City of SACRAMENTO
Community Development

300 Richards Blvd., 3rd Floor
Sacramento, CA 95811

Help Line: 916-264-5011
CityofSacramento.org/dsd

DATE: February 15, 2017

TO: Interested Persons

FROM: Tom Buford, Senior Planner
Community Development Department

RE: **NOTICE OF PREPARATION OF AN ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT AND SCOPING MEETING FOR THE DOWNTOWN SPECIFIC PLAN**

COMMENT PERIOD

February 15, 2017 – March 17, 2017

SCOPING MEETING

City Hall, 915 I Street

Thursday, March 2, 2017; 6-8 p.m.

Responsible agencies and members of the public are invited to attend and provide input on the scope of the EIR. The scoping meeting will be conducted in an open house format. Written comments regarding relevant issues may be submitted at the meeting.

INTRODUCTION

The City of Sacramento (City) is the Lead Agency for preparation of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the proposed Downtown Specific Plan (DSP). The EIR to be prepared by the City will evaluate potential significant environmental effects of the proposed DSP and other actions and transactions associated with the proposed DSP. Written comments regarding the issues that should be covered in the EIR, including potential alternatives to the proposed DSP and the scope of the analysis, are invited.

The EIR for the proposed DSP is being prepared for the project in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Under CEQA, upon deciding to prepare an EIR, the City as lead agency must issue a Notice of Preparation (NOP) to inform trustee agencies, the public, and responsible agencies of that decision. The purpose of the NOP is to provide information describing the project and its potential environmental effects to those who may wish to comment regarding the scope and content of the information to be included in the EIR. Agencies should

comment on such information as it relates to their statutory responsibilities in connection with the project.

The EIR will provide an evaluation of potential environmental impacts associated with development of the proposed DSP. The proposed DSP project description, location, and environmental issue areas that may be affected by development of the proposed project are described below. The EIR will evaluate the potentially significant environmental impacts of the proposed project, on both a direct and cumulative basis, identify mitigation measures that may be feasible to lessen or avoid such impacts, and identify alternatives to the proposed project.

PROJECT LOCATION/SETTING

Figure 1 (Regional Location Map) shows the location of the DSP area in the Sacramento region. The DSP area is generally bounded by the Sacramento River to the west; Business 80 (Route 51) to the east; the American River on the north (not including the River District and Railyards specific plan areas), and Broadway on the South. Figure 2 (Project Location Map) illustrates the proposed DSP area from a downtown Sacramento vicinity perspective.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

On August 25, 2015 the Sacramento City Council initiated the DSP, which will be a key program to implement the Downtown Housing Initiative Plan, an initiative to develop 10,000 places to live in downtown Sacramento.

The DSP is intended to incorporate technical analyses, surveys, design standards, land use, public improvements and information related to environmental and historical regulatory items that may affect development in the DSP area. Grid 3.0, a transportation strategy proposed for the DSP area would be included in the DSP and would be approved as the DSP's Mobility chapter. Grid 3.0 may be reviewed online at www.sacgrid.com/.

The Downtown Housing Initiative proposes to increase population density to a level that can sustain and attract additional investments such as hotel, grocery and retail establishments. It also recommends mixed income and multi-modal friendly residences to meet a diverse range of housing needs. This strategy has the added benefits of stabilizing the tax base, attracting and keeping young professionals, families and retirees while providing the economic stability to support fast-paced growth projects.

The proposed DSP would respond to the Downtown Housing Initiative by including land use regulations and policies designed to streamline the housing development process and identify necessary public improvements to support new housing development. The Community Development Department will be the lead agency in developing the DSP and ensuring the plan is consistent with both the framework of the Downtown Initiative and the City's 2035 General Plan.

The proposed DSP will include the following components:

1. Downtown Specific Plan, which will include the following chapters:
    a. Land Use
    b. Infrastructure Financing
    c. Mobility (Grid 3.0)
    d. Arts and Culture
    e. Design Guidelines and Development Standards
    f. Housing
    g. Historic and Cultural Resources
    h. Utilities
    i. Sustainability
    j. Health and Safety
    k. Economy and Innovation
    l. Education, Recreation and Open Spaces
    m. Implementation Programs
2. Amendments to the Central City Design Guidelines
3. Amendments to the Planning and Development Code and General Plan, as necessary
4. Historic Survey Report for the R Street Corridor
5. Infrastructure Finance Plan
6. Identified Sites for Hotels
7. Environmental Impact Report

The City of Sacramento Community Development Department has developed an initial map of vacant and underutilized opportunity sites (approximately 100) that it considers to have the greatest likelihood for residential development. As part of the planning process, the opportunity sites and market analysis will inform a thorough analysis of the infrastructure required to develop the sites, specific plan policies, the historic resource survey and the Environmental Impact Report.

Additional information and materials relating to the proposed project are available on the City's web site at www.downtownspecificplan.com.

ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS AND SCOPE OF THE EIR

The EIR will analyze potentially significant impacts that result from implementation of the proposed DSP.

Pursuant to section 15063 (a) of the CEQA Guidelines, an Initial Study has not been prepared for the proposed project. The EIR will evaluate the full range of environmental issues contemplated for consideration under CEQA and the CEQA Guidelines, including:

- Aesthetics, Light and Glare
- Air Quality
- Biological Resources
- Cultural Resources
- Geology and Soils
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Climate Change and Energy
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- Hydrology and Water Quality
- Land Use and Planning
- Noise and Vibration
- Population and Housing
- Public Services
- Recreation
- Transportation/Traffic
- Utilities and Service Systems
- Growth Inducement
- Urban Decay
- Cumulative Impacts
- Alternatives

SUBMITTING COMMENTS

Comments and suggestions as to the appropriate scope of analysis in the EIR are invited from all interested parties. Written comments or questions concerning the EIR for the proposed project should be directed to the City's environmental project manager at the following address by 5:00 p.m. on March 17, 2017. Please include the commenter's full name and address.

Tom Buford, Senior Planner,
City of Sacramento Community Development Department,
300 Richards Blvd., Third Floor, Sacramento, CA 95811.
Tele (916) 808-7931
E-mail: tbuford@cityofsacramento.org

Figure 1 Regional Location Map

Figure 2 Project Location Map

Figure 3 Opportunity Sites

Figure 1, Regional Location Map

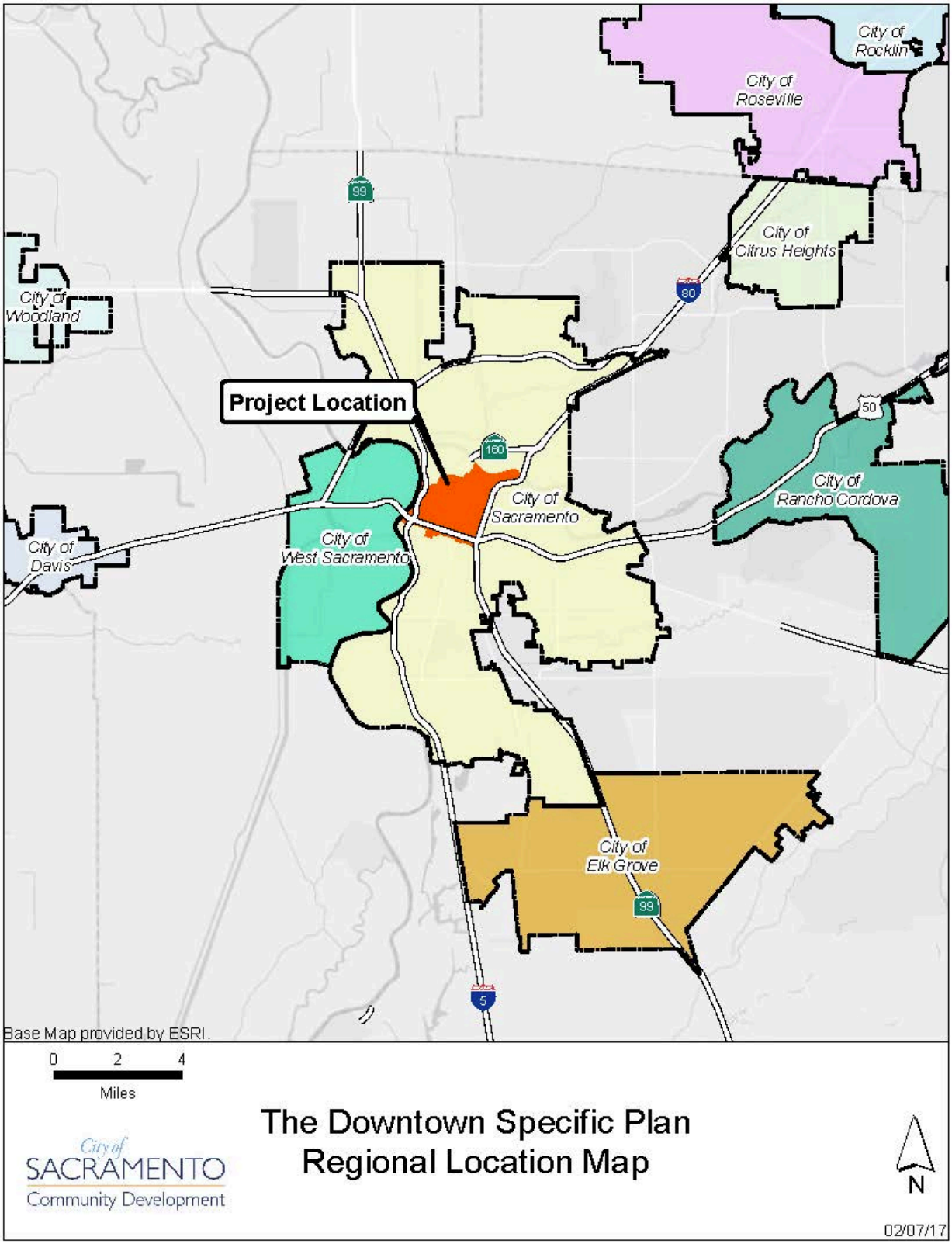

Figure 2, Project Location Map

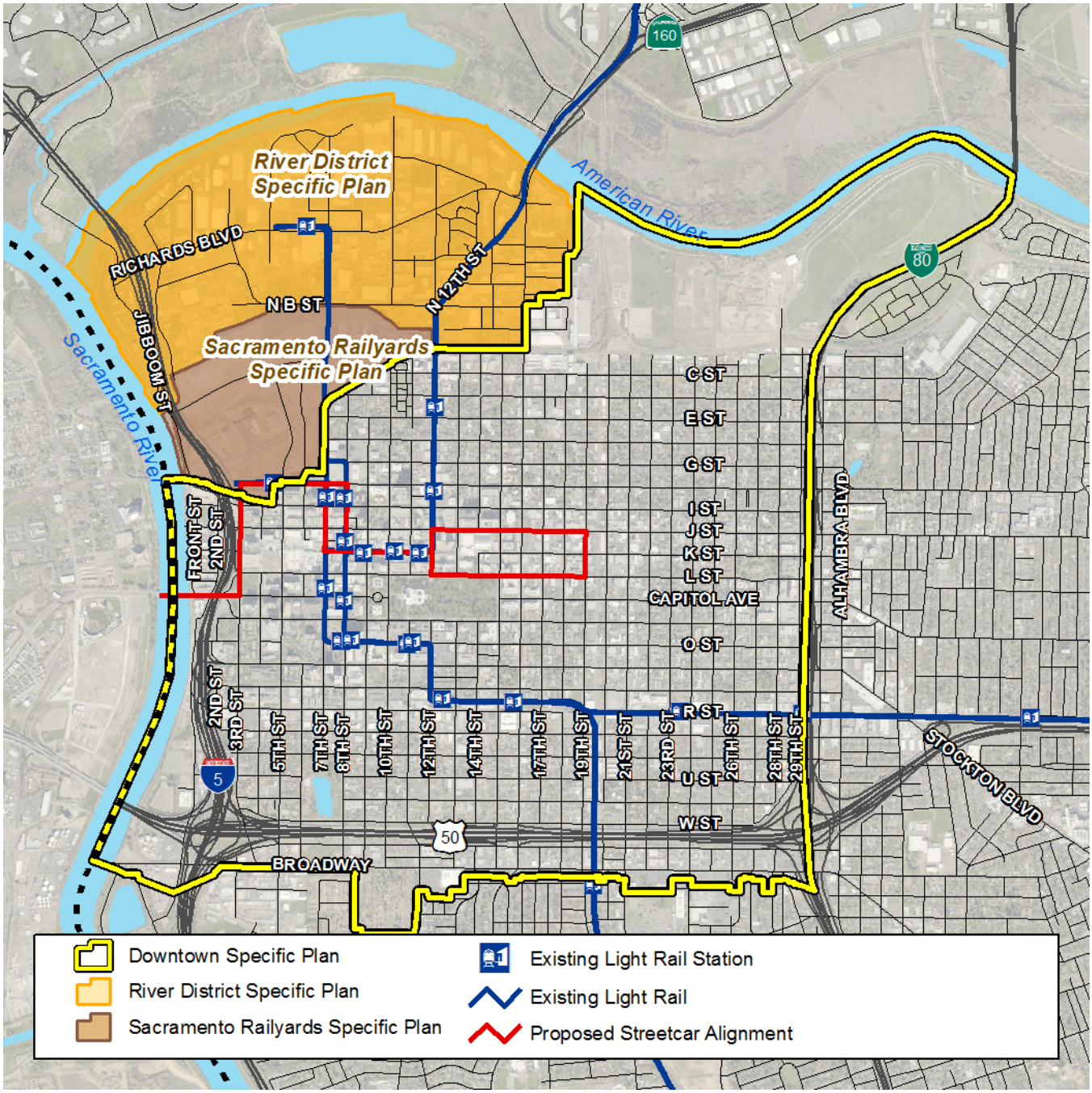
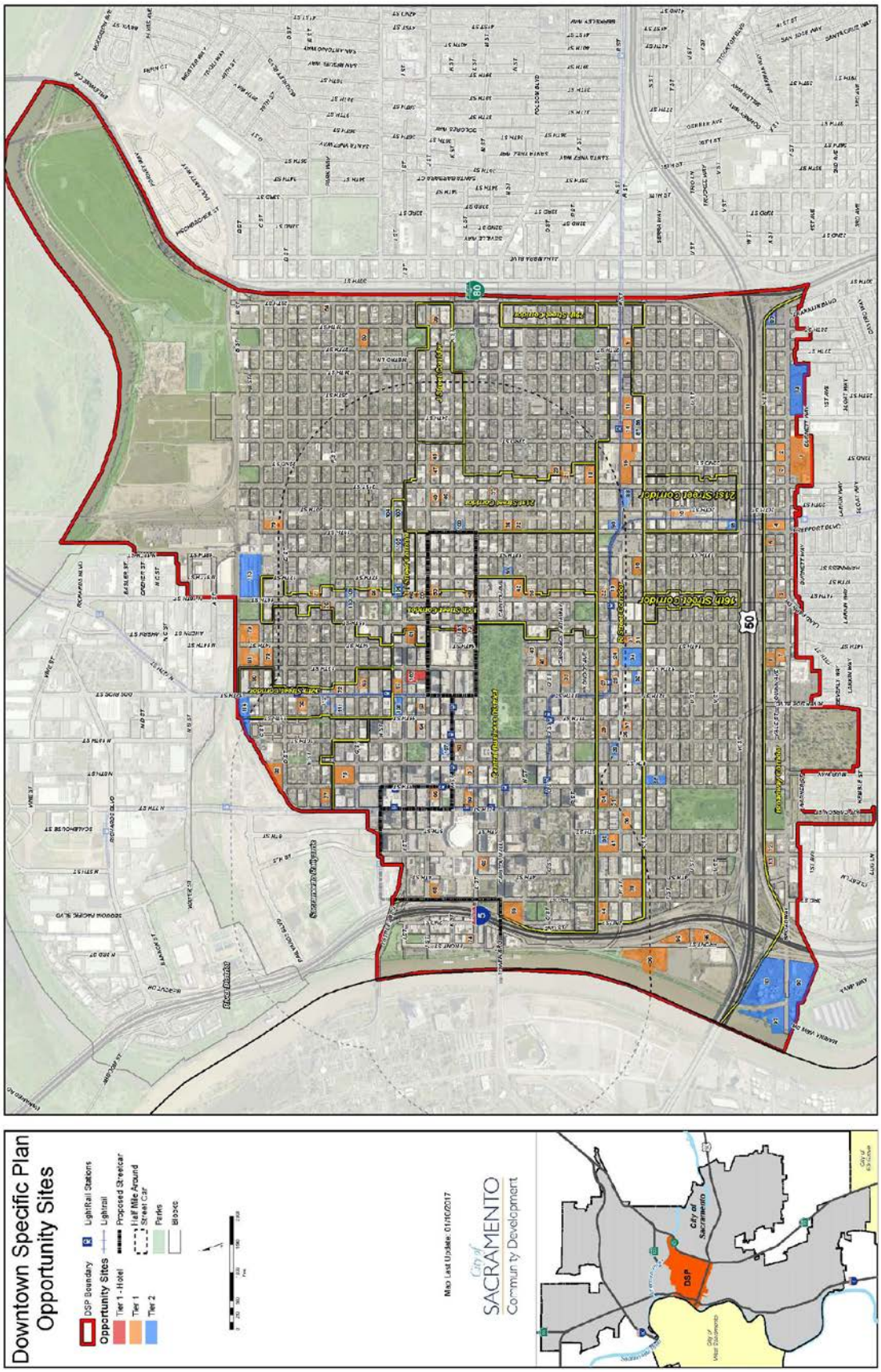
Figure 3, Opportunity Sites