



# NOTICE OF PREPARATION ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT 1350 ADAMS COURT PROJECT CITY OF MENLO PARK

**Date:** December 10, 2018

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

**From:** Tom Smith  
Senior Planner  
City of Menlo Park  
701 Laurel Street  
Menlo Park, CA 94025

**Subject:** **Notice of Preparation (NOP) of the Initial Study and  
Environmental Impact Report for the 1350 Adams Court Project**

**Lead Agency:** City of Menlo Park, Planning Division

**Project Title:** 1350 Adams Court Project

**Project Area:** City of Menlo Park

Notice is hereby given that the City of Menlo Park (City) will be the lead agency and will prepare a focused environmental impact report (EIR) for the 1350 Adams Court Project (Project). An Initial Study has been prepared along with this Notice of Preparation (NOP), which scopes out several environmental topics for further review. The focused EIR will address potential physical environmental effects of the Project that have not been scoped out, as outlined in the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The City is requesting comments on the scope and content of this focused EIR.

A scoping session will be held as part of the Planning Commission meeting on **January 14, 2019, at 7:00 p.m.** at the Menlo Park City Council Chambers, located at 701 Laurel Street, Menlo Park, CA 94025. The scoping session, which is part of the focused EIR scoping process, is the time when the City solicits input from the public and agencies on specific topics they believe should be addressed in the environmental analysis.

Written comments on the scope of the focused EIR may also be sent to:

**Tom Smith, Senior Planner  
City of Menlo Park  
Community Development Department, Planning Division  
701 Laurel Street  
Menlo Park, CA 94025  
tasmith@menlopark.org  
Phone: 650.330.6730**

Comments on the NOP are due no later than the close of the NOP review period (5:00 p.m. on Thursday, **January 24, 2019**). However, we would appreciate your response at the earliest possible date. Please send your written comments to Tom Smith at the address shown above or by email to [tasmith@menlopark.org](mailto:tasmith@menlopark.org) with "1350 Adams Court Project EIR" as the subject. Public agencies that provide comments are asked to include a contact person for the agency.

The Initial Study is available online at: <https://menlopark.org/Archive.aspx?AMID=76>. Hardcopies are also available for review at:

- Menlo Park Library (800 Alma Street, Menlo Park, CA 94025)
- Belle Haven Branch Library (413 Ivy Drive, Menlo Park, CA 94025)
- Community Development Department, Civic Center (701 Laurel Street, Menlo Park, CA 94025)

**PROJECT LOCATION AND EXISTING CONDITIONS:** The Project site is located north of US 101 in the City of Menlo Park (as shown in Figure 1.) The site is bounded by Adams Court to the north, Adams Drive to the east, O'Brien Drive to the south, and the Menlo Science and Technology Park to the west. Farther to the north, beyond the Menlo Park Labs Campus, is the currently inactive Dumbarton Rail Corridor, State Route (SR) 84, tidal mudflats and marshes along San Francisco Bay (Bay), the Don Edwards San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge (Refuge), and Ravenswood Slough. Approximately one-fourth of a mile to the east (across University Avenue) and south (across O'Brien Drive) are residential neighborhoods of East Palo Alto. The Belle Haven neighborhood of Menlo Park is west of Willow Road, approximately one-third of a mile from the Project site.

The Project site (also referred to as Lot 3) is within the Menlo Park Labs Campus. The 11.2-acre Project site encompasses Lot 3 North and 1305 O'Brien Drive, which are both part of the same legal parcel. Lot 3 North is the currently vacant 4.4-acre northern portion of the undeveloped parcel (APN 055-472-030), which is covered predominantly with dirt, loose vegetation, and concrete paving. The Project site also encompasses 6.8 acres at 1305 O'Brien Drive, directly south of Lot 3 North. The existing 188,100-gross-square-foot (gsf) building at 1305 O'Brien Drive, which was redeveloped in 2015, is currently leased to Pacific Biosciences-California (PacBio).

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION:** The Project would be constructed on Lot 3 North, the vacant portion of the parcel. The existing development at 1305 O'Brien Drive (the PacBio building) would generally not be affected by the Project, with some minor exceptions, including but not limited to the relocation of some required parking for the building. The Project would develop an approximately 260,400 gsf building that would be designed with the flexibility to accommodate a single life science tenant or meet the needs of multiple tenants. The building would be oriented in an east–west direction, with the northern frontage, along Adams Court, as the front façade. The building, including the garage, would have a footprint of approximately 89,034 square feet. The proposed building would have five levels, with a maximum height of approximately 92 feet, as measured to the top of the parapet. Note that because the Project site is a single parcel with both Lot 3 North and 1305 O'Brien Drive, both the new and existing buildings are included in the calculations, where applicable.

Although one building would be constructed, three offset building modules would be provided for architectural articulation and interest, and to maximize the open space at the northeast corner of the Project site, the corner of Adams Drive and Adams Court. In addition, a parking garage would be connected to the southwest portion of the proposed building. The building, which would allow for separate visitor/pedestrian, parking, and service-vehicle access, would be set back from the northeast corner to create a patio and a large outdoor deck on the second floor. The main lobby on the first floor would be more than two feet above the base flood elevation, as required by the Life Sciences (LS) zoning district, and oriented toward Adams Court. A curved driveway would ramp up slightly from the street to the entry plaza and the visitors parking area.

This Project is proposing bonus level development, although the proposed community amenity has not yet been identified.

**PROJECT APPROVALS:** The following City discretionary approvals would be required prior to development at the Project site:

- Use Permit
- Architectural Control
- Heritage Tree Removal Permit
- Below-Market-Rate Housing Agreement
- Environmental Review

In addition, as part of the Project review process conducted by the City, a Fiscal Impact Analysis will be prepared as well as an appraisal to identify the necessary value of the community amenity.

**RESPONSIBLE AGENCIES:** The agencies listed below are expected to review the draft focused EIR to evaluate the Project:

- Bay Area Air Quality Management District
- California Department of Transportation
- California Regional Water Quality Control Board/San Mateo Countywide Water Pollution Prevention Program
- City/County Association of Governments
- San Mateo County Transportation Authority
- Menlo Park Fire Protection District
- San Mateo County Environmental Health Division
- West Bay Sanitary District
- Native American Heritage Commission

**INTRODUCTION TO EIR:** The Project site is within the ConnectMenlo study area. ConnectMenlo, which updated the City's General Plan Land Use and Circulation Elements and rezoned land in the M-2 Area (now referred to as the Bayfront Area), was approved on November 29, 2016. Because the City's General Plan is a long-range planning document, the ConnectMenlo EIR was prepared as a program EIR, pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15168. Section 15168(d) of the CEQA Guidelines provides information for simplifying the preparation of environmental documents by incorporating by reference analyses and discussions. CEQA Guidelines Section 15152(d) provides that where an EIR has been prepared or certified for a program or plan, the environmental review for a later activity consistent with the program or plan should be limited to effects that were not analyzed as significant in the prior EIR or susceptible to substantial reduction or avoidance.

An Initial Study for the Project, which is available for review online, at the City libraries, and at the Community Development Department (as listed above) has been prepared to evaluate the potential environmental impacts of the Project and determine what level of additional environmental review is appropriate. In accordance with the requirements outlined in Section 15168 of the CEQA Guidelines, the Initial Study has been prepared to disclose the relevant impacts and mitigation measures covered in the ConnectMenlo EIR and discuss whether the Project is within the parameters of the ConnectMenlo EIR. Based on the findings in the Initial Study, a focused EIR will be prepared for impacts that need further discussion and/or mitigation beyond that provided in the ConnectMenlo EIR. The focused EIR for the Project will be prepared and processed in accordance with CEQA and the CEQA Guidelines.

**PROBABLE ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS:** Based on the conclusions in the Initial Study, the following topics will be scoped out of the EIR: agriculture, aesthetics, biological resources, cultural resources, geology and soils, hazards and hazardous materials, hydrology and water quality, land use, mineral resources, public services, recreation, and tribal resources. Therefore, the focused EIR will analyze whether the Project would have a significant environmental impact in the following areas:

- Air quality
- Greenhouse gas emissions
- Noise (traffic noise)
- Population and housing
- Transportation and traffic
- Utilities (water supply)

**ALTERNATIVES:** Based on the significance conclusions determined in the focused EIR, alternatives to the Project will be analyzed to reduce identified impacts. Section 15126.6(e) of the CEQA Guidelines requires the evaluation of a No-Project Alternative. Other alternatives may be considered during preparation of the EIR and will comply with the CEQA Guidelines, which call for a “range of reasonable alternatives to the project, or to the location of the project, which would feasibly attain most of the basic objectives of the project but would avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects of the project.” The focused EIR will also analyze a Reduced Intensity Alternative, along with any other feasible alternatives that are proposed during the scoping process.

**EIR PROCESS:** Following the close of the NOP comment period, a draft focused EIR will be prepared that will consider all NOP comments. In accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15105(a), the draft focused EIR will be released for public review and comment for a required 45-day review period. Following the close of the 45-day public review period, the City will prepare a final EIR, which will include responses to all substantive comments received on the draft focused EIR. The draft focused EIR and final EIR and will be considered by the Planning Commission and City Council in making the decision to certify the EIR and approve or deny the Project.



Tom Smith, Senior Planner  
City of Menlo Park

December 10, 2018

Date