

STANFORD WEDGE HOUSING PROJECT – CEQA/EIR FAQ

Q: What is CEQA?

A: The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) generally requires state and local agencies to inform decision makers, like the Town of Portola Valley (Town) Council, and the community about the potential environmental impacts of proposed projects, and to identify ways to avoid or mitigate those impacts, if feasible. If a project may cause adverse impacts, the public agency must prepare an EIR.

The Town is the CEQA lead agency, meaning it has the primary responsibility in preparing the EIR and discretionary authority over the proposed project. The Town has contracted with the environmental consulting firm Lamphier Gregory and Associates for professional environmental planning services in preparation of the EIR. The Town solely manages the contract for these CEQA services and as the applicant, Stanford pays for the cost of such services. Stanford submits such funds directly to the Town and the Town directly pays related contract invoices to the consultant. Beyond funding the contract services, Stanford has no other direct involvement in the preparation of the DEIR.

Q: What is an EIR?

A: An Environmental Impact Report (EIR) is a document that contains in-depth studies of potential impacts & measures to reduce or avoid those impacts (called mitigation measures), and an analysis of project alternatives. An EIR examines all phases of the project including planning, construction, and operation. The

PROJECT INFORMATION

PROJECT NAME: Stanford Wedge Housing
PROJECT ADDRESS: 3530 Alpine Road
PROJECT WEBSITE: <https://portolavalley.net/projects>

WHERE TO PROVIDE COMMENT ON THE DEIR:

Please note that written correspondence is typically considered a public record and may be attached to staff reports, which are posted on the Town's website.

***Web form:** Visit project website

***Email:** stanfordeir@portolavalley.net

***Mail:** Town of Portola Valley, Planning Dept.
DEIR – Stanford Wedge Housing Project
765 Portola Rd.
Portola Valley, CA 94028

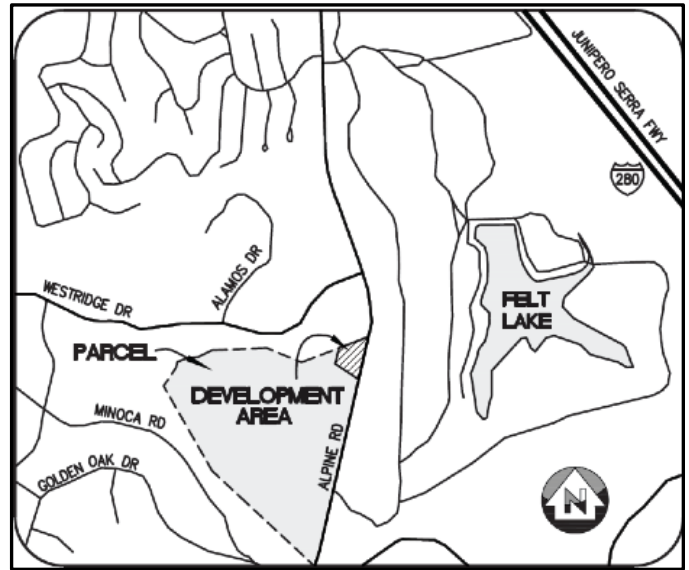
WHEN TO PROVIDE COMMENT ON THE DEIR:

March 30 to May 13, 2022

EIR itself does not determine whether a project will be approved; instead, it is an informational and disclosure document taken under consideration during the decision-making process.

Q: Who must comply with CEQA and who is responsible for approving an EIR?

A: A public agency must comply with CEQA when it undertakes an activity defined by CEQA as a “project”; an activity which must receive some discretionary approval from a public agency which may cause either a direct physical change or a reasonably foreseeable indirect change in the environment. The proposed Stanford University Faculty Housing project is a defined “project” per CEQA. Discretionary approval means that there is an exercise of judgement or deliberation by a governing body in determining whether a project will be approved, or if a permit is issued. The Town Council is responsible for approving the EIR for this project.



Area of Study – Location of Stanford Wedge Housing Project on Alpine Road

Q: What topics did the Stanford Wedge Housing EIR study?

A: The EIR evaluates a projects potential impact on the following environmental topics as required by CEQA and State Law:

| | | | |
|--|--------------------------------------|---------------------|---|
| Aesthetics | Cultural & Tribal Cultural Resources | Land Use & Planning | Utilities & Service Systems and Energy |
| Agriculture, Forest, & Mineral Resources | Geology & Soils | Wildfire | Population & Housing, Public Services, and Recreation |
| Air Quality | Hazards & Hazardous Materials | Noise & Vibration | Transportation |
| Biology | Hydrology & Water Quality | Population/Housing | Greenhouse Gas Emissions |

The EIR also includes a project description, alternative project scopes, description of the environmental setting, and identifies significant environmental impacts and potential adverse effects, technical studies, and mitigation measures.

It is important to note that not all specific details of the proposed project are evaluated in the EIR if not explicitly required in the CEQA guidelines but could be further evaluated as part of the Town’s future consideration of the project entitlements and consistency with applicable Town plans and regulations. These may include such things as parking, inclusionary housing and some wildfire issues not explicitly called out in CEQA.

Q: What are the major steps to this CEQA Process?

A: Major steps include:

| CEQA Process & Schedule | | | |
|-------------------------------|--|---|--|
| Activity | Purpose | Activity | Date |
| (1) Notice of Preparation | Communicates to the public, agencies, and organizations an EIR is being prepared. Also serves to solicit input on the scope and content of the environmental information to be included in the EIR. <i>COMPLETED JANUARY 16, 2020</i> | (4) Notice of Completion (NOC) | An NOC signals that the DEIR is available for public review for no less than 45 days. The NOC also identifies where the DEIR and technical studies may be reviewed and where to address comments on the DEIR. <i>March 30 – May 13 2022</i> |
| (2) Public Scoping Meeting(s) | A scoping meeting informs the public that the Town is evaluating a project under CEQA and allows the Town to solicit public comment and identify possible impacts. <i>COMPLETED JANUARY 30, 2020</i> | (5) Final EIR and Notice of Determination / Decision (NOD) | A Final EIR includes responses to public comments received after release of the DEIR and any additional relevant project information. An NOD is a notice filed by the Town after it approves a project, describes the project, and identifies expected environmental impacts, if any. <i>August 2022</i> |
| (3) Draft EIR (DEIR) | The DEIR is the first iteration of environmental analyses collecting the project description, identification of impacts, technical studies, mitigation measures and alternatives <i>March 30, 2022</i> | (6) Certification and Mitigation Monitoring & Reporting Program Statement of Overriding Considerations | A certification is an official position taken by the Town Council indicating that the EIR has complied with CEQA for the identified project. It also indicates the EIR is adequate and provides sufficient detail to allow the project’s construction and will include a Mitigation Monitoring & Reporting Program (MMRP) which is a matrix describing the mitigation measures, responsibility, and timing of implementation. If a project has identified significant, unavoidable impacts, then a Statement of Overriding Considerations would also need to be adopted. This Statement identifies economic, social, technological, or other benefits of a Project that override any significant, unavoidable impacts. As this project has not identified such significant, unavoidable impacts, there is no Statement of Overriding Consideration. <i>Late 2022</i> |

Q: How do identified impacts in the DEIR affect the ability to approve or deny the project?

A: The DEIR is not intended to serve as recommendation of either approval or denial of the project. It provides the primary source of environmental information for the Town to consider and identify ways any potentially significant environmental impacts can be avoided or significantly reduced. Impacts can be identified as “no impact”, “less than significant or less than significant with mitigation incorporated”, or “significant impact”. If an impact is identified as “significant and unavoidable” it means that an impact

that would cause a substantial adverse impact that cannot be avoided, even with the implementation of all feasible mitigation. In these instances, a jurisdiction must adopt a “statement of overriding considerations” which will conclude that even though adverse impacts have been identified, overriding economic, legal, social technological or other considerations outweigh the project’s significant, unmitigated impacts.

All impacts identified in the Stanford DEIR are “no impact”, “less than significant” or “less than significant with mitigation incorporated”. No significant, unavoidable impacts were identified as part of this project.

Q: When and how can I provide comment on the Draft EIR (DEIR) document?

A: Public input is a critical component of the CEQA environmental review process. The DRAFT EIR (DEIR) will be circulated for review from March 30 to May 13, 2022. During this time, you may submit your comments to the Town via the form on the website, email, mail and/or drop off hard copy comments, or verbally during the Planning Commission’s public meeting on the DEIR. See “Where to Provide Comments” above.

When the DEIR has been completed, the Town shall notify the public that the DEIR is available for review and comment. The notice will include general information about a project; the comment period, the date, time and location of public hearings, and the location where the DEIR and supplemental information is available for review.

Q: How can I make the most effective comments on the DEIR?

A: It is best to try and make substantive comments that are backed by factual support. Substantive comments are required to be responded to prior to certification of the EIR. Substantive comments could point out errors, inconsistencies, omissions of data or analyses, conclusions not based on evidence, or failures to provide discussion required by CEQA. Be aware that, when responding to comments, the Town need only respond to significant environmental issues and does not need to provide all information requested by reviewers, if a good faith effort at full disclosure is made in the DEIR. Comments that simply reflect an opinion or emotion about the project will likely not be addressed. For example, comments that state, “I don’t like the project,” or “I oppose the entire development project” typically result in a response of “Comment Noted.”

Try to focus on evaluating the sufficiency of the document in identifying and analyzing the possible impacts on the environment. For example, is there a local public facility that has not been identified as potentially having an impact? If you believe an area has been insufficiently analyzed, include that in your comment and request that it be analyzed. Another place to focus is on ways in which the significant effects of the Project might be avoided or mitigated. These are typically called “mitigation measures.” Does it appear that the mitigation measures sufficiently minimize the project impacts? If not, do not simply state that the mitigation measure is insufficient. A comment is more substantive when it suggests an alternative project or a mitigation measure that would provide better ways to avoid or mitigate the significant environmental effects of the Project.
