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# INTRODUCTION

## PURPOSE OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

The California Environmental Quality Act and the Guidelines promulgated thereunder (together “CEQA”) require an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) be prepared for any project which may have a significant impact on the environment. An EIR is an informational document, the purposes of which, according to CEQA are “to provide public agencies and the public in general with detailed information about the effect which a proposed project is likely to have on the environment; to list ways in which the significant effects of such a project might be minimized; and to indicate alternatives to such a project.” The information contained in this EIR is intended to be objective and impartial, and to enable the reader to arrive at an independent judgment regarding the significance of the environmental impacts resulting from the proposed project.

This EIR evaluates the potential environmental impacts that may be associated with the Stanford Wedge Housing Project (“Project”) at 3530 Alpine Road in Portola Valley, California.

## ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT REVIEW PROCESS

This Draft EIR, together with the Final EIR (discussed below) will constitute the EIR for the proposed Project. The EIR is intended to enable Town decision makers, public agencies, and interested citizens to evaluate the environmental issues associated with the proposed Project.

In reviewing the Draft EIR, readers should focus on the sufficiency of the document in identifying and analyzing the possible environmental impacts associated with the Project. Readers are also encouraged to review and comment on ways in which significant impacts associated with this Project might be avoided or mitigated. Comments are most helpful when the basis for the comments is explained and they suggest additional specific alternatives or mitigation measures that would provide better ways to avoid or mitigate significant environmental impacts.

The Draft EIR will be available for review online at <https://www.portolavalley.net/building-planning/stanford>, and as a hard copy at Town Hall, 765 Portola Road, Portola Valley and at the Portola Valley Library located adjacent to Town Hall. Comments on the Draft EIR may be submitted in writing until 5:00 P.M. PST on the last day of the public review period to:

Town of Portola Valley  
Building and Planning Department  
765 Portola Road, Portola Valley, CA 94028  
Attn: Laura Russell, Planning & Building Director  
[stanfordeir@portolavalley.net](mailto:stanfordeir@portolavalley.net)

The comments received during the public review period will be compiled and presented together with responses to those comments in the Final EIR. Any minor revisions to the Draft EIR will also be included in the Final EIR.

The Town of Portola Valley Planning Commission and the Town Council will review the EIR documents and will determine whether or not the EIR provides a full and adequate appraisal of the Project and its alternatives. After reviewing this Draft EIR and the Final EIR, and after reviewing the recommendation of the Town of Portola Valley Planning Commission regarding the certification of the EIR as adequate and complete, the Town Council will be in a position to determine whether or not the EIR should be certified. An EIR does not control the agency's ultimate discretion on the Project. However, as required under CEQA, the agency must respond to each significant effect identified in the EIR by making findings and, if necessary, by making a statement of overriding considerations for any significant and unavoidable impacts. In accordance with California law, the EIR on the Project must be certified before any action on the Project can be taken. Once the EIR is certified, the Town of Portola Valley can then consider whether the Project as proposed should be approved, revised, or rejected.

## **CONTENT AND ORGANIZATION OF THE DRAFT EIR**

A Notice of Preparation (NOP) was issued in January 2020 to solicit comments from public agencies and the public regarding the scope of the environmental evaluation for the proposed Project. The NOP and all written responses to the NOP are presented in Appendix A. These comments were taken into consideration during the preparation of the Draft EIR.

An Executive Summary follows this introduction as Chapter 2. This summary presents an overview of the Project and the potentially significant environmental impacts which may be associated with the Project, including a listing of recommended mitigation measures.

The Draft EIR presents a description of the Project in Chapter 3. Chapters 4 through 18 present environmental analysis of the Project, focusing on the following issues:

4. Aesthetics
5. Agricultural, Forestry, and Mineral Resources
6. Air Quality
7. Biological Resources
8. Cultural Resources and Tribal Cultural Resources
9. Geology and Soils
10. Greenhouse Gas Emissions
11. Hazards and Hazardous Materials
12. Hydrology and Water Quality
13. Land Use and Planning
14. Noise
15. Population and Housing, Public Services, and Recreation
16. Transportation
17. Utilities and Service Systems

18. Wildfire

19. Other CEQA Topics

**Chapter 20** presents an evaluation of the environmental effects that may be associated with the proposed Project and three alternatives evaluated: the "No Project" Alternative, the "Larger Setback" Alternative and the "No Clustering" Alternative.

**Chapter 21** lists the persons who prepared the Draft EIR, identifies those persons and organizations contacted during the preparation of the document, and lists the reference materials used.

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