



**NOTICE OF PREPARATION  
OF A PROGRAM ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT  
FOR  
THE CITY OF FRESNO GENERAL PLAN**

**Date:** May 16, 2019

**To:** Office of Planning and Research, Responsible and Trustee Agencies, Other Public Agencies and Other Interested Parties

**Subject:** Notice of Preparation of a Program Environmental Impact Report, an Update to the Master Environmental Impact Report for the City of Fresno General Plan

**Lead Agency:** City of Fresno

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**Comment Period:** May 16, 2019 to June 17, 2019

**PURPOSE OF NOTICE**

In 2014 the City of Fresno adopted the Fresno General Plan and certified the accompanying Master Environmental Impact Report (MEIR). In order to be in conformance with State law and consistent with recent legislative changes, the City of Fresno, as the lead agency, is responsible for preparation of a Program Environmental Impact Report (PEIR) – an update to and conversion of the 2014 MEIR for the General Plan (proposed project). Pursuant to provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the City has prepared this Notice of Preparation (NOP) for the proposed project. Once a decision is made to prepare an Environmental Impact Report (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.

**PUBLIC REVIEW PERIOD**

This Notice of Preparation is being circulated for public review and comment for a period of 30 days beginning May 16, 2019. The City requests that any potential Responsible or Trustee Agencies responding to this NOP reply in a manner consistent with Section 15082(b) of the CEQA Guidelines, which allows for submittal of any comments in response to this notice no later than 30 days after



receipt of the NOP. Comments in response to this NOP will be accepted through **5 .p.m., June 17, 2019**. Please send your written comments to Ms. Pagoulatos and include your name, address, and phone number and/or email address so that we may contact you for clarification, if necessary.

## SCOPING MEETING

The City will hold a public scoping meeting to inform interested parties about the General Plan PEIR and to provide agencies and the public with an opportunity to provide comments on the scope and content of the PEIR. The meeting time and location is as follows:

Fresno City Hall  
Room 2165 (Meeting Room A), Second Floor  
2600 Fresno Street  
Fresno, CA 93721  
Date: May 21, 2019  
Time: 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Copies of the full Notice of Preparation may be reviewed at the following locations:

- Fresno County Public Library (all branches in Fresno) during library hours;
- City of Fresno, 2600 Fresno St, Room 3065 between 7:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m.; or
- Online at: <https://www.fresno.gov/cityclerk/notices-publications/>

Your views and comments on how the project may affect the environment are welcomed. Please contact Ms. Pagoulatos if you have any questions about the environmental review process for the General Plan EIR Update.

## PROJECT DESCRIPTION

In order to be in conformance with State law and consistent with recent legislative changes, the City is updating the existing General Plan Master EIR (MEIR) and converting it to a Program EIR (PEIR). This update, consistent with Section 15168 of the CEQA Guidelines, is intended to streamline implementation of the General Plan's programs and projects by supporting them with updated environmental analysis, regulatory framework, and mitigation measures, pursuant to CEQA. Two major goals of updating the EIR include:

- Complying with new legislation as it relates to various resource topic area as defined by CEQA; and
- Updating the technical analyses to reflect the current baseline conditions of 2019.

This update will include the following components:



- **Incorporation of New local, State and/or federal regulations.** Since adoption of the Fresno General Plan in 2014, several new regulations that have taken effect, including:
  - Climate Action Plan Legislation. The City will update the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Plan that was prepared for the MEIR (Appendix F-2) taking into account Executive Order S-03-05 (2005), SB 32 (2006), and Executive Order B-30-15 (2015);
  - Vehicle Miles Travelled (VMT) Legislation – SB 743 (2013); and
  - Tribal Consultation, Assembly Bill (AB) 52 (2014).
  - Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) (2014);
  - Cooperative Agreement between the City of Fresno Irrigation District and City of Fresno for Water Utilization and Conveyance (2016);
  - 2017 Housing Package as described by the State of California Department of Housing and Community Development, <http://www.hcd.ca.gov/policy-research/lhp.shtml#summary>;
- **Corresponding technical revisions to the Mobility and Transportation Element of the Fresno General Plan. Specific changes include, but are not limited to, the following:**
  - Add Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) policies consistent with the requirements of Senate Bill (SB) 743;
  - Revise text relating to Level of Service (LOS) metrics to update applicability; and
  - Update Figure MT-1: Major Street Circulation Diagram and Figure MT-3: Regional Transportation.

Project Location: The General Plan Planning Area encompasses approximately 106,000 acres and includes all areas within the City’s current City limits and the current Sphere of Influence (see map attached).

## **POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS**

An Initial Study is typically prepared during the environmental scoping process to determine whether a project warrants the preparation of an EIR. Because the City intends to update the MEIR in the form of a PEIR, the City has determined that preparation of an Initial Study is not necessary.

The PEIR will evaluate the potential environmental impacts related to the General Plan, after having first established the environmental setting, or baseline, for the environmental analysis. The significance of potential impacts, cumulative impacts, and appropriate mitigation measures associated with implementation of the General Plan will be thoroughly discussed in the PEIR. The PEIR will be comprehensive and will evaluate each of the environmental issue topics required by CEQA. The individual environmental topics include:



- Aesthetics
- Agriculture and Forestry Resources
- Air Quality
- Biological Resources
- Cultural Resources and Tribal Cultural Resources
- 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 and Traffic
- Utilities, Service Systems, and Energy Conservation

In addition, in accordance with Section 15126.6 of the CEQA Guidelines, the PEIR will assess a range of reasonable alternatives to the project. The range of alternatives to be addressed will include alternatives that are specifically required by CEQA (e.g., the No Project Alternative), as well as other alternatives (intended to reduce or eliminate potentially significant impacts) as identified through the coordinated consultation and planning process.