



Southeast Valley Community Plans Update

North Hollywood
Valley Village

Sherman Oaks
Studio City
Toluca Lake
Cahuenga Pass

Van Nuys
North Sherman Oaks

Executive Summary of Fall 2018 Open Houses

The Los Angeles Department of City Planning began the process of updating the three Community Plans in the Southeast Valley in summer 2018. This work program will develop land use and zoning policies and regulations that will create a long-term vision for each community. To kick off the initial phase of the update process, the department hosted four open houses to identify issues and opportunities in the Southeast Valley. These Community Plans include: North Hollywood-Valley Village, Sherman Oaks-Studio City-Toluca Lake-Cahuenga Pass, and Van Nuys-North Sherman Oaks. Each community meeting was located within one of the plan areas.

- North Hollywood-Valley Village: Monday, October 15, 2018 from 5:30-7:30 p.m. at the North Hollywood Regional Library
- Van Nuys-North Sherman Oaks: Monday, October 22, 2018 from 5:30-7:30 p.m. at the Marvin Braude Constituent Service Center Community Room
- Sherman Oaks-Studio City: Monday, October 29, 2018 from 5:30-7:30 p.m. at the Studio City Branch Library
- Toluca Lake-Cahuenga Pass: Wednesday, November 7, 2018 from 5:30-7:30 p.m. at the Harmony Toluca Lake Church

The Southeast Valley team promoted these events through an interested parties email list, visiting neighborhood councils in the Southeast Valley, the council district offices, flyer distribution, social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter, local community events, and the project's website (www.southeastvalleyplans.org). The community meetings were the public's first opportunity to provide input on the community plans update. In summer 2019, the team will reveal initial land use concepts. This document summarizes what we heard at the open house events, with feedback categorized by each plan area. Several major recurring themes were identified at these events, including:

- People value being able to shop and dine at local-serving, small businesses and would like to see more of these types of options.
- There are opportunities for growth in the Southeast Valley, but the community plan should be strategic about where to increase density.
- There is a lack of open space and many people would like to see improvements along the LA River and the Tujunga Wash to make it an attractive source of open space.
- Industrial areas are valuable sources of economic activity and should be protected.
- There is a need to increase housing affordability and provide a variety of housing options.

Please provide us with your feedback by emailing us at planning.southeastvalley@lacity.org or by completing our survey at <http://bit.ly/SEValleySurvey>.

Table of Contents

| | |
|--|----|
| North Hollywood-Valley Village Open House | 3 |
| Van Nuys-North Sherman Oaks Open House | 20 |
| Sherman Oaks-Studio City-Toluca Lake-Cahuenga Pass Open Houses | 30 |

**North Hollywood-Valley Village Community Plan Area
Open House Feedback
October 15, 2018**

HOUSING

1. Existing affordable housing should be preserved and new affordable housing should be incentivized; Plan policies should prioritize housing for individuals experiencing homelessness and those at risk of displacement, particularly low-income senior renters.

- There is a desire to see more than just market rate housing constructed. People mentioned market rate developments that they liked, but expressed concern about a lack of affordable and rent stabilized units in new buildings.
- Homelessness is a major concern - it came up in almost every small group- and many people would like to see more affordable housing and housing that will support individuals experiencing homelessness.
- Displacement resulting from new construction is a concern.
- People commented that the community's diversity is being lost as people must search for affordable housing outside of the area.
- The elderly population is being displaced by new construction.
- Some worried that tearing down housing occupied by low-income people - even to build new affordable housing units - would displace tenants.



Figure 1 - The North Hollywood Transit Hub
Image Source: LA Department of City Planning

2. Multifamily development should be concentrated in transit rich areas with existing multifamily density. Mixed-use development should be concentrated along major corridors and at existing commercial corners.

- Adding density and developing more housing around transit is a priority.
 - Multifamily housing should be accessible to bus, trains, etc.
 - More density/amenities within a mile or half-mile from metro stations. Growth can happen beyond the half mile, but less intense.
 - More density around transit would allow for more open space.
 - Site higher density housing for low income and/or homeless people in the existing high density areas, near transit and close to services.
- North Hollywood needs more infill and upzoning.
- Some people want to maintain lower densities in Valley Village.
- Mixed-use (i.e. residential with ground floor retail/commercial) would be suited to major corridors. Specifically, people mentioned:
 - Would like to see mixed-use along Laurel Canyon/Chandler.
 - Would like to see more mixed-use development at Magnolia/Colfax.
 - Mixed use might work along Laurel Canyon Boulevard where apartments are already being built. The first floor should be retail or restaurant uses.
 - Whitsett/Magnolia needs some new enhancements. Perhaps some type of mixed-use with retail such as “Rite-Aid” still in existence.
 - Need more mixed-use development near Victory and Laurel Canyon.
 - Bring combined retail + housing with parking & transportation options to Toluca Lake.
- Rezone and combine commercial corners for mixed-use development.



Figure 2 - Forthcoming Lankershim+Otsego mixed-use project in NOHO Arts District
Image Source: DE Architects

3. Where single-family and multifamily neighborhoods meet there should be transitional zones and sufficient parking.

- “Better” transitions between single-family and multifamily housing are needed. 3-story buildings and townhomes would help with transitions and privacy issues where tall buildings “look down” on single family. One person suggested that structures or walls should be installed to protect privacy.
- Parking strategies were suggested - provided on a per unit or per room basis. Some people named specific multifamily developments that they believed lack sufficient parking for their residents. Several people felt that any kind of multifamily construction would make parking worse.

4. Mansionization impacts community character and quality of life in single-family neighborhoods; existing regulations to address it are not properly enforced.

- Smaller residential development is preferred to “McMansions” or “box houses”; Concern with allowing larger building envelopes at a single story buildout.
- Some desire to limit FAR in single-family areas to 0.25 - 0.33.
- One person suggested that the City should consider designating particular streets for mansions.
- Need for stronger enforcement of regulations, limitations and inspections. Poor enforcement leads to illegal demolitions.
- Construction on single-family properties often leads to increased congestion and traffic.

5. Trees on both private and public property should be protected, preserved and maintained. A fluctuating water supply in Southern California should influence the types of trees and plants in the public realm.

- The tree canopy contributes to the quality of life and people want to protect it, some specifically mentioned preventing removal of mature trees.
- Concerns with the health of existing trees.
 - Need for good landscaping, i.e. drought tolerant trees, coupled with a strong maintenance program.
 - Many are disappointed by dying trees in the parkway.
 - One person thought that restrictions on tree removal and types of trees should be relaxed.
- Developments built to the sidewalk do not allow space for trees. One person suggested low FARs would allow for ample setbacks that would accommodate street trees, street furniture and outdoor seating in commercial areas.



Figure 3 - The Tujunga Greenway
Image Source: Flickr user John Sequeira

- 6. There are mixed opinions about the effectiveness of the Valley Village Specific Plan - some want to preserve its regulations while others feel they do not achieve the plan's stated goals.**
- Some felt that regulations set forth by the Specific Plan - in particular height limits and limits on density and FAR in multifamily developments - should be preserved. They worried that building higher would threaten the community character of Valley Village. 5-story structures, for example, were perceived to be out of scale for the neighborhood.
 - Some said that compatibility is an issue - even with the Valley Village Specific Plan. New development did not match existing conditions and community character or met requirements of the Specific Plan "in a superficial way" rather than a holistic one.
 - Others feel that development is limited due to an "outdated" Specific Plan. They also perceived compatibility as an issue, arguing that old buildings do not fit with new development.
 - Some felt that despite the Specific Plan, "out of area architects and builders don't care about the character of the neighborhood" and this would have an impact on the design of new developments and therefore community character.



Figure 4 - Palisades Village
Image Source: Flickr user John Sequeira

7. Commenters expressed admiration for a variety of other neighborhoods in the Valley, City of LA and neighboring cities. Generally people like areas where commercial and residential uses have been integrated, or stable single-family neighborhoods.

- Communities in the Valley included: the Tarzana Safari area; Tujunga Village (Tujunga/Moorpark) for its low density, small shops and cafes; Studio City; Lake Balboa's residential areas; Toluca Lake's single-family neighborhoods; as well as affordable and furnished units in Sun Valley.
- Other City of LA neighborhoods included: Bel Air and the Pacific Palisades.
- Areas outside of Los Angeles included: Residential areas in Santa Monica (houses from the 60s and 70s) and commercial areas where they have been integrated with single-family uses; Pasadena for walkability and good transitions between residential and commercial; and Burbank for its development restrictions, retail areas, and available parking.

8. The Community Plans Update will require interdepartmental coordination within the City of LA. New development should be coupled with adequate infrastructure improvements, traffic mitigations, and investment in City services.

- Existing infrastructure may struggle to support a continually growing community. Concerns about water and power distribution and the ability of sewer systems to accommodate additional density.
- Issues with existing facilities - frequency of street maintenance, traffic safety and availability of parking.
- Need for more open space with increasing population.

9. Miscellaneous Comments - Some comments do not fit into a broader theme, but are still worth mentioning. Miscellaneous comments related to Housing are below.

- People asked for increased maintenance and enforcement of buildings, fences and walls.
- One person mentioned supporting green roofs and stormwater capture. Another mentioned access to roofs in townhomes and small lot developments
- Several people had ideas about incentivizing particular types of housing to preserve affordability.
 - One participant mentioned living in a Tiny House – constructed in 1922, 320 square feet, and enjoyed this as an alternative to usual housing typologies.
 - One person suggested reusing motels as SRO housing.
 - Several people expressed a desire for Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) with mental health services.
- Three people mentioned places where new development did not match the scale of existing development.

COMMERCIAL

1. The existing mix of both small, local-serving businesses and larger scale commercial development in the Community Plan Area should be maintained. People dine and shop at small businesses that are both in and outside of the Community Plan Area. There were mixed opinions, but many prefer traveling to areas outside the Community Plan to visit “big box” retail, rather than living near it.

- There is sufficient retail to serve the existing community. Many people often shop locally.
- Most people feel that incentivizing “Big Box retail” is not appropriate in the area, due to the community’s proximity to other retail destinations. Some explicitly said they would like more “big box shopping” in the plan area. Several identified Valley Plaza as a good site for large scale commercial development.
- Commercial areas outside of the plan area are popular:
 - In the Sherman Oaks-Studio City-Toluca Lake-Cahuenga Pass Plan area, people frequent Tujunga Village (Moorpark/Tujunga) to walk, shop and eat; Many appreciate the “community feel” of Toluca Lake; and the commercial areas of Studio City were often mentioned as good examples of retail.
 - The Westfield Fashion Square in the Van Nuys-North Sherman Oaks Community Plan area is seen an asset, and has potential to add more shops and restaurants.

- Elsewhere in the City of LA, people mentioned the Westfield Topanga Mall and Encino Commons as good retail options.
 - Some travel to Burbank for shopping.
- New commercial developments should incentivize healthier food options (e.g. Trader Joe's), rather than fast food options.



Figure 5 - Businesses along Magnolia in Valley Village
Image Source: Yelp

2. Walkable commercial development that contributes to community character should be encouraged. Many people enjoy walking to shop, dine and access services in their neighborhood.

- Most people felt that existing neighborhoods are walkable and should be maintained. Some appreciate a pedestrian friendly scale and mixed-use retail in the plan area. Walking to basic services (i.e. grocery stores, restaurants, post office, small markets) is valued.
- Others felt that there were not enough services in close proximity to residential neighborhoods, citing the need for more neighborhood serving businesses (i.e. restaurants with outdoor seating, theaters, corner stores, etc.).
- Desire for design standards that: 1) contribute to a distinct neighborhood identity, 2) supplement placemaking efforts in the area, and 3) are cohesive with community character. Design of commercial development should be informed by the design of nearby residential areas.
- Make commercial areas more walkable and attractive. Commercial buildings should face the street to encourage a pedestrian friendly environment. Places such

as “Restaurant row” at Magnolia/Vineland and the commercial area at Magnolia/Whitsett are examples of the scale and activation people want to see.

- Ventura Blvd, within the Sherman Oaks-Studio City-Toluca Lake-Cahuenga Pass plan, is seen as a model walkable area with lots of shops, planted medians, and big trees.

3. The Community Plan Update should leverage the NOHO West development to revitalize the surrounding area. The project is seen as a positive development that will bring needed retail and services to the area.

- People are hopeful that the NOHO West development will bring quality retail and services to the area, providing a shopping environment comparable to Ventura Boulevard. Several people mentioned that the project is an appropriate development for the site.
- The redevelopment is an opportunity in the area, and could incentivize further development of the Laurel Canyon corridor from Erwin to Vanowen.
- The Valley Plaza site, in particular, was identified as problematic. Many referred to the area as blighted, and suggested it would be a good site to redevelop. New uses that were suggested included - homeless housing, permanent supportive housing, and big box retail. Problematic existing uses included strip clubs and vacant storefronts.



Figure 6 - Vacant storefronts in Valley Plaza
Image Source: Dominick Ortiz

4. The existing development patterns on many commercial corridors could be preserved, but new uses should be encouraged and maintenance increased.

- The mix of uses on Lankershim in the NOHO Arts District should be encouraged in the northern portions of the street. “Mom and Pop” stores are preferred to larger scale development.
- Laurel Canyon Boulevard is a problematic corridor - people identified several areas along the corridor that would benefit from maintenance, change of use and new development. In particular, the area near Valley Plaza at Victory and the commercial areas near the Laurel Canyon Orange Line station near Chandler.
- Need for more maintenance of commercial areas. There is a desire for sidewalk improvements, street light installation, and maintenance of storefronts.

5. Miscellaneous Comments - Some comments we did not fit into a broader theme, but are still worth mentioning. Miscellaneous comments related to Commercial areas are below.

- Some people view parking and access to freeways as an asset. One person said that Valley Plaza’s proximity to the freeway is convenient and makes shopping easy. Two people expressed frustration with current parking availability in commercial areas.
- One person suggested that solar be installed on rooftop parking structures.
- Some people wondered about the future need for commercial space with online shopping.
- One person asked for more resources for the disabled community (e.g. donation centers, haircuts, self help opportunities) in commercial areas.
- Some people suggested commercial development incentives between Colfax and Vineland on Victory, and between Vineland and Cahuenga on Burbank to help revitalize the area.
- Some people were concerned with the high cost of new developments and its impact on existing retail.
- One person mentioned that increasing land values are making it more difficult for developers to build smaller projects and still break even.
- Another person was concerned about new developments in the NOHO Arts District and their impact on small existing businesses.
- Another person expressed concerns about the general business climate in LA.

MOBILITY

1. The Metro Orange and Red Lines are assets, but more mobility options are needed. Many people prefer traveling by car to transit because they can efficiently reach their desired destination and avoid perceived safety issues on transit. Connectivity to employment and commercial centers that are currently not accessible by rail or Bus Rapid Transit should be enhanced.

- The Metro Orange Line is a preferred route. Having access to so many Orange Line stations in the southern part of the plan area is seen as an asset. The Metro Red Line is an effective way to get downtown; some people prefer taking the Red Line downtown to driving downtown.
- Enhance transit options along Lankershim Blvd. In particular connect Universal City, North Hollywood and the Burbank Airport. People suggested light rail, bus and cable cars.
- Enhance transit connections to locations outside of the plan area - to LAX, Santa Monica, Century City and Miracle Mile.
- Safety and cleanliness concerns on transit, especially for women.
- Accessibility of transit - improving access for disabled people, decreasing wait times for buses and improving wayfinding.
- Concern about reduced parking requirements, even in transit rich areas like the North Hollywood Arts District.



Figure 7 - The North Hollywood Transit Station
Image Source: Dominick Ortiz

2. Walkability is hindered by the poor quality of sidewalks, intersections that prioritize cars and an environment that is inhospitable to pedestrians and transit users. In particular, the diagonal intersections created by Lankershim need safety improvements for all users.

- The inconsistency of sidewalks in the plan area is an issue. Many streets lack sidewalks completely or have partial sidewalks. Sidewalk improvement is a top priority. Some people asked for sidewalks to be widened, and for sidewalks near schools to be prioritized in any improvement plans.
- Invest in basic amenities for pedestrians and transit users. The public realm lacks lighting, street furniture, bus shelters, and trash cans.
- Make pedestrian improvements at 4-way intersections. Consider scramble crosswalks. Certain areas also need mid-block crossing lanes with flashing lights.
- Introduce traffic calming measures like speed bumps, traffic circles and add stop lights to improve street safety.
- The diagonal intersections created by Lankershim Boulevard are dangerous for walking, driving, and biking, in particular the Lankershim/Camarillo/Vineland and Lankershim/Burbank/Tujunga intersections.



Figure 8 - The intersection of Lankershim, Vineland and Camarillo
Image Source: Flickr user Zachary Diaz

3. Bike infrastructure improvements should prioritize continuous bike lanes, especially protected and dedicated bike lanes. There is some disagreement on the value of bike parking in new developments.

- Existing bike paths in the area are safe, i.e. the bikeway adjacent to the Orange Line and the Chandler bike path. The landscaping and lighting on these paths should be improved.
- The LA River should become a continuous bike path.
- There should be more protected bike lanes as well as better connections for the existing bike lanes in the plan area. The Vineland bike lane is dangerous for both cyclists and drivers, and some suggested that it should become a protected bike lane. Several people were critical of bike lanes generally, stating that they aren't frequently used and have negative traffic impacts.
- Some people mentioned that new developments should include bike parking and accommodate dockless bike and scooter sharing services. Others argued that substituting bike parking for automobile parking would not be a good policy.



Figure 9 - The Chandler Bikeway in North Hollywood

Image Source: Spinlister.com

4. Freeways have significant impacts on mobility in the plan area. Entry and exit ramps create traffic impacts in freeway adjacent neighborhoods and underpasses are dangerous. The plan update should prioritize mitigating these impacts.

- The traffic surrounding the 101/170 interchange should be mitigated. The 101 East does not have a direct transition to the 170 North so this traffic is redirected onto surface streets. While the freeways are not under the City's purview, many people

experience traffic issues resulting from this design and asked that measures be taken to mitigate the impacts, both the amount and speed of traffic.

- The freeway underpasses at Victory Boulevard and Magnolia are dangerous for pedestrians, drivers and cyclists. Safety improvements are needed.
- Many specific intersections within the plan area were identified as experiencing heavy traffic congestion - Laurel Canyon/Chandler, Laurel Canyon/Colfax, Magnolia/Colfax, Tujunga/Camarillo, Lankershim/Camarillo, Camarillo/Riverside, Whitsett/Riverside, and Magnolia/Chandler. Reasons included poorly maintained streets, poor visibility, and large numbers of people traveling.

5. Miscellaneous Comments - Some comments do not fit into a broader theme, but are still worth mentioning. Miscellaneous comments related to Mobility are below.

- Some people mentioned issues with street signals and signal priorities. At Woodman and Oxnard, Chandler and the Orange Line Busway, and Riverside and Laurel Canyon the crossing takes “super long”.
- Two people asked for stronger traffic and parking enforcement.
- One person felt that streets were not wide enough in Van Nuys.

OPEN SPACE AND PUBLIC FACILITIES

1. Many of the existing parks, libraries and rec centers are valued, but there is a desire for more open space and public facilities with increased amenities. The community does not have sufficient space for people to gather.

- North Hollywood Park, Valley Village Park and Laurel Grove Park are popular. Many people also use parks outside of the plan area - Woodbridge Park in Studio City and the Studio City Recreation Center were identified as great places for people to exercise.
- Comments primarily focused on adding amenities to the parks, i.e. shade trees, picnic tables, lighting, playgrounds for children, trails and exercise equipment, etc.
- There are not enough parks and open space in North Hollywood. The vacant lot near Burbank/Coldwater Canyon and Whitnall Highway beneath the power lines could be repurposed as parks. Smaller pocket parks and creative reuse of space should be introduced throughout the plan area.
- In terms of other public facilities, the North Hollywood and Studio City libraries are popular. There is a lack of community meeting space, and a desire for more community events. There should be more senior centers within the plan area, Van Nuys is “too far” to travel to.



Figure 10 - Whitnall Highway Power Corridor
Image Source: LA Department of City Planning

- 2. Improving parks in the area requires a broader effort to improve public safety and provide housing for individuals experiencing homelessness. Many people are hesitant to use the parks in their neighborhood because of perceived threats.**
 - The presence of homeless individuals deters people from using their local park. Providing adequate housing for individuals experiencing homelessness would improve park conditions.
 - Safety concerns getting to parks. Improve bike and pedestrian access to existing parks, and connect more parks and green space throughout the area. Some wanted increased police presence in parks. Others said police made them feel unsafe.
 - Safety concerns along the LA River path. People said they do not use the path because it is below street level.
- 3. The Tujunga Wash is part of a larger watershed in the Valley and is considered an asset by many. The Tujunga Greenbelt adjacent to the Wash is a pleasant open space now, but the Wash should be revitalized and improved as a continuous linear park and path.**
 - The Tujunga Wash trail is an asset, but it should be improved. Landscape the wash and develop a portion of it as a public park. The stretch of the Wash that is between Chandler and Oxnard needs improvements.
 - The wash could be better connected to other paths, especially along the LA River.



Figure 11 - The Tujunga Wash
 Image Source: Flickr user John Sequeira

4. Miscellaneous Comments - Some of the comments we heard did not fit into a broader theme, but are still worth mentioning. Miscellaneous comments related to Open Space and Public Facilities are below.

- People were concerned about Valley Village park being improperly used as a dog park, and people having unpermitted bounce houses, BBQs and parties.
- One person said that public bathrooms need more attention at the local parks and libraries.
- One person felt that having a police presence at the library gave a perception of danger.
- Some people had questions related to the LA River master plan- the discontinuous nature of paths and revitalization/restoration efforts along the river is confusing.

INDUSTRIAL

Existing Industrial areas are a valuable source of employment and should be preserved and maintained. Where industrial uses persist, noxious uses should be phased out. Zoning strategies should also ensure adequate buffers between industrial and residential areas.

- Preservation of existing industrial areas is important. Industrial land is essential for the movie industry and other types of employment. Industrial areas, especially in the North Hollywood Arts District, are appreciated.
- Maintenance of existing industrial facilities could be improved. Cleanliness, trash, graffiti and poor lighting are challenges in existing industrial areas.

- People prefer clean industry to more noxious uses. There is a preference for clean/tech uses.
- Introduce a stronger buffer between industrial and residential uses. Suggestion of siting open space and trees between residential areas and industrial ones.
- There is support for industrial areas introducing housing, either through new construction or adaptive re-use. Some people like live/work units and thought these could be good in industrial areas. One person did not want to see hotels in industrial areas.



Figure 12 - An Industrial park off Raymer Street in North Hollywood
Image Source: Google Maps

OPPORTUNITY SITES

There are a variety of “opportunity sites” in the plan area that could be redeveloped. While there was no consensus on the best future use of these sites, they were identified as worthy of redevelopment. The sites included:

- Body shops throughout the area. Many are beginning to disappear and give way to new development. These sites could continue to be valuable to developers in the future.
- Underutilized space at the intersection of 134/170 freeway under the freeway
- Behind Riverside Drive alley
- Park near DWP at Riverside/Cahuenga
- Reuse vacant city parcels on Burbank Boulevard - 5700 block of Case Avenue
- Arts District is perceived as an opportunity site, but it’s almost built out
- Convert the fenced undeveloped lot located at Burbank Boulevard between Coldwater Canyon Avenue and Whitsett Avenue to Multifamily.

MISCELLAENOUS FEEDBACK

1. There are questions about the current Community Plan boundaries and how this will impact representation in the Community Plan Update process.

- Several Neighborhood Councils are within more than one community plan. Some of these are included in the Southeast Valley Community Plans update while others are not. Some people feel that these neighborhoods require special attention, including revisiting community plan boundaries.
- A small portion of the Van Nuys-North Sherman Oaks Community Plan, roughly bounded by the Tujunga Wash, the 101 freeway and Coldwater Canyon is not represented by a Neighborhood Council.
- One person expressed concern about the boundaries of the North Hollywood Business Improvement District, and wanted the BID to move the boundary north.

2. Some of the comments we heard are outside of the realm of the Community Plan Update and did not fit into a broader theme, but are still worth mentioning. Miscellaneous comments not associated with a particular land use category are listed below.

- One person mentioned concerns about the urban heat island effect in the San Fernando Valley.
- One person suggested that power lines should be relocated underground.
- Several people mentioned noise from the Burbank and Van Nuys airport.
- Several people mentioned concerns with other Department of City Planning processes. One person was frustrated with the expedited project planning process. Several people were concerned about noticing of different entitlement types.
- There were a number of concerns about other City Departments and government agencies - Staffing levels in the police department, effectiveness of construction inspections by the Department of Building and Safety, sidewalk clean-up of illegally dumped bulk items by the Bureau of Sanitation, and concern with LAUSD expansion and school district boundaries.

**Van Nuys-North Sherman Oaks Community Plan Area
Open House Feedback
October 22, 2018**

HOUSING

- 1. For some residents of single-family neighborhoods, two issues affect the character and density of their neighborhoods: new single-family residences (SFRs) that seem out of scale with surrounding homes and abrupt transitions between single-family homes and multifamily buildings. They would like to see more stringent design standards applied to new SFRs to limit lot coverage and height as well as deeper setbacks and other mitigation measures in transition areas. Other comments include:**
 - Lack of parking is a problem in single-family neighborhoods; concern about increasing density is often related to parking concerns.
 - Some residents want streets without sidewalks and that have minimal or low lighting to remain, but others feel they are unsafe.
 - There should be incentives for homeowners to build smaller homes and leave more open space on their properties.
 - Less density is desirable because existing services are insufficient.

- 2. The design quality of new multifamily buildings is uneven and requires rules for improved and more context-sensitive design. New apartment buildings should be scaled to the surrounding neighborhood; participants cited the IMT development at Magnolia and Kester as a good example of a suitably scaled development. While there is no consensus that a specific architectural style is preferable, participants want to see new buildings incorporate architectural elements and add more open space to residential buildings:**
 - Developments that incorporate public benefits are desirable, such as Greenwood Square (new park at Hazeltine and Sherman Way).
 - Residential design along major corridors needs to be more consistent.
 - Permeable paving and other “green building” elements should be incorporated into building design.
 - Parking should be provided in new housing development.
 - Older garden-style apartments provide sufficient open space, but newer buildings don’t have enough open space or the open space is not well designed/well maintained.

- Opinions were mixed about the boxy, modern architectural style of The Glen project on Victory Boulevard but many view the project's density as appropriate for the corridor.
- Multifamily housing should prioritize underground parking.
- Mature trees and landscaping should be preserved in the design of new multifamily complexes.



Figure 1 – Context-sensitive multifamily building design, with transitional height adjacent to lower-scale development.

Image Source: Google Maps

3. **There is broad support for placing higher density housing on major corridors such as Van Nuys Boulevard, Sepulveda Boulevard and Vanowen Street, especially near transit hubs. Some believe increasing the amount of housing and/or mixed-use development on corridors would help address the extensive problem of vacant retail, especially on Van Nuys Blvd. between Victory and Vanowen. Other comments include:**
 - Intensify amount of housing near Orange Line and job centers.
 - Build housing around open space.
 - Keep rental housing affordable; many are concerned about displacement of lower-income residents as new developments come in.
 - The Department of City Planning should coordinate with Metro to rezone around transit hubs.
4. **Participants express support for new housing types that would provide alternative living arrangements to what is currently available, i.e., single-family homes and apartments. Some cite small lot subdivisions as a way to provide more affordable single-family homes, although others believe those homes are not affordable for many families in the area.**

- Permanent supportive housing should be located on appropriate sites, with professional services provided on-site.
- There should be affordable, cooperative housing that includes community gardens.

COMMERCIAL

1. In terms of commercial development in the plan area, participants view revitalization of Van Nuys Boulevard as the top priority because of the number of empty storefronts, the types of businesses that predominate, and the dilapidated condition of many buildings on the boulevard. Although some participants describe Auto Row as uninviting to pedestrians, the corridor north of Oxnard Street, including the Civic Center, is the area most in need of attention and improvement. They would like to see more restaurants (non-fast food) and more upscale retail shops on Van Nuys and identified businesses such as 24-hour laundromats and bail bond agents as being less desirable.

- The Van Nuys Community Design Overlay should be better defined to create a consistent architectural design for Van Nuys Boulevard.
- The character of the historic core should be enhanced.
- It is important to maintain spaces that are affordable for local entrepreneurs, not just chain stores.
- More mixed-use, mixed-income development would contribute to revitalization.
- A business improvement district for the Civic Center would help beautify the area.
- There is concern about impact on Van Nuys businesses from light rail construction.



Figure 2 - Mixed-use development on Van Nuys Blvd. could reduce the number of vacant storefronts
Image Source: LA Department of City Planning

2. The plan area as a whole does not provide the range of retail, restaurants and entertainment that would attract participants to shop and dine locally. For example, many participants say the recent closure of Orchard Supply has left them without a hardware store in the community. Some participants value the “legacy” businesses that have existed in Van Nuys for many years (e.g., tailoring and barbershops in the Civic Center) and would like to see more independent, “Mom and Pop” businesses come to the area. The restaurant sector in particular is seen as dominated by chains and the area has few restaurants/bars or lounges for nighttime entertainment, with MacLeod’s Brewery cited as the notable exception.

- Fairly good coverage of supermarkets but some feel they are too downscale; there are very few fresh food alternatives.
- Walkable retail is rare.
- The mix of businesses and restaurants on Riverside Drive is appealing.
- Some value the Fashion Square Mall, others say it is outdated.
- Ventura Boulevard in Studio City, Old Town Pasadena, Santa Monica and Glendale were mentioned as preferred commercial destinations for their walkability, parking options, variety of shopping and dining, as well as proximity to key destinations.

3. The appearance of commercial buildings and sidewalks/streets in commercial areas is generally viewed as poor, the result of insufficient enforcement of existing regulations as well as proliferation of main entrances on the back of buildings (i.e., main entrances on rear parking lots rather than the street. Van Nuys Blvd between Kittridge and Vanowen is the most notorious example of this, but there are others). Overflowing trash cans, trash dumping (e.g., at Sepulveda near Victory) are just some of the problems that need to be addressed to make commercial areas more appealing.

- Auto dealerships are the only clean areas; in other areas, there is insufficient maintenance and enforcement of business conditions.
- Commercial areas also lack trees/shade.
- The proliferation of empty storefronts has exacerbated the lack of appeal, especially on Van Nuys south of Victory.
- Street setbacks should be reduced for large commercial sites to promote pedestrian activity (e.g., Orchard Supply Hardware, when redeveloped, should be located near Sepulveda Blvd, rather than its current location at the rear of the site behind a parking lot).
- Ventura Boulevard in Studio City, Old Town Pasadena, Santa Monica and Glendale were cited as valued for their walkability, abundance of parking, variety of shopping and dining, as well as proximity to key destinations.



Figure 3 - Participants prefer business districts with interesting streetscapes, pedestrian amenities and a variety of stores

Image Source: Flickr user Ken Lund

4. Participants say most Van Nuys-North Sherman Oaks residents commute outside the plan area for work, although they would prefer to work closer to home if possible. Some cited the plan area's lack of suitable building types, such as Class A office space and facilities for TV/film production, as a significant barrier to providing more jobs in the community.

MOBILITY

1. Streetscapes in the plan area discourage people from walking, with participants citing a lack of trees and shade; narrow, broken or nonexistent sidewalks; long blocks; and undesirable activities such as loitering and drug use as key reasons for not walking more. Van Nuys Boulevard and Oxnard Street are cited as the most unsafe, especially for women, while Hazeltine and Burbank are viewed as safer.
 - Better and more frequent street maintenance would improve the pedestrian experience.
 - Sidewalks need to be fixed and cleaned as do crosswalks, streetlights and potholes.
 - Sepulveda has debris and garbage on the medians.
 - There's a need for walking paths along the LA River.

- The historic character of central Van Nuys should be emphasized with more cleanliness and walkability.
- Mature trees should be preserved.



Figure 3 - Stakeholders say the Orange Line bikeway is the only safe place to ride a bike in Van Nuys-North Sherman Oaks

Image Source: Flickr user Dan Reed

- 2. With the exception of the Orange Line bikeway, safer and more extensive biking infrastructure is needed to persuade participants to bike for either recreational or practical purposes. Until there is a biking network that links key destinations in the area through protected bike lanes and other facilities such as bike racks and rental bikes, many said they would be unlikely to ride a bike in the plan area.**
 - Green stripes should be used to clearly demarcate lanes and make streets welcoming places for all.
 - Van Nuys needs bike lanes like the ones on Figueroa (MyFigueroa).
 - Have demarcated areas for bike parking.
- 3. Driving in the plan area can be problematic due to lack of street maintenance, speeding drivers, and in particular, traffic around freeway on-ramps and off-ramps, which are outdated and inadequate for the volume of traffic.**
 - Several participants say Chandler Boulevard is their preferred east-west driving route.

4. Many participants cite infrequent service, slow speeds and lack of certainty about parking as key barriers to more frequent use of public transit. There is general agreement that more mobility options are needed, especially faster transit on Sherman Way and Sepulveda. Many believe the light rail on Van Nuys Blvd. will bring positive change to the community and help alleviate traffic, but some participants are concerned that the rail line's negative impacts (length of construction period, limited access to local businesses forcing them to close) will outweigh the benefits.
- The most frequently used public transit routes are the Orange Line, the DASH to Ventura Boulevard and the Metro 750 bus on Ventura.
 - All train stations should have parking lots.
 - Shuttles are an option for major corridors.
 - Participants want to be able to get to Westwood quickly. The community needs to plan for a future Sepulveda Corridor transit station linking Van Nuys-North Sherman Oaks to the Westside; Valleyheart at Sepulveda may be an opportunity for transit access to downtown and UCLA.
 - Many students are transit dependent, so it's important to link universities and community colleges to transit.
 - Converting the Orange Line to rail may be a poor allocation of resources which could be used to improve other lines.



Figure 4 – Although Metro studies indicate that occupancy of parking lots at the Orange Line Sepulveda and Van Nuys stations is well below capacity each day, stakeholders expressed uncertainty about parking availability and cited that as a reason for not using public transit.

Image Source: Google Maps

5. Access to low-cost parking continues to be an important concern for stakeholders. Many participants say it is a major factor in their decision to take public transit and determines where they shop and go out for meals or entertainment. Some participants' say the success of the light rail on Van Nuys Boulevard will depend on whether investments are made in parking garages and lots near the stations.

- Allowing only the light rail, bikes and buses on Van Nuys Boulevard (i.e., no vehicle parking) will be a positive change.
- Parking infrastructure should accommodate spillover from visitors.
- Santa Monica has free parking for the first 90 minutes; this should be considered for Van Nuys.
- The community plan should consider the impacts of autonomous vehicles in the region.
- Businesses might fail without parking when the light rail is built.
- In the Civic Center area, it would be helpful if the parking lots closed later than 6pm and more of the parking meters were functional.

OPEN SPACE AND PUBLIC FACILITIES

1. There is insufficient open space in the plan area, both in terms of area and distribution, especially in the northern portion. Of the plan area's parks, the most highly valued ones are the largest ones (Van Nuys-Sherman Oaks Park, Sepulveda Basin, Delano Park), which are largely concentrated in the southern part of the plan area. Existing parks need more active uses to engage children. Improvement to sidewalks and other streetscape components would help improve access to parks, particularly Delano Park and the Sepulveda Basin.

- Some are concerned that there will not be enough open space to serve a greater numbers of residents, since no new parks are planned.
- Students in the area do not have spaces to study apart from businesses like Starbucks, especially around Valley College. More youth-oriented spaces are needed.
- The community overall needs more parks, landscaping and flowers; Van Nuys Boulevard would benefit from investment in green space.
- Open space opportunities include expansion of the LA River Park by Sepulveda and addition of riverside walking/biking trails; the Sunkist project; the Tujunga Wash; greening of the Civic Center mall; vacant lots on Sherman Way.



Figure 5 - The Tujunga Wash represents an opportunity for expanding and improving open space in the plan area
 Source: Wikimedia Commons - Tamaba9

2. **The area’s public facilities are not easily accessible and not well maintained. Youth in particular lack gathering/cultural spaces. For example, Van Nuys High School is an asset, but it isn’t open to the community; there is no public pool that is ADA accessible; and access to the Van Nuys Branch Library is hidden within the Civic Center.**
 - There are no alternatives when public facilities need to be renovated.
 - The fire station is potential site for a museum or cultural center.
 - Senior Center on Van Nuys Boulevard is an asset.

INDUSTRIAL

Industrial land and uses should be protected to preserve jobs and economic vitality with the exception of industrial uses that generate nuisances, which should be limited in terms of type and location. Participants pointed out that many car repair businesses are located adjacent to single-family homes (Oxnard Street abounds in examples of poor transitions between such uses). Overall, more stringent rules are needed to improve and modernize industrial uses in terms of use, design, intensity, walkability and maintenance of the public right-of-way.

- Industrial land lost to Metro (for the train yard) should be replaced elsewhere.
- Encourage industrial uses, not just self-storage or warehouses, on industrial land.

- Oxnard Street could be rezoned and repurposed as a media/production jobs center, with streetscape improvements to increase walkability near transit stations.
- Industrial uses should be prohibited near Kester Avenue and Van Nuys Blvd.

**Sherman Oaks-Studio City-Toluca Lake-Cahuenga Community Plan Area
Open House Feedback
October 17 and November 7, 2018**

HOUSING

- 1. Residents feel that the character of their single-family neighborhoods were being negatively impacted by things such as mansionization, the lack of protection for trees, and the increase in higher density housing. There is general agreement that the quality of life in single-family neighborhoods is enjoyed by many residents and needs to be protected.**
 - Maintain the community plan area as a livable place, improve the quality of life, and protect the environment.
 - The community is suburban and there is a good ‘valley feel’– not sidewalks everywhere, semi-rural, not overly lit.
 - Zoning is causing the area to be overdeveloped and lose its residential feel as it becomes more commercial – developers don’t care about the local neighborhood
 - Concern about single-family homes being torn down for multifamily projects (e.g. along Radford).
 - Many change of uses occur in the community for more housing.
 - Place more emphasis on design to make neighborhoods more attractive.
 - Influx of tract housing in the valley has made it all look the same.
 - Toluca Lake is an oasis in the city with a good neighborhood atmosphere, low scale development, and good walkability.
 - Preserve two-story type/single-family homes. Perhaps duplexes/triplexes, but not high density.
 - Older homes on large lots are being replaced by larger homes or multiple homes on one lot, reducing the space between neighbors.
 - A lot of mcmansions and larger homes are changing the character of older neighborhoods, but also increasing property values.
 - Baseline mansionization ordinance has been helpful for regulating oversized homes.
 - Don’t like ‘cape cod’ houses but they go for a lot of money and there is demand for that.

- Mature trees need to be maintained and protected from being removed by new construction – protect the tree canopy.
- Don't want condo canyons.
- Parking spills over into neighborhoods from Universal City/Studio City Red Line Station.
- Concern about Universal City/Studio City Red Line station becoming a hub and impacting neighborhoods.
- Transportation shouldn't be an excuse for more housing.
- Prefer open space in the back and front yards of homes.
- Cramped sliver of homes near CBS is getting more crowded near Ventura.



*Figure 1 - Single family neighborhood in Toluca Lake
Image Source: LA Department of City Planning*

2. The community is largely built out and offers limited opportunities for more housing capacity. People acknowledge that if new housing is built, it should be near transit and places where employment is concentrated. The area frequently identified with the most potential for growth was near Universal City/Studio City Metro Red Line station.

- Metro station has been a game-changer as people now understand the value of living near transit and don't want to be in traffic.
 - Building homes near transit is only half of the approach.
 - Multifamily would be appropriate near Metro Subway – also along Lankershim Boulevard and Vineland Avenue.

- Housing should be closer to Universal where there is transit and a job center – R3 should be recommended.
- Housing and density should go near transit to support ridership.
- There were other ideas for places that could be appropriate for more density:
 - Lankershim Corridor is a good place to put density – it has low slung development right now and could be higher - maybe mixed-use.
 - There is also capacity for more housing along Sepulveda near the freeway.
 - Possibly build up on Ventura Boulevard and Moorpark Street as well.
 - North Hollywood, Van Nuys, and Studio City could support more housing.
 - Sepulveda and Magnolia could be a place for change.
 - Vineland, Cahuenga, & Clybourn in NOHO/VV could be mixed use.
 - Sepulveda, Kester, and Woodman are good places for adding housing.
 - More density is appropriate near transit and along commercial corridors.
 - North of Moorpark should be protected but south of Moorpark can be apartment buildings.
 - Increase density along Burbank Avenue between Laurel Canyon and Woodman.
 - Upzone areas strategically to increase density – focus on bigger lots.
 - Increase the amount of people living near their job so they can walk or use active transportation.
 - Sherman Oaks community plan area should be considered a transitioning neighborhood from less dense to more.
- The flats are pretty dense – not much of an opportunity for housing.
- Bonuses for community benefits are good.
- Need incentives for multifamily property owners to redevelop.
- High rises are ok but need open space.
- In Sherman Oaks, R3 zones are underbuilt, but there is capacity for more housing.
- In the 80s, several RD 1.5 zones were created where they used to be R3.
 - RD1.5 incentivizes small lots, not apartment density – losing housing opportunity.
- Consider possibility of subdividing 30,000 sf lots to create smaller homes.
- Housing should be oriented away from risk areas (earthquake, flooding, fire, etc.).
- Ensure that there is enough infrastructure to support increase in housing development.



Figure 2 - Higher density housing near North Hollywood Station
 Image Source: Wikimedia Commons - Downtowngal

3. New multifamily housing developments need to fit in with the existing neighborhood character. Design requirements should allow for better transitions between higher density and lower density homes and there should be adequate enforcement for these regulations.

- Create better transitions between multifamily and lower density residential neighborhoods, particularly along major corridors.
 - Should be a gradual transition from higher to lower density.
- Current density is not necessarily bad, but need buffer zones.
- Concerns about rear setbacks in low density neighborhoods.
- Q conditions along major corridors that restrict height should be maintained.
- Q conditions on Moorpark/Tujunga should be reviewed for height restrictions.
- Take into consideration developments that may cast shadows into surrounding neighborhoods (e.g. 28 story building in Universal City).
- Do not want to endure looming structures – worried about height and incompatible scale.
- One condo gets a variance for height which establishes a precedent and now they all have variances.
- Code requirements to build bigger/denser leads to loss of community character.



Figure 3 - Appropriate transition between multifamily and single-family homes

Image Source: Google Maps

- There is a lack of design requirements and a loss of mature trees - minimum landscaping is replacing the lost trees.
- Developers are looking for exceptions and easy ways to get around requirements.
- Potential for mixed use along Riverside, but it should be sensitive to residential neighborhoods behind.
- Landscaping should provide more privacy for residents and minimize the visibility of larger developments.
- Concern with shadow, light and glare of tall commercial buildings.
- Big new development on Tujunga might affect older homes nearby.
- Development over 3 stories is too impactful.
- There are no buffers between commercial and residential properties north of Ventura.
- 2-4 stories are fine as long as there is open space.
- Large new developments have no green space or sufficient parking.
- Concern about impact from Sunkist development.
- Lack of incentives for quality entitlements is a drawback of the existing code.



Figure 4 - Poor transition between multifamily and single-family homes.

Image Source: Google Maps

- New row homes are fine as long as they have enough open space.
- Any Caruso property is beautiful – open, friendly, done with class.
- Residential homes should have more lot coverage.
- Setbacks should be administered within the context of the lot.

4. Rising housing costs are causing displacement for many people. While there has been some success in providing more housing options across multiple income levels, there is a need to increase the overall supply of affordable housing to address growing homelessness and prevent displacement.

- Concern that new developments will increase housing value of surrounding area and decrease affordability.
- Houses are all \$2-million and families are being priced out.
- Only luxury housing can be built because of the high land costs.
- Need public private partnerships to get affordable housing with public land.
- Need more missing middle housing types for small families.
- Need assisted living and aging in place housing.
 - Would have to move when retired due to cost of housing.



Figure 5 - Small lot homes are viewed as an opportunity to provide more affordable housing opportunities

Image Source: Google Maps

- Provide opportunities for starter homes such as condos and townhomes.
- Airbnb threatens to reduce affordable housing.
- Positive community response to small lot developments because they provide an affordable opportunity to own a home.
- Single-family dwellings are becoming too crowded.
- Opportunities for live-work and affordable housing along Ventura, Riverside, and Lankershim.
- Too many homeless people in the community decreases the quality of life.

COMMERCIAL

1. **There are not enough job opportunities in the Valley, which results in longer trips for people as they must travel long distances to get to work. Many people would support the development of more work places to reduce commute times.**

- Consider creating more flex and office spaces near homes.
- Not enough Class A office space in the Valley to attract jobs.
 - Would need more parking.
- Mixed use with offices and retail on the bottom would be great.
- Need better office space to compete with Century City.
- Open to new jobs in the Valley to reduce traffic and long commutes.
- Sepulveda is mostly 1-2 story buildings and could accommodate retail, hotel, offices close to the river.
- More offices on Sepulveda Boulevard.

2. The community enjoys the current mix of smaller retail options in the Community Plan Area which offer a variety of unique shopping and dining options for residents. The community plan should continue to support the existence of these smaller shops which establish an identity for the area.

- There is support for the existing small diversity of shops – pleasant village feel.
- Most goods are easily accessible for people in the community but people are comfortable shopping outside of the neighborhood (Burbank, Pasadena).
- No big box retail needed in the community, there is plenty elsewhere in the Valley.
- People enjoy shopping and dining in the Toluca Lake and Studio City neighborhoods.
- Support for more grocery stores – would be good at Moorpark & Tujunga.
- Strip commercial is not the most efficient use but meets the needs of many community members.
- Corner commercial stores are good but probably need more housing to be viable.
- Mom and Pop shops provide the neighborhood with character, but high rents may push these businesses out for more chains.
- Retail options like Tujunga Village drive demand for housing in the area.
- Offices and banks take up good real estate on Riverside.
- There are lots of underutilized lots for commercial uses.
- Metro’s joint development in NoHo may be an issue.



Figure 6 - Local retail options along Tujunga Avenue
Image Source: Google Maps

3. People enjoy being able to walk to certain retail options (e.g. Tujunga Village and shops in Toluca Lake) because of the enjoyable pedestrian experience. Other commercial corridors should have pedestrian enhancements in order to create retail destinations throughout the area.

- Make commercial areas more walkable, engaging, and interesting.
- There should be low scale shopping centers for residents – similar to the small scale shopping corridor on Riverside Drive leading to Burbank.
- Focus on trees, sidewalks, landscaped medians, and smaller blocks.
- Tujunga Village is a good example of quality retail – people are able to walk here when they get home from work.
- More vision in designing commercial areas (e.g. Walmart design in small town in MA).
- Intersection of Woodman and Moorpark is ugly.
- Bodegas would be nice - like NYC.
- Commercial on Riverside needs to have parking in the back like Ventura Specific Plan.
- A lot of potential for more commercial uses on Van Nuys Boulevard.
- Paseos in the Arts District are nice.
- Van Nuys/Sherman Oaks Recreation Center has approximately 200 people at a time playing soccer on a nightly basis but there are no nearby eateries or restaurants for people. Mixed-use developments could benefit that area (near Hazeltine and Riverside Drive).



Figure 7 - Pedestrian friendly commercial corridor in Toluca Lake
 Image Source: LA Department of City Planning

4. The perceived lack of parking makes it harder to go shopping at local stores. More parking options would make shopping in the area more viable.

- Limited parking in shopping centers.
- Not enough parking along commercial corridors.
- Don't want levels of parking, but instead flat parking structures.
- There should be parking structures near residential areas that are close to commercial uses.

MOBILITY

1. There are insufficient options for public transit in the area and it is viewed by many as unattractive to use. The existing public transit needs better maintenance and there should be more transit options as well as better access to different modes of transportation.

- Sepulveda Pass connector should be connected to larger network, but needs population to support it.
- Sepulveda connector needs to have a stop at Ventura Boulevard.
- DASH services could be improved, particularly if its route is extended to the Universal City/Studio City Red Line Station and further along Ventura Blvd.
- People had mixed feelings about the quality of service provided by DASH buses.
- Better maintenance for existing bus services.
- Metro stops are not reliable (miss buses and trains) – need better frequency.



Figure 8 - People feel the DASH bus services could be improved.
 Image Source: Flickr User: George

- Ventura, Lankershim, Riverside could be folded into transportation network.
- North/south connections are missing in the Southeast Valley – lack of connectivity.

- Currently not taking advantage of wide boulevards with bus connections – dedicated bus lanes would be helpful.
- Transportation infrastructure needs to be built before housing.
- City is headed in right direction with transit options.
- People mentioned they would support transit expansion to reduce traffic.
- Connections to the Sunkist development will be important moving forward.
- Traffic patterns have changed with rideshare and scooters.
- Scooters are fun but messy, unsafe, and need regulation.
- Want to enjoy valley without needing a car.
- Maybe there should be ride share drop off points with new developments.
- Valley feels ignored for public transit improvements.
- Cahuenga Pass needs better transit options.
- Old mobility maps need to be updated.
- Moorpark does not have good transit service.



Figure 9 - Universal City/Studio City Metro Red Line Station
Image Source: Wikimedia Commons - GTD Aquitaine

2. Most people said that they used their car for major transportation needs. They feel that their car is the most efficient form of transportation available to them, but the amount of traffic and lack of parking in the area has negatively impacted the quality of life.

- Local streets are currently congested as people are either trying to reach or avoid the freeways.
- Waze has killed safety - area near Mulholland and Laurel Canyon used to love before cut-through traffic.
- Not much room for other transportation options along the Cahuenga Pass
- Linear nature of community makes it harder to walk.
- Getting to Metro Red Line station is difficult without a car.
- Driving provides instant gratification and public transit is not convenient.
- Traffic concerns at the transition from 170 interchange/101 freeway.
- Universal Studios should allocate funding to improve transportation along freeways.
 - Their development plan makes them responsible for freeway ramp improvements and traffic mitigation.
 - They will get more busy as development takes shape.
- Traffic is calm on Colfax Avenue.
- Need to create traffic calming methods to prevent high speeds.
- Colfax and Valley Spring is a bad intersection.
- Lankershim Boulevard is bumper to bumper at rush hour as a lot of traffic is headed to the freeway on-ramps.
- Laurel Canyon, Ventura, and Moorpark are awful streets.
- Transit is not adequate – light rail is a “glorified bus”- moves too slow.
- There is no street parking because of condos.
- People shopping on Ventura and other nearby businesses park on residential streets - need public parking structures.
- Parking should be included in new developments because most people in community still drive/own a car.
- Parking structures should be considered at Metro Parking lots – limit to 2 stories.
- Politicians want to make the Valley just as congested as “the city”.



Figure 10 - Lankershim Boulevard near the freeway on-ramps
 Image Source: Wikimedia Commons - Junkyardsparkle

3. There are opportunities to enhance the pedestrian experience in neighborhoods throughout the Community Plan Area. Certain design treatments should be applied to streets and along major corridors to encourage walkability.

- No sidewalks in some neighborhoods make it hard to navigate.
- Need sidewalks due to fences/walls/hedges which cause safety issues – should be on both sides of major streets.
- Lack of sidewalks also provide character for local neighborhood and a sense of a ‘rural’ lifestyle.
- If city doesn’t want sidewalks, we need consistency – can be dangerous for drivers and pedestrians.
- Encourage more trees, sidewalk improvements, and protected bike lanes to make the area more pedestrian friendly.
- Alleys in the area are in poor repair due to increased traffic - improve the alleyways like Pasadena and Santa Monica.
- Unnecessary street widening removes trees and landscaping.
 - Wider streets mean faster cars and less walkability – need more strategies for preserving streetscape.
- Walkability is nice in Studio City and Toluca Lake – needs to be maintained.

- Make Riverside Drive more pedestrian friendly and maybe more mixed use buildings.
- Streetscapes in Toluca Lake – maybe bulb outs.
- Walkability leads to better communities.
- Reevaluate tunnels along the 170 to prevent homeless encampments but still make it accessible.
- Enhance road markers and better crosswalks, more lights.
- Colfax Meadows are nice for walking – small houses, less traffic, calm neighborhood.
- Provide mid-block crossings.
- Homelessness is impacting the walking experience.



*Figure 11 - Many stakeholders mentioned the need to enhance the pedestrian experience
Image Source: Flickr user Eric Sehr*

4. The existing bike infrastructure is viewed as inadequate and people do not feel safe riding their bike. Major improvements would be needed for bikers to feel comfortable using the bikeways and bike lanes in the community.

- Safety and risk issues for cyclists need to be resolved before people can feel comfortable using bike lanes – drivers don't respect the bike lanes.
- Dangerous for bikers along Vineland, Riverside, and Moorpark.
- Bike lanes are nice for long stretches near the Orange Line, Lake Balboa, Chandler.
- Some people wanted no bike lanes on major streets.
- Can't afford bike lanes because of traffic lanes.
- Cycling is hard when needing to stop at intersections – need separate signals.

- Need a bike path parallel to 101.
- Want to be able to ride bike along river/Tujunga Wash from Victory to Griffith Park.
- Not much access to roads for biking in the Cahuenga Pass.
- Nothing east/west is developed for an adequate bike lane.
- Bike lane on Riverside Drive would be nice.
- Potentially install bike lanes as a buffer between parked vehicles and sidewalks.
- Bikes should have their own signals.
- Complete the bikeway along the LA River.
- Bikeways need to be more than asphalt and concrete – should be protected.
- Bike riders don't stop on Lankershim & Vanowen .



Figure 12 – Cyclist using protected bicycle lane
 Source: Streetsblog LA

OPEN SPACE/PUBLIC FACILITIES

1. People feel there is a lack of open space in not only the community, but throughout Los Angeles. The community would like to see more creative solutions to cultivate attractive parks and open spaces that are usable for the people that live there.

- Include green/open space along major corridors.
- Pocket parks are nice but they are not destinations.
- In the future, convert city owned parking to open space.
- Lack of parks is a shortcoming throughout Los Angeles.
- Certain risk areas should be repurposed for open space, carbon sequestration, and urban cooling.

- Need more shared open space (private & public) to increase efficiency and resource management.
- More functional paths for walking & biking.
- Need for more communal areas such as plazas, paseos, and active alleys.
- Higher density homes will call for the need for more parks.
- If more mixed-use is developed, add green space/open space such as dog parks.
- Public gardens on small lots would be nice (e.g. Arlington in Pasadena).
- Sunkist has been required to create a linear park (45-65' wide) and the community wants it to continue to Sherman Oaks park.



Figure 13 - More gathering places, such as plazas and paseos, were cited as needs for the community
Source: People St. – City of Los Angeles

2. Existing parks and public facilities are considered valuable and members of the public mentioned several that are popular. However, accessibility, the homeless presence, and maintenance are obstacles that prevent people from visiting these places.

- Popular parks and open spaces in the Community Plan Area include: Weddington Park, Fryman Canyon, Wilacre Park, Woodbridge Park, Moorpark Park, Studio City Recreation Center, Rocket Universe (North Weddington).
- Van Nuys/North Sherman Oaks park is always busy and needs more parking.
- YMCA in North Hollywood is well utilized.
- There is substantial open space concentrated in the hillside, but it can be hard to reach and difficult to access – need more parks in the flats.

- Existing parks and libraries are filled with homeless – often use libraries in Burbank.
- Parks need better design and more maintenance.
- Concern about strain on park infrastructure and services needed to keep up with development.
- Exit ramps, fast cars, poor signage, poor light threaten parks.
- Open space is not conveniently accessible by foot.



Figure 14 - Studio City Recreation Center was cited as a valuable place in the community
Source: LA Department of City Planning

3. The Los Angeles River is considered a valuable resource in the community, but it is in need of major improvements to realize its potential as an attractive destination. People generally support the goal of creating a continuous bikeway/greenway and are excited about the prospect of more open space and parks along the River.

- Currently, the LA River is not viewed as an attractive asset and it does not experience a lot of use – too many transients and not clean.
- People would like to see the continuous greenway/bikeway along the LA River completed and it should be accessible by both pedestrians and cyclists.
- The river is a prime opportunity for community gathering – establish an identity.

- Members of the Sherman Oaks Neighborhood Council would like to see the movement of the LA River Bike Path to the north side of the river between Hazeltine and Woodman and the south side of the river be used for pedestrians.
- South side of the river in Studio City is where bike path should be – there are commercial uses.
- More direct connections and orientation towards the river would provide “more eyes” and help resolve safety issue.
- Open space and the protection of the watershed and wildlife should be prioritized near the river.
- Bikeway is funded as a ‘commuter bikeway’ but there are no job destinations along the river.
- People in tents and sleeping bags along the river make it feel unsafe.
- River needs to have better lighting, clean up, and a nice bike path.
- Neighborhood clean ups are not enough.
- LA River Master Plan is too focused on development – needs more focus on aligning open space.
- Connect the river to its flood plain and create a broader corridor near the river.
- Need more permeable surfaces and less concrete – more water capture to prevent flooding.
- River adjacent zoning should allow for greater heights in combination with open space.
- Problems when the river intersects with the roadway.
- Underground segments of LA River can be dangerous.



Figure 15 - People view the LA River as an opportunity to add more open space.

Source: LA Department of City Planning

OPPORTUNITY SITES

Community members identified several opportunity sites that are currently underutilized including:

- At Hazeltine and the 101 freeway, there are a lot of damaged vehicles, should consider a park here.
- On Tujunga near the freeway entrance.
- Activate spaces under freeways.
- Parking sites for metro stations are good sites for housing.
- Studio City – near Coldwater.
- Underutilized lots with big box stores should be redeveloped for mixed-use.
- Along Valleyheart – east of Hazeltine to Woodman.
- Lankershim corridor between Riverside and to the river – could be a ‘village’ feel.
- Vineland and Moorpark Street.
- Near Trader Joes in Toluca Lake there could be more capacity for housing.

VENTURA/CAHUENGA BOULEVARD CORRIDOR SPECIFIC PLAN

While the Ventura/Cahuenga Boulevard Corridor Specific Plan is not a part of this work program, it is still an integral part of this community and the public was welcome to provide their thoughts about the Corridor. More information about the status of the Specific Plan can be found under [Council File: 17-1071](#). People generally recognized Ventura Boulevard’s significance as a regional thoroughfare and had mixed opinions about what the future of the Boulevard should look like.

- Don’t wall off buildings on Ventura Boulevard like Central Avenue in Glendale.
 - Buildings should be tiered.
- Project near the 405 on Sepulveda is tied up in lawsuit (Tina’s Trees).
- There were suggestions about going as high as 40 stories on Ventura.
- North side of Ventura Boulevard would be better for taller buildings; backs onto river so no adjacency issues.
- Ventura Boulevard commercial corridor works well.
- Low quality commercial uses on Ventura Boulevard.
- Ventura Boulevard isn’t very wide.
- No more density on Ventura between Sherman Oaks and Studio City.



Figure 16 - Ventura/Cahuenga Boulevard is a major commercial corridor in the plan area.

Image Source: Pinterest user Eddie Teran

- Sepulveda and Ventura is a good place to concentrate development.
- Not enough parking structures on Ventura.
- Ventura Boulevard is an opportunity for transit oriented development.
- There are nice grocery stores along Ventura.
- Open to clean tech production on Ventura Boulevard – between Coldwater & Vineland.
- Parking is bad at Trader Joe's on Ventura.
- People avoid Laurel Canyon and Ventura for shopping.
- Lots of people sleep in front of businesses on Ventura Blvd.
- Mixed-use on Ventura Blvd. commercial on the ground floor and build up.
- Be cautious about space between Ventura Blvd. and the river.
- Need another parking lot at east end of Ventura.
- Walkability is good on Ventura but not good for bikes.
- Need wide, continuous sidewalk on Ventura with outdoor seating and blue parking.
- Need green energy and smart transportation system along Ventura Blvd.
- Auto body shops along Ventura near the river should be open space.
- Specific plan heights are too restrictive.

MISCELLANEOUS FEEDBACK

In some cases, the public commented on issues in their community that either could not be addressed in this program or were out of the realm of the planning department. These comments are summarized below.

- Morning traffic with school buses is bad.
- There is high crime and need for more policing.
- More solar power in new homes and water capture.
- Concerns about infrastructure – mainly water.
- Schools are overcrowded.
- More housing should be concentrated in Century City.
- Commercial areas are being filled with cannabis uses.
- Too much giant signage.
- Educate people on how to live environmentally friendly.
- Need to encourage more energy efficient resources.
- Not much development is going through Studio City NC.
 - Most of it is by-right.
- Noise from Burbank Airport is a problem.
- Local noise issues can be mitigated by having neighbors alternate gardening days.
- Construction is not obeying working hours.
- Need play equipment at Campo de Cahuenga.
- Concern with drop in red line ridership.