

DEPARTMENT OF
CITY PLANNING

COMMISSION OFFICE
(213) 978-1300

CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

SAMANTHA MILLMAN
PRESIDENT

CAROLINE CHOE
VICE-PRESIDENT

HELEN LEUNG
KAREN MACK

DANA M. PERLMAN
YVETTE LOPEZ-LEDESMA
JENNA HORNSTOCK
RENEE DAKE WILSON
VACANT

CITY OF LOS ANGELES
CALIFORNIA



ERIC GARCETTI
MAYOR

EXECUTIVE OFFICES

200 N. SPRING STREET, ROOM 525
LOS ANGELES, CA 90012-4801
(213) 978-1271

VINCENT P. BERTONI, AICP
DIRECTOR

KEVIN J. KELLER, AICP
EXECUTIVE OFFICER

SHANA M.M. BONSTIN
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

ARTHI L. VARMA, AICP
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

LISA M. WEBBER, AICP
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

VACANT
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

**NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY OF
DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT
FOR THE CITYWIDE HOUSING ELEMENT 2021-2029 AND
SAFETY ELEMENT UPDATE
CITY EIR No. ENV-2020-6762-EIR
CPC-2020-1365-GPA; CPC-2021-5499-GPA
STATE CLEARINGHOUSE No. 2021010130**

TO: Agencies, Organizations, and Interested Parties

DATE: July 22, 2021

PROJECT NAME: Citywide Housing Element 2021-2029 Update and Safety Element Update

COMMENT REVIEW PERIOD: July 22, 2021 to September 7, 2021

COUNCIL DISTRICTS: Citywide

PROJECT LOCATION

The Citywide Housing Element 2021-2029 and Safety Element Update (hereafter collectively referred to as the “Proposed Project,” or individually as “Housing Element Update” or “Safety Element Update”) will apply to the entire geographic area located within the boundaries of the City of Los Angeles (City), which encompasses 467 square miles. Figure 1 shows the boundaries of the City within the southern California region.

PROJECT BACKGROUND

The Housing Element is one of the eight State-mandated elements of the General Plan and identifies the City’s housing conditions and needs, establishes the goals, objectives, and policies that are the foundation of the City’s housing strategy, and provides an array of programs to create sustainable, mixed-income neighborhoods across the City.

The Housing Element Law, enacted in 1969, mandates that local governments adequately plan to meet the existing and projected housing needs of all economic segments of the community through the preparation of a Housing Element. The law requires local governments to adopt land use plans and regulatory systems that provide opportunities for, and do not unduly constrain, housing development. The law requires the update of the Housing Element every eight years. The Housing Element Update will establish new policies, goals, and programs for the City to accommodate the City’s required housing needs allocation as determined by the Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) and the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) in the Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA). The Update to the

Housing Element is required to be adopted by October 15, 2021 and will be in effect through October 2029.

Housing Element law also requires that HCD review local Housing Elements for compliance with State law and report written findings to the local government. The City has submitted the Draft Housing Element to HCD for a 60-day review. HCD is expected to provide comments to the City, which will be incorporated in a revised Housing Element that will be submitted to HCD by no later than October 15, 2021.

The Safety Element is one of the eight State-mandated elements of the General Plan. The purpose of the update to the Safety Element is to comply with recent State legislation and guidelines (such as Senate Bill 2141, Assembly Bill 162, Senate Bill 99, Assembly Bill 747, Senate Bill 1035 and Senate Bill 379). Targeted amendments will be made to the Safety Element to achieve compliance with State, regional and local policies and guidelines. The targeted amendments will incorporate data and maps, address vulnerability to climate change; incorporate policies and programs from the City's updates to the Local Hazard Mitigation Plan and the Floodplain Management Plan, as well as partial or full integration of other recent city documents (including but limited to: Resilient Los Angeles, LA's Green New Deal / 2019 Sustainability Plan and the Emergency Management Department Emergency Plans and Annexes). The Safety Element amendments will be submitted to the California Geological Survey, California Office of Emergency Services, California State Board of Forestry and Fire Protection, and Federal Emergency Management Agency for review.

The update of two or more general plan elements triggers a State requirement to address environmental justice under the provisions of Senate Bill (SB) 1000. Therefore, the City is required to review existing environmental justice policies to ensure compliance with State law and document the review. The Plan for a Healthy Los Angeles, adopted in 2015, is the General Plan Element that contains the majority of the City's environmental justice policies and programs. As part of the Proposed Project, the City will make a targeted amendment to the Plan for a Healthy Los Angeles alongside the Safety Element to clarify that in addition to health, wellness and equity goals and policies, it is the general plan element containing environmental justice goals and policies for the City.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Housing Element Update

The Project involves State-mandated updates to the Housing Element of the City of Los Angeles General Plan to generally further the goal of meeting the existing and projected housing needs of all income levels of the community, and specifically to demonstrate compliance by documenting adequate sites to accommodate the RHNA allocation through the year 2029, as established by SCAG. Under the RHNA allocation, the City is required to provide the zoned capacity to accommodate the development of at least 456,643 residential units using various land use planning strategies. The City provides capacity for housing through local zoning regulations. The City, however, is not required to physically construct 456,643 units as a result of the RHNA allocation.

This project takes a conservative approach by analyzing the reasonable "worst case" scenario of environmental impacts from future implementation of the 2021-2029 Housing Element, which is the full build-out of the City's RHNA allocation. The most significant potential impact under this approach is the potential construction and operation of 420,327 housing units (hereafter referred to as "build out of the RHNA" or "housing development accommodated by the Housing Element

Update”), which represents the City’s RHNA allocation of 456,643 units, less the 36,316 already approved pipeline housing units expected to receive a COO during the 6th cycle.

Construction of these 420,327 housing units may occur anywhere in the City where residential uses are permitted. While many units are anticipated to be built on the Opportunity Sites required to be identified in the Inventory of Adequate Sites for Housing, it is not reasonable to expect that housing development will occur solely on those Opportunity Sites. Housing may occur on a wide variety of sites, including any site that is currently zoned for residential use; whereas the Opportunity Sites are subject to a number of requirements to demonstrate the suitability and realistic likelihood of development of each site. Housing may also occur on sites that do not currently allow residential uses or multi-family residential uses of adequate density, including sites that will be rezoned in the future under a Housing Element Rezoning Program.

The anticipated 420,327 units may occur in types of development such as multi-family residential, single-family residential, Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs), mixed use development, and conversion and/or rehabilitation of existing nonresidential, residential, and mixed used structures.

Rezoning Program

The Inventory of Adequate Sites for Housing identifies a total development potential of 266,647 units, which is insufficient capacity to accommodate both the RHNA Allocation of 456,643 units and the City’s target capacity of 486,379 units. As a result, the Housing Element identifies a shortfall at all income levels and a total rezoning need of 219,732 units, including rezoning to accommodate a shortfall of 121,881 lower income units, 72,639 moderate income units, and 25,212 above moderate-income units. Therefore, the Rezoning Program must create at least 219,732 units of new capacity by October 2024.

The Rezoning Program will likely be accomplished through updates to the City’s Community Plans, an update to the City’s Density Bonus program, targeted zone changes and zoning ordinances, and updates to specific plans and overlays. The Rezoning Program will prioritize opportunities for rezoning or development incentives in areas that are located in a Transit Priority Area, near major job centers, and in higher resource areas. This Program may also consider rezoning or development incentives in existing lower density residential zones to create opportunities for missing middle housing typologies (up to low-medium residential density) in these areas.

Safety Element Update

While the Housing Element is undergoing a comprehensive update, the update to the Safety Element is limited to targeted amendments to bring the element up to date and ensure consistency with legislative mandates and the other General Plan elements. The following three main components of the Safety Element 2021 targeted update are summarized below:

1. Additions to goals, policies, and objectives to better address climate change;
2. Integration of updated background information and mapping; and
3. Incorporation and update of programs.

New State legislation requires that cities include goals, policies, objectives, and feasible implementation measures that place a greater emphasis on wildfires, flooding, and climate change. As part of the targeted update to the Safety Element, relevant policies from the City’s other policy documents that address climate change adaptation and resilience, such as Resilient Los Angeles, and LA’s Green New Deal (Sustainability pLAn), will be incorporated into the Safety

Element, centralizing information in the City's General Plan and providing a framework for updates to other implementing documents, allocation of resources, and actions required of City staff and collaborating agencies.

To reduce duplication with the existing Safety Element and 2018 Local Hazard Mitigation Plan, the City will replace repetitive descriptions and exhibits within the Safety Element with references to the 2018 Local Hazard Mitigation Plan. Where additional information is required to satisfy State mandates, information will be included in the Safety Element Update, or in the next update to the Local Hazard Mitigation Plan, anticipated to begin in 2022.

The Safety Element Update will incorporate programs from the 1996 Safety Element, the 2018 Local Hazard Mitigation Plan, the 2020 Floodplain Management Plan, Resilient Los Angeles, LA's Green New Deal and other related plans into a revised Chapter 4, Implementation, that includes a table of programs that implement one or more policies.

Project Objectives

The underlying purpose of the Proposed Project is to accommodate the RHNA compliant with State law and consistent with the City's General Plan. The primary objectives of the Project will be to:

- Meet the City's fair share of the regional housing need to accommodate projected population growth and meet existing housing needs within the city
- Increase the availability of affordable housing and the variety of housing options within the city
- Promote concentrated housing growth in High and Very High Resource areas and in areas with good access to jobs, services, and high-quality public transit
- Strengthen the City's goals, policies, objectives and programs that prevent displacement, promote homeless prevention and diversion, and promote housing stability
- Strengthen the City's goals, policies, objectives and programs that reduce greenhouse gas emissions and promote climate resiliency
- Update the City's Safety and Health Elements to be consistent with current State regulations

The Proposed Project requires the following actions to implement these objectives:

- Adoption of the 2021-2029 Housing Element Update
- Adoption of the Safety Element Update
- Adoption of targeted amendments to the Plan for a Healthy LA
- Certification of the 2021-2029 Housing and Safety Element Update EIR
- Technical amendments to other General Plan Elements, including but not limited the Framework Element and other elements as needed to ensure consistency with the updated Housing and Safety Elements
- Future Legislative Actions to Implement Programs, including Rezoning Program, to comply with State law.
- Review of the draft 2021-2029 Housing Element Update by HCD to determine compliance with state law and submittal of written findings to the City.
- Review of the draft amendments for the Safety Element Update by California Geological Survey, California Office of Emergency Services, California State Board of Forestry and Fire Protection, and the Federal Emergency Management Agency to determine compliance with State law.

ANTICIPATED SIGNIFICANT ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

Based on the analysis contained in the Draft EIR, the Proposed Project would result in unavoidable significant environmental impacts with regard to:

- Air Quality (Exceedance of Criteria Pollutants—Construction and Operations)
- Biological Resources (Special Status Species, Sensitive Habitats, Wildlife Corridors)
- Cultural Resources (Historical Resources and Archaeological Resources)
- Geology and Soils (Paleontological Resources)
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials (Hazardous Materials Near Schools and Hazardous Materials Sites)
- Noise (Construction Noise, Operation Noise, and Construction Vibration)
- Public Services (Fire Protection, Police Protection, and School Facilities)
- Recreation (Deterioration of Recreational Facilities and Construction of Recreational Facilities)
- Transportation – (Freeway Queuing)
- Tribal Cultural Resources (Construction: Ground Disturbance during Construction)
- Wildfire (Impair Emergency Response Plan, Exacerbate Wildfire Risks in State Responsibility Area or VHFHSZ, Require Infrastructure that may Exacerbate Fire Risk, Expose People or Structures to Significant Risks in State Responsibility Area or VHFHSZ, and Expose People or Structures to Significant Risks Involving Wildland Fires).

The Draft EIR has also identified the following significant impacts that are anticipated to be reduced to less than significant with identified mitigation measures:

- Air Quality: Construction-related emissions of toxic air contaminants
- Hydrology: Impeding or Redirect Flood Flows
- Transportation: Circulation Plan Consistency, Hazardous Design, Emergency Access

Government Code Section 65962.5 Notice: The City includes sites listed under Government Code Section 65952.5. These are described in Section 4.7.1 of the Draft EIR, Hazards, Environmental Setting.

DOCUMENT REVIEW AND COMMENT

COMMENT PERIOD: **START DATE AND TIME: July 22, 2021 AT 9 A.M.**

END DATE AND TIME: September 7, 2021 AT 5 P.M.

The Draft EIR and all documents referenced in the EIR are available for public review and a 45-day comment period. At this time, there are no scheduled public hearings during the Comment Period.

If you wish to review a copy of the Draft EIR or the documents referenced in the Draft EIR, you may do so at the City of Los Angeles Department of City Planning Records Management at 221 N Figueroa St, Room 1450, Los Angeles. Appointments must be made in advance by emailing planning.recordsmgmt@lacity.org or calling (213) 847-3732. Printed copies of the Draft EIR are also available at the following public libraries.

1. Central Library - 630 W. 5th Street, Los Angeles, CA 90071
2. Exposition Park Library - 3900 S. Western Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90062
3. San Pedro Library - 931 S. Gaffey Street, San Pedro, CA 90731
4. Arroyo Seco Library - 6145 N. Figueroa Street, Los Angeles, CA 90042

5. North Hollywood Library - 5211 Tujunga Avenue, North Hollywood, CA 91601
6. Mid-Valley Library - 16244 Nordhoff Street, North Hills, CA 91343
7. West Valley Library - 19036 Vanowen Street, Reseda, CA 91335
8. Goldwyn-Hollywood Library - 1623 N. Ivar Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90028
9. West Los Angeles Library - 11360 Santa Monica Boulevard, Los Angeles, CA 90025

For an electronic copy, the Draft EIR can be downloaded or reviewed at the Department of City Planning's website at: [https://planning.lacity.org/development-services/eir/Housing-Element 2021-2029 Update Safety-Element Update deir](https://planning.lacity.org/development-services/eir/Housing-Element%2021-2029%20Update%20Safety-Element%20Update%20deir)

If you wish to review a copy of the Draft EIR or the documents referenced in the Draft EIR, you may do so at the City of Los Angeles Department of City Planning Records Management at 221 N Figueroa St, Room 1450, Los Angeles. Appointments must be made in advance by emailing planning.recordsmgmt@lacity.org or calling (213) 847-3732

If you wish to submit comments on the Draft EIR, please submit your written comments (including a name, contact information, and the following file number ENV-2020-6762-EIR) during the Comment Period, via mail or e-mail to the following addresses:

Mail: Cally Hardy, City Planning Associate
City of Los Angeles Department of City Planning
200 North Spring Street, Room 750, Los Angeles, CA 90012

Email: housingelement@lacity.org

Comments that are sent to the City before or after the Comment Period provided above or that fail to comply with the above instructions for the manner or submission of comments may not be included in the Final EIR and receive a response to comments under CEQA Guidelines Section 15088.

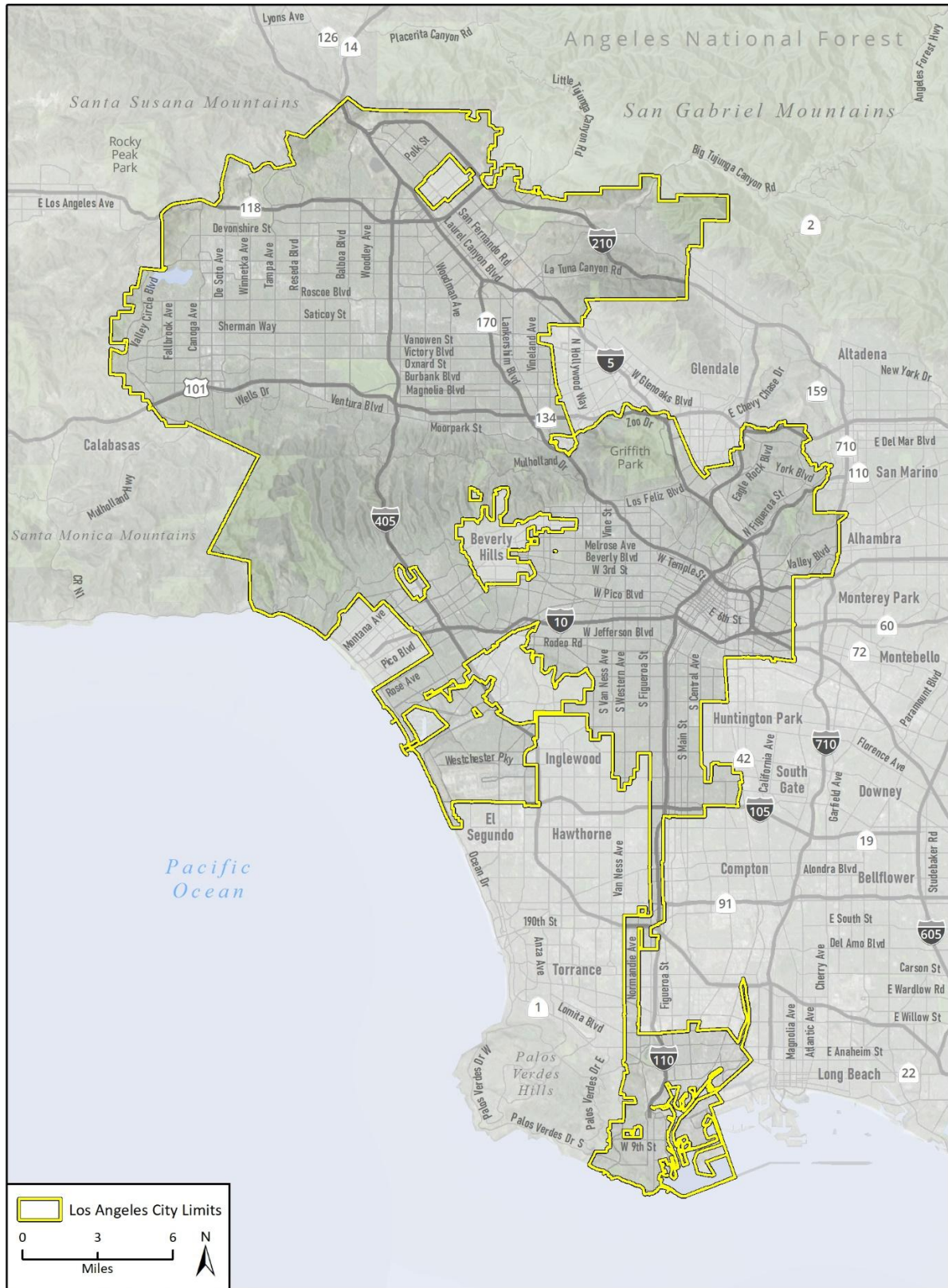


Cally Hardy, City Planning Associate
City of Los Angeles Department of City Planning

Attachment:

Figure 1: Citywide Map

Figure 1 Citywide Map



Imagery provided by Esri and its licensors © 2020.

Fig.1 Regional Location