

NOTICE OF PREPARATION

OF AN ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

Downtown Bakersfield High Speed Rail Station Area Plan (SAP)

LEAD AGENCY:



City of Bakersfield
Community Development Department
Planning Division
1715 Chester Avenue
Bakersfield, CA 93301

Contact:
Cecelia Griego, Principal Planner
Email: cgriego@bakersfieldcity.us | Phone: (661) 326-3788

August 2016



Community Development Department
Douglas N. McIsaac, Community Development Director

Phil Burns, Building Director
Building Division
Phone: (661) 326-3720
Fax: (661) 325-0266

Jacquelyn R. Kitchen, Planning Director
Planning Division
Phone: (661) 326-3733
Fax: (661) 852-2136

NOTICE OF PREPARATION

DATE: August 29, 2016

TO: State Clearinghouse
Public Agencies
Interested Parties
(See *Distribution List*)

FROM: City of Bakersfield – Planning Division
Community Development Department
1715 Chester Avenue
Bakersfield, California 93301 | (661) 326-3733

SUBJECT: Notice of Preparation of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the Downtown Bakersfield High Speed Rail Station Area Plan

Dear Interested Party,

This Notice of Preparation (NOP) has been prepared to notify agencies and interested parties that the City of Bakersfield will serve as the Lead Agency, consistent with Section 15021 of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines, in preparing a Program Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the proposed Downtown Bakersfield High Speed Rail Station Area Plan (the "proposed project"). The City of Bakersfield is soliciting the views of interested persons and agencies as to the scope and content of the environmental information to be studied in the EIR. The EIR will address the potential physical environmental effects of the proposed project for each of the environmental topics outlined in the CEQA Guidelines, Appendix G.

In accordance with Section 15082 of the CEQA Guidelines, this NOP is being sent to the Office of Planning and Research (OPR), Responsible Agencies, Trustee Agencies, and other interested parties. Agencies are requested to review the proposed project description provided in this NOP and provide comments on environmental issues related to the statutory responsibilities of the agency. If you are an authorized representative of any agency or interested party that may be affected by this project, the City of Bakersfield encourages you to express the views of your agency as to the scope and content of the environmental information that is relevant to your agency's statutory responsibilities in connection with the proposed project. In responding, please also provide the name, address, telephone number and e-mail address of the contact person.

Scoping comments on the EIR should focus on discussing possible impacts of the proposed project on the physical environment, ways in which potential adverse effects might be minimized, and alternatives to the proposed project in light of the EIR's purpose to provide useful and accurate information about such factors.

Due to time limits mandated by State law, your response must be received no later than 30 days after issuance of this notice, which is **September 29, 2016**. In addition, comments can be submitted at a public **Scoping Meeting on September 22, 2016**, at 4:00 p.m., at the City of Bakersfield City Council Chamber, 1501 Truxtun Avenue, Bakersfield, California 93301.

Sincerely,


Jacquelyn R. Kitchen, Planning Director

Notice of Completion & Environmental Document Transmittal

Mail to: State Clearinghouse, P.O. Box 3044, Sacramento, CA 95812-3044 (916) 445-0613
For Hand Delivery/Street Address: 1400 Tenth Street, Sacramento, CA 95814

SCH #

Project Title: Downtown Bakersfield High Speed Rail Station Area Plan

Lead Agency: City of Bakersfield Contact Person: Cecelia Griego, Principal Planner
Mailing Address: 1715 Chester Ave. Phone: (661) 326-3788
City: Bakersfield Zip: 93301 County: Kern

Project Location: County: Kern City/Nearest Community: Bakersfield
Cross Streets: Golden State Ave., Chester Ave., California Ave., Union Ave., 38th Ave., F Street Zip Code: 93301
Longitude/Latitude (degrees, minutes and seconds): 35 ° 23 ' 15 " N / 119 ° 52 ' 26 " W Total Acres: 1,472
Assessor's Parcel No.: _____ Section: _____ Twp.: _____ Range: _____ Base: _____
Within 2 Miles: State Hwy #: 204, 178, 99, 58 Waterways: Kern River
Airports: Bakersfield Municipal Airport Railways: BNSF, Union Pacific Schools: BHS, Stella Hills Elem.

Document Type:

CEQA: NOP Draft EIR NEPA: NOI Other: Joint Document
 Early Cons Supplement/Subsequent EIR EA Final Document
 Neg Dec (Prior SCH No.) _____ Draft EIS Other: _____
 Mit Neg Dec Other: _____

Local Action Type:

General Plan Update Specific Plan Rezone Annexation
 General Plan Amendment Master Plan Prezone Redevelopment
 General Plan Element Planned Unit Development Use Permit Coastal Permit
 Community Plan Site Plan Land Division (Subdivision, etc.) Other: _____

Development Type:

Residential: Units 8,570 Acres _____
 Office: Sq.ft. 2,005M Acres _____ Employees _____ Transportation: Type _____
 Commercial: Sq.ft. 906K Acres _____ Employees _____ Mining: Mineral _____
 Industrial: Sq.ft. _____ Acres _____ Employees _____ Power: Type _____ MW _____
 Educational: _____ Waste Treatment: Type _____ MGD _____
 Recreational: _____ Hazardous Waste: Type _____
 Water Facilities: Type _____ MGD _____ Other: Hotel Units: 2,400

Project Issues Discussed in Document:

Aesthetic/Visual Fiscal Recreation/Parks Vegetation
 Agricultural Land Flood Plain/Flooding Schools/Universities Water Quality
 Air Quality Forest Land/Fire Hazard Septic Systems Water Supply/Groundwater
 Archeological/Historical Geologic/Seismic Sewer Capacity Wetland/Riparian
 Biological Resources Minerals Soil Erosion/Compaction/Grading Growth Inducement
 Coastal Zone Noise Solid Waste Land Use
 Drainage/Absorption Population/Housing Balance Toxic/Hazardous Cumulative Effects
 Economic/Jobs Public Services/Facilities Traffic/Circulation Other: _____

Present Land Use/Zoning/General Plan Designation:

General Plan Designations: (P), (PS), (HR), (HMR), (LMR), (LI), (SI), (GC), (OC), (MUC), (OS-P), (PT)

Project Description: (please use a separate page if necessary)

The Plan will establish a strategic vision for the future development of the High Speed Rail Station and the surrounding areas. The Plan will address key factors affecting future development within the plan area, including but not limited to: land use patterns in the context of the Metropolitan Bakersfield General Plan, architecture and urban design, infrastructure, multi-modal transportation services and circulation, parking, pedestrian and bicycle access, open space and recreation, arts and culture, and other principal factors. The plan envisions a phased approach to future physical development, including a long-term (30-year) development projection which envisions the following development statistics: up to 2,005,000 square feet of office; up to 8,570 residential units; up to 906,000 square feet of retail; and up to 2,400 hotel rooms.

Note: The State Clearinghouse will assign identification numbers for all new projects. If a SCH number already exists for a project (e.g. Notice of Preparation or previous draft document) please fill in.

Reviewing Agencies Checklist

Lead Agencies may recommend State Clearinghouse distribution by marking agencies below with an "X".
If you have already sent your document to the agency please denote that with an "S".

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Air Resources Board | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Office of Historic Preservation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Boating & Waterways, Department of | <input type="checkbox"/> Office of Public School Construction |
| <input type="checkbox"/> California Emergency Management Agency | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Parks & Recreation, Department of |
| <input type="checkbox"/> California Highway Patrol | <input type="checkbox"/> Pesticide Regulation, Department of |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Caltrans District #6 | <input type="checkbox"/> Public Utilities Commission |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Caltrans Division of Aeronautics | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Regional WQCB #5 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Caltrans Planning | <input type="checkbox"/> Resources Agency |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Central Valley Flood Protection Board | <input type="checkbox"/> Resources Recycling and Recovery, Department of |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Coachella Valley Mtns. Conservancy | <input type="checkbox"/> S.F. Bay Conservation & Development Comm. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Coastal Commission | <input type="checkbox"/> San Gabriel & Lower L.A. Rivers & Mtns. Conservancy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Colorado River Board | <input type="checkbox"/> San Joaquin River Conservancy |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Conservation, Department of | <input type="checkbox"/> Santa Monica Mtns. Conservancy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Corrections, Department of | <input type="checkbox"/> State Lands Commission |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Delta Protection Commission | <input type="checkbox"/> SWRCB: Clean Water Grants |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Education, Department of | <input type="checkbox"/> SWRCB: Water Quality |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Energy Commission | <input type="checkbox"/> SWRCB: Water Rights |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fish & Game Region #4 | <input type="checkbox"/> Tahoe Regional Planning Agency |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Food & Agriculture, Department of | <input type="checkbox"/> Toxic Substances Control, Department of |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Forestry and Fire Protection, Department of | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Water Resources, Department of |
| <input type="checkbox"/> General Services, Department of | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other: <u>High Speed Rail Authority</u> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Health Services, Department of | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other: <u>Kern County Council of Governments</u> |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Housing & Community Development | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Native American Heritage Commission | |

Local Public Review Period (to be filled in by lead agency)

Starting Date August 29, 2016 Ending Date September 27, 2016

Lead Agency (Complete if applicable):

Consulting Firm: <u>Rincon Consultants, Inc.</u>	Applicant: <u>City of Bakersfield Community Development Dept.</u>
Address: <u>180 North Ashwood Avenue</u>	Address: <u>1715 Chester Avenue</u>
City/State/Zip: <u>Ventura, CA 93003</u>	City/State/Zip: <u>Bakersfield, CA 93301</u>
Contact: <u>Jasch Janowicz</u>	Phone: <u>661-326-3733</u>
Phone: <u>805-644-4455</u>	

Signature of Lead Agency Representative: *Cecilia Griego* **Date:** 8-26-16

Authority cited: Section 21083, Public Resources Code. Reference: Section 21161, Public Resources Code.

Notice of Preparation of Environmental Impact Report

Comments Due: Do to the time limits mandated by State law your response must be sent at the earliest possible date but not later than 30 days after receipt of this notice. The Notice of Preparation comment period **begins on August 29, 2016** and **ends on September 27, 2016**. Please send your comments by regular mail, email, or fax, no later than **September 27, 2016**, to:

Cecelia Griego, Principal Planner
Community Development Department
1715 Chester Avenue
Bakersfield, California 93301
Phone: 661-326-3788
Fax: 661-852-2136
Email: cgriego@bakersfieldcity.us

Public Scoping Meeting: A public scoping meeting to be held on **September 22, 2016, at 4:00 p.m.**, at the City of Bakersfield City Council Chamber, 1501 Truxtun Avenue, Bakersfield, California 93301. Attendance is open to the public. The meeting will provide a brief description of the project, a brief overview of the CEQA process, and will provide a forum for submittal of public comments regarding the scope and content of the environmental analysis that will be provided within the EIR.

Project Location: The proposed project area encompasses approximately 2.3 square miles (1,472 acres) surrounding the proposed Bakersfield High Speed Rail Station locations, which are located along Golden State Avenue near its intersections with Chester Avenue and F Street, and along California Avenue near its intersection with Union Avenue. The project area is bound by California Avenue to the south, Union Avenue to the east, 38th Street and Kern River to the north, and F Street to the west. Refer to Figure 1 (attached) for the location of the proposed Bakersfield High Speed Rail Station Area Plan.

Project Description: The proposed Downtown Bakersfield High Speed Rail Station Area Plan will establish a strategic vision for the future development of the High Speed Rail Station and the surrounding areas. The Plan will address key factors affecting future development within the plan area, including but not limited to: land use patterns in the context of the Metropolitan Bakersfield General Plan, architecture and urban design, infrastructure, multi-modal transportation services and circulation, parking, pedestrian and bicycle access, open space and recreation, arts and culture, and other principal factors. The proposed project would establish a phased approach to future physical development, including a long-term (30-year) development projection which envisions the following development statistics: up to 2,005,000 square feet of office; up to 8,570 residential units; up to 906,000 square feet of retail; and up to 2,400 hotel rooms.

**Notice of Preparation of
Environmental Impact Report**

Potential Environmental Effects:

Potentially significant environmental impacts have been identified in the following issue areas: Aesthetics, Air Quality, Biological Resources, Cultural Resources, Geology/ Soils, Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, Hydrology/ Water Quality, Land Use/ Planning, Noise, Population and Housing, Public Services, Transportation/Traffic, and Utilities/Service Systems.

In addition, three alternative development scenarios, including the "no project" alternative, will be examined as part of the Environmental Impact Report.

A copy of the NOP is available for review at the following locations:

- Kern County Clerk, 1115 Truxtun Avenue, Bakersfield, CA 93301
- City of Bakersfield, Community Development Department, Planning Division, 1715 Chester Avenue, 2nd Floor, Bakersfield, CA 93301
- City's Project Website located at <http://www.makingdowntownbakersfield.us>
- Kern County Beale Memorial Library, 701 Truxtun Avenue, Bakersfield, CA 93301
- Kern County Law Library, 1415 Truxtun Avenue, Bakersfield, CA 93301



Signature

8-26-16

Date

Cecelia Griego

Print Name

Principal Planner

Title

Downtown Bakersfield High Speed Rail Station Area Plan EIR
Notice of Preparation



- Study Area
- 1/2 Mile Walk Radius
- Kern County Canals
- Railroads
- HSR Station Locations

Project Location

Figure 1

