



**NOTICE OF PREPARATION OF A DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT
AND NOTICE OF PUBLIC SCOPING MEETING FOR THE
NEIGHBORHOODS WHERE WE ALL BELONG ZONING UPDATES AND HOUSING
ELEMENT IMPLEMENTATION**

DATE: November 17, 2025

TO: State Clearinghouse, Responsible Agencies, Organizations, and Interested Parties

SUBJECT: Notice of Preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Report and Public Scoping Meeting for the Neighborhoods Where We All Belong Zoning Updates and Housing Element Implementation in the City of Costa Mesa

PUBLIC REVIEW PERIOD: November 17, 2025 to December 19, 2025

SCOPING MEETING: December 10, 2025 at 5:30 PM at Costa Mesa City Council Chambers, located at 77 Fair Drive, Costa Mesa, CA, 92626

Pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21067 and the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines Section 15367, the City of Costa Mesa (City) is the Lead Agency responsible for preparation of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) addressing potential impacts associated with the Neighborhoods Where We All Belong Zoning Updates and Housing Element Implementation (project).

REQUEST FOR COMMENTS ON THE SCOPE OF THE EIR

The purpose of the Notice of Preparation (NOP) is to notify potential Responsible Agencies (Agencies) that the City, as Lead Agency, plans to prepare an EIR for the project and to solicit comments and suggestions regarding (1) the scope and content of the EIR and (2) the environmental issues and alternatives to be considered in the EIR, pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15082. The NOP provides agencies, organizations, tribes, and interested parties a notification of the preparation of the EIR and requests comments on the scope and contents of the environmental document. Your agency may rely on the EIR prepared by the City when considering permits or other approvals for this proposed project.

POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

The City will prepare a comprehensive Draft EIR that evaluates all potentially significant environmental impacts associated with the proposed project. The Draft EIR will explain the potentially significant effects of the proposed project, as well as the reasons that other identified impacts are not potentially significant.

An Initial Study (IS) has been prepared for the proposed project. As a result, the City has determined that the proposed project could potentially affect 19 of the 20 environmental topic areas identified in Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines. The topical areas are aesthetics, agricultural and forestry resources, air quality, biological resources, 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, recreation, transportation, tribal cultural resources, and utilities and service systems. These impacts will be analyzed in detail in the Draft EIR. The proposed project is not expected to result in impacts related to wildfire; therefore, the Draft EIR will not include a detailed analysis of this topic. Other required sections of CEQA will be addressed including cumulative impacts and project alternatives.

RESPONDING TO THE NOTICE OF PREPARATION

The City requests your careful review and consideration of the IS/NOP and invites any and all input and comments from agencies, organizations, tribes, and interested parties regarding preparation of the EIR. Pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21080.4, Responsible Agencies should submit any comments in writing to the City as soon as possible, but no later than December 19, 2025. For the comments to be considered, agencies, organizations, tribes, and interested parties are requested to submit any comments in writing to the City in response to the IS/NOP between November 17, 2025, and 5:00 PM on December 19, 2025. The IS/NOP is available for review at the City of Costa Mesa Economic and Development Services Department, located at 77 Fair Drive, 2nd Floor, Costa Mesa, CA 92626, as well as the Mesa Verde Library, 2969 Mesa Verde Drive E., Costa Mesa, CA 92626, and Donald Dungan Library, 1855 Park Avenue, Costa Mesa, CA 92627, and can also be accessed online at: <https://www.costamesaca.gov/government/departments-and-divisions/economic-and-development-services/planning/environmental-notice-and-reports>

All comments must be submitted in writing via mail, or email to:

Attn: Michelle Halligan, Senior Planner
City of Costa Mesa
Economic and Development Services Department
77 Fair Drive
Costa Mesa, CA 92626
neighborhoods@costamesaca.gov

All parties that have submitted their names and mailing addresses will be notified of the availability of the Draft EIR. If you wish to be placed on the mailing list, have any questions, or need additional information, please contact Michelle Halligan at (714) 754-5608 or by email, as noted above.

SCOPING MEETING

The City will conduct a public Scoping Meeting in conjunction with the IS/NOP to present the project and the EIR process, and to receive public comments and suggestions regarding the scope and content of the EIR for the proposed project. All interested parties are invited to attend the Scoping Meeting to assist in identifying issues to be addressed in the Draft EIR. The Scoping Meeting will involve a presentation about the project, the environmental review process, and schedule. Written public comments will be accepted at the meeting.

Habr  personal que habla espa ol disponible en la Reuni n de Delimitaci n del Aviso de Preparaci n para brindar servicios de interpretaci n. Please contact the City Clerk at (714) 754-5225 to request additional language interpreting services for City meetings. Notification at least 48 hours prior to the meeting will enable the City to make arrangements.

The Scoping Meeting will be held on:

Wednesday, December 10, 2025 at 5:30 PM
Costa Mesa City Council Chambers
77 Fair Drive, Costa Mesa, CA 92626

PROJECT SUMMARY

PROJECT LOCATION: The Neighborhoods Where We All Belong Zoning Updates and Housing Element Implementation (project) is proposed within the City of Costa Mesa, a city located in Orange County, California, as shown in Figure 1, Regional Location and Local Vicinity Map. The project would apply to parcels at various locations throughout the City. Given the citywide nature, the project's parcels are collectively referred to as the "Planning Area." These parcels consist of Measure K sites, which include but are not limited to sites identified in the Housing Element. See Figure 2, Planning Area, for the general location of the project's parcels.

EXISTING CONDITIONS: The Planning Area is comprised of 1,079 parcels totaling approximately 1,353.4 acres. Under existing conditions, the parcels vary in use and Land Use Designation as defined in the General Plan. Whereas some parcels consist of vacant land, a majority of the identified parcels contain existing development, including but not limited to residential, commercial, and industrial land uses. The Planning Area is currently zoned with the following zones:

- Administrative and Professional District (AP);
- Commercial Limited District (CL);
- General Business District (C2);
- General Industrial (MG);
- Industrial Park (MP);
- Institutional and Recreational District (I&R);
- Local Business District (C1);
- Multiple-Family Residential District (R3);
- Multiple-Family Residential District, High Density (R2-HD);
- Multiple-Family Residential District, Medium Density (R2-MD);
- Planned Development Commercial (PDC);
- Planned Development Industrial (PDI);
- Planned Development Residential—High Density (PDR-HD);
- Planned Development Residential—Medium Density (PDR-MD);
- Shopping Center District (C1-S);
- Single-Family Residential District (R1); and
- Town Center District (TC).

Additionally, the Planning Area contains the following General Plan land use designations:

- Commercial Center (CC);
- Commercial-Residential (CR);
- Cultural Arts Center (CAC);
- General Commercial (GC);
- High-Density Residential (HDR);
- Industrial Park (IP);
- Light Industrial (LI);
- Medium-Density Residential (MDR);
- Neighborhood Commercial (NC);
- Regional Commercial (RC); and
- Urban Center Commercial (UCC).

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: The proposed project is a comprehensive effort to address housing needs, comply with State Housing Law, and address the City Council goal to "diversify, stabilize and increase housing to reflect community needs." The City proposes to implement the project in accordance with approved Measure K ballot measure, which facilitates the development of housing in commercial and industrial areas. Properties identified in Measure K include sites that are included in the City's 2021-2029 Housing Element Update as well as non-Housing Element sites. The City's Housing Element identifies specific programs to encourage the development of housing for residents at various income levels and housing sizes. Implementation of these programs would update zoning regulations to increase development opportunities, simplify the process of building housing, and

accommodate the City's mandated fair share of Orange County's housing needs (also known as the Regional Housing Needs Allocation [RHNA]) as well as a necessary buffer of additional development capacity.

The proposed project implements portions of the Housing Element as required by State Housing Law. Implementation of Housing Element programs include rezoning of Housing Element sites and Measure K sites, along with modifications to the City's zoning regulations across existing Urban Plans, Overlays, and Specific Plans with the intent to clarify, consolidate, and streamline regulations where possible. As such, the project would amend the City's existing Mixed-Use Overlay District (MUOD), as codified in Chapter V (Development Standards) of Title 13 (Planning, Zoning, and Development) of the CMMC. The amended MUOD would be applied to all Measure K sites, including Housing Element and non-Housing Element sites. Application and utilization of the amended MUOD assumes that residential only or mixed-use (residential and commercial) would be developed on Housing Element sites.

The project analyzes the capacity of the Housing Element sites, which as identified in the Housing Element is comprised of 17,042 units (the Regional Housing Needs Assessment of 11,760 units and Housing Element-required buffer capacity) as well as additional capacity for Measure K non-Housing Element sites. At full buildout in 2056, the proposed project studies an increased capacity for the development of approximately 21,522 dwelling units and approximately 17,306,003 square feet of commercial uses. Given that the Planning Area contains existing non-residential land uses (i.e., commercial and industrial), including approximately 11,619,124 square feet of existing commercial uses and approximately 5,223,256 square feet of existing industrial uses, the net new non-residential buildout for all Measure K sites is anticipated to be approximately 10,630,361 square feet within the Planning Area by 2056. Components of the project include, but may not be limited to:

Mixed-Use Overlay District Amendments

Housing Element Sites

In order to accommodate the City's mandated fair share of housing needs (i.e., RHNA), the Housing Element identifies Housing Element sites at specific densities and capacities and requires that they be rezoned to allow for the development of housing. The proposed project would rezone Housing Element sites by applying the amended MUOD with specific provisions to satisfy the requirements of Housing Element Programs 3C, 3D, and 3N, as described below.

- Program 3C: Update the North Costa Mesa Specific Plan. The project would satisfy the objectives of Program 3C by implementing zoning amendments pertaining to the North Costa Mesa Specific Plan that would permit residential development at an allowable density of up to 90 dwelling units per acre on select properties as identified in the Housing Element. As a result of Project Implementation, unit caps would not apply within the North Costa Mesa Specific Plan.
- Program 3D: The project would satisfy the objectives of Program 3D by implementing zoning amendments pertaining to the existing Urban Plans (i.e., 19 West Urban Plan, SoBECA Urban Plan, and Mesa West Bluff Urban Plan) and Overlays (i.e., Harbor Mixed-Use Overlay) that would permit the residential development capacity identified in the Housing Element. As a result, identified sites in the 19 West Urban Plan would have a maximum residential density of 50 du/ac, identified sites in the SoBECA Urban Plan would have a maximum of 60 du/ac, identified sites in the Mesa West Bluff Urban Plan would have a maximum of 40 du/ac, and identified sites in the Harbor Mixed-Use Overlay would have a maximum of 50 du/ac. The project would potentially sunset the Mesa West Residential Overlay.

- Program 3N: Candidate Sites Used in Previous Housing Elements. The project would satisfy the objectives of Program 3N by implementing zoning amendments that would apply the amended MUOD to all nonvacant sites included in the prior Housing Element and all vacant sites included in two or more consecutive planning periods that permits by-right housing development for projects that meet the requirements of State Housing Law (Gov Code Section 65583.2(c)).

Non-Housing Element Sites

Additional residential development potential was created through Measure K, a local ballot measure approved by Costa Mesa voters in November 2022. Under existing conditions, Measure Y, a ballot measure approved by Costa Mesa voters in November 2016, requires a vote of the people for any major land use change that meets specific criteria. Measure K allows the City to update the land use regulations, including the zoning, of sites within its boundary. The Measure K boundary includes Housing Element sites and “non-Housing Element sites.” The rezoning of all Measure K sites, including Housing Element and non-Housing Element sites (with the exception of the Fairview Development Center site, which is not a part of this project), provides opportunities for corridor revitalization and the preservation of existing residential neighborhoods elsewhere in the City, while enabling the City to comply with State Housing Law. Measure K is a direct result of Housing Element Program 3G, Address City-wide Vote Requirement in Relation to Housing Element Compliance. For non-Housing Element sites, the amended MUOD would provide property owners with the option to develop residential or mixed-use under the provisions of the MUOD, or develop commercial or industrial uses as currently permitted by the underlying base zone.

Other Zoning Code Amendments

The project includes various amendments to the City’s Zoning Code that would implement Housing Element Programs, including but not limited to 2E, 2F, 2H, 2J, 2M, 3F, 3S, 4E, and 4G. These programs would revise development standards, guidelines and policies, and provide for internal consistency including, but not necessarily limited to, those with respect to larger units for large-family households; persons with physical and developmental disabilities; farmworker housing; transitional and supportive housing; parking standards for residential development; motel conversions, efficiency units, and co-living housing types; findings for conditional use permits, design review, and master plans; low barrier navigation centers; and parking for emergency shelters. The project would also implement objective design standards for residential and mixed-use development.

General Plan Amendments

Land use amendments to the City’s General Plan are required for project implementation and consistency (i.e., changes to density, FAR, height, and trip generation standards). These amendments would be applied to the Land Use Element of the General Plan in order to be consistent with the Housing Element’s specific provisions regarding allowed uses, minimum densities, and other development standards. In addition, amendments to the Land Use Element would occur with the intent to clarify, consolidate, and streamline regulations to existing Urban Plans, Overlays, and Specific Plans, where possible.

ANTICIPATED DISCRETIONARY APPROVALS

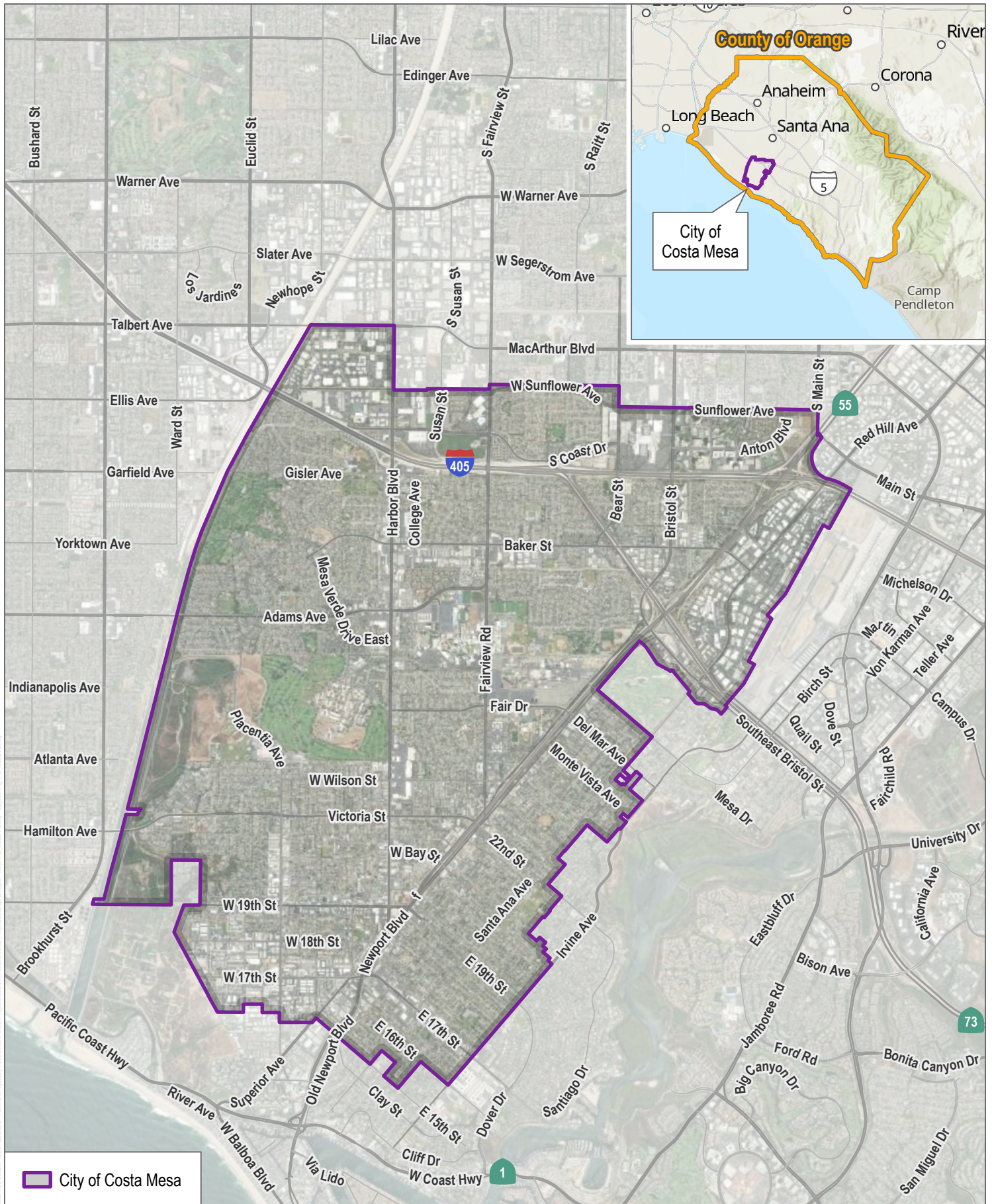
The following is a summary of discretionary actions the City will consider for project implementation:

- General Plan Amendments
- Zoning Code Amendments (Title 13 of the City Municipal Code)
- Adoption of Specific Plan Amendments
- Certification of the EIR

Attachments:

Figure 1, Regional Location and Local Vicinity Map

Figure 2, Planning Area



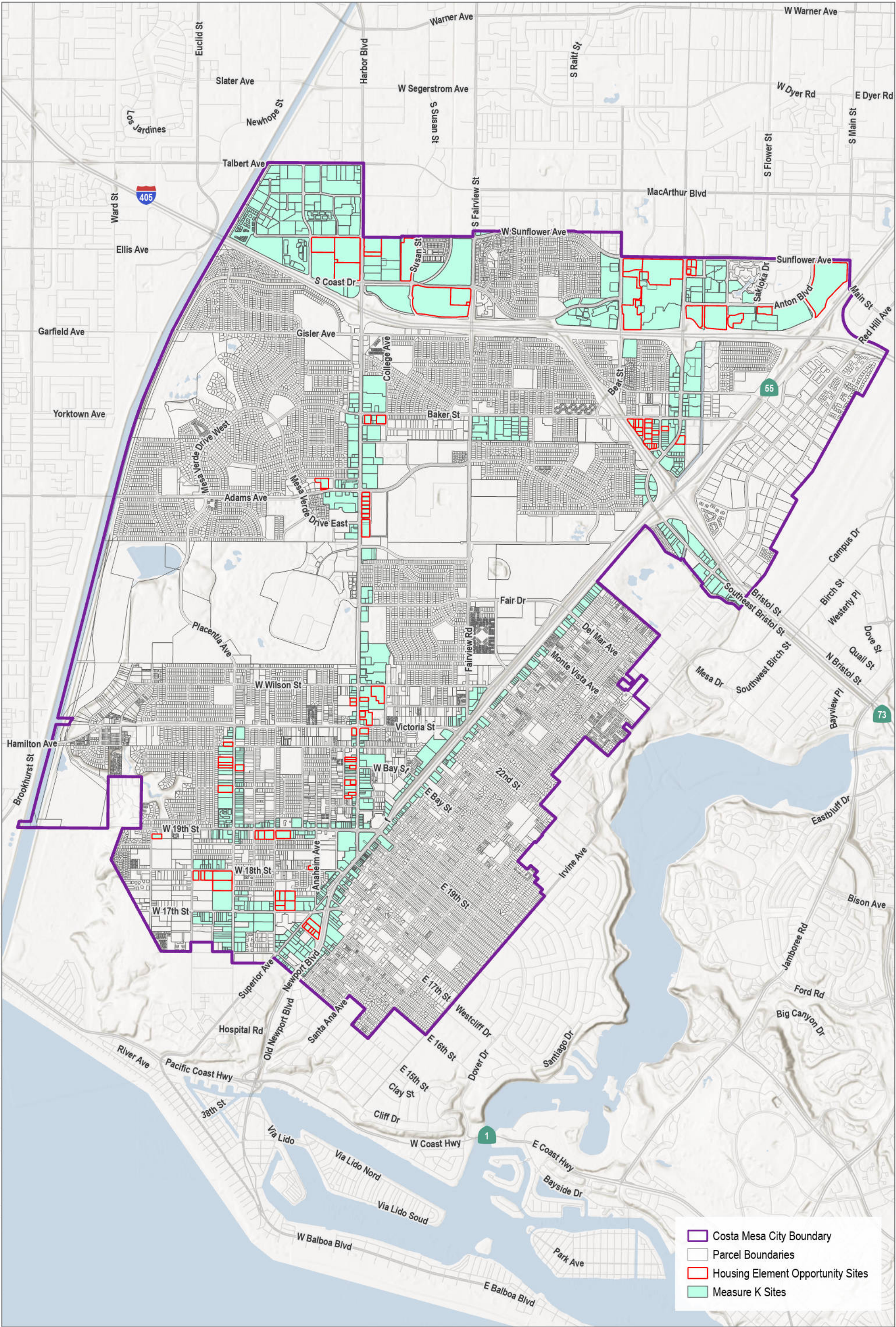
SOURCE: Esri, Open Street Map

DUDEK



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Feet

Neighborhoods Where We All Belong Zoning Updates and Housing Element Implementation



SOURCE: City of Costa Mesa, Orange County Sanitation District, Open Street Map

FIGURE 2
Planning Area