



City of Los Banos / General Plan 2042  
EIR Scoping Meeting / Wednesday, January 26, 2022

# Purpose of Scoping Meeting

Receive comments from members of the public, organizations, and interested public agencies on issues related to the physical environment that should be addressed in the Environmental Impact Report (EIR).



# Public Scoping Meeting Agenda

- » Welcome and Introductions
- » Project Overview
- » EIR Scoping Session
  - CEQA Overview
  - Program-Level EIR
  - EIR Process
  - Environmental Topics Addressed in the EIR
- » Receive Comments
- » Next Steps and Wrap-up
- » Adjourn



# Welcome and Introductions

## » City of Los Banos

- Stacy Souza Elms, Community & Economic Development Director

## » PlaceWorks

- Terri McCracken, Associate Principal
- Allison Dagg, General Plan EIR Project Manager



# Project Overview

# Los Banos General Plan 2042

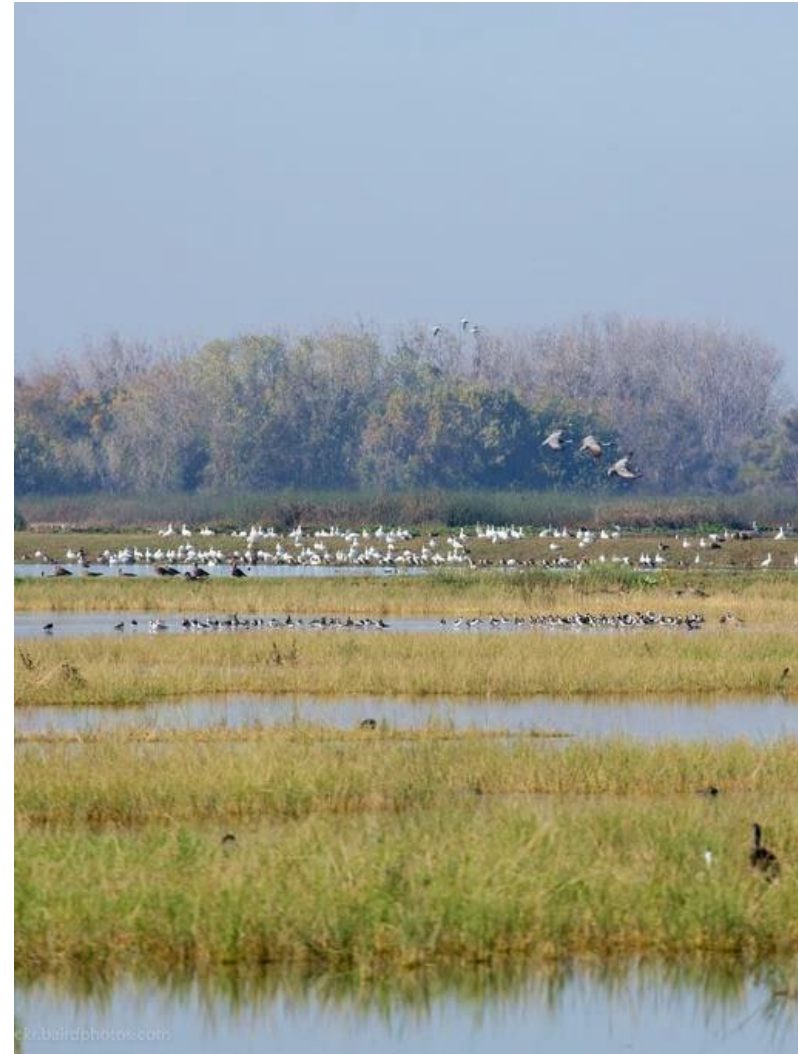
## “Constitution for Growth and Development”

- » Establishes City Vision and supporting Goals, Policies, and Actions
- » Provides consistent direction for future development in Los Banos
- » Balances growth and quality of life



# Key Issues

- » Economic Development
- » Growth Management/  
Annexation Policy
- » Downtown
- » Agricultural Mitigation
- » Water Supply
- » Historic Preservation
- » Legislative Consistency Updates



# What is in the Los Banos General Plan?

## Required Elements

- » Land Use
- » Circulation
- » Parks, Open Space, and Conservation (includes Air Quality)
- » Safety and Noise
- » Environmental Justice (new)

## Optional Elements

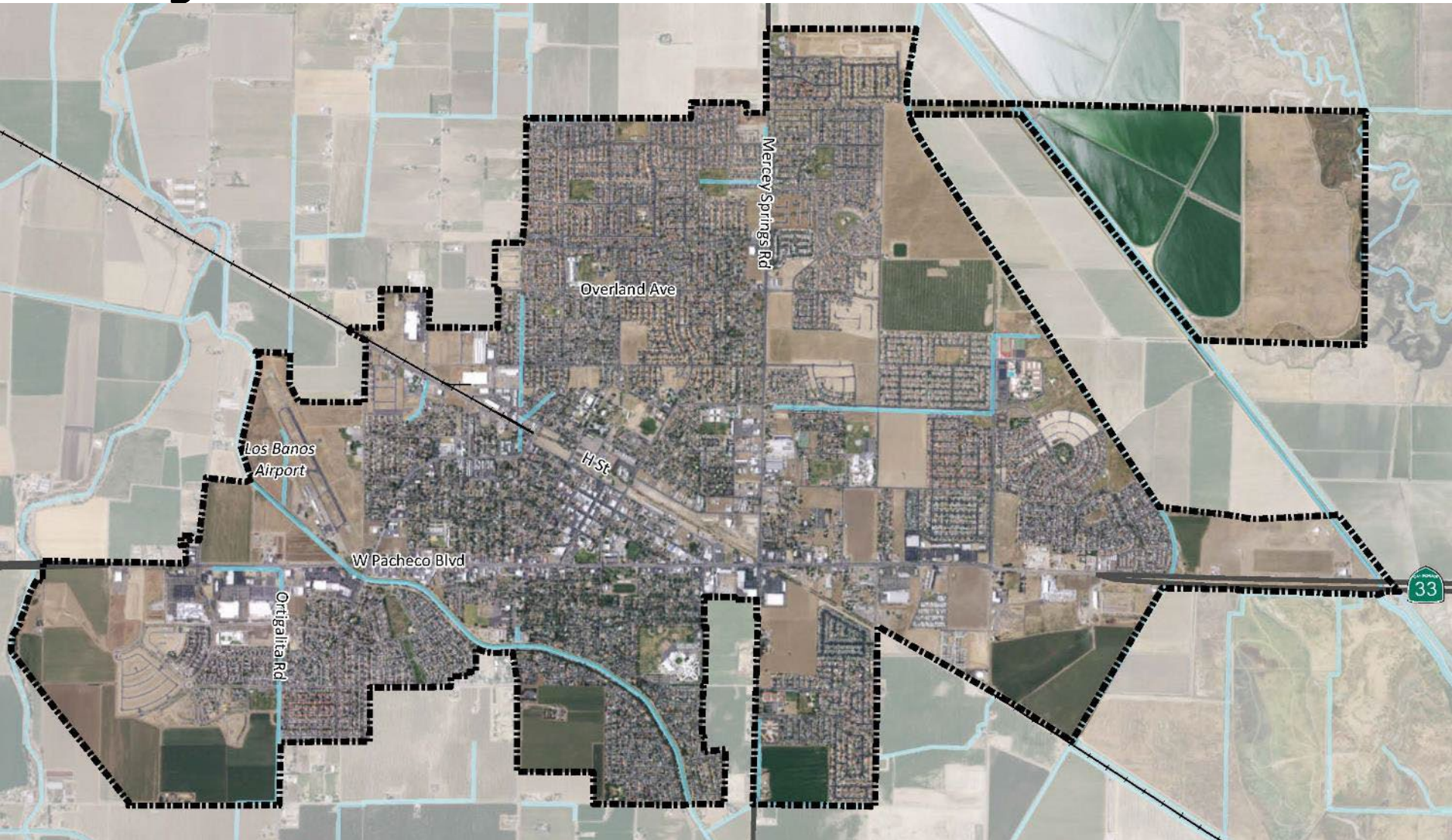
- » Economic Development
- » Public Facilities and Services

## Separate Process

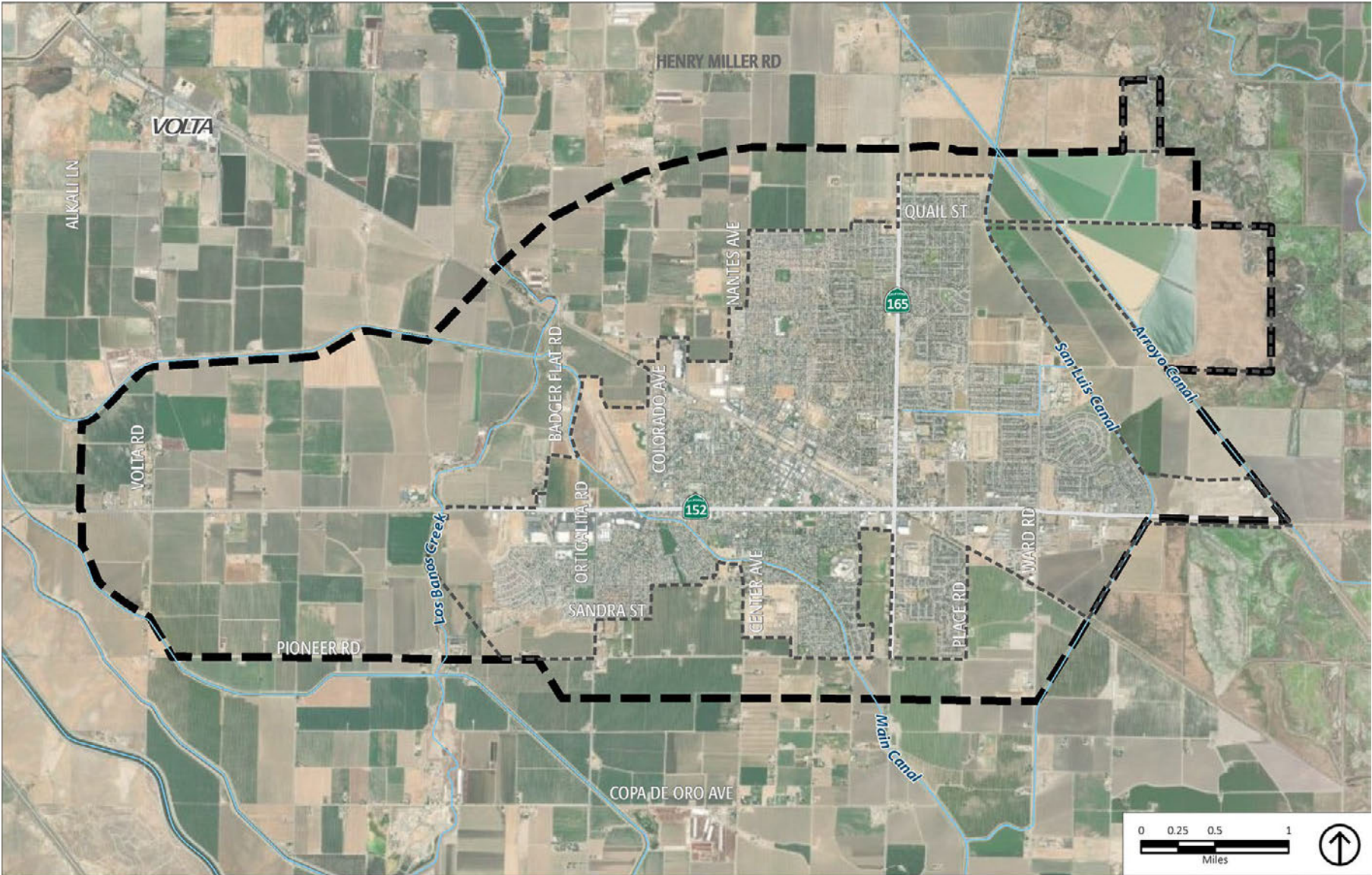
- » Housing Element



# City Limits of Los Banos



# General Plan EIR Study Area



Source: California Department of Conservation, 2016; ESRI, 2018; Merced County, 2018; PlaceWorks, 2019.

# Project Outreach

- » LosBanos2040.org
- » Online Engagement
- » Community Event
- » Economic Development Advisory Committee
- » Downtown stakeholder group
- » Regional agencies
- » Planning Commission and City Council study sessions



# EIR Scoping Session

# CEQA Overview

- » **The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) is the State's primary environmental protection law.**
- » **An informational document:**
  - Discloses the potential environmental impacts of projects that have a physical effect on the environment;
  - Identifies mitigation measures;
  - Describes feasible alternatives to the proposed project.
- » **CEQA does not dictate project approval or denial.**

# Program-Level EIR

- » An Environmental Impact Report or EIR is a public disclosure document that includes an evaluation of physical impacts to the environment that could occur as a result of the implementation of the project based on specific and established criteria.
- » The EIR is the highest-level environmental review document in CEQA.
- » Program-level environmental review documents are appropriate when a project consists of a series of actions related to the issuance of rules, regulations, and other planning criteria (CEQA Guidelines Section 15168).
- » Does not evaluate impacts of future construction-level projects that are consistent with the General Plan.
- » Does allow the subsequent project-level environmental review for future development to tier off the Program EIR.
- » Streamlines future environmental review procedures

# EIR Process

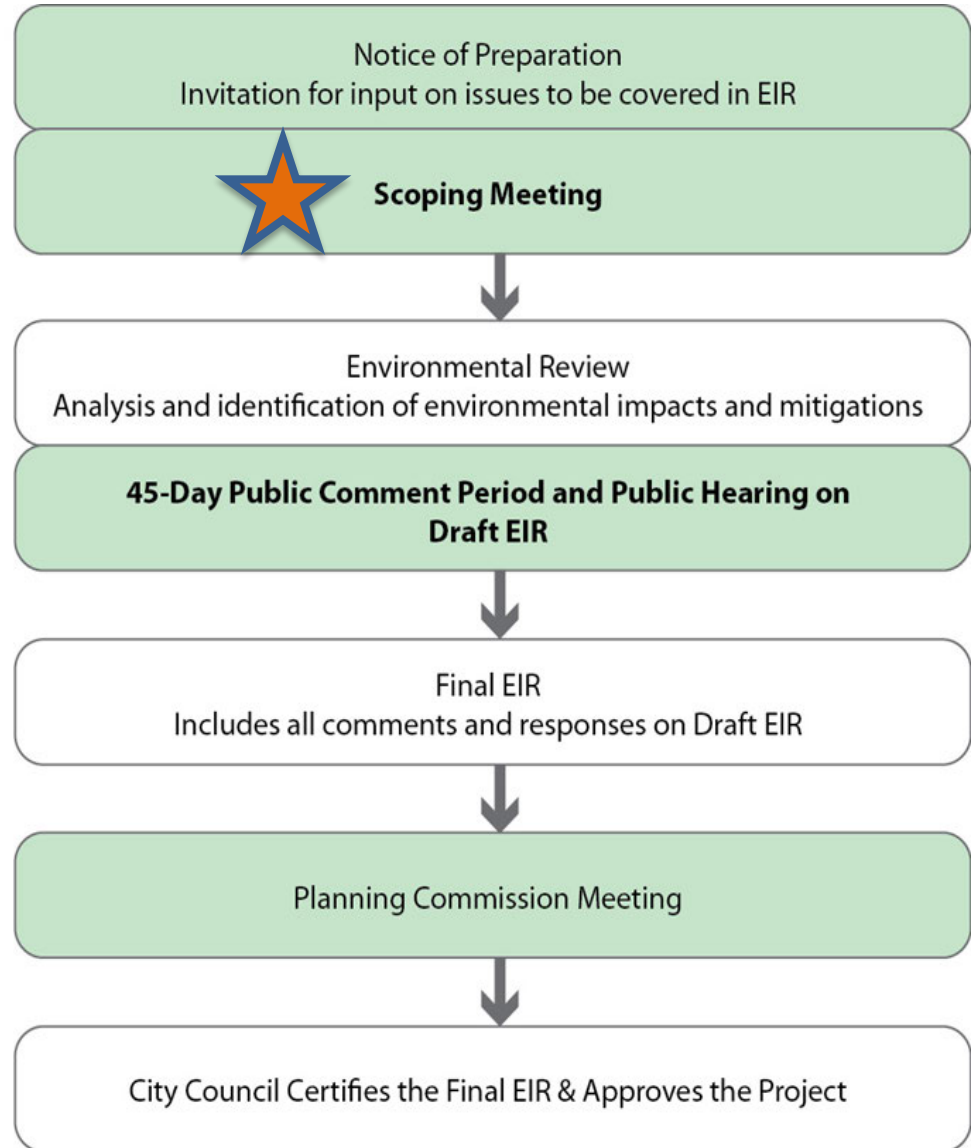
» This chart summarizes the EIR process mandated by State Law



= Current phase



= Opportunities for Public Input



# Environmental Topics Evaluated in the EIR

- Aesthetics
- Agricultural and Forestry 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
- Mineral Resources
- Noise
- Population and Housing
- Public Services
- Parks and Recreation
- Transportation
- Utilities and Service Systems
- Wildfire



# Addressing Environmental Impacts

- » **Where significant environmental impacts are identified, CEQA requires the impact be:**
  - avoided
  - minimized
  - rectified
  - reduced or eliminated
  - compensated
  
- » **CEQA permits the General Plan to incorporate mitigation measures as goals, policies, and actions that are designed to protect, preserve and enhance environmental resources**

# Receiving Comments

# Scoping Comments Should Address

- » Technical issues to address in the Draft EIR
- » Appropriate range of alternatives to evaluate in the Draft EIR
- » The potential environmental impacts of the proposed project



# Submitting Scoping Comments

» **Comments due 5:00 p.m. on Wednesday, February 16, 2022, by:**

- Speaking at tonight's meeting
- Mail to:
  - Stacy Souza Elms, Community & Economic Development Director
  - City of Los Banos
  - Community & Economic Development Department
  - 520 J Street
  - Los Banos, CA 93635
- Email: [stacy.souza@losbanos.org](mailto:stacy.souza@losbanos.org) with "Los Banos General Plan 2042 EIR" as the subject line

**Wrap Up**

# Next Steps (tentative dates)

- » Accept Scoping Comments **Winter 2022**
- » Evaluate Potential Impacts **Now through Spring 2022**
- » Publish Draft EIR **Spring 2022**
- » Draft EIR 45-Day Public Comment Period **Spring/Summer 2022**
- » Publish Final EIR with Response to Comments **Summer/Fall 2022**
- » General Plan Adoption/Final EIR Certification **Fall 2022**

# Thank you for attending!

Stay connected at:

<https://losbanos2040.org/>

Provide input along the way at:

<https://losbanos2040.org/contact/>



City of Los Banos / General Plan 2042  
EIR Scoping Meeting / Wednesday, January 26, 2022