WESTSIDE COMMUNITY PLANS

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

LOS ANGELES CITY PLANNING

Overview

The Westside Community Plans Update (WCPU) is the comprehensive update to the West Los Angeles, Venice, Palms-Mar Vista-Del Rey, and Westchester-Playa del Rey Community Plans. The project includes updates to the Policy Document, Land Use Map, and Zoning regulations for each Plan Area. In the Spring of 2024, the Westside Community Plans team released the draft General Plan Land Use (GPLU) maps for all four plan areas, along with draft zoning metrics covering height limits, floor area ratio (FAR) limits, and density regulations. The information was made available through an interactive StoryMap made available on the Westside Community Plans Update website.

Following the release of the draft GPLU maps, the team conducted outreach through virtual office hours, presentations at neighborhood council meetings and the Westside Community Plans Advisory Group (WCPAG), and community events and workshops. In total, the team reached over 870 stakeholders across 15 outreach events. This outreach and the feedback informed the Fall 2025 draft GPLU maps and 2025 StoryMap. This Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) handout has been prepared based on questions and comments received during this round of outreach.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is a Community Plan Update?

The 34 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 are updated every 10 to 20 years to continue to meet the growing and evolving needs of their communities.

The Community Plans Update (CPU) includes updates to the policy document, the land use map, and introduces the New Zoning Code across the four Westside plans. 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. The zoning contains parcel level regulations about what can be built - including details like setback requirements and specific uses that are permitted. Together, the land use map and zoning implement the policies and goals laid out in the policy document.

Why are the plans being updated?

The Westside Community Plans were last updated between 1997 and 2004, and the region is facing different needs and challenges now than it was then. The existing Community Plans do not address the regional housing crisis, climate resilience, equity, or recent infrastructure investments. The new plans will continue to build on the goals of the current plans, while accommodating for emerging community needs and future growth.

The current update program launched at the end of 2018, and the draft plans identify opportunities for new housing, particularly around existing transportation infrastructure; accommodate expected jobs growth and emerging industries; and create space for small businesses. The plans aim to balance future housing and jobs growth for the next 20-30 years in a sustainable and equitable way.

How far along are the Community Plan Updates?

Currently, the Westside Community Plans Update (WCPU) is in the consult phase. The CPU began in 2018 with initial outreach through the Neighborhood Councils. 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.

In 2024, City Planning released draft GPLU maps and an interactive StoryMap that was informed by the comments and input received during the first few years of the Plan Update process. The 2025 draft GPLU maps and StoryMap published this Fall are



informed by the input received throughout outreach conducted in 2024. The latest drafts, as well as prior drafts and concepts, are available on City Planning's website.

How can members of the community get involved?

The WCPU team will continue to engage with community stakeholders through meetings, public events, and online webinars throughout the formal adoption process. There is currently no deadline for public comments and we encourage stakeholders to continue submitting their feedback to the Westside Community Plans team at planning.thewestside@lacity.org. Members of the public interested in receiving email updates for future meetings, events, and draft releases can sign up on the project website here.

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

The New Zoning Code includes tools that encourage and regulate pedestrian friendly building design and promote open space amenities, such as requirements for street-facing entrances to buildings, encouragement of pedestrian paseos and plazas, and building coverage regulations.

All new development projects under the new code are required to provide amenity 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. Under the New Zoning Code regulations, residential projects with fewer than 6 units, commercial projects, and industrial projects would be obligated to provide amenity space on-site. In addition, amenity space will be regulated as a percentage of total lot area, rather than based on the number of units in a project. Building form and frontage regulations in the new zoning code will also require objective design standards such as ground floor window transparency, pedestrian entrances from the street, and upper story stepbacks for taller buildings to encourage context-sensitive development.

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. The Community Plans implement zoning that includes a base and bonus development regulation, incentivizing new affordable housing units in new developments. For more information about housing incentives, please see this handout.



In addition to the Community Plan Update program, in early 2025 the City adopted its Housing Element Rezoning program, which includes new resident protections, and new incentive programs for mixed-income and affordable housing developments. Learn more about the adopted ordinances of the Housing Element Rezoning Program, here: https://planning.lacity.gov/plans-policies/housing- element-rezoning-program.

What does it mean for housing to be "affordable"?

When a housing project is referred to as "affordable housing", it means that a specified percentage of units - sometimes up to 100% of the units - in the project will be set aside on-site as deed restricted affordable housing units. This means that rents may be capped for households making up to a certain percentage of the "Area Median Income" (AMI), which is the measure for what is considered affordable housing.

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 either 55 or 99 years, and even if the tenants change, the new household must meet the same income qualifications for the life of the covenant. When a developer receives a building permit, the Los Angeles Housing Department (LAHD) verifies that the required number of affordable units are included, and that they are distributed throughout the project with comparable size to the market-rate units.

Typically, a developer has the option to choose which income levels they will be providing units for. The required percentage of units that they have to include varies based on the income level, 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 Very-Low Income families, which would include households making between 30-50% of the AMI. As of 2025, the AMI in Los Angeles is $106,600. For more information, please see the LAHD website at https://housing.lacity.gov/.

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 Planning 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. The Community Plan Update process does not include nomination or designation of new historic resources, but members of the public can learn more about that process through the department's Office of Historic Resources.

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.

Will new Specific Plans or Overlays be included as part of the Community Plan updates? What will happen with existing Specific Plans and Overlays?

Los Angeles City Planning is moving away from creating new Specific Plans or Overlays within Community Plan areas. The new zoning code includes tools to better regulate building design, massing, and uses, instead of relying on new Overlays. Existing Specific Plans and Overlays will be evaluated during this update process to identify where existing regulations can be folded into the new zoning code.

How do the Venice Community Plan Update (CPU) and the Venice Local Coastal Program (LCP) work together to guide development?

The Venice CPU and LCP are two concurrent work programs within the Venice community. The Venice CPU and LCP will work together to guide development in the Venice Coastal Zone. The LCP regulates development within the Coastal Zone boundaries of Venice, while the Venice Community Plan covers the entire Venice neighborhood. The Venice LCP Update began in 2015, and consists of two main components - the Land Use Plan (LUP) and the Implementation Plan (IP). The objective



of the Venice LCP is to implement the California Coastal Act at a local level, and contains regulations and standards that go beyond zoning and land use. Once the LCP is adopted locally by the Los Angeles City Council, it is submitted to the California Coastal Commission (CCC) for certification. City Planning is currently coordinating with the CCC on a draft Land Use Plan, and expects to release a draft for public review in the second half of 2026.

More information on the LCP can be found here.

Why is the draft land use and zoning for the Venice Coastal Zone not shown on the 2025 draft GPLU maps and StoryMap?

Approximately two-thirds of the Venice Community Plan is within the California Coastal Zone, which is simultaneously undergoing a Local Coastal Program (LCP) update. Previous drafts of land use and zoning for the Venice Community Plan Area included the entire Venice Community, both East Venice and the Venice Coastal Zone. The 2025 GPLU map and StoryMap focus on the draft zoning and land use for East Venice, but do not include draft zoning and land use for the Coastal Zone of Venice. As City Planning continues to coordinate with the California Coastal Commission on the draft Land Use Plan (LUP), the teams will continue to refine and update the draft zoning and land use, and take into account the immense feedback received to date from stakeholders in Venice. Draft zoning and land use for the Venice Coastal Zone will be shared at a future date.

How does State Senate Bill 79 (SB 79) impact the Community Plan Updates?

Senate Bill 79 (SB 79) was signed in October 2025 and is effective July 1, 2026. SB 79 enables increased housing near transit by introducing new by-right development standards for residentially and commercially zoned parcels located within a ¼ and ½ mile from eligible transit stops. The bill applies to Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) stops as defined in the bill and categorizes TOD stops within two tiers (Tier 1 and Tier 2) with scaled development standards. The City Council has directed City Planning to report on various options to address and implement SB 79. This work effort is not part of the Westside Community Plan Updates, but may result in future changes to draft zoning and land use in order to implement SB 79. More information about SB 79 can be found on the department website at https://planning.lacity.gov/resources/senate-bill-sb-79, or via the City Council File CF 25-1083.



What are the remaining steps in the adoption process?

In the Spring of 2026, the team expects to host two virtual scoping meetings to begin the Environmental Review process. Throughout 2026 and early 2027, the team will continue work on additional zoning regulations - including use regulations, development standards, and building frontage regulations. The team will also be preparing the environmental analysis, which will be available for public review and comment once the analysis is completed. After the environmental review, a public hearing will be held on the draft plans, and then a recommended plan will be brought before the City Planning Commission. After the City Planning Commission hearing, the plans will be heard at the City Council and its committees. Please note that public feedback is welcome throughout the process, and the drafts are not finalized until council adoption.

Where can I get more information?

All information related to current Community Plans, public outreach events, drafted policy documents, and other general updates can be accessed at https://planning.lacity.gov/plans-policies/community-plan-update/planning-westside.

You can also contact us at planning.thewestside@lacity.org

Media inquiries should be directed to planning.media@lacity.org