

4.2 AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY RESOURCES

This section provides an overview of agricultural and forestry resources and evaluates impacts associated with the proposed project. Topics addressed include farmland, agricultural land, timberland, and forest land. This section was prepared utilizing the information from the California Department of Conservation (DOC) Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP), the City of Los Angeles General Plan, General Plan Framework, and zoning code.

The proposed project is evaluated in terms of whether the implementation of the project would result in the permanent loss of, or loss of access to, agriculture and forestry resources occurring within the West Adams CPA.

REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

The following section provides a regulatory framework, describing applicable agencies and regulations related to agriculture and forestry resources.

Farmland maps are compiled by the DOC FMMP, pursuant to the provisions of Section 65570 of the California Government Code. These maps utilize data from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Natural Resources Conservation Services (NRCS) soil surveys and represent an inventory of agricultural resources. The maps use eight classification categories, the top four of which are regarded as “Important Farmland” for mapping purposes, and include Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, Unique Farmland, and Farmland of Local Importance.

Federal

USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). The NRCS maps soils and farmland uses to provide comprehensive information necessary for understanding, managing, conserving, and sustaining the nation’s limited soil resources. The NRCS manages the Farmland Protection Program, which provides funds to help purchase development rights to keep productive farmland in agricultural uses.

State

California Department of Conservation. In 1982, the State of California created FMMP within the DOC to continue the mapping activity of the NRCS. The DOC administers the California Land Conservation Act of 1965, also known as the Williamson Act.

California Land Conservation Act (Williamson Act). The Williamson Act is the only established agricultural program that directly involves State government in an administrative or fiscal capacity. The Williamson Act creates an arrangement whereby private landowners voluntarily restrict their land to agricultural and compatible open space uses under a rolling ten-year contract. In return, parcels are assessed for property tax purposes at a rate consistent with their actual use, rather than their potential market value.

Farmland Security Zones (FSZ). In August of 1998, the legislature enhanced the Williamson Act with the FSZ provisions. The FSZ provision offer landowners greater property tax reduction in return for a minimum rolling contract term of 20 years.

Local

City of Los Angeles General Plan Framework (Framework). The Framework is a strategy for long-term growth that sets a Citywide context to guide the subsequent amendments to the City’s community plans, zoning ordinances, and other pertinent programs. The Framework responds to State and federal mandates to

plan for the City of Los Angeles’ future. The Framework supersedes Concept Los Angeles and the Citywide elements of the City of Los Angeles General Plan. In many respects, the Framework is an evolution of the “centers” concept, adopted in 1974, that provides fundamental guidance regarding the City’s future. While the Framework incorporates a diagram that depicts the generalized distribution of centers, districts, and mixed-use boulevards throughout the City, it does not convey nor affect entitlements for any property. Specific land-use designations are determined by the Community Plans. The Framework provides guidelines for future updates of the City’s Community Plans. It does not supersede the more detailed Community and Specific Plans.

The Framework’s Infrastructure and Public Services chapter establishes Citywide planning policies regarding forestry resources. The Open Space and Conservation chapter includes policies and objectives related to agricultural uses. Applicable policies and objectives are shown in **Table 4.2-1**.

TABLE 4.2-1: RELEVANT GENERAL PLAN FRAMEWORK AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY RESOURCES GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND POLICIES	
Goal/Policy/Objective	Goal/Policy/Objective Description
FRAMEWORK - INFRASTRUCTURE AND PUBLIC SERVICES CHAPTER	
Objective 9.43	Improve City tree selection, placement and maintenance.
Policy 9.43.4	Revise removal standards to address horticultural problems, aforestration, and reforestation.
FRAMEWORK - OPEN SPACE AND CONSERVATION CHAPTER	
Objective 6.4	Ensure that the City’s open spaces contribute positively to the stability and identity of the communities and neighborhoods in which they are located or through which they pass.
Policy 6.4.7	Consider as part of the City’s open space inventory of pedestrian streets, community gardens, shared school playfields, and privately-owned commercial open spaces that are accessible to the public, even though such elements fall outside the conventional definitions of “open space.” This will help address the open space and outdoor recreation needs of communities that are currently deficient in these resources.
SOURCE: City of Los Angeles, <i>The Citywide General Plan Framework, An Element of the City of Los Angeles General Plan</i> , re-adopted 2001.	

City of Los Angeles Municipal Code (LAMC). The LAMC provides the set of detailed requirements that implement general plan policies at the level of the individual parcel. Zoning codes present standards for different uses and identify which uses are allowed in the various zoning districts of the jurisdiction.

EXISTING SETTING

Farmland

A review of the maps compiled by the DOC FMMP indicates that the West Adams CPA is mapped as an “urbanized area” and does not have parcels that contain prime or important farmlands.

Agricultural Land

West Adams CPA parcels are zoned as: residential (single- and multi-family), commercial, industrial, open space, and public facilities. There are no parcels located in the West Adams CPA that are zoned for agriculture use, and there are no agriculture land uses in the West Adams CPA.

Timberland

As discussed above, the West Adams CPA is zoned for residential, commercial, industrial, open space, and public facilities uses. Vegetation within the West Adams CPA consists largely of non-native ornamental trees, grasses, and shrubs that are typical of urban landscaping. The West Adams CPA and surrounding area are fully developed and urbanized and there are no timberlands in the project vicinity. A review of City land

use and zoning maps shows there is no forest land defined as timberland or timberland production in the West Adams CPA.

Forest Land

As discussed above, the West Adams CPA is zoned for residential, commercial, industrial, open space, and public facilities uses. Vegetation within the West Adams CPA consists largely of non-native ornamental trees, grasses, and shrubs that are typical of urban landscaping. The West Adams CPA and surrounding area are fully developed and urbanized and there are no forest lands in the project vicinity.

THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

In accordance with Appendix G of the State CEQA Guidelines, the proposed project would have a significant impact related to agricultural and forestry resources if it would:

- Convert Prime Farmland Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance to non-agricultural uses;
- Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use or a Williamson Act contract;
- Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land, timberland, or timberland zoned Timberland Production;
- Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use; and/or
- Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use.

IMPACTS

The proposed project is the adoption of the West Adams New Community Plan and its implementing ordinances. These ordinances, which include standards and guidelines for projects within the West Adams CPA, include a Community Plan Implementation Overlay District (CPIO) containing several subdistricts throughout the plan area, as well as amendments to the existing Crenshaw Corridor Specific Plan. The proposed project further involves General Plan Amendments and zone changes to create consistency with the City's General Plan Framework Element, as well as create consistency between both planned and existing uses of parcels and their relationship to surrounding areas. Through implementation of the CPIO, the proposed project further restricts detrimental uses, incentivizes development in targeted areas, and provides development standards to ensure that new construction is consistent with neighborhood character, as well as corrects minor errors within the existing West Adams Community Plan. As there are no agriculture or forestry resources within the West Adams CPA, the proposed West Adams New Community Plan and its implementing ordinances do not contain any specific guidelines that would affect farmland, agricultural land, timberland, or forest land.

Construction

The West Adams New Community Plan describes the capacity for future development for a portion of the City. While the proposed project includes a series of implementing ordinances, it is not an implementation plan in and of itself, and its adoption does not constitute a commitment to any project-specific construction. However, construction related to future capacity within the West Adams CPA would have the following potential effects.

Farmland

Many of the land use changes under the proposed West Adams Community Plan consist of General Plan Amendments to create consistency with Framework Land Use designations. However, the proposed West Adams Community Plan could potentially result in some development or infrastructure projects on undeveloped/vacant lands within the West Adams CPA. Nevertheless, the West Adams CPA does not contain land uses that are considered prime or important farmlands; therefore, no impacts related to farmland would occur.

Agricultural Land

Many of the land use changes under the proposed West Adams Community Plan consist of General Plan Amendments to create consistency with Framework Land Use designations. However, the proposed West Adams Community Plan could potentially result in some development or infrastructure projects on undeveloped/vacant lands within the West Adams CPA. Nevertheless, no parcels zoned for agriculture use are located in the West Adams CPA, and there are no agricultural land uses in the West Adams CPA. Therefore, no impacts related to agricultural land would occur.

Timberland

Many of the land use changes under the proposed West Adams Community Plan consist of General Plan Amendments to create consistency with Framework Land Use designations. As discussed above, the West Adams CPA and surrounding areas are fully developed and urbanized and there are no timberlands in the project vicinity. Therefore, no impacts related to timberland would occur.

Forest Land

Many of the land use changes under the proposed West Adams Community Plan consist of General Plan Amendments to create consistency with Framework Land Use designations. As described above, the West Adams CPA and surrounding areas are fully developed and urbanized and there is no forest land in the West Adams CPA. Therefore, no impacts related to forest land would occur.

Operations

Operation of the proposed project would not affect agriculture and forestry resources. Therefore, no further discussion of operation impacts is necessary.

MITIGATION MEASURES

Construction

The West Adams New Community Plan describes the capacity for future development for a portion of the City. While the proposed project includes a series of implementing ordinances, it is not an implementation plan in and of itself, and its adoption does not constitute a commitment to any project-specific construction. However, construction related to future capacity within the West Adams CPA would require the following mitigation measures.

Farmland

No impacts related to farmland would occur. No mitigation measures are required.

Agricultural Land

No impacts related to agricultural land would occur. No mitigation measures are required.

Timberland

No impacts related to timberland would occur. No mitigation measures are required.

Forest Land

No impacts related to forest land would occur. No mitigation measures are required.

Operations

No operational impacts related to agriculture and forestry resources would occur. No mitigation measures are required.

SIGNIFICANCE OF IMPACTS AFTER MITIGATION

Construction

The West Adams New Community Plan describes the capacity for future development for a portion of the City. While the proposed project includes a series of implementing ordinances, it is not an implementation plan in and of itself, and its adoption does not constitute a commitment to any project-specific construction. However, construction related to future capacity within the West Adams CPA would have the following significance after mitigation.

Farmland

No impacts related to farmland would occur.

Agricultural Land

No impacts related to agricultural land would occur.

Timberland

No impacts related to timberland would occur.

Forest Land

No impacts related to forest land would occur.

Operations

No operational impacts related to agriculture and forestry resources would occur.