



### **PUBLIC HEARING**

Santa Fe Springs 2040 General Plan, including the 2021-2029 Housing Element, Final Environmental Impact Report, Statement of Overriding Considerations, Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program, and Implementation Plan

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- Open the Public Hearing and receive the staff report and any comments from the public regarding the Santa Fe Springs 2040 General Plan, 2021-2029 Housing Element, and Final Environmental Impact Report, and related documents, and thereafter, close the Public Hearing;
- Adopt Resolution No. 9760, to certify the Final Environmental Impact Report (EIR), adopt CEQA Findings and Statement of Overriding Considerations and Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program for the Santa Fe Springs 2040 General Plan update and targeted zoning code update; adopt the Santa Fe Springs 2040 General Plan, including the 2021-2029 Housing Element and Implementation Plan.

### **BACKGROUND**

State law requires every city and county to prepare and maintain a planning document called a general plan. A general plan is a “constitution” or a “blueprint” for the future physical development of a city or county. The general plan covers issues which include land use, traffic, circulation, housing, mobility, public health and safety, conservation, fiscal sustainability, economic development, environmental justice, and other important topics for the next 20 years. It articulates the community’s vision and guides growth, change, and development over a 20 to 25-year period and must contain goals, policies, and programs that will provide City staff and discretionary bodies with a foundation for decisions on long-range planning related to physical development and public services.

The City of Santa Fe Springs’ General Plan was last comprehensively updated in 1993-1994 and has had only a few revisions since that time. As such, the City is proposing a comprehensive update to its existing General Plan. The proposed Santa Fe Springs 2040 General Plan will include the seven stated mandated elements, an environmental justice element and an economic development element.

It should be noted that the adopted General Plans may be amended four times per year per State law. Amendments may include map changes (ex. changing a parcel’s land use designation or revising the transit routes), text and/or policy changes (background text revisions, policy or program clarifications, revisions, or deletions), and rescinding

elements identified as optional by State law. The proposed Santa Fe Springs 2040 General Plan, including the 2021-2029 Housing Element, will be one of the four amendments permitted for 2022.

Once the proposed Santa Fe Springs 2040 General Plan is adopted, a Targeted Zoning Code Update will follow to ensure consistency between the City's two primary planning documents: the General Plan and Zoning Code. Said zoning code update will utilize supplementary land use controls to implement the overall character and vision established within the 2040 General Plan.

#### Santa Fe Springs 2040 General Plan

On September 26, 2019, the City of Santa Fe Springs City Council authorized the Director of Planning to release a competitive Request for Proposal (RFP) for the preparation of a comprehensive General Plan update, Targeted Zoning Code Update, and the necessary environmental documents. At a special study session on December 12, 2019, the planning department staff provided the City Council with an informative presentation to re-emphasize the need to comprehensively update the City's General Plan and the importance of also having a zoning code that is consistent with the general plan.

On February 13, 2020, the Santa Fe Springs City Council awarded a contract to MIG, Inc. for the preparation of the 2040 Comprehensive General Plan Update, Targeted Zoning Code Update, and necessary environmental documents. As such, the comprehensive update to the City's roughly 30-year-old General Plan began in the spring of 2020 and has been ongoing for almost two years.

Staff and the General Plan consultant team immediately began working together to:

1. Create a dedicated General Plan Update website:  
[www.reimaginesantafesprings.org](http://www.reimaginesantafesprings.org)
2. Conduct various stakeholder interviews.
3. Assemble a General Plan Advisory Group.
4. Conduct a Community Survey.
5. Engage the community through social media posts.

These various initial outreach efforts assisted the General Plan team in drafting an existing conditions technical report, a General Plan vision, Guiding Principles, and preferred land use alternatives.

The Santa Fe Springs 2040 General Plan represents an opportunity to define a contemporary vision for Santa Fe Springs that reflects community values and aspirations. It is an opportunity to reimagine what the City of Santa Fe Springs will look like, how it will function, and how people will experience the City in the future. It touches on many topic areas, such as where housing can be built, where new commercial

businesses are needed, how the road network can better accommodate cyclists and pedestrians, how parks can be improved, and how public safety is addressed in daily activities, including exposure of people to noise and air pollutants.

The Santa Fe Springs 2040 General Plan considers lands within the City's jurisdictional limits and also certain lands outside the City's limits within its Sphere of Influence, which collectively comprise the City's Planning Area, covering a total of 7,331.8 net acres (11.45 square miles).

As stated in the draft document, the proposed Santa Fe Springs 2040 General Plan focuses on achieving the City's plan to continue to evolve into a balanced community, one where the long-established industrial business base is complemented by new homes and neighborhoods that grow the local workforce, a new downtown that provides community gathering spaces, transit-oriented districts around Metro's L Line and Metrolink stations, and civic improvements that serve both residents and the business community. As such, the Santa Fe Springs 2040 General Plan presents the following big ideas:

- *Integrating Transit-Oriented Communities and Mixed Uses* around the Norwalk Santa Fe Springs Metrolink Station and the planned L line station on Washington Boulevard.
- A new *Economic Development* element identifies strategies to retain our strong economic base, court new business that benefit local residents and have limited environmental and public health impacts, and create a diversity of commercial enterprises to serve residents and day-time workers.
- *Protecting Residential Neighborhoods from Pollution Burdens*, such as hazardous emissions, contaminated soils and water, release of diesel exhaust and particulate matter from trucks that can adversely affect residents.
- *Active Transportation* to encourage more walking and biking in the community by creating safer environments.
- *Digital City and Technology* to improve day-to-day operations, create efficiencies and cost savings, improve sustainability, and ensure everyone stays connected.
- Prioritize *Community Needs* related to health and employment, especially disadvantaged communities, through increased access to parks and open space, access to healthy foods, and expanded community engagement.
- A new *Downtown* at the center of the City to create community gathering spaces, restaurants, entertainment venues, hospitality uses within a mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly environment.
- An *I-5 Freeway Corridor* that emphasizes regional-oriented commercial and hospitality uses that will benefit from freeway visibility.

- New policies and land-use changes to reduce *Trucking Impacts* with the goal to improve air quality, reduce pollution burdens, and improve the paving of City streets.

The proposed 2040 General Plan establishes the policies and actions that will guide decisions towards achieving the general plan vision. Decision-making in Santa Fe Springs—by City leaders and City staff—will be guided by the following Guiding Principles:

- Healthy and Safe Neighborhoods - Promote healthy and safe neighborhoods with comprehensive approaches that consider best practices around land use, mobility, housing, environmental justice, community services, and design.
- Economic Strength and Local Businesses - Strengthen the City's industrial and office sectors while increasing and diversifying commercial businesses.
- Diversified Economy - Support a diversified economy with a balance of small and large businesses across a broad range of industries that provide employment, commercial, and experiential opportunities.
- Downtown - Support a downtown that showcases our rich history, celebrates local entrepreneurship, features our civic institutions, and encourages downtown living within a vibrant gathering place for the community.
- Active and Diverse Transportation - Create an interconnected and active transportation system that recognizes and responds to the critical needs of businesses to move commerce while accommodating the equally important necessity for pedestrians, cyclists, transit users, and motorists to move around the City with convenience and ease.
- Environmental Justice and Community Safety - Improve environmental conditions, noise conditions, and air and water quality for all residents and people working in the City by minimizing the impacts of industrial businesses, truck and commuter traffic, and contaminated lands.
- Clean and Sustainable Environment - Insist upon remediation of contaminated land and take steps to prevent pollution from the different processes involved in industrial business operations. Improve local air quality and make rational use of natural resources to support environmental responsibility and the collective health of residents, employees, and visitors.
- Equitable and Inclusionary - Engage residents and stakeholders in ensuring equitable and inclusive processes, policies, investments, and service systems. Our residents in disadvantaged communities have access to healthy foods, parks, mobility options activity, public programs, and safe homes.

- Adaptive and Resilient Community - Protect people, infrastructure, and community assets from evolving climate threats and vulnerabilities, and from natural and human-caused hazards.
- Technology - Embrace technology and innovative practices where digital technology and intelligent design can be harnessed to create smart, sustainable cities and adaptable infrastructure systems.

### Proposed General Plan Elements

The proposed Santa Fe Springs 2040 General Plan contains the following elements (i.e., chapters):

#### **MANDATORY ELEMENTS:**

- **Land Use Element** - provides the framework for establishing the patterns of development activity and land uses that achieves the General Plan's Vision and Guiding Principles. The Land Use Element serves as a guide for decision-makers, residents, stakeholders, business owners, and property owners as it identifies and describes the type, intensity, and general distribution of land for housing, businesses, industries, and public facilities. Land use designations identify the general categories of activities permitted throughout the City. The Land Use Element includes a land use plan that establishes 15 land use designations intended to provide a rational and orderly approach to land use development. Land use designations include: Low Density Residential, Medium Density Residential, High-Density Residential, Commercial, Freeway Commercial, Downtown, Mixed-Use, Mixed-Use Transit Oriented Development, Business Park, Light Industrial, Industrial, Public Facilities, Parks and Open Space, Rivers and Creeks, and Railroad Right-of-Way. It should be noted that 5 of the 15 land use designations are new categories. Except for the Light Industrial and Freeway Commercial land use designations, whereby the corresponding zoning district of M-1 and FOZ are already in place, the remaining three new land use designations will need to be clarified through the targeted zone text amendments.

In developing this plan, the City considered the concerns and ideas of the people who participated in the extensive public engagement activities balanced with the technical analysis necessary to develop sound land use strategies. The following considerations were considered during the development of the land use element:

- Revenue Sources to Fund Public Facilities and Services
- Need for Commercial and Local Services
- Housing Demand
- Extension of Passenger Rail
- Building on Former Industrial Sites

- Residential/Industrial Interface
- Urban Design
- Flooding and Land Use
- Preserving the City's Heritage

The overarching strategy is to facilitate redevelopment within focus areas to provide for new uses that strengthen and diversify the business sector, provide additional housing, and create a true town center for Santa Fe Springs. Industry will continue to be the predominant land use. There are 12 goals and related policies contained in the land use chapter.

- **Housing Element (2021-2029)** - provides a coordinated and comprehensive strategy for promoting the production of safe, decent, and affordable housing for all community residents. The Housing Element specifically intends to: 1) provide direction for future planning programs to ensure that sufficient consideration is given to housing goals and policies; 2) establish community goals and policies relative to housing through the identification of existing, stated, and implicit goals, and the identification of housing needs and challenges; 3) accommodate the Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) goal mandated by the State; and 4) establish and identify programs to implement and attain the community's goals and policies, taking into consideration the feasibility of those programs, and act as a meaningful guide to decision-makers considering housing-related issues. There are 5 goals and related policies, along with 20 implementing programs, contained in the housing chapter.

There have been five previous housing element update cycles. This update will be the sixth cycle Housing Element for Santa Fe Springs. Unlike the other General Plan elements, the Housing Element is the only one reviewed and certified by the Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) for compliance with State law. Housing law mandates that the City meets the projected housing needs of all economic segments of the community through zoning and policy actions. As part of this effort, the City must adopt a land use plan and regulations that provides opportunities for, and do not unduly constrain, housing development. The 2021-2029 Housing Element responds to those requirements and responds specifically to conditions and policy directions unique to Santa Fe Springs.

State law does not require Santa Fe Springs to build or finance new housing. Rather, the City must provide adequate housing sites zoned at various densities to accommodate a mix of housing products (e.g., single-family, townhome, and apartment units). The City of Santa Fe Springs has a Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) requirement of 952 units.

Income Group	% of AMI	2021-2029 RHNA	% of Units
Very Low	0-50%	253	26.6%
Low	>50-80%	159	16.7%
Moderate	>80-120%	152	16.0%
Above Moderate	120%+	388	40.8%
Total		952	100.0%

The City has achieved approximately 35 percent of its RHNA with 330 housing units under construction or pending approval. After accounting for credits and permitted or approved units in the City’s site inventory, it is expected that the City will have a remaining RHNA of 622 units for the 2021-2029 RHNA planning period. The General Plan identifies meeting the remaining RHNA requirements through projected accessory dwelling units (ADUs) and potential units from vacant and underutilized sites. As identified in Table H-24 of the 2021-2029 Housing Element, the sites inventory summary is as follows:

- 330 units from credit sites
- 125 units from accessory dwelling units
- 1,014 units from vacant and underutilized sites
- 1,469 total units to be applied toward the RHNA

It is important to note, the City of Santa Fe Springs received the State of California Housing and Community Development Department’s housing element review letter dated September 24, 2021. The project team has since revised the 2021-2029 Housing Element to address comments provided within said letter. Attachment 5 is the revised Housing Element with said changes. Upon adoption, the revised Housing Element will be submitted to HCD for certification review. It is possible that additional changes may be necessary to attain certification. If this is the case, revisions to the adopted Housing Element will be brought back to the Planning Commission and City Council for subsequent review and adoption.

- **Circulation Element** - identifies a network that meets evolving mobility modes and forwards initiatives to improve the health of the environment and Santa Fe Springs residents. It promotes accessibility of pedestrian, bicycle, and transit networks in the City of Santa Fe Springs by making daily transportation options more reliable and convenient for children, older adults, people of color, and people with physical disabilities. In addition to addressing mobility infrastructure, the Circulation Element covers other

infrastructure that supports a thriving community: water and sewer systems, communications networks, and the energy systems that heat, cool, and power homes and businesses. There are 15 goals and related policies contained in the circulation chapter.

**Open Space and Conservation Element** - addresses preservation and enhancement of the open spaces important to local community life, and the careful conservation of natural resources that contribute to a quality living environment. There are 11 goals and related policies contained in the open space and conservation chapter.

Within the city limits, parkland and open spaces encompass about 80.3 acres, or just over two percent of all land area. (Within the overall Planning Area, parks also represent about two percent of the land area.) In 2021, with a population of 18,295, Santa Fe Springs had a ratio of 4.4 park acres per 1,000 residents, a number most parks planners would consider quite healthy. Future attention will be directed towards open spaces and vacant properties for new parks with particular attention directed towards strategies to create innovative recreation and public gathering spaces.

In maintaining existing parks and recreation facilities and providing new amenities, the City applies the philosophy that those spaces must be:

- **Smart:** Sustainable, durable, and distinctive
- **Multipurpose:** Combining complementary uses and purposes
- **Ecological:** Open spaces and buildings that contribute to the urban ecosystem and do not harm water, soil, light, and air such
- **Universal:** Inclusive, barrier-free spaces and programming for people of varying abilities and vulnerable populations in environmental justice communities

With regard to conservation, planning policies and actions target:

- Energy-producing resources (oil, solar) and energy conservation
- Water and Air quality improvements
- **Safety Element** - works together with the Land Use, Open Space and Conservation, and Environmental Justice elements to create an urban environment in which residents, local workers, and visitors feel safe. The overarching goal of the Safety Element is to improve disaster planning and response for all types of potential adverse events: earthquakes, flooding, hazardous materials releases, urban fires, roadway and rail accidents, and increasingly, conditions associated with climate change. There are 9 goals and related policies contained in the safety chapter.

- **Noise Element** - works together with the other General Plan elements to guide Santa Fe Springs toward a healthier 2040 by reducing noise exposure resulting from concentrations of vehicle traffic and heavy industry next to or within environmental justice communities—areas that already bear the burden of adverse health effects from air pollution. The Noise Element identifies strategies to mitigate long-standing noise conflicts and minimize future ones as new, denser infill residential and mixed-use development occurs. There are 3 goals and related policies contained in the noise chapter.

*OPTIONAL ELEMENTS:*

- **Economic Development Element** – is an optional element and thus not a statutorily required part of a community's General Plan. The Economic Development Element provides an overview of Santa Fe Springs' unique economic setting and associated fiscal challenges and opportunities, all of which are affected by economic development choices made by City staff and the City Council. It will be used to strengthen the City's fiscal position and communicate to businesses and industries Santa Fe Springs' goals regarding business attraction and retention, key target industries, and workforce development. There are 5 goals and related policies contained in the economic development chapter. The 5 Economic Development Goals are as follows:
  1. A City that strives to continue its reputation as a premier southern California business location.
  2. Successfully retain, expand, and attract target business and industry clusters that grow high-paying jobs appropriate for the local and regional workforce and expand sales tax revenue.
  3. Diverse commercial facilities to serve residents, daytime employees, and visitors.
  4. Long-term fiscal strength that maintains the City's excellent reputation for business friendliness.
  5. Leveraging the impact of the City's investment in economic development through effective public/private partnerships.
- **Environmental Justice Element** - is mandated in the General Plan to serve as a comprehensive policy document specific to disadvantaged communities in the City. Disadvantaged communities, as defined by the State of California, are communities (area, neighborhoods, or parts of neighborhoods) that are disproportionately burdened by multiple sources of pollution and with population characteristics that make them more sensitive to pollution. The Environmental Justice Element identifies the screening method to identify disadvantaged communities, documents the spatial relationship of existing and planned land uses, and provides a community

profile relating to public health. As mandated by State law, its contents identify policies and objectives related to addressing and identifying health risks associated with overconcentration and proximity of industrial and polluting land uses to residential properties; reducing health risks through the promotion of physical activities, improved housing conditions, and food access. There are 5 goals and related policies contained in the environmental justice chapter.

While the original intent was to adopt both the General Plan and the Targeted Zoning Code Update concurrently, a decision was made during the General Plan update process to bring forward the Targeted Zoning Code Update at a later date to allow City staff and the General Plan consulting team additional time to refine the Code revisions in consideration of the discussions and various public comments made relating to the General Plan update.

### **GENERAL PLAN ENGAGEMENT**

Santa Fe Springs residents, business owners, and property owners all contributed to the vision and ideas expressed in this General Plan. Beginning in April of 2020, City staff and the General Plan consulting team began a series of engagement activities to promote and inform the public of the General Plan update. Despite limitations due to COVID-19, the team conducted extensive public outreach throughout the planning period. A key priority was to make participation easy, accessible, and bilingual. The list below summarizes some of the key approaches taken by the City to enhance community participation and engagement throughout the planning process for the Santa Fe Springs 2040 General Plan:

- **Project Website** ([www.reimaginesantafesprings.org](http://www.reimaginesantafesprings.org))  
The project website is a clearinghouse of all project documents and reports and provides information on meetings and materials as well as opportunities for the public to contact the project team directly.
- **Multimedia Campaign**  
Staff and the project team used both digital and non-digital platforms to advertise each community engagement activity. The digital platforms include: The Re-Imagine Santa Fe Springs website, Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, email blasts, the City's website, and advertised during the Drive-In Movie Night event on October 2, 2020. Non-digital platforms include summary documents and flyers which were inserted into the water bills and distributed in library and lunch bags. Lastly, banners were hung at Los Nietos Park and Lakeview Park.
- **City Publications**  
Staff and the project team placed a total of seven articles in both the City

Newsletter and the City Quarterly. Below are the dates for the respective publications:

1. 2020 Summer Quarterly
2. June/July 2020 Santa Fe Springs City News
3. 2020 Fall Quarterly
4. September/October 2020 Santa Fe Springs City News
5. 2020 Winter Quarterly
6. 2021 Summer Quarterly
7. 2021 Fall Quarterly

- Stakeholder Interviews

The project team conducted over two dozen interviews from May through July of 2020, reaching over 36 stakeholders.

- Stakeholder interviews included all City Council Members at the time, the City Manager, a Chamber of Commerce representative, local school and/or school district representatives, local businesses owners or managers, industrial property owners, a member of the youth leadership, and Community Based Organizations (CBOs).

- Focus Group Discussion

The project team also held various focus group discussions with City Commissions, City Departments, and the local business community.

- Focus group meetings were held with the Planning Commission and Traffic Commission.
- Focus group meetings were also held with the Public Works Department, Fire Department, Police Services Department, Community Services Department, and the Whittier Police Department.
- Lastly, the project team held three focus group discussions with the Chamber of Commerce and business community to listen to their concerns with the proposed General Plan.
  - On January 14, 2022, a focus group meeting was conducted via Zoom. Over 30 stakeholders were in attendance.
  - On January 26, 2022, a focus group meeting was conducted via Zoom. Over 40 stakeholders were in attendance.
  - On January 31, 2022, a focus group meeting was conducted via Zoom. Over 40 stakeholders were in attendance.

- Community Survey

Staff and the project team published a citywide community survey in August of 2020 to understand community priorities. The survey had 19 questions and was provided both online and in paper form. The team also hand-

delivered surveys to several senior facilities. A total of approximately 90 completed surveys were collected.

- General Plan Advisory Group (GPAG) Meetings

Staff and the project team conducted a total of five GPAG meetings to help craft the Vision and Guiding Principles, produce the preferred land use plan, identify desired circulation improvements, and shape goals and policies. Below are the dates and topics covered within the five GPAG meetings:

- July 8, 2020: Introduction and Identify Challenges.
  - 15 GPAG members attended the meeting, as well as City staff, General Plan consultants, and members of the public. MIG led an interactive discussion that went over the following topics:
    1. Overview: What is a General Plan
    2. General Plan Update Schedule
    3. GPAG purpose and charge
    4. Assets, Challenges, and Opportunities
- August 26, 2020: Existing Conditions Report Review
  - 15 GPAG members attended the meeting, as well as City staff, General Plan consultants, and members of the public. MIG led an interactive discussion that went over the following topics:
    1. Existing Conditions Technical Report
      - Community Profile
      - Land Use
      - Transportation and Infrastructure
      - Public Safety and Hazards
      - Environmental Justice and Health
    2. Preliminary Land Use Focus Areas
      - What should be preserved, enhanced, or changed?
      - Community needs
      - Opportunities for development
- September 23, 2020: Land Use Alternatives
  - 15 GPAG members attended the meeting, as well as City staff, General Plan consultants, and members of the public. MIG led an interactive discussion and asked GPAG members to vote on their favorite land use alternatives for four focus areas:
    1. Washington Boulevard Focus Area

2. Imperial and Bloomfield Focus Area
  3. MC&C Site Focus Area
  4. Koontz Focus Area
- October 7, 2020: Land Use Alternatives Continued
    - 7 GPAG members attended the meeting, as well as City staff, General Plan consultants, and members of the public. MIG led an interactive discussion and asked GPAG members to vote on their favorite land use alternatives for four focus areas:
      1. Downtown Focus Area
      2. Telegraph and Pioneer Focus Area
      3. Former Vons Distribution Center Focus Area
      4. Los Nietos Industrial Focus Area
  - June 23, 2021: Economic Development
    - 7 GPAG members attended the meeting, as well as City staff, General Plan consultants, and members of the public. MIG led an interactive discussion and GPAG members had the opportunity to provide input on the following discussion topics:
      1. Assets and Opportunities for Economic Development
      2. Potential Threats to Economic Progress
      3. City Roles in Improving Economic Vitality
  - Community Visioning Workshops

Staff and the project team conducted a total of four community workshops to provide an opportunity for the public to learn more about the project and provide input on land use changes, key issues and challenges, and priorities to be addressed in the 2040 Comprehensive General Plan Update. Since three out of the four workshops were virtual, staff encouraged participation by offering gifts cards to participants and the winners were selected randomly. The last workshop was held in person while strictly adhering to the County guidelines for indoor activities. Below are the dates and topics covered within the four Community Workshops:
  - September 16, 2020: Introduction and Identify Challenges (Virtual Workshop on Zoom)
    - Four members of the public participated in the workshop. All four participants indicated that they live in Santa Fe Springs. MIG led an interactive discussion around three questions.
      1. What are the strengths, assets, or unique qualities that make Santa Fe Springs great?

2. What do you believe are the biggest opportunities or challenges in the community?
  3. Overall, what is your vision of the future of Santa Fe Springs?
- November 11, 2020: Land Use Alternatives (Virtual Workshop on Zoom)
    - Approximately 20 participants attended the workshop. All participants were entered into a raffle for a chance to win one of six gift cards to local restaurants and retail stores. MIG led an interactive discussion and participants were asked to vote on their favorite land use alternative for the following five focus areas:
      1. Washington Boulevard Focus Area
      2. Imperial and Bloomfield Focus Area
      3. Downtown Focus Area
      4. MC&C Focus Area
      5. Former Vons Distribution Center Focus Area
  - March 31, 2021: Environmental Justice and Housing Policy Direction (Virtual Workshop on Zoom)
    - Approximately 50 participants attended the workshop. All participants were entered into a raffle for a chance to win one of ten gift cards to local restaurants and retail stores. There was a presentation to provide an overview of the General Plan update and the overall significance of the Housing and Environmental Justice Elements. A presentation focusing on the Housing Element and the Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) was also provided.
  - November 17, 2021: Public Review Draft General Plan (In-Person – Open House Style Workshop)
    - Approximately 20 participants attended the workshop. There was a total of 8 stations with boards and post-it notes for commenting.
      1. Introduction Station
      2. Land Use and Housing Station
      3. Circulation and Infrastructure Station
      4. Environmental Justice Station
      5. Safety/Noise Station
      6. Open Space/Parks/Conservation Station
      7. General Plan Documents Station
      8. Snacks and Refreshments Station.

- Each station, aside from the Snacks and Refreshments Station, was manned by City staff or a member of the General Plan consulting team. Two individuals also roamed the room and participated in discussions as appropriate.
- Study Sessions and Public Meetings

Staff and the project team presented or otherwise participated at a total of 15 Study Sessions or Public Meetings before the Planning Commission (PC), Traffic Commission (TC), and City Council (CC). Below are the dates and topics covered during the 11 meetings held to date:

  - *November 12, 2020 (PC/CC)*: The Study Session provided feedback on the draft Vision, Land Use Alternatives, and Land Use Plan.
  - *December 10, 2020 (CC)*: A New Business item to confirm direction on the Preferred Draft Land Use Plan and the preferred land use alternatives for the four focus areas.
  - *May 18, 2021(CC)*: The Study Session provided a summary of progress on the comprehensive General Plan update, with emphasis on the Housing Element and draft goals and policies.
  - *October 18, 2021(PC)*: The Study Session provided a review of the General Plan update including the process timeline, engagement efforts, a summary of community comments, and a preview of all elements.
  - *October 21, 2021 (TC)*: The Study Session provided a review of the General Plan update including the process timeline, engagement efforts, a summary of community comments, and a preview of all elements with an emphasis on the Transportation Element.
  - *November 2, 2021 (CC)*: The Study Session provided a thorough review of the General Plan update including the process timeline, engagement efforts, a summary of community comments, and a preview of all elements.
  - *December 7, 2021 (CC)*: A Public Hearing before the City Council to solicit comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR).
  - *January 5, 2022 (CC)*: The Study Session provided a thorough review of the General Plan update and provided details on the specific comments received and corresponding land use designation changes.
  - *January 10, 2022 (PC)*: The Study Session provided a thorough review of the General Plan update and provided details on the specific comments received and corresponding land use designation changes.
  - *January 11, 2022 (CC)*: The Study Session provided the general public with an additional opportunity (without a 3-minute limit) to

- provide comments on the proposed General Plan Update.
- *January 18, 2022 (CC)*: The Study Session provided the City Council with the necessary background and responses to the various issues raised at the last study session.
  - *January 24, 2022 (PC)*: A Public Hearing before the Planning Commission to present the Draft Environmental Impact Report and Santa Fe Springs 2040 General Plan, including the 2021-2029 Housing Element for their consideration and recommendation to the City Council.
  - *January 27, 2022 (CC)*: The Study Session provided the City Council with an opportunity to further engage with the property and business owners who have expressed concerns over proposed changes. Staff also provided the City Council with an update on discussions with property and business owners and presented various options for the City Council to consider.
  - *February 1, 2022 (CC)*: A New Business item to provide the City Council with an update from staff and provide direction as desired. Staff provided the Council with the necessary background on the remaining issues.
  - *February 3, 2022 (CC)*: The Study Session provided the City Council with an update on the project team's effort to find an agreeable solution to address concerns raised by the property and business owners. The Study Session also allowed staff to receive some direction from the City Council on four remaining issues:
    1. Non-conforming provisions
    2. Implementation of the Freeway Commercial land use designation
    3. Buffer from residential properties: Existing residential only or both existing and planned residential.
    4. Buffer from residential properties: City residents only or also include adjacent cities and/or Sphere of Influence

### **ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTS**

The City's preparation of a General Plan and Targeted Zoning Code Update (GPTZCU) established a vision and policies to shape and manage long-term growth in the "Planning Area," which includes areas within the City's incorporated boundaries and areas within the City's Sphere of Influence. The adoption and implementation of the GPTZCU are defined as a "project" and is subject to review under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (Public Resources Code, Section 21000 *et seq.*), and the State CEQA Guidelines (California Code of Regulations, Section 15000 *et seq.*). Accordingly, an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) has been prepared to assess the long-range and cumulative environmental consequences that could result from the adoption and implementation of the proposed project. It should be noted that while the

Targeted Zoning Code Update efforts will occur following the adoption of the General Plan, the EIR does consider the potential impacts of both efforts.

The approach to the EIR analysis is programmatic, given the broad scope of the GPTZCU. According to Section 15168 of CEQA Guidelines, a program EIR is an EIR that may be prepared on a series of actions that can be characterized as one large project and that are related geographically or logical parts in the chain of contemplated actions. Program EIRs may provide several advantages, including that they provide occasions for more thorough consideration of effects and alternatives than would be practical in an EIR on an individual action, they ensure consideration of cumulative impacts that might be ignored on a case-by-case analysis, they avoid duplicative reconsideration of basic policy considerations, and they allow lead agencies to consider broad policy alternatives and program-wide mitigation measures early when there is greater flexibility to deal with the basic problems and cumulative impacts.

Each environmental issue is analyzed similarly, with a discussion of the existing environmental setting, including physical conditions and pertinent planning and regulatory framework. Thresholds of significance are then defined and used to measure the GPTZCU's potential impact on the environment. Thresholds of significance are based on a broad list of questions and impact topics set forth in Appendix G of the State CEQA Guidelines.

The impact analysis provided in each of the 20 topical areas of the EIR examines the potential, short and long-term environmental effects resulting from the implementation of the goals and policies contained in each of the updated General Plan elements. The EIR focuses on analyzing the impacts of the GPTZCU and addressing whether the goals, policies, or some other aspect of the proposed Plan would reduce or eliminate such impacts. The presence of sensitive environmental resources, hazards in specific areas, and the broad implications of the GPTZCU throughout the Planning Area are also considered in the determination of significance. If the analysis indicates that a significant impact could occur, even with the benefits of any proposed goals or policies, mitigation measures are identified.

#### Draft Environmental Impact Report

The Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) (Attachment 1, Resolution – Exhibit A) evaluates the anticipated 2040 build-out of the Planning Area, which consists of approximately 8.9 square miles (5,681-acres) of land within the City's boundaries and approximately 2.6 square miles (1,650-acres) of land outside of the City's boundaries within the Sphere of Influence, for a total Planning Area of approximately 11.5 square miles (7,332-acres). In addition to the General Plan and Zoning updates, four Key Opportunity Sites are included in the EIR evaluation:

1. Washington Boulevard/Norwalk Boulevard Transit-Oriented Development – This site is located within the triangular blocks between Washington Boulevard, Norwalk Boulevard, and Broadway Avenue bordering the City of Santa Fe Springs and the Los Angeles County unincorporated area of West Whittier-Los Nietos.
2. Metrolink Transit-Oriented Development - This site is located at the northeast corner of Imperial Highway and Bloomfield Avenue bordering the City of Norwalk and across the street from the Norwalk/Santa Fe Springs Transportation Center and Metrolink Station.
3. MC&C Site - This site is located at the southeast corner of Telegraph Road and Bloomfield Avenue on vacant properties that include active, plugged, idle, and abandoned oil wells and associated pipelines
4. Koontz Site - This site is located between Lakeland Road, Norwalk Boulevard, Fulton Wells Avenue, and Florence Avenue.

The DEIR assesses the anticipated development that could occur within the Planning Area *if* every parcel in the city (including the four Key Opportunity Sites) and its Sphere of Influence is developed at the densities and intensities expected under the GPTZCU. However, actual development within the Planning Area under the guidance of the GPTZCU would depend on future real estate market conditions, new State and federal laws and regulations, property owner preferences, site-specific constraints, technological advancements, and other factors.

The GPTZCU is intended to achieve land use, transportation, housing, and other goals of the City which reflects the community's growth over the long term. The 2040 planning horizon for the Planning Area is estimated to result in increases of approximately 4,572 dwelling units, 364,000 square feet of office space, 383,500 square feet of industrial space, and a reduction of 80,000 square feet of commercial space. An estimated increase of approximately 13,890 residents and 4,788 jobs is also projected for the 2040 horizon year.

#### Results of 20 Topical Areas Examined

The DEIR determined that three impact areas, even with all feasible and recommended mitigation, will result in *Significant and Unavoidable Impacts*. The three impact areas are: Air Quality, Greenhouse Gas Emissions, and Transportation (Vehicles Miles Traveled or "VMT"). If the City of Santa Fe Springs City Council chooses to certify the DEIR, it will need to adopt a Statement of Overriding Considerations.

The DEIR also determined that two impact areas will result in *Less than Significant Impacts with Mitigation Measures*. These two impact areas are: Hydrology and Water Quality, and Utilities and Service Systems. All mitigation measures are identified and discussed in the DEIR.

Last, the DEIR determined that the remaining 15 impact areas will result in *No Impacts or Less than Significant Impacts*. They are Aesthetics, Agriculture and Forestry Resources, Biological Resources, Cultural Resources, Energy, Geology and Soils, Hazardous Materials, Land Use and Planning, Noise, Population and Housing, Public Services, Recreation, Safety, Tribal Cultural Resources, and Wildfire.

#### Alternatives Considered

Per CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(a), an EIR does not need to evaluate every conceivable alternative. The DEIR considered three alternatives to the GPTZCU, including the CEQA-mandated No Project Alternative, and compared the impacts of each alternative to the Project. The ability of each alternative to meet the basic project objectives is also described, and the “environmentally superior” alternative among the three is identified, as required by the CEQA Guidelines.

The following alternatives have been evaluated in comparison to the GPTZCU:

- *Alternative 1: No Project/Existing General Plan*
  - The No Project/Existing General Plan Alternative (No Project Alternative) assumes that development would occur within the Planning Area, but only development anticipated under the 1994 General Plan. For this alternative, it is assumed there would be a significant reduction in residential development and a significant increase in non-residential development when compared to the Project. Additionally, no new policies, goals, or development standards associated with the Project would be implemented; the standards, goals, and policies associated with the 1994 General Plan would be applicable. This alternative would not meet the City’s current Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) requirement of accommodating 952 dwelling units.
- *Alternative 2: Reduced Mixed-Use Alternative*
  - The Reduced Mixed-Use Alternative reflects a reduced number of residential units and a reduced amount of non-residential development (both approximately 25 percent less) compared to those expected under the proposed GPTZCU. Development assumptions for this alternative are shown in Table 5-1 of the plan. This alternative assumes that policies, goals, or development standards associated with the Project would apply to this alternative. This alternative would meet the City’s current Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) goals.
- *Alternative 3: Reduced Residential Alternative*
  - The Reduced Residential Alternative assumes that the total number of dwelling units under this alternative would be 50 percent less than the increase expected under the proposed GPTZCU. This alternative assumes the same amount of non-residential development as the

proposed GPTZCU. This alternative assumes that policies, goals, or development standards associated with the Project would apply to this alternative. This alternative would also meet the current City's Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) goals.

None of the alternatives would eliminate or reduce any of the significant impacts of the GPTZCU to less than significant levels. However, Alternative 2, the Reduced Mixed-Use Alternative, would reduce potential impacts to the greatest degree and would therefore be the "environmentally superior alternative." However, as the DEIR notes, this alternative does not meet the project objectives to the same degree as the proposed project.

#### Cortese List

As described in the DEIR, the City contains over 200 sites that are included on the Cortese list required by Government Code Section 65962.5 for various reasons; however, the vast majority of these sites are now closed following remediation and cleanup. Several sites are permitted sites operating within code requirements and regulations. One site is a hazardous waste facility that is subject to corrective action that is currently ongoing. This disclosure is provided to address the requirements of Section 15087(c)(6) of the CEQA Guidelines.

#### Notice of Preparation and Scoping Meeting

Per State law, a Notice of Preparation (NOP) was issued on May 17, 2021, for a 30-day review period. The public review ended on June 15, 2021. On June 9, 2021, the City conducted a virtual scoping meeting on the NOP and issues to be addressed in the DEIR. In total, 8 comment letters were received during the 30-day review period and 2 oral comments were received during the scoping meeting. Additional information regarding the NOP comments is provided in Table 1.1 of the DEIR's Introduction Chapter.

#### 45-day Public Review

Per State law, the DEIR for the GPTZCU was released for its 45-day public review period on Wednesday, November 3, 2021. The public review period ended on Friday, December 17, 2021. A total of 5 comment letters were received at or before 5:00pm on December 17, 2021.

#### Public Hearing to Solicit Comments on DEIR

It should be noted that CEQA does not require public meetings or public hearings on the DEIR; however, it does encourage wide public involvement to receive and evaluate public reactions to environmental issues. Although the City had circulated a Notice of Preparation (NOP), conducted a scoping meeting to solicit written comments on the scope and content of the DEIR, and circulated the DEIR for the mandatory 45-day public review period, the City voluntarily conducted a public hearing on December 7,

2021, to provide members of the public with another opportunity to remain involved in the EIR process. Members of the public were invited to comment on the DEIR, but were asked for their comments to focus on the sufficiency of the DEIR in discussing possible impacts of the project in light of the DEIR's purpose to provide useful and accurate information about such factors. Two individuals attended the meeting and provided comments on the DEIR.

#### Response to Comments

In compliance with CEQA, a Notice of Availability was sent to government agencies, neighboring cities, and non-governmental interested parties (CEQA Guidelines § 15087). The City's Local Agency Notification List, showing who received notice of the DEIR, is provided in Section 4.0 - Public Circulation - of the FEIR. Four comment letters were received from various agencies, conservation organizations, and private groups, as well as a letter from the California Office of Planning and Research (OPR) acknowledging receipt of the DEIR. A copy of each comment letter and the City's written responses to those comments are presented in Section 2 (Response to Comments) of the FEIR.

#### Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR)

The Final EIR document (Attachment 1, Resolution – Exhibit A) has been prepared to comply with Sections 15088 and 15089 of the CEQA Guidelines (Guidelines). The City of Santa Fe Springs (City) has prepared the Final EIR according to the CEQA Guidelines, including Sections 15086 (Consultation Concerning DEIR) and 15088 (Evaluation of and Responses to Comments). As noted in Section 15089(b) of the Guidelines, the focus of an FEIR should be on responses to comments on the DEIR. In conformance with these guidelines, the FEIR consists of the following volumes:

1. The DEIR circulated for a 45-day public agency, and public review and comment period, commencing on November 3, 2021, and ending on December 17, 2021. A Notice of Availability was sent to neighboring cities, other government agencies, and non-governmental interested parties. The City's Notification List for the DEIR is provided in Section 4.0 (Public Circulation) of the FEIR.
2. The FEIR document includes all written comments received on the DEIR during the 45-day public review period, the City's written responses to the comments, revisions to the DEIR in response to comments (*presented in Section 3, Errata*) and the public circulation record. None of the revisions to the DEIR represents a substantial increase in the severity of an identified significant impact or the identification of a new significant impact, mitigation, or alternative considerably different from those already considered in the DEIR.

### Revisions to the Draft EIR

As noted previously, Section 3 (Errata) of the FEIR identifies revisions to the DEIR to incorporate clarifications, corrections, or additions prepared in response to comments on the DEIR. These changes include minor errors or editorial corrections identified through subsequent review. Additions are shown in underline. Deletions are shown in strikethrough. Commentary notes are shown in italic type where needed. It should be noted that none of the revisions to the DEIR represent a substantial increase in the severity of an identified significant impact or the identification of a new significant impact, mitigation, or alternative considerably different from those already considered in the DEIR.

### Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP)

The MMRP (Attachment 1, Resolution – Exhibit C) identifies mitigation measures incorporated from the GPTZCU DEIR. For each mitigation measure, the MMRP identifies the significant impact, the related mitigation measure, the implementation agency, the monitoring and verification entity, and timing requirements. A total of 10 mitigation measures are proposed. Said mitigations address impacts related to *Air Quality, Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Hydrology and Water Quality; and Utility and Service Systems*.

### Findings of Fact and Statement of Overriding Considerations

CEQA requires the City Council of Santa Fe Springs, as the CEQA lead agency, to complete and adopt the following:

- Make written findings when it approves a project for which an environmental impact report was certified; and
- Identify overriding considerations for significant and unavoidable impacts identified in the EIR.

CEQA requires that a Lead Agency balance the benefits of a project against its unavoidable environmental risk in determining whether to approve the project. If the benefits outweigh the unavoidable adverse effects, those effects may be considered “acceptable” according to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15093(a). CEQA requires that a Lead Agency support, in writing, the specific reasons for considering a project acceptable when significant impacts are infeasible to mitigate. Those reasons must be based on substantial evidence in the EIR or elsewhere in the administrative record according to State CEQA Guidelines 15093(b). The Lead Agency’s written reasons are referred to as a *Statement of Overriding Considerations*. For those significant impacts that cannot be mitigated to below a level of significance, the Lead Agency is required to find that the specific overriding economic, legal, social, technological, or other benefits of the project outweigh the significant impacts on the environment.

If the City Council approves the Project, along with the EIR that has been prepared, the following adverse impacts of the project are considered significant and unavoidable based on the analysis in the DEIR, FEIR, and the Findings of Fact:

Section 4.3, Air Quality

- *Impact AQ-1 – Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan.* Since the projected population growth under the Project's 2040 time-horizon exceeds the 2016 RTP/SCS growth forecasts used to prepare the 2016 South Coast Air Quality Management Plan, the Project could increase the frequency and/or severity of air quality violations in the Basin or otherwise impede attainment of air quality standards in the Basin, particularly national and state ozone standards.
- *Impact AQ-2 – Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard.* Due to the built-out nature of the Planning Area, construction emissions are speculative for the timing and magnitude of demolition, site preparation, grading, building construction, paving and painting activities that would occur over time. Fugitive dust (PM10) emissions would be greatest during building demolition, site preparation, and grading, due to the disturbances of soil and transport of material and NOx emission would result from the combustion of diesel fuels used to power off-road heavy-duty pieces of equipment (e.g. backhoes, bulldozers, excavators, etc). Reactive Organic Gas (ROG) or Volatile Organic Compound (VOC) emissions would generally be greatest during architectural activities. The types and quantity of equipment, and duration of construction activities, would be dependent on project-specific conditions. Despite the unknowns, it is plausible that one or more projects developed under the implementation of the proposed GPTZCU could exceed one or more of the SCAQMD's construction criteria air pollutant thresholds of significance.
- *Impact AQ-3 – Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations.* Construction emissions associated with future development activities facilitated under the implementation of the proposed GPTZCU could exceed SCAQMD construction Localized Significance Thresholds (LSTs) and cancerogenic and non-cancerogenic thresholds maintained and recommended by the SCAQMD.
- *Impact AG-5 - Cause adverse substantial adverse cumulative impacts with respect to air quality.* The project's 2040 growth and associated construction and operation emissions may not be consistent with the planning assumptions and emission levels which exceed the SCAQMD recommended CEQA Threshold of significance.

Section 4.8, Greenhouse Gas Emissions

- *Impact GHG-1 – Generate GHG emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment.* The GPTZCU's 2040 growth

projection would result in GHG emissions that exceed the adjusted SCAQMD derived plan-efficiency metric.

- *Impact GHG-2 – Conflict with an applicable plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases.* The growth that could occur under the GPTZCU could result in GHG emissions that exceed the 2017 Climate Change Scoping Plan’s recommended efficiency metrics. In addition, the Project has the potential to result in growth which is approximately 2.5 times more than the assumed growth in the 2020 RTP/SCS.
- *Impact GHG-3 - Cause substantial adverse cumulative impacts with respect to greenhouse gases.* The GPTZCU’s 2040 growth projection and associated GHG emissions could exceed the significance threshold applied in the DEIR and pose a conflict with the 2017 Climate Change Scoping Plan of the California Air Resources Board.

#### Section 4.17, Transportation

- *Impact TRANS-2 – Conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA guidelines section 15064.3, subdivision (b).* The GPTZCU will substantially increase the projected population in the Planning Area over those projected in the 2020 Urban Water Management Plan which must be updated every five years and will need to be updated to account for the growth represented by future land uses under the GPTZCU.
- *Impact TRANS-5 – Cause substantial adverse cumulative impacts with respect to transportation and traffic.* At this time, the City of Santa Fe Springs cannot demonstrate that vehicle miles traveled (VMT) will be reduced to the degree that it meets State goals related to VMT reduction. The feasibility and effectiveness of VMT mitigation measures such as a local or regional VMT bank or exchange is unknown at this time. The findings for the project indicate that the project is beneficial for VMT efficiency and is expected to produce VMT at a rate that would not result in a significant impact (as discussed above the model is not sensitive to many of the factors identified that affect VMT per person). CARB data indicates the trend of VMT growth across the state is going up when the regional models predict that it should be decreasing. This trend highlights the current uncertainty of the model in predicting VMT.

The City Council will have to find that the foregoing benefits provided to the public through the approval of the Project outweigh the identified significant adverse environmental impacts of the Project that cannot be mitigated. The City Council will have to find that each of the Project benefits separately and individually outweighs all the unavoidable adverse environmental effects identified in the EIR and, therefore, finds those impacts to be acceptable. The City Council will have to further find that no feasible alternative exists that both would provide all the foregoing benefits to the public and reduce environmental impacts when compared to the Project. (Attachment 1, Resolution – Exhibit B.)

**LEGAL NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING**

Legal notice of the Public Hearing for the proposed project was published in a newspaper of general circulation (Whittier Daily News) on January 28, 2022, as required by the State Zoning and Development Laws and by the City's Zoning Ordinance. Notices were also mailed to local groups associated with the blind, aged, and disabled in accordance with California Government Code Section 65090.

It should be noted that due to the Covid pandemic, the upcoming City Council meeting will be held by teleconference, the public hearing notices provides a link to the Zoom meeting, along with the meeting ID, password, and dial-in information as provided below:

**Electronically using Zoom**

Go to Zoom.us and click on "Join A Meeting" or use the following link:

<https://zoom.us/j/521620472?pwd=U3cyK1RuY1ekVGZFdKQXNZVzh4Zz09>

Zoom Meeting ID: 521 620 472

Password: 659847

**Telephonically**

Dial: 888-475-4499

Meeting ID: 521 620 472

**COMMENTS RECEIVED ON THE DRAFT GENERAL PLAN**

Following the release of the draft General Plan for public review in November 2021, the City received several letters and emails commenting on proposed land use designation changes (relative to the 1993 General Plan). Correspondence was received from the following and are attached to the staff report:

- Briggs Alexander on behalf of property owners at 10801-10859 Norwalk Boulevard, 12120 Florence Avenue, and 10819-10858 Koontz Avenue - letter dated October 15, 2021
- John Moore of Primestor Development, LLC - email dated December 1, 2021
- Primestor Development, LLC – letter dated December 3, 2021
- Thrifty Oil – letter dated December 15, 2021
- Santa Fe Springs Chamber of Commerce – email dated December 17, 2021
- Rutan and Tucker on behalf of Goodman North American Partnership Holdings, LLC – letter dated December 17, 2021
- Rutan and Tucker on behalf of Golden Springs Development Company - letter dated January 10, 2022
- Rutan and Tucker on behalf of Premier RV Storage SFS, LLC - letter dated January 10, 2022

- Golden Springs Development Company - letter dated January 10, 2022
- Rexford Industrial – letter dated January 10, 2022
- Santa Fe Springs Chamber of Commerce – letter dated January 10, 2022
- Steve Masura representing Rexford Industrial – email dated January 18, 2022
- Rutan and Tucker on behalf of Premier RV Storage SFS, LLC - Letter dated January 18, 2022

All correspondence (except that from the Chamber of Commerce) raised issues specific to particular properties regarding proposed land use designation changes. The Chamber correspondence generally noted the proposed reclassification of many properties from Industrial to the new Light Industrial designation. The following paragraphs summarize the objections raised in the correspondence as a whole and provide responses for City Council consideration.

### **Creation of the new Light Industrial land use designation and its application to properties within 500 feet of residential neighborhoods**

**Comment:** The proposed Light Industrial designation would prohibit certain industrial uses/businesses from being established and operated on properties to be redesignated Light Industrial (and subsequently rezoned M-1 Light Manufacturing). Some existing businesses would be rendered nonconforming, and property owners would be restricted in their ability to lease to trucking, warehousing, and large-scale logistics businesses (among other heavy industrial uses). This change constitutes a regulatory taking of property due to a reduction in property value.

**Response:** The new Light Industrial land use designation responds to established land use policy practices in place through the Light Manufacturing (M-1) zone, which historically has been applied to properties adjacent to residential neighborhoods. The M-1 zone restricts heavier industrial uses and trucking-intensive uses to minimize impacts on residents living in proximity to the zones. Through the General Plan update program, the City looks to further this practice by applying the Light Industrial designation to properties currently zoned M-1, as well as to industrial properties within 500 feet of residential neighborhoods and properties planned for residential use. The proposed Light Industrial designation would explicitly prohibit “industrial uses that manufacture, store, or generate large volumes of hazardous materials,” as well as “trucking, warehousing, and large-scale logistics uses.”

This land use policy will be implemented via refinements to the M-1 zone in the Zoning Code. New such uses would not be permitted in the future. In recognition of existing property rights, existing such uses would become nonconforming and can continue to operate but could not expand except under circumstances set forth in the Zoning Code. The goal is to reduce the exposure of residents to potentially harmful conditions related to noise, air pollutant emissions, and hazardous materials.

The City—and all jurisdictions in California—has the ability to make land use changes through police powers established by the California constitution. This is a critical function of local government: to plan for its physical and financial health consistent with a community vision. The Light Industrial designation and implementing M-1 zone allow for a broad range of industrial uses and will continue to provide property owners with significant opportunities to attract new tenants.

### **Applying the Business Park land use designation to properties currently designated Industrial**

**Comment:** Redesignating certain properties from Industrial to Business Park would prohibit certain industrial uses/businesses from being established and operated. Some existing businesses would be rendered nonconforming, and property owners would be restricted in their ability to lease to trucking, warehousing, and large-scale logistics businesses (among other heavy industrial uses). This change constitutes a regulatory taking of property due to a reduction in property value.

**Response:** The Business Park designation is implemented via the Limited Manufacturing, Administration, and Research zone (ML). As with the discussion regarding Light Industrial above, specific properties adjacent to established residential neighborhoods are proposed to be redesignated Business Park to protect residents' health and safety, including residents in the adjacent city of Norwalk. Specifically prohibited would be "trucking, warehousing, logistics, oil refining and storage, and any food processing or production that has discernable exterior odors." The Business Park designation and implementing ML zone allow for a broad range of manufacturing, assembly, and repair uses, as well as office uses, and will continue to provide property owners with significant opportunities to attract new tenants.

### **Restrictions imposed by the Freeway Commercial designation**

**Comment:** Redesignating properties along Interstate 5 (I-5) from Industrial to Freeway Commercial would prohibit many industrial uses/businesses from being established and operated. The market is trending away from commercial uses, and the COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated conditions. The freeway frontage provides excellent access for logistics businesses. Through the application of the Freeway Commercial designation, as implemented via the Freeway Commercial Overlay zone, some existing businesses would be rendered nonconforming, and property owners would be restricted in their ability to lease to trucking, warehousing, and large-scale logistics businesses. This change constitutes a regulatory taking of property due to a reduction in property value.

**Response:** The proposed Freeway Commercial designation responds to the Freeway Commercial Overlay Zone which has been in place for 30+ years and applies to properties along the I-5 corridor. The General Plan will clarify already established land

use practices and furthermore, will strengthen the City's vision to attract revenue-generating businesses along a busy travel route. Communities throughout California have demonstrated the advantage freeway frontage offers for attracting large-scale commercial and hospitality uses. Examples include Cerritos Auto Square, the Citadel in Commerce, and SoCo in Costa Mesa, among many others. Today, almost all businesses within the Freeway Commercial Overlay Zone are commercial or non-logistics industrial uses. Two are illegal and/or nonconforming businesses. Legal existing uses and legal nonconforming businesses would continue to be allowed to operate, and similar new uses could be established. The City would focus its economic development activity on attracting businesses that would contribute to the sales tax base and provide quality jobs. Foremost to note is that the General Plan represents a long-term plan that looks beyond current COVID-related market disruptions.

### **Provide more time for community discussion**

**Comment:** Industrial property owners have not had sufficient time to consider the proposed General Plan changes related to nonresidential use.

**Response:** The General Plan update process was initiated in February 2020 and involved the robust community engagement process described in this staff report. The draft Land Use plan and General Plan framework were presented to the City Council in May 2021, and the Council affirmed the preferred alternative for the purpose of crafting the EIR project description and writing the draft General Plan. At that meeting, the draft land use goals were affirmed, including diverse industrial activities, "green" industrial operations, healthy neighborhoods, creation of a downtown, transformation of Telegraph Road, a vibrant I-5 corridor, and TOD around transit stations. The land use designation descriptions subsequently were crafted based on this direction. The public had the opportunity to weigh at the May meeting and via General Plan overview study sessions with the Planning Commission and City Council in October and November 2021, respectively. The full General Plan and EIR were published in October 2021, and an in-person community workshop occurred on November 17, 2021. During December 2021 and January 2022, the Council conducted several study sessions specifically to hear comments from business owners and industrial property owners. These stakeholders requested that the discussion of changes to industrial properties be separated from the rest of the effort and that the General Plan move forward in a two-step process.

Since the submittal of this comment, the City Council has held numerous study sessions and staff has met and worked with members of the business community to address their concerns to allow the General Plan update and Housing Element to be adopted together.

**Allow drive-through businesses in transit-oriented districts and reduce parking requirements**

**Comment:** Owners of properties near proposed transit-oriented districts (TOD) would like to ensure that drive-through establishments will be allowed and that parking regulations reflect the ultimate presence of transit service.

**Response:** This level of land use regulation is addressed through the Zoning Code, which will be a follow-up work effort to the General Plan. TODs focus on encouraging land uses with a pedestrian orientation. Drive-through restaurants typically are not compatible with this objective, although reduced parking standards are. These issues will be considered during the Zoning Code update.

**Proposed bike accommodations around the Golden Springs Business Center conflict with truck traffic**

**Comment:** Designating Class II bikeways on Imperial Highway, Shoemaker, Adler, Leffingwell, Orden, Carmenita, and Foster will create risks to cyclists due to heavy truck traffic.

**Response:** Precedent to initiating the General Plan update effort, the City commissioned an Active Transportation Plan (ATP) which recommended transportation system improvements to better accommodate pedestrians and cyclists. The ATP recommendations were considered by the General Plan traffic consultant in drafting the Circulation Element. As noted on page C-15 of the Circulation Element, "Recognizing that trucks and bicycle facilities do not mix well, the Bicycle Network Plan identifies paths along the San Gabriel River and streets to accommodate various types of bike facilities that provide connections from neighborhoods to parks, schools, activity areas, and commercial centers, while ensuring alternative connections to avoid bike facilities on major truck routes."

**PLANNING COMMISSION PUBLIC HEARING AND RECOMMENDATION**

On January 24, 2022, the City of Santa Fe Springs Planning Commission convened a public hearing to evaluate the Draft Santa Fe Springs 2040 General Plan, including the 2021-2029 Housing Element (as revised to address HCD comments), and the associated Draft Environmental Impact Report for the Project. In addition to the materials presented in the Planning Commission packet, Commission members were provided with four comments letters that were received via e-mail on the day of the meeting (Attachment 12). The individuals that sent the letters all reiterated the concerns identified in their respective letters during the public comment period.

The Commission viewed a presentation provided by City staff and the General Plan consulting team to recap the overall general plan update process, the technical documents under review, including seven options for the Planning Commission to

consider and recommend to the City Council to incorporate into the General Plan as part of the final adoption. Below are the options that were presented to the Planning Commission:

- 1) Page LU-23 of the Land Use Element relating to the Business Park land use designation is to be revised as follows: “~~Specifically prohibited~~ Limited uses should include trucking, warehousing, logistics, oil refining and storage, and any food processing or production that has discernable exterior odors.”
- 2) Page LU-24 of the Land Use Element related to the Light Industrial land use designation is to be revised as follows: “The Light Industrial category allows for light industrial processes and manufacturing activities in multi-tenant, small-scale industrial developments. Industrial uses that manufacture, store, or generate high volumes of hazardous material ~~will~~ should be limited ~~prohibited or considered nonconforming uses~~. Trucking, warehousing, and large-scale logistics uses should be limited ~~are prohibited~~ due to proximity to residential neighborhoods, as are oil refining and storage. Supporting and complementary commercial retail and services are permitted.”
- 3) Change the land use designation proposed in Figure LU-3: Land Use Plan for parcels 8177-029-004, -005, -802, -808, -810, -812, -813, -815, -822, -823, -824, 903, -905 and -908 from Light Industrial to Industrial. This triangular-shaped area is bounded by Interstate 605 to the east, the San Gabriel River to the west, and the Atchison Topeka and Santa Fe Railroad to the north.
- 4) Due to their location outside a 500’ radius from residential land use designations, change the land use designation proposed in Figure LU-3: Land Use Plan for parcels 8005-012-803, -804, -030, -034, -036, -037, -038, -039, and -043 from Light Industrial to Industrial. This area is roughly bounded by Matern Place to the south, Norwalk Boulevard to the east, Smith Avenue to the north, and the Southern Pacific Railroad to the west.
- 5) Due to their location outside a 500’ radius from residential land use designations, change the land use designation proposed in Figure LU-3: Land Use Plan for parcels:
  - a) 8009-013: -037, -072, -073, -074, -075, -076, -077, -079, -080, -081, -082, -085, -086, and -088
  - b) 8009-015: -037, -038, -039, -030, -048, -040, -041, -042, -043, -047, -914, -913, -028,
  - c) 8009-020: -012, -013, -014, -015, -016, -017, -018, -019, -020, and -021

from Light Industrial to Industrial. This area is roughly bounded by Florence

Avenue to the south, Bloomfield Avenue to the east, 500' south of Clark Street to the north, and 500' east of Norwalk Boulevard to the west.

- 6) Change the land use designation proposed in Figure LU-3: Land Use Plan for parcels 8009-023-027 and 8009-023-041 from Commercial to Business Park. These parcels are located south of Florence Avenue and West of Norwalk Boulevard.
- 7) Change the land use designation proposed in Figure LU-3: Land Use Plan for parcels 8082-003-006 and the western half of 8082-003-010 from Business Park to Light Industrial. This area is bounded by Excelsior Drive to the south and Bloomfield Avenue to the west.

A total of 17 members of the public provided comments at the meeting, including 2 residents from the City of Norwalk, and 3 residents from the City of Santa Fe Springs. Several speakers from the group of business and properties owners thanked staff for their time and efforts to find a compromise. The speakers had acknowledged that significant progress has been made to address the various concerns brought forth by a group, however, they also felt that there were still several major issues that still needed to be resolved. Speakers expressed concerns with the distance and criteria for the proposed residential buffer in the land use map, the potential devaluing of industrial properties affected by the proposed land use changes, the lack of clarity within the general plan language, the non-conforming provisions, and that resident concerns are not being addressed. The two residents from the City of Norwalk commented on the ongoing noise, trucking, and traffic impacts generated by the former Vons facility. Both expressed support for a rezoning of the subject site to a less intense industrial zone.

Several speakers brought forth specific requests for consideration by the Planning Commission. Requested items included: Elimination of certain properties from the new Light Industrial land use designation or otherwise not be included in any proposed land use change; changing the criteria surrounding the proposed residential buffer; postponing the Planning Commission's decision or otherwise bifurcation of the proposed general plan; and the removal of the property at 11733 Florence Avenue from the Medium Density Residential designation in the General Plan and instead consider a change to Single Family Residential.

The Planning Commission deliberated for almost an hour before they voted unanimously in favor of recommending that the City Council adopt the 2040 General Plan update, with consideration of options presented by staff in light of public input given at the February 8, 2022 City Council study session on the general plan update. The Planning Commission vote was five in favor, none in opposition, none in abstention. (Attachment 7.)

Since the January 24, 2022 Planning Commission meeting, there have been several group think sessions, two focus group meetings, two study sessions, a City Council meeting, and numerous e-mails and phone calls. The results of such efforts have led to proposed text changes and an updated land use map for the Santa Fe Springs 2040 General Plan including the changes directed by the City Council at the February 3, 2022 study session. (Attachment 1, Resolution, Section 5.)

### **NEXT STEPS**

After adoption, the Santa Fe Springs General Plan will be finalized to reflect all amendments and changes as directed by the City Council. The 2021-2029 Housing Element will be forwarded to HCD for its certification review. If successful, the City will receive a letter finding that the adopted Housing Element is certified as meeting State Law. If unsuccessful, the City will receive a letter identifying areas of concern, which the City must satisfactorily address to achieve certification.

Staff and the consulting team will continue working on the Targeted Zoning Code Updates in the coming months. We plan to share our progress and continue to keep everyone informed and involved in said efforts.

### **CONCLUSION**

Staff recommends that the City Council certify the Final Environmental Impact Report, adopt related findings of fact and statement of overriding considerations and mitigation monitoring and reporting program, and adopt the Santa Fe Springs 2040 General Plan, including the 2021-2029 Housing Element, and related Implementation Plan as set forth in Resolution No. 9760 (Attachment 1).



Raymond R. Cruz  
City Manager

### **Attachments:**

1. City Council Resolution No. 9760 certifying the Environmental Impact Report and adopting findings of fact and statement of overriding considerations, mitigation monitoring and reporting program, the Santa Fe Springs 2040 General Plan, including the 2021-2029 Housing Element, and Implementation Plan
  - Exhibit A: City of Santa Fe Springs General Plan and Targeted Zoning Code Update Final Environmental Impact Report
  - Exhibit B: General Plan and Targeted Zoning Code Update Findings of Fact and Statement of Overriding Considerations
  - Exhibit C: Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program
  - Exhibit D: Draft Santa Fe Springs 2040 General Plan
  - Exhibit E: Updated Figure LU-3: Land Use Plan
  - Exhibit F: 2040 General Plan Implementation Plan

2. Existing Conditions and Technical Report
3. Vision and Guiding Principles
4. Public Comment Letters Received on the General Plan and/or Housing Element
5. January 24, 2022 Planning Commission Staff Report
6. Letters received by the Planning Commission
7. Planning Commission Resolution No. 206-2022 - Recommending Certification of the Environmental Impact Report and the Santa Fe Springs 2040 General Plan, including the 2021-2029 Housing Element

**Attachment 1: City Council Resolution No. 9760**

## **Attachment 2: Existing Conditions and Technical Report**

**Attachment 3: Draft General Plan Vision and Guiding Principles**

**Attachment 4: Public Comment Letters Received on the General Plan  
and/or Housing Element**

**Attachment 5: January 24, 2022 Planning Commission Staff Report**

**Attachment 6: Letters received by the Planning Commission**

**Attachment 7: Planning Commission Resolution No. 206-2022  
Recommending Certification of the Environmental Impact Report and  
the Santa Fe Springs 2040 General Plan, including the 2021-2029  
Housing Element**