

FACT SHEET

Frequently Asked Questions - Community Plan Update

What is the purpose of the Community Plan Update?

The 35 Community Plans for the City of Los Angeles make up the Land Use Element of the Los Angeles General Plan, and plan for neighborhood growth and adaptation for the next 20-30 years. Community Plans, in accordance with state guidelines, are updated every 10 to 20 years to continue to meet the growing and evolving needs of their communities. The Westchester-Playa Del Rey Community Plan was last updated in 2004, and does not address the regional housing crisis, climate change, equity, or recent infrastructure investments. The new plan will continue to build on the goals of the current, while accommodating for emerging community needs and future growth.

The Community Plan Update includes updates to the policy document, the land use map, and introduces the New Zoning Code. The policy document lays out the community's goals, policies, and future programs. The land use map identifies where certain uses (such as residential, commercial, and industrial) are permitted. Most recently, Planning the Westside released the Spring 2024 Draft Land Use Maps, along with an interactive ArcGIS StoryMap that shows parcel level draft Land Use and zoning regulations.

Will anything be built as a result of updating the Community Plan?

The Plan does not propose any specific development project, but it establishes expectations and sets the range of uses and the scale of future development allowed in the Plan Area. The Plan will allow for more development potential in areas identified for growth. All proposed development projects must go through their required review and permitting process.

How far along is the Community Plan Update?

Currently, the Community Plan Update (CPU) for Westchester-Playa Del Rey is in the consult phase. The CPU for Westchester-Playa Del Rey began in 2018 with initial outreach through the Neighborhood Council. In 2020 staff released initial draft concepts for the plan to identify



community needs and potential for new growth. In 2022 City Planning formed the Westside Community Plans Advisory Group (WCPAG) to act as a sounding board for concepts and drafts. With input from the WCPAG, in 2023 staff released the first draft with identified “subareas”, or areas where changes to land use and zoning were being proposed. Throughout 2023 staff collected feedback from neighborhood councils and stakeholders to inform refinements for the next draft. Planning staff released the latest draft land use maps in Spring 2024 of this year.

The Spring 2024 drafts are the first comprehensive draft land use map that has been published. City Planning is continuing to collect resident feedback through resident and community meetings as well as presenting through neighborhood councils. We expect to incorporate this feedback and publish it in the next draft, tentatively early 2025. There is currently no deadline for public comments and we encourage stakeholders to continue submitting their feedback to City Planning staff.

How does the New Zoning Code improve building design and pedestrian safety?

The New Zoning Code has tools that encourage and regulate pedestrian friendly building design and open space, such as requirements for street-facing entrances to buildings, encouragement of pedestrian paseos and plazas, and building coverage regulations. As we move farther along in the process, we will have conversations about building design and street frontages - what should the pedestrian experience be next to new developments? How many entrances should there be? What type of facade or transparency requirements should be included?

All projects under the new code are required to provide open space on site - this is a change from the current zoning code, where open space is only required for residential developments that are building 6 or more units, and not required from commercial or industrial buildings at all.

How will the plan update promote the creation of affordable housing?

There are a variety of affordable housing incentive programs in the City of LA, each one requiring different amounts and income levels for affordable units that are included in a project. As we work through the Community Plan Update process, we will get deeper into the details of the options that we have in front of us to include in the Community Plan and Zoning, and look forward to hearing from all of you what levels and kinds of affordable housing you do want to see in your community. In addition to the Community Plan Update program, the City is adopting its Housing Element Implementation program, which includes new resident protections, and new incentive programs for mixed-income and affordable housing developments Use the QR code below to access more information.



What does it mean for housing to be “affordable”?

Deed restricted affordable housing requires developers to dedicate a percentage of units on-site as “affordable” units. This means that rents may be capped for households making up to 30% of the Area Median Income, which is the measure for what is considered affordable housing, or can also be capped at incomes that are up to 60 or 80% of the Area Median Income. As of 2024, the Area Median Income in Los Angeles is \$98,200.

Typically, a developer has the option to choose which income levels they will be providing units for - and the required percentage of units that they have to include changes, so that if they are providing units for Extremely Low Income households, which would be up to 30% of the AMI, they will end up setting aside fewer units in their project than if they are setting aside units for Low Income families. Depending on the incentive program a developer uses - such as State Density Bonus or a local incentive program - there may be different requirements or options for the number of units that must be set aside, and at what rent levels. Once the units are set aside, they are covenanted at rent levels for that income category for a term of 55 or 99 years. For more information, please see the Los Angeles Housing Department website using the QR code below:



Does the plan protect existing cultural assets in the community?

As part of the Community Plan Update process, City Planning looks at how to balance the need for new housing and mixed-use development across the entire City, with the recognition of the significant cultural contributions and legacy of many communities throughout Los Angeles. Through the Community Plan Update process, new zoning tools can be explored to reflect the unique architectural styles in surveyed eligible historic residential or commercial districts, and additional City review can be required for identified eligible historic resources. The Community Plan can also include policies that support the future designation and protection of various identified historic neighborhoods or buildings, should local stakeholders wish to pursue such protections through a Historic Cultural Monument designation process.

Frequently Asked Questions - Ladera Heights

How does the plan impact single family neighborhoods?

The Draft Plan does not change what could be built in the single-family residential areas of Ladera Heights, but instead directs future housing growth towards the existing commercial areas around the Ladera Center. These areas are predominantly adjacent to other commercial uses or multi-family uses, which would limit the direct effects development could have on the existing single-family areas of Ladera and Westchester.

Why is growth being concentrated in the Ladera Heights neighborhood?

With the goal of preserving existing single family zoning, growth throughout the plan area is being directed towards existing major commercial corridors. This also includes directing growth towards areas that are transitioning away from industrial, allowing the potential for new housing and job growth. When deciding where to encourage new housing or mixed-use development in a Community Plan Area, City Planning looks at factors such as existing large surface parking lots, single-story commercial uses, and underutilized or vacant lots. From this assessment our most recent draft identified sites such as Downtown Westchester, Playa Vista, Arizona Circle, Howard Hughes Center, and existing industrial areas near the K Line Station, in addition to the Ladera Center as sites for growth.

How will the plan update address the traffic and congestion issues that could come with new housing, especially near LAX?

We understand that traffic and congestion is a big issue throughout the City, and particularly for communities impacted by traffic going to and from LAX. While this Community Plan will not be able to comprehensively solve existing issues of congestion around LAX, as it is one of our nation's largest airports, it can include Goals and Policies that will guide future decision making, as well as changes to land use, to encourage mixed-use development that will provide commercial uses and daily amenities closer to residents.

Why has outreach not extended to Ladera Heights in the past?

Though we try to reach as many residents and communities as possible when we start the Community Plan Update process, inevitably we do not reach all the nearly 300,000 residents living in the Westside Community Plans geography. The Community Plan Update process typically starts with partnering with the Neighborhood Council system to reach as many stakeholders in the community as we can. We understand that it did not reach Ladera residents as we would have hoped. We are very happy to have more stakeholders involved in the process now and look forward to working together to bring forward a draft community plan that works for as many stakeholders as possible.

Who can I contact for additional information?

For more information please contact planning.westside@lacity.org

Any media inquiries should be directed to Nora Frost at planning.media@lacity.org or (213) 978-1248.