

**NOTICE OF PREPARATION
OF A DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT
AND PUBLIC SCOPING MEETING**

June 11, 2020

TO: Office of Planning and Research, Responsible Agencies, Trustee Agencies, Organizations, and Interested Parties

SUBJECT: Notice of Preparation of a Program Environmental Impact Report (PEIR) for the Los Angeles County Green Zones Program in Compliance with Title 14, section 15082(a) of the California Code of Regulations

The County of Los Angeles (County), is the Lead Agency pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and intends to prepare a Program Environmental Impact Report (PEIR) for the proposed project described below. The County has prepared this Notice of Preparation (NOP) to provide Responsible Agencies, Trustee Agencies, and other interested parties with information regarding the proposed project and its potential environmental effects. For more information on the project, please see:

<http://planning.lacounty.gov/greenzones>

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

A PEIR is needed to address changes to Title 22 of the County's zoning code to address incompatible land uses in proximity to sensitive uses by changing regulatory requirements for specific industrial land uses, in addition to revisions to goals, policies, guiding principles, and the Land Use Map Legend to the General Plan Land Use Element. The intent of the Green Zones Program is to develop targeted land-use policies that can be used to improve the health and quality of life for residents surrounding major sources of pollution, aligned with the State's environmental justice initiatives such as the Planning for Healthy Communities Act (Senate Bill 1000) and California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006 (Assembly Bill 32 and Senate Bill 535).

The project includes a proposal to adopt the County Green Zones Program to promote environmental justice by providing zoning requirements for industrial uses, vehicle-related uses, and recycling and solid waste uses that may disproportionately affect communities surrounding these land uses. The Green Zones Program would not involve any new construction or physical development and would not result in increased density. The Recycling and Waste Management revisions element of the Green Zones Program would result in providing a more streamlined process to permit new types of recycling processing facilities using newer technologies in order to meet State requirements, and to further define and provide specific regulations for automobile dismantling yards, pallet yards, recycling collection facilities, recycling processing facilities, organic waste, and solid waste facilities. Additionally, the revisions to Title 22 would result in more locations where recycling and waste management facilities could be permitted along with restrictions on automobile dismantling yards, pallet yards, recycling collection facilities, recycling processing facilities, organic waste, and solid waste facilities from Hillside Management Areas (HMAs), Significant Ecological Areas (SEAs), and Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones (VHFHSZs). Additionally, in-vessel organic waste facilities are prohibited in Agricultural Resource Areas (ARAs). The Green Zones Program consists of the following five elements and the associated amendments to the County Zoning Code:

Element 1 – Green Zone Districts

Element No. 1 consists of new development standards would result in a more stringent entitlement processes for specific industrial, recycling, or vehicle-related uses within Green Zone Districts within a 500-foot radius of existing sensitive uses on other properties. Currently the zoning and land use designations for the eleven districts under consideration for proposed revision, allow industrial uses in these communities by-right and include standards for limited parking, signage, tree planting, and maximum floor area ratio (FAR) requirements. The new development standards and/or more stringent entitlement process would be retroactive to the 11 districts, and to future entitlements subject to a Conditional Use Permit (CUP). The new development standards would apply to specific industrial, recycling, or vehicle-related uses within Green Zone Districts within a 500-foot radius of existing sensitive uses, requiring the use of alternative fencing materials, solid wall screening where certain facilities are not enclosed, expanded landscaping buffers between incompatible uses, required paving, lighting standards, signage standards, maintenance and operations standards, building height and screening standards, storage enclosure standards, access and vehicle circulation standards, and open space standards within subject properties. The program requires the nonconforming uses to come into compliance within 3 to 10 years of adoption of the Ordinance.

Element 2 – New Sensitive Uses

Element No. 2 consists of new development standards for New Sensitive Uses within a 500-foot radius of existing industrial, recycling, and solid waste, or vehicle-related uses. Currently the zoning and land use designations that permit sensitive uses do not have requirements for remediating the effects of incompatible adjacent uses. The Ordinance establishes the definition of sensitive uses to include dwelling units, schools and school yards, parks, playgrounds, daycare centers, preschools, nursing homes, hospitals, shelters, and daycares, or preschools as accessory to a place of worship, in close proximity to existing industrial uses. The existing zoning designations currently include development standards applicable to the above listed sensitive uses. However, the Ordinance expands these requirements to include development of new sensitive uses where these uses are adjacent to, or adjoining industrial, recycling, or vehicle-related uses. The Ordinance includes standards for requiring the use of solid wall screening; expanded landscaping buffers between incompatible uses; standards for windows; placement of balconies; and air filtration devices. The Ordinance requires the nonconforming uses to be brought into compliance within 3 to 10 years of adoption of the Ordinance. Construction activities for the proposed program would include landscaping barriers, enclosures, fencing, solid walls, signage, lighting, and air filtration as measures that would decrease impacts to new sensitive uses near or adjacent to existing industrial, recycling and solid waste, or vehicle-related uses (Chapter 22.130). These measures would be required where the Title 22 Ordinance implements new development standards for new sensitive uses, such as dwelling units, schools and school yards, parks, playgrounds, daycare centers, preschools, nursing homes, hospitals, shelters, and daycares, or preschools as accessory use to a place of worship, in close proximity to existing industrial uses.

Element 3 – Recycling and Waste Management Revisions

Element No. 3 includes revisions to Recycling and Waste Management standards and regulations, including supermarket accessory recycling collection centers. The County currently regulates solid waste and recycling facilities under junk and salvage, which are allowable in M-2 designated zones. The Ordinance would allow for permitting of new types of facilities including organic waste that would aid in the reduction of greenhouse gases and comply with State requirements. The new development standards and/or more stringent entitlement process for future recycling and solid waste facilities would be subject to a CUP, and would include requirements for construction of improvements consisting of landscaping barriers, enclosures, fencing, solid walls, paving, signage, and lighting, air filtration, building height restrictions, vehicle circulation, and storage of materials, as well as cleaning and maintenance standards. These construction improvement requirements are already subject to current development standards. The proposed revisions would prohibit automobile dismantling yards, pallet yards, recycling collection facilities, recycling processing facilities, organic waste, and

solid waste facilities from HMAs, SEAs, and VHFHSZs. Additionally, in-vessel organic waste facilities would be prohibited in ARAs. Additionally, Supermarket Accessory Recycling Collection Centers would be permitted in currently developed supermarket locations in urbanized locations in the County.

Element 4 – Storage Enclosures for Recycling and Solid Waste Revisions

Element No. 4 would add additional requirements to current development requirements for solid waste and recycling storage enclosures including increased enclosure wall height, a roof, paving, cleaning and maintenance, requirements for distance from adjoining doorway, and enhanced circulation. These revisions to the Ordinance would only apply to new development and expansion of existing development.

In addition to the revisions to Title 22, the project would also include a General Plan Amendment to ensure consistency with the proposed revisions to Title 22. The project's General Plan Amendment component consists of text changes to policies in Chapter 3 (Guiding Principles), Chapter 6 (Land Use Element), Chapter 13 (Public Services and Facilities Element), and Appendix C (Land Use Element Resources). The edits and additions to policies in these chapters support the incorporation of the Green Zones Program framework into the General Plan as well as the implementation of the goals of SB 1000 and existing environmental justice language in the General Plan.

The new policies under the additional chapters include language around promoting environmental justice in areas that bear disproportionate impacts from stationary polluting sources, additional development standards including appropriate technology and building enclosure to address land use incompatibility, and encouraging land use patterns that protect the health of sensitive receptors.

Additional changes include Zone changes and corresponding changes in the Land Use Designation for a subset of those parcels for consistency and in support of the goals of addressing incompatible land uses.

As part of the General Plan Amendment Revisions, 15 parcels within the Green Zones Districts area are proposed to be changed from the designation of Heavy Industrial (IH) to the Light Industrial (IL) General Plan designation. Similarly, in order to retain consistency with the General Plan and Title 22 zoning code, 27 parcels are proposed for a zone change from M-2, to M-1. The purpose of the general plan amendment and zone change is to ensure that the current general plan and zoning designations are consistent with the revisions proposed with Title 22, Green Zones Districts with regard to intensity of permitted industrial land uses. The 15 parcels included in the general plan amendment and the 17 parcels in the zone change are proposed to occur in the same geographic locations as the Green Zones Districts Element (Figure 1.IV-2).

Element 5 – Addition of New Uses and Re-defining/Categorizing Uses Title 22

Element No. 5 includes the addition of specific recycling and solid waste uses into Title 22 definitions to be regulated countywide. This includes new organic waste facilities such as anaerobic digestion, chipping and grinding, mulching, and composting. This also includes recategorizing junk and salvage and auto-dismantling yards under recycling facilities to allow for improved regulation with new development standards for these types of uses. This includes changes to various sections of Chapter 22.172 (Nonconforming Uses, Buildings, and Structures) to be consistent with new standards and Schedule for Compliance related to Green Zone Districts (Chapter 22.84). This makes changes to various sections in Division 10 (Community Standards Districts), including language in Application of Community Standards Districts to Property (22.300.030) and Community Standards Districts for the following communities: Avocado Heights (22.308), East LA (22.316), and Florence-Firestone (22.324), to be consistent with new development standards in the overlapping Green Zone Districts (Chapter 22.84). This also makes changes to various chapters in Division 3 to update land use regulation summary tables by zones for consistency with new use and development standards in the ordinance.

General Plan Amendment Revisions

In addition to the revisions to Title 22, the project would also include a General Plan Amendment to ensure consistency with the proposed revisions to Title 22. The project's General Plan Amendment component consists of text changes to policies in Chapter 3 (Guiding Principles), Chapter 6 (Land Use Element), Chapter 13 (Public Services and Facilities Element), and Appendix C (Land Use Element Resources). The edits and additions to policies in these chapters support the incorporation of the Green Zones Program framework into the General Plan as well as the implementation of the goals of SB 1000 and existing environmental justice language in the General Plan.

The new policies under the additional chapters include language around promoting environmental justice in areas that bear disproportionate impacts from stationary polluting sources, additional development standards including appropriate technology and building enclosure to address land use incompatibility, and encouraging land use patterns that protect the health of sensitive receptors.

Additional changes include Zone changes for 28 parcels and corresponding changes in the Land Use Designation for a subset (15) of those parcels for consistency and in support of the goals of addressing incompatible land uses.

In order to retain consistency with the General Plan and Title 22 zoning code, 28 parcels are proposed for a zone change from M-2, to M-1. Similarly, as part of the General Plan Amendment Revisions, 15 of the 28 parcels proposed for a zone change within the Green Zone Districts area are proposed to be changed from the land-use designation of Heavy Industrial (IH) to the Light Industrial (IL) General Plan designation. The purpose of the general plan amendment and zone change is to ensure that the current general plan and zoning designations are consistent with the revisions proposed with Title 22, Green Zone Districts with regard to intensity of permitted industrial land uses. The 15 parcels included in the general plan amendment and the 28 total parcels in the zone change are proposed to occur in the same geographic locations as the Green Zone Districts Element and will be evaluated with this element in the analysis.

All proposed changes of Green Zones Element No. 5, except for the General Plan Amendment Revisions, were determined to not have the potential to result in a physical change to the environment. As a result, this element of the Green Zones Program is not included in the environmental document, except for the General Plan Amendment Revisions addressed in the Green Zones Element No. 1 – Green Zone Districts.

PROJECT & PERMITS(S): Green Zones Program, Project No. 2018-003209-(1-5), Advance Planning Case No. RPPL2018004908, Environmental Plan No. RPPL2020002788, General Plan Amendment No. 2020002900

PROJECT APPLICANT: Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning

PROJECT LOCATION: The areas subject to the Green Zones would apply to all applicable zoning designations throughout the unincorporated areas of the County (see the attached *Project Location Maps*).

PROJECT APPROVALS: The County has sole approval authority over the Green Zones Program Project. No approvals are required by other public agencies.

POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS: In accordance with State CEQA Guidelines Section 15063(a), the County has determined that a PEIR should be prepared for this project. In addition, consistent with section 15082(a) of the State CEQA Guidelines, the County has identified the following potentially significant environmental effects that will be evaluated in the PEIR:

1. Air Quality
2. Biological Resources
3. Cultural Resources
4. Hazards and Hazardous Materials
5. Hydrology / Water Quality
6. Land Use and Planning
7. Noise
8. Utilities and Service Systems
9. Tribal Cultural Resources

The County has determined through the Initial Study that the following environmental issues would not have the potential to cause significant impacts:

1. Aesthetics
2. Agriculture and Forestry Resources
3. Energy
4. Geology / Soils
5. Greenhouse Gas Emissions
6. Mineral Resources
7. Population / Housing
8. Public Services
9. Recreation
10. Transportation
11. Wildfire

NOTICE OF PUBLIC SCOPING MEETING: The Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning will conduct two online public scoping meetings to inform the public and interested agencies about the proposed project and solicit oral and written comments as to the appropriate scope and content of the PEIR. The scoping meetings will online via Zoom 4:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. on Monday July 13, 2020, and from 5:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. on Wednesday July 22, 2020. Please visit: <https://planning.lacounty.gov/greenzones/meetings>.

Translation in other languages can be made available at the meeting upon request. Please submit translation requests at least seven business days in advance of the scheduled meeting to tfarris@planning.lacounty.gov

PUBLIC REVIEW PERIOD: The County invites interested parties to provide written or verbal comments as to your specific concerns about the project's potential environmental effects. The County requests that any Responsible or Trustee Agency responding to this notice do so in a manner consistent with section 15082(b) of the State CEQA Guidelines. **A 70-day NOP review period starts on June 16, 2020 and ends on August 24, 2020.** Due to the time limits mandated by State law, please send your written response to the Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning at the address below at the earliest possible date but no later than **August 24, 2020, at 5:00 p.m.** Please include your name and address for all written correspondence.

Taahirah Farris, Regional Planner
Department of Regional Planning
320 West Temple Street, 13th Floor
Los Angeles, California 90012
213-974-6422



Responses may also be submitted via email to GreenZones@planning.lacounty.gov.




All written responses will be included in an Appendix to the Draft PEIR and their contents considered in accordance with State and County environmental guidelines.

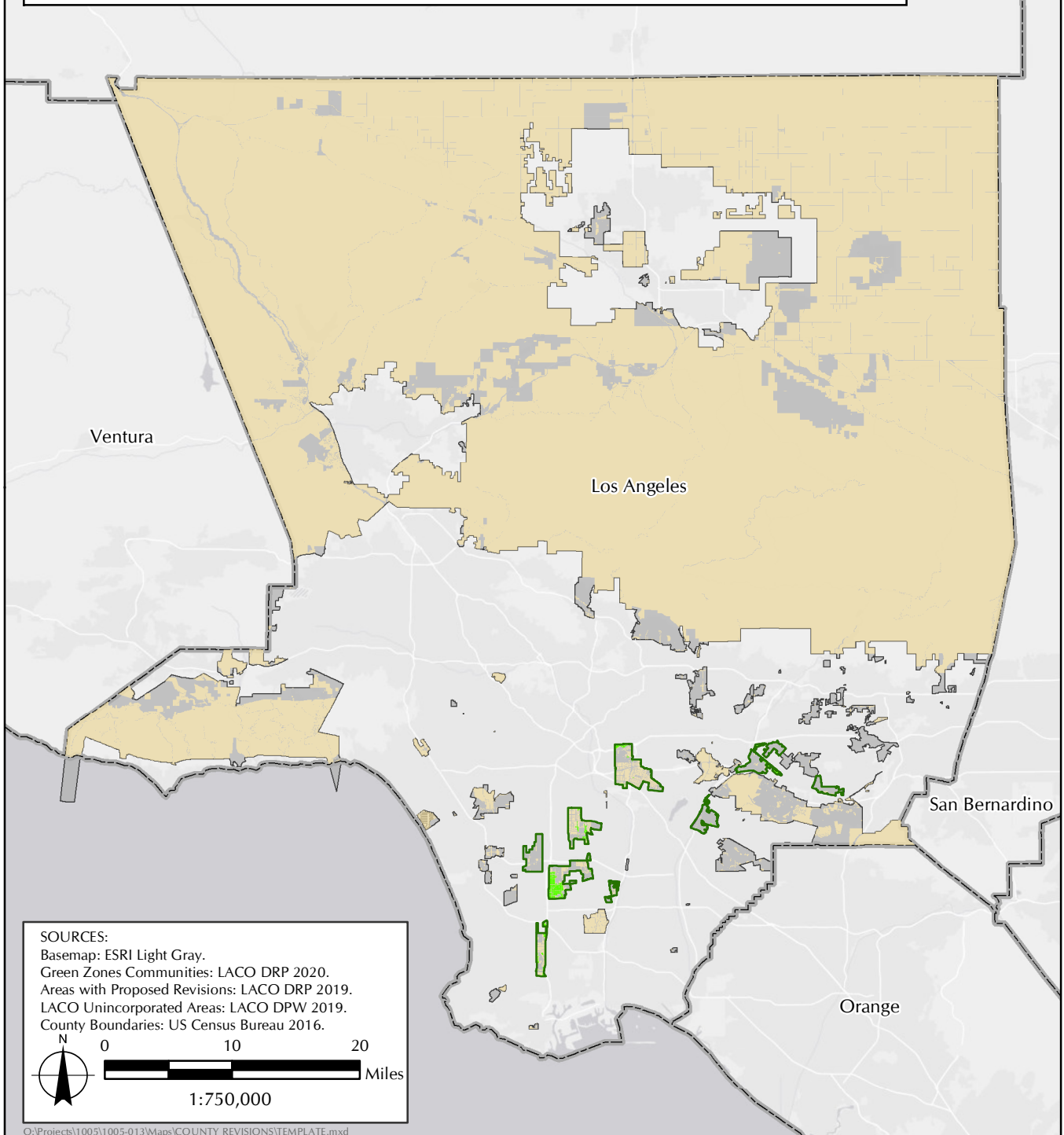
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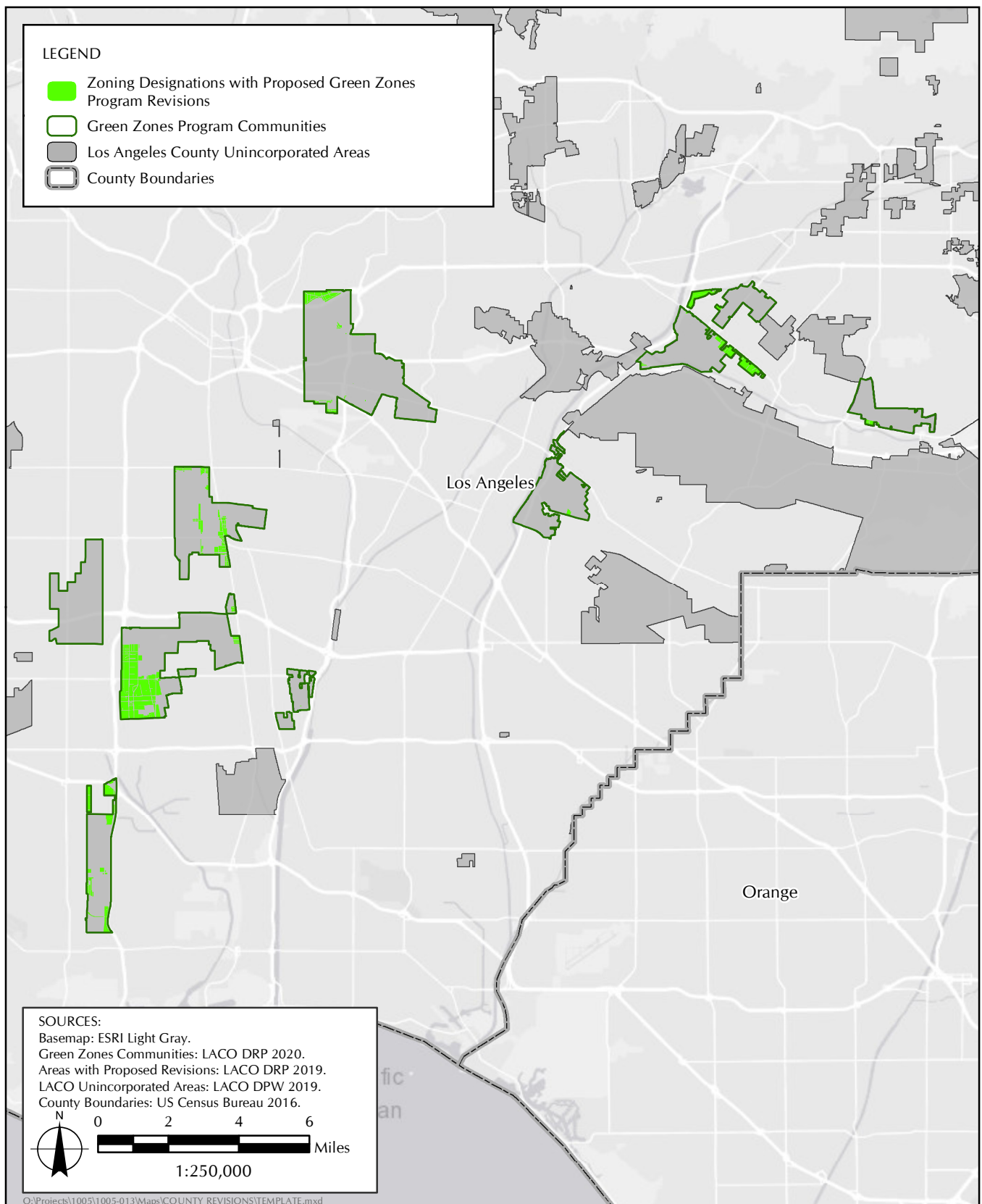
The NOP, Initial Study, and Project Location Map are available for review online at the following website:
<http://planning.lacounty.gov/greenzones/documents>

LEGEND

-  Zoning Designations with Proposed Revisions
-  Zoning Designations with Proposed Green Zones Program Revisions

-  Green Zones Program Communities
-  Los Angeles County Unincorporated Areas
-  County Boundaries





Project Location Map: Green Zones Program