, certain off-site improvements would be constructed, including a new traffic signal at the intersection of Seminary Drive and Middlefield Road, bike lane enhancements within Laurel Street and Burgess Drive, improvements along the Project frontage on Ravenswood Avenue, curb changes on Ravenswood Avenue to accommodate left turn pockets, and realignment of West 4th Street (which is within the Project Site).

Project Variant Description

The Draft EIR also includes a description and evaluation of a variant of the Proposed Project, called the “Increased Development Variant” (Project Variant). The Project Variant is a variation of the Proposed Project at the same Project Site (although the Project Site would be slightly expanded to include 201 Ravenswood Avenue), generally with the same objectives, background, and development controls, but with the following differences:

- 1) The Project Site has been expanded to include the Project Site and the parcel at 201 Ravenswood Avenue to create a continuous Project frontage area along Ravenswood Avenue and increase the overall Project Site by approximately 43,762 square feet (approximately 1.0 acre) to approximately 64.2 acres;
- 2) The Project Variant would include up to 250 additional residential rental dwelling units compared to the Proposed Project (an increase from 550 to 800 units, inclusive of up to 154 units to be developed by an affordable housing developer);
- 3) The Project Variant would reduce the underground parking footprint within the site, both by removing underground parking from the multifamily residential buildings in the residential area and removing the underground parking connection between Office/R&D Building O1 and Building O5. As a result, Parking Garage (PG) 1 and PG2 increase in square footage and height as compared to the Proposed Project and increases the number of structured spaces by 400 (but with no net increase in commercial parking spaces relative to the Proposed Project); and
- 4) The Project Variant would include an approximately 2- to 3-million-gallon emergency water reservoir that would be buried below grade in the northeast area of the Project Site, in addition to a small pump station, an emergency well, and related improvements that would be built at grade (i.e., emergency generator, disinfection system, surge tank). It would be built and operated by the city of Menlo Park.

The Project Variant would not differ from many of the other basic characteristics of the Proposed Project, particularly with respect to the commercial component. For example, the total office/R&D development would remain the same as the Proposed Project. Certain residential uses, including the affordable housing site and a limited number of townhome units, would shift to the corner of the site nearest to the intersection of Middlefield Avenue and Ravenswood Avenue. In addition, the existing buildings associated with First Church of Christ, Scientist and Alpha Kids Academy (Chapel buildings) located at 201 Ravenswood would be demolished. The conceptual site plan for the

Project Variant is shown in Figure 3.

Project Approvals

Implementation of the Proposed Project (or Project Variant) would require amendments to the city's General Plan, zoning ordinance, and zoning map, and issuance of a new conditional development permit. The Proposed Project would be designed as an integrated mixed-use master plan, allowing for a continuous and complementary site plan and program. To achieve this goal, the Proposed Project would be subject to site-specific, tailored land use controls, including development standards, to guide development on the Project Site, through land use approvals by the City.

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

- General Plan Amendment (Text and Map)
- Zoning Ordinance Amendment
- Rezoning
- Conditional Development Permit
- Development Agreement
- Architectural Control Approval(s)
- Heritage Tree Removal Permit(s)
- Vesting Tentative Map
- Below Market Rate Housing Agreement
- Transportation Demand Management Plan
- Water Supply Assessment
- Housing Needs Assessment
- Fiscal Impact Analysis
- Environmental Review pursuant to CEQA
- Any additional actions or permits deemed necessary to implement the Proposed Project (or Project Variant) and off-site improvements

Responsible Agencies

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

- Pacific Gas and Electric Company
- California Regional Water Quality Control Board, San Francisco Bay Region/San Mateo Countywide Water Pollution Prevention Program
- Native American Heritage Commission
- City/County Association of Governments
- Bay Area Air Quality Management District
- San Mateo County Transportation Authority
- San Mateo County, Environmental Health Division
- Menlo Park Fire Protection District
- West Bay Sanitary District
- California Department of Transportation (Caltrans)

Introduction to EIR

The Draft Environmental Impact Report (Draft EIR) for the Proposed Project and the Project Variant has been prepared by the lead agency, the city of Menlo Park, in conformance with the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (California Public Resources Code Section 21000 et seq.) and the CEQA Guidelines (California Code of Regulations Title 14, Section 15000 et seq.). The lead agency is the public agency that has principal responsibility for carrying out or approving a project. Here, the city has principal responsibility for approving the Proposed Project. As provided in the CEQA Guidelines, an EIR is an “informational document” that is intended to inform public-agency decision-makers and the public of the significant environmental effects of a project, identify possible ways to avoid or substantially lessen the significant effects, and describe reasonable alternatives to a project. The purpose of the Draft EIR is to provide the city, responsible and trustee agencies, other public agencies, and the public with detailed information about the environmental effects that could result from implementing the Proposed Project; examine and identify methods for mitigating any adverse environmental impacts should the Proposed Project or the Project Variant be approved; and consider feasible alternatives to the Proposed Project and Project Variant, including the required No-Project Alternative.

Significant Environmental Effects

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

Hazards Materials and Hazardous Waste Sites

The Cortese List is a compilation of several different lists of hazardous material release sites that meet the criteria specified in Section 65962.5 of the California Government Code. Two listings were identified within the State Water Resources Control Board’s leaking underground storage tank (UST) database; a third listing was identified as a Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) military evaluation site. All three listings meet the criteria specified in Section 65962.5 and were identified as being within the Project Site. Both USTs were granted case closure by the Regional Water Quality Control Boards (RWQCB) in 1995 and 1999, respectively. The third listing was granted “No Further Action” status as of December 2013.

EIR Process

In accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15105(a), the Draft EIR will be available for public review and comment during a 45-day review period. Comments on the Draft EIR will be accepted as part of the Planning Commission meeting on **July 22, 2024**, at **7 p.m.** Following the close of the public review period on August 5, 2024 at 5:30 p.m., the City will prepare a Final EIR, which will include responses to all substantive comments received on the Draft EIR. The Draft EIR and Final EIR will be considered by the City Council in making the decision to certify the EIR and taking final action on the Proposed Project.

Public Hearing Meeting

The City of Menlo Park is hosting a public hearing for the EIR during the NOA public comment period on **July 22, 2024** during a regularly scheduled Planning Commission meeting beginning at **7:00 p.m.** or as near as possible thereafter.

The meeting link will be available with publication of the Planning Commission agenda and staff report on the City’s website at menlopark.gov/Agendas-and-minutes, not less than 72 hours in advance of the meeting.

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

Submittal of Comments

Comments on the Draft EIR are due no later than the close of the Draft EIR review period (**5:30 p.m., Monday, August 5, 2024**). However, we would appreciate your response at the earliest possible date. Please send your written comments to Corinna Sandmeier at the address shown below or email them to **cdsandmeier@menlopark.gov** with "Parkline EIR" as the subject. Public agencies that provide comments are asked to include a contact person for the agency.

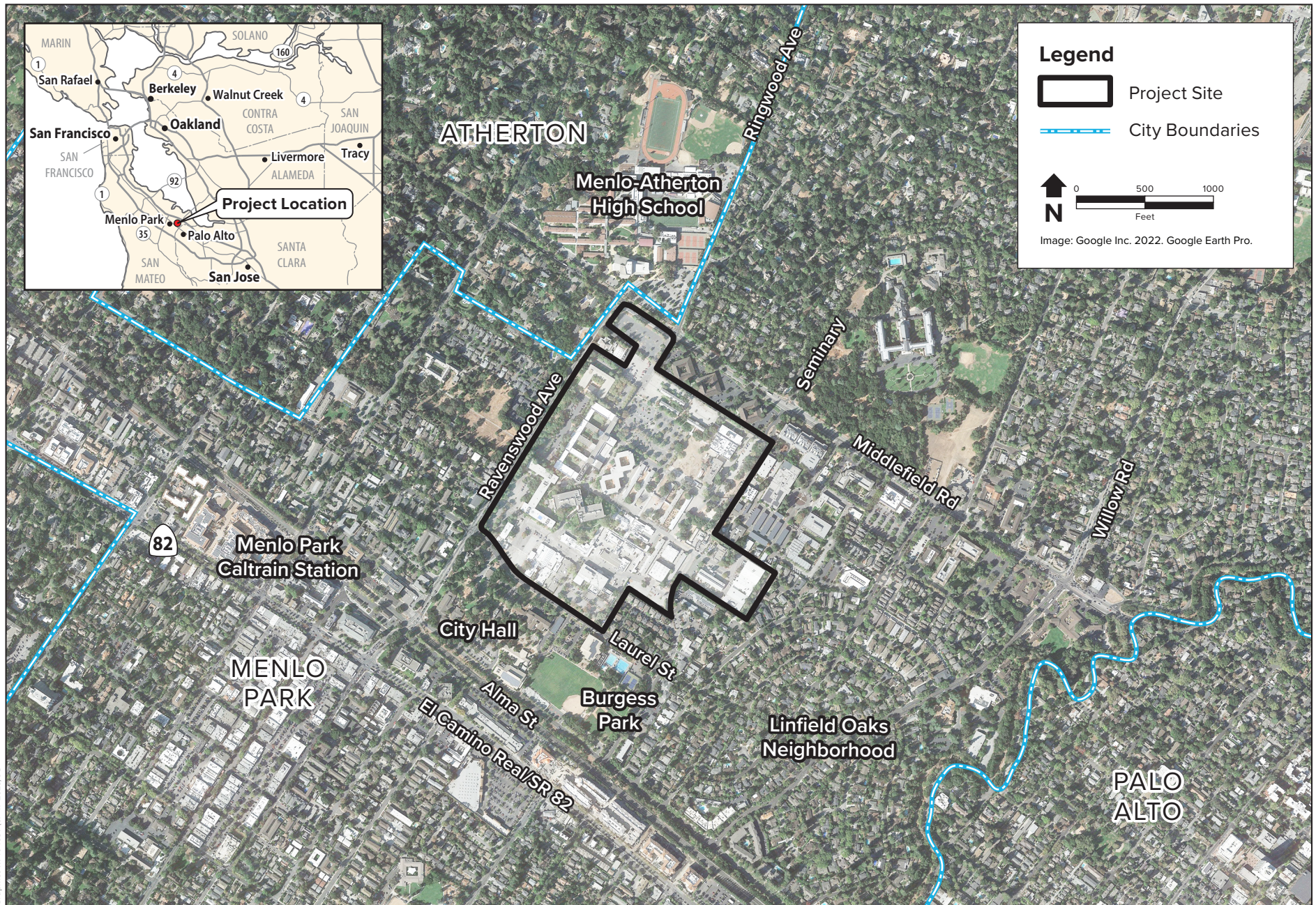
If you have any questions regarding the Proposed Project or the EIR process, please contact Corinna Sandmeier at the contact information listed below.

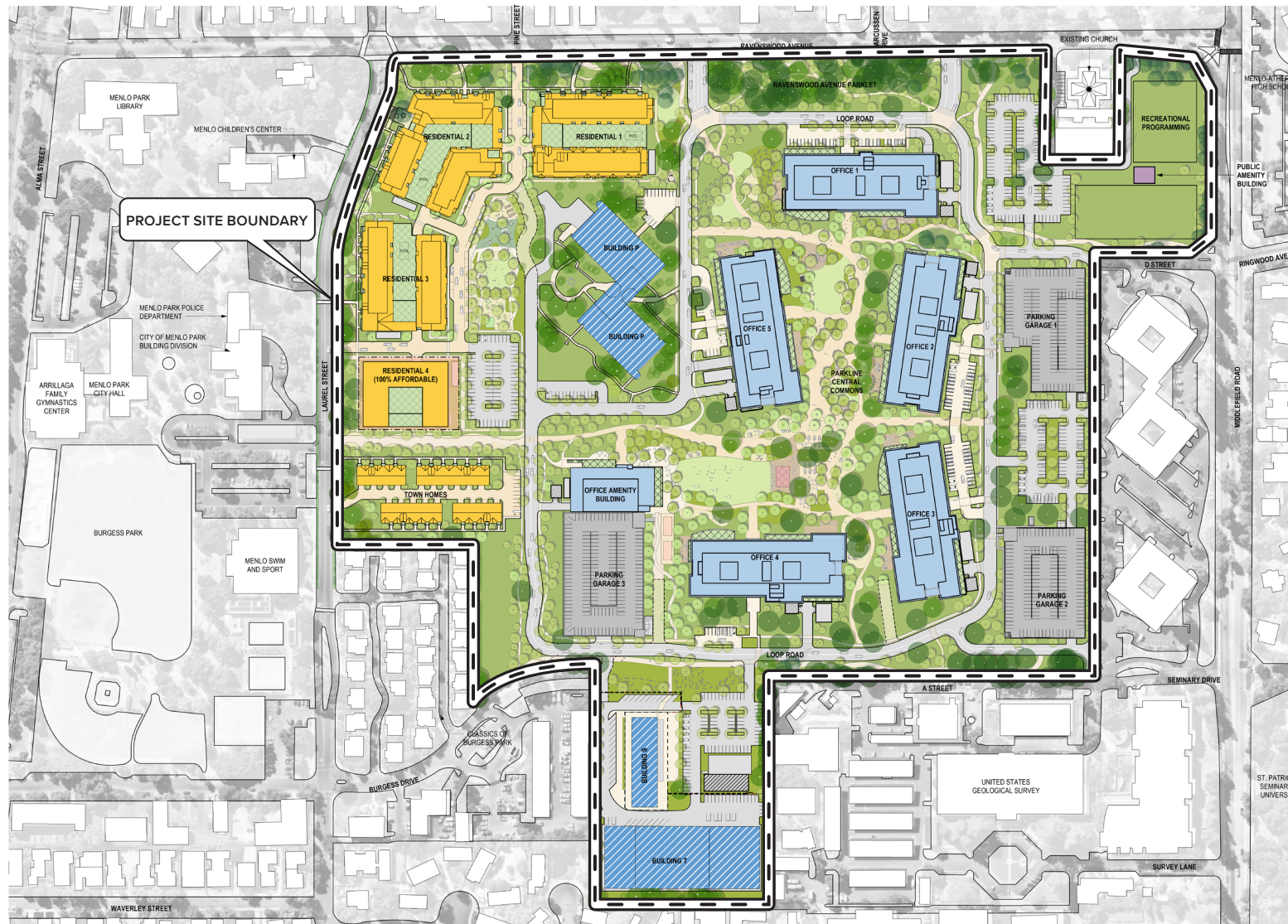
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Corinna Sandmeier

Corinna Sandmeier
 City of Menlo Park

June 20, 2024





LEGEND	
	RESIDENTIAL
	OFFICE
	TERRACE
	PUBLIC AMENITY BUILDING
	EXISTING BUILDINGS
	PARKING GARAGE
	UTILITY YARD
	TRASH ENCLOSURE
	FOOTPRINT / ROOF
	OUTDOOR PAVILION / EVENT SPACE

Scale: 1" = 100'-0"

Note: The combined utility yard (CUY), which is directly east of Building S, and the associated changes to the parking layout that are shown as existing in this figure are part of a separate architectural control application currently under review by the City for the proposed tenant improvements in Buildings P, S, and T. The proposed tenant improvements in Buildings P, S, and T are not part of the Proposed Project but are included in the cumulative analysis.

Source: Studios Architecture, OJB, Kier+Wright, 2024.

Figure 2
Conceptual Site Plan for the Proposed Project
Parkline



Source: Studios Architecture, OJB, Kier+Wright, 2024.

Figure 3
Conceptual Site Plan for the Project Variant
Parkline