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## CITY of CHINO

### NOTICE OF PREPARATION Program Environmental Impact Report Chino 2045 General Plan Update

**Date** September 23, 2024

**To** Reviewing Agencies, Interested Parties, and Organizations

**Subject** Notice of Preparation of a Draft Program Environmental Impact Report for the Proposed Chino 2045 General Plan Update and Scheduling of a Scoping Meeting on October 17, 2024

The City of Chino (City) will be the Lead Agency and will prepare a Program Environmental Impact Report (PEIR) for the Chino 2045 General Plan Update (the Project). The Project, its location, and potential environmental effects are described below. Pursuant to California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Section 15060, the City has determined that a PEIR is required for the Project and an Initial Study has not been prepared.

Public agencies and members of the general public are invited to provide comments in writing as to the scope and content of the PEIR. Specifically, the City needs to know the views of Responsible and Trustee Agencies as to the potentially significant environmental issues, reasonable alternatives, and mitigation measures that are germane to each agency's statutory responsibilities in connection with the Project. Responsible Agencies will need to use the PEIR prepared by the City when considering permits or other approvals for the Project.

Due to the time limits mandated by State law, responses must be sent at the earliest possible date, but no later than the close of the Notice of Preparation review period, which runs as follows: September 23, 2024, through October 24, 2024. Please send written responses to Michael Hitz, Principal Planner, at the address shown below. Public agencies providing comments are requested to include a contact person for the agency.

**PROJECT TITLE:** Chino 2045 General Plan Update

**LEAD AGENCY CONTACT:**

Michael Hitz, AICP, Principal Planner  
City of Chino, Development Services Department  
13220 Central Avenue  
Chino, CA 91710  
Email: [mhitz@cityofchino.org](mailto:mhitz@cityofchino.org)  
Phone: 909-334-3448



**PROJECT SPONSOR:**

City of Chino  
13220 Central Avenue  
Chino, CA 91710

**PROJECT LOCATION AND CONTEXT:**

Chino is the eighth largest city in San Bernardino County by population. It is strategically located within the fast-growing Inland Empire region of California, approximately 36 miles east of Los Angeles, 30 miles west of San Bernardino, 25 miles northeast of Anaheim, and 50 miles northeast of Long Beach. As shown on Figure 1, Chino is positioned at the convergence of Los Angeles, Ontario, Riverside, and San Bernardino counties, bordered by Pomona (Los Angeles County) to the northwest, Ontario (San Bernardino County) to the northeast, Eastvale (Riverside County), and Chino Hill (San Bernardino County) to the southwest. The planning area addressed by the General Plan Update includes nearly 30 square miles of land within the City limit and approximately 2.5 square miles of unincorporated San Bernardino County land within the City's Sphere of Influence.

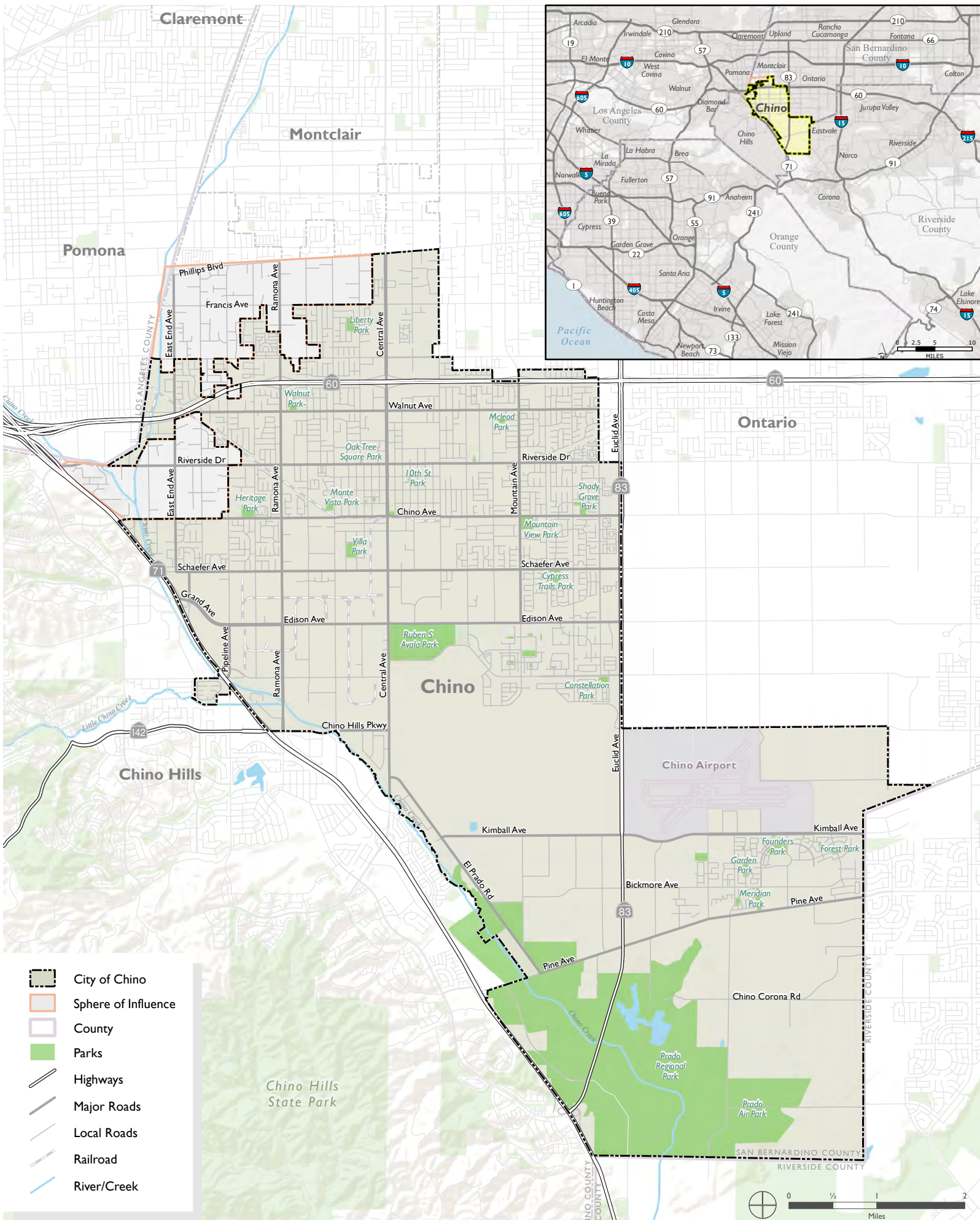
Chino enjoys excellent access to the regional transportation network. The northern portion of the City is bisected by State Route 60 (SR-60), a major east-west freeway and goods movement corridor that connects the Los Angeles metropolitan area with the Inland Empire and points beyond. State Route 71 (SR-71) generally forms the western boundary of Chino, providing connections to Pomona to the north and job centers in Orange County to the south via State Route 91. State Route 83, known locally as Euclid Avenue, generally forms the eastern boundary of the City, providing connections to Ontario to the north. Chino is located approximately 10 miles from Ontario International Airport, a commercial airport that serves as a major freight distribution point and offers 64 passenger departures and arrivals daily. There are no passenger rail stations in Chino, but Omnitrans provides bus service from the Transit Center in Downtown Chino to the Metrolink Station in Montclair, which offers passenger rail connections to points throughout southern California.

Chino Airport, located in the southeast portion of the City, is the largest non-commercial airport within a 20-mile radius making it a leading general aviation airport of choice for independent pilots, students and trainers, and corporate users.

**COMMUNITY PROFILE:**

Chino began as an agricultural community and grew with the construction of freeways and airports connecting the community to the region and the nation. Today, the community is home to approximately 92,000 residents and a thriving local economy, anchored by a range of businesses in manufacturing, retail commercial, wholesale trade, logistics and warehousing, and public administration. Notable landmarks within the City include the Chino Airport, Ayala Park, Chaffey College, and Prado Regional Park, a 2,000-acre park that was the site of the 1984 Olympic sports shooting events.

Figure I: Planning Area



Chino is a diverse and growing community with an enviable quality of life and a distinctive small-town feel. With a median age of 37.7 and an average household size of 3.5, Chino is a community of relatively young families, although the population of adults aged 65 and older was the fastest growing segment of the population over the last 10 years. More than half of Chino's residents identify as Hispanic or Latino. Over 70 percent of the existing housing stock in Chino is made up of single-family detached homes and the rate of homeownership is high, although the share of renters is growing. The City has a strong sense of community, evidenced by many well-attended festivals and events throughout the year.

## **PROJECT DESCRIPTION:**

Chino's current General Plan was adopted in 2010, but emerging trends and new State laws are now triggering the need for an update. These trends include demographic change, the rise of internet shopping, remote work, growth in the logistics industry, and new transportation technologies. Additionally, a series of new State laws enacted since the General Plan was last comprehensively updated mean the City must incorporate strategies to address multi-modal mobility, environmental justice, climate vulnerability, and emergency evacuation among other topics.

The 2045 Chino General Plan Update will serve as the blueprint for the City's future. It is built on a shared vision that describes the type of community Chino residents and businesses desire and identifies actions that can be taken to realize the vision. Key objectives for the Project established through community engagement include:

- Preserving and enhancing local heritage and "small town" character;
- Growing the local economy in ways that improve quality of life for local residents;
- Revitalizing older commercial centers with new uses that serve community needs and creating inviting gateways to Chino that help build a distinctive sense of place and enhance local pride;
- Modernizing the transportation system, improving connectivity within the City, and fostering safe routes to schools; and
- Establishing a framework for a sustainable, healthy, and resilient community.

Between 2000 and 2021, the total population of Chino grew by 38.4 percent, and it is projected to grow at a similar rate over the next 20 years. The 2045 General Plan will seek to manage growth in ways that bring prosperity for the whole community, while preserving and enhancing the unique character and spirit of Chino. With relatively little vacant land, infill development will be an important focus of the next phase of the City's evolution. In 2023, the City took some initial steps to facilitate infill development, adopting two zoning overlays that permit multifamily housing on some underutilized properties in older shopping centers and along commercial corridors. As residential development takes place on these sites, new rooftops and residents will provide additional opportunities for redevelopment that can help revitalize older commercial centers and corridors in Chino.

The 2045 General Plan will focus on key opportunity areas within the City limit where change is foreseeable. Shown on Figure 2, these are generally areas with clusters of vacant and underutilized land, many of which contain commercial properties recently rezoned through adoption of an overlay to allow multifamily housing consistent with the City's Housing Element. The 2045 General Plan will incorporate strategies to move a shared community vision for the future of these areas forward. Outside of these key areas, the 2045 General Plan will maintain the existing urban form and enhance the character and quality of life in Chino's established neighborhoods, and it will support continued implementation of The Preserve Specific Plan.

Figure 3 shows the Proposed General Plan Land Use Map, which will guide development and conservation in the planning area through 2045.

Key components of the 2045 General Plan will include:

- Four new land use designations designed to promote a vibrant mix of uses in key opportunity areas including:
  - A new Regional Mixed Use (RMU) designation that permits a wide range of retail, dining, entertainment, office, lodging, recreational, and cultural facilities that cater to both visitors and Chino residents, together with multifamily housing when permitted under zoning. The intent of this designation is to revitalize underutilized regional shopping centers in the area around Philadelphia and Central Avenue, support existing businesses, and position Chino as a regional destination for festivals, cultural, and sporting events. The RMU designation would also apply to the Spectrum Towne Center.
  - A new Boulevard Mixed Use (BMU) designation provides for a mix of commercial-retail and services that cater to the daily needs of local residents together with multifamily housing when permitted under zoning. The intent of the BMU designation is to foster attractive, human-scaled, mixed-use development that contributes to local character and enhances a "small town" sense of place along key segments of Riverside and Central Avenue south of SR-60.
  - A new Downtown (DT) land use designation to signal that the area is intended as a unique and distinct district within the City. The DT designation would promote a vibrant mix of business, entertainment, residential, cultural, and civic uses with housing when permitted by zoning, activating the area throughout the day and into the evening to make Downtown Chino a destination for residents and visitors from the region.
  - A new Employment Mixed Use (EMU) designation that would permit a mix of commercial-retail, light industrial, and manufacturing uses on a single site of adequate size, with provisions for adequate separation and buffering of uses. This designation would apply in a strategic location along Euclid Avenue in the south of the City to help support the financial feasibility of retail and restaurant uses to serve local residents and passersby.
- An updated circulation diagram with new roadway classifications for mixed-use boulevards and Downtown streets that emphasize walkability and roadway safety.
- Completion of the Pine Avenue Connector, linking SR-71 with Euclid Avenue. This connection will benefit residents in The Preserve; provide access for commuters, helping to generate a customer base for the commercial-retail uses on Euclid Avenue; and facilitate access to the regional transportation network for light industrial uses.



Figure 2: Key Opportunity Areas

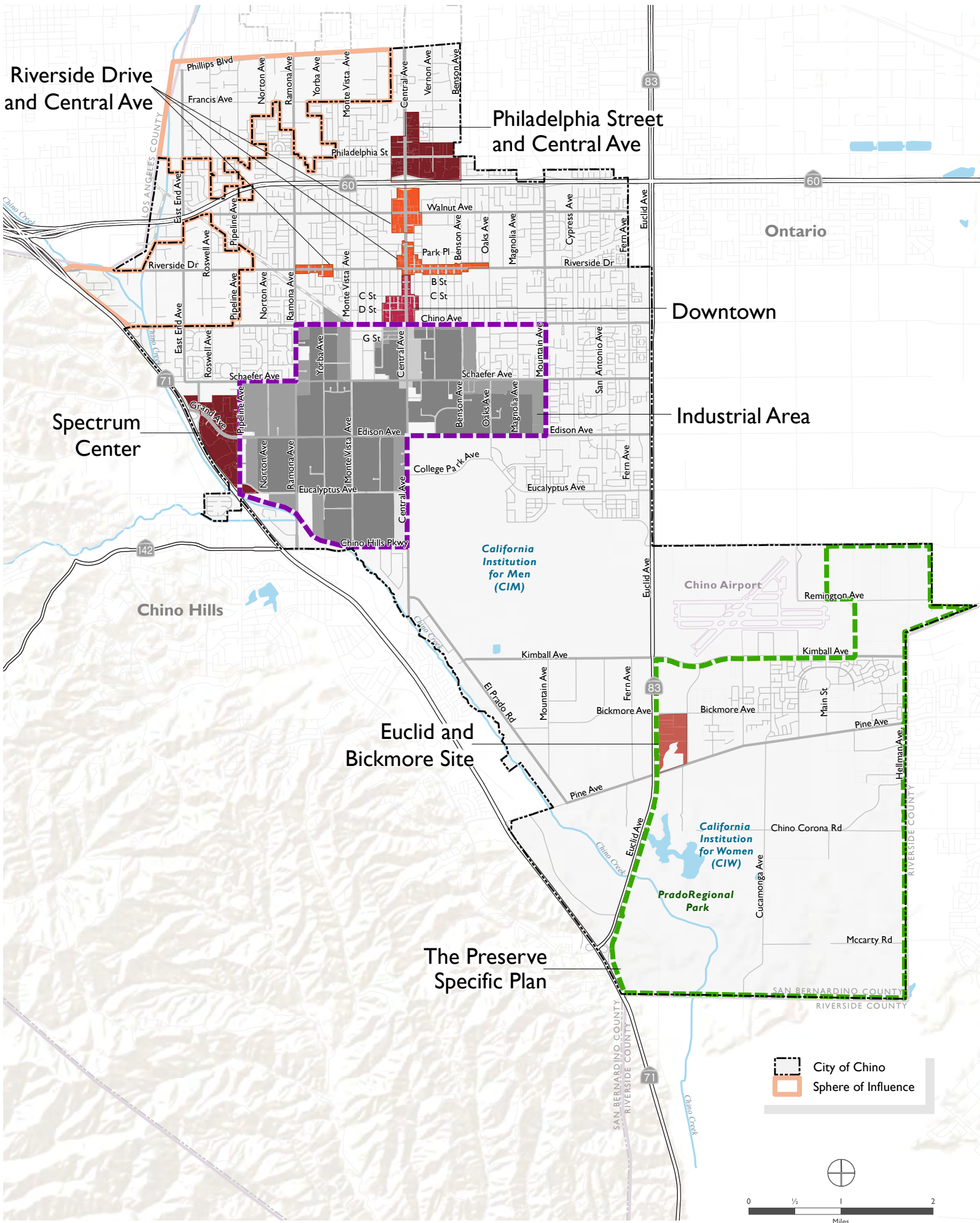
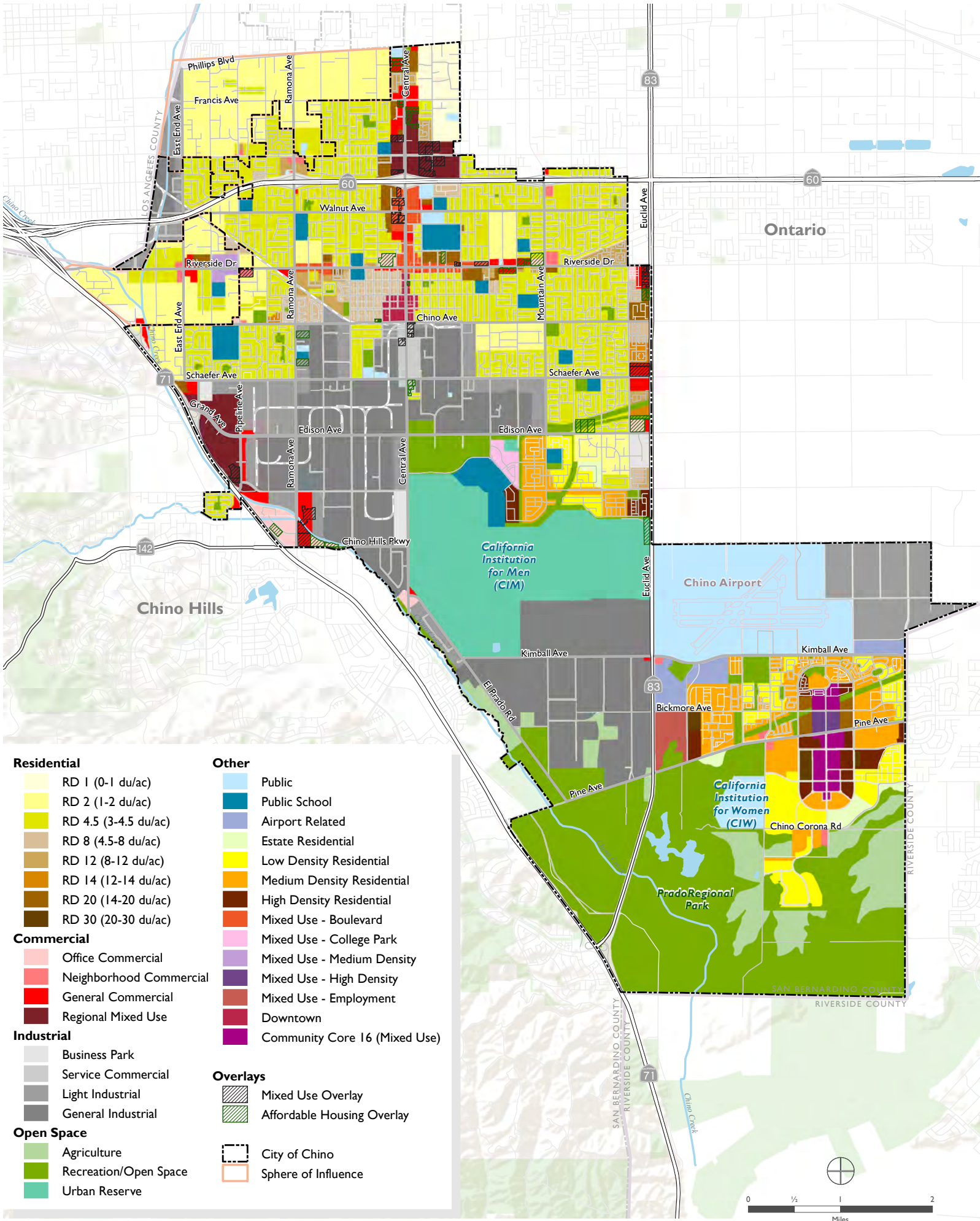


Figure 3: Proposed General Plan Land Use





- Strategies for effectively managing truck traffic to minimize conflicts with bicycles, pedestrians, and local traffic while optimizing access to the regional network.
- Establishing “good neighbor” policies and performance standards for light industrial and manufacturing uses, particularly when adjacent to residential neighborhoods. These policies and standards will govern screening, landscaping, architectural design, noise, air quality, traffic, and access.
- Streetscape improvements to improve bicycle/pedestrian safety and enhance walkability along segments of Riverside Drive, including wider sidewalks, landscaped buffers between pedestrians and traffic, the addition of bicycle lanes, and the conversion of the ends of some alleyways into pocket parks/plazas.
- A new Community Health and Environmental Justice Element with strategies to promote active, healthy lifestyles, reduce exposure to air pollution, mitigate urban heat in summertime, and improve roadway safety, particularly around schools and community centers.
- Strategies to incentivize the creation of mini parks, plazas, and publicly accessible privately-owned open spaces in the northern part of the City where there is a need for new parks and recreational spaces.
- Policy guidance for future uses on the former Ayala Park driving range, including providing on-site food and beverage vending for game and events days and/or constructing a water park.

Additionally, it is envisioned that the 2045 General Plan process will provide direction for the repeal of three outdated specific plans and the incorporation of any standards and provisions from those plans that remain relevant into the Zoning Code: the Central Avenue Specific Plan, the Eucalyptus Business Park Specific Plan, and the Spectrum Center Specific Plan.

### **Projected Buildout**

The City is projected to have 119,200 residents, 38,100 homes, and 58,785 jobs at full buildout in 2045, based on regional growth projections and the proposed general plan land use map. This represents approximately 29,650 new residents, 12,000 new homes, and 9,150 new jobs incrementally over the planning period. New jobs and housing will be focused primarily in the areas shown on Figure 2 above.

### **Alternatives**

The PEIR will consider alternatives that can reduce or avoid the significant environmental impacts of the Project. One alternative will be a Downtown alternative that considers adding multifamily apartments and mixed-use development Downtown, together with civic, commercial and entertainment uses. Such an alternative could potentially reduce citywide per capita Vehicle Miles Traveled and associated air quality and greenhouse gas emissions (GHG). A change in zoning to permit additional housing Downtown would require a vote of the people, consistent with Measure M, the City's residential growth control measure. The City invites comments on other potential alternatives that can reduce or avoid the potential environmental impacts of the Project.



## PROBABLE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS OF THE PROJECT

The PEIR will evaluate potentially significant environmental impacts associated with the adoption and implementation of the Project. Consistent with the State CEQA Guidelines (Appendix G), the following environmental resource categories will be analyzed in relation to the Project:

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

All of the resource categories listed above will be considered in the PEIR; however, given the local context of Chino, the following key issues are anticipated to be addressed in the environmental analysis:

- Motor vehicles traveling on freeways and roadways with high volumes of traffic and heavy-duty truck traffic running through the community are the main source of air pollution in the region. Residential and employment growth through 2045 will contribute to an increase in air pollutants, GHG emissions, and noise. The potential for adverse effects on sensitive populations, such as children and seniors, will be evaluated.
- Panoramic views of the San Gabriel Mountains to the north of the City are available from Euclid Avenue and other public locations in Chino. The PEIR will consider the cumulative impacts of development in Chino and the adjacent Ontario Ranch Master Plan area on scenic views.
- With a rich agricultural heritage that dates back to the 19th century, Chino is home to several historically significant properties. The potential for new development to adversely affect historic resources will be evaluated. Additionally, there are many properties in the City which are "age-eligible" for historic designation, meaning they are over 50 years old and require some level of evaluation to determine whether or not they are historically significant. Impacts to these potentially historic resources will be analyzed.
- Potential impacts to tribal cultural resources will also require close consideration, as the planning area was traditionally used by the Gabrieleno/Tongva San Gabriel Band of Mission Indians, and a number of significant prehistoric resources are known to be present.
- Areas in the south of the City are designated as 100-year flood hazard zones by the Federal Emergency Management Agency, and there is a history of flooding on Kimball and Pine Avenues. Additionally, properties in the south of the City are within the future high-water line of the Prado Dam Spillway. Project impacts related to flood hazards will be evaluated.
- Potential impacts related to airport hazards and noise in the vicinity of Chino Airport will be assessed.

- The burrowing owl is known to occupy disturbed lands within the City limit, and the southern portion of the planning area contains areas mapped as Critical Habitat for southwestern willow flycatcher, least Bell's vireo, and western yellow-billed cuckoo. Accordingly, the potential for impacts to these species will be evaluated.

The City welcomes the public to identify other key environmental issues that should be addressed in the PEIR.

**SCOPING MEETING:**

A scoping meeting will be conducted on Thursday, October 17, 2024, to collect oral comments from agencies and members of the public regarding the scope and content of the PEIR in accordance with CEQA Section 21083.9.

**PEIR Scoping Meeting on the Chino 2045 General Plan Update**

Thursday, October 17, 2024, from 5:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.

City Hall  
13220 Central Avenue  
City Council Chambers  
Chino, CA 91710

For project information, please visit the Project website:

<https://cityofchino.org/1676/General-Plan-Update>

Please contact Michael Hitz, Principal Planner at [mhitz@cityofchino.org](mailto:mhitz@cityofchino.org) or 909-334-3448 with any questions regarding this notice or the scoping meeting.



Michael Hitz, AICP  
Principal Planner  
City of Chino

9/17/24

Date