

SUPPLEMENTAL REPORT TO THE REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

DATE ISSUED:	August 8, 2023		
MEETING DATE:	8/9/2023	AGENDA	7
		ITEM:	
PROJECT NUMBER:	2020-000612-(1,5)		
PROJECT NAME:	East San Gabriel Valley Area Plan		
PLAN NUMBER(S):	Advance Planning Case No. RPPL2021013047, General Plan Amendment No. RPPL2022003554, Zone Change No. RPPL2022003557, Environmental Assessment No. RPPL2022003550		
SUPERVISORIAL DISTRICT:	1, 5		
PROJECT LOCATION:	East San Gabriel Valley Planning Area		
PROJECT PLANNER:	Mi Kim, Supervising Regional Planner mkim@planning.lacounty.gov		

Between August 3-8, 2023, LA County Planning staff (“Staff”) received three letters from organizations, Hills for Everyone, Whittier Conservancy, and Housing and Homelessness Collaborative of Claremont, and two letters from community members in support of the East San Gabriel Valley Area Plan and its policies to focus housing in areas with access to transit and to reduce potential residential land use intensity of the Puente Hills.

Staff has received 16 letters in opposition to elements of the Project. On August 8, 2023, Staff received a letter from Aera Energy LLC in opposition to the proposed change in land use designation on the properties they own in Rowland Heights. Between August 6-8, 2023, Staff received 15 letters from community members in opposition to proposed rezoning of A-1 (Light Agriculture) to R-1 (Single-Family Residence) and R-A (Residential Agriculture) for residential land with equestrian and/or agricultural uses outside of Equestrian Districts. In response to community feedback, this proposal was revised. A-1 zoning is being maintained in the communities of Avocado Heights and South El Monte, and in Valinda and South San Jose Hills on land that contains agricultural or equestrian uses. This change was communicated via a postcard mailing to 5,533 property owners, project website, interactive web map, blog post, multi-lingual fact sheets, and phone calls to property owners.

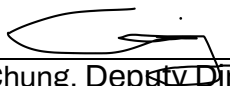
Additional Changes By Staff

Staff is recommending a land use and zone change to a property in East San Dimas fronting E Foothill Blvd. (APN: APN 8661-020-022) to CG and C-3 for consistency with the adjacent commercial land uses.

PROJECT NO. 2020-000612-(1,5)
ADVANCE PLANNING CASE NO. RPPL2021013047
GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT NO. RPPL2022003554
ZONE CHANGE NO. RPPL2022003557
ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT NO. RPPL2022003550

August 9, 2023
PAGE 2 OF 2

Report
Reviewed By: 
Mi Kim, Supervising Regional Planner

Report
Approved By: 
Connie Chung, Deputy Director

LIST OF ATTACHED EXHIBITS	
EXHIBIT A	Public Comment Letters
EXHIBIT B	Land Use and Zoning Map for APN: APN 8661-020-022

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August 3, 2023

Via Electronic Mail

Mi Kim
Supervising Regional Planner
County of Los Angeles
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Los Angeles, CA 90012
E-Mail:
commplan@planning.lacounty.gov

Re: Supplemental Comments by Hills For Everyone on the East San
Gabriel Valley Area Plan

Dear Ms. Kim:

Hills For Everyone (“HFE”) appreciates the opportunity to submit supplemental comments on the East San Gabriel Valley Area Plan Project (“ESGVAP Project”). On July 24, 2023, HFE transmitted to the County of Los Angeles (“County”) a letter expressing its support for the ESGVAP Project, which would limit development in the rugged, rural Puente-Chino Hills, and thus be consistent with the ESGVAP itself, the County’s Significant Ecological Area Ordinance, and the forthcoming Community Wildfire Protection Ordinance. HFE explained that the County’s proposal to reduce housing density in the rural hills owned by Aera Energy is consistent with the Housing Crisis Act because the ESGVAP Project will, overall, significantly increase housing density within the Valley’s unincorporated areas.

HFE now writes to explain why the County’s proposal to reduce housing density within the hillside area owned by Aera Energy would not be considered an unconstitutional taking of the company’s property. The economic impact of the County’s proposed land use changes to Aera Energy’s property is limited due to the pre-existing legal and technical restrictions that already likely preclude a full, 522 housing unit build-out of the company’s property. Conversely, the County’s proposed changes will advance important goals, such as prevention of wildfire and protection of people, property, and

wildlife. The ESGVAP Project is therefore likely to survive a takings challenge if one is brought by Aera Energy.

I. Overview of the Unconstitutional Takings Doctrine.

The “takings” clause of the Fifth Amendment to the United States Constitution, made applicable to the states through the Fourteenth Amendment, and comparable provisions of the California Constitution, art I, § 19, require payment of just compensation when a public entity “takes” private property for a public use. *First Evangelical Lutheran Church v. County of Los Angeles* (1987) 482 US 304, 314; *Nollan v. California Coastal Comm’n* (1987) 483 US 825, 831. Although the “takings” clauses within the United States and California Constitutions are not identical, California and federal courts generally interpret the two clauses congruently. *See, e.g. San Remo Hotel v. City & County of San Francisco* (2002) 27 Cal.4th 643, 664; *San Remo Hotel, L.P. v. San Francisco City & County* (9th Cir. 2004) 364 F.3d 1088, 1098.

California and federal law recognize three general types of takings: (1) possessory, or physical, takings; (2) regulatory takings; and (3) unconstitutional conditions. Possessory, or physical, takings occur when the government physically occupies, takes possession of, or destroys property. *U.S. v. Pewee Coal Co.* (1951) 341 U.S. 114, 115. A regulatory taking occurs where an ordinance, policy, or other regulation negatively impacts a landowner’s property interest in such a way that it “goes too far.” *Pennsylvania Coal Co. v. Mahon* (1922) 260 U.S. 393, 415; *Lockaway Storage v. County of Alameda* (2013) 216 Cal.App.4th 161, 184. A condition imposed by a public agency on the development of private property is unconstitutional if the condition lacks an “essential nexus” and “rough proportionality” to the impact of the proposed project. *Nollan v. California Coastal Commission* (1987) 483 U.S. 825, 837; *Dolan v. City of Tigard* (1994) 512 U.S. 374, 375, 391.

Here, the only doctrine that is even remotely relevant is the regulatory takings doctrine. The County’s approval of the ESGVAP Project will not result in the County physically occupying Aera Energy’s property. Nor does the County propose to impose any conditions on the development of Aera Energy’s property. Thus, the physical takings and unconstitutional conditions doctrines are inapplicable here.

II. The County’s Approval of the ESGVAP Project is Unlikely to Constitute an Unconstitutional Taking of Aera Energy’s Property.

Regulatory takings generally occur in three distinct ways: (1) where a regulation requires a property owner to suffer a permanent physical invasion of his or her property;

(2) where a regulation deprives a landowner of all economically beneficial or productive use of his or her land; and (3) where a regulation does not completely deny a landowner of all economically beneficial use of his or her land, but is nonetheless found to be unreasonable under the balancing test created by the US Supreme Court in *Penn Central Transportation Co. v. New York City* (1978) 438 U.S. 104.

Again, the ESGVAP Project will not require or allow the County or any other party to physically invade the Aera property, and thus this form of regulatory taking is inapplicable here. Additionally, if the ESGVAP Project were approved by the County, Aera Energy would still be authorized to develop its property consistent with the proposed “Rural Land 40” land use designation and “Light Agricultural” zoning designation. Thus, the County’s approval of the ESGVAP Project would not deprive Aera Energy of all economically beneficial or productive use of its land. *See Lucas v. South Carolina Coastal Council* (1992) 505 U.S. 1003.

Any argument that the ESGVAP Project effects a taking would thus fall under the *Penn Central* balancing test for determining the reasonableness of a regulation that affects land’s value without entirely wiping it out. The County’s proposed action is very unlikely to be found unreasonable. The most important factors to consider under this test are: (1) the economic impact of the regulation; (2) the character of the governmental action, measured by the extent to which the public agency’s action approaches a physical invasion of the applicable property; and (3) whether the regulation interferes with the landowner’s reasonable, investment-backed expectations for the use of its property. *Penn Central*, 438 U.S. at 122-25. The California Supreme Court has identified numerous additional factors, including “whether the regulation prevents the best use of the land,” “whether the regulation is reasonably necessary to the effectuation of a substantial public purpose,” and “whether the regulation extinguishes a fundamental attribute of ownership.” *Kavanau v. Santa Monica Rent Control Bd.* (1997) 16 Cal.4th 761, 775.

The *Penn Central* test has only very rarely been applied in a way that found a compensable taking.¹ Courts have repeatedly rejected regulatory takings claims even in scenarios where the landowner demonstrated a regulation caused a more than 90 percent loss in the property’s value. *William C. Haas & Co. v. Cty. & Cnty. Of San Francisco* (9th Cir. 1979) 605 F.2d 1117, 1120 (had a 95 percent reduction in property value and was not a taking); *see also Hadacheck v. Sebastian* (1915) 239 U.S. 394, 405 (included a loss in value of more than 90 percent and was not a taking); *Village of Euclid v. Ambler*

¹ *See Higgins, Bill, Regulatory Takings and Land Use Regulation: A Primer for Public Agency Staff*, at 29 (July 2006), available at <https://mrsc.org/getmedia/FB8A8201-E2CC-453B-BE00-AECEFA196562/m58takings.aspx>.

Realty Co., (1926) 272 U.S. 365, 384 (demonstrated a loss in value of more than 75 percent and was not a taking); *Tahoe-Sierra Preservation Council, Inc. v. Tahoe Regional Planning Agency* (2002) 535 U.S. 302, 319, fn. 15 (citing examples of large diminution in value and were found not to be a taking).

The economic impact of the County's proposal and Aera Energy's reasonable expectations for the development of its property are insignificant, given the legal and technical limitations that inhibit a full build-out of the property under current, pre-ESGVAP regulations. The maximum number of housing units that the current land use designation allows is 522, which would be reduced to 65 if the County approves the ESGVAP Project. However, additional current requirements make it very unlikely Aera Energy could actually construct 522 housing units on its land. Almost all of Aera Energy's property is designated as a Significant Ecological Area by the County.² All of Aera Energy's property is within the "Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone"³ as designated by CalFire and LA County. As a result of each of these legal classifications, development on Aera Energy's property is right now subject to severe restrictions.⁴

Additionally, the rugged, wild nature of Aera Energy's property would likely preclude development of 522 homes even in the absence of any legal restrictions. It is therefore likely that the actual number of housing units Aera Energy could currently construct on its land is closer to the 65 allowed under the County's proposed land use designation than to 522. Therefore, the economic impact of the County's proposed changes is far less substantial than is suggested merely by considering the reduction in allowable housing units. For the same reasons, Aera Energy's reasonable expectations for the use of its property likely do not encompass anywhere close to a full residential build-out.

Aera Energy's already onerous burden of demonstrating a compensable regulatory taking is made even more difficult by the fact that the ESGVAP Project would not affect all of its hillside property. Where a regulation will only affect a portion of contiguous property owned by a landowner, it is well-settled that a court must consider the landowner's parcel as a whole, not just the portion of the property affected by the

² A map of the Significant Ecological Areas within the County is available at https://planning.lacounty.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/gp_2035_2014-FIG_9-3_significant_ecological_areas.pdf.

³ A map of the Fire Hazard Severity Zones within the County is available at <https://lacounty.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=d2ea45d15c784adfa601e84b38060c4e>.

⁴ See Los Angeles County Code § 22.102; 14 Cal. Code of Regs. §§ 1270-1276.05.

applicable regulation. *Palazzolo v. Rhode Island* (2001) 533 U.S. 606; *Tahoe-Sierra Preservation Council, Inc. v. Tahoe Reg'l Planning Agency* (2002) 535 U.S. 302. Aera Energy must therefore demonstrate that the County's proposed land use changes, which are limited to a portion of Aera Energy's property, severely impact the economic value of *all* of the company's hillside land.

Even if Aera Energy could somehow demonstrate a severe economic impact to all of its hillside property, Aera Energy would need to show this impact outweighs the significant goals advanced by the County's proposed changes. Limiting development on Aera Energy's property is crucial to local and state conservation goals. The property lies adjacent to over 27,000 acres of land that have already been protected via the Puente-Chino Hills Wildlife Corridor. It is a major part of the "Missing Middle" of the Wildlife Corridor. Due to its strategic position, its biologically rich species, and diverse habitats, the property has been ranked in the top tier of the regional conservation list pursuant to Governor Newsom's Executive Order N-82-20, known as "30 x 30." The proposed changes would limit development in these rugged, rural lands, maintaining scenic and wildlife values while mitigating the ever-present danger of catastrophic wildfire, and while focusing development in urban areas away from these dangers and closer to transportation options and existing infrastructure. These are all important goals that a court would likely give great weight to when considering a regulatory takings claim.

In sum, were Aera Energy to challenge the County's approval of the ESGVAP Project on the grounds it constitutes a compensable taking, Aera Energy would likely be unsuccessful. Aera Energy could only challenge the County's proposal under the sub-set of the regulatory takings doctrine which, historically, has given public agencies broad latitude to act for the benefit of the public. Due to the pre-existing legal and technical restrictions that already limit construction on the property, both the economic impact of the proposed land use changes, and Aera Energy's reasonable expectations for use of its property, are likely to be minimal. Conversely, the County's proposed changes will significantly further crucial public purposes, such as prevention of wildfire and protection of people, property, and wildlife. Therefore, the ESGVAP Project is likely to easily hold up in the face of any takings challenge brought by Aera Energy.

Mi Kim
August 3, 2023
Page 6

Very truly yours,

SHUTE, MIHALY & WEINBERGER LLP



Gabriel M.B. Ross

1672676.5



August 3, 2023

Via Electronic Mail

Mi Kim
Supervising Regional Planner
County of Los Angeles
320 W. Temple Street, # 1362
Los Angeles, CA 90012

E-Mail: commplan@planning.lacounty.gov

Subject: Comments on the East San Gabriel Valley Area Plan

Dear Ms. Kim,

The Whittier Conservancy welcomes the opportunity to provide comments on the environmental documents prepared for the East San Gabriel Valley Area Plan Project ("ESGVAP Project").

The Whittier Conservancy is the largest and oldest environmental non-profit organization in Whittier. Formed by a group of concerned citizens in response to the aftermath of the 1987 Whittier Narrows Earthquake, the Conservancy's Mission Statement is:

"to promote awareness and appreciation of Whittier's historic, aesthetic, and natural resources. The Conservancy works for the preservation and sensitive use of Whittier's significant residential structures, landmark commercial buildings, and notable landscapes, including its valuable cultivated trees, public parks, and the natural beauty of the Whittier Hills."

The City of Whittier lies at the far eastern portion of Los Angeles County, on the Orange County border. The Conservancy has been instrumental in promoting compatible development that doesn't alter the delicate biological habitat or sever the functioning wildlife corridor. The Conservancy also helped to educate the public regarding the benefits of Los Angeles County Proposition A in 1993 that provided funds for the acquisition and preservation of sensitive lands in the area, creating a permanent open space corridor. It continues to advocate for development that respects the natural environment while still providing for needed housing.

Today the Conservancy writes to support the County's proposal to change land use designations in the undeveloped areas of the East San Gabriel Valley. At a time when the possibility of wildfire is ever-present, these proposed changes would maintain rural landscapes and scenery as well as protect wildlife, yet still allow for development in appropriate areas. Thus, the changes would be both consistent with and compatible to the County's SEA (Significant Ecological Area) Ordinance that protects these unique lands within an otherwise heavily urban space.

While AERA Energy contends that the County's proposal will result in reduced housing density in rural parts of the Valley, we believe that the current proposal will comport with the emphasis on needed housing because the ESGVAP Project will allow for increased density within unincorporated areas. The shift in density will correlate with recently approved designations in jurisdictions that abut the area under consideration.

The undeveloped hills that are owned by AERA Energy encompass almost 3,000 acres in the hills that connect eastern Los Angeles County with northern Orange County. Most of this acreage is within the scope of the ESGVAP Project which includes a General Plan amendment and zone change. The "upzoned" area allows for increased density in close proximity to urban retail and transit centers. The trade-off would be the protection of the most sensitive hillside land.

The proposed General Plan amendment, while redesignating much of AERA's property to the category of "Rural Land 40," would encourage larger lot-size in the more open areas, while keeping the "Light Agricultural" zoning designation for the AERA property. Hence, AERA would still be able to develop single-family homes under the new General Plan classification.

The land in question has been part of a decades-long effort by a coalition of cities and other government agencies to acquire sensitive habitat in the well-acknowledged Wildlife Corridor that stretches from the San Gabriel Mountains to the Cleveland National Forest. The Whittier Conservancy has taken a lead in sponsoring and supporting this long-term goal of connectivity and environmental stewardship. Since the AERA property sits basically in the middle of the corridor, it has been the goal of several coordinating organizations to purchase this property to ensure that the connectivity between the two major sections isn't severed, irreversibly harming wildlife and destroying urban wilderness. Much of the AERA property has been designated as a Significant Ecological Area due to its diversity of species and habitats. If altered, it would be gone forever.

This property has been ranked in the top tier of the regional conservation list, the goal of which is to protect 30% of California's lands and waters by 2030. The retention of this sensitive area would not only help preserve the biological diversity within, but would be a natural buffer to Southern California's large population and the impacts that accompany future growth.

As Climate Change continues to wreak havoc on the West, wildfires have become an enormous concern. To this end, the proposed General Plan redesignation would reduce the number of people subject to the fire threat associated with hillside development. This would be consistent with limiting the "Wildland-Urban Interface" that parallels the goals of ESGVAP's Natural Resources, Conservation and Open Space Element, while simultaneously avoiding impacts to SEA resources.

Because the proposed General Plan amendment will preserve sensitive habitat, leave scenic vistas intact, provide needed housing, limit wildfire hazards, and fulfill state mandates with regard to Climate

Change and affordable housing needs, the Whittier Conservancy fully supports this action. It is the determination of the Whittier Conservancy that the proposal under your consideration is wholly consistent with the goals of several government agencies that have jurisdictional authority concerning the property. The resultant County proposal is reasonable, considerate, and beneficial to all.

The Whittier Conservancy is grateful to the County for considering its comments and is supportive of the adoption of the long-awaited and well-thought-out ESGVAP Project. The Conservancy maintains that the plan before you secures the interests of all stakeholders, including AERA. Thank you for your time and consideration of this very important matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Helen M. Rahder". The signature is fluid and elegant, with a large initial 'H' and 'R'.

Helen Rahder

Executive Director

(562) 858-3110

Adrine Arakelian

Subject: FW: In support of East San Gabriel Valley Area Plan

From: Ilsa Lund <ILund@larkinstreetyouth.org>

Sent: Tuesday, August 8, 2023 11:42 AM

To: DRP Public Comment <comment@planning.lacounty.gov>

Cc: GeneBoutillier@gmail.com; Jake Pierce <jake@abundanthousingla.org>; hotthomessells@gmail.com; Lynne Marsenich <lynne@lmarsenich.com>; Zachary C. Courser <zcourser@gmail.com>; Nancy Treser-Osgood <nancytreserosgood@gmail.com>

Subject: In support of East San Gabriel Valley Area Plan

CAUTION: External Email. Proceed Responsibly.

Dear Members of the Planning Commission:

I'm writing on behalf of the Housing and Homelessness Collaborative of Claremont to express our strong support of the East San Gabriel Valley Area Plan's Growth Area and Housing Element changes.

Our communities are facing an unprecedented housing crisis. Housing Claremont supports actions that will create opportunities to build the homes required by RHNA, especially those that will be affordable for lower income households. Building in the unincorporated areas adjacent to the City of Claremont and other Pomona Valley sites present just such an opportunity, and we strongly support the proposal.

We fully recognize the importance of protecting wilderness and avoiding extreme environmental damage. The solution is higher density development in cities and neighborhoods that have long resisted such development and the introduction of lower income neighbors into their communities. The changes in the ESGVAP gets us closer to putting more housing within reach for lower income households that is reasonably near jobs, transit, shopping, and schools. We support these changes and the potential they hold.

Respectfully,
Ilsa Lund
Board President
Housing and Homelessness Collaborative of Claremont

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Adrine Arakelian

From: DRP Community Studies East Area Section
Subject: FW: Agenda Item 7, 8/9/2023

From: Henry Fung <calwatch@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, August 8, 2023 12:04 AM
To: DRP Public Comment <comment@planning.lacounty.gov>
Subject: Agenda Item 7, 8/9/2023

CAUTION: External Email. Proceed Responsibly.

Item 7, 8/9/2023, Henry Fung, unincorporated Covina, CA, not the applicant

I support the East San Gabriel Valley Area Plan and the attempt to modernize zoning in the area. The plan calls for a moderate increase in density in areas within one mile of transit, and allow for outdated commercial along corridors to be redeveloped for mixed use should owners choose, while preserving the Puente Hills area as low density to continue enabling habitat for animals and safe passage for critical species.

LA County Planning could do more in streamlining ADU production, although much of this has to do with time lags in plan checks and development permitting.

There should be a recognition of the equestrian community in the Avocado Heights and unincorporated South El Monte area that allows for those uses to continue, including on properties that may be too small for them but still in or adjacent to the equestrian districts, without foreclosing on the ability of property owners to develop higher density homes. While the two may conflict, the ability for people to add more homes should prevail, with appropriate safeguards so that the new residents are aware of the historic nature of the horse community and renters and buyers are aware that certain aspects of living next to an agricultural community, like animal noises and smells, cannot be mitigated.

Parking requirements leading to properties not being able to pencil is also a concern and one that LA County Planning is dealing with more globally with the parking ordinance. I supported the draft parking ordinance in concept when it was first proposed and hope that it will come up again. There needs to be a shift to micromobility, transit, and non-motorized vehicles if LA County wants to meet its sustainability goals.

Sincerely,
Henry Fung

commplan@planning.lacounty.gov

To: Regional Planning Commission

Re: Project No. 2020-0 00612 East San Gabriel Valley Area Plan

As a long-time resident of Rowland Heights, I cannot express how strongly I feel about the importance of viewing our ridgelines. From the, "Where in the Hills is Rowland Heights" bumper stickers of the 1980's to present day postings of photos of our hills in their various seasons on social media, our HILLS define our community.

I strongly support the NEW land use plan that decreases the allowable number of units from 1-5 units per acre to 1 unit per 40 acres (RL40). Our hills are not only important to us, but they are crucial for our wildlife too. It is a wildlife corridor and there even is an existing "underpass" wildlife crossing on Harbor Blvd. The area is either identified SEA and/or in a high fire hazard area or adjacent to one.

The East San Gabriel Area Plan, of which the Rowland Heights Plan is a part of, identifies land use changes in the Puente Hills ridgelines AND those ridgelines needing protection.

For these reasons I support the proposed new RL40 standard that preserves our ridgelines.

Sincerely,

Name Bonnie Duenas

Address 18666 Fieldbrook

Rowland Hgts CA 91748

Phone (optional) 626 827 4273

Signature Bonnie Duenas

Date 7/8/2023



Sigrid R. Waggener
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Direct Dial: (415) 291-7413
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August 8, 2023

VIA EMAIL (commplan@planning.lacounty.gov)

Ms. Mi Kim, Supervising Regional Planner
County of Los Angeles
Department of Regional Planning
320 West Temple Street, Room 1362
Los Angeles, California 90012

Re: *East San Gabriel Valley Area Plan – Comments on Final Environmental Impact Report, Project No. PRJ2020-000612, Advance Planning Case No. RPPL2022003554*

Dear Ms. Kim:

This firm represents Aera Energy LLC (“Aera”), and we appreciate the opportunity to comment on the Final Program Environment Impact Report (“Final PEIR”) for the proposed Los Angeles County (“County”) East San Gabriel Valley Area Plan (“Area Plan” or “Project”). We ask that the County include this comment letter in the record of proceedings for Advance Planning Case No. RPPL2022003554.

As the County is aware, Aera previously submitted two comment letters regarding Advance Planning Case No. RPPL2022003554, both dated April 11, 2023. Those two comment letters detailed numerous legal infirmities in the Draft Program Environmental Impact Report (“Draft PEIR”) prepared for the Project and, most importantly, urged the County to refrain from re-designating Aera’s significant property holdings as part of the Project. As detailed in Aera’s prior letters, Aera was never informed that the County was considering any sort of land use re-designation of lands owned by Aera, and ***Aera was certainly never informed that the County was considering a crippling and unlawful down-zone of Aera’s lands.*** To date, Aera’s significant concerns regarding the legality of the County’s proposed down-zone remain unaddressed.

We have reviewed the County’s responses to Aera’s comments of April 11, 2023 as well as the County’s responses to other agencies, and we are compelled to point out that the County’s Responses to Comments (“RTCs”) do not comply with the requirements of the California

Ms. Mi Kim
County of Los Angeles, Dept. of Regional Planning
August 8, 2023
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Environmental Quality Act (“CEQA”). As such, the environmental concerns raised by Aera and others remain outstanding.¹

As a preliminary matter, it appears that the County and, in particular, the preparers of the Draft PEIR, have proceeded under the demonstrably false assumption that Aera’s activities on the approximately 2,614 acres it owns within the Project boundary have ceased or been suspended. Had the County undertaken even the most cursory of investigations, it would have easily determined that this is not the case. To the contrary, approximately 35 percent of the 2,935 acres Aera owns (hereinafter, the “Aera Property”) is devoted to existing and long-standing oil and gas production activities.² Aera owns more than 100 well sites, which produce approximately 155 barrels of oil and 200 million cubic feet of natural gas *per day*. The Aera Property is further developed with an extensive network of oil, water, and natural gas infrastructure, including, but not limited to, numerous tank facilities, processing facilities, service roads and power lines. Large-scale cattle grazing also takes place across the Aera Property. The fact that the Aera Property is developed with these mineral resource extraction uses is wholly ignored by the County, the Draft PEIR, and the Final PEIR’s RTCs, despite the fact that such development undermines the County’s entire justification for the debilitating down-zoning of Aera’s assets. ***As detailed herein, proceeding with the Project not only would result in numerous CEQA violations, but would result in the illegal taking of Aera’s property without just compensation.***

We strongly urge the County to refrain from advancing this Project any further until and unless it cures the numerous legal defects identified in this letter and Aera’s past comment letters.

I. APPROVAL OF THE PROJECT WOULD VIOLATE CEQA IN NUMEROUS RESPECTS.

A. The County’s reliance on the “Web App” or “Web Map” to excuse numerous omissions, inconsistencies, and errors in the Draft PEIR violates CEQA.

Throughout the County’s RTCs, the County relies on the “Web App”³ to excuse omissions and patently erroneous statements presented in the Draft PEIR. (See, e.g., RTC B-7

¹ We incorporate here by reference Aera’s two previous comment letters dated April 11, 2023.

² Of Aera’s approximately 2,935 acres, approximately 2,614 acres are located within the County and within the proposed Project boundary. The remaining approximately 321 acres lies within the County of Orange.

³ For purposes of this comment, Aera assumes that the County’s references to the “Web App” and the “Web Map” are intended to point a reader to the same online application. However, the County’s documents include references to both, and it is unclear whether there are multiple “dynamic” (and therefore, ever-changing) online applications with which a reader must be familiar and consistently checking for updates in order to understand the scope of the Project.

[attempting to excuse Draft PEIR’s false assumption that certain land was designated commercial]; RTC B-8 [attempting to excuse the Draft PEIR’s “numerous inconsistencies between the figures provided in Appendix C . . . [and] the information provided on the ESGV Proposed Land Use Policy and Zoning website”]; RTC F-3 [attempting to excuse the total omission of portions of the Project from the Draft PEIR’s Project Description]; RTC F-7 [same].) Instead of correcting the Draft PEIR’s omissions and errors through redline errata, the County punts to what is essentially a constantly shifting web application, one that the County admits no longer reflects the Project Description included in the Draft PEIR or, by extension, the Area Plan.

The RTCs describe the “Web App” or “Web Map” as “dynamic” and “part of ongoing outreach efforts undertaken by the County.” (Final PEIR, p. 2-14.) The County goes on to explain, confoundingly, that the Web App “is updated frequently whereas the Draft PEIR captures in essence a point in time.” (*Ibid.*) Specifically, the County states that the Web App “has been updated frequently since the release of the Draft PEIR.” (*Ibid.*) In response to a comment pointing out “numerous inconsistencies” in the Draft PEIR, the County responds, without any further detail, that “some of the inconsistencies identified *may have been* rectified after the Draft PEIR was released.” (*Ibid.*, emphasis added.) No table or summary is provided to show a reader what these updates and changes to the existing and proposed land use designations shown in the “Web App” are. The County assures reviewing stakeholders that such changes “do not change the Draft PEIR’s significance conclusion or result in a conclusion that significantly more severe environmental impacts will result” but absolutely no evidence or analysis is presented to support this bare assertion. Given that a reader has no way of even knowing what sorts of changes have occurred, neither the public—nor any decisionmaker—can independently verify that the significance conclusions are unchanged. The County’s response amounts to no more than “Trust me, it’s fine.” CEQA, of course, requires more.

When Aera noted in its prior comment letters that the land use designation changes proposed as part of *this Project* were wholly omitted from the Draft PEIR’s Project Description, analysis, and appendices, the County responded, in essence, that this should not matter, because the “dynamic” and therefore everchanging “Web App” includes the proposed land use designation change. *Notably, the Web App is never mentioned in the Draft PEIR* despite the fact that the County, in its RTCs, claims that “the Draft PEIR was prepared in conjunction with the Draft East San Gabriel Valley Area Plan and associated supporting information such as the ESGVAP Proposed Land Use Policy and Zoning Web App.” (Final PEIR, p. 2-14; see also pp. 2-29, 2-41.)

The County’s procedural approach here—attempting to correct errors and omissions through unspecified updates to a “dynamic” website that is never even referenced in the Draft PEIR—is prohibited as a matter of law. The CEQA Guidelines set forth three specific methods for referring to information that is not contained within the body of an EIR. First, such information can be included in an appendix to the EIR. (State CEQA Guidelines, § 15147.)

Second, such information can be incorporated through citations to specific technical source documents. (State CEQA Guidelines, § 15148.) Third, such information can be incorporated by reference. (State CEQA Guidelines, § 15150.) Per the Guidelines, the third approach of incorporation by reference is suitable for “long, descriptive, or technical materials that provide general background but do not contribute directly to the analysis of the problem at hand.” (State CEQA Guidelines, § 15150(f).) Even if incorporation by reference of the “Web App” were appropriate—and we are aware of no case law that permits incorporation of a separate “dynamic” and shifting document to stand in for an EIR’s **Project Description**—the County utterly failed to follow the correct legal procedures. (See State CEQA Guidelines, §15150(b), (c).) Regardless, again, the “Web App” is never mentioned in the Draft PEIR, therefore it is nonsensical to rely on it to fix the errors in the Draft PEIR, or to expect individuals, organizations, and agencies who commented on the Draft PEIR to have known about the “Web App” and understood it to be constantly and impermissibly updating the information provided in the Draft PEIR.

The County’s improper reliance on the “Web App” also violates at least three of CEQA’s core substantive tenets. CEQA requires that a Draft PEIR’s Project Description be **accurate, stable, and consistent**. (State CEQA Guidelines, § 15124; see also *County of Inyo v. City of L.A.* (1977) 71 Cal.App.3d 185, 192; *Washoe Meadows Community v. Dept. of Parks & Recreation* (2017) 17 Cal.App.5th 277, 287.) CEQA requires that a Draft PEIR’s Project Description describe **the entire project being proposed for approval**. (State CEQA Guidelines, § 15378; see also *City of Santee v. County of San Diego* (1989) 214 Cal.App.3d 1438, 1454.) CEQA requires that where a final EIR makes changes to the information contained in the text of the draft EIR, these changes must be included **in the EIR itself**. (State CEQA Guidelines, § 15088(d).) These are nonnegotiable, substantive requirements of any environmental review document purporting to comply with CEQA. The County has failed to meet its legal obligations with respect to the Final EIR by relying upon a shifting and “dynamic” “Web App” to stand in for a Project Description, by continuing to omit the entirety of the proposed project (including down-zoning), and by failing to correct its errors and omissions in the Final PEIR itself.

B. The PEIR fails to consider impacts associated with mineral resources.

The Draft PEIR does not address or analyze impacts to the availability of mineral resources and instead states that such an analysis was determined, in the Initial Study, to be less than significant. However, as discussed above, a significant portion of the Aera Property is currently devoted to existing and long-standing oil and gas production activities, wells that produce hundreds of barrels of oil per day, millions of cubic feet of natural gas per day, infrastructure for oil, gas, and water, tank facilities, processing facilities, roads, and power lines.

There is no analysis in the Initial Study of whether and how the proposed change in land use designation for the Aera Property would affect the availability of mineral resources, given the extraction activities that currently take place there. In fact, at the time the Initial Study was

prepared, it is unclear—and unlikely—that the County was even considering the down-zoning of the Aera Property at all. Thus, the Initial Study did not, in any way, consider the potential loss of mineral resources due to the down-zoning. Because it is undeniably clear that down-zoning the Aera Property could result in the loss of availability of mineral resources, the Draft PEIR must be revised to consider whether such loss will occur and the potential significance of such an impact.⁴

C. The Draft PEIR’s conclusions regarding aesthetic impacts are unsupported and inconsistent.

The Draft PEIR’s conclusion that impacts on views from regional riding, hiking or multi-use trails would be less than significant is nonsensical, given the Draft PEIR’s opposite conclusions that impacts to scenic vistas and impacts associated with degradation of visual character would be significant and unavoidable.

On page 4.1-17, the Draft PEIR states: “While abundant views of [the San Gabriel Mountains and San Jose and Puente Hills] resources would remain with new development, the extent of physical change that could occur and the associated alteration and potential blockage of views is considered substantial. Given that the ESGVAP plans for higher density development than currently exists in the area, no feasible mitigation measures are available to reduce this impact. This impact is, therefore, considered significant and unavoidable.”

Similarly, on page 4.1-19, the Draft PEIR reads: “[N]ew developments of increased density, greater scale, and higher height than currently exists in many areas could result in potentially adverse effects to visual character and the quality of public views. As development pursuant to the ESGVAP could be denser and taller than most or all of the existing adjacent development, some areas currently appreciated as open space could be developed with new housing. Given that the ESGVAP would result in higher density development than currently exists in the Plan Area, no feasible mitigation is available, and this impact is considered significant and unavoidable.”

Yet, despite the conclusion that impacts to scenic vistas and impacts on visual character would be significant and unavoidable, the Draft PEIR nonsensically arrives at the opposite conclusion on page 4.1-18, finding that “policies included in the ESGVAP and the County’s General Plan would guide the design of future development in these areas to the extent that such

⁴ The Draft PEIR must also disclose and evaluate the reasonably foreseeable indirect impacts of down-zoning the Aera Property. This would include the impacts of importing energy resources to replace the hundreds of barrels of oil and millions of cubic feet of natural gas that are produced on the Aera Property. This would also include the noise, air quality, water quality, soils and geotechnical-related impacts of removing the oil and gas infrastructure currently in place on the Aera Property. None of these impacts were disclosed or considered in the Draft PEIR.

development would integrate into the existing character of those communities, would have gradual transitions between areas of differing density, and would not have an adverse impact to existing views of the ESGVAP area from elevated vantage points, as are available from regional riding, hiking, and multi-use trails, and a less than significant impact would occur.”

The views from the County’s trails include views of scenic vistas and include the same views that the Draft PEIR concludes will be significantly and unavoidably impacted. The facts, evidence, and reasoning that led to the County concluding there would be significant and unavoidable impacts to scenic vistas and visual character necessarily dictate that impacts to views from trails would also be significant and unavoidable. This impact was not disclosed in the Draft PEIR, and therefore the Draft PEIR must be revised and recirculated in accordance with CEQA.

D. The Draft PEIR fails to adequately describe and disclose potential air quality impacts to sensitive receptors and impacts due to odor emissions.

The Draft PEIR concludes that air emissions impacts to sensitive receptors would be significant and unavoidable. (Draft PEIR, p. 4.3-49.) However, the Draft PEIR does not specify what types of impacts would be significant and unavoidable, does not explain *how* significant such impacts would be, *how* such impacts will affect human health and, worse yet, does not explore *at all* whether there are feasible mitigation measures available to reduce such impacts.

For example, after stating that Impact 4.3-3 (“Would future development facilitated by adoption of the ESGVAP have a significant impact if it exposes sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?”) would be “Significant and Unavoidable,” the Draft PEIR states, without any additional detail provided, that “sensitive receptors could be exposed to levels of toxic air contaminants that could result in a potential increase in cancer, acute, and/or chronic risk.” (Draft PEIR, p. 4.3-49.) No discussion of what toxic air contaminants are expected, where these impacts would occur, or how large an increase in cancer, acute and/or chronic health risk the County expects to occur is provided. The Draft PEIR later states that sensitive receptors may be exposed to “substantial concentrations of criteria air pollutant emissions or [diesel particulate matter]” However, once again, the Draft PEIR provides no information as to the extent, type, or severity of such exposure that the County actually expects. The County also states that there is a potential for “localized emissions to exceed the significance thresholds” established by the air district, but no detail is provided as to which emissions thresholds will be exceeded, or by how much. Such generic, conclusory statements utterly fail to meet CEQA’s information disclosure mandates.

E. The Draft PEIR's analysis of biological resources impacts is legally inadequate.

While we understand that this is a program-level analysis, the Draft PEIR's assessment of impacts to candidate, sensitive, and special status species is so generic and vague it is rendered useless. The Draft PEIR concludes that impacts to such species will be significant and unavoidable because "future projects may not completely avoid impacts or result in habitat enhancements. As a result, impacts would be significant and unavoidable." (Draft PEIR, p. 4.4-19.) But beyond a limited reference to the coastal California gnatcatcher, the many-stemmed dudleya, and the big free-tailed bat, the impact analysis provides *no discussion at all of which species or habitat types are likely to be impacted, does not disclose how substantial these impacts will be, and does not even attempt to remedy these impacts through mitigation measures*. It is known where the areas of potential new development will be located. It is known what types of habitat have the potential to occur in these development locations, and by extension, what candidate, sensitive, and/or special status species have the potential to be impacted. Therefore those impacts must be evaluated in this Draft PEIR. The same critique also applies to the EIR's analysis of impacts to sensitive natural communities. (Draft PEIR, p. 4.4-20.)

The comment letter submitted to the County by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife ("CDFW") brought several of these issues to the County's attention. However, the County's responses to CDFW's requested revisions wholly ignored the issues CDFW raised. CDFW pressed the County to expressly discuss the types of impacts to specific sensitive species, but the County's responses to comments refused to do so. CDFW also presented the County with no less than 16 suggested mitigation measures, and the County rejected these measures without explanation in violation of CEQA.

F. Because the PEIR's Project Description omits portions of the proposed Project, the County's conclusions as to land use and planning and population and housing are inadequate.

As Aera pointed out in its prior comment letters, the Draft PEIR omitted, and therefore did not consider, the down-zoning of the Aera Property. The County responded, without any citation to CEQA, the State CEQA Guidelines, case law, or any other authority, that its proposed down-zoning "is not required to be analyzed within the Draft PEIR." (Final PEIR, p. 2-38 [RTC F-2].) However, the County does not have the authority to pick and choose which aspects of the Project it may include in the Draft PEIR. As Aera noted, the Project Description must describe the whole of the Project, even if the County believes there are portions or aspects of the Project that, on their own, would not result in significant impacts. This type of project piecemealing has been expressly prohibited by the courts. (*Orinda Association v. Board of Supervisors* (1986) 182 Cal.App.3d 1145, 1171 ["The requirements of CEQA cannot be avoided by chopping up proposed projects into bite-size pieces which, individually considered, might be found to have no

significant effect on the environment”].)

Given the County’s position that it may omit portions of the proposed Project from the Draft PEIR, it is highly likely that there are other land use designation changes that the County intends to implement through this Project, but that it chose to leave out of the Project Description and, by extension, the Draft PEIR’s analyses. The County’s position that it can pick and choose what land use designation changes it discloses calls into question each and every analysis in the Draft PEIR. Most directly, it calls into question the Draft PEIR’s analysis and determinations relating to land use and planning and population and housing, as these analyses are very clearly implicated by the Project’s proposed land use plan.

G. The County’s RTCs do not meet CEQA’s clear, mandatory requirements.

Responses to comments must provide a good faith, reasoned response to issues raised by commenters. (State CEQA Guidelines, § 15088(c).) “Conclusory statements unsupported by factual information will not suffice.” (*Ibid.*) The County’s responses fail to meet this standard in several inexcusable ways.

First, the County unlawfully ignores proposed mitigation measures presented by commenters, even when the commenter is an expert agency commenting within its area of expertise. For example, CDFW’s comment letter presents no less than 16 mitigation measures, which CDFW advises are feasible and would reduce the biological resource impacts identified in the Draft PEIR. Despite the fact that reasons for rejecting mitigation measures proposed by commenters must be explained in detail (see, e.g., State CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15204(a), 15088(c); *People v. County of Kern* (1976) 62 Cal.App.3d 761), the County simply rejects CDFW’s proposed measures out of hand, without any explanation. (See, e.g., Final PEIR, p. 2-80 [RTC H-11].)

Similarly, Caltrans, another expert agency, identifies additional mitigation measures and analyses necessary to adequately consider and disclose impacts associated with transportation. Instead of responding in any detail, the County rejects Caltrans’ recommendations without any explanation. (Final PEIR, p. 2-21 [RTC C-9]. (See *Berkeley Keep Jets Over the Bay Comm. v. Board of Port Commissioners* (2001) 91 Cal.App.4th 1344, 1367, 1371 [conclusory responses to comments from experts and other agencies rendered the EIR legally inadequate].)

The County of Los Angeles Sheriff’s Department also submitted a comment letter pointing out that the proposed Project’s impacts to police protection **would be potentially significant without mitigation**. Instead of revising its analysis to account for this previously undisclosed potentially significant impact and identifying mitigation measures to address the impact, the County’s response merely states that future projects will undergo environmental review. (Final PEIR, p. 2-25 [RTC D-3].) Such a response does nothing to remedy the defect in **this** Draft PEIR—the erroneous conclusion that impacts to police protection will be less than

significant. To the extent the County believes that the Los Angeles County Sheriff erred in concluding that impacts to police protection would be significant, the County was obligated to provide substantial evidence countering the Sheriff's Department's significance conclusion. The County failed to do so.

Finally, there are several comments included in other comment letters that raise environmental issues, question the conclusions of the Draft PEIR, and suggest additional mitigation measures or necessary analyses that the County either: (1) completely ignores; or (2) improperly provides a conclusory response that the comment "does not raise a significant environmental issues regarding the adequacy of the information presented in the Draft PEIR." (See, e.g., Comments B-9, B-10, B-12, C-3, C-6, C-7, C-8, C-9, F-8.) However, comments that suggest changes in land use designation on grounds such change would reduce impacts (whether accurate or not) (e.g., Comments B-9, B-10), comments suggesting fuel modification measures (Comment B-12), comments asking the County to conduct additional analyses (Comments C-3, C-6, C-8, C-9), comments questioning or requesting changes in parameters in analyses (Comment C-7), and comments expressing concern that aspects of the project description were omitted from the Draft PEIR (Comment F-8) ***are comments raising demonstrably significant environmental issues requiring detailed, good faith, responses.*** (See State CEQA Guidelines, § 15088(c); *Flanders Found. v. City of Carmel-by-the-Sea* (2012) 202 Cal.App.4th 603, 615.)

II. THE PROJECT IS INCONSISTENT WITH THE COUNTY GENERAL PLAN

As a matter of basic land use planning law, specific plans and area plans must be consistent with a local government agency's general plan. (See Gov. Code § 65454.) Despite this clear statutory mandate, the County is proposing to approve an area plan that is inconsistent with its operative General Plan in multiple respects. Specifically, the Area Plan's proposed down-zoning of the Aera Property is inconsistent with multiple goals and policies of the General Plan. Such inconsistencies include, but are not limited to, the following:

- "Policy LU 2.2: Ensure broad outreach, public participation, and opportunities for community input in community-based planning efforts." Aera was never alerted to, engaged, or asked to assist in any decision or planning related to the down-zoning of its property. See also, Policy LU 10.1.
- "Policy LU 2.4: Coordinate with other local jurisdictions to develop compatible land uses." Aera's holdings straddle the Los Angeles and Orange County boundary. The region just to the south in the City of Brea is a regionally significant job center. To our knowledge, there was no coordination with Brea or any of the surrounding municipalities related to the down-zoning of the Aera Property relative to jobs/housing balance or any other basis.
- "Policy LU 2.7: Set priorities for Planning Area-specific issues, including transportation,

housing, open space, and public safety as part of community-based planning efforts.” The administrative record is devoid of any analysis whatsoever as to the implications for housing, public safety, beneficial reuse, or any other “Planning Area-specific issues” for Aera’s more than 2,000 acres.

- “Policy LU 5.1: Encourage a mix of residential land use designations and development regulations that accommodate various densities, building types and styles.” The administrative record is devoid of any analysis as to the effect of the Aera Property down-zoning on the ability to provide a variety of building types and styles.
- “Policy LU 5.3: Support a mix of land uses that promote bicycling and walking, and reduce VMTs.” The Aera Property is in close proximity to a regionally significant job center to the south in Orange County and the down-zoning reduces opportunities for multi-modal and VMT-reducing housing in proximity to those jobs.
- “Policy LU 11.1: Encourage new development to employ sustainable energy practices, such as utilizing passive solar techniques and/or active solar technologies.” The potential adaptive reuse of the Aera Property is rich with the possibility of renewable generation, storage, and distributed deployment. The County’s proposed down-zoning would improperly foreclose this reuse opportunity in conflict with the County’s General Plan.

The foregoing are just a few examples of inconsistencies between the Area Plan’s proposed down-zoning of the Aera Property and the General Plan’s goals and policies related to housing, renewable energy production, jobs/housing balance, and productive reuse of industrial sites. Nevertheless, the administrative record is completely devoid of any analysis or consideration of impacts resulting from the down-zoning of the Aera Property, and there is certainly no discussion or analysis of General Plan-Area Plan consistency.

III. THE PROPOSED DOWNZONING OF AERA’S PROPERTY CONSTITUTES A TAKING WITHOUT JUST COMPENSATION.

The use designations governing the Aera Property under the existing Rowland Heights Community Plan (“Community Plan”) allow for residential uses. In fact, the Community Plan specifically states that the Aera Property “will be suitable for residential development” as oil resources are depleted. The Community Plan provides for a transition from oil development to residential development. Currently, the Community Plan allows for 1,420 dwelling units on the 2,614 acres of the Aera Property within the County. Aera has operated, and made investment decisions, pursuant to that understanding for decades.

The Area Plan proposes to down-zone the Aera Property and reduce the residential allowance to the least “intense” uses allowed under the proposed Area Plan – Rural Land 40 (“RL40”) or Rural Land 10 (“RL10”). That down-zoning would reduce the allowable dwelling

Ms. Mi Kim
County of Los Angeles, Dept. of Regional Planning
August 8, 2023
Page 11

units on the Aera property to approximately 65 dwelling units or fewer.

The County provides no factual findings or evidentiary support to justify down-zoning the Aera Property in the manner contemplated in the Area Plan. The Area Plan would restrict the use of the Aera Property by providing Aera with lesser rights than adjacent properties. This selective assignment of land use designations under the Area Plan constitutes “spot zoning” amounting to irrational discrimination against Aera. Moreover, the severe use restrictions associated with an RL40 or RL10 designation are arbitrary and capricious and would result in a major loss of the use of the Aera Property, which would undermine Aera’s investment backed expectations for the property. As such, the Area Plan constitutes a regulatory taking of the Aera Property under well settled legal authority. (*Penn Central Transp. Co. v. City of New York* (1978) 438 U.S. 104; *Avenida San Juan Partnership v. City of San Clemente* (2011) 201 Cal.App.4th 1256.)

Aera again urges the County to refrain from re-designation the Aera Property as part of this Project. The proposed down-zoning of the Aera Property fails to take into account the on-the-ground conditions of the Aera Property, the significant oil and gas uses currently in place, and Aera’s reliance on and investment backed expectations for the property’s future development for residential uses. The base unfairness of proposing such a crippling down-zone, without any outreach or discussion with Aera, is reason enough to refrain from implementing any down-zone of the Aera Property as part of this Project. The fact that such down-zone will expose the County to costly and protracted takings litigation constitutes further grounds for leaving the land use designations for the Aera Property as they are now. Finally, we urge the County to rectify its numerous CEQA violations through a revised and recirculated Draft PEIR prior to approving the Project and certifying the Final PEIR.

Sincerely,



Sigrid R. Waggener
MANATT, PHELPS & PHILLIPS, LLP

CC:

Connie Chung, Deputy Director, Advance Planning Division (email)
Kathy Park, Deputy County Counsel (email)

From: [Axer Pop](#)
To: [DRP Community Studies East Area Section](#)
Subject: Public Comment Re: East San Gabriel Valley Area Plan Project No.2020-000612
Date: Monday, August 7, 2023 4:23:22 PM

CAUTION: External Email. Proceed Responsibly.

Regional Planning Commission
County of Los Angeles
320 West Temple Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Re: Project No. 2020-000612 East San Gabriel Valley Area Plan & Final
Environmental Impact Report

Submitted via email to: commplan@planning.lacounty.gov

Dear Chair Hastings and Commissioners:

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed rezoning of the East San Gabriel Valley as part of the East San Gabriel Valley Area Plan. The implications of this proposal, should it proceed, are deeply concerning for many reasons, including the potential environmental damage, threats to the character and sustainability of our local communities, and the inequitable distribution of responsibility.

Despite a projected significant reduction in the Los Angeles County population—about 1.4 million residents from 2023 to 2060, according to California's Department of Finance—the drive for more housing seems redundant and potentially damaging. This is particularly the case when considering the approximately 93,000 units sitting vacant in Los Angeles, almost half of which are currently withheld from the housing market.

Moreover, the area's agricultural and equestrian communities, integral to the cultural and historical fabric of the East San Gabriel Valley, stand to suffer disproportionately. Their character and livelihoods are at risk from aggressive code enforcement operations, notably from the Nuisance Abatement Team (NAT). This is deeply concerning, particularly as the impact extends beyond the current boundaries of agricultural communities to those neighboring regions.

On this note, I argue that the East San Gabriel Valley Area Plan (ESGVAP) fails to comply with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Specifically, the impact analysis for Agricultural Land Use does not correctly apply CEQA Guidelines Appendix G “II. Agricultural and Forestry Resources.” Part (b) of this section of the guidelines requires the County to consider whether the project will conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use or a Williamson Act contract. In the County’s Appendix A: Initial Study, the County fails to properly consider the significant impact that the project will have on existing zoning for agricultural use.

Notably, the significant impact on existing zoning for agricultural use will have detrimental social and environmental impacts on the residents of A-1 zoned communities, such as Avocado Heights, Pellissier village, El Monte/South El Monte,

Valinda, South San Jose hills, Rowland Heights. These impacts include the loss of opportunity to practice local, self-sustaining agriculture. The impact of changing agricultural use zoning is also significant, especially in communities vulnerable to environmental changes. Such zoning change makes these communities more susceptible to the effects of climate change.

Also, it's essential to highlight the glaring omission of the City of Industry from sharing the responsibility of addressing the housing shortage. Despite Avocado Heights, Rowland Heights, South San Jose Hills, and South Walnut collectively housing 92% of all community industrial inventory within the Planning Area, the City of Industry, a significant contributor to the job market, particularly in the industrial sector, is not shouldering its part of the housing issue.

The considerable financial backing from the Southern California Association of Governments, a non-profit entity with minimal public accountability, raises questions about potential conflicts of interest. Why such an organization has a stake in our communities, where the current zoning aligns with the community's characteristics, warrants scrutiny.

I implore the Regional Planning Commission to reconsider this proposed rezoning, considering the need for sustainable, environmentally friendly, and affordable housing options that respect the historical integrity of our communities. The mitigation measures must include preserving and expanding agricultural zoning and encouraging self-sustaining agriculture.

It is incumbent upon the Commission to ensure that all voices are heard, considered, and reflected in these crucial decisions about our future. Our communities must build resiliency before climate change, including resisting potential changes to the housing market due to zoning changes.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Best,

From: [Daniel Talamantes](#)
To: [DRP Community Studies East Area Section](#)
Subject: Project No. 2020-0 00612 East San Gabriel Valley Area Plan & Final Environmental Impact Report
Date: Sunday, August 6, 2023 5:47:11 PM

CAUTION: External Email. Proceed Responsibly.

Regional Planning Commission
County of Los Angeles
320 West Temple Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Re: Project No. 2020-0 00612 East San Gabriel Valley Area Plan & Final
Environmental Impact Report

Submitted via email to: commplan@planning.lacounty.gov

Dear Chair Hastings and Commissioners:

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Despite a projected significant reduction in the Los Angeles County population—about 1.4 million residents from 2023 to 2060, according to California's Department of Finance—the drive for more housing seems redundant and potentially damaging. This is particularly the case when considering the approximately 93,000 units sitting vacant in Los Angeles, almost half of which are currently withheld from the housing market.

Moreover, the area's agricultural and equestrian communities, integral to the cultural and historical fabric of the East San Gabriel Valley, stand to suffer disproportionately. Their character and livelihoods are at risk from aggressive code enforcement operations, notably from the Nuisance Abatement Team (NAT). This is deeply concerning, particularly as the impact extends beyond the current boundaries of agricultural communities to those neighboring regions.

On this note, I argue that the East San Gabriel Valley Area Plan (ESGVAP) fails to comply with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Specifically, the impact analysis for Agricultural Land Use does not correctly apply CEQA Guidelines Appendix G “II. Agricultural and Forestry Resources.” Part (b) of this section of the guidelines requires the County to consider whether the project will conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use or a Williamson Act contract. In the County’s Appendix A: Initial Study, the County fails to properly consider the significant impact that the project will have on existing zoning for agricultural use.

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detrimental social and environmental impacts on the residents of a-1 zoned communities, such as Avocado Heights, Pellissier village, El Monte/South El Monte, Valinda, South San Jose hills, Rowland Heights. These impacts include the loss of opportunity to practice local, self-sustaining agriculture. The impact of changing agricultural use zoning is also significant, especially in communities vulnerable to environmental changes. Such zoning change makes these communities more susceptible to the effects of climate change.

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It is incumbent upon the Commission to ensure that all voices are heard, considered, and reflected in these crucial decisions about our future. Our communities must build resiliency before climate change, including resisting potential changes to the housing market due to zoning changes.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Best,
Daniel Talamantes

From: [Monica Sandoval](#)
To: [DRP Community Studies East Area Section](#)
Subject: Project No. 2020-0 00612 East San Gabriel Valley Area Plan & Final Environmental Impact Report
Date: Sunday, August 6, 2023 4:49:44 PM

CAUTION: External Email. Proceed Responsibly.

Regional Planning Commission
County of Los Angeles
320 West Temple Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Re: Project No. 2020-0 00612 East San Gabriel Valley Area Plan & Final
Environmental Impact Report

Submitted via email to: commplan@planning.lacounty.gov

Dear Chair Hastings and Commissioners:

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed rezoning of the East San Gabriel Valley as part of the East San Gabriel Valley Area Plan. The implications of this proposal, should it proceed, are deeply concerning for a multitude of reasons, not least of which include the potential environmental damage, the threats to the character and sustainability of our local communities, and the inequitable distribution of responsibility.

Despite a projected significant reduction in the Los Angeles County population—about 1.4 million residents from 2023 to 2060 according to California's Department of Finance—the drive for more housing seems not only redundant but potentially damaging. This is particularly the case when considering the approximately 93,000 units sitting vacant in Los Angeles, almost half of which are currently withheld from the housing market.

Moreover, the area's agricultural and equestrian communities, integral to the cultural and historical fabric of the East San Gabriel Valley, stand to suffer disproportionately. Their character and livelihoods are at risk from aggressive code enforcement operations, notably from the Nuisance Abatement Team (NAT). This is deeply concerning, particularly as the impact extends beyond the current boundaries of agricultural communities to those neighboring regions.

On this note, I argue that the East San Gabriel Valley Area Plan (ESGVAP) fails to comply with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Specifically, the impact analysis for Agricultural Land Use does not properly apply CEQA Guidelines Appendix G “II. Agricultural and Forestry Resources”. Part (b) of this section of the guidelines requires the County to consider whether the project will conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use or a Williamson Act contract. In the County’s Appendix A: Initial Study, the County fails to properly consider the significant impact that the project will have on existing zoning for agricultural use.

Notably, the significant impact on existing zoning for agricultural use will have detrimental social and environmental impacts on the residents of a-1 zoned communities, such as Avocado Heights, Pellissier village, El Monte/South El Monte, Valinda, South San Jose hills, Rowland Heights. These impacts include the loss of opportunity to practice local, self-sustaining agriculture. The cumulative impact of changing agricultural use zoning is also significant, especially in communities vulnerable to environmental changes. Such zoning change makes these communities more susceptible to the effects of climate change.

Furthermore, it is pertinent to highlight the glaring omission of the City of Industry from sharing the responsibility of addressing the housing shortage. Despite Avocado Heights, Rowland Heights, South San Jose Hills, and South Walnut collectively housing 92% of all community industrial inventory within the Planning Area, the City of Industry, a significant contributor to the job market, particularly in the industrial sector, is not shouldering its part of the housing issue.

The considerable financial backing from the Southern California Association of Governments, a non-profit entity with minimal public accountability, raises questions about potential conflicts of interest. Why such an organization has a stake in our communities, where the current zoning aligns with the community's characteristics, warrants scrutiny.

I implore the Regional Planning Commission to reconsider this proposed rezoning, taking into account the need for sustainable, environmentally friendly, and affordable housing options that respect the historical integrity of our communities. The mitigation measures must include preserving and expanding agricultural zoning and encouraging self-sustaining agriculture.

It is incumbent upon the Commission to ensure that all voices are heard, considered, and reflected in these crucial decisions about our future. Our communities need to build resiliency before climate change, and this includes resisting potential changes to the housing market due to zoning changes.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Best,
Monica Sandoval

From: [Nicole Maez](#)
To: [DRP Community Studies East Area Section](#)
Subject: Project No. 2020-0 00612 East San Gabriel Valley Area Plan & Final Environmental Impact Report
Date: Sunday, August 6, 2023 4:44:39 PM

CAUTION: External Email. Proceed Responsibly.

Regional Planning Commission
County of Los Angeles
320 West Temple Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Re: Project No. 2020-0 00612 East San Gabriel Valley Area Plan & Final
Environmental Impact Report

Submitted via email to: commplan@planning.lacounty.gov

Dear Chair Hastings and Commissioners:

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed rezoning of the East San Gabriel Valley as part of the East San Gabriel Valley Area Plan. The implications of this proposal, should it proceed, are deeply concerning for a multitude of reasons, not least of which include the potential environmental damage, the threats to the character and sustainability of our local communities, and the inequitable distribution of responsibility.

Despite a projected significant reduction in the Los Angeles County population—about 1.4 million residents from 2023 to 2060 according to California's Department of Finance—the drive for more housing seems not only redundant but potentially damaging. This is particularly the case when considering the approximately 93,000 units sitting vacant in Los Angeles, almost half of which are currently withheld from the housing market.

Moreover, the area's agricultural and equestrian communities, integral to the cultural and historical fabric of the East San Gabriel Valley, stand to suffer disproportionately. Their character and livelihoods are at risk from aggressive code enforcement operations, notably from the Nuisance Abatement Team (NAT). This is deeply concerning, particularly as the impact extends beyond the current boundaries of agricultural communities to those neighboring regions.

On this note, I argue that the East San Gabriel Valley Area Plan (ESGVAP) fails to comply with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Specifically, the impact analysis for Agricultural Land Use does not properly apply CEQA Guidelines Appendix G “II. Agricultural and Forestry Resources”. Part (b) of this section of the guidelines requires the County to consider whether the project will conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract. In the County’s Appendix A: Initial Study, the County fails to properly consider the significant impact that the project will have on existing zoning for agricultural use.

Notably, the significant impact to existing zoning for agricultural use will have detrimental social and environmental impacts on the residents of a-1 zoned communities, such as Avocado Heights, Pellissier village, El Monte/south El Monte, Valinda, South San Jose hills, Rowland Heights. These impacts include the loss of opportunity to practice local, self-sustaining agriculture. The cumulative impact of changing agricultural use zoning is also significant, especially in communities vulnerable to environmental changes. Such zoning change makes these communities more susceptible to the effects of climate change.

Furthermore, it is pertinent to highlight the glaring omission of the City of Industry from sharing the responsibility of addressing the housing shortage. Despite Avocado Heights, Rowland Heights, South San Jose Hills, and South Walnut collectively housing 92% of all community industrial inventory within the Planning Area, the City of Industry, a significant contributor to the job market, particularly in the industrial sector, is not shouldering its part of the housing issue.

The considerable financial backing from the Southern California Association of Governments, a non-profit entity with minimal public accountability, raises questions about potential conflicts of interest. Why such an organization has a stake in our communities, where the current zoning aligns with the community's characteristics, warrants scrutiny.

I implore the Regional Planning Commission to reconsider this proposed rezoning, taking into account the need for sustainable, environmentally friendly, and affordable housing options that respect the historical integrity of our communities. The mitigation measures must include preserving and expanding agricultural zoning and encouraging self-sustaining agriculture.

It is incumbent upon the Commission to ensure that all voices are heard, considered, and reflected in these crucial decisions about our future. Our communities need to build resiliency before climate change, and this includes resisting potential changes to the housing market due to zoning changes.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Best,
Nicole Maez

From: [Rene Jimenez](#)
To: [DRP Community Studies East Area Section](#)
Subject: Project No. 2020-000612 East San Gabriel Valley Area Plan & Final Environmental Impact Report
Date: Tuesday, August 8, 2023 10:18:53 AM

CAUTION: External Email. Proceed Responsibly.

Regional Planning Commission
County of Los Angeles
320 West Temple Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012
August 9, 2023

Dear Chair Hastings and Commissioners:

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed rezoning of the East San Gabriel Valley as part of the East San Gabriel Valley Area Plan. The implications of this proposal, should it proceed, are deeply concerning for many reasons!!!!

Which includes the potential environmental damage, threats to the character and sustainability of our local communities, and the inequitable distribution of responsibility.

Despite a projected significant reduction in the Los Angeles County population—about 1.4 million residents from 2023 to 2060, according to California's Department of Finance—the drive for more housing seems redundant and potentially damaging. This is particularly the case when considering the approximately 93,000 units sitting vacant in Los Angeles, almost half of which are currently withheld from the housing market.

Moreover, the area's agricultural and equestrian communities, integral to the cultural and historical fabric of the East San Gabriel Valley, stand to suffer disproportionately. Their character and livelihoods are at risk from aggressive code enforcement operations, notably from the Nuisance Abatement Team (NAT). This is deeply concerning, particularly as the impact extends beyond the current boundaries of agricultural communities to those neighboring regions.

On this note, I argue that the East San Gabriel Valley Area Plan (ESGVAP) fails to comply with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Specifically, the impact analysis for Agricultural Land Use does not correctly apply CEQA Guidelines Appendix G “II. Agricultural and Forestry Resources.” Part (b) of this section of the

guidelines requires the County to consider whether the project will conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use or a Williamson Act contract. In the County's Appendix A: Initial Study, the County fails to properly consider the significant impact that the project will have on existing zoning for agricultural use.

Notably, the significant impact on existing zoning for agricultural use will have detrimental social and environmental impacts on the residents of A-1 zoned communities, such as Avocado Heights, Pellissier village, El Monte/South El Monte, Valinda, South San Jose hills, and Rowland Heights. These impacts include the loss of opportunity to practice local, self-sustaining agriculture. The impact of changing agricultural use zoning is also significant, especially in communities vulnerable to environmental changes. Such zoning change makes these communities more susceptible to the effects of climate change.

Also, it's essential to highlight the glaring omission of the City of Industry from sharing the responsibility of addressing the housing shortage. Despite Avocado Heights, Rowland Heights, South San Jose Hills, and South Walnut collectively housing 92% of all community industrial inventory within the Planning Area, the City of Industry, a significant contributor to the job market, particularly in the industrial sector, is not shouldering its part of the housing issue.

I implore the Regional Planning Commission to reconsider this proposed rezoning, considering the need for sustainable, environmentally friendly, and affordable housing options that respect the historical integrity of our communities. The mitigation measures must include preserving and expanding agricultural zoning and encouraging self-sustaining agriculture.

It is incumbent upon the Commission to ensure that all voices are heard, considered, and reflected in these crucial decisions about our future. Our communities must build resiliency before climate change, including resisting potential changes to the housing market due to zoning changes.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Kind regards,

Rene Jimenez

Adrine Arakelian

From: Matthew Brechbuhler <martradh@mac.com>
Sent: Tuesday, August 8, 2023 9:48 AM
To: DRP Community Studies East Area Section
Subject: Zoning

CAUTION: External Email. Proceed Responsibly.

Dear Chair Hastings and Commissioners:

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed rezoning of the East San Gabriel Valley as part of the East San Gabriel Valley Area Plan. The implications of this proposal, should it proceed, are deeply concerning for many reasons, including the potential environmental damage, threats to the character and sustainability of our local communities, and the inequitable distribution of responsibility. Despite a projected significant reduction in the Los Angeles County population—about 1.4 million residents from 2023 to 2060, according to California's Department of Finance—the drive for more housing seems redundant and potentially damaging. This is particularly the case when considering the approximately 93,000 units sitting vacant in Los Angeles, almost half of which are currently withheld from the housing market.

Moreover, the area's agricultural and equestrian communities, integral to the cultural and historical fabric of the East San Gabriel Valley, stand to suffer disproportionately. Their character and livelihoods are at risk from aggressive code enforcement operations, notably from the Nuisance Abatement Team (NAT). This is deeply concerning, particularly as the impact extends beyond the current boundaries of agricultural communities to those neighboring regions.

On this note, I argue that the East San Gabriel Valley Area Plan (ESGVAP) fails to comply with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Specifically, the impact analysis for Agricultural Land Use does not correctly apply CEQA Guidelines Appendix G "II. Agricultural and Forestry Resources." Part (b) of this section of the guidelines requires the County to consider whether the project will conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use or a Williamson Act contract. In the County's Appendix A: Initial Study, the County fails to properly consider the significant impact that the project will have on existing zoning for agricultural use.

Notably, the significant impact on existing zoning for agricultural use will have detrimental social and environmental impacts on the residents of A-1 zoned communities, such as Avocado Heights, Pellissier village, El Monte/South El Monte, Valinda, South San Jose hills, and Rowland Heights. These impacts include the loss of opportunity to practice local, self-sustaining agriculture. The impact of changing agricultural use zoning is also significant, especially in communities vulnerable to environmental changes. Such zoning change makes these communities more susceptible to the effects of climate change.

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I implore the Regional Planning Commission to reconsider this proposed rezoning, considering the need for sustainable, environmentally friendly, and affordable housing options that respect the historical integrity of our communities. The mitigation measures must include preserving and expanding agricultural zoning and encouraging self-sustaining agriculture.

It is incumbent upon the Commission to ensure that all voices are heard, considered, and reflected in these crucial decisions about our future. Our communities must build resiliency before climate change, including resisting potential changes to the housing market due to zoning changes. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Best,

Matthew Brechbuhler

Regional Planning Commission
County of Los Angeles
320 West Temple Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

August 8, 2023

Re: Project No. 2020-000612 East San Gabriel Valley Area Plan & Final Environmental Impact Report

Dear Chair Hastings and Commissioners:

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed rezoning of the East San Gabriel Valley as part of the East San Gabriel Valley Area Plan. The implications of this proposal, should it proceed, are deeply concerning for many reasons, including the potential environmental damage, threats to the character and sustainability of our local communities, and the inequitable distribution of responsibility.

Despite a projected significant reduction in the Los Angeles County population—about 1.4 million residents from 2023 to 2060, according to California's Department of Finance—the drive for more housing seems redundant and potentially damaging. This is particularly the case when considering the approximately 93,000 units sitting vacant in Los Angeles, almost half of which are currently withheld from the housing market.

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Notably, the significant impact on existing zoning for agricultural use will have detrimental social and environmental impacts on the residents of A-1 zoned communities, such as Avocado Heights, Pellissier village, El Monte/South El Monte, Valinda, South San Jose hills, and Rowland Heights. These impacts include the loss of opportunity to practice local, self-sustaining agriculture. The impact of changing agricultural use zoning is also significant, especially in communities vulnerable to environmental changes. Such zoning change makes these communities more susceptible to the effects of climate change.

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inventory within the Planning Area, the City of Industry, a significant contributor to the job market, particularly in the industrial sector, is not shouldering its part of the housing issue.

I implore the Regional Planning Commission to reconsider this proposed rezoning, considering the need for sustainable, environmentally friendly, and affordable housing options that respect the historical integrity of our communities. The mitigation measures must include preserving and expanding agricultural zoning and encouraging self-sustaining agriculture.

It is incumbent upon the Commission to ensure that all voices are heard, considered, and reflected in these crucial decisions about our future. Our communities must build resiliency before climate change, including resisting potential changes to the housing market due to zoning changes.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,

Danita Beauchamp

Adrine Arakelian

From: Barbara McDermaid <barbara.mcdermaid@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, August 8, 2023 9:04 AM
To: DRP Community Studies East Area Section
Subject: Project # 2020-000612 East San Gabriel Valley Area Plan & Final Environmental Impact Report

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

CAUTION: External Email. Proceed Responsibly.

Dear Chair Hastings and Commissioners:

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed rezoning of the East San Gabriel Valley as part of the East San Gabriel Valley Area Plan. The implications of this proposal, should it proceed, are deeply concerning for many reasons, including the potential environmental damage, threats to the character and sustainability of our local communities, and the inequitable distribution of responsibility. Despite a projected significant reduction in the Los Angeles County population—about 1.4 million residents from 2023 to 2060, according to California's Department of Finance—the drive for more housing seems redundant and potentially damaging. This is particularly the case when considering the approximately 93,000 units sitting vacant in Los Angeles, almost half of which are currently withheld from the housing market.

Moreover, the area's agricultural and equestrian communities, integral to the cultural and historical fabric of the East San Gabriel Valley, stand to suffer disproportionately. Their character and livelihoods are at risk from aggressive code enforcement operations, notably from the Nuisance Abatement Team (NAT). This is deeply concerning, particularly as the impact extends beyond the current boundaries of agricultural communities to those neighboring regions.

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Notably, the significant impact on existing zoning for agricultural use will have detrimental social and environmental impacts on the residents of A-1 zoned communities, such as Avocado Heights, Pellissier village, El Monte/South El Monte, Valinda, South San Jose hills, and Rowland Heights. These impacts include the loss of opportunity to practice local, self-sustaining agriculture. The impact of changing agricultural use zoning is also significant, especially in communities vulnerable to environmental changes. Such zoning change makes these communities more susceptible to the effects of climate change.

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historical integrity of our communities. The mitigation measures must include preserving and expanding agricultural zoning and encouraging self-sustaining agriculture.

It is incumbent upon the Commission to ensure that all voices are heard, considered, and reflected in these crucial decisions about our future. Our communities must build resiliency before climate change, including resisting potential changes to the housing market due to zoning changes.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Regards

Barbara McDermaid

Adrine Arakelian

From: Elizabeth Jouvenat <ejouvenat@hotmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, August 8, 2023 6:10 AM
To: DRP Community Studies East Area Section
Subject: Public Comment Re: East San Gabriel Valley Area Plan Project No. 2020-000612

CAUTION: External Email. Proceed Responsibly.

Regional Planning Commission
County of Los Angeles
320 West Temple Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Re: Project No. 2020-000612 East San Gabriel Valley Area Plan & Final Environmental Impact Report - Submitted via email to: commplan@planning.lacounty.gov

Dear Chair Hastings and Commissioners:

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed rezoning of the East San Gabriel Valley as part of the East San Gabriel Valley Area Plan. The implications of this proposal, should it proceed, are deeply concerning for many reasons, including the potential environmental damage, threats to the character and sustainability of our local communities, and the inequitable distribution of responsibility.

Despite a projected significant reduction in the Los Angeles County population—about 1.4 million residents from 2023 to 2060, according to California's Department of Finance—the drive for more housing seems redundant and potentially damaging. This is particularly the case when considering the approximately 93,000 units sitting vacant in Los Angeles, almost half of which are currently withheld from the housing market.

Moreover, the area's agricultural and equestrian communities, integral to the cultural and historical fabric of the East San Gabriel Valley, stand to suffer disproportionately. Their character and livelihoods are at risk from aggressive code enforcement operations, notably from the Nuisance Abatement Team (NAT). This is deeply concerning, particularly as the impact extends beyond the current boundaries of agricultural communities to those neighboring regions.

On this note, I argue that the East San Gabriel Valley Area Plan (ESGVAP) fails to comply with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Specifically, the impact analysis for Agricultural Land Use does not correctly apply CEQA Guidelines Appendix G "II. Agricultural and Forestry Resources." Part (b) of this section of the guidelines requires the County to consider whether the project will conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use or a Williamson Act contract. In the County's Appendix A: Initial Study, the County fails to properly consider the significant impact that the project will have on existing zoning for agricultural use.

Notably, the significant impact on existing zoning for agricultural use will have detrimental social and environmental impacts on the residents of A-1 zoned communities, such as Avocado Heights, Pellissier village, El Monte/South El

Monte, Valinda, South San Jose hills, Rowland Heights. These impacts include the loss of opportunity to practice local, self-sustaining agriculture. The impact of changing agricultural use zoning is also significant, especially in communities vulnerable to environmental changes. Such zoning change makes these communities more susceptible to the effects of climate change.

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The considerable financial backing from the Southern California Association of Governments, a non-profit entity with minimal public accountability, raises questions about potential conflicts of interest. Why such an organization has a stake in our communities, where the current zoning aligns with the community's characteristics, warrants scrutiny.

I implore the Regional Planning Commission to reconsider this proposed rezoning, considering the need for sustainable, environmentally friendly, and affordable housing options that respect the historical integrity of our communities. The mitigation measures must include preserving and expanding agricultural zoning and encouraging self-sustaining agriculture.

It is incumbent upon the Commission to ensure that all voices are heard, considered, and reflected in these crucial decisions about our future. Our communities must build resiliency before climate change, including resisting potential changes to the housing market due to zoning changes.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Jouvenat

Get [Outlook for Android](#)

Adrine Arakelian

From: Elsa Villegas <elsa.villegas77@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, August 7, 2023 10:15 PM
To: DRP Community Studies East Area Section
Subject: Project No 2020-000612

CAUTION: External Email. Proceed Responsibly.

Regional Planning Commission
County of Los Angeles
320 West Temple Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Re: Project No. 2020-000612 East San Gabriel Valley Area Plan & Final Environmental Impact Report

Submitted via email to: commplan@planning.lacounty.gov (mailto:commplan@planning.lacounty.gov)

Dear Chair Hastings and Commissioners:

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed rezoning of the East San Gabriel Valley as part of the East San Gabriel Valley Area Plan. The implications of this proposal, should it proceed, are deeply concerning for many reasons, including the potential environmental damage, threats to the character and sustainability of our local communities, and the inequitable distribution of responsibility.

Despite a projected significant reduction in the Los Angeles County population—about 1.4 million residents from 2023 to 2060, according to California's Department of Finance—the drive for more housing seems redundant and potentially damaging. This is particularly the case when considering the approximately 93,000 units sitting vacant in Los Angeles, almost half of which are currently withheld from the housing market.

Moreover, the area's agricultural and equestrian communities, integral to the cultural and historical fabric of the East San Gabriel Valley, stand to suffer disproportionately. Their character and livelihoods are at risk from aggressive code enforcement operations, notably from the Nuisance Abatement Team (NAT). This is deeply concerning, particularly as the impact extends beyond the current boundaries of agricultural communities to those neighboring regions.

On this note, I argue that the East San Gabriel Valley Area Plan (ESGVAP) fails to comply with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Specifically, the impact analysis for Agricultural Land Use does not correctly apply CEQA Guidelines Appendix G "II. Agricultural and Forestry Resources." Part (b) of this section of the guidelines requires the County to consider whether the project will conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use or a Williamson Act contract. In the County's Appendix A: Initial Study, the County fails to properly consider the significant impact that the project will have on existing zoning for agricultural use.

Notably, the significant impact on existing zoning for agricultural use will have detrimental social and environmental impacts on the residents of A-1 zoned communities, such as Avocado Heights, Pellissier village, El Monte/South El Monte, Valinda, South San Jose hills, Rowland Heights. These impacts include the loss of opportunity to practice local, self-sustaining agriculture. The impact of changing agricultural use zoning is also significant, especially in communities vulnerable to environmental changes. Such zoning change makes these communities more susceptible to the effects of climate change.

Also, it's essential to highlight the glaring omission of the City of Industry from sharing the responsibility of addressing the housing shortage. Despite Avocado Heights, Rowland Heights, South San Jose Hills, and South Walnut collectively housing 92% of all community industrial inventory within the Planning Area, the City of Industry, a significant contributor to the job market, particularly in the industrial sector, is not shouldering its part of the housing issue.

The considerable financial backing from the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG), a non-profit entity with minimal public accountability, raises questions about potential conflicts of interest. Why such an organization has a stake in our communities, where the current zoning aligns with the community's characteristics, warrants scrutiny.

I implore the Regional Planning Commission to reconsider this proposed rezoning, considering the need for sustainable, environmentally friendly, and affordable housing options that respect the historical integrity of our communities. The mitigation measures must include preserving and expanding agricultural zoning and encouraging self-sustaining agriculture.

It is incumbent upon the Commission to ensure that all voices are heard, considered, and reflected in these crucial decisions about our future. Our communities must build resiliency before climate change, including resisting potential changes to the housing market due to zoning changes.

Thank you
for your time and consideration.

Best,
Elsa Villegas

[Sent from Yahoo Mail for iPhone](#)

Adrine Arakelian

From: Yolanda BV <elenavasquezbrown@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, August 7, 2023 9:28 PM
To: DRP Community Studies East Area Section
Subject: Re: Project No. 2020-000612 East San Gabriel Valley Area Plan & Final Environmental Impact Report

CAUTION: External Email. Proceed Responsibly.

Regional Planning Commission
County of Los Angeles
320 West Temple Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Chair Hastings and Commissioners:

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed rezoning of the East San Gabriel Valley as part of the East San Gabriel Valley Area Plan. The implications of this proposal, should it proceed, are deeply concerning for many reasons, including the potential environmental damage, threats to the character and sustainability of our local communities, and the inequitable distribution of responsibility.

I live in an area that lacks green space. There's a lot of suburban homes, corporations, and toxic facilities such as Quemetco. Therefore, this area already faces a lot of pollution burden.

Despite a projected significant reduction in the Los Angeles County population—about 1.4 million residents from 2023 to 2060, according to California's Department of Finance—the drive for more housing seems redundant and potentially damaging. This is particularly the case when considering the approximately 93,000 units sitting vacant in Los Angeles, almost half of which are currently withheld from the housing market.

Moreover, the area's agricultural and equestrian communities, integral to the cultural and historical fabric of the East San Gabriel Valley, stand to suffer disproportionately. Their character and livelihoods are at risk from aggressive code enforcement operations, notably from the Nuisance Abatement Team (NAT). This is deeply concerning, particularly as the impact extends beyond the current boundaries of agricultural communities to those neighboring regions.

On this note, I argue that the East San Gabriel Valley Area Plan (ESGVAP) fails to comply with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Specifically, the impact analysis for Agricultural Land Use does not correctly apply CEQA Guidelines Appendix G "II. Agricultural and Forestry Resources." Part (b) of this section of the guidelines requires the County to consider whether the project will conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use or a Williamson Act contract. In the County's Appendix A: Initial Study, the County fails to properly consider the significant impact that the project will have on existing zoning for agricultural use.

Notably, the significant impact on existing zoning for agricultural use will have detrimental social and environmental impacts on the residents of A-1 zoned communities, such as Avocado Heights, Pellissier village, El Monte/South El Monte, Valinda, South San Jose hills, Rowland Heights. These impacts include the loss of opportunity to practice local, self-sustaining agriculture. The impact of changing agricultural use zoning is also significant, especially in communities vulnerable to environmental changes. Such zoning change makes these communities more susceptible to the effects of climate change.

Also, it's essential to highlight the glaring omission of the City of Industry from sharing the responsibility of addressing the housing shortage. Despite Avocado Heights, Rowland Heights, South San Jose Hills, and South Walnut collectively housing 92% of all community industrial inventory within the Planning Area, the City

of Industry, a significant contributor to the job market, particularly in the industrial sector, is not shouldering its part of the housing issue.

I implore the Regional Planning Commission to reconsider this proposed rezoning, considering the need for sustainable, environmentally friendly, and affordable housing options that respect the historical integrity of our communities. The mitigation measures must include preserving and expanding agricultural zoning and encouraging self-sustaining agriculture.

It is incumbent upon the Commission to ensure that all voices are heard, considered, and reflected in these crucial decisions about our future. Our communities must build resiliency before climate change, including resisting potential changes to the housing market due to zoning changes.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Best,

Yolanda B. Vasquez

Adrine Arakelian

From: David Loredo <loredodavid@aol.com>
Sent: Monday, August 7, 2023 9:12 PM
To: DRP Community Studies East Area Section
Subject: Project No. 2020-000612 East San Gabriel Valley Area Plan & Final Environmental Impact Report

CAUTION: External Email. Proceed Responsibly.

Dear Chair Hastings and Commissioners:

I am a resident of Pellissier Village and I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed rezoning of the East San Gabriel Valley as part of the East San Gabriel Valley Area Plan. The implications of this proposal, should it proceed, are deeply concerning for many reasons, including the potential environmental damage, threats to the character and sustainability of our local communities, and the inequitable distribution of responsibility.

Despite a projected significant reduction in the Los Angeles County population—about 1.4 million residents from 2023 to 2060, according to California's Department of Finance—the drive for more housing seems redundant and potentially damaging. This is particularly the case when considering the approximately 93,000 units sitting vacant in Los Angeles, almost half of which are currently withheld from the housing market.

Moreover, the area's agricultural and equestrian communities, integral to the cultural and historical fabric of the East San Gabriel Valley, stand to suffer disproportionately. Their character and livelihoods are at risk from aggressive code enforcement operations, notably from the Nuisance Abatement Team (NAT). This is deeply concerning, particularly as the impact extends beyond the current boundaries of agricultural communities to those neighboring regions.

On this note, I argue that the East San Gabriel Valley Area Plan (ESGVAP) fails to comply with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Specifically, the impact analysis for Agricultural Land Use does not correctly apply CEQA Guidelines Appendix G “II. Agricultural and Forestry Resources.” Part (b) of this section of the guidelines requires the County to consider whether the project will conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use or a Williamson Act contract. In the County's Appendix A: Initial Study, the County fails to properly consider the significant impact that the project will have on existing zoning for agricultural use.

Notably, the significant impact on existing zoning for agricultural use will have detrimental social and environmental impacts on the residents of A-1 zoned communities, such as Avocado Heights, Pellissier village, El Monte/South El Monte, Valinda, South San Jose hills, Rowland Heights. These impacts include the loss of opportunity to practice local, self-sustaining agriculture. The impact of changing agricultural use zoning is also significant, especially in communities vulnerable to environmental changes. Such zoning change makes these communities more susceptible to the effects of climate change.

Also, it's essential to highlight the glaring omission of the City of Industry from sharing the responsibility of addressing the housing shortage. Despite Avocado Heights, Rowland Heights, South San Jose Hills, and South Walnut collectively housing 92% of all community industrial inventory within the Planning Area, the City of Industry, a significant contributor to the job market, particularly in the industrial sector, is not shouldering its part of the housing issue.

The considerable financial backing from the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG), a non-profit entity with minimal public accountability, raises questions about potential conflicts of interest. Why such an organization has a stake in our communities, where the current zoning aligns with the community's characteristics, warrants scrutiny.

I implore the Regional Planning Commission to reconsider this proposed rezoning, considering the need for sustainable, environmentally friendly, and affordable housing options that respect the historical integrity of our communities. The mitigation measures must include preserving and expanding agricultural zoning and encouraging self-sustaining agriculture.

It is incumbent upon the Commission to ensure that all voices are heard, considered, and reflected in these crucial decisions about our future. Our communities must build resiliency before climate change, including resisting potential changes to the housing market due to zoning changes.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Best,

David Loredó

Adrine Arakelian

From: Save GlendaleRiversideRancho <saveglendaleriversiderancho@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, August 7, 2023 7:28 PM
To: DRP Community Studies East Area Section
Cc: info@legalactionnetwork.net; info@elcr.org; mara@saveglendaleriversiderancho.com
Subject: Re: Project No. 2020-000612 East San Gabriel Valley Area Plan & Final Environmental Impact Report

CAUTION: External Email. Proceed Responsibly.

Dear Chair Hastings and Commissioners:

Please make this email a matter of public record.

I represent Save Glendale Riverside Rancho, a community organization of equestrians, and equestrian business owners that represent ranchos in Los Angeles County. We have collaborated with other equestrian and rancho communities and after careful review, as a former urban and regional, and city planner, we strongly oppose the rezoning of the East San Gabriel Valley as part of the East San Gabriel Valley Area Plan. The implications of this proposal, should it proceed, are deeply concerning for many reasons, including the potential environmental damage, threats to the character and sustainability of our local communities, and the inequitable distribution of responsibility.

Despite a projected significant reduction in the Los Angeles County population—about 1.4 million residents from 2023 to 2060, according to California's Department of Finance—the drive for more housing seems redundant and potentially damaging. This is particularly the case when considering the approximately 93,000 units sitting vacant in Los Angeles, almost half of which are currently withheld from the housing market.

Moreover, the area's agricultural and equestrian communities, integral to the cultural and historical fabric of the East San Gabriel Valley, stand to suffer disproportionately. Their character and livelihoods are at risk from aggressive code enforcement operations, notably from the Nuisance Abatement Team (NAT). This is deeply concerning, particularly as the impact extends beyond the current boundaries of agricultural communities to those neighboring regions.

On this note, I argue that the East San Gabriel Valley Area Plan (ESGVAP) fails to comply with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Specifically, the impact analysis for Agricultural Land Use does not correctly apply CEQA Guidelines Appendix G “II. Agricultural and Forestry Resources.” Part (b) of this section of the guidelines requires the County to consider whether the project will conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use or a Williamson Act contract. In the County’s Appendix A: Initial Study, the County fails to properly consider the significant impact that the project will have on existing zoning for agricultural use.

Notably, the significant impact on existing zoning for agricultural use will have detrimental social and environmental impacts on the residents of A-1 zoned communities, such as Avocado Heights, Pellissier village, El Monte/South El Monte, Valinda, South San Jose hills, Rowland Heights. These impacts include the loss of opportunity to practice local, self-sustaining agriculture. The impact of changing agricultural use zoning is also significant, especially in communities vulnerable to environmental changes. Such zoning change makes these communities more susceptible to the effects of climate change.

Also, it's essential to highlight the glaring omission of the City of Industry from sharing the responsibility of addressing the housing shortage. Despite Avocado Heights, Rowland Heights, South San Jose Hills, and South Walnut collectively housing 92% of all community industrial inventory within the Planning Area, the City of Industry, a significant contributor to the job market, particularly in the industrial sector, is not shouldering its part of the housing issue.

The considerable financial backing from the Southern California Association of Governments, a non-profit entity with minimal public accountability, raises questions about potential conflicts of interest. Why such an organization has a stake in our communities, where the current zoning aligns with the community's characteristics, warrants scrutiny.

I implore the Regional Planning Commission to reconsider this proposed rezoning, considering the need for sustainable, environmentally friendly, and affordable housing options that respect the historical integrity of our communities. The mitigation measures must include preserving and expanding agricultural zoning and encouraging self-sustaining agriculture.

It is incumbent upon the Commission to ensure that all voices are heard, considered, and reflected in these crucial decisions about our future. Our communities must build resiliency before climate change, including resisting potential changes to the housing market due to zoning changes.

Sincerely,

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Dr. James DeCarli
Save Glendale Riverside Rancho
323-491-6197

Website: SaveGlendaleRiversideRancho.com

Instagram: [@saveglendaleriversiderancho](https://www.instagram.com/saveglendaleriversiderancho)

Twitter: [@SaveOurRancho](https://twitter.com/SaveOurRancho)

YouTube: [@SaveGlendaleRiversideRancho](https://www.youtube.com/@SaveGlendaleRiversideRancho)

Facebook: [@SaveGlendaleRiversideRancho](https://www.facebook.com/@SaveGlendaleRiversideRancho)

Adrine Arakelian

From: Tarrah Barbour <tarrahbarbour@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, August 8, 2023 11:58 AM
To: DRP Community Studies East Area Section
Subject: Re: Project No. 2020-000612 East San Gabriel Valley Area Plan & Final Environmental Impact Report

CAUTION: External Email. Proceed Responsibly.

Dear Chair Hastings and Commissioners:

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed rezoning of the East San Gabriel Valley as part of the East San Gabriel Valley Area Plan. The implications of this proposal, should it proceed, are deeply concerning for many reasons, including the potential environmental damage, threats to the character and sustainability of our local communities, and the inequitable distribution of responsibility.

Despite a projected significant reduction in the Los Angeles County population—about 1.4 million residents from 2023 to 2060, according to California's Department of Finance—the drive for more housing seems redundant and potentially damaging. This is particularly the case when considering the approximately 93,000 units sitting vacant in Los Angeles, almost half of which are currently withheld from the housing market.

Moreover, the area's agricultural and equestrian communities, integral to the cultural and historical fabric of the East San Gabriel Valley, stand to suffer disproportionately. Their character and livelihoods are at risk from aggressive code enforcement operations, notably from the Nuisance Abatement Team (NAT). This is deeply concerning, particularly as the impact extends beyond the current boundaries of agricultural communities to those neighboring regions.

On this note, I argue that the East San Gabriel Valley Area Plan (ESGVAP) fails to comply with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Specifically, the impact analysis for Agricultural Land Use does not correctly apply CEQA Guidelines Appendix G “II. Agricultural and Forestry Resources.” Part (b) of this section of the guidelines requires the County to consider whether the project will conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use or a Williamson Act contract. In the County’s Appendix A: Initial Study, the County fails to properly consider the significant impact that the project will have on existing zoning for agricultural use.

Notably, the significant impact on existing zoning for agricultural use will have detrimental social and environmental impacts on the residents of A-1 zoned communities, such as Avocado Heights, Pellissier Village, El Monte/South El Monte, Valinda, South San Jose hills, and Rowland Heights. These impacts include the loss of opportunity to practice local, self-sustaining agriculture. The impact of changing agricultural use zoning is also significant, especially in communities vulnerable to environmental changes. Such zoning change makes these communities more susceptible to the effects of climate change.

Also, it's essential to highlight the glaring omission of the City of Industry from sharing the responsibility of addressing the housing shortage. Despite Avocado Heights, Rowland Heights, South San Jose Hills, and South Walnut collectively housing 92% of all community industrial inventory within

the Planning Area, the City of Industry, a significant contributor to the job market, particularly in the industrial sector, is not shouldering its part of the housing issue.

I implore the Regional Planning Commission to reconsider this proposed rezoning, considering the need for sustainable, environmentally friendly, and affordable housing options that respect the historical integrity of our communities. The mitigation measures must include preserving and expanding agricultural zoning and encouraging self-sustaining agriculture.

It is incumbent upon the Commission to ensure that all voices are heard, considered, and reflected in these crucial decisions about our future. Our communities must build resiliency before climate change, including resisting potential changes to the housing market due to zoning changes.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Best,

Tarrah Barbour

--

Tarrah Barbour

Adrine Arakelian

From: ROBERT RODE <rode849@verizon.net>
Sent: Tuesday, August 8, 2023 11:56 AM
To: DRP Community Studies East Area Section
Subject: Re: East San Gabriel Valley Area Plan Project Number 2020-000612

CAUTION: External Email. Proceed Responsibly.

Dear Chair Hastings and Commissioners:

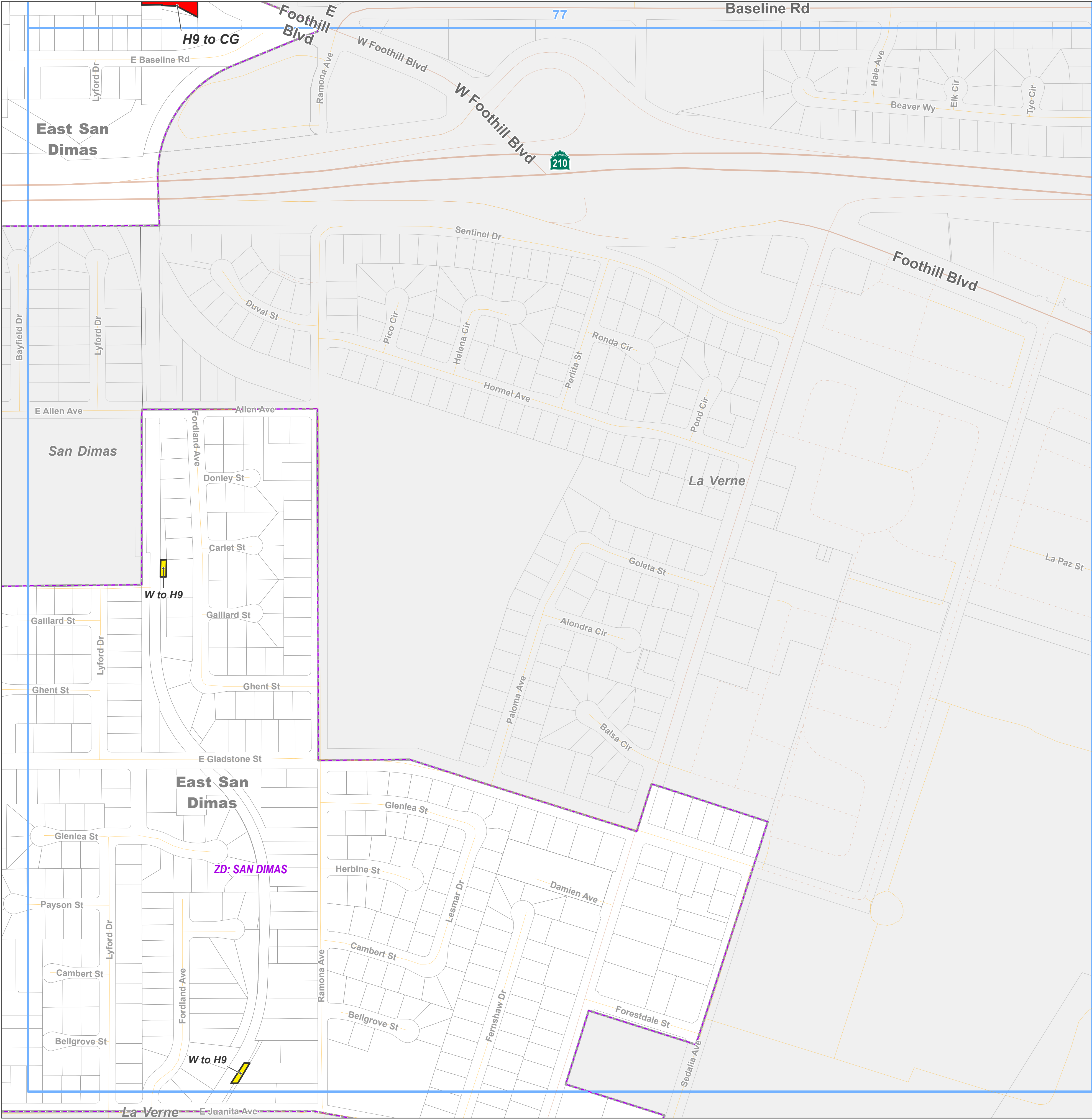
I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed rezoning of the East San Gabriel Valley as part of the East San Gabriel Valley Area Plan. The implications of this proposal, should it proceed, are deeply concerning for many reasons, including the potential environmental damage, threats to the character and sustainability of our local communities, and the inequitable distribution of responsibility. Despite the fact that CA population is down significantly, there is still this strong push to build these stacked housing projects that do not follow local zoning ordinances and significantly alter residential neighborhoods. There is no housing shortage, this is driven by money.

I implore the Regional Planning Commission to reconsider this proposed rezoning, considering the need for sustainable, environmentally friendly, and affordable housing options that respect the historical integrity of our communities. The mitigation measures must include preserving and expanding agricultural zoning and encouraging self-sustaining agriculture.

It is incumbent upon the Commission to ensure that all voices are heard, considered, and reflected in these crucial decisions about our future. Our communities must build resiliency before climate change, including resisting potential changes to the housing market due to zoning changes.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

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- Land Use Policy Change*
- H9 - Residential 9

CG - General Commercial
- Base Layers
- Zoned District

Parcels

Unincorporated Area

Incorporated City

Map Series Grid
- Street Types
- Freeway

Highway

Primary

Secondary

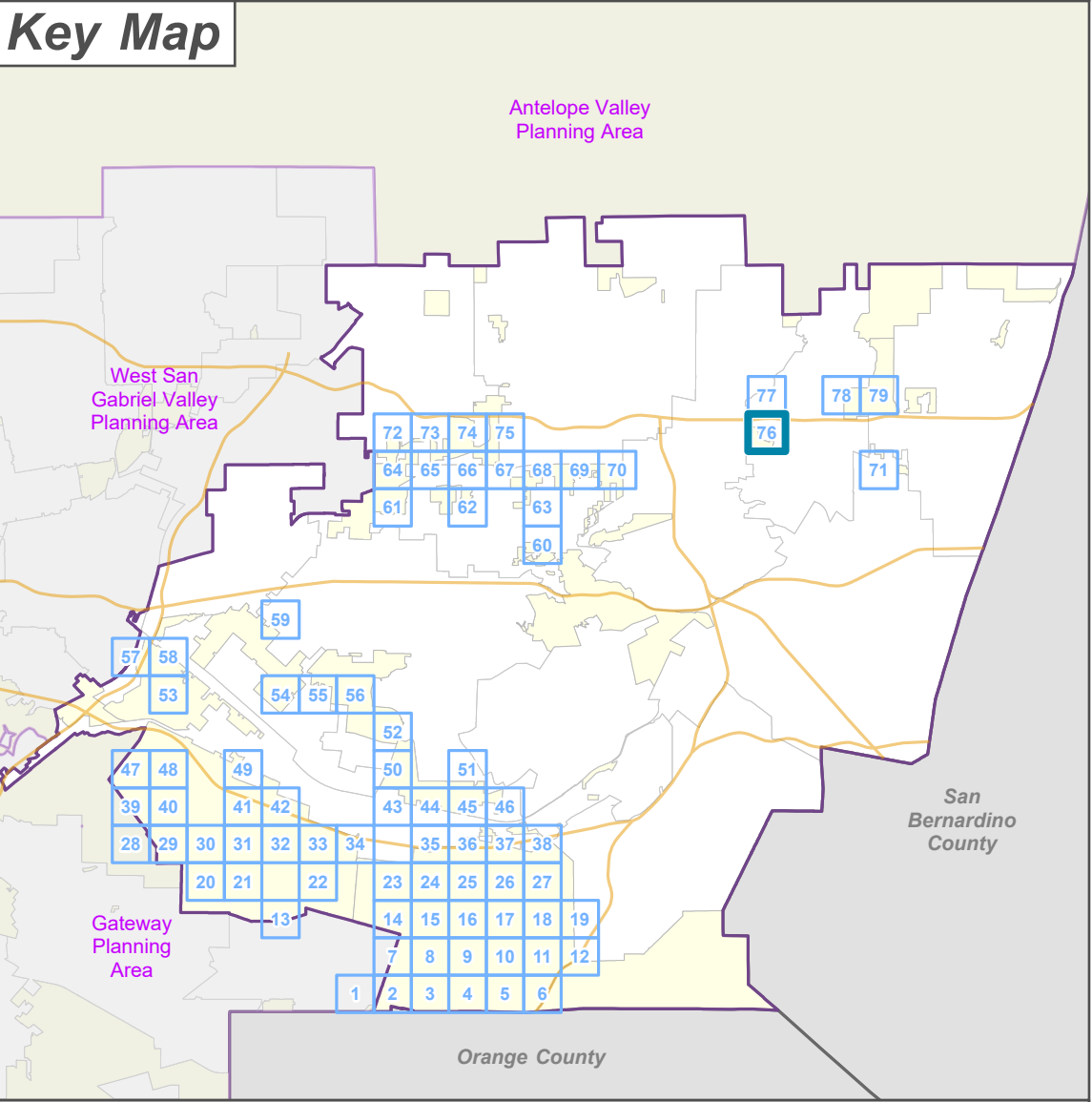
Minor

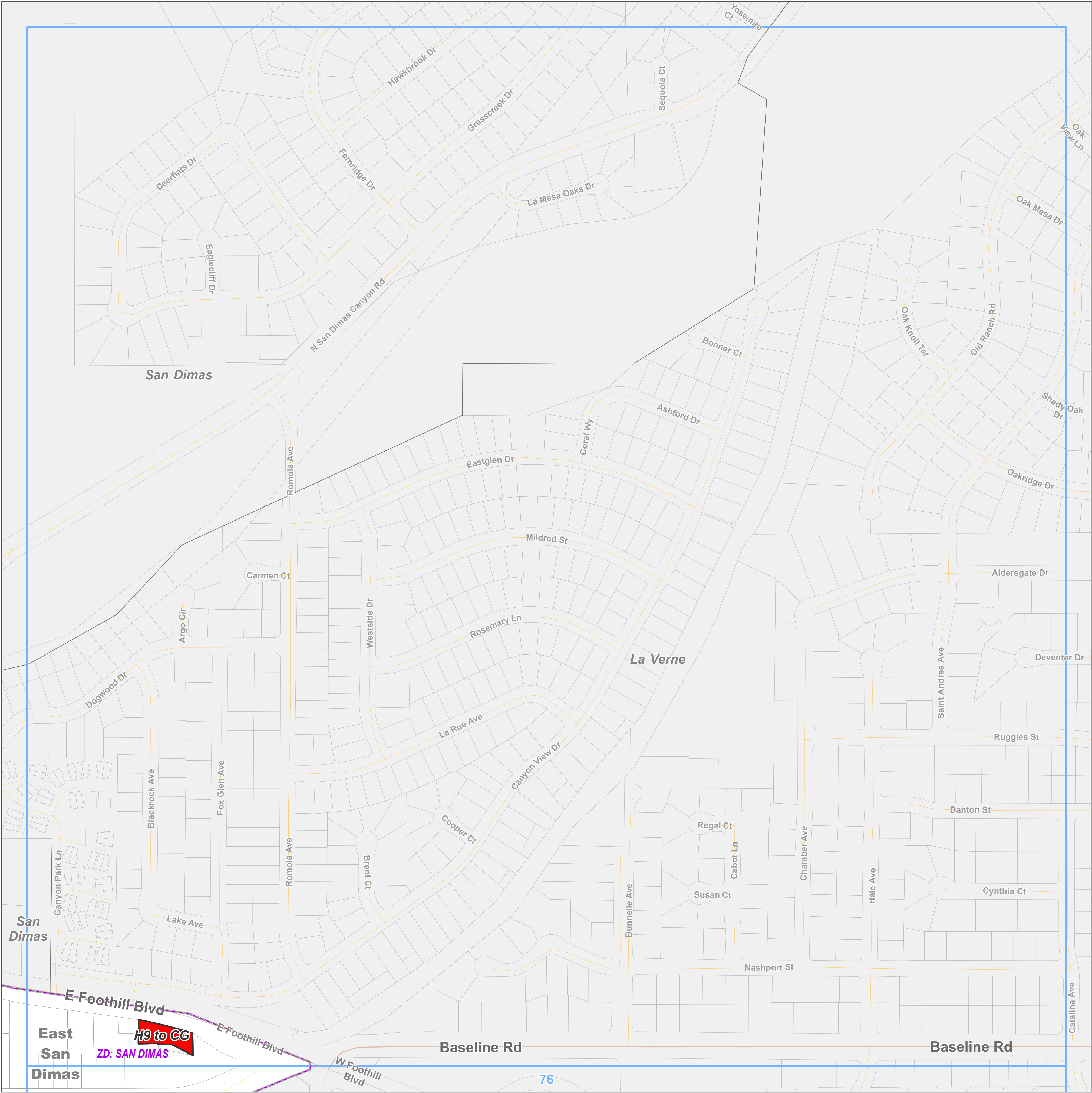
Ramp

Private Road

*** NOTE ABOUT COMMUNITY PLANS:**

Both Hacienda Heights and Rowland Heights have land use policy categories that are changing from the Community Plan land use categories to the equivalent land use categories that were defined by the General Plan update in 2015 (eg. U1 to H5). Although these are technically changes to the land use policy, they are not mapped in this series. The only changes mapped in this series are those changes which either change the density or intensity of the use, or change to an entirely different category.





East San Gabriel Valley Planning Area
Land Use Policy Changes

Zoned District(s): San Dimas

Land Use Policy Change*

CG - General Commercial

Base Layers

Zoned District

Parcels

Unincorporated Area

Incorporated City

Map Series Grid

Street Types

Highway

Primary

Minor

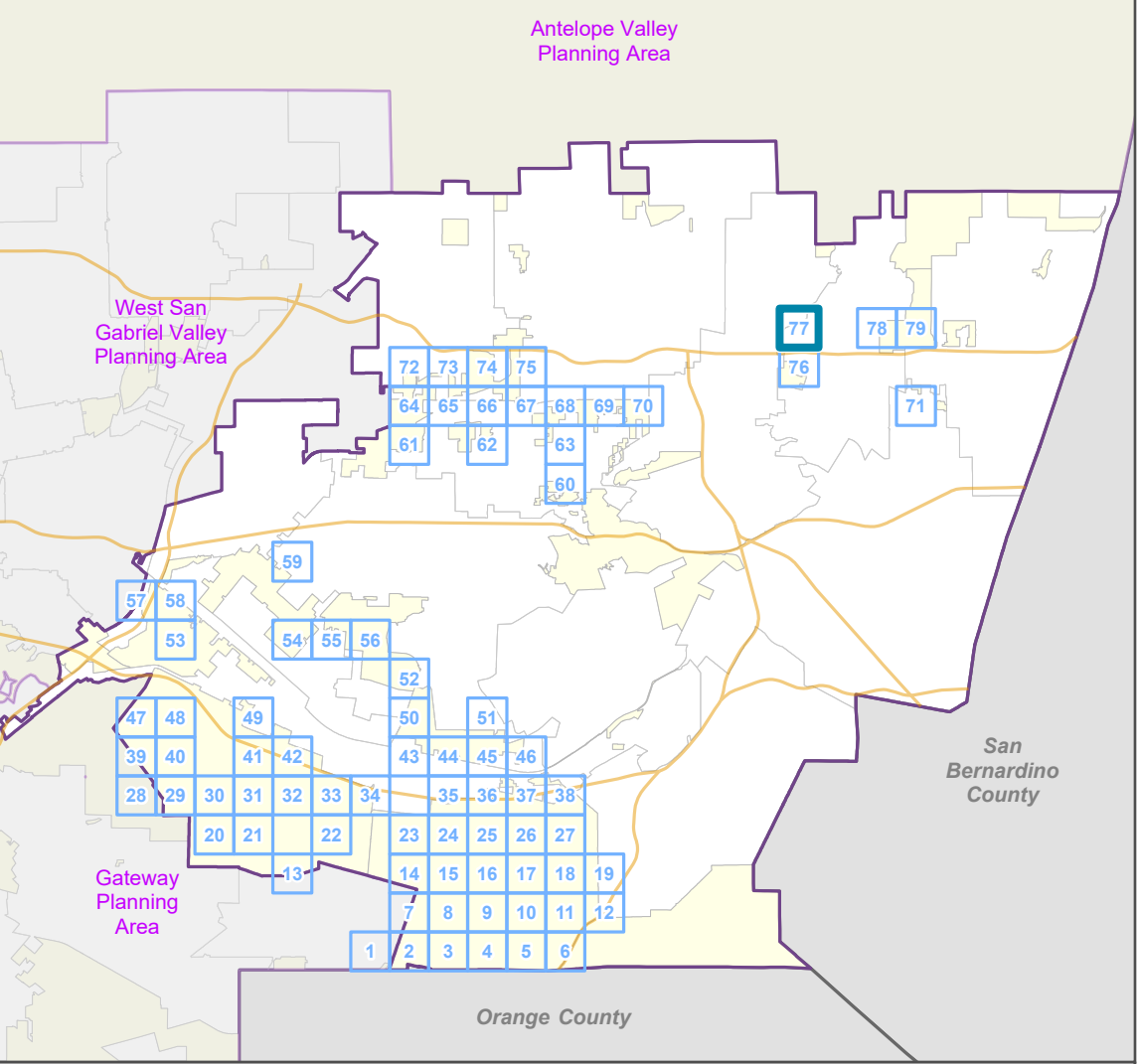
Ramp

Private Road

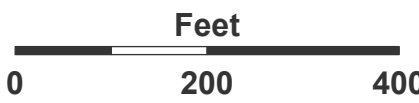
* NOTE ABOUT COMMUNITY PLANS:

Both Hacienda Heights and Rowland Heights have land use policy categories that are changing from the Community Plan land use categories to the equivalent land use categories that were defined by the General Plan update in 2015 (eg. U1 to H5). Although these are technically changes to the land use policy, they are not mapped in this series. The only changes mapped in this series are those changes which either change the density or intensity of the use, or change to an entirely different category.

Key Map



LOS ANGELES COUNTY
Dept. of Regional Planning
320 W. Temple St.
Los Angeles, CA 90012





Zone Change

R-1 - Single-Family Residence

C-3 - General Commercial

Base Layers

Zoned District

Parcels

Unincorporated Area

Incorporated City

Map Series Grid

Street Types

Freeway

Highway

Primary

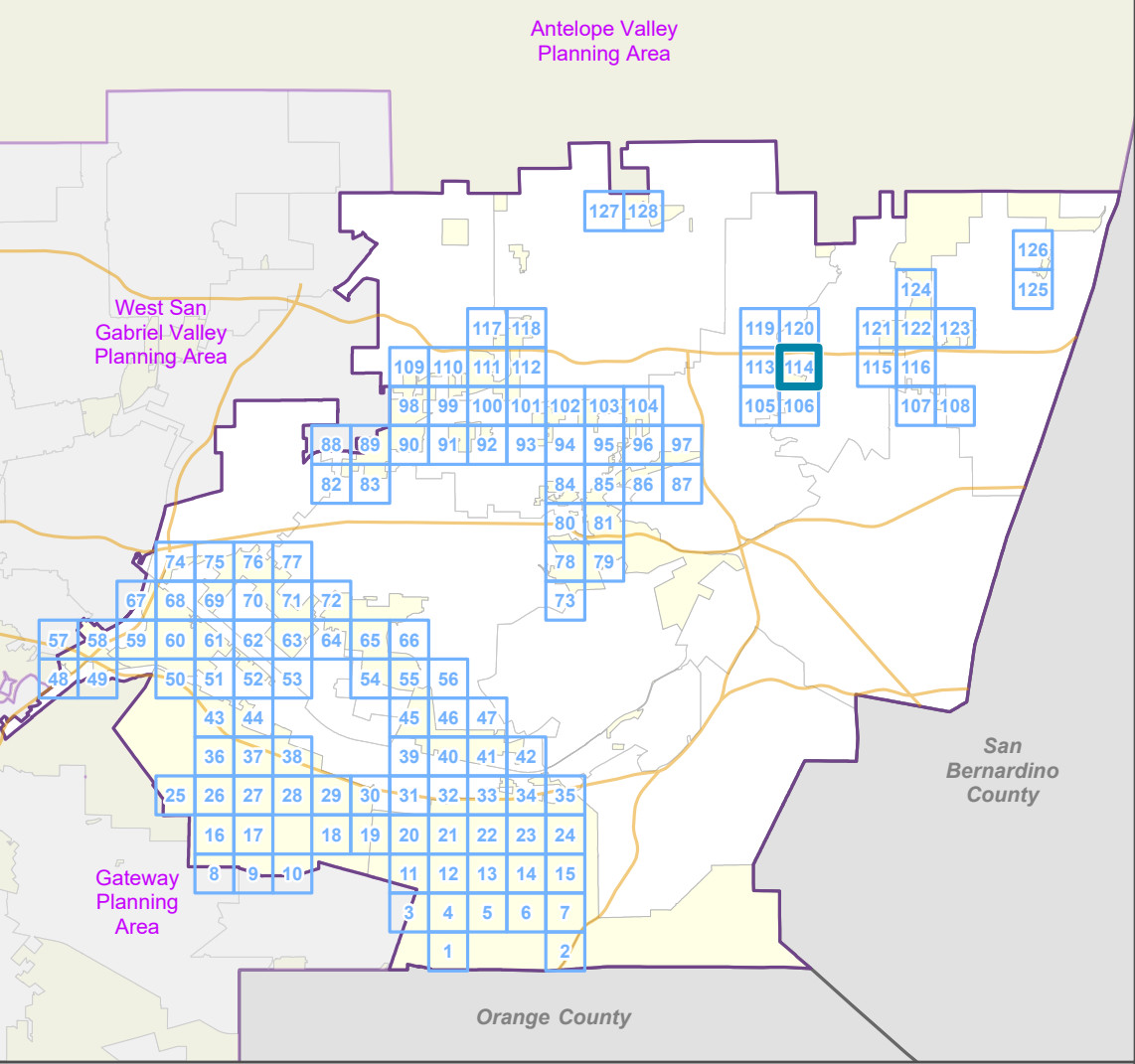
Secondary

Minor

Ramp

Private Road

Key Map

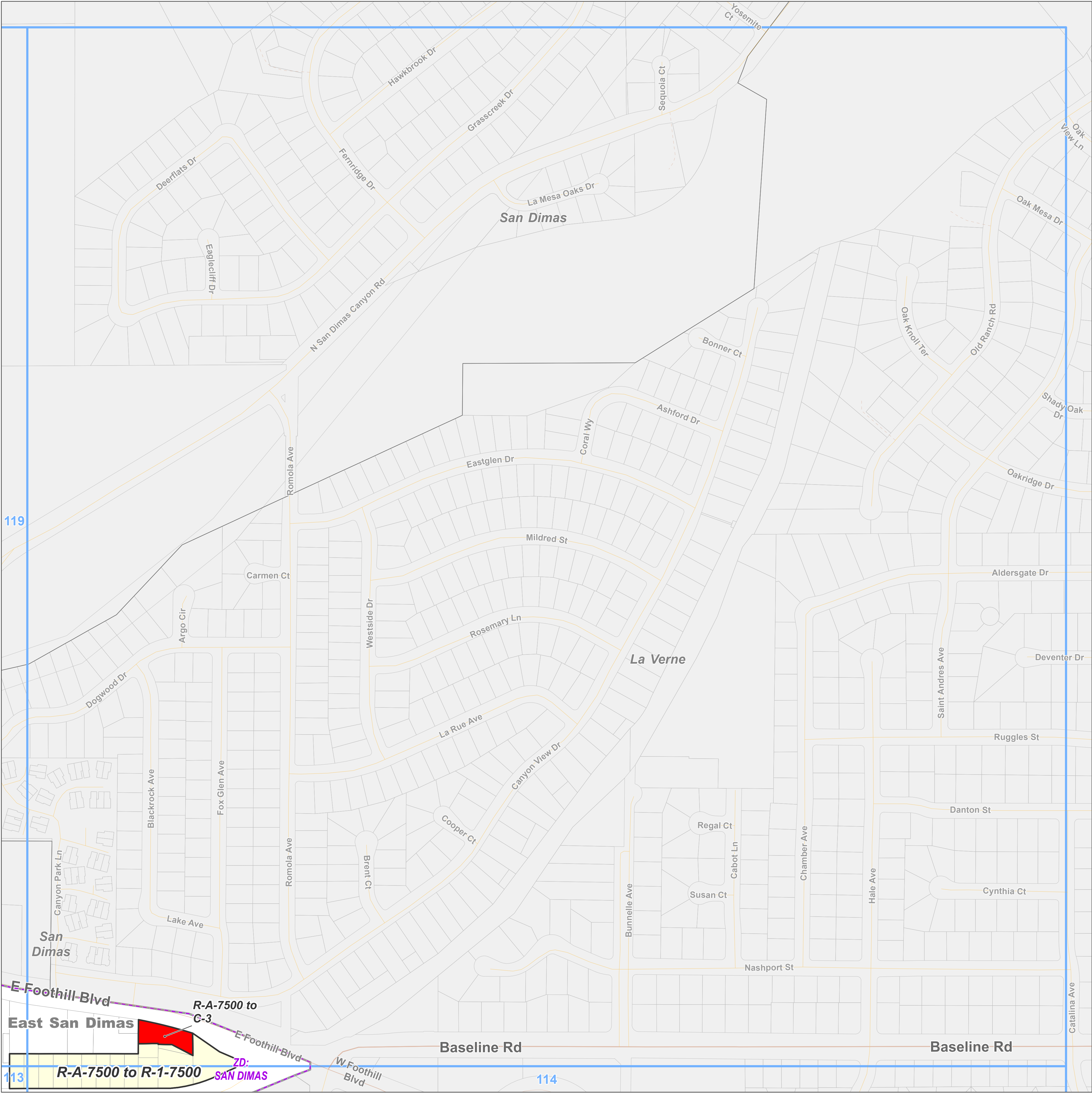


LA COUNTY
PLANNING

LOS ANGELES COUNTY
Dept. of Regional Planning
320 W. Temple St.
Los Angeles, CA 90012

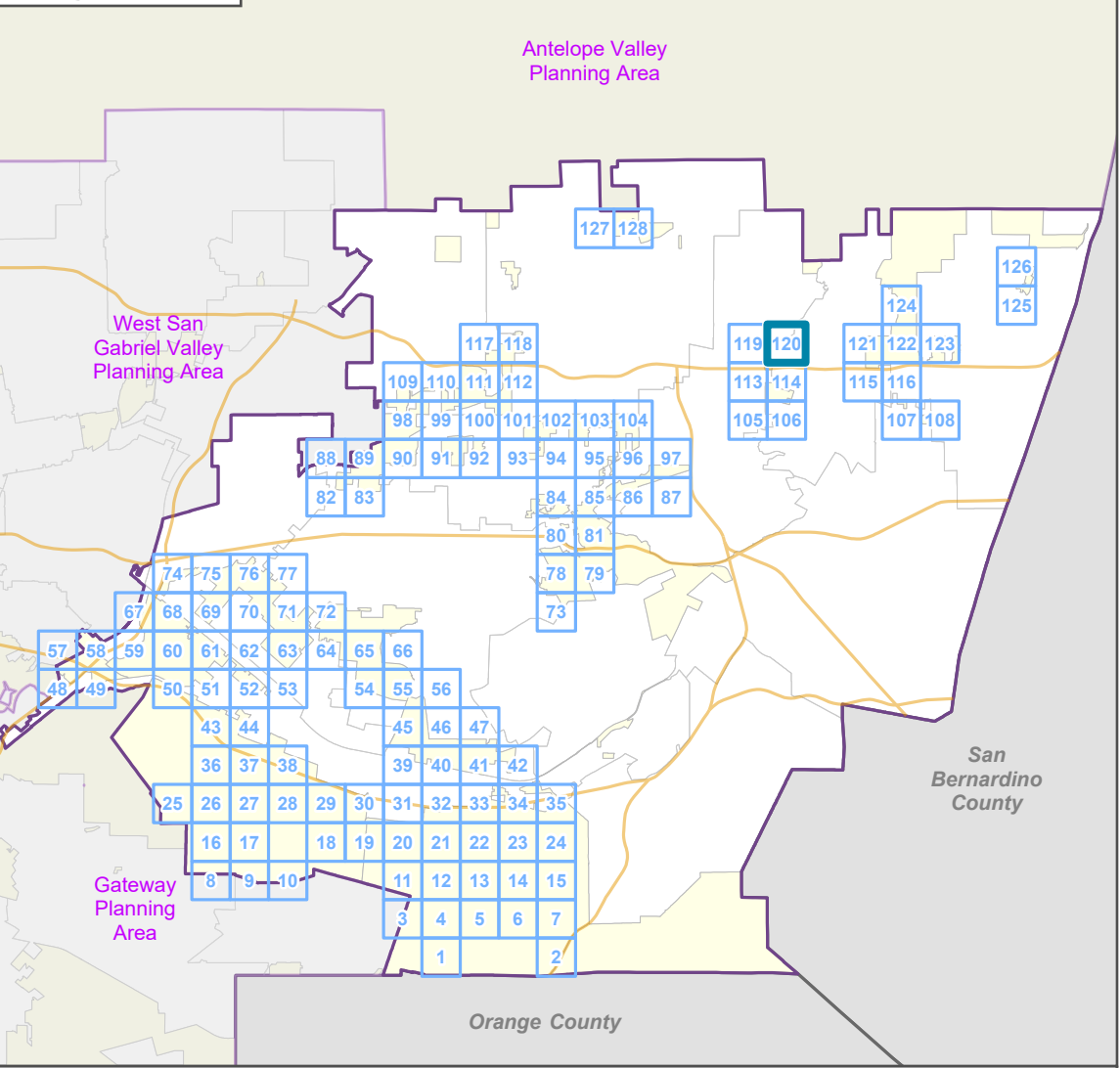


Prepared by DRP GIS Section / August 2023

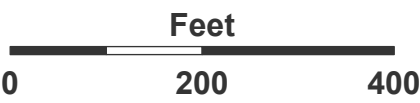


- Zone Change**
- R-1 - Single-Family Residence
 - C-3 - General Commercial
- Base Layers**
- Zoned District
 - Parcels
 - Unincorporated Area
 - Incorporated City
 - Map Series Grid
- Street Types**
- Highway
 - Primary
 - Minor
 - Ramp
 - Private Road

Key Map



LOS ANGELES COUNTY
Dept. of Regional Planning
320 W. Temple St.
Los Angeles, CA 90012



Prepared by DRP GIS Section / August 2023