



Notice of Preparation Environmental Impact Report

City of Santa Rosa

Date: February 7, 2023

To: State Clearinghouse
State Responsible Agencies
State Trustee Agencies
Other Public Agencies
Interested Organizations
Sonoma County Clerk

From: Amy Lyle, Supervising Planner - Advance Planning
Planning & Economic Development Department
City of Santa Rosa
100 Santa Rosa Avenue, Room 3
Santa Rosa, CA 95404

Subject: Notice of Preparation (NOP) of a Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR)

Lead Agency: City of Santa Rosa Planning & Economic Development Department

Project Title: Santa Rosa General Plan 2050, also known as Santa Rosa Forward

Notice is hereby given that the City of Santa Rosa (City) will prepare an EIR for the proposed Santa Rosa General Plan 2050, also known as Santa Rosa Forward (proposed project). Pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines Section 15206, the proposed project is considered a project of statewide, regional, or areawide significance. The City, acting as the Lead Agency, will prepare an EIR to address the potential environmental impacts associated with the project at a programmatic level, consistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15168. The program-level EIR will evaluate the environmental impacts associated with the broad policies of the proposed General Plan 2050 and the likely type and amount of development allowed within the General Plan horizon of 2050. The EIR will not evaluate future site-specific development projects that are consistent with the proposed General Plan 2050. An evaluation of project alternatives that could reduce significant impacts will be included in the EIR. The proposed project, its location, and potential environmental effects are described below, and additional information on the proposed General Plan 2050 is available at www.santarosafoward.com.

Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15082, the City is requesting comments and guidance on the scope and content of the EIR from interested public agencies, organizations and individuals. With respect to the views of Responsible and Trustee Agencies as to significant environmental issues, the City needs to know the reasonable alternatives and mitigation measures that are germane to each agency's statutory responsibilities in connection with the proposed project. Responsible agencies may need to use the EIR prepared by the City when considering permitting or other approvals for potential future development projects.

Due to the time limits mandated by State law, your response must be sent at the earliest possible date, but no later than the close of the 30-day Notice of Preparation (NOP) review period on Wednesday, March 8, 2023. If you submit comments on the scope of the EIR, you will automatically be added to the City's distribution list for future notices and information about the environmental review process for the proposed project. If you do not wish to submit comments on the scope of the EIR, but would like to be added to the City's mailing list, you can submit your contact information, including email address with a request to be added to the mailing list.

Please send your written comments to Amy Lyle, Supervising Planner – Advance Planning of the Planning & Economic Development Department, at the address shown above or email to Alyle@srcity.org with "Santa Rosa General Plan 2050 EIR" as the subject. Public agencies providing comments are asked to include a contact person for the agency.

1. Project Location:

The City of Santa Rosa is located approximately 50 miles north of San Francisco in central Sonoma County. Situated on the Santa Rosa Plain, the City is bounded by the foothills of the Sonoma Mountains to the east and Laguna de Santa Rosa to the west. U.S. Highway 101 (Highway 101) and State Route 12 (SR 12) divide the city into quadrants. Highway 101 is the north-south route connecting the San Francisco Bay Area to Mendocino and Humboldt counties to the north. SR 12 runs in an east-west direction, connecting the Sonoma Coast to the Sonoma and Napa Valleys to the east. The City is surrounded by unincorporated rural and agricultural land. Nearby cities/communities include the Town of Windsor located to the north, the community of Kenwood located to the east, the City of Rohnert Park located to the south, and the City of Sebastopol located to the west. The Sonoma County Airport is located about 2.5 miles northwest of Santa Rosa's Urban Growth Boundary. Figure 1, *Santa Rosa Regional Location*, shows the regional setting of the city of Santa Rosa and Figure 2, *EIR Study Area*, which follows the boundary of the adopted Sphere of Influence and Urban Growth Boundary, shows the area to be evaluated in the EIR.

2. Lead Agency Contact:

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Santa Rosa, CA 95404
(707) 543-3410
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3. Project Sponsor:

City of Santa Rosa

4. Project Description:

The City of Santa Rosa is preparing a comprehensive update to its existing General Plan. The update is expected to be completed in 2024 and will guide the City's development and conservation through 2050. State law requires that the General Plan contain eight elements: Land Use, Circulation, Housing, Open Space, Noise, Safety, Conservation, and Environmental Justice. The content of these elements is outlined in State law. The proposed General Plan 2050 will include revisions to the policies and land use map of the existing General Plan. The proposed General Plan 2050 will include all State-required elements and optional elements including climate action planning, organized in the following sections (the required elements are denoted in **bold**):

- **Land Use** and Economic Development
- **Housing** (currently being updated through a separate process)
- Community Character (covering the topics of Urban Design, Historic Preservation, Art and Culture, and Hillside Policies)
- Efficient and Sustainable Development (covering the topics of **Mobility [Circulation]**, **Open Space**, and **Conservation**)
- Climate Resilience and Safety (covering the topics of Climate Resilience, **Safety**, **Noise**, and Public Services and Facilities)
- Health, Equity, and Environmental Justice (covering the topics of Community Health, Equity, **Environmental Justice**, Parks, and Youth and Family)

The overall purpose of the proposed General Plan 2050 is to create a policy framework that articulates a vision for the long-term physical form and development of Santa Rosa, while preserving and enhancing the quality of life for Santa Rosa residents. The key components of the proposed project will include broad community goals for the future of Santa Rosa and specific policies and implementing actions that will help meet the goals. The proposed General Plan 2050 will add new and expanded policy topics to address the current requirements of State law, modernize the City's policy framework, and address land use mapping issues and inconsistencies. To achieve the proposed General Plan 2050 vision, the City has analyzed three future land use and circulation alternatives and a subsequently refined preferred alternative that were developed through an extensive

public process. Details of the public process and preferred alternative are available on the website for the proposed General Plan 2050 at <https://www.santarosaforward.com>. The final preferred alternative will serve as the foundation of the proposed General Plan 2050. Figure 3, *Final Preferred Alternative*, shows the final preferred alternative which identifies 21 areas of change where the City will focus efforts on addressing housing, services, connectivity, and/or infrastructure needs to make these complete neighborhoods. Zoning and/or land use changes supporting additional development capacity will be concentrated in select areas only. Changes to the city's transportation infrastructure will include new pedestrian and bicycle connections across Highways 101 and 12, road diets, and roadway widenings.

5. Potential Environmental Impacts of the Project

The EIR for the proposed project will address the range of impacts that could result from adoption and implementation of the proposed General Plan 2050. Below is a list of environmental topics that will be examined in the EIR.

- aesthetics
- agricultural resources
- air quality
- biological resources
- cultural and tribal cultural resources
- energy
- geology and soils
- greenhouse gas emissions
- hazards and hazardous materials
- hydrology and water quality
- land use and planning
- noise
- population and housing
- public services, parks, and recreation
- transportation
- utilities and system services
- wildfire

The topics of forestry and mineral resources are likely to be associated with less-than-significant impacts and are not expected to be evaluated in detail in the EIR.

6. Public Meetings and Workshops

The City will continue to hold many public workshops and meetings throughout the planning process, as well as meetings of the General Plan Technical Advisory Committee, Planning Commission, and City Council, to inform the public and interested agencies about the proposed project and solicit feedback on the contents of the proposed General Plan 2050. Details for each meeting are available on the website for the proposed General Plan 2050 at <https://www.santarosaforward.com>.

The City will hold a scoping meeting to solicit public comment on the environmental issues to be addressed in the EIR. The scoping meeting will be held on Monday, February 27, 2023, at 5:30 p.m. via a hybrid public meeting format. The public can attend the scoping meeting at **www.zoom.us/join - Meeting ID: 819 2726 9879** or call **877 853 5257 (Toll Free) Meeting ID: 819 2726 9879** and provide comment virtually using the instructions included provided on the City's website at <https://www.srcity.org/DocumentCenter/View/28150/Virtual-Meeting-Public-Participation-Instructions-PED>. Members of the public may also participate in person at the Old Chamber Building, Large Conference Room at 637 1st Street, Santa Rosa, CA.

Date February 7, 2023

Signature 

Title Supervising Planner

FIGURE 1: SANTA ROSA REGIONAL LOCATION

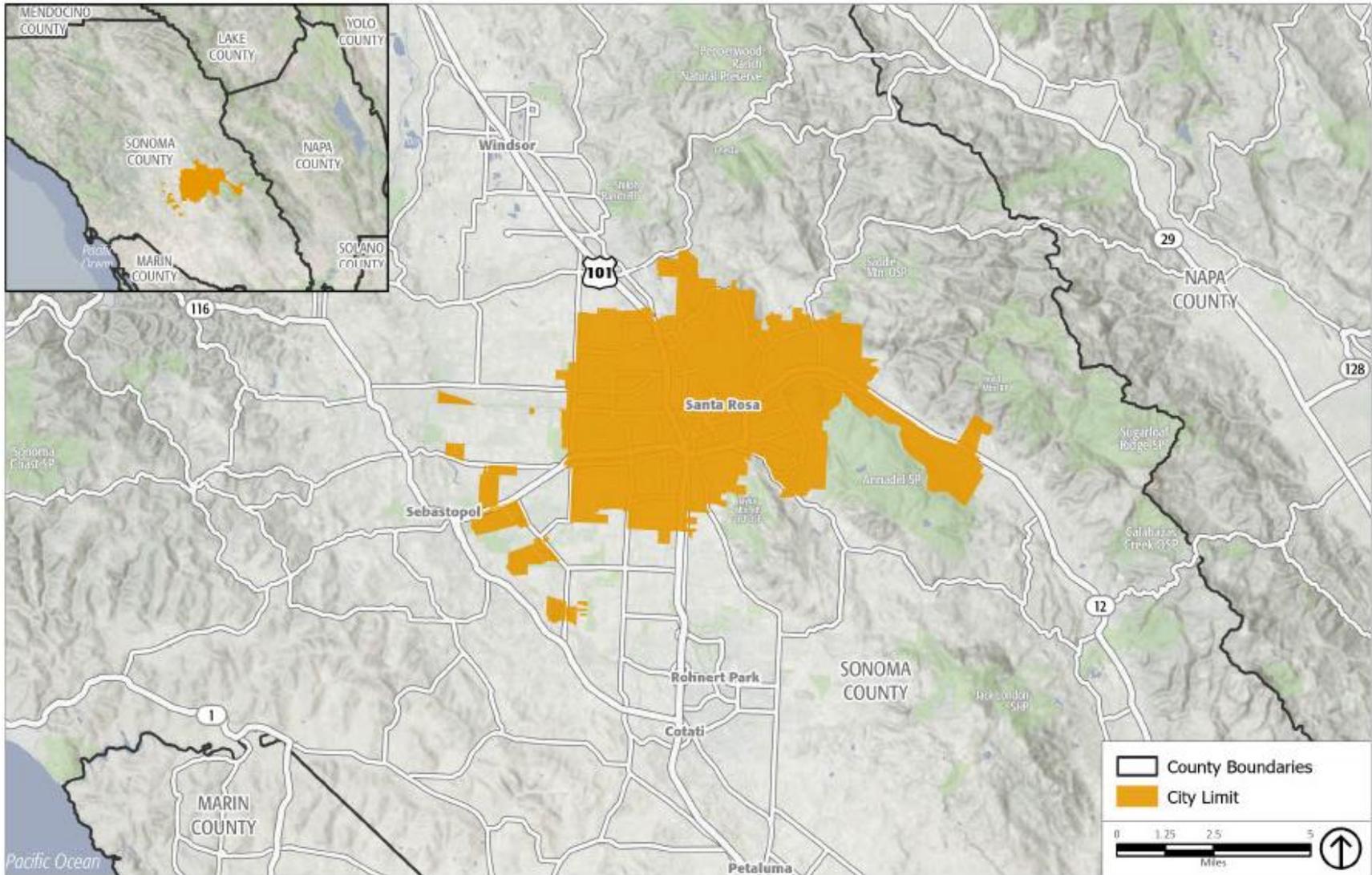


FIGURE 2: EIR STUDY AREA

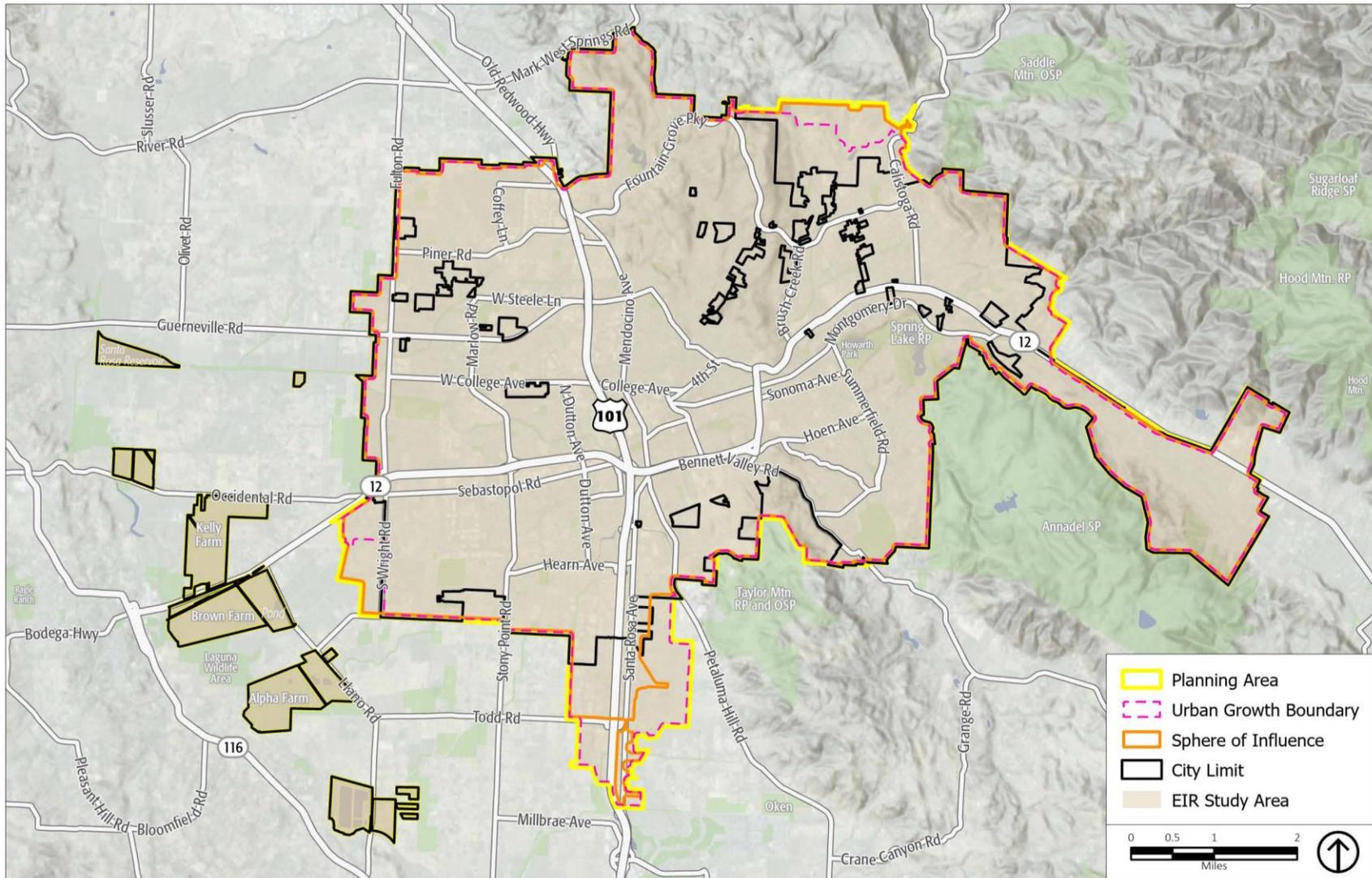


FIGURE 3: FINAL PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE

