SOUTHWEST VALLEY COMMUNITY PLANS

# Neighborhood Identity

LOS ANGELES CITY PLANNING

The Southwest Valley communities contain a variety of distinct residential and commercial development patterns and architectural styles, including ranch-style homes and mid-century modern development. While there are existing buildings from the turn of the century, as well as contemporary development, the majority of buildings in the Southwest Valley were developed between the 1950s and the 1970s. As the Southwest Valley continues to evolve, the Community Plans Update provide an opportunity to raise design standards through new zoning regulations and policy guidance.

## What Are the Goals for the Southwest Valley Community Plans?

The Southwest Valley Community Plans seek to support a high-quality built environment characterized by active building frontages and a sense of place that is inviting for pedestrians. New zoning regulations promote design compatibility for infill development by requiring, for example, higher levels of window transparency and consistent street walls, particularly in areas with consistent development patterns. The Plans will increase opportunities for greater height and intensity in transit-served and additional strategic areas, while creating continuity between mixed-use corridors and lower-scale neighborhoods.

**Draft Land Use Goals related to Urban Design:**

- New development contributes to enhanced aesthetic quality and pedestrian orientation
- Industrial areas with improved design and aesthetic quality
- Parking facilities that are designed to support vibrant, accessible streets for all users and reduce exposure to vehicle-related hazards
- Residential and mixed-use neighborhoods with varied and distinct character and integrity

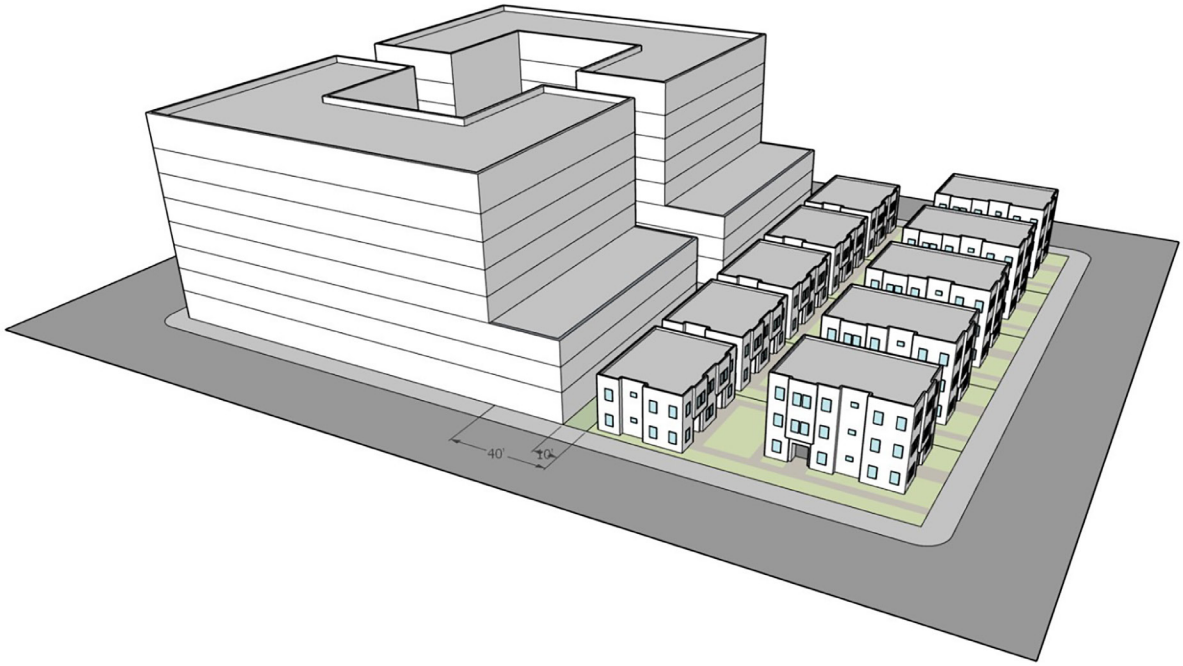
## Zoning Strategies for Urban Design & Infill Compatibility

### Raising Design Standards Across the Southwest Valley

New zoning regulations aim to raise the standard of building design and urban form in the Southwest Valley. Examples of proposed building form and frontage regulations include ground floor window transparency, pedestrian entrances from the street, upper story stepbacks to encourage context-sensitive development, and entry features such as paseos and courtyards to improve pedestrian access and interest on larger sites, among other strategies. Part of raising design standards is also streamlining the process for creating high-quality buildings. Since these design regulations will now be required through the underlying zoning, there should be fewer discretionary review processes for projects that meet the design requirements.

## Building Height Transitions

To support compatible infill development and effective transitions between buildings that have different maximum heights, the Community Plan applies height transition regulations. The height transition standards would apply to lots abutting an existing zone with a maximum height of 33 feet or 3 stories, or less. The height transition would also apply to lots that are located across an alley from a zone with a maximum height of 33 feet or 3 stories. Where a height transition is required, a building cannot be located within 10 feet of the abutting lot line. Additionally, no portion of a building can exceed three stories when located within a distance of 40 feet of the adjoining lot.




## Design of Single-Family Homes

Many of the single-family residential homes (also known as single-unit dwelling) in the Southwest Valley are variations of traditional and contemporary ranch-style homes, as well as mid-century modern style with consistent front yard setbacks and attached garages. These site layouts and building features such as porch and forecourt entry features will continue to be options for new or remodeled homes through the Community Plan's proposed form and frontage regulations.



## Established Neighborhood Commercial Corridors

The original neighborhood commercial corridors of Reseda and Canoga Park were built between the 1920s and the 1950s, along Pacific Electric rail lines. The predominantly one- and two-story buildings have consistent street walls, large glass storefronts, and wide sidewalks, contributing to a sense of time and place. In addition to integrating the existing Community Design Overlays into the underlying zoning, the Community Plans will also apply regulations that create continuity between new and existing buildings by requiring buildings to step back after the first two stories, high ground floor transparency, and locating the parking at the rear of the building.



## Pedestrian Experience

Multiple adjacent driveways and driveways that are not well defined can cause safety problems for pedestrians and motorists. The proposed zoning will limit the amount of vehicular curb cuts in order to improve safety and experience for those traveling on the sidewalk, whether walking or rolling. Minimal curb cuts that do not cause multiple disruptions to the sidewalk flow can improve access for people with disabilities and improve visibility of cars and pedestrians at driveways.

## Preservation of Eligible Historical Resources

In order to further the Community Plans Update policy goal of supporting existing and future efforts to enhance, restore, and activate historic resources, the Plans Update is carrying forward the Individual Historic Resource (IHR) Review tool, which is intended to preserve an individual property's character-defining features. This tool is applied to properties which have been identified by Los Angeles' Citywide Historic Resources Survey, SurveyLA, as potentially eligible for local, State, or National historic designation.