NOTICE OF PREPARATION
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT
MENLO PORTAL PROJECT
CITY OF MENLO PARK

Date: January 7, 2020

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

From: Kaitie M. Meador
Senior Planner
City of Menlo Park
701 Laurel Street
Menlo Park, CA 94025

Subject: **Notice of Preparation (NOP) of an Initial Study and Environmental Impact Report for the Menlo Portal Project**

Lead Agency: City of Menlo Park, Planning Division

Project Title: Menlo Portal Project

Project Area: Bayfront 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 proposed Menlo Portal Project (project). An Initial Study has been prepared along with this Notice of Preparation (NOP), which scopes out several environmental topics from further review. The focused EIR will address potential physical environmental effects of the proposed 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 27, 2020** 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 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. The scoping process is designed to enable the City to determine the scope and content of the focused EIR, identify the range of actions, and identify potentially significant environmental effects, alternatives, and mitigation measures to be analyzed in the focused EIR. Written comments on the scope of the focused EIR may also be sent to:

Kaitie M. Meador
City of Menlo Park
Community Development Department, Planning Division
701 Laurel Street
Menlo Park, CA 94025
KMMeador@menlopark.org
Phone: 650.330.6731

Comments on the NOP are due no later than the close of the NOP review period (5:00 p.m. on **Friday, February 7, 2020**). However, we would appreciate your response at the earliest possible date. Please send your written comments to Kaitie Meador at the address shown above or by email to KMMeador@menlopark.org with "Menlo Portal 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://www.menlopark.org/1601/Menlo-Portal. Paper copies 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 east of US Highway 101 (US 101) in the City of Menlo Park, as shown in Figure 1. The site consists of three parcels located at 104 Constitution Drive, 110 Constitution Drive, and 115 Independence Drive. The project site is generally surrounded by a mix of uses, including older buildings and new construction. The project site is bordered to the north by Constitution Drive, to the east by commercial and light manufacturing uses, to the south by a single-story commercial office building, and to the west by Independence Drive and Marsh Road.

The project site is designated Mixed Use Residential within the Bayfront Area on the City's General Plan Land Use Designations Map and is within the Residential-Mixed Use-Bonus Zoning District. The generally-level site is currently developed with three buildings totaling approximately 64,832 square feet, as shown in Figure 2. The existing buildings were constructed between 1960 and 1966 and are currently occupied by office and industrial uses. Vegetation on the project site consists of small landscaped areas and approximately 13 mature trees along both the southern and northern borders of the project site.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: The proposed project would result in the demolition of the existing office and industrial buildings and associated improvements and redevelopment of the project site with an approximately 327,970-gross-square-foot, seven-story multi-family apartment building with approximately 335 dwelling units and an approximately 34,819-gross-square-foot commercial office building, as well as associated open space, circulation and parking, and infrastructure improvements, as shown in Figures 3, 4, and 5. The project sponsor is currently proposing that a total of approximately 48 residential units (15 percent) be affordable to low income households. Low income households are those earning up to 80 percent of the area median income. The proposed allotment of affordable housing units would continue to be refined with the City.

The ground floor of each building would be raised 3 to 5 feet above grade to accommodate flood plain design requirements. The proposed residential building would be a maximum of 84 feet, 9 inches and would front to both Constitution Drive and Independence Drive. The commercial office building would be a maximum of 56 feet, 7 inches in height. The residential building would include an at-grade, two-level, approximately 93,716-square-foot, 324-space parking garage. The commercial office building would also include an at-grade, two-level approximately 42,338-square foot parking garage. Across both levels, the parking garage at the commercial office building would include approximately 93 standard parking spaces.

A total of approximately 51,319 square feet of open space would be provided across the entire project site, including a publicly-accessible, approximately 12,870-square-foot central plaza on the ground floor between the residential and commercial buildings.

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

- EIR Certification
- Use Permit
- Architectural Control
- Lot Line Adjustment
- Lot Merger
- Heritage Tree Removal Permit
- Below Market Rate Housing Agreement

There will be a fiscal impact analysis conducted regarding the proposed project. In order to qualify for bonus-level development within the R-MU-B zoning district, the proposed project will also be required to complete an appraisal process to identify the value of the community amenities to be provided in exchange for the opportunity to develop at the bonus level.

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

- Pacific Gas & Electric
- California Department of Transportation
- California Department of Toxic Substances Control
- California Regional Water Quality Control Board/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
- West Bay Sanitary District
- Menlo Park Fire Protection District

INTRODUCTION TO EIR: 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. The City certified the program EIR for ConnectMenlo on November 29, 2016. Section 15168(d) of the CEQA Guidelines provides information for simplifying the preparation of environmental documents by incorporating by reference analyses and discussions from the program EIR. CEQA Guidelines Section 15162(d) states that where an EIR has been prepared and certified for a program or plan, the environmental review for a later activity consistent with the program or plan should be limited to the effects that were not analyzed as significant in the prior EIR or susceptible to substantial reduction or avoidance.

An Initial Study for the proposed 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 proposed 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 certified program-level ConnectMenlo EIR and discuss whether the proposed project is within the parameters of the certified ConnectMenlo EIR. In addition, as a result of the settlement agreement between the City of Menlo Park and the City of East Palo Alto regarding the ConnectMenlo EIR, certain topics are required to be analyzed. Based on the findings of the Initial Study, a focused EIR will be prepared for impacts that need further discussion and/or mitigation beyond that provided in the certified ConnectMenlo EIR. The focused EIR for the proposed 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: aesthetics; agriculture and forestry resources; biological resources; cultural resources; energy; geology and soils; hazards and hazardous materials; hydrology and water quality; land use and planning; mineral resources; public services; recreation; utilities and service systems; and wildfire. These topic areas were adequately analyzed in the ConnectMenlo EIR and no additional potential impacts or mitigation measures have been identified in the Initial Study. Therefore, the focused EIR will analyze whether the proposed project would have a significant environmental impact in the following areas:

- Air Quality;
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions;
- Noise (traffic noise);
- Population and Housing;
- Transportation; and
- Tribal Cultural Resources

ALTERNATIVES: Based on the significance conclusions determined in the focused EIR, alternatives to the proposed project will be identified and 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 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.

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 will be considered by the Planning Commission in making the decision to certify the EIR and approve or deny the project.

Kaitie M. Meador
City of Menlo Park

January 7, 2020



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FIGURE 1

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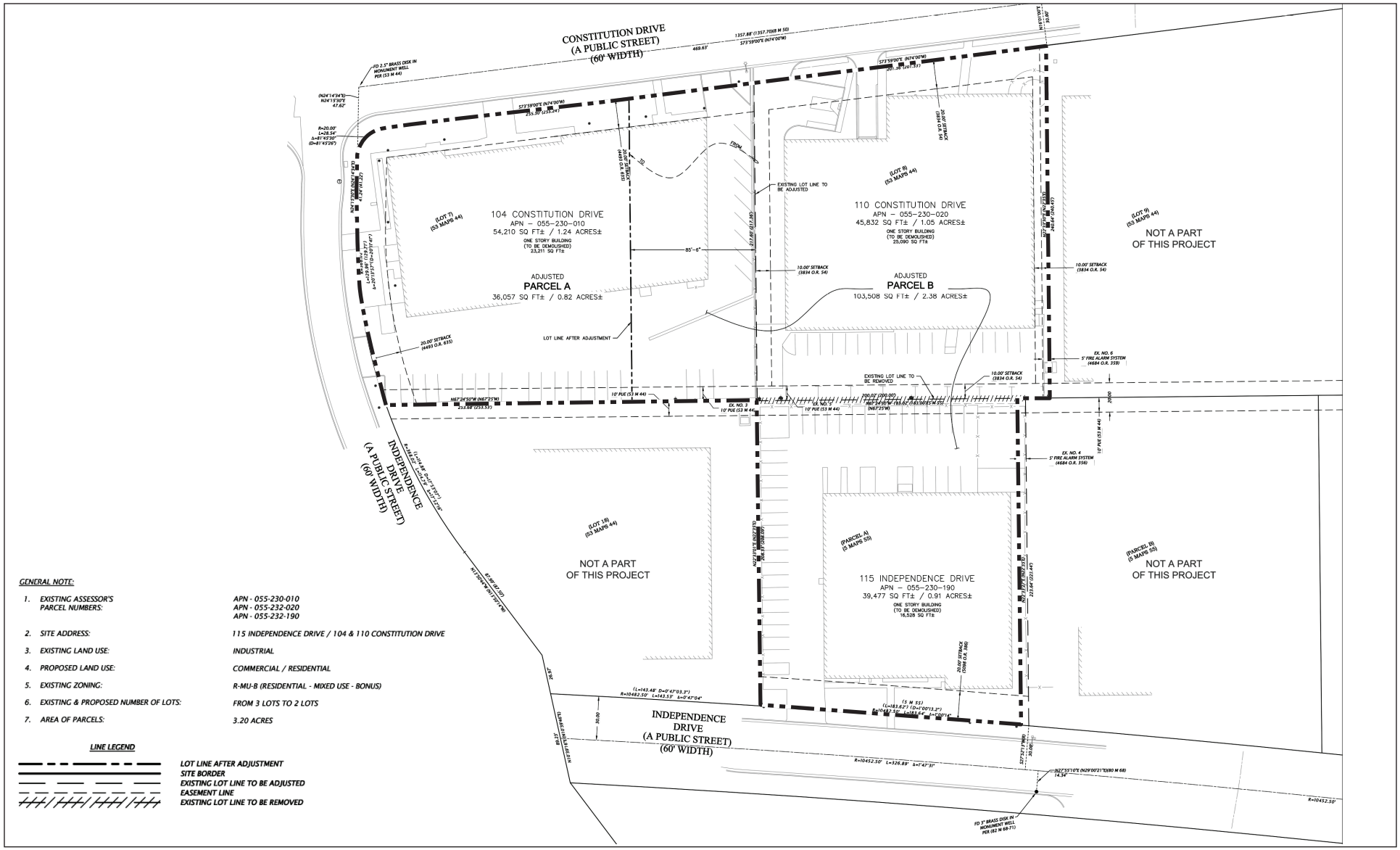
Project Site

Menlo Portal Project NOP

Project Location and Regional Vicinity Map

SOURCES: GOOGLE EARTH 8/9/18; LSA, 2019.

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GENERAL NOTE:

1.	EXISTING ASSESSOR'S PARCEL NUMBERS:	APN - 055-230-010 APN - 055-232-020 APN - 055-232-190
2.	SITE ADDRESS:	115 INDEPENDENCE DRIVE / 104 & 110 CONSTITUTION DRIVE
3.	EXISTING LAND USE:	INDUSTRIAL
4.	PROPOSED LAND USE:	COMMERCIAL / RESIDENTIAL
5.	EXISTING ZONING:	R-MU-B (RESIDENTIAL - MIXED USE - BONUS)
6.	EXISTING & PROPOSED NUMBER OF LOTS:	FROM 3 LOTS TO 2 LOTS
7.	AREA OF PARCELS:	3.20 ACRES

LINE LEGEND

- LOT LINE AFTER ADJUSTMENT
- SITE BORDER
- EXISTING LOT LINE TO BE ADJUSTED
- EASEMENT LINE
- EXISTING LOT LINE TO BE REMOVED

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FIGURE 2

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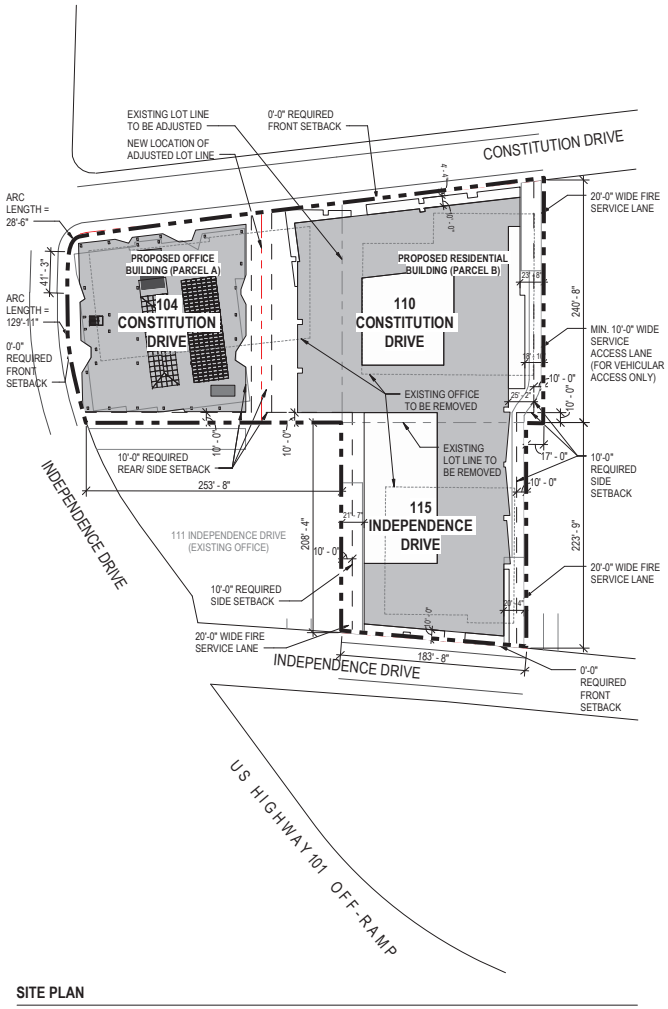
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Project Boundary

Menlo Portal Project NOP
Existing Site Conditions

SOURCE: BKF, 2018.

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SITE PLAN



SITE CONTEXT - LEVEL 1

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FIGURE 3

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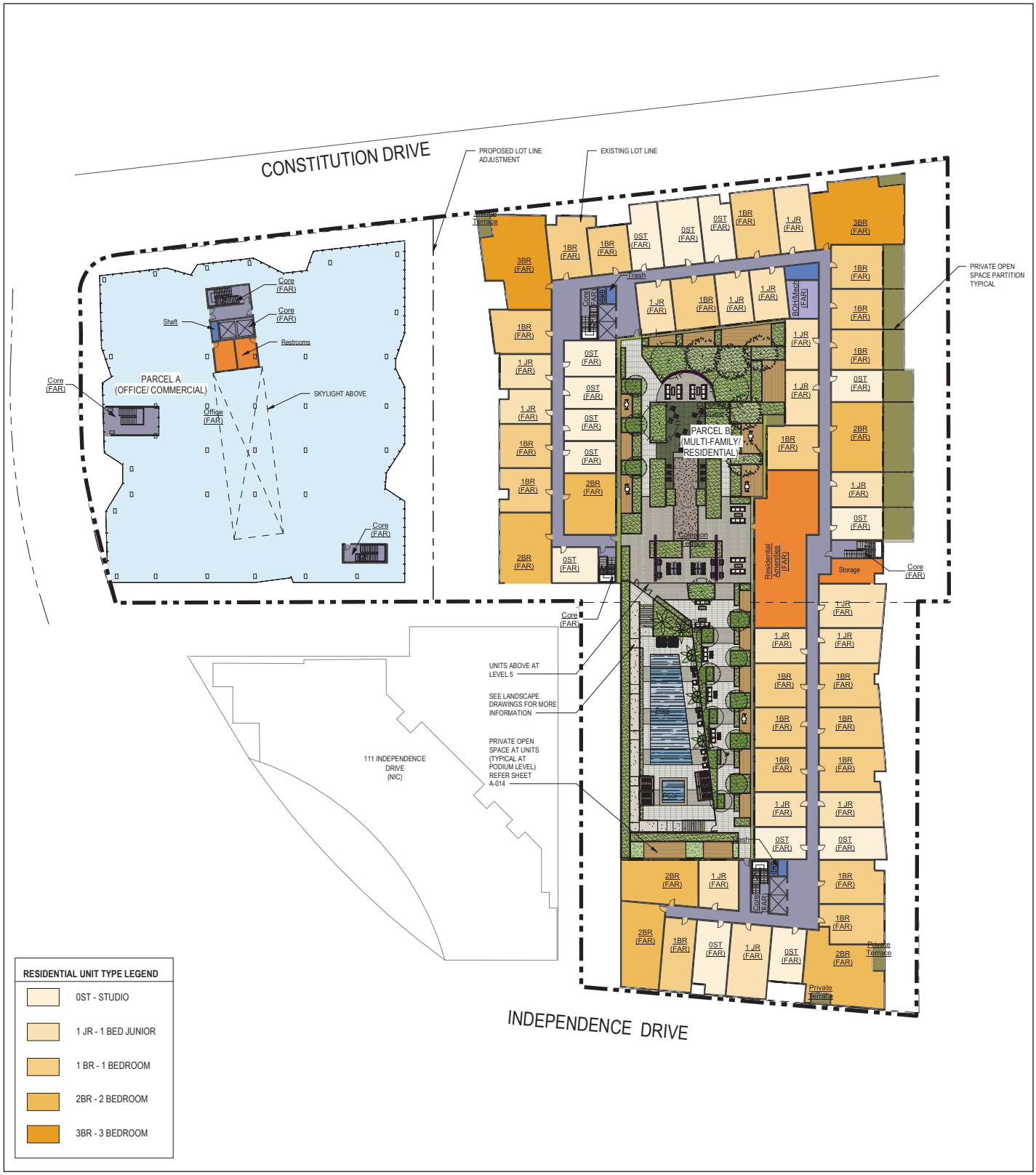
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Project Boundary

Menlo Portal Project NOP
Conceptual Site Plan

SOURCE: BKF, 12/10/19.

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FIGURE 4

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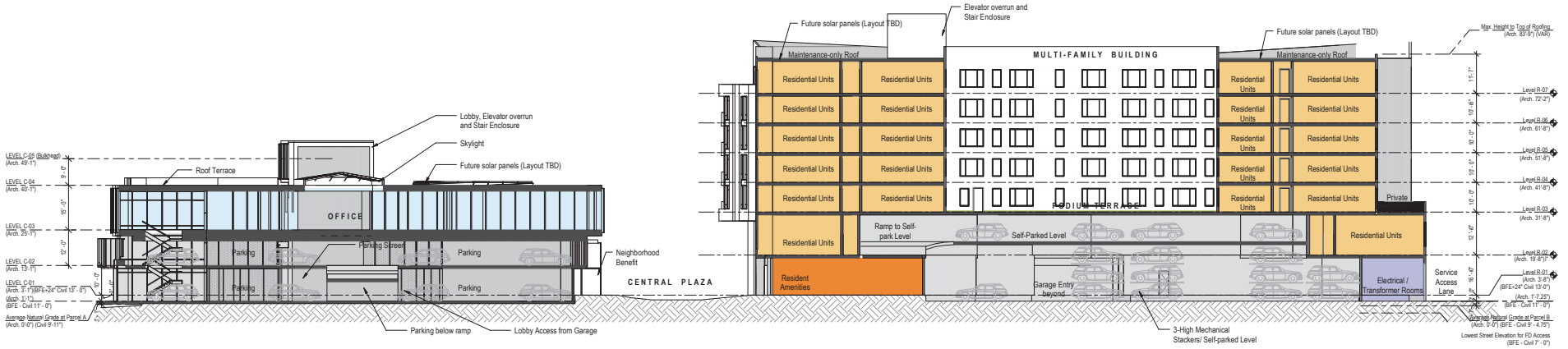
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Project Boundary

Menlo Portal Project NOP
Conceptual Third Level Site Plan

SOURCE: BKF, 12/10/19.

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WEST EAST BUILDING SECTION



NORTH SOUTH BUILDING SECTION

BUILDING SECTION NOTES:

1. BFE IS BASE FLOOD ELEVATION (CIVIL GRADE 11.0)
2. BFE+24" IS THE CODE REQUIRED MIN. FINISHED FLOOR ELEVATIONS FOR OCCUPIED LEVELS OF NEW CONSTRUCTION (CIVIL GRADE 13.0)
3. AVERAGE NATURAL GRADE OF OFFICE BUILDING IN PARCEL A IS +/-9.96' OR 9'-11"
4. AVERAGE NATURAL GRADE OF RESIDENTIAL BUILDING IN PARCEL B IS +/-9.44 OR 9'-5"

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FIGURE 5

0 16 32
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Menlo Portal Project NOP
Conceptual Building Sections

SOURCE: BKF, 12/10/19.

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