

**HEART OF NORWALK SPECIFIC PLAN PROJECT
PREPARATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT AND PUBLIC SCOPING MEETING**

Lead Agency: City of Norwalk, Community Development Department

Project Applicant: City of Norwalk, Community Development Department

Notice of Preparation Review Period: Wednesday, April 3, 2024, to Friday, May 3, 2024

Scoping Meeting: Tuesday, April 23, 2024, 6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m., details below

Notice is hereby given that the City of Norwalk (City), as Lead Agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), will prepare an environmental impact report (EIR) for the Heart of Norwalk Specific Plan Project (proposed project) pursuant to the California Public Resources Code, Division 13, Section 21000 et seq. (CEQA Statute), and the California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Division 6, Chapter 3, Section 15000 et seq. (CEQA Guidelines).

The purpose of this Notice of Preparation (NOP) is to (1) serve as a public notice pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15082 that an EIR will be prepared; (2) advise and solicit comments and suggestions regarding the scope and content of the EIR to be prepared; and (3) provide notice of the public scoping meeting. The City is seeking your input regarding the scope and content of the EIR, including input on potentially significant environmental effects, mitigation measures, or project alternatives that should be explored in the EIR. If you represent a public agency, the City seeks input as to the scope and content of the environmental information that is germane to your agency's statutory responsibilities in connection with the proposed project.

Due to time limits mandated by state law, public agencies, members of the public, or any other interested parties are requested to respond to this NOP in writing no later than 30 days from the date of this NOP. The City will accept written comments regarding this NOP through the close of business on **Friday, May 3, 2024**. Please send all written comments, including emailed comments, to Carlos Rojas or Alexander Hamilton at the address below.

Project Location: The City is bordered by the cities of Downey to the northwest, Santa Fe Springs to the north and east, Artesia to the south, Cerritos to the south and west, and Bellflower to the west, as shown in Figure 1, Regional Context. The proposed specific plan area, or project site, consists of approximately 615 acres located at the center of the City. The project site is generally bound by the Imperial Highway to the north; Interstate 5 (I-5) Freeway to the east; Rosecrans Avenue to the south; and Pioneer Boulevard to the west, as shown in Figure 2, Plan Area. The Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad traverses the Plan Area from the north-east corner to the southeast corner.

Description: The City will prepare an EIR to analyze environmental impacts associated with implementation of the proposed project, which would include the establishment of the Heart of Norwalk Specific Plan. The purpose of the Specific Plan is to revitalize the underutilized corridors within the center of the City and spur development of new commercial and residential uses, while balancing place making and open spaces. Some of the key themes of the Specific Plan revolve around: making places, connecting with corridors, and supporting the social element. These environments would incorporate a variety of urban residential uses, places to walk and spend time, nightlife and spaces that can encourage and celebrate local culture, such as performing arts spaces.

The Specific Plan includes land use, zoning, and street improvement changes that will facilitate new community-supporting development. In general, the Specific Plan:

- Identifies three new framework districts that preserve the City of Norwalk's visual and cultural character, including a Front Street Historic District, Town Square District, and Triangle District;
- Reconfigures Front Street as one-way to prioritize pedestrian safety and divert traffic to Firestone Boulevard.
- Reconfigures San Antonio Drive (San Antonio Corridor) to create a linear park with neighborhood-serving amenities to provide an ideal walking, biking and driving connection between Norwalk Town Square, Front Street and the Civic Center.
- Redevelops Firestone Boulevard (Firestone Corridor) into a green urban boulevard that supports new residential and commercial development.
- Establishes the Norwalk Railway Corridor Rail Trail which provides a greenway parallel to the existing railroad to provide a landscaped trail with planted walkways, artwork, and cultural exhibitions to provide an inviting and safe environment for pedestrians and cyclists.
- Implements a new pedestrian and bicycle path running adjacent to the Southern Pacific Railroad right-of-way and provides a connection to the regional recreational Rail Trail.

Potential Environmental Effects: The City will prepare a comprehensive EIR that evaluates all potentially significant environmental impacts associated with the anticipated buildout of the proposed project. The EIR will explain the potentially significant effects of the proposed project as well as the reasons that other effects are not potentially significant. Pursuant to *CEQA Guidelines Section 15060(d)*, an initial study is not required to determine that an EIR will be prepared, and an initial study was not prepared for the proposed project.

In accordance with Section 15082 of the CEQA Guidelines, the City has prepared this NOP to provide agencies, organizations, and interested parties with information describing the proposed project and its potential environmental effects. Consistent with Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, the 20 environmental topics that may be analyzed in an EIR are:

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

The City has determined that the proposed project could potentially affect 15 of the 20 environmental topic areas identified in Appendix G. These 15 topical areas are aesthetics, air quality, cultural resources, energy, greenhouse gas emissions, hazards and hazardous materials, hydrology and water quality, land use and planning, noise, population and housing, public services, recreation, transportation, tribal cultural resources, and utilities and service systems. These impacts will be analyzed in detail in the EIR. The EIR will address the short- and long-term effects of the proposed project on the environment. Feasible mitigation measures will be proposed for impacts that are determined to be potentially significant and reasonable alternatives will be considered. A mitigation monitoring program will also be developed for any mitigation measures required by the City. The proposed project is expected to have no impact on agriculture and forestry resources, biological resources, geology and soils, mineral resources, or wildfire, and therefore the EIR will not present a detailed analysis of the project's impact on these topic areas.

Document Availability: The 30-day public review period for the NOP is from **Wednesday, April 3, 2024, to Friday, May 3, 2024**. In accordance with the time limits mandated by State law, if there are any concerns about the scope and content of the information to be addressed in EIR, written comments may be submitted via email or by mail to the addresses below. All written comments should be submitted at the earliest possible date but must be submitted no later than close of business **Friday, May 3, 2024**. Public agencies should identify the contact person for your agency in your written comments.

Public Comments: Please submit your comments to:

Carlos Rojas, Acting Senior Planner
Alexander Hamilton, Development Services Manager Consultant

- **Mailing Address:**
City of Norwalk
Community Development, Room 12
12700 Norwalk Boulevard
Norwalk, CA 90650
- **Email Address:** crojas@norwalkca.gov or ahamilton@norwalkca.gov

Public Scoping Meeting: A public scoping meeting will be held at the address below on **Tuesday, April 23, 2024**, from 6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m., to solicit input from any interested parties on the scope and content of the EIR, in conformance with Section 21083.9 of the California Public Resources Code. Applicable COVID-19 policies in place at the time will be followed. The public scoping meeting is intended to receive input from interested parties and no decisions about the proposed project will be made at the public scoping meeting. Though staff will prepare a summary of the issues raised verbally at the public scoping meeting, anyone wishing to make formal comments on the scope of issues or content of the EIR should also do so in writing. Written comments can be submitted at the scoping meeting. You may also send a written response to this NOP to the email and address listed above by **Friday, May 3, 2024**, without attending the scoping meeting.

A copy of the materials presented at the scoping meeting will be posted to the City's website:

<https://www.norwalk.org/city-hall/departments/community-development/planning> following the meeting.

The public scoping meeting will be held at the location identified below.

Location: City of Norwalk,
City Council Chambers
12700 Norwalk Boulevard
Norwalk, CA 90650

More Information: Questions concerning the matter should be directed to Carlos Rojas, Acting Senior Planner, or Alexander Hamilton, Development Services Manager Consultant, at (562) 929-5744, crojas@norwalkca.gov or ahamilton@norwalkca.gov

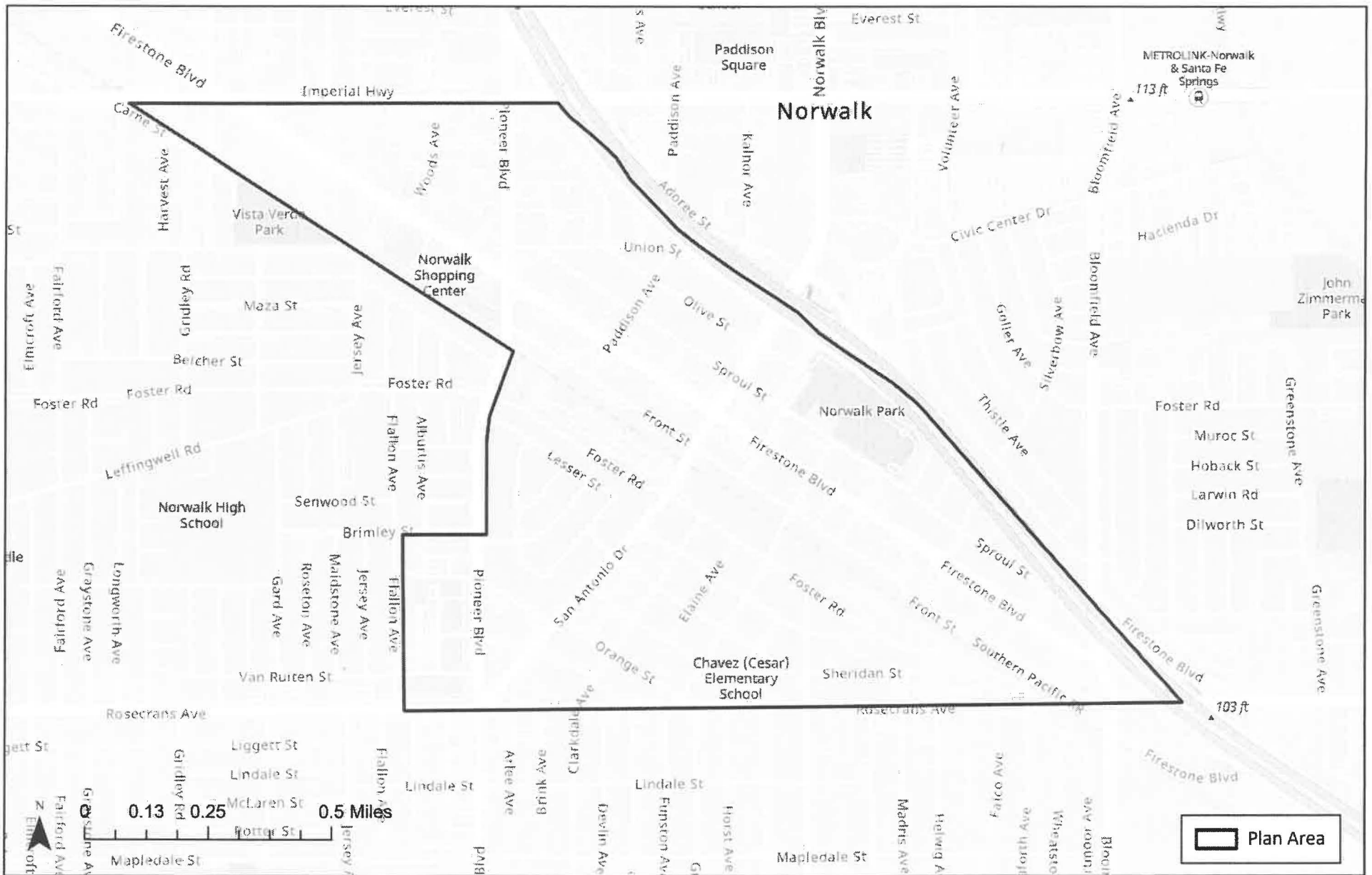
Dated this 3rd day of April, 2024.



Theresa Devoy, CMC
City Clerk

Attachments:

- Figure 1, Regional Location
- Figure 2, Plan Area

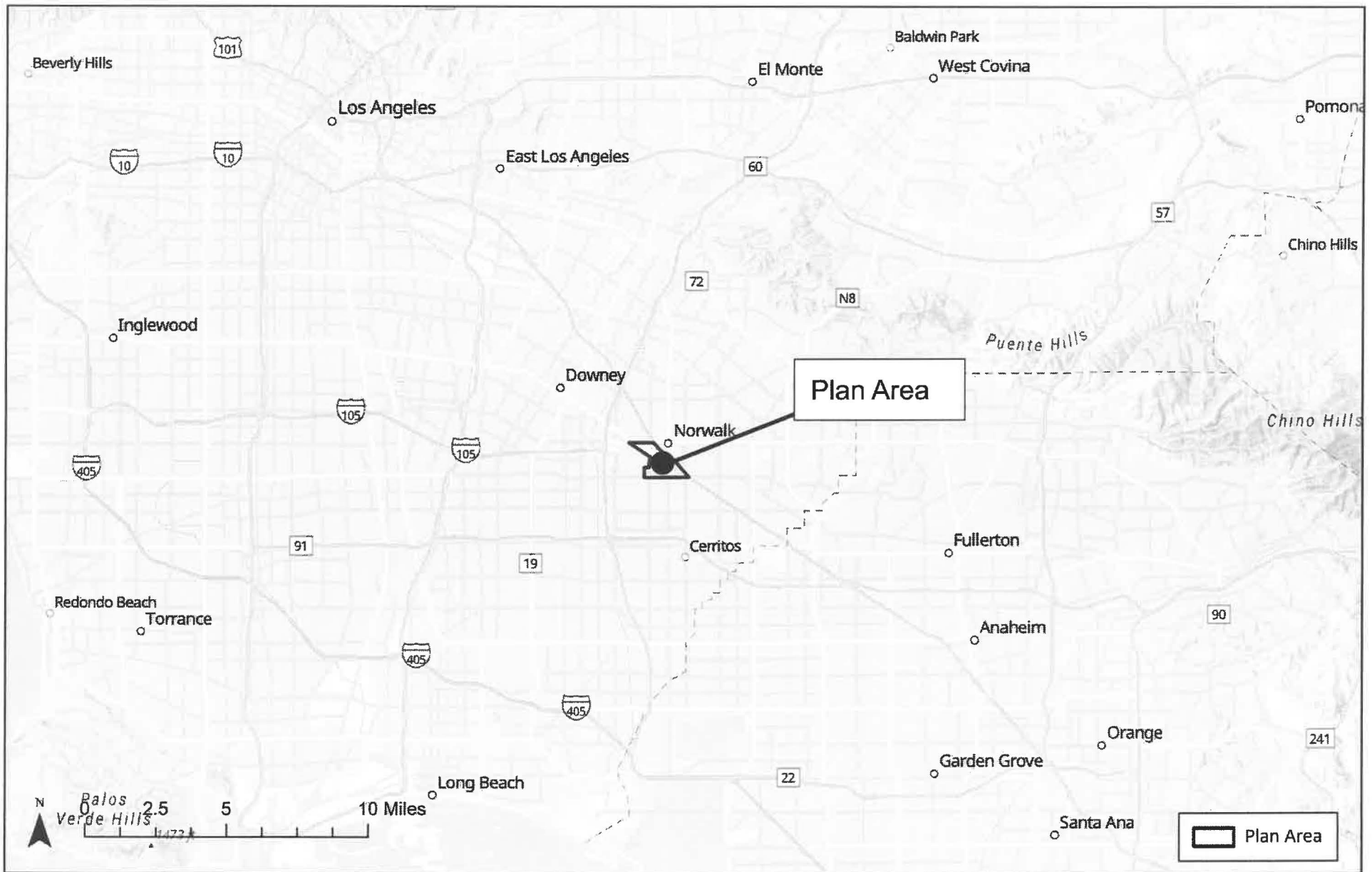


SOURCE: Esri 2023

FIGURE 2



Plan Area



SOURCE: Esri 2023

FIGURE 1