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**NOTICE OF PREPARATION OF A DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT  
AND NOTICE OF SCOPING MEETING FOR  
UPDATES TO THE CORNFIELD ARROYO SECO SPECIFIC PLAN (CASP)**

**TO:** Agencies, Organizations, and Interested Parties

**DATE:** April 8, 2021

The City of Los Angeles is the Lead Agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and will prepare an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for a project involving updates to the Cornfield Arroyo Seco Specific Plan ("CASP Update" or "Proposed Project" or "Project"). The CASP Update would amend the text, maps, and tables of the CASP, including new land use and zoning regulations, incentives, and boundaries, for the purpose of encouraging affordable and mixed-income housing production. More details on the Project are provided below.

The City is requesting identification of environmental issues, environmental impacts, and information that you or your organization believes needs to be considered and analyzed in the EIR, including environmental impacts, mitigation measures, and alternatives.

**NOTICE OF SCOPING MEETING**

Pursuant to California Public Resources Code Section 21083.9 and California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Chapter 3, ("CEQA Guidelines") Section 15082, the Lead Agency will conduct a scoping meeting for the purpose of soliciting oral and written comments from interested parties requesting notice, responsible agencies, agencies with jurisdiction by law, trustee agencies, and involved federal agencies, as to the appropriate scope and content of the EIR.

The Public Scoping Meeting will be held virtually in an online format using Zoom to share information regarding the Project and the environmental review process and to provide information on how interested parties can provide written comments. City staff and environmental consultants will be available during this virtual meeting which will begin with a pre-recorded presentation. After the Public Scoping Meeting has ended, a copy of the pre-recorded presentation will be posted to the Department's website at <https://planning.lacity.org/development-services/eir>.

The City encourages all interested individuals and organizations to attend this virtual meeting. Questions may be submitted via the chat box in the control panel or verbally for participants joining by telephone during the Question and Answer session. Interested parties wishing to provide comments or public testimony in response to the NOP should provide them in writing, as described under "Submittal of Written Comments," below. No decisions about the Project will be made at the Public Scoping Meeting. A separate

public hearing for the CASP Update, along with other public engagement activities, will be scheduled at a later date. The date, time, and virtual location of the Public Scoping Meeting are as follows:

**Date:** Thursday, April 22, 2021  
**Time:** 4:00 PM  
**Virtual Location:** Join Zoom Meeting <https://planning-lacity-org.zoom.us/j/84993793018>  
Meeting ID: 849 9379 3018  
Password: 912684

Instructions for joining by telephone:  
Dial by your location  
+1 213 338 8477 US (Los Angeles)  
+1 669 900 9128 US (San Jose)  
Meeting ID: 849 9379 3018

Participants will be asked for a Meeting ID, enter "(Meeting ID listed above)", followed by "#" (pound sign).  
Participants will be asked to enter a participant ID, enter "#" (pound sign) to continue.

**ACCOMMODATIONS:** As a covered entity under Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act, the City of Los Angeles does not discriminate. Closed captioning or other assistive services may be provided upon request. Other services, such as translation between English and other languages, may also be provided upon request. To ensure availability of services, please make your request no later than three working days (72 hours) prior to the meeting by contacting Clare Kelley at (213) 978-1207 or [clare.kelley@lacity.org](mailto:clare.kelley@lacity.org).

## **RESPONSIBLE AND TRUSTEE AGENCIES**

The City requests your agency's views on the scope and content of the environmental information relevant to your agency's statutory responsibilities in connection with the project, in accordance with the CEQA Guidelines, Section 15082(b). Your agency will need to use the EIR prepared by the City when considering any permits or other project approvals that your agency must issue. As such, your responses to this Notice of Preparation (NOP), at a minimum should identify: (1) The significant environmental issues and reasonable alternatives and mitigation measures that your agency will need to have explored in the EIR; and (2) Whether your agency will be a responsible or trustee agency for this project.

## **REVIEW AND RESPONSE PERIOD**

April 8, 2021 to May 8, 2021

Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines, Section 15082(b), responses to this NOP must be provided during this response period.

## **PROJECT LOCATION**

The Project location is the Cornfield Arroyo Seco Specific Plan Area ("CASP Area" or "Project Area"), a geographically contiguous, approximately 660-acre (1.0 square mile) area located within portions of the Central City North, Northeast Los Angeles, and Silver Lake-Echo Park-Elysian Valley Community Plan Areas. The Project Area encompasses the Los Angeles State Historic Park, segments of the Los Angeles River and Arroyo Seco, segments of Interstate 5 and California State Route 110, and the Lincoln/Cypress Metro L Line station. Approximately 6,201 individuals (1,814 households) reside within the Project Area, which is bordered by the neighborhoods of Chinatown to the west, Lincoln Heights to the east, and Cypress Park to the north. The regional context of the CASP is shown on **Figure 1**. The CASP Area boundaries are shown in **Figure 2**.

## **PROJECT BACKGROUND**

On June 28, 2013, the City adopted the CASP and certified its Environmental Impact Report (ENV-2009-599-EIR, SCH No. 2009031002). The CASP involved substantial revisions to portions of the Central City North, Northeast Los Angeles, and Silver Lake-Echo Park-Elysian Valley Community Plans and the establishment of a specific plan to guide the future development of the predominantly industrial, approximately 660-acre area. Broadly, the CASP includes the following:

- The designation of new mixed-use zoning districts that replace former industrial zoning, and the identification of the types and intensities of uses permitted within these districts, as well as building height, massing, and façade standards,
- The establishment of new affordable housing land use incentives,
- The designation of new open spaces and parks and the establishment of open space requirements for new developments,
- Circulation and parking standards,
- Revised street designations and standards,
- Resource conservation standards, and
- Mitigation measures for subsequent development projects.

The intent of the adopted CASP is to guide the transition of an underserved, vehicular-oriented industrial and public facility area into a cluster of mixed-use, pedestrian-oriented neighborhoods. Policies in the CASP support a range of housing options, new public spaces, opportunities for walking and bicycling, and the retention of land for existing industrial businesses and the clean technology businesses of the future. Among its numerous goals, a key priority of the CASP is to facilitate the production and continued provision of affordable housing for Extremely Low Income and Very Low Income households.

However, since the CASP's adoption, housing production of any kind has been extremely limited. Among the projects proposed and approved, all involved discretionary actions from the City Planning Commission or Area Planning Commission to deviate from the CASP, with less than one percent of total units reserved for low-income households. The limited supply of available housing units (0.9 percent residential vacancy rate), together with the low average household income and strong demand for housing in the area, creates growing displacement pressure for existing residents and disproportionately in communities of color. The Project Area has seen rents increase at a higher rate than in nearby neighborhoods that have experienced greater increases to their housing supply.

In light of the present housing situation, and in response to a City Council Motion (Council File No. 13-0078-S2) calling for the evaluation and amendment of the Specific Plan, the City of Los Angeles is updating the CASP with the goal of further bolstering the production of affordable and mixed-income housing in the Project Area. The Proposed Project will entail updates to the CASP's zoning regulations, land use incentives, boundaries, and other key provisions to facilitate the production of housing, in a manner consistent with the underlying vision and purpose of the adopted CASP.

## **PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The Proposed Project is the update of the CASP and the adoption of necessary revisions and any other amendments necessary to implement this update, including amendments to General Plan elements (such as the Framework Element), Community Plans, the LAMC (Chapter 1 and Chapter 1A), specific plans, and other ordinances to implement those updates. The primary objective of the Proposed Project is to encourage affordable and mixed-income housing production in the Project Area.

The Proposed Project would accommodate additional housing in the Project Area by expanding the residential Urban Village zoning designation to more parcels within the CASP and allowing 100% affordable housing developments in the Urban Innovation and Urban Center zones where they are not currently

permitted. The changes would result in a more even split between Urban Village and Urban Innovation zoning compared to the existing CASP. Additionally, the existing 10% non-residential use requirement for projects in the Urban Village zone would be removed. At the same time, the CASP's affordable housing zoning incentives would be recalibrated and updated for those development projects seeking additional FAR rights.

The Proposed Project would also update the building form, urban design, open space, parking, conservation, performance, and sign standards of the CASP as necessary to support housing production, and amend the CASP text with technical revisions that ensure consistency, clarity, and ease of implementation and reflect current and future demographic, regulatory, environmental, and economic conditions. The CASP boundaries would be revised to exclude parcels that currently do not contain CASP zoning, such as RD zones. The Project would retain the existing ministerial review process for subsequent development projects.

### Project Objectives

The primary objectives of the Project will be to:

- Increase the production of affordable and mixed-income housing within the Project Area,
- Protect residents, especially low-income households, from indirect and direct displacement, and ensure stability of existing vulnerable communities,
- Design and regulate housing to promote health and well-being, increase access to amenities such as parks and public transit, contribute to a sense of place, foster community and belonging, and plan for a sustainable future,
- Build, operate, and maintain welcoming and accessible housing for Angelenos with unique needs, including those with disabilities, large families, older adults, and other people facing housing barriers and food insecurity,
- Refine Plan standards, processes, and procedures to be more intuitive and transparent, with the goal of enhancing development certainty for both market-rate and affordable developers, and
- Preserve employment areas that show a concentration of jobs, while supporting small and/or legacy businesses, local employment, new productive uses, and employment spaces, such as light industrial and general commercial uses.

### **ISSUES TO BE ADDRESSED IN THE EIR**

Based on the project description and the Lead Agency's understanding of the environmental issues associated with the CASP update, the following topics will be analyzed in the EIR:

- Aesthetics
- Air Quality
- Biological Resources
- Cultural Resources
- Energy
- Geology and Soils
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- Hydrology and Water Quality
- Land Use and Planning
- Mineral Resources
- Noise
- Population and Housing
- Public Services
- Recreation
- Transportation
- Tribal Cultural Resources
- Utilities and Service Systems
- Wildfire

The EIR will analyze the reasonably foreseeable indirect physical changes to the environment in the above topic areas caused by the project, including the updates to the CASP and any other necessary amendments to the General Plan or the LAMC.

The Hazards and Hazardous Materials section of the Draft EIR will discuss the potential impacts associated with housing development on sites identified as hazardous materials sites, known as the Cortese List, pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5. The Project area includes hundreds of sites, some of which are on the Cortese List. Interested parties can view the Cortese List sites within the CASP Area at the following link: <https://planning4la.org/odoc/corteseList>.

Alternatives to be analyzed in the EIR are to be defined and analyzed consistent with the requirements of CEQA Guidelines, Section 15126.6. The specific alternatives to be evaluated will include a “No Project” alternative, as required by CEQA, and may include alternative land use configurations.

## DOCUMENT AVAILABILITY

The NOP can be viewed on the City of Los Angeles Department of City Planning website at: <https://planning.lacity.org/development-services/environmental-review/published-documents>.

To request an appointment to view a hard copy of the documents, please contact Clare Kelley at (213) 978-1207 or [clare.kelley@lacity.org](mailto:clare.kelley@lacity.org).

## SUBMITTAL OF WRITTEN COMMENTS

The Lead Agency solicits comments regarding the scope, content and specificity of the EIR from all interested parties requesting notice, responsible agencies, agencies with jurisdiction by law, trustee agencies, and involved agencies. Please send written/typed comments (including a name, telephone number, and contact information) electronically or by mail to the following:

City of Los Angeles, Department of City Planning  
ATTN: Clare Kelley, City Planner  
Case Numbers: CPC-2021-2642-SP; ENV-2021-2643-EIR  
200 N. Spring Street, Room 667, Los Angeles, CA 90012

E-mail: [clare.kelley@lacity.org](mailto:clare.kelley@lacity.org)  
Phone: (213) 978-1207

In accordance with CEQA Section 15082, this Notice of Preparation is being circulated for a 30-day comment period. **The City of Los Angeles requests that written comments be provided at the earliest possible date, but no later than 5:00 p.m. on May 8, 2021.**

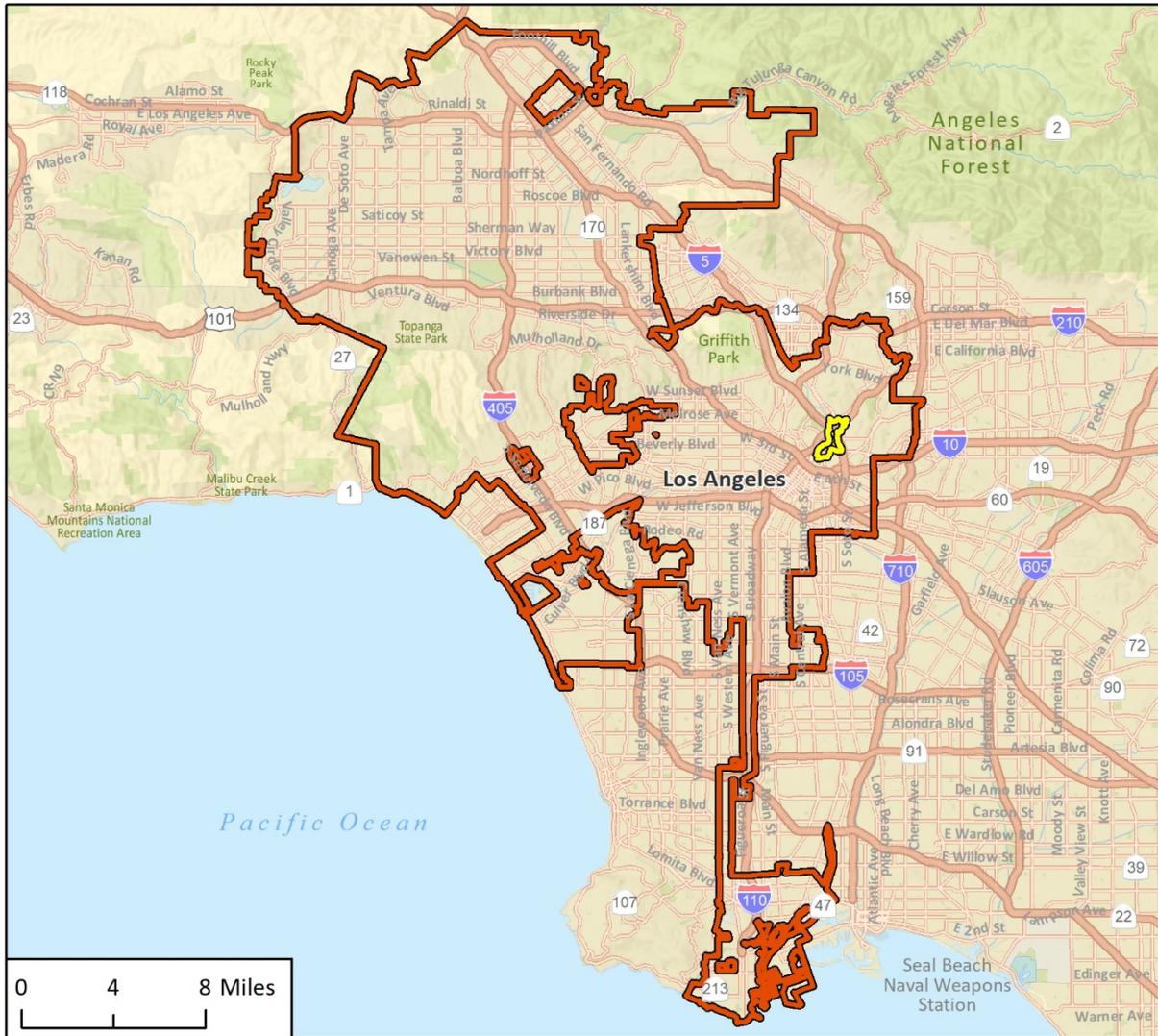
For more information about the CASP Update, please visit [Planning4LA.org/casp-update](https://Planning4LA.org/casp-update).

**ALL INTERESTED PARTIES ARE INVITED TO ATTEND THE PUBLIC SCOPING MEETING TO ASSIST IN IDENTIFYING ISSUES TO BE ADDRESSED IN THE EIR. ATTENDEES WILL HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY TO PROVIDE INPUT TO THE CONSULTANTS PREPARING THE EIR.**

  
Clare Kelley, City Planner  
City of Los Angeles Department of City Planning

Attachments  
Figure 1: Regional Context Map  
Figure 2: CASP Area Boundaries Map

**Figure 1 Regional Context Map**



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- Plan Boundary
- Los Angeles City Boundary

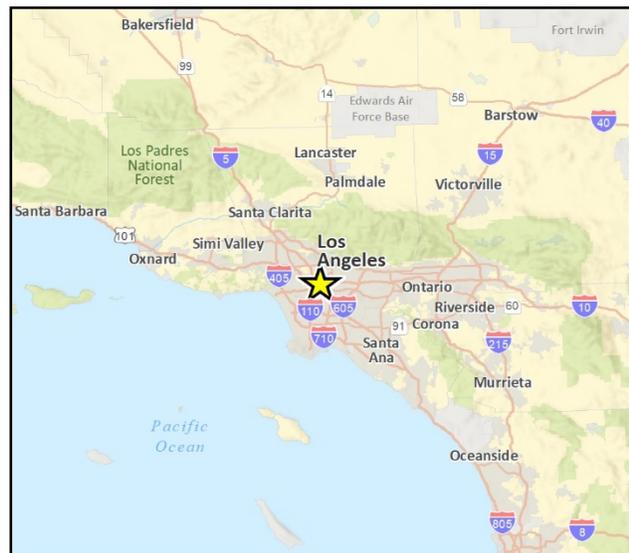


Figure 2 CASP Area Boundaries Map



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Fig 2 Project Location