Frequently Asked Questions

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1. Project Proposals and Issues

Q: What is proposed for the Stanford Medical Center?

A: The Stanford Medical Center (SUMC) proposes to renew and replace facilities due to state-mandated seismic safety laws, a shortage of patient beds, changing patient needs, outdated facilities and the need to further new advances in medical care. The project includes the replacement and expansion of Stanford Hospital & Clinics, expansion of Lucile Packard Children’s Hospital, a new medical office building and replacement of several of the Stanford University School of Medicine laboratory buildings.

The renovation and expansion project, which would be constructed over a 15-year time line, would result in a net increase of approximately 1.3 million square feet of floor area, including 200,000 square feet of new medical office space at or near the Hoover Pavilion. The project would also include the demolition and reconstruction of the existing School of Medicine buildings, parking facilities and two buildings now housing medical office space for clinics and community health practitioners. Some of the land for this part of the project is located outside of the City of Palo Alto and will be considered for annexation into the City limits.

The project through a development agreement may also include development of additional off-site infrastructure and new housing units to address increased infrastructure needs and the job housing balance.

Q: How will traffic be addressed in the project reviews?

A: As the project progresses, an environmental impact report (EIR*) prepared pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) will identify and describe proposed traffic solutions that provide for improved traffic flow and that work towards minimizing the use of single-occupant vehicles. Potential locations for new housing in or near the Plan area and an expanded Transportation Demand Management (TDM) program will be identified in order to reduce automobile trips.

The Draft EIR includes a Village Concept Alternative that includes designed and built features that promote linkages for pedestrians, bicyclists and transit users from and within the SUMC to the Stanford Shopping Center, the Stanford University Campus, the Palo Alto Transit Center, downtown, and nearby residential neighborhoods.

The project is also expected to include specific design features to promote the efficient movement of vehicles, increased use of the Marguerite Shuttle, and other more efficient modes of transit in and around the SUMC. The efficient movement of emergency vehicles to the appropriate facilities will be an important focus of the circulation design.

Traffic and transportation impacts will be studied during the EIR process, in order to evaluate the projects’ potential to induce additional growth and development. Alternatives and mitigation measures will be explored as well during this process.

* Please refer to Section 5 for more information about the EIR process.
Q: What other key issues are likely to be addressed and discussed in the project reviews?

A: During Phase I, six issue teams, headed by city staff, were created to address major issues pertaining to the project. These issues included Land Use and Open Space, Housing, Transportation and Linkages, Sustainability, Fiscal Impacts, and Utilities and City Services. A wide range of environmental issues will be evaluated in the EIR, such as traffic, noise, and aesthetics, including building height (see Section 5).

2. The Review Process

Q: What is the schedule for the review process?

A: Review for the project has been divided into two phases: Phase I (Information Sharing and Preliminary Area Plan) began in December 2006 and ended in July 2007, while Phase II (EIR and Entitlements) started in July 2007 and ended in May 2010 with the release of the Draft EIR. The intent of Phase I was to collect and synthesize information to share with the applicants, the public, the Commission, and the City Council. It was also intended to identify the key benefits and challenges of each project, and focus the discussion on key issues of concern during the Phase II entitlement process.

Q: What approvals will be required for the projects?

The following Entitlements** have been proposed for the Stanford University Medical Center:

1. Environmental Impact Report (EIR) Process
2. Comprehensive Plan Amendments
3. Rezoning
4. Preliminary Architectural Review
5. Annexation
6. Development Agreement (DA)

** Please see Section 4 for Terminology Definitions: Area Plan, Rezoning, and Development Agreement. This section also gives an overview of the key issues addressed and discussed in the project reviews.
3. Community Benefits and Input Opportunities

Q: What benefits would this project provide for the Palo Alto community?

A: The SUMC expansion will improve the SUMC’s ability to provide healthcare support for Palo Alto and the surrounding communities. It is also expected that the SUMC will provide a variety of additional public benefits to Palo Alto, which will be negotiated as part of the development agreement process. The SUMC intends to apply for a development agreement with the City. The public benefits to be provided by SUMC in exchange for their development agreements may extend to areas outside the SUMC boundaries. These benefits may include, among other things, support for new housing in the City and new public infrastructure and facilities.

Q: What opportunities will be provided for residents and businesses to provide input on this substantial project?

A: Public workshops, project websites, and forums will be employed throughout the review process to ensure that community residents, businesses, hospital employees, patients, and other interested parties are heard and kept up-to-date. For more information, please refer to the websites listed below, as well as the information contained in the responses to the EIR questions in Section 5.

Q: Where can I get additional information?

A: Further information about this project is available on the City’s website at www.cityofpaloalto.org/sumc. Information is included about the project applications and plans, staff reports to the Planning and Transportation Commission and City Council, community workshop notes, and a calendar of upcoming meetings.

Also, Stanford maintains a website http://stanfordpackard.org/faqs for the Medical Center Modernization and Expansion project.
4. Terminology: Area Plan, Rezoning, Development Agreement

Q: What is the Area Plan?

A: Program L-46 of the City's 2010 Comprehensive Plan requires the City to work with Stanford to prepare an area plan for the Stanford Medical Center. The area plan is intended to be a guidance document for the City, Stanford and the public to provide an overview and context for anticipated future development at the SUMC. It is not a regulatory document and does not comprise a coordinated area plan or specific plan under the City's Municipal Code. The content of the Area Plan is expected to evolve as expansion plans in the SUMC are developed, and the Area Plan may be modified to accommodate changes in those expansion plans, to respond to new information revealed during the environmental review process, or at the City's discretion.

As a guidance document, the Area Plan may identify policies and regulatory requirements from the City's Comprehensive and Municipal Code that would apply to proposed development at the SUMC, and/or describe proposed amendments to such applicable policies and regulations. The Area Plan is not intended to establish land use or development policies or standards, and is not intended to supersede the applicable policies, regulations, requirements and standards of the City's Comprehensive Plan and Municipal Code. If any provisions of the Area Plan vary from or conflict with the Comprehensive Plan or Municipal Code, the applicable provisions of the Comprehensive Plan or Municipal Code shall prevail. The Area Plan does not identify mitigation measures for project impacts, evaluate alternatives to the proposed project, or specify community benefits outside the immediate scope of the project.

Q: What are the key elements of the current Area Plan?

A: The following delineates the current Area Plan. As new information is obtained through the environmental review process and community input, SUMC's expansion plans will evolve, and the content of the Area Plan is expected to change accordingly. At the Palo Alto City Council meeting of July 23, 2007, the City Council voted 5-0 to accept the draft Area Plan update.

1.0 Introduction
This section identifies the purpose and intent of the Area Plan, and the City's and Stanford's project planning objectives. It also includes some history and a discussion of land use and development regulations.

2.0 Facilities Renewal and Replacement Needs
This section includes a discussion of the hospital's needs that drive the project and its scope. The hospital has retained Marlene Berkoff, FAIA, an architect and economist familiar with hospital planning and design, to provide the City Staff and City decision-makers with a peer review of the proposed medical facilities.

3.0 Plan Elements
In order to achieve a balance between creating a compact, pedestrian-oriented development and the programmatic objectives to provide a functional and effective medical center, the City has identified key objectives in response to a proposed renewal project. These key issues are discussed in the following subsections:
Land Use; Housing; Urban Design and Community Character; Linkages and Connections; Circulation; Vehicular Access and Parking; Transit, Bicycle, and Pedestrian Circulation; Open Space; Utilities and Public Infrastructure; and Sustainability and Green Building.

4.0 Zoning and Land Use Regulation

This section identifies the potential Comprehensive Plan and zoning changes that may be needed to accommodate the SUMC’s current proposals. These are likely to be modified as the project develops further.

5.0 Implementation

This section will be further developed and completed during Phase 2 of the project.

Q: What is Rezoning?

A: Current zoning designations within the project area will not permit the level of development proposed, and it will therefore be necessary for the City to consider alternative zoning designations. The City’s Zoning Ordinance establishes the allowable land uses and development standards for each area in the City, and implements the land use designations and policies established in the Comprehensive Plan. Rezoning an area or specific site modifies the uses and development standards for the area or site and may permit uses or development that would not be allowed by the existing zoning designations. The rezoning process provides a regulatory framework for reviewing project applications. The City may consider what types of land uses are appropriate for the site under consideration, as well as the intensity and density of the proposed development. The City may also consider whether subsequent permits or approvals should be required for certain types of development, following the rezoning. In addition, the City may consider other related zoning changes to facilitate goals identified in the Area Plan such as creation and maintenance of open space and provision of affordable housing to support the increased development. All re-zonings are subject to environmental review.

Q: What is a Development Agreement?

A: A Development Agreement is a negotiated contract between the city and a project applicant, which provides assurance to the applicant that the approved project may proceed subject to the policies, rules, regulations and conditions of approval applicable to the project at the time of approval. The agreement applies regardless of any changes to city policies, rules and regulations after such approval. In return, the applicant agrees to provide infrastructure, pay fees and/or provide other benefits to the City that would not normally be required of the applicant under state and local planning, zoning and environmental laws. Considerable latitude is provided in the California Government Code for development agreements. In contrast to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), which requires environmental review for all discretionary projects and outlines specific guidelines and limits for the EIR process and contents of an EIR, a Development Agreement is a negotiated contract between two parties and allows broad discretion for the agency and applicant to work out project requirements and to require compensating community benefits.
The terms of a development agreement may include some or all of the following:

- Duration of the agreement;
- Permitted uses for the subject property;
- Density or intensity of the permitted uses;
- Approved site plans, elevations, floor plans and sections showing the maximum height and size of the proposed building;
- Provisions, if any, for reservation or dedication of land for public purposes;
- Conditions, terms, restrictions and requirements for subsequent discretionary actions, provided that these provisions shall not prevent development of the land for the uses and to the density/intensity of development specified in the Agreement;
- Terms and conditions relating to applicant financing of necessary public improvements and facilities, including, but not limited to, applicant participation in benefit assessment proceedings; and
- Any other terms, conditions and requirements as the Council may deem necessary and proper, including, but not limited to, a requirement for ensuring, to the satisfaction of the city, performance of all provisions of the Agreement in a timely fashion by the applicant/contracting party.

5. **Environmental Impact Report (EIR)**

As the Environmental Impact Report is a complex process, this entire section is dedicated to explaining the details of environmental review.

Q: **What is the purpose of an EIR?**

A: The purpose of an EIR is to provide public agencies and the public in general with detailed information about the effects a proposed project is likely to have on the environment; to list ways in which the significant effects of the proposed project might be minimized; and to identify and analyze alternatives to the proposed project.¹

Q: **When is an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) required?**

A: The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) is a state law that requires lead agencies (such as the City of Palo Alto) to prepare an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for a proposed project when it determines that the project may have one or more significant adverse impacts on the physical environment.

¹ *CEQA Statutes and Guidelines, Section 21061, 2007.*
Q: What project is being analyzed in the EIR?

A: The City will prepare one EIR that analyzes the SUMC expansion project. The SUMC project would result in a net increase of about 1.3 million square feet of hospital, hospital support, medical office space and additional parking facilities within the SUMC campus.

Q: What environmental impacts will be studied in the EIR?

A: The EIR will analyze impacts on all relevant environmental parameters identified in the CEQA Statutes and Guidelines, including aesthetics (including views and scenic vistas), air quality, biological resources, cultural and historic resources, geology and soils, hazards and hazardous materials, hydrology and water quality, land use and planning, noise, population and housing, public services, recreation, transportation/traffic, and utilities and service systems (including water supplies and service, wastewater and sewer service, storm drainage and flood control services, and emergency services such as police and fire protection). The EIR will also evaluate the projects potential to induce additional growth and development.

Q: Who will prepare the EIR?

A: The EIR will be prepared by the City of Palo Alto, who is the lead agency responsible for approving the proposed projects. The City has contracted with a team of third party, independent consultants to assist in the preparation of the EIR. The City’s primary consultant for this EIR is PBS&J. Technical studies that will be prepared to support the EIR will be prepared by AECOM (traffic study); Keyser Marston Associates (housing needs analysis); and the Architectural Resources Group (historic resource analysis).

Q: When and how can the public get involved in the EIR process? When is the scoping meeting?

A: Public involvement for the EIR process will occur at three main junctures: (1) upon issuance of the Notice of Preparation (NOP) of the EIR, (2) upon publication of the Draft EIR, and (3) prior to Final EIR certification, in conjunction with the review of project entitlements (development agreement, Comprehensive Plan amendments, rezoning, etc.). As required by CEQA, the City issued a NOP at the outset of the EIR process; the NOP was issued on August 22, 2007. Upon issuance of the NOP, there was a minimum 30-day public review period, during which public input on the issues to be addressed in the EIR will be solicited by the City. Public comments were mailed/submitted to:

Steven Turner
Senior Planner
City of Palo Alto
Department of Planning & Community Environment
250 Hamilton Avenue
Palo Alto, CA 94301

During the NOP public review period, the City held a public scoping meeting, at which public agencies and members of the public orally provided input on the issues to be addressed in the EIR. This meeting was held on September 24, 2007 at 6:00 PM in the City Council Chambers, and was also noted in the NOP.
Public agencies and members of the public will also be provided an opportunity to comment on the Draft EIR upon its publication. Publication of the Draft EIR occurred on May 20, 2010. This initiated a 69-day public review process, during which the City will solicit comments on the Draft EIR analysis. The City will hold public meetings with the Planning & Transportation Commission and City Council during the review period; public agencies and members of the public may orally provide comments on the Draft EIR during this hearing. The public review period will end on July 27, 2010.

Prior to certification of the Final EIR, the City will hold public hearings for public agencies and members of the public to orally provide comments on the Final EIR and project entitlements. The date, time, and location of the hearings will be announced upon Final EIR publication. The Final EIR will be available to the public for a minimum of 10 days prior to any action on the Final EIR.

Q: When are the NOP, Draft EIR and Final EIR documents available for public review, and how can I obtain copies of these documents?

A: EIR notices, including notices for hearings and document availability, will be posted in local publications and on the City’s website at (www.cityofpaloalto.org/sumc), and mailed to all responsible and trustee agencies as well as to members of the public who request notification in writing. Requests for notice should be mailed or submitted to Steven Turner at the above address.

The Draft EIR and the Final EIR (which comprises of the Draft EIR and Responses to Comments on the Draft EIR), as well as supporting technical documents for the EIR, such as a traffic report or historic resource evaluation, will be posted on the City’s website.

Q: What is the difference between the Draft EIR and the Final EIR?

A: The Draft EIR will include descriptions of the projects, an identification of the environmental effects of the projects, measures to mitigate or avoid the environmental impacts of the projects, and an analysis of alternatives to the projects. The Draft EIR, as described above, is circulated to responsible and trustee agencies and the public for their review and comment on the adequacy of the analysis. After receiving comments on the Draft EIR, the City will prepare written responses to each comment and make any necessary changes to the Draft EIR. These responses and revisions will be provided in the Responses to Comments on the Draft EIR. The Final EIR is comprised of the Draft EIR and the Responses to Comments document.

Q: Will certification of the EIR mean that the proposed project will be approved?

A: No. Under CEQA Guidelines Section 15093, a lead agency must balance consideration of adverse environmental impacts with economic, legal, social, technological, or other benefits in deciding whether to approve a project. Thus, once certified, the EIR will be one consideration of the City Council in deciding whether or not to approve the proposed project. A project may be denied or modified even though an EIR is certified, but a project may not be approved without certification of the EIR.
6. Summary of Relationships between the Area Plan, Rezoning, EIR and Development Agreement

Q: How are these separate documents and permitting processes related to the project, and one another?

A: The table below compares and summarizes the purpose, limitations, and actions of each process relative to the Stanford project.

Summary Table of Relationships between Area Plan, EIR, Rezoning and Development Agreements

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>PURPOSE</th>
<th>LIMITATIONS</th>
<th>REQUIRED ACTIONS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>REZONING</td>
<td>Establishes allowable uses and development standards for each area. Framework for reviewing project applications.</td>
<td>Does not impose conditions of approval or mitigation measures.</td>
<td>Adoption by ordinance.</td>
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<tr>
<td>EIR</td>
<td>Required by state law. Analyzes environmental impacts and proposes mitigation measures for those impacts. Examines project alternatives.</td>
<td>Topics are limited to environmental issues associated with project and the Development Agreements. Very detailed review of these issues.</td>
<td>Certification by the City Council after appropriate public review, concurrent with the approval of the project.</td>
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<tr>
<td>DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENT</td>
<td>Negotiated agreement between the applicant and the City to provide development certainty to applicant in exchange for public benefits beyond the conditions of project approval and mitigation measures.</td>
<td>Terms are negotiated and are not limited to conditions or measures necessary to mitigate the projects' impacts. Public benefits provided by the applicant in exchange for a development agreement may extend to areas outside of the boundaries of the project.</td>
<td>Adopted by Ordinance after approval of the project.</td>
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