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NOTICE OF PREPARATION (NOP) OF A DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT FOR THE ORANGE LINE TRANSIT NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN, AND AMENDMENTS TO THE CITY OF LOS ANGELES MUNICIPAL CODE TO ADOPT NEW ZONES AND ZONING CLASSIFICATIONS FOR PORTIONS OF THE VAN NUYS-NORTH SHERMAN OAKS AND NORTH HOLLYWOOD-VALLEY VILLAGE COMMUNITY PLAN AREAS

TO: Agencies, Organizations, and Interested Parties

DATE: July 11, 2018

The City of Los Angeles Department of City Planning (DCP), as the Lead Agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), will prepare an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) to evaluate the Orange Line Transit Neighborhood Plan Project or "Project." The Project will include:

- (1) Changes to land-use and zoning regulations in areas proximate to the Metro Orange Line ("Orange Line Transit Neighborhood Plan" or "TNP");
- (2) Amendments to the City of Los Angeles Municipal Code (LAMC) to adopt new zoning regulations as part of the **re:code LA** program ("Zoning Code Update");
- (3) All necessary amendments to the Van Nuys-North Sherman Oaks and North Hollywood-Valley Village Community Plans, the General Plan Framework Element, the Mobility Plan, and other General Plan elements; and
- (4) Ordinances to effectuate changes to overlay zones, the Los Angeles Municipal Code, and other land-use ordinances and regulations, as may be necessary, to implement the above.

The Project description, location, and goals and objectives are set forth below, and the Project Study Area is shown in **Figures 1, 2, and 3**. The City is requesting identification of environmental issues and information that you or your organization believes should be considered in the EIR.

NOTICE OF PUBLIC SCOPING MEETING

Pursuant to California Public Resources Code Section 21083.9 and California Code of Regulations, Title 14 ("CEQA Guidelines") Section 15082, the Lead Agency will conduct a Scoping Meeting for the purpose of soliciting oral and written comments from interested parties requesting notice, responsible agencies, agencies with jurisdiction by law, trustee agencies, and involved federal agencies, as to the appropriate scope and content of the EIR. You are welcome to attend the meeting and present environmental information that you believe should be considered in the EIR. The scoping meeting is scheduled as follows:

Date: Wednesday, July 25, 2018
Time: 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM
Place: Marvin Braude Building
First Floor Conference Room
6262 Van Nuys Blvd.
Van Nuys, CA 91401

As a covered entity under Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act, the City of Los Angeles does not discriminate. The meeting facility and its parking are wheelchair accessible. Sign language interpreters, assistive listening devices, or other auxiliary aides and/or services may be provided upon request. Other services, such as translation between English and other languages, may also be provided upon request. To ensure availability of services, please make your request no later than three working days (72 hours) prior to the meeting calling Daniel Skolnick at 818.374.7556.

REVIEW AND RESPONSE PERIOD

Thursday July 12, 2018 to Wednesday, August 15, 2018 by 5:00 p.m.

Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines, Section 15082(b), responses to this NOP must be provided during this response period.

RESPONSIBLE AND TRUSTEE AGENCIES

The City requests your agency's views on the scope and content of the environmental information relevant to your agency's statutory responsibilities in connection with the Project, in accordance with the CEQA Guidelines, Section 15082(b). Your agency will need to use the EIR prepared by the City when considering any permits or other project approvals that your agency must issue. As such, your responses to this Notice of Preparation (NOP) at a minimum should identify: (1) The significant environmental issues and reasonable alternatives and mitigation measures that your agency will need to have explored in the EIR; and (2) Whether your agency will be a responsible or trustee agency for this project.

PROJECT LOCATION

The Metro Orange Line is an 18-mile Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) service located in the southern and western San Fernando Valley, along the former right-of-way of the Southern Pacific Railroad. It first opened in 2005 with service between North Hollywood and Warner Center, and an extension to Chatsworth opened in 2012. The Project Area is comprised of LA Transportation Analysis Zones (TAZs) surrounding the North Hollywood, Van Nuys, and Sepulveda Orange Line stations; the majority of changes are expected to occur within an approximately half-mile radius of each station. The North Hollywood station is approximately 11 miles northwest of Downtown Los Angeles, and the Van Nuys and Sepulveda stations are approximately 4 and 5 miles west of North Hollywood, respectively. In total, the Project Area consists of two non-contiguous portions of land, one measuring approximately 4.5 square miles (surrounding Van Nuys and Sepulveda stations) and one measuring approximately 2.85 square miles (surrounding North Hollywood station). The Project's study area is outlined in **Figures 1 & 2**, within which land use and zoning changes are contemplated; the Project may include land use and zoning changes to only select portions of the study area. The Project Area is located entirely within the incorporated City of Los Angeles, within City Council Districts 2, 4, and 6, and includes portions of the Van Nuys-North Sherman Oaks and North Hollywood-Valley Village Community Plan Areas. The study area is shown within a regional context in **Figure 3**.

PROJECT BACKGROUND

The Project is part of the City of Los Angeles Transit Neighborhood Plans (TNP) initiative, which encourages livable communities and employment centers around the region's expanding transit network. The Los Angeles Department of City Planning is focusing land use planning around transit to create complete neighborhoods. Planning regulations adjacent to transit neighborhoods typically encourage building design and a mix of uses that foster transit use. This pattern of development is intended to expand mobility options for greater numbers of people; improve the livability of the City; reduce vehicle-miles travelled (VMT) and related greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions consistent with regional and state policies; reinforce neighborhood character and identity; and generate greater economic opportunity for all residents.

The Project includes a variety of land-use and zoning changes for select areas within the City of Los Angeles surrounding three Orange Line BRT stations: North Hollywood, Van Nuys, and Sepulveda. These stations have among the highest ridership on the Orange Line, itself one of the most frequently used bus lines in the Los Angeles Metro network. Each station covered under the Project sits at the intersection of at least two major transit services: at North Hollywood, the Orange Line connects with the Red Line subway to Hollywood and Downtown Los Angeles, along with several buses on Lankershim Boulevard; at Van Nuys, the Orange Line connects with local and rapid bus services on Van Nuys Boulevard, the highest-ridership transit corridor in the San Fernando Valley; and at Sepulveda, the Orange Line connects with local and rapid bus services that take passengers to the Westside. In addition, the East San Fernando Valley Transit Corridor Project, funded under 2016's Measure M ballot initiative, will bring light-rail transit to the Van Nuys Boulevard corridor, increasing the Van Nuys Station area's transit accessibility. The study areas around all three stations contain a mix of commercial, public facility, single-family residential, multifamily residential, and industrially zoned land, often in close proximity to each other. Changes will be considered to all land-use types in an attempt to maximize accessibility to high-quality transit infrastructure and ensure a balance of housing, jobs, commercial, and open space.

The Project includes portions of the Van Nuys-North Sherman Oaks and North Hollywood-Valley Village Community Plan Areas, two of the 35 Community Plans (and two Special Purpose Districts – Port of Los Angeles and Los Angeles World Airports) that comprise the Land Use Element of the City's General Plan. The Land Use Element is one of the seven State-mandated elements of the General Plan that also includes open space, transportation, conservation, housing, noise, and safety elements. Community Plans are intended to foster an arrangement of land uses, streets, and services that promotes economic vitality, social and physical well-being, and the general health, safety, welfare and convenience of people who live and work in the plan area. The Community Plans covering the Southeast Valley have not been updated since the late 1990s and are thus out of date. Over the next three years, comprehensive updates to the entire Van Nuys-North Sherman Oaks, North Hollywood-Valley Village, and Sherman Oaks-Studio City-Toluca Lake-Cahuenga Pass Community Plan Areas are scheduled to occur as a separate planning project.

The planned Zoning Code Update is a portion of the **re:code LA** program, a program to comprehensively rewrite the City of Los Angeles Zoning Code for the first time since the 1940s. In summary, the **re:code LA** program will overhaul the text of the LAMC to replace the City's existing Zoning Ordinance (Chapter 1 of the LAMC) with a new City zoning ordinance (New Zoning Ordinance). The Orange Line Transit Neighborhood Plan would apply the new zoning

regulations to land within the Project Area. The New Zoning Ordinance would include, among other provisions, new zone classifications and revised/reorganized development standards and requirements for those new zone classifications. The New Zoning Ordinance and zone classifications are further described below.

It is expected that the parts of the Zoning Code necessary to utilize the New Zoning Ordinance will have already been adopted by the time the Project is considered for adoption. These elements of the Zoning Code include definitions, administrative rules, and development standards that are expected to be adopted before or simultaneously with the first ordinance to implement the New Zoning Ordinance zone classifications. On the other hand, new zones (or zone module types, as further described below) are expected to be adopted at different times. None of the new zones, or their respective development standards and requirements, would be in effect for any property in the City until that property is rezoned and the relevant Community Plan is amended to allow that new zoning classification.

As such, the City expects to implement the necessary portions of the **re:code LA** program in the Project Area with a Zoning Code Update, which would involve the creation of new commercial, industrial, and multifamily residential zones as necessary to implement Project objectives. The Zoning Code Update would include: (1) new zone classifications (or zone module types for zone classifications) for the Project Area; and (2) if not previously adopted at the time of Project approval, those elements of the New Zoning Ordinance that are required to utilize the new zones, such as definitions and development standards, including standards that may be utilized citywide. The Project does not include rezoning land outside of the Project Area or amending any Community Plans other than the Van Nuys-North Sherman Oaks and North Hollywood-Valley Village Community Plans.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The components of the proposed Project are: Amendments to the Van Nuys-North Sherman Oaks and North Hollywood-Valley Village Community Plans (the “Transit Neighborhood Plan” or “TNP”) the adoption of new zones and land-use and development regulations developed through the **re:code LA** program (the “Zoning Code Update,”) and the adoption of necessary revisions and any other amendments necessary to implement the above, including amendments to other General Plan elements (such as Mobility and Framework), the Los Angeles Municipal Code (LAMC), Van Nuys Community Design Overlay (CDO), North Hollywood Commercial & Artcraft District, and other ordinances and regulations. The TNP may also include updates to the maps, goals, policies, and programs that constitute the Van Nuys-North Sherman Oaks and North Hollywood-Valley Village Community Plans.

Orange Line Transit Neighborhood Plan

The Orange Line TNP will reflect a long-term vision for the Orange Line corridor and adjacent areas by guiding development through the year 2040, and would amend the existing Van Nuys-North Sherman Oaks and North Hollywood-Valley Village Community Plans for consistency in the process. It includes amending the Zoning Map to rezone the Project Area with new zone classifications developed for the Project. Modifications to the aforementioned Community Plans may include modifications to goals, policies, and objectives necessary to reflect, and attain consistency with, new zoning and development standards for the Project Area. The TNP would allocate land, and zone as appropriate, for the range of uses that the Project Area will need through 2040, including land for jobs and housing, while improving the link between land use and transportation in a manner that is consistent with the General Plan Framework Element. Zoning implemented by the TNP would serve to emphasize contextual compatibility with adjacent land uses while accommodating growth in a variety of commercial, residential, and industrial neighborhoods. Additionally, the TNP seeks to provide incentives for the creation of affordable housing and other community benefits, such as publicly accessible open space. As necessary, amendments to the Van Nuys-North Sherman Oaks and North Hollywood-Valley Village Community Plans’ goals, objectives, policies, and programs would articulate the policy direction that the City continues to promote consistent with statewide policy direction.

Zoning Code Update

As discussed above, the Project also includes a Zoning Code Update, which refers to amendments to the LAMC required to implement the Project objectives and **re:code LA** in the Project Area.

The new **re:code LA** zoning system will be a modular one, in which use and form are regulated separately. Zoning classifications require the bundling of several designations to make a zone. These designations are intended to regulate the following elements and may include the following modules: Form District, Frontage, Development Standards, Use District, and Density. Proposed modules are described as follows:

- The *Form District* module governs the shape and size of buildings by regulating lot size and site coverage, building placement, bulk, and mass;
- The *Frontage* module governs how a site or building interacts with and relates to the street or right of way by regulating ground floor story height, the amount of transparency (such as windows) required, pedestrian entry requirements and spacing, and allowable building elements (such as canopies);
- The *Development Standards* module is comprised of regulations meant to enhance the existing or establish new development patterns of an area where applied. Such Development Standards regulations could include grading quantities, landscaping, and potentially new minimum parking requirements;

- The *Use District* module establishes which uses and activities are allowed. Each use will have a corresponding definition and any relevant standards, either maintained from the current Zoning Code or newly established standards; and
- The *Density* module, which is an optional module, specifies the maximum allowable density of residential units, based on the square footage of lot area required for each individual unit. If this module is not included within a site's zone, the maximum number of units is not limited by the size of the lot.

To implement the Project, and similar projects throughout the City, certain Form District, Frontage, Development Standards, Use District, and Density module types are proposed to be added to the LAMC. New zones using the above described modules would be developed for the purpose of rezoning property in the Project Area and incorporated into the LAMC. As the system is modular, it is anticipated that some of these Form District, Frontage, Development Standards, Use District, and Density module types developed for the Zoning Code Update will be used in other parts of the City in various combinations in the future when community plans are updated and properties rezoned.

If not already adopted at the time of Project approval, the Project would also include the adoption of citywide elements of the New Zoning Code, including: citywide development standards (such as parking stall dimensions, grading haul route standards, minimum pedestrian walkways, and others); definition of terms; rules of measurement (such as how to measure lot width and building height); possible land use incentive system(s), modifications to existing nonconforming provisions; maintenance of current rules for division of land; creation of new streetscape and maintenance of street improvement requirements; establishment of new overlay districts; and potentially new minimum parking requirements. As with the new re:code LA zones, these regulations would only go into effect when property is rezoned and as community plans are amended. This is expected to occur through future community plan updates and potentially through other City-initiated land-use planning efforts.

Objectives

The primary objectives of the Project are to:

- Provide a guide for future development in the area through 2040
- Create opportunities for more jobs and housing near transit
- Improve the quality of local public spaces for residents, employees, and visitors
- Promote a transit, bicycle, and pedestrian friendly environment, thereby reducing Vehicle-Miles Travelled (VMT) and greenhouse gas emissions (GHGs)
- Maintain and enhance job growth in commercial and industrial zones near transit stations
- Encourage building and street design that is aesthetically pleasing and sensitive to the surrounding context
- Create opportunities for the development of new housing that meets the diverse needs and income levels of City residents
- Take advantage of upcoming projects funded by Measures R and M, including the East San Fernando Valley Transit Corridor, Sepulveda Corridor, and Metro's NextGen Bus Study.
- Refine and expand a system that links development with public benefits to deliver community amenities in the Project Area.

Elements of the proposed Project to implement these objectives may include the following:

- Amend the text of the Van Nuys-North Sherman Oaks and North Hollywood-Valley Village Community Plans to revise the stated plan policies and objectives to reflect the Project;
- Amend the land use map of the Van Nuys-North Sherman Oaks and North Hollywood-Valley Village Community Plans to implement the new policies and objectives, including amendments to establish plan consistency with the new zones;
- Adopt the Zoning Code Update;
- Amend the Zoning Map to rezone select parcels in the Project Area with new zoning classifications;
- Integrate regulations of existing zoning overlays into the new **re:code LA** zones; and
- Amend the General Plan Framework, Mobility Plan and other Citywide General Plan Elements, and ordinances, as necessary.

ISSUES TO BE ADDRESSED IN THE EIR

Based on the project description and the Lead Agency's understanding of the environmental issues associated with the Proposed Project, the following topics will be analyzed in the EIR:

- | | |
|----------------------------|---|
| • Aesthetics | • Population and Housing |
| • Air Quality | • Public Services |
| • Cultural Resources | • Recreation |
| • Greenhouse Gas Emissions | • Transportation/Circulation |
| • Land Use and Planning | • Tribal Cultural Resources |
| • Noise | • Utilities, Energy and Service Systems |

It is anticipated that the following topics will be analyzed as less than significant impacts:

- Agricultural Resources
- Biological Resources
- Geology and Soils
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- Hydrology and Water Quality
- Mineral Resources

The EIR will analyze the reasonably foreseeable indirect physical changes to the environment in the above topic areas caused by the Project, the adoption of the Zoning Code update, and any other necessary amendments to the Van Nuys-North Sherman Oaks and North Hollywood-Valley Village Community Plans or LAMC.

To the extent that the Zoning Code Update includes zoning module types or citywide standards and regulations that may in the future be used in other parts of the City, indirect impacts to the environment from those provisions are speculative. This is due to both the modularity of the system (zone module types can be combined to make many different zones) and the fact that none of the components of the new zoning would be available for use on a property until a community plan update or other planning process, such as a site-specific General Plan Amendment and zone change, has introduced the new zones to an area. Additionally, as stated above, additional zoning classifications (i.e. module types) may be created in the future through the **re:code LA** program to meet the needs of other parts of the City. Any application of any part of the Zoning Code Update outside of the Project Area would require a Community Plan amendment, rezoning, and new environmental analysis. The EIR will consider and discuss whether any impacts from the use of the Zoning Code Update outside the Project Area are reasonably foreseeable, and if so, the EIR will analyze those impacts.

Alternatives to be analyzed in the EIR are to be defined and analyzed consistent with the requirements of CEQA Guidelines, Section 15126.6. The specific alternatives to be evaluated will include a "No Project" alternative, as required by CEQA, and may include alternative land use configurations that would focus on reducing any identified significant adverse impacts.

DOCUMENT AVAILABILITY

The Notice of Preparation can be viewed on the Transit Neighborhood Plan program's website at: www.latnp.org. It can also be viewed on the City of Los Angeles Department of City Planning website at: www.planning.lacity.org. To locate a copy of the Notice of Preparation online, click on Environmental Review on the left side of the Department of City Planning website and then click on the Notice of Preparation & Public Scoping Meetings link.

SUBMITTAL OF WRITTEN COMMENTS

The Lead Agency solicits comments regarding the scope, content and specificity of the EIR from all interested parties requesting notice, responsible agencies, agencies with jurisdiction by law, trustee agencies, and involved agencies. Please send written/typed comments (including a name, telephone number, and contact information) to the following:

City of Los Angeles, Department of City Planning
Attn: Daniel Skolnick, City Planning Associate
Case Numbers: CPC-2018-3723-GPA-ZC-CDO-BL; ENV-2018-3724-EIR
6262 Van Nuys Boulevard, Room 351
Van Nuys, CA 91401

Phone: (818) 374-7556
Fax: (818) 374-5070
E-mail: daniel.skolnick@lacity.org

In accordance with CEQA Section 15082, this Notice of Preparation is being circulated for a 30-day comment period. The City of Los Angeles requests that written comments be provided at the earliest possible date, but no later than **5:00 p.m. on Wednesday, August 15, 2018**.

For more information about the Orange Line Transit Neighborhood Plan, please visit www.latnp.org and for more details about **re:code LA**, please visit <http://recode.la/>.

ALL INTERESTED PARTIES ARE INVITED TO ATTEND THE PUBLIC SCOPING MEETING TO ASSIST IN IDENTIFYING ISSUES TO BE ADDRESSED IN THE EIR. ATTENDEES WILL HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY TO PROVIDE INPUT TO THE CONSULTANTS PREPARING THE EIR.


Daniel Skolnick, City Planning Associate
City of Los Angeles Department of City Planning

Attachments:
Figure 1 & 2: Orange Line Transit Neighborhood Plan study area
Figure 3: Regional Context Map

Figures 1 & 2: Orange Line Transit Neighborhood Plan Study Area

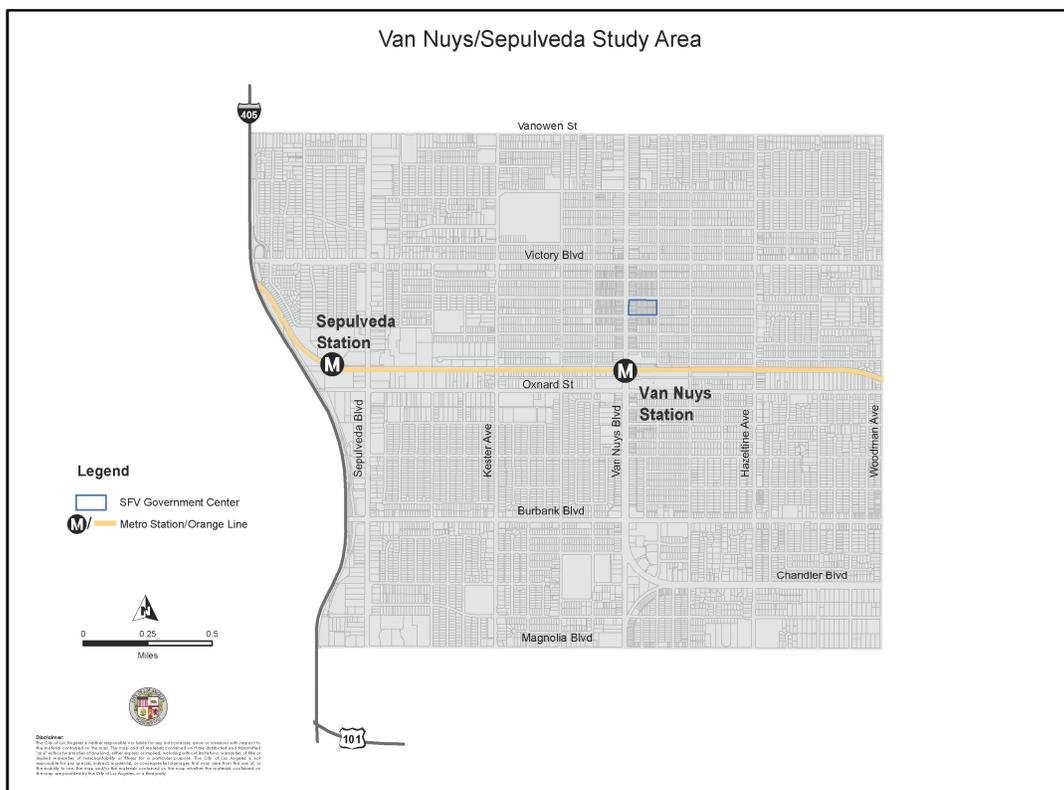
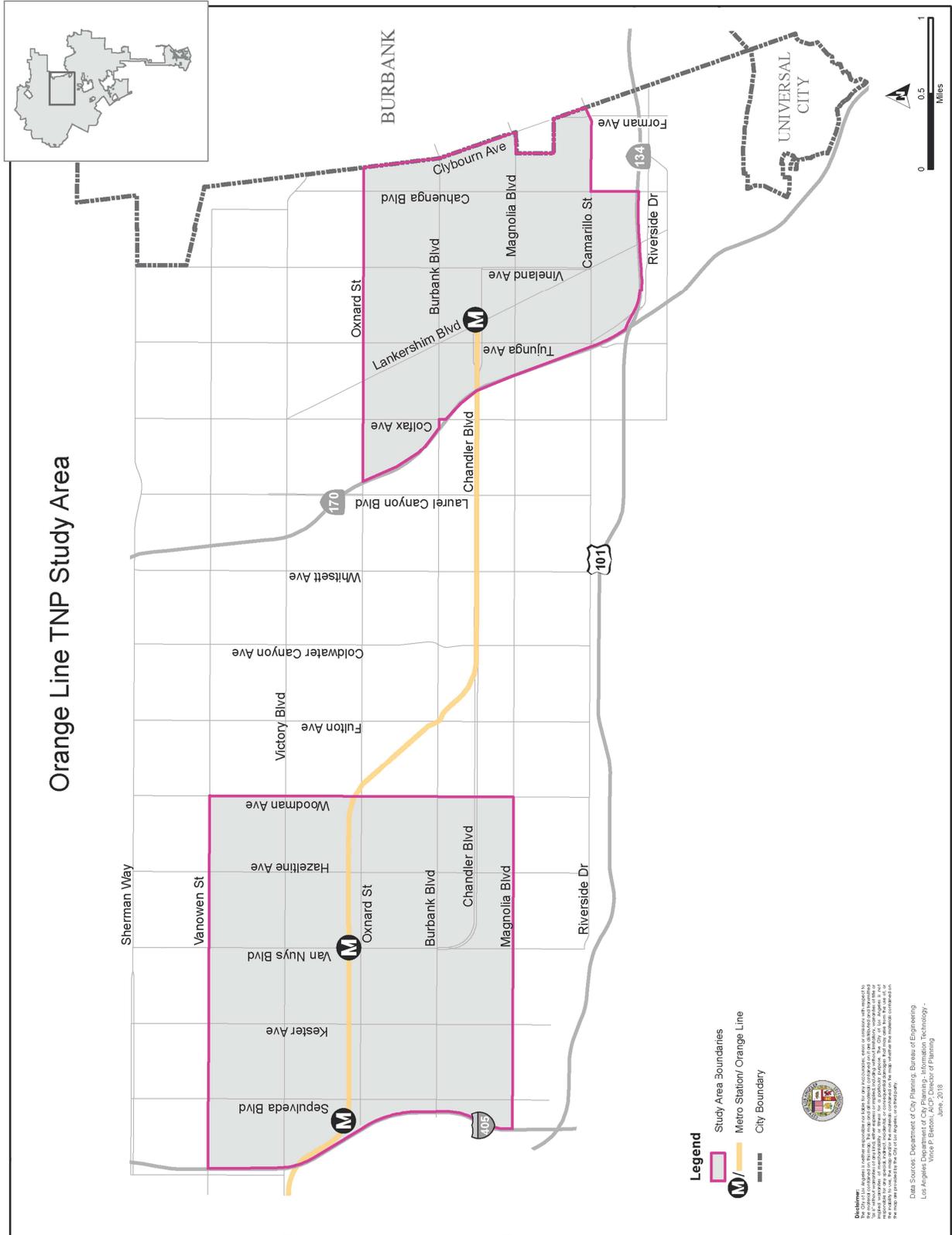


Figure 3: Regional Context Map



Disclaimer:
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Date: Sources: Department of City Planning, Bureau of Engineering
 Los Angeles Department of City Planning - Information Technology
 Vice P. Bellotti, Director of Planning
 June 2018