



City of East Palo Alto

Community & Economic Development Department

TO: State Clearinghouse, Responsible and Trustee Agencies, Interested Parties, and County Clerk of San Mateo County

DATE: July 26, 2024

SUBJECT: **Notice of Availability of the Subsequent Environmental Impact Report (SEIR)**

LEAD AGENCY: City of East Palo Alto

PROJECT TITLE: Ravenswood Business District/4 Corners Specific Plan Update

PROJECT AREA: City of East Palo Alto, Ravenswood Business District

Notice is Hereby Given that the City of East Palo Alto (City), as the Lead Agency, prepared a Subsequent Environmental Impact Report (SEIR) in accordance with the California Environmental Act (CEQA) for the Ravenswood Business District / 4 Corners Specific Plan Update.

Project Location: The approximately 350-acre Ravenswood Business District /4 Corners Specific Plan area is located in the northeastern area of East Palo Alto, in southern San Mateo County. The project site is generally bounded by the City Limits/Union Pacific Railroad tracks to the north, Weeks Street or Runnymede Street to the south, University Avenue and Gloria Way to the west, and the Ravenswood Open Space Preserve and Don Edwards Reserve/Palo Alto Baylands Nature Preserve to the east. Existing development within the Specific Plan area includes residential, retail, medical office, light industrial, and institutional land uses. The Specific Plan area has been reduced compared to the Adopted 2013 Plan, by removing the University Village neighborhood and Cooley Landing from its extent.

Project Description Summary: The current Ravenswood Business District /4 Corners Specific Plan, adopted in 2013, serves as a guide for development and redevelopment, including a policy and regulatory framework. The Adopted Plan allows for development of up to 1.268 million square feet of office uses, 351,820 square feet of industrial or research and development uses, 112,400 square feet of retail uses, 61,000 square feet of civic/community uses, and 835 housing units (816 multifamily, 19 single-family).

The proposed update to the Ravenswood Business District / 4 Corners Specific Plan (Plan) would **increase the total amount of development allowed within the Specific Plan area** by increasing the maximum square footages for office, research and development/life science, light industrial, civic/community, tenant amenity, and the total number of residential units allowed to be developed. The SEIR evaluated two scenarios; the smaller consisting of 2.82 million square feet of office and Research & Development (R&D) uses and 1,350 residential units, and the larger scenario consisting of 3.35 million square feet of office and R&D uses and 1,600 residential units. Therefore, this SEIR is seeking to analyze the potential environmental impacts of a cumulative amount of development that is greater than the existing Specific Plan. The future exact allocation of that development will be determined by project-specific applications and approvals but will not exceed the total analyzed in this SEIR. The Specific Plan update (under both Project scenarios) also includes comprehensive utility, infrastructure, transportation, and sea level rise improvements.

The project will include adoption of amendments to the East Palo Alto General Plan and Development Code, changing certain existing land use designations in the Plan Area and updating existing or establishing new development standards to replace some of the current zoning provisions applicable to the Plan Area. These amendments must be completed to ensure consistency between the Specific Plan, General Plan, and Development Code.

Specific Plan update can be found on the City’s project page:

<https://www.cityofepa.org/planning/page/rbd-specific-plan-update>.

| Table 1: Future Development Analyzed Under SEIR Scenarios (No Project and Proposed Project #1 and #2) | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|--------------------------------------|---------------|--------------------|-------------------|---------------|-------------------|-----------------------|---------------|---------------------|----------------------|
| | Non-Residential (square feet) | | | | | | | Housing Units | | |
| | <i>Combined Office + R&D/Lab</i> | Office | R&D/Lab | Industrial | Retail | Civic/Comm | Tenant Amenity | All | Multi-family | Single-Family |
| “No Project” Adopted 2013 Specific Plan | 1,444,410 | 1,268,500 | 175,910 | 175,910 | 112,400 | 61,000 | 0 | 835 | 816 | 19 |
| Project Scenario #1 | 2,824,000 | 1,835,600 | 988,400 | 250,000 | 112,400 | 154,700 | 43,870 | 1,350 | 1,270 | 80 |
| <i>Net Change #1</i> | +1,379,590 | +567,100 | +812,490 | +74,090 | 0 | +93,700 | +43,870 | +515 | +454 | +61 |
| Project Scenario #2 | 3,335,000 | 2,167,750 | 1,167,250 | 300,000 | 112,400 | 154,700 | 53,500 | 1,600 | 1,472 | 128 |
| <i>Net Change #2</i> | +1,890,590 | +899,250 | +991,340 | +124,090 | 0 | +93,700 | +53,500 | +765 | +656 | +109 |

Significant Environmental Effects: The Draft SEIR identified significant impacts related to construction air quality, biological resources, cultural resources, geology and soils, hazards and hazardous materials, and construction noise and vibration, which can be mitigated to less than significant levels with the implementation of mitigation measures and Specific Plan Policies. The Specific Plan Update would result in significant and unavoidable operational air quality, greenhouse gas emissions, and noise impacts

Availability: The Draft SEIR can be viewed at the City of East Palo Alto Planning Division at 1960 Tate Street, East Palo Alto, CA 94303; East Palo Alto Library at 2415 University Ave, East Palo Alto, CA 94303; or online at: <https://www.cityofepa.org/planning/page/rbd-specific-plan-update>.

The Adopted 2013 can be found online at: <https://www.cityofepa.org/econdev/page/adopted-ravenswoodfour-corners-specific-plan>

Public Review Period & Comments: Open from July 26, 2024 – September 10, 2024, at 5PM. Written comments should be addressed to: Alvin Jen, Associate Planner, City of East Palo Alto, 1960 Tate Street, East Palo Alto, CA 94303. Alternatively, written comments can also be emailed to rbd@cityofepa.org. Emailed comments must include “Ravenswood Business District/4 Corners Specific Plan Update SEIR” in the subject box.

Public Hearing: Notice is hereby given that on Monday, September 9, 2024, at the hour of 7:00 p.m., or as soon thereafter as the matter may be heard, virtually and in-person at the Council Chambers located at 2415 University Avenue, First Floor, East Palo Alto, CA 94303. The City of East Palo Alto Planning Commission will conduct a hearing on the following item:

- **Public Hearing:** Ravenswood Business District/4 Corners Specific Plan Update Subsequent Environmental Impact Report (SEIR), as described above.
- **Location/APN:** City of East Palo Alto, Ravenswood Business District
- **Staff Recommendation:** Provide and receive public comments on the SEIR
- **Staff Contact:** Alvin Jen, Associate Planner, rbd@cityofepa.org, (650) 853-3189

The Planning Commission will hold this hearing in person. However, members of the public may attend the meeting in person or choose to participate via teleconference/video conference. Members of the public who choose to attend virtually can find information and may provide comments by signing up on the City’s meeting page at <https://www.cityofepa.org/citycouncil/page/agenda-and-minutes> or by attending the meeting live via Zoom and using the “RAISE HAND” feature when staff calls for public comment. Project questions and comments can also be sent to the project planner per the contact information listed above.

A challenge to the above item in court may raise only those issues which were raised at the public hearing described in this notice or in written correspondence to the City of East Palo Alto at, or prior to, the public hearing, or submitted to the City of East Palo Alto as a comment on the SEIR before September 10, 2024, at 5:00PM, as described below. For further information regarding this meeting, contact the City of East Palo Alto Planning Division, (650) 853-3189. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requires reasonable accommodation and access for the physically challenged. East Palo Alto City Council Chambers is ADA compliant. Requests for disability related modifications or accommodations, aids or services may be made by a person with a disability to the City Clerk’s Office at (650) 853-3127 no less than 72 hours prior to the meeting as required by Section 202 of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and the federal rules and regulations adopted implementation thereof.

Members of the public can find information and may provide comments by signing up on the City’s meeting page at <https://www.cityofepa.org/citycouncil/page/agenda-and-minutes> or by attending the meeting live or via Zoom and using the “RAISE HAND” feature when the Chair or Planning Clerk calls for public comment. Project questions and comments can also be sent to the City per the contact information listed above.

Figure 1: Specific Plan Boundary and Vicinity Map

