

# NOTICE OF PREPARATION

**Date:** March 24, 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  
c/o Cherie Vick, Executive Assistant  
Planning and Development Department  
2600 Fresno Street, Room 3065  
Fresno, CA 93721  
(559) 621-8003  
Jennifer.Clark@fresno.gov  
Cherie.vick@fresno.gov

**Comment Period:** March 24, 2021 to April 23, 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. 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.

## 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 is being re-circulated for public review and comment for a period of 30 days beginning March 24, 2021. The City will hold a public scoping meeting 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. 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/98637478188>

Call-in Information: [(669) 900-9128]

Webinar ID: 986 3747 8188

Meeting Date: April 6, 2021

Meeting Time: 6:00 to 8:00 p.m.

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](http://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 4,997-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 4,997-acre 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 proposed Specific Plan and plan alternatives. 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 Acreages**

Land Use	Existing General Plan Acres (percent)	Proposed Plan Acres (percent)	Alternative 1 <sup>a</sup> Acres (percent)	Alternative 2 <sup>b</sup> 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
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>4,852</b>	<b>4,997</b>	<b>4,852</b>	<b>4,852</b>
<i>TOTAL (including SCSP Boundary Change)</i>	<i>4,997</i>	<i>4,997</i>	<i>4,997</i>	<i>4,997</i>

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

NA Not applicable

<sup>a</sup> Alternative 1 tentatively labeled Community Proposed Alternative

<sup>b</sup> 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
- ▶ Air 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 April 23, 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

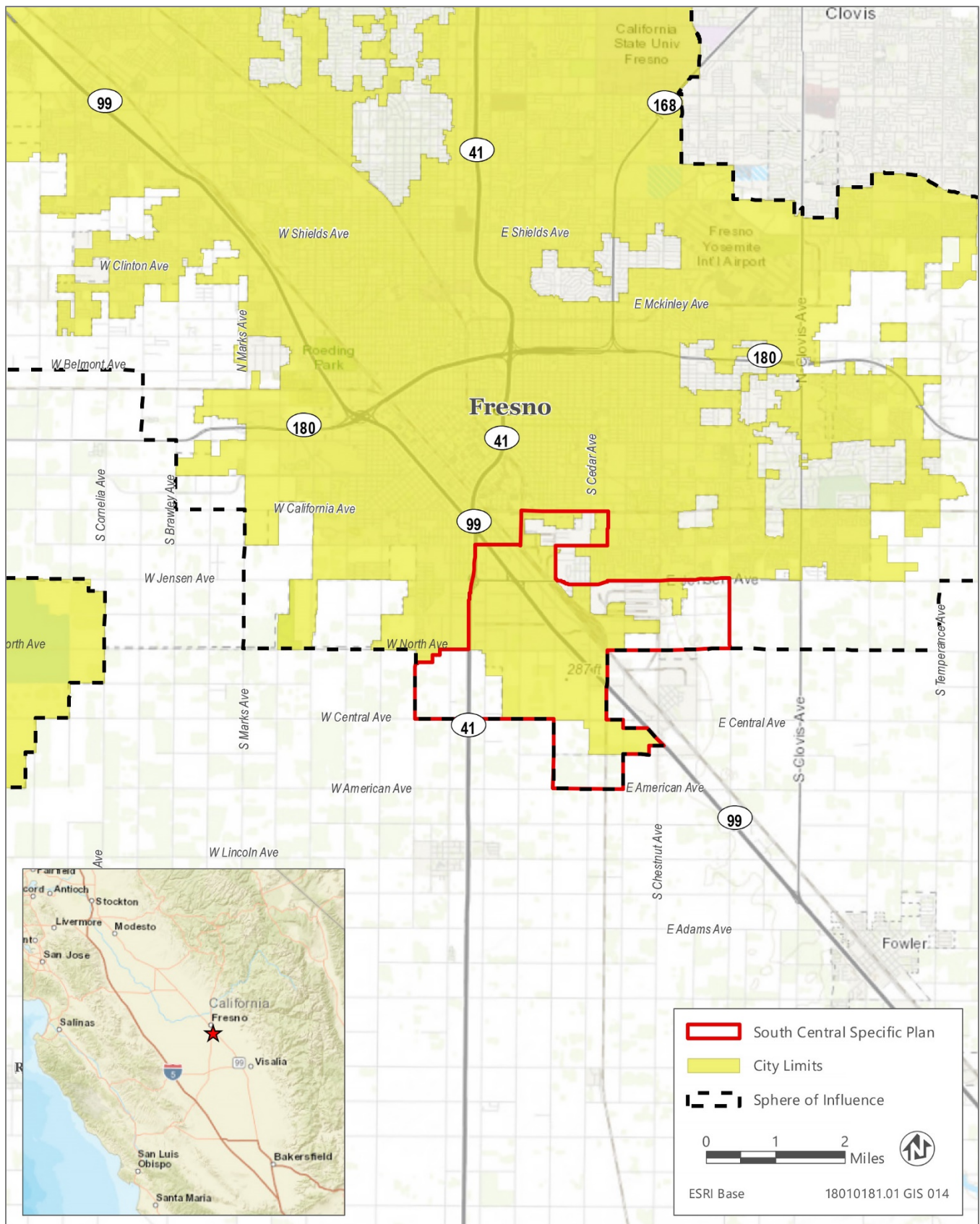


Figure 1 Regional Location



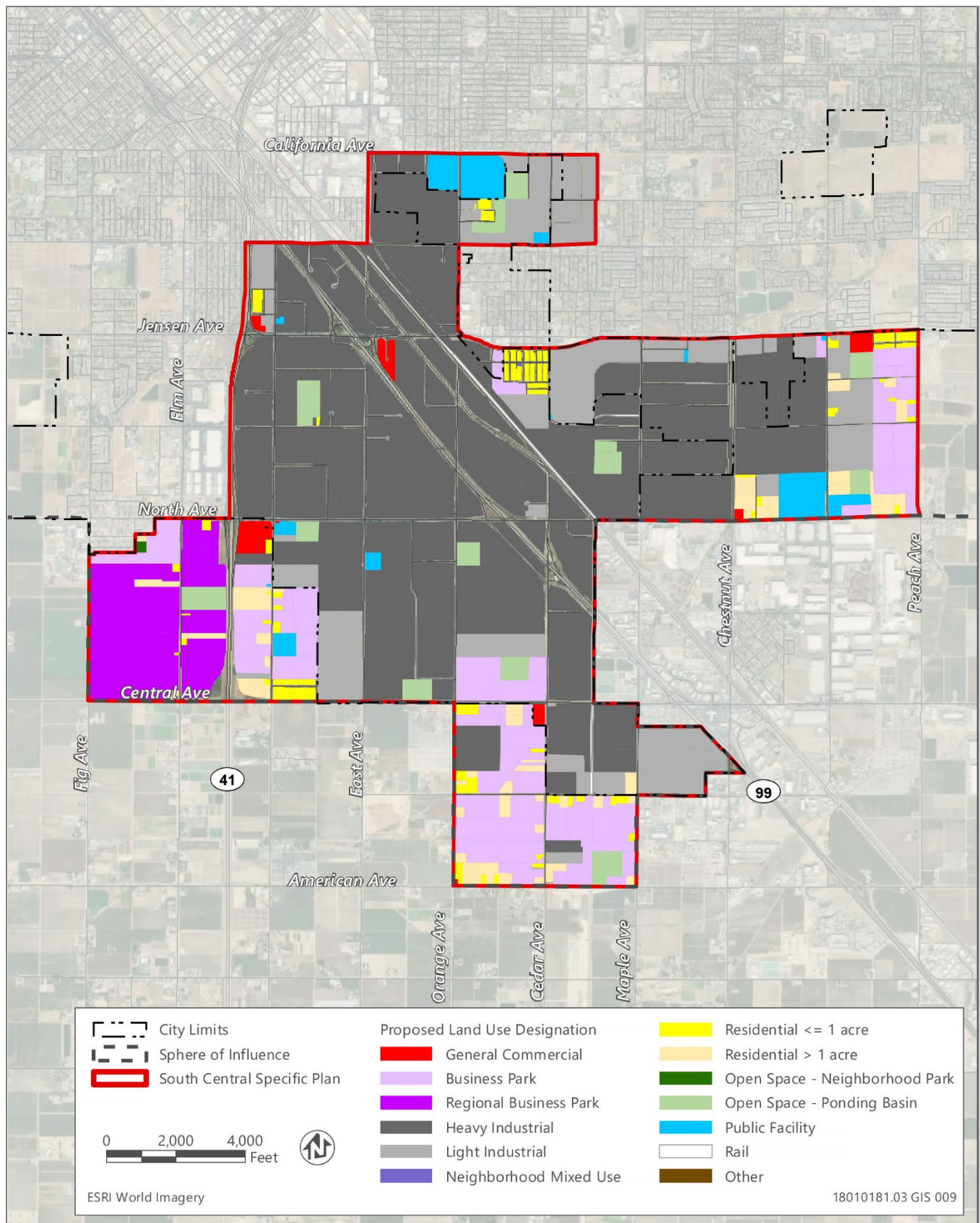


Figure 2 Planning Area