# REVISED NOTICE OF PREPARATION

## TO EXTEND COMMENT PERIOD

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|---|---|
| Date: | April 14, 2021 |
| To: | Responsible Agencies, Interested Parties, and Organizations |
| Subject: | Notice of Preparation of an Environmental Impact Report for the South Central Specific Plan Project, Fresno, California |
| Lead Agency: | City of Fresno |
| Contact: | Jennifer Clark, Director<br>c/o Cherie Vick, Executive Assistant<br>Planning and Development Department<br>2600 Fresno Street, Room 3065<br>Fresno, CA 93721<br>(559) 621-8003<br>Jennifer.Clark@fresno.gov<br>Cherie.vick@fresno.gov |
| Comment Period: | March 24, 2021 to May 14, 2021 |
| Note to Reader: | The City of Fresno (City) is recirculating this Notice of Preparation (NOP) to reflect revisions to the South Central Specific Plan, formerly referred to as the South Industrial Priority Area Specific Plan and to extend the comment period to May 14, 2021. Please refer to subheading, "Project Description," for more information. All comments previously submitted to the City during the 2019 NOP public review period (July 8 to August 6, 2019) have been retained by the City. **The comment period for this re-circulated Notice of Preparation (NOP) has been extended to May 14, 2021. If you submitted comments previously, they have been retained and do not need to be resubmitted.** |

## PURPOSE OF NOTICE

The City of Fresno is the lead agency responsible for preparation of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the proposed South Central Specific Plan project (proposed project), located in the City of Fresno. Pursuant to provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the City has prepared this NOP for the proposed project. Once a decision is made to prepare an EIR, the lead agency must prepare a NOP to inform all responsible and trustee agencies that an EIR will be prepared (CEQA Guidelines Section 15082). The purpose of this NOP is to provide agencies, interested parties, and organizations with sufficient information describing the proposed project and the potential environmental effects to enable meaningful input related to the scope and content of information to be included in the EIR.

The EIR will provide an evaluation of potential environmental impacts associated with the proposed project. A brief project description, location, and potential environmental issue areas that may be affected by development of the proposed project are described below. The EIR will evaluate the potentially significant environmental impacts of the proposed project, on both a direct and cumulative basis, identify

mitigation measures that may be feasible to lessen or avoid such impacts, and identify alternatives to the proposed project.

## PUBLIC REVIEW PERIOD

This NOP was re-circulated for public review and comment for a period of 30 days beginning April 14, 2021. This notice is to extend the public review period to May 14, 2021. The City held a public scoping meeting on April 6, 2021 to inform interested parties about the proposed project and provide agencies and the public with an opportunity to submit comments on the scope and content of the EIR. The City will hold **a second public scoping meeting on April 28, 2021.** As a result of the current COVID-19 restrictions in place on in-person gatherings, City of Fresno public meetings will be conducted electronically only. The meeting time, web link, and call-in information is as follows:

Web link: https://zoom.us/j/98373607907
Call-in Information: (669) 900-9128
Webinar ID: 983 7360 7907

Meeting Date: April 28, 2021

Meeting Time: 6:00 to 8:00 PM

Due to COVID-19 restrictions, copies of the NOP may be reviewed at the following locations:

- Online at: https://www.fresno.gov/cityclerk/notices-publications/ or
- www.fresno.gov/SCSP

For information on additional viewing methods, contact Executive Assistant Cherie Vick (contact information below).

Your views and comments on how the project may affect the environment are welcomed. Please contact Jennifer Clark if you have any questions about the environmental review process for the proposed project.

## Project Location

The approximately 5,629-acre planning area, located in the southern portion of the City, is largely comprised of land within the City limits. However, as shown in Figures 1 and 2, the planning area also includes land within the City's Sphere of Influence (SOI) to the north, east, and west.

## PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The City of Fresno is preparing the South Central Specific Plan to maximize economic benefit and job growth for residents, while reducing impacts on the environment and improving quality of life. The proposed project would designate land uses, establish a planning framework, and development standards to facilitate and guide future development within the planning area through the year 2040.

The EIR will evaluate potential impacts associated with development of a preferred proposed Specific Plan as well as at two additional development alternatives that may occur within the planning area through the year 2040. The specific plan proposes revised land use and zoning designations, specific design guidelines, and process improvements. See Table 1 for draft estimated acreages for the approximately 5,000 acres of land use designations proposed for the Specific Plan and plan alternatives. These acreages do not include existing infrastructure such as roadways included in the 5,629-acre Specific Plan boundary. Future

development would be required to comply with the proposed specific plan land use designations, development standards, and policy framework. Following adoption of the South Central Specific Plan, subsequent projects that are consistent with the Specific Plan could undergo a streamlined CEQA environmental review and approval process that may consist of completing a conformance checklist demonstrating consistency with the Specific Plan.

**Table 1: Proposed Specific Plan and Plan Alternatives Estimated Land Use Designation Acreages**

| Land Use | Existing General Plan Acres (percent) | Proposed Plan Acres (percent) | Alternative 1[a] Acres (percent) | Alternative 2[b] Acres (percent) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Business Park | 144 (3%) | 655 (13%) | 581 (12%) | 40 (1%) |
| General Commercial | 10 (<1%) | 48 (1%) | 2,014 (42%) | 13 (<1%) |
| Regional Business Park | 351 (7%) | 334 (7%) | 247 (5%) | 334 (7%) |
| Heavy Industrial | 3,470 (72%) | 2,651 (53%) | 22 (<1%) | 3,043 (63%) |
| Light Industrial | 614 (13%) | 714 (14%) | 1,495 (31%) | 1,076 (22%) |
| Neighborhood Mixed Use | 0.25 (0%) | 0.25 (<1%) | 0.25 (<1%) | 0.25 (<1%) |
| Open Space - Ponding Basin | 157 (3%) | 157 (3%) | 157 (3%) | 157 (3%) |
| Open Space - Neighborhood Park | 2 (0%) | 2 (<1%) | 2 (<1%) | 2 (<1%) |
| Public | 41 (1%) | 135 (3%) | 29 (1%) | 78 (2%) |
| Rail | 32 (1%) | 32 (1%) | 32 (1%) | 32 (1%) |
| Residential | 30 (1%) | 270 (5%) | 273 (6%) | 76 (2%) |
| Other | NA | 0.001 (<1%) | 0.001 (<1%) | 0.001 (<1%) |
| SCSP Boundary Change | 146 | NA | 146 | 146 |
| *TOTAL* | *4,852* | *4,997* | *4,852* | *4,852* |
| *TOTAL (including SCSP Boundary Change)* | *4,997* | *4,997* | *4,997* | *4,997* |

* Rounded to the nearest acre. Figures may not sum due to rounding.

NA Not applicable

[a] Alternative 1 tentatively labeled Community Proposed Alternative

[b] Alternative 2 tentatively labeled Business Proposed Alternative

# RESPONSIBLE AGENCIES

For the purposes of CEQA, the term "Responsible Agency" includes all public agencies other than the Lead Agency that have discretionary approval power over the project (CEQA Guidelines Section 15381). Discretionary approval may include such actions as issuance of a permit, authorization, or easement needed to complete some aspect of the proposed project. Responsible agencies may include, but are not limited to:

- California Department of Transportation (Caltrans),
- California State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB),
- California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW),

- Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (CVRWQCB),
- County of Fresno,
- Fresno Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo), and
- San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (SJVAPCD).

## AREAS OF POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

The EIR will analyze the significant environmental effects associated with adoption and implementation of the proposed project. Specific areas of analysis will include the following topics based on Appendix G of the State CEQA Guidelines:

- Aesthetics
- Agricultural and Forestry Services
- Ai Quality
- Biological Resources
- Cultural Resources
- Energy
- Geology and Soils
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Climate Change
- 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
- Cumulative Impacts

The EIR will also include a discussion of environmental justice issues, and identify and evaluate a range of reasonable alternatives to the proposed project, including a No Project Alternative.

## SUBMITTING COMMENTS

Comments and suggestions as to the appropriate scope of analysis in the EIR are invited from all interested parties. Written comments or questions concerning the EIR for the proposed project should be directed to the City's environmental project manager at the following address by **5:00 p.m. on May 14, 2021**. Please include the commenter's full name and address.

Jennifer Clark , Planning Director
c/o Cherie Vick, Executive Assistant
2600 Fresno Street, Room 3065
Fresno, CA 93721
(559) 621-8003
Cherie.vick@fresno.gov

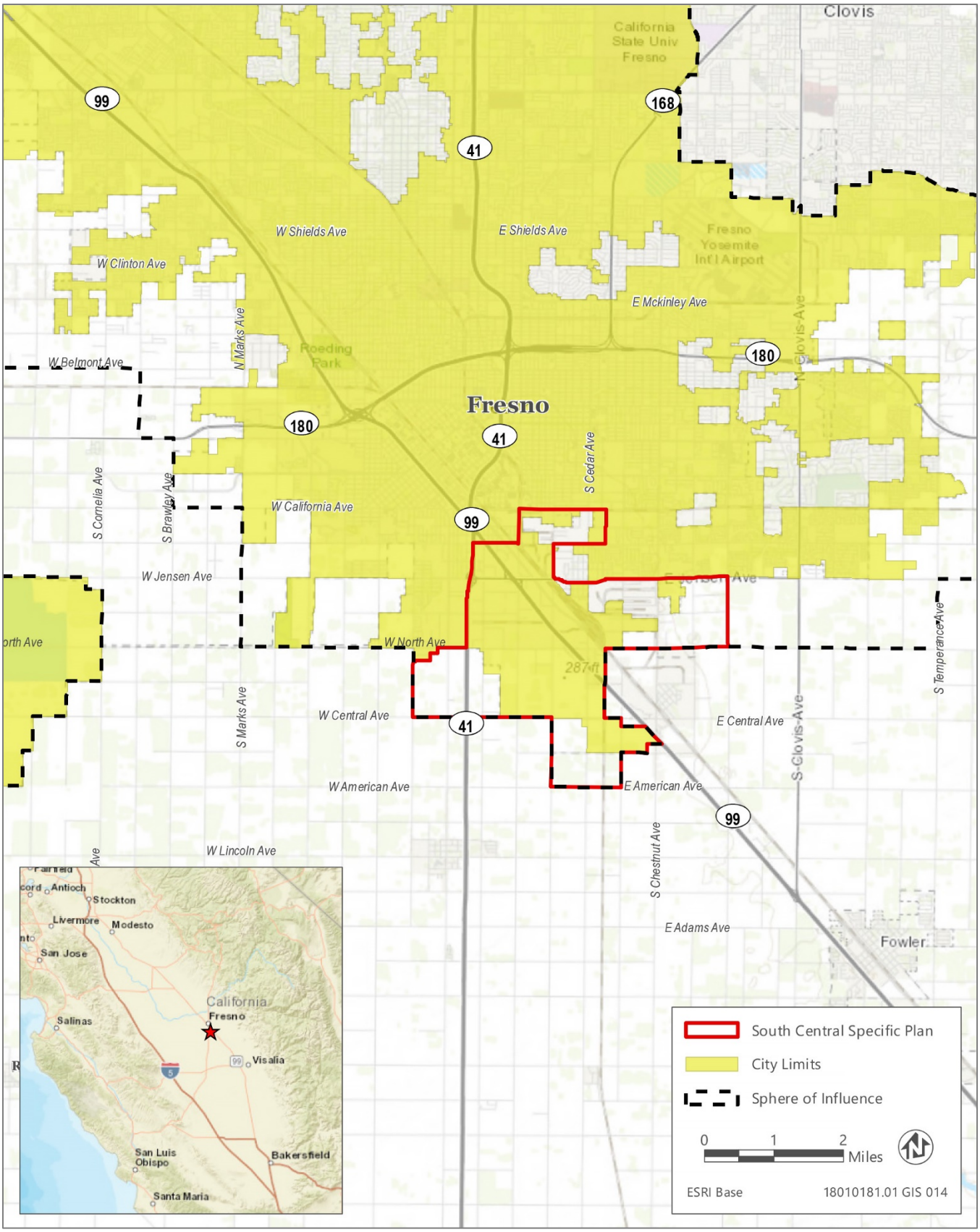


Figure 1 Regional Location

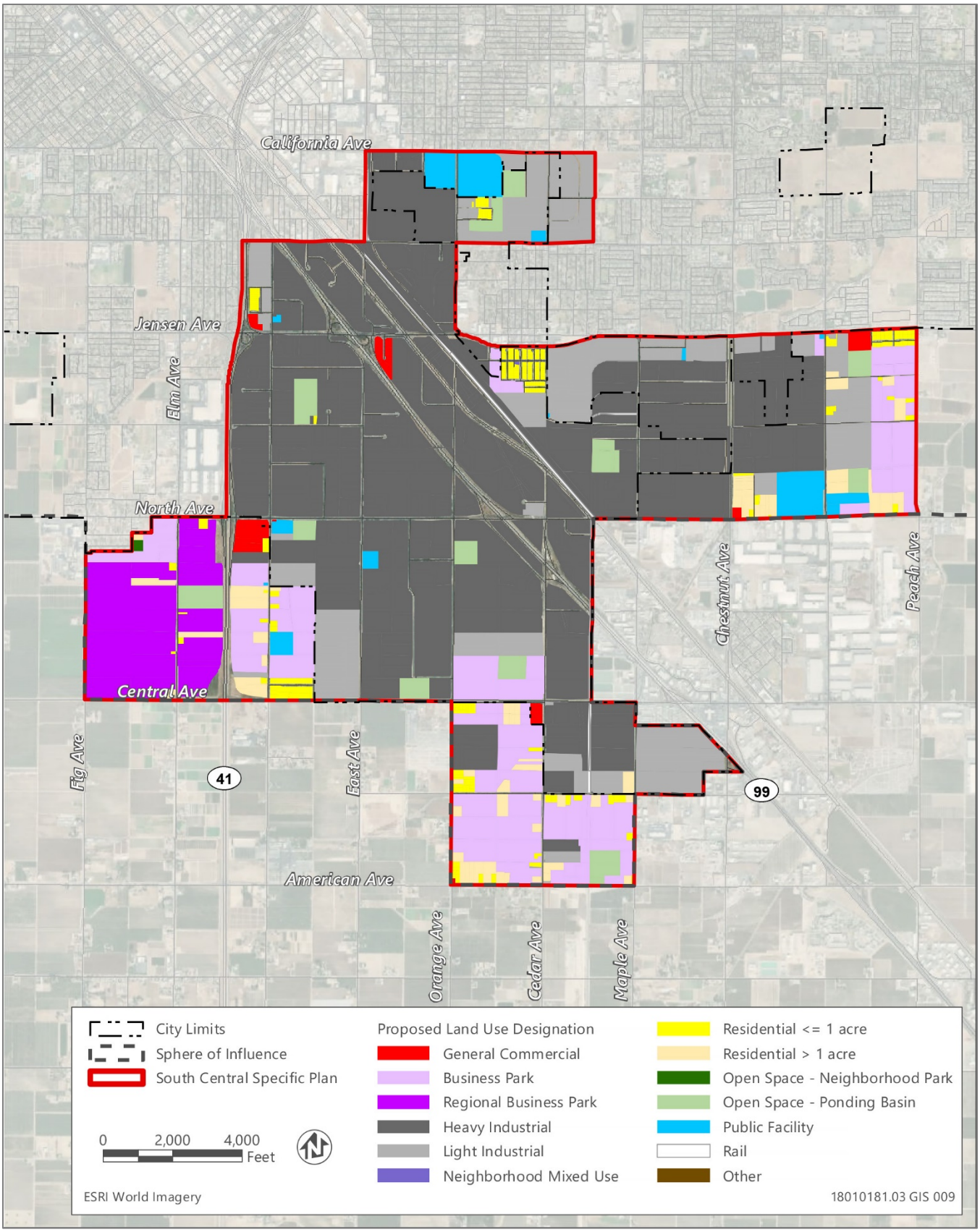


Figure 2 Planning Area