



NOTICE OF PREPARATION
City of Costa Mesa
General Plan Amendment Program EIR

Date: November 16, 2015

To: State Clearinghouse
State Responsible and Trustee Agencies
County Clerk
City Departments
Federal Agencies
Interested individuals and organizations

Subject: Notice of Preparation for the City of Costa Mesa 2015-2025 General Plan Amendment Project Environmental Impact Report

The City of Costa Mesa is the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Lead Agency for the City of Costa Mesa 2015-2025 General Plan Amendment Environmental Impact Report (EIR).

Project Title: City of Costa Mesa 2015-2025 General Plan Update

Project Applicant: City of Costa Mesa

Project Location: City of Costa Mesa, Orange County

Project Description: The City of Costa Mesa proposes to adopt focused amendments to the following General Plan elements: Land Use, Circulation, Growth Management, Conservation, Open Space and Recreation, Noise, Safety, Community Design, and Historic and Cultural Resources.

The purpose of this NOP is to request comments from responsible and trustee agencies, federal agencies, and any other person or organization concerned with the environmental effects of the project regarding the scope and content of the environmental review the City of Costa Mesa will conduct on the 2015-2025 General Plan Amendment.

Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines §15082 (b), you have 30 days from the date of receipt of this NOP to respond. Please send your comments by the earliest possible date, but no later than 5:00 P.M. December 17, 2015. Please send your responses to Ms. Claire Flynn, Assistant Development Services Director, City of Costa Mesa at 77 Fair Drive, Costa Mesa, California 92626 or to Claire.Flynn@costamesaca.gov. (Please enter "General Plan Amendment NOP" in

the "Subject" line.) Agency responses should include the name of a contact person at the agency.

The City of Costa Mesa encourages all interested individuals, organizations, and agencies to attend the scoping meeting for the Program EIR as follows:

Monday, November 30, 2015
Emergency Operations Center, City Hall
99 Fair Drive, Costa Mesa, CA
6:00 pm – 8:00 pm

Additional project information is available on the City of Costa Mesa's 2015-2025 General Plan Amendments Information Website: <http://www.costamesaca.gov/index.aspx?page=1592>

CEQA Guidelines Section 15168(a) permits a lead agency to prepare a program EIR on a series of actions that can be categorized as one large project and are related either: 1) geographically, 2) as logical parts in the chain of contemplated actions, 3) in connection with issuance of rules, regulations, plans, or other general criteria to govern the conduct of a continuing program, or 4) as individual activities carried out under the same authorizing statutory or regulatory authority and having generally similar environmental effects which can be mitigated in similar ways. The 2015-2025 General Plan Amendment represents a logical series of actions that are connected, would occur in approximately the same geographic area, and would result in generally similar environmental effects that can be mitigated in similar ways. Accordingly, the City of Costa Mesa is preparing a program EIR for the project.

Signature: _____
Claire Flynn, Assistant Development Services Director

Date: 11/16/2015

COSTA MESA 2015-2025 GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENTS PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The City of Costa Mesa proposes to adopt focused amendments to several elements of its General Plan: Land Use, Circulation, Growth Management, Conservation, Open Space and Recreation, Noise, Safety, Community Design, and Historic and Cultural Resources. The Housing Element for the 2015-2021 cycle was adopted on January 21, 2014 and will not be updated as part of this project.

The proposed General Plan Update is a long-range planning program intended to guide the orderly growth and development of the Costa Mesa planning area over the long term. The updated General Plan communicates the City's vision of its future and establishes a policy framework to govern decision-making concerning the physical development of the community and the public services and infrastructure systems that support existing and planned development. The planning area, which includes the corporate City limits and unincorporated properties within the City's designated sphere of influence, encompasses 15.7 square miles and has a total population of approximately 110,000.

The General Plan Amendments would not authorize any specific development project or other form of land use approval or any kind of public facilities or capital facilities expenditures or improvements. Later activities proposed pursuant to the goals and policies of the General Plan will be reviewed in light of this EIR and may focus on those site-specific and localized environmental issues that could not be examined in sufficient detail as part of this program EIR.

Project Location

The project "planning area" encompasses the entire City of Costa Mesa and its sphere of influence. The City is located in coastal Orange County and is surrounded to the north by the city of Santa Ana, to the south by the City of Newport Beach, the west by the Cities of Huntington Beach and Fountain Valley, and to the east by the City of Irvine. Costa Mesa lies approximately one mile northeast of the Pacific Ocean. Attached exhibits identify the City's location and the planning area.

Summary of Proposed Changes to General Plan Elements

The City proposes focused amendments to the General Plan elements to encourage targeted investment/property improvements and to respond to State laws that have become effective in the past 10 years.

Land Use Element

The City proposed changes to the land use plan in eight "focus areas," which are considered strategic areas and corridors that can accommodate new development. The focus areas and the proposed changes are as follows:

- 1) The Fairview Developmental Center property, proposed to accommodate up to 500 new residential units at specified densities and 25.6 acres of active open space uses.
- 2) South Harbor Boulevard, with a new proposed Harbor Boulevard Mixed-Use on select properties, allowing up to 20 units per acre and a maximum floor area ratio (FAR) of 1.00 to 1.25.
- 3) The Segerstrom Home Ranch property to allow up to 1.2 million square feet of development at a maximum FAR of 0.64 for corporate headquarters and FAR of 0.54 for commercial/retail uses.
- 4) The site of the former Los Angeles Times printing operation, proposed to be redesignated as a commercial land use designation to allow a maximum FAR of 0.64 for corporate headquarters and FAR of 0.54 for commercial/retail uses.
- 5) Sakioka Site 2 at Sunflower Avenue and Main Street, proposed to allow residential development at up to 80 units per acre but not to exceed the existing total unit allocation of 660 units and not to exceed the established trip budget.
- 6) Harbor Boulevard Residential Overlay, which proposes an overlay on targeted sites to allow up to 40 units per acre (without any changes to the base zoning districts).
- 7) Newport Boulevard Residential Overlay, which proposes an overlay on targeted sites to allow up to 40 units per acre (without any changes to the base zoning districts).
- 8) SoBECA Overlay, which proposes up to 40 units per acre and a maximum residential unit count of 450 units within the SoBECA Urban Plan area.

The proposed land use changes would result in an increase in residential dwelling units, office space, and general and regional commercial uses. The following land uses are anticipated to be reduced in scope citywide: motels, light industrial and storage, hospital, agricultural, and vacant land. Exhibit 2 presents the proposed amended Land Use Policy Map, and Exhibits 3 through 11 show the focused amendment areas.

Circulation Element

The City does not propose any changes to roadway configurations or capacity as part of the circulation element update. The element is being amended to incorporate “complete streets” policies and to establish a framework for a new bicycle master plan. New goals, policies, and exhibits have been developed to illustrate the City’s future direction related to walking, bicycling, and transit improvements.

Growth Management Element

The Growth Management Element is being amended to reflect the updated Land Use and Circulation Elements, with the aim to balance new development with the ability of the street network to accommodate that development. This element is required by Orange County Measure M2 and provides for the City to remain eligible for future transportation funding improvements.

Conservation Element

This element is being amended to reflect new policies regarding sustainability initiatives, particularly with regard to preservation of coastal wildlife habitat areas and landforms, natural

resource conservation and environmental sustainability, water conservation and water quality, and air quality and climate change.

Open Space and Recreation Element

The City is in the process of updating its Parks and Recreation Master Plan. Amendments to the Open Space and Recreation Element propose a revised policy framework for the Master Plan. The updated open space and recreation element will identify future park and open space improvements to accommodate the population growth identified in the Land Use Plan. New goals and policies are proposed to establish new revenue streams to fund the acquisition and maintenance of future and established parks. New cultural arts goals and policies will also be introduced.

Noise Element

This element is being amended to reflect new baseline (2015) noise conditions. The element will include updated exhibits and analysis that depict the future noise environment pursuant to the changes in the Land Use and Circulation Elements. New goals and policies are proposed to create compatibility among new residential and industrial uses located within mixed-use districts.

Safety Element

This element is being amended to reflect current conditions regarding wildland fires, seismic hazards, flooding, aviation hazards, and emergency services, and to establish more modern policies appropriate to the hazards present.

Community Design

The goals and policies in this element are proposed to be updated to reflect changes in the Land Use Element.

Historic and Cultural Resources Element

This element is being amended to reflect current framework conditions and more direct policy statements regarding historic and cultural resources. Most specifically, the element will address Post-World War II historical resources and policies that encourage compatibility between historic resource sites and new development.

Potential Environmental Effects

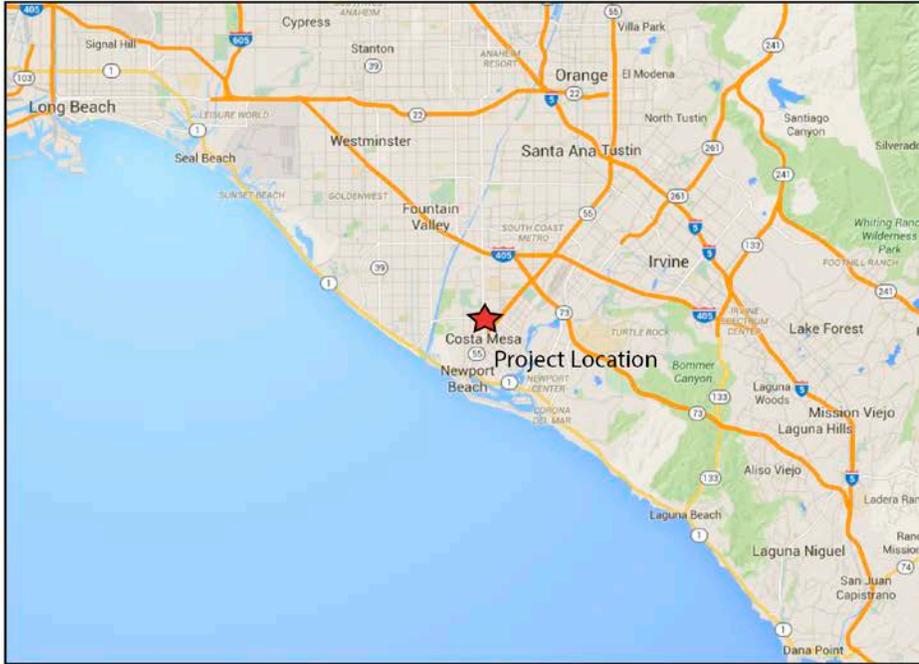
The focused amendments to the General Plan are proposed to reflect changes in the City resulting from changing demographics, economics, socialization, and technological advances. To a large degree, the proposed amendments reflect new policies, regulations, and laws meant to preserve the desirable qualities of Costa Mesa and protect the environment.

Since the amendments would not authorize any specific development project or other forms of land use change, the impacts to be addressed in the EIR would be indirect effects. However, since the City's action ultimately could lead to the impact, such impacts must be analyzed and be subject to public scrutiny.

Most physical effects of the land use changes would occur in the eight focus areas described above where opportunities for development or redevelopment are still present. New development has the potential to affect the following resources, which will be examined in detail in the EIR: aesthetics, air quality, biological resources, cultural resources, geology and soils, greenhouse gas emissions, hazards and hazardous materials, hydrology and water quality, land use, mineral resources, noise, population and housing, public services, recreation, transportation and traffic, and utility and service systems.

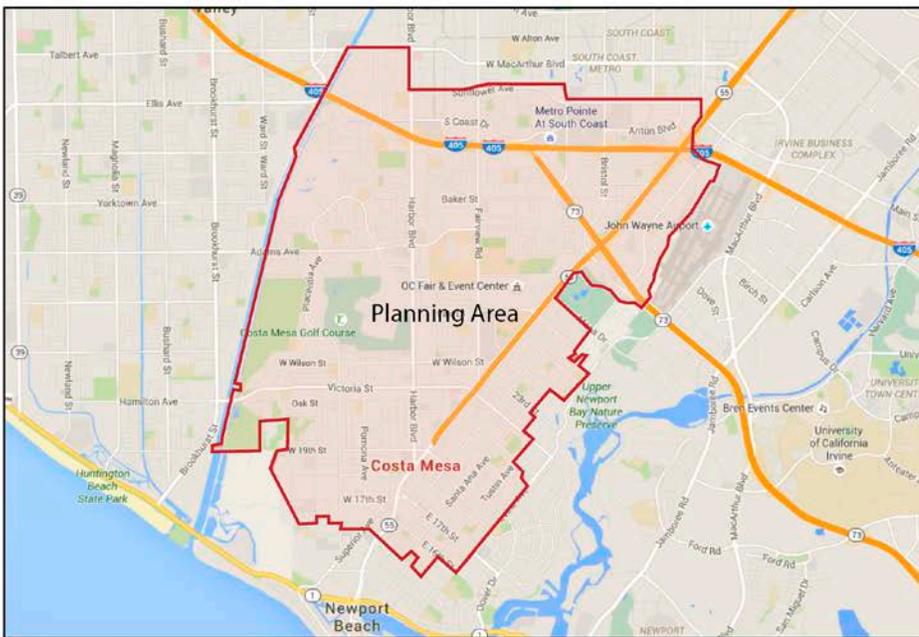
The proposed project is expected to have no impact on agriculture and forest resources, as these resources do not exist within the project. Accordingly, the EIR will not present a detailed analysis of the project's potential impacts on agriculture and forest resources.

In accordance with the requirements of CEQA, the City of Costa Mesa has determined that an EIR for the proposed project should be prepared because the proposed activities have the potential to result in one or more adverse environmental effects to the resources listed above. The city has not prepared an Initial Study since all topics- with the exception of agricultural and forest resources as referenced above- will be examined in the EIR. The City will further refine the scope of the technical issues to be addressed in the EIR during the CEQA process, including input received in response to this NOP.



Source: Google Maps

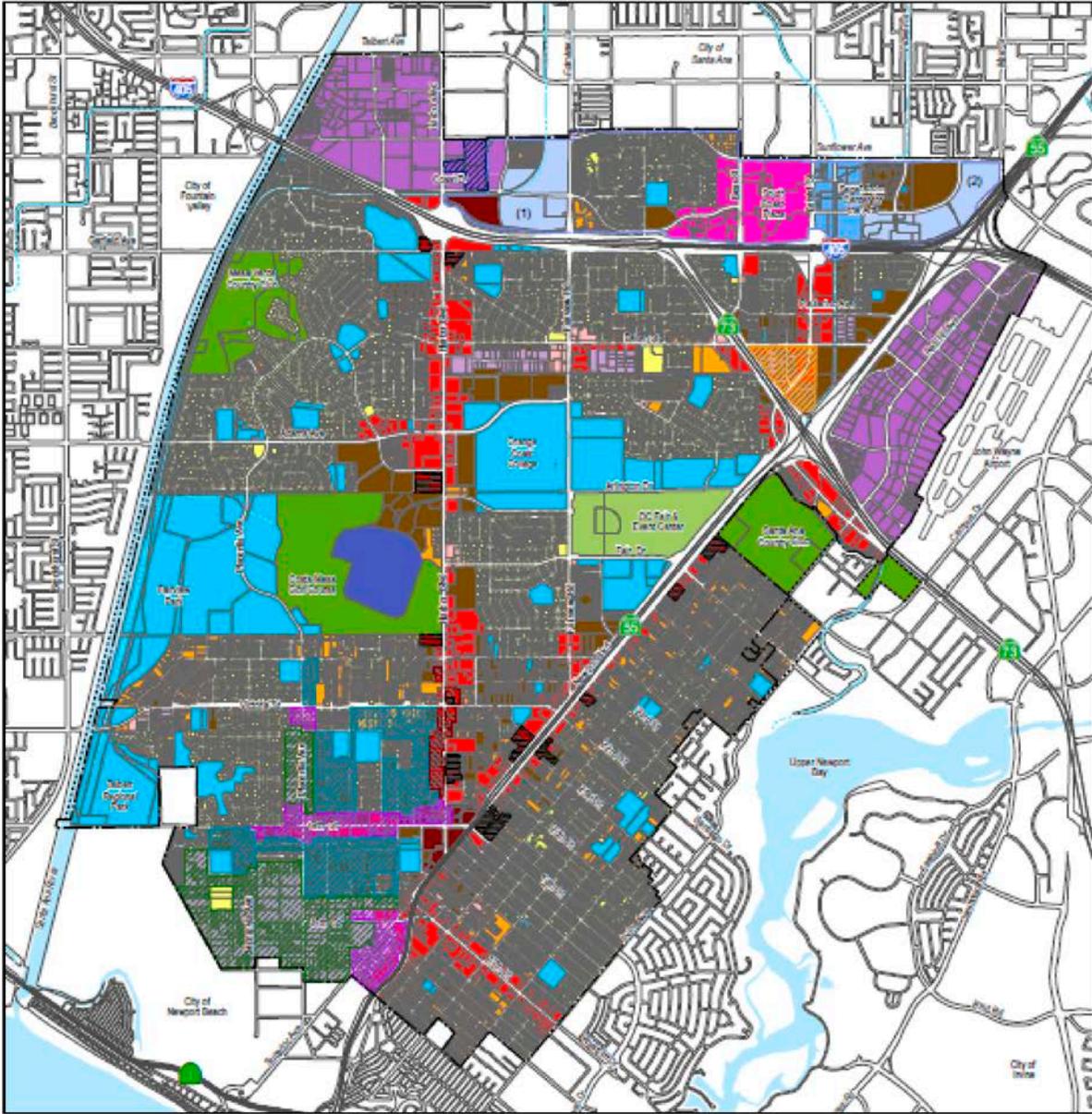
Regional



Source: Google Maps

Vicinity





General Plan Land Uses

- Low Density Residential (8 du/ac)
- Medium Density Residential (12 du/ac)
- High Density Residential (20 du/ac)
- Neighborhood Commercial
- General Commercial
- Commercial Center
- Regional Commercial
- Fairview (15 to 25 du/ac)
- Urban Center Commercial
- Cultural Arts Center
- Light Industrial
- Industrial park
- Golf Course
- Fairgrounds
- Public/Institutional

Land Use Overlays

- Residential Incentive (40 du/ac)
- Harbor Mixed Use (20 du/ac; 1.25 FAR)
- LA Times Site (0.54 to 0.64 FAR)

Boundaries

- City Boundary
- Sphere of Influence

Urban Plans and Specific Plan

- 19 West Urban Plan
- Mesa West Bluffs Urban Plan
- Mesa West Residential
- SoBECA Urban Plan (40 du/ac)*
- * Not to exceed 450 units
- North Costa Mesa Specific Plan
- (1) Segerstrom Home Ranch
- (2) Sakioka Site (Lot 2)

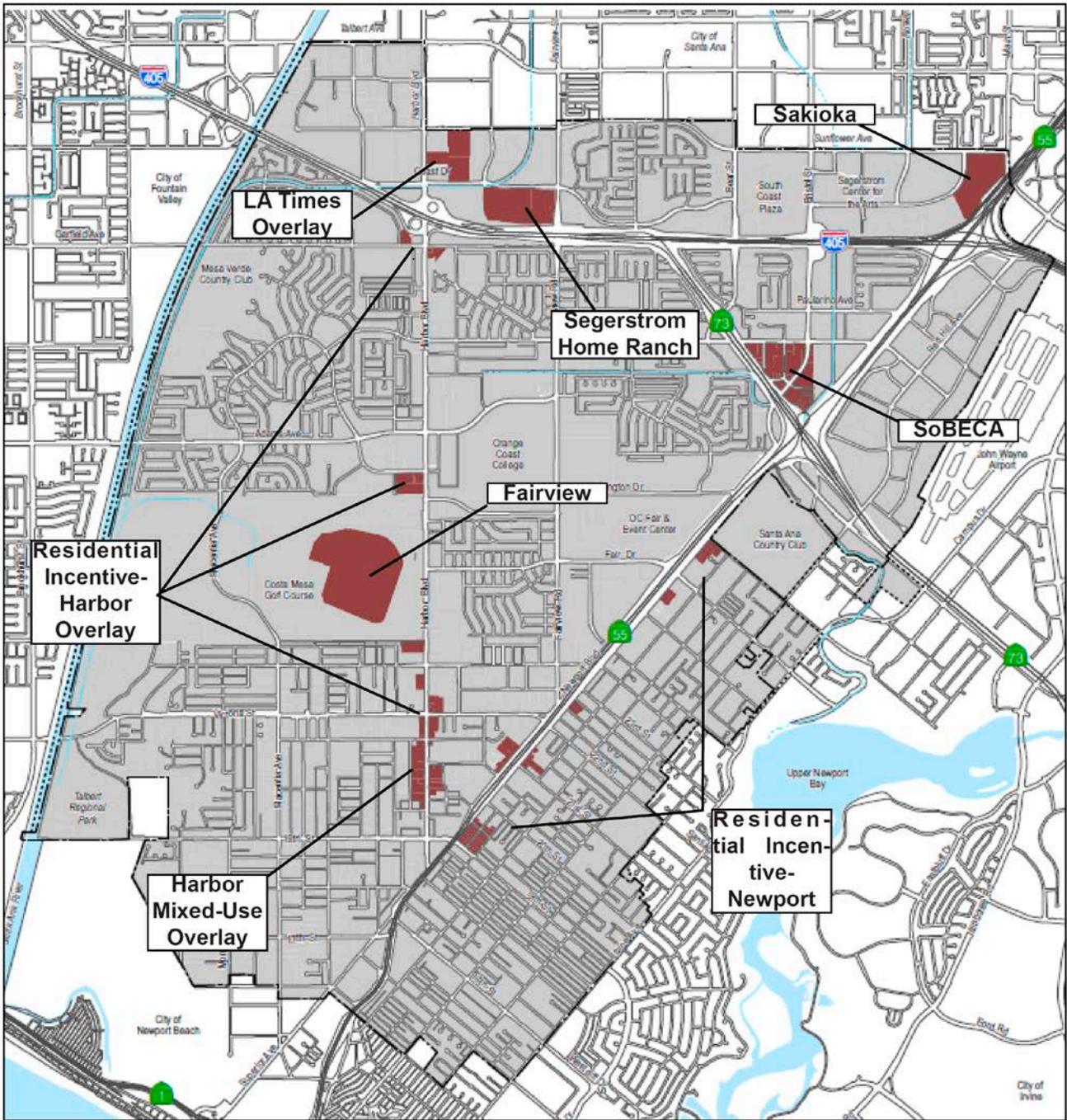


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Exhibit 2 Draft Land Use Plan

Costa Mesa General Plan Update
Costa Mesa, California



Not to Scale

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Exhibit 3 Focus Area Overview Map

Costa Mesa General Plan Update
Costa Mesa, California

Existing Context



Key Map



Proposed General Plan: New Land Use Designation - Fairview



Current General Plan Designation

- Low Density Residential (8 du/ac)
- Medium Density Residential (12 du/ac)
- High Density Residential (20 du/ac)
- General Commercial
- Neighborhood Commercial
- Public/Institutional
- Golf Course

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Exhibit 4 Fairview Focus Area

Costa Mesa General Plan Update
Costa Mesa, California

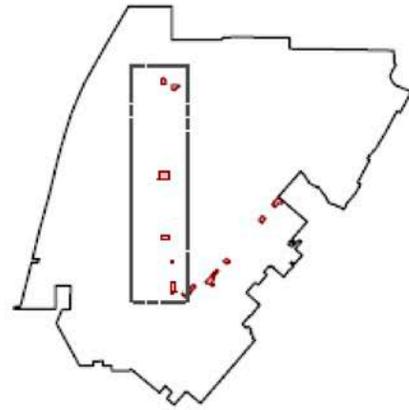
Existing Context



Proposed General Plan: Overlay



Key Map



Current General Plan Designation

- Low Density Residential (8 du/ac)
- Medium Density Residential (12 du/ac)
- High Density Residential (20 du/ac)
- General Commercial
- Neighborhood Commercial
- Light Industrial
- Public/Institutional
- Golf Course

Exhibit 5

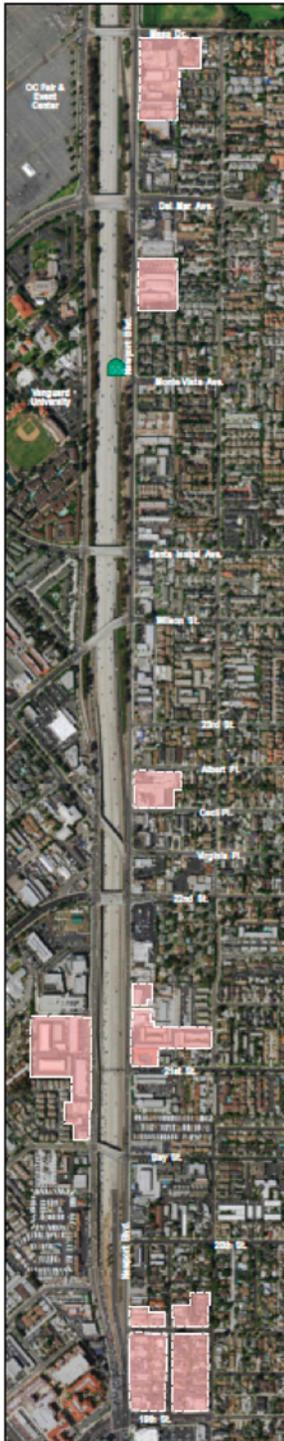
Residential Incentive- Harbor Blvd. Overlay Focus Area

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Costa Mesa, California

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Existing Context



Proposed General Plan: Overlay



Key Map



Current Land Use Designation

- Low Density Residential (8 du/ac)
- Medium Density Residential (12 du/ac)
- High Density Residential (20 du/ac)
- Commercial Residential (17.4 du/ac)
- General Commercial
- Neighborhood Commercial
- Light Industrial
- Public/Institutional
- Golf Course

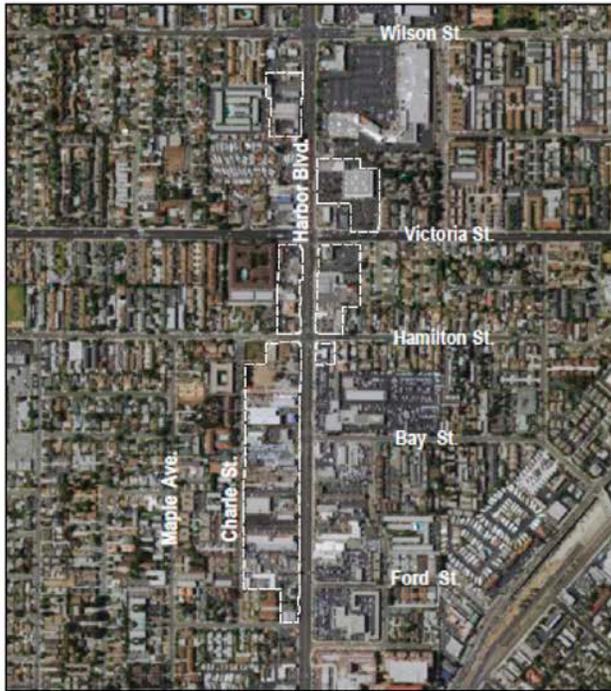
Exhibit 6
Residential Incentive- Newport Blvd. Overlay Focus Area

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Costa Mesa General Plan Update
Costa Mesa, California

Existing Context



Key Map



Proposed General Plan: Overlay



Current General Plan Designation

- Low Density Residential (8 du/ac)
- Medium Density Residential (12 du/ac)
- High Density Residential (20 du/ac)
- General Commercial

Exhibit 7

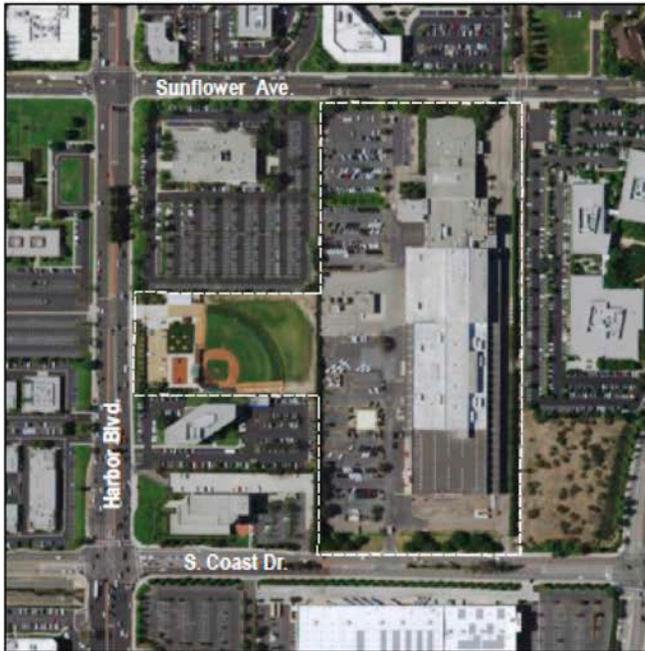
Harbor Mixed-Use Overlay Focus Area

Costa Mesa General Plan Update
Costa Mesa, California

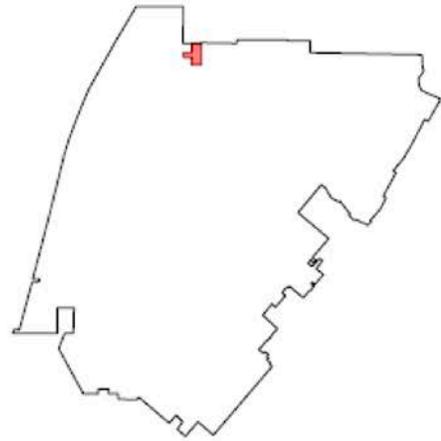
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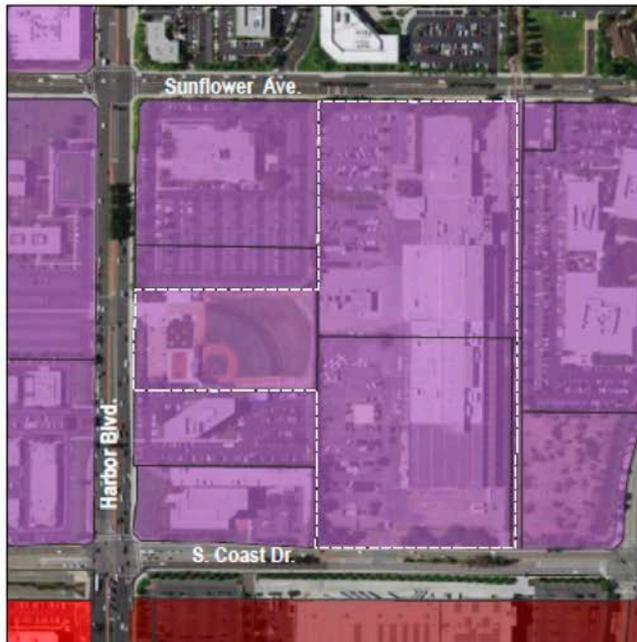
Existing Context



Key Map



Proposed General Plan: Overlay



Current General Plan Designation

- Industrial Park
- General Commercial
- Commercial Center

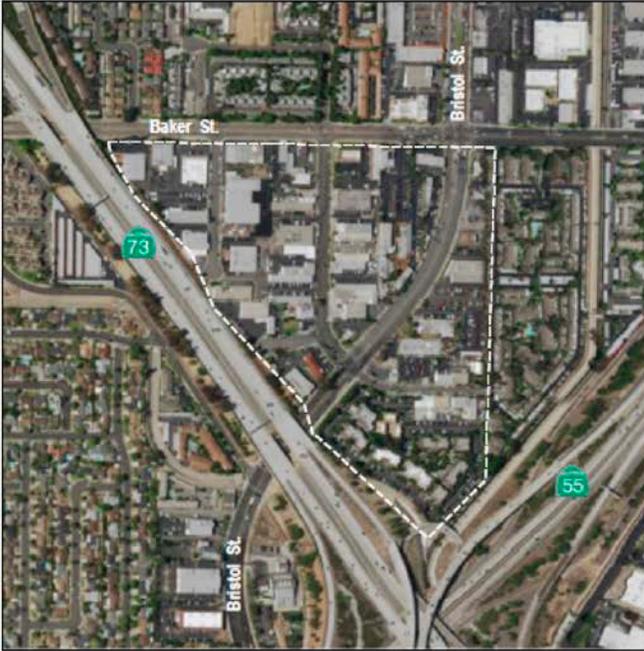
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Exhibit 8 LA Times Overlay Focus Area

Costa Mesa General Plan Update
Costa Mesa, California

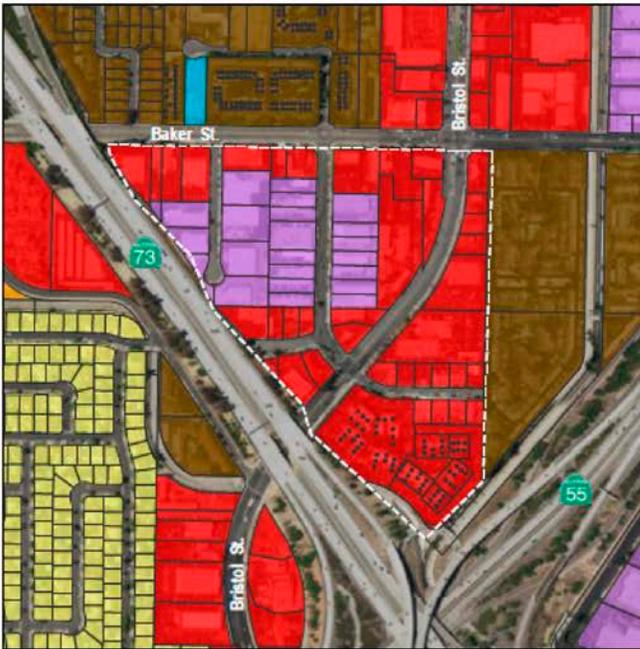
Existing Context



Key Map



Proposed General Plan: Overlay



Current General Plan Designation

- Low Density Residential (8 du/ac)
- Medium Density Residential (12 du/ac)
- High Density Residential (20 du/ac)
- General Commercial
- Light Industrial
- Public/Institutional

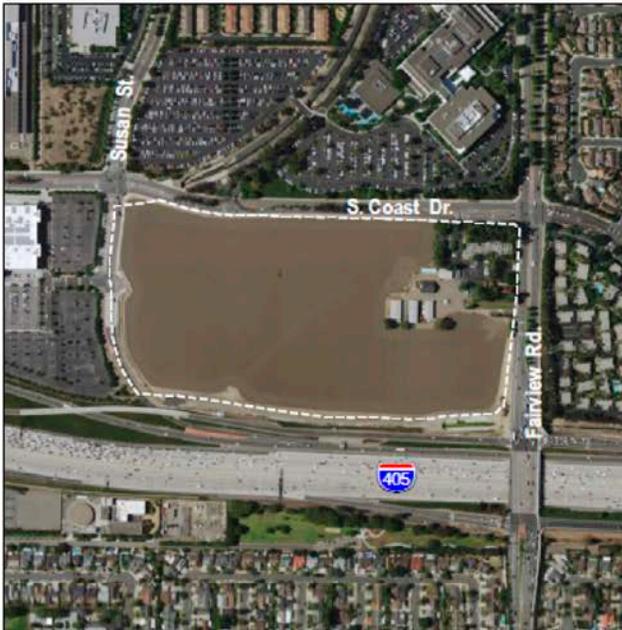
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Exhibit 9 SoBECA Focus Area

Costa Mesa General Plan Update
Costa Mesa, California

Existing Context



Key Map



Proposed General Plan: Commercial Center



Current General Plan Designation

- Low Density Residential (8 du/ac)
- Medium Density Residential (12 du/ac)
- High Density Residential (20 du/ac)
- General Commercial
- Commercial Center
- Urban Center Commercial
- Industrial Park
- Public/Institutional

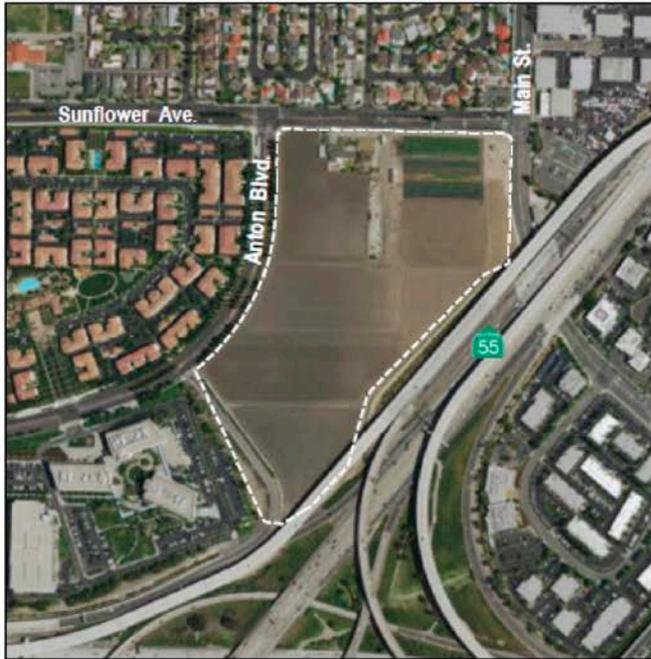
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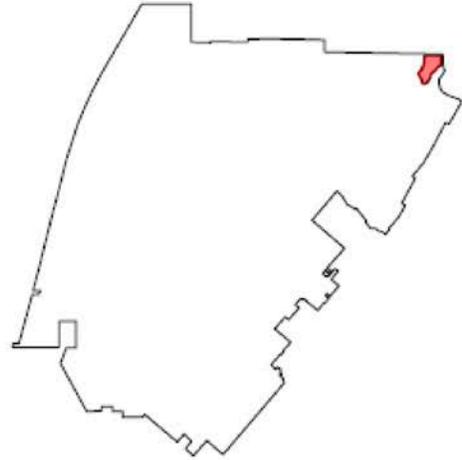
Exhibit 10
Segerstrom Home Ranch Focus Area

Costa Mesa General Plan Update
Costa Mesa, California

Existing Context



Key Map



Proposed General Plan: Urban Center Commercial



Current General Plan Designation

- High Density Residential (20 du/ac)
- Urban Center Commercial

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Exhibit 11 Sakioka Focus Area

Costa Mesa General Plan Update
Costa Mesa, California