

Venice Planning Working Sessions

Venice Planning Working Session: Mixed Use Corridors October 22-23 and November 22, 2019

Summary

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WORKING SESSION OVERVIEW

The Venice Planning teams - comprised of the Venice Local Coastal Program (LCP) and Venice Community Planning Unit (CPU) hosted four Working Sessions in October and one in November. The focus of the Working Sessions were three mixed-use corridors in Venice, including: Lincoln Blvd, Ocean Front Walk and Rose Ave.

Each Working Session included a presentation, a break out session and a feedback/share out activity.

Three sessions were hosted on Tuesday, October 22 one session was held on Wednesday, October 23 and the last session was held on Thursday, November 22.

These efforts mark the 3rd year of outreach efforts which have included 13 prior events which have engaged ~ 523 stakeholders.

The Venice LCP Planning Team is committed to providing the community with a variety of opportunities to connect with planners. These events create important opportunities for Planners to learn about issues that are most important to stakeholders while also providing opportunities to discuss solutions collectively. This summary documents the objectives, activities, format, and major themes from the October 22-23 and November 22 Venice Planning Working Sessions on Venice Mixed-Use Corridors.

WORKING SESSION OBJECTIVES

The working sessions aimed to provide a space for learning, sharing information and collaborating to find solutions. The objectives of the workings sessions were met by facilitating and designing activities that:

- i. Demonstrated methodology + process for analyzing existing conditions
- ii. Examined examples of existing built form in Venice
- iii. Explored how specific building metrics (such as transparency, and setbacks) can affect the public realm.
- iv. Discussed:
 - a. Specific uses on corridors (for example: retail, restaurant and residential uses, etc.)
 - b. Opportunities for incorporating density
 - c. Discovering opportunities for corridors to be more pedestrian oriented and relevant to surroundings (360 degree design, climate adaptive design)
 - d. Showcasing 360 design examples (transition buffers)

WORKING SESSION OUTCOMES

The Working Sessions session resulted in clear, detailed and realistic metrics to inform the vision for future development on mixed use corridors. At the end of this outreach series, the following outcomes were met:

- i. The community's ideas and solutions to achieve improved mixed-use corridors have been heard and recorded.
- ii. LA City Planning:
 - a. Understands concerns and considerations for height in Venice NHBDs.

- b. Received feedback on the range of form metrics that are most amenable to community stakeholders.
- c. Has clear direction to proceed with creation of proposed form districts (new zone string).

These working sessions focused on the built form and tools available to City Planning to shape the built form in response to the public realm. Utilizing these available planning tools, break out groups comprised of City Planners and Venice community stakeholders discussed and identified how these tools could improve specific areas in the Venice Community.

WHERE AND WHEN

Location: Venice - Abbot Kinney Memorial Branch Library
Address: 501 S. Venice Blvd., Venice, CA 90291

Day 1: Tuesday, October 22, 2019

Session 1: 10:30am-12pm
Session 2: 1:30pm-3pm
Session 3: 5pm-7pm

Day 2: Wednesday, October 23, 2019

Session 4: 5pm-7pm

Day 3: Thursday, November 22, 2019

Session 5: 5pm-7pm

ATTENDANCE

A total of 66 attendees participated in the events.

OUTREACH METHODS

The City used the methods outlined below to inform community members and encourage participation in the events:

- Email announcements to community members using database of contacts.
- Email invitations were sent to community stakeholders.
- Email announcement was sent to Council District 11 to share with constituents.
 - CD 11 shared the announcement on social media.
- Email announcement was sent to the Venice Neighborhood Council for distribution to their membership.

- Email announcement was sent to the Venice Chamber of commerce for distribution to their membership.
- Outreach via LA City Planning External Affairs Office on social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter and Instagram) and at City Stakeholder meetings.

OUTREACH FORMAT AND ACTIVITIES

In order to accommodate the smaller nature of the meeting space (the library) and maximize participation with the time we had, there were 4 distinct working sessions. All working sessions covered the same content and built on the previous workshops' input (via maps, shared notes, post-its, etc).

Day 1: Tuesday, October 22, 2019

- ***Session 1: 10:30am-12pm: Venice Chamber of Commerce***
- ***Session 2: 1:30pm-3pm: Venice Neighborhood Council***
- ***Session 3: 5pm-7pm: Public RSVP Sign Ups via MailChimp, Venice LCP Website, LA City Planning Website and Google Forms***

Day 2: Wednesday, October 23, 2019

- ***Session 4: 5pm-7pm: Public RSVP Sign Ups via MailChimp, Venice LCP Website, LA City Planning Website and Google Forms***

Day 3: Thursday, November 22, 2019

- ***Session 5: 5pm-7pm: Waitlist - Public RSVP Sign Ups via MailChimp, Venice LCP Website, LA City Planning Website and Google Forms***

REGISTRATION

Participants were all welcomed at the registration table where they were asked to sign in. City planning hosts provided information about the working session format as participants arrived. Participants were invited to join one of three working groups. Light refreshments and snacks were available for the public.

PRESENTATION & WORKING SESSION FORMAT

The Venice Planning Working Sessions began with a short presentation which provided an overview of:

- Venice Planning Program updates,
- A recap from the July 10 2019 Summer Workshop,
- An introduction to the City's new zoning tools
- Visual Tour of the existing corridors, including Lincoln Blvd, Rose Ave and Ocean Front Walk.
- Case Studies of Form and Frontage concepts

Concluding the presentation portion, the large group transitioned into the break out session organized by mixed use corridor tables. Guided by a table facilitators, stakeholders and community members at each of the tables were assigned a “buddy” to work through discussion questions. To guide the lively discussions, each pair was given a set of discussion cards which covered zoning tool metrics: form, frontage, use and density. During the buddy discussion session, answers to the questions were written on the back of the cards. At the end of the buddy discussion exercise, the facilitators had the pairs identify a main point from their discussion to take back to the larger discussion.

During the feedback session, the main facilitator directed the table facilitators to present 3-4 key points to the whole group.

INPUT THEMES

The themes in the tables below represent topics that came up most frequently in conversations throughout the Venice Planning Working Sessions held on October 22-23, and November 22. Comments were captured via email, rsvp sign up, comment cards and in working sessions. They are organized by mixed use corridor table and re:code metric themes.

October and November 2019 - Venice Planning Working Sessions: Mixed Use Corridors	
Corridor Table: Lincoln Blvd.	
Form Themes	
	<i>Form (Setbacks + Step-backs): 0' Setbacks on front, back, side</i>
	<i>Form (Height): 20+ stories, 200' height</i>
	<i>Form (transition buffers): (1) Landscaped setbacks to soften transition and provide privacy to residents; (2) Green elements to building design (solar, green walls); (3) Preserve existing environment, developer works around mature trees; (4) Step back architecture after 2nd floor.</i>
	<i>Form (height): Max height is 34' (3 stories is ok, though it is mostly 2 stories now). Boys & Girls club is current highest building on the corridor. If community benefits are given: 4 stories for affordable housing, 5 stories for 100% affordable housing.</i>
	<i>Form (articulation): Articulation makes a difference with taller buildings. Want a balanced blvd, one side should not take all the development.</i>
	<i>Form (height): 20' sidewalk at the ground floor and landscaping. After 2 stories, step back 5' - or if there is a lot of upper floor transparency, does it really seem that monolithic</i>
	<i>General comment from OFW corridor table: 10 stories on Lincoln is ok, that is where the density should go.</i>

	<i>Form: Higher buildings on corner lots where transition areas can be used for public and the buildings can be used as landmarks, those that have community benefits. 2-4 stories on narrow parcels.</i>
	<i>Form: Improve pedestrian experience: appropriate setbacks for pedestrians to walk safely and implement eye-level experiences.</i>
Frontage Themes	
	<i>Frontage (active frontages): Pedestrian friendly landscaping, trees for shade, no solid walls, lots of entrances to storefronts</i>
	<i>Frontage (Active Alleys): Proper planning will mitigate the need for parking. Promote green space.</i>
	<i>Frontage (Transparency): No mixed use, 20% transparency from alley to street, commercial access from both alley + street</i>
	<i>Frontage (active frontages): (1) Consistent design aesthetic to surrounding neighborhood; (2) Keep signature and historical details where possible; (3) Regulation on signage so that it's not overbearing; (4) Implement streetscape design on Lincoln; (5) Decorative power poles in artistic way.</i>
	<i>Frontage (active alleys): (1) Allow parking at rear of building; (2) Non-operational alleys for businesses, i.e., no dumpsters, deliveries, etc.; (3) Pedestrian only alleys and walk streets; (4) Reinstate pocket parks as entrance to walk streets.</i>
	<i>Frontage: 12'-14' would be a sufficient sidewalk (room for a bike parking & walking, can't imagine wanting to sit on Lincoln). A wide sidewalk will accommodate a more pedestrian friendly Lincoln in the future. (eg: Street curb, landscape buffer, bike parking, walkway, more landscape).</i>
	<i>Frontage: Designate safe width in sidewalk for pedestrian (15' wide). Pedestrian scale design - using transparent store fronts. Green buffers between pedestrian and cars.</i>
	<i>Frontage: Prevent alleys to be used as a cut-through street, use alleys for parking access and circulation.</i>
	<i>Frontage: CDO addressing Lincoln - retail not doing well, less pedestrian attractions. More: trees, restaurant /bars and better lighting.</i>
	<i>Maintain interesting look and appeal of existing buildings</i>
Use Themes	
	<i>Use (types of commercial business): Restaurants, shops, and business: keep variety, attractiveness; no flat buildings, need articulation</i>
	<i>Use: Mixes of use - commercial/community and frontages such as transparency will make the street more interesting. Uses that serve the immediate surrounding residents.</i>
	<i>RD1.5 (with alley for rear and side setbacks)</i>
	<i>Pocket parks, more trees</i>
	<i>Use: Better programming on use</i>
	<i>Use: Small size and no chain stores</i>
	<i>Use: More community orientated uses</i>

	<i>Use: Gentrification and displacement</i>
	<i>Use: value and honor community character: 1) working class and 2) identify special features</i>
Density Themes	
	<i>Density (density bonus): Proper planning will eliminate the need for density bonuses</i>
	<i>Density: Size of units should be considered as new units tend to be larger luxury units and we are losing diversity. Smaller units may help with affordability in addition to low and moderate affordable units. On Lincoln consider the size of the parcels in design standards and guidelines.</i>

October and November 2019 - Venice Planning Working Sessions: Mixed Use Corridors	
<u>Corridor Table: Rose Ave</u>	
Form Themes	
	<i>Form (transition buffers): lot size (whole block development); 45 degree angle alley buffer; 35'</i>
	<i>Form (set backs + step-backs): Rear building step back 45 degrees no more than 3 stories; 3 story, then step back after 25', If 4 stories are proposed, 35' by right.</i>
	<i>Form (Amenity/Open Space): Concern for people to loiter; how to preserve the quality; maintenance, security, loitering</i>
	<i>Form (Height): 3 stories (ok exception w/ case gratitude shadow cast on street); incentive for housing affordability; no more than 3 stories - unless affordable</i>
	<i>Form (Amenity/Open Space): Small scale, semi-private space, gathering; industrial zone issue; housing ground floor; mixed use but more community - a balance; changing to one zone is cookie cutter; not enough open space - more opportunity for public/private; likes mix of use.</i>
	<i>Form (Transition Buffers): 3; from sidewalk</i>
	<i>Form: Street needs a bike path. The wall on picture #16 is affecting the tree space, the sidewalks are too narrow.</i>
	<i>Form: The height on the Cafe Gratitude project is ok as long as there is a proper setback. 3 stories, 35 ft with no transportation is a challenge.</i>
	<i>FORM: Articulated vs. non-articulated buildings - The size and height is more important (scale/form), would like to see smaller buildings (1-3 stories). Density could increase if providing affordable housing but would prefer smaller buildings overall.</i>
Frontage Themes	
	<i>Frontage (active alleys): No focus on street</i>
	<i>Frontage (Active frontages): Remove building line (no set back; build to property line - 7'-10')</i>
	<i>Frontage (Transparency): Min 50-60%; no driveways; no new curb cuts</i>

	<i>Frontage (Transparency): balancing w/ other services; community serving; not a cookie cutter piece; diversity activation</i>
	<i>Frontage (Active Alleys): Diverse use; fences; wider sidewalk</i>
	<i>Frontage: Sidewalks are too narrow. Fences are ok as long as they flow.</i>
	<i>FRONTAGE: Buildings should be orientated towards front, make them pedestrian friendly.</i>
	<i>FRONTAGE: Prevent outdoor seating that blocks sidewalks.</i>
Use Themes	
	<i>Use (types of commercial business): Retail, cafe, creative all restricted by parking requirements; no more public services; more lenient change of use; No medical offices</i>
	<i>Use (Types of commercial business): Shared parking near beach (whole foods suggestion; underground)</i>
	<i>Use: Good mix of uses, one of the few corridors that does.</i>
	<i>Use: Bring balance between more community serving and visitor serving uses. Commercial uses should serve the residents. Bring back more accessible neighborhood serving stores, most stores today do not integrate in the community.</i>
	<i>Use: There is an over saturation of liquor licenses on Rose Ave. This brings lots of tourists and visitors - so it doesn't matter how a building is being built (it does not address the issue).</i>
	<i>Use: Protect the RSO housing stock. Many RSO units are being lost to large new buildings.</i>
Density Themes	
	<i>Density (density bonus): Parking; 3 stories; density bonus 4th floor w/ parking reduction; +Height for affordable; Need 35ft to go 3fl</i>

October and November 2019 - Venice Planning Working Sessions: Mixed Use Corridors

Corridor Table: Ocean Front Walk

Form Themes	
	<i>Form (Height): Reduce parking requirements</i>
	<i>Form (Set backs + step-backs): No setback from boardwalk; retail + food/drink uses 1st floor; need outdoor seating</i>
	<i>Form (Set backs + Step-backs): 0' set back all sides; 30' limit removed if afford; 5 stories</i>
	<i>Form (Height): 2 affordable, 3 more market rate</i>
	<i>Form: articulation of buildings -not monolithic</i>

Frontage Themes	
	<i>Frontage (Active frontages): Increase density allowances in residential area.</i>
	<i>Frontage (Transparency): Encourage outdoor seating w/o parking requirements</i>
	<i>Frontage (Active frontages): glass breaks -- roll ups</i>
	<i>Frontage (Active alleys): 2 way bike lane on speedway</i>
	<i>Frontage (Character frontage): No open air vending on private property (image #12)</i>
	<i>Frontage (Transparency): Storefronts on ground floor; If increase height, setback 1:1 above second story</i>
	<i>Frontage: (more) landscaping and trees along oceanfront</i>
	<i>Frontage: Do not allow hordes on encampments in this area</i>
	<i>Frontage: No lot consolidation, keep lots to historic frontage width. Honor frontage.</i>
	<i>Frontage: Preserve the Arches, original character</i>
Use Themes	
	<i>Use (Tenant Size): Flexible use</i>
	<i>Use (Types of commercial business): Encourage restaurants, hotel, bars, mixed use, pedestrian friendly; Problems: parking requirement for permits</i>
	<i>Use: Expand and reconfigure the bike path to improve safety</i>
	<i>Use (Types of commercial business): No open air vending on private property (tee shirt sales out of back of pickup truck); Mixed use ground floor retail w/ optional residential above; Increase height limit when affordable; Business hours extend evening hours</i>
	<i>Mixed use areas - no net loss of RSO or affordable</i>
	<i>Use: Better programming on use</i>
	<i>Use: Small Size and no chain stores</i>
	<i>Use: Use: Preserve housing (don't change to mixed use keep residential full residential).</i>
	<i>Use: Keep scale, uses. Small boutique hotels ok. Don't allow "sameness"</i>
	<i>Use: Variety is nice, keep the mix. Preserve the murals.</i>