

City of Palo Alto
Department of Planning & Community Environment

California Environmental Quality Act

NOTICE OF PREPARATION

TO: Responsible Agencies, Trustee Agencies, and Other Interested Parties

FROM: City of Palo Alto
250 Hamilton Avenue
Palo Alto, CA 94301

SUBJECT: Notice of Preparation (NOP) of a Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for a proposed City of Palo Alto Public Safety Building at 250 Sherman and Parking Structure at 350 Sherman Avenue (AKA California Avenue Parking Garage).

The City of Palo Alto will be the lead agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and will prepare a project EIR for the proposed project, identified below.

AGENCIES: The City of Palo Alto requests that public agencies provide comments regarding the scope and content of the EIR as it relates to an agency's statutory responsibilities in connection with the proposed project in accordance with California Code of Regulation, Title 14, Section 15082(b), if the agency will need to use the EIR prepared by the City of Palo Alto when considering any permit or other approval for the project.

ORGANIZATION AND INTERESTED PARTIES: The City of Palo Alto requests comments and concerns from organizations and interested parties regarding the environmental issues associated with construction and operation of the proposed project.

PROJECT TITLE: City of Palo Alto Public Safety Building and California Avenue Parking Garage

PROJECT LOCATION: 250 and 350 Sherman Avenue; two City blocks fronting Sherman Avenue on the southeast and bounded by Jacaranda Lane to the northwest, Ash Street to the southwest and Park Boulevard to the northeast, and bisected by Birch Street, within the city of Palo Alto, Santa Clara County, California.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: The City of Palo Alto (City/project applicant) proposes to relocate the City's Police Department, Fire Administration, Emergency Communications Center (911), Office of Emergency Services, Emergency Operations Center (EOC), and associated parking and other support spaces from their current downtown location at the Palo Alto Civic Center at 275 Forest Avenue, Palo Alto, California, to 250 Sherman Avenue in a new adequately sized Public Safety Building (PSB) facility designed to meet the operational and essential facility standards for police and emergency service providers. The City also proposes to construct a new public

parking garage at 350 Sherman Avenue to provide a net increase of 150 to 330 public parking stalls for the California Avenue commercial area.

The project site includes two City-owned surface parking lots designated as Lot C-6 and Lot C-7 on Sherman Avenue between Jacaranda Lane, Ash Street and Park Boulevard in the California Avenue commercial area in Palo Alto.

The construction of the PSB on the 1.2-acre Lot C-6 (at 250 Sherman Avenue) will displace approximately 160 existing public parking stalls. Redevelopment of the adjoining 0.93-acre surface parking Lot C-7 (at 350 Sherman Avenue) for a new parking garage will displace approximately 150 existing parking stalls and will contain 460 to 640 stalls (an increase in the number of parking spaces on-site). The construction of the 350 Sherman garage must be complete prior to the start of construction of the new PSB, in order to minimize construction disruption to the neighborhood and loss of parking to local merchants.

The Project includes three primary elements:

- A new three-story PSB ranging in size from 45,500 square feet (SF) to 50,000 SF, over two levels of secure basement parking providing approximately 170 to 190 total secure parking spaces at 250 Sherman Avenue (Lot C-6), and associated site improvements.
- A new three- to four-level public parking garage over one to two basement parking levels, providing approximately 460 to 640 spaces at 350 Sherman Avenue (Lot C-7), and associated site improvements.
- An approximately 4,200 SF to 4,700 SF multi- or single-tenant commercial shell space building fronting Birch Street, to be used as commercial retail space for new or existing businesses. This retail component is an option that would accompany the public parking garage of 460 to 640 spaces at 350 Sherman Avenue. Without the retail component, the parking garage would accommodate 522 to 640 parking spaces.

Further details about the project design are included in the Initial Study, which is available for review at the City of Palo Alto website: <http://www.cityofpaloalto.org/planningprojects>

The two blocks that comprise the site are both zoned as Public Facilities (PF) and are located in the California Avenue Business District. The Comprehensive Plan land use designation of the PSB project site is Public Facilities (PF). The parking garage site's Comprehensive Plan land use designation is Community Commercial.

Implementation of the proposed project will require approval from the City Council. As currently planned, the proposed parking garage will require changes to the zoning district (from Public Facilities to another zone) or changes to the text of the zoning ordinance to allow for the planned lot coverage, Floor Area Ratio (FAR), height, and setbacks in the Public Facilities zone.

POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS: The following areas of potentially significant environmental impact will be analyzed in the Draft EIR: Aesthetics, Air Quality, Biological Resources, Cultural Resources, Geology and Soils, Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, Hydrology and Water Quality, Land Use and Planning, Noise, Public Services, Transportation/Traffic, Utilities and Service Systems, and Energy. Potential cumulative impacts and alternatives, including the No Project Alternative, will be evaluated. An Initial Study

evaluating the project's environmental effects in other resource areas is available for review at the City of Palo Alto website, as noted above.

SCOPING MEETING: The City of Palo Alto will hold a scoping meeting as part of the Planning and Transportation Commission (PTC)'s regularly scheduled meeting on April 12, 2017. The meeting will start at 6:00 PM and will be held at the City of Palo Alto Council Chambers, located in City Hall at 250 Hamilton Avenue. The meeting agenda will be posted to the City's website: <http://www.cityofpaloalto.org/gov/boards/ptc/default.asp>.

Interested parties are welcome to attend and present environmental information or concerns that you believe should be addressed in the EIR.


The NOP and related CEQA documents for this project will be available for review on the web. You can view this NOP and the Initial Study electronically at:
<http://www.cityofpaloalto.org/planningprojects>

If you require additional project information, please contact Matt Raschke, Senior Engineer, Department of Public Works, at Matt.Raschke@cityofpaloalto.org

PUBLIC REVIEW PERIOD: This Notice of Preparation is available for public review and comment pursuant to California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Section 15082(b), for 30 days. The comment period for the NOP begins March 24, 2017 and ends on April 24, 2017. Due to the limits mandated by state law, your response must be sent at the earliest possible date but not later than 30 days after receipt of this notice.

RESPONSES AND COMMENTS: Please indicate a contact person for your agency and send your responses and comments to:

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Project Planner

3/22/17
Date