



LOS ANGELES CITY PLANNING DEPARTMENT

Planning 101

Congress of Neighborhood Councils
October 27, 2007

Planning Affects Issues Neighborhood Councils Care About

- Traffic
- Noise
- Livability
- Security
- Economic stability and progress
- Aesthetics
- Neighborhood services



Why Participate in Planning?

- Preserve What You Value
- Avoid Mistakes of the Past
- Learn New Tools to Improve Your Community
- Create Great Places
- Be your Neighborhood's Voice



What You Need to Know

- Neighborhood Values & Vision
- Understand Your Role
- Learn the Process
- Fit into the Framework for Decision-Making



Neighborhood Values and Vision

- What do You Like about Your Neighborhood? Why?
- What do You Want to Change? Why?
- What does Your Neighborhood Need?







Understanding Your Role

- Developers & Communicators of the Community's Vision
- Key Informants of Community Perspective
- Advocates for Change (and/or Preservation)
- Partners in Developing Projects that Benefit the Community



Effective Input



- Expand Participation – Seek Out Neighborhood Expertise
- Become “intimate” with:
- Planning’s website – www.lacity.org/PLN
- ZIMAS
- PCTS
- PDIS



Fit into the Framework of Decision-Making

Understand the Proposal

- What's the alternative? What is happening now?
- What change is proposed? Why?
- What are the long-term policy or neighborhood implications of the proposal?
- Work with applicant, City staff, etc. to make project better



Crafting Your Neighborhood's Position

- Decision-makers must make legal “findings” to approve a project
- Each entitlement process has specific findings that must be made



Typical Findings

- Consistent with General Plan
- Consistent with good zoning practice
- Special circumstances applicable to the property
- Not materially detrimental to public welfare or character of neighborhood



Planning's Legal Foundation

- **State Law** - Every city is required to have a General Plan for growth & development. The State has also passed numerous land use laws that regulate development processes.
- **City Charter** - Amended in 2001, the Charter sets forth responsibility of Planning Department, established Neighborhood Councils and Area Planning Commissions
- **Case Law**



Los Angeles' General Plan

General Plan Framework - sets policy
To accommodate growth & development
Over 20 years. Among its goals:

- Protect single family neighborhoods
- Focus development in centers and near transit



Other General Plan Elements

- Housing
- Transportation
- Noise
- Air Quality
- Conservation
- Historic Preservation & Cultural Resources
- Open Space
- Safety
- Public Facilities & Services
- Infrastructure



The **General Plan**, prepared and maintained by the Department of City Planning, is a comprehensive, long range declaration of purposes, policies and programs for the development of the City of Los Angeles.

It is approved by the City Planning Commission and the Mayor and adopted by the City Council.

The General Plan is a dynamic document consisting of **eleven (11) elements**; ten (10) citywide elements and the **land use element** or plan for each of the City's 35 Community Planning Areas.

What is the General Plan?

Community Plans
Area Planning Commissions (APC)
Certified Neighborhood Councils (CNC)
Neighborhood Councils / APC
Specific Plans
Other Plans/Guidelines
Related Programs
Plan Adoption Info

Community Plans (Land Use Element)

General Plan

General Plan Framework (Framework Element)

The **General Plan Framework Element** is a strategy for long-term growth which sets a citywide context to guide the update of the community plan and citywide elements.

General Plan Elements

Air Quality Element
Conservation Element
Historic Preservation and Cultural Resources
Housing Element
Infrastructure Systems Element
Noise Element
Open Space Element
Public Facilities and Services Element
Safety Element
Transportation Element (including Bike Plan)



Land Use Element - 35 Community Plans

Each plan sets policies for that community and includes a map that shows types of uses allowed on each parcel

- Residential
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Open Space
- Public Facilities



- Each plan is reviewed approximately every 5 to 10 years
- Generally takes about 3 years with extensive neighborhood council & community input
- Currently completing Hollywood
- Working on Boyle Heights, Sylmar, Granada Hills, Westlake, San Pedro, West Adams, South Los Angeles, and SE Los Angeles
- West LA, Sunland-Tujunga, and Central City to begin in 2008



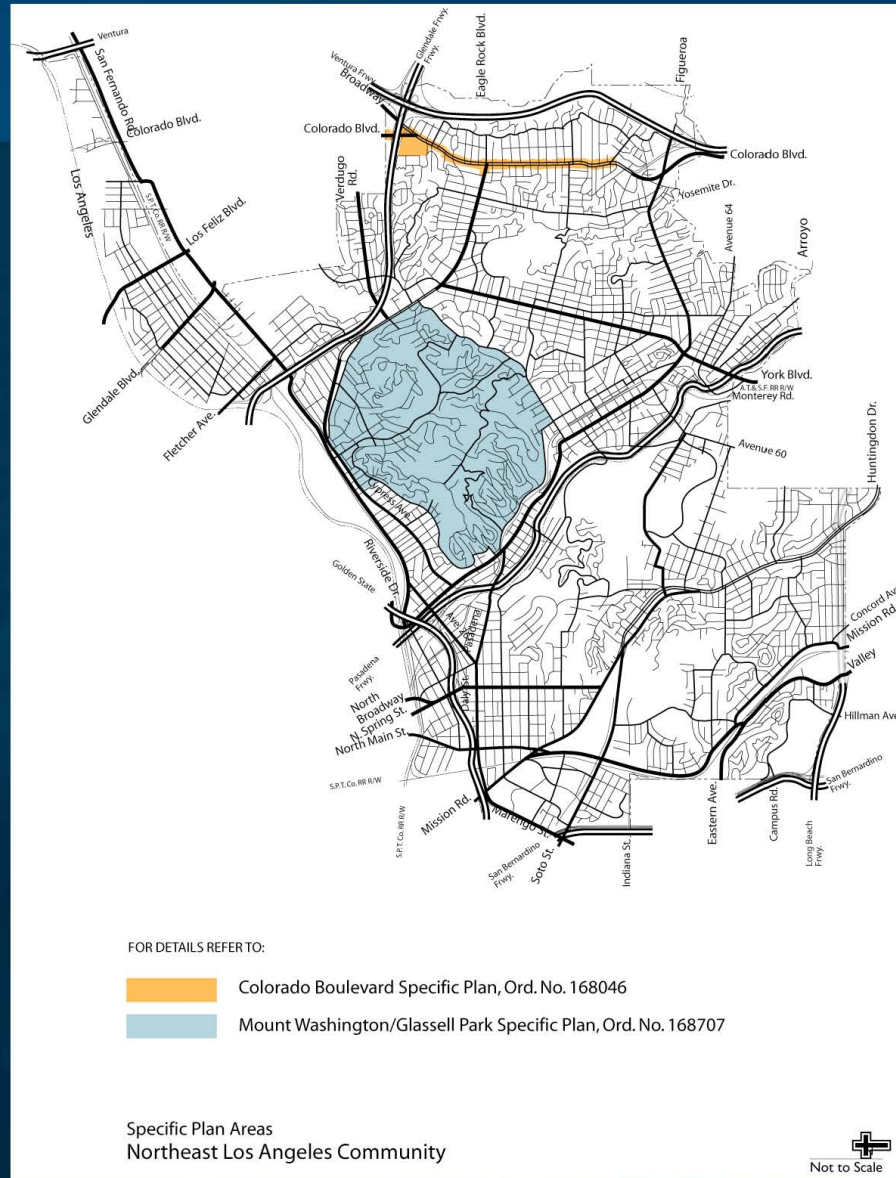
Other Community Level Plans



Specific Plan

- Regulations for a defined area
- Can address use, building height, landscape, parking, signs, building design





Streetscape Plans



STUDIO CITY/CAHUENGA PASS

Streetscape Plan and Design Guidelines



Approved by the City Planning Commission on May 23, 2002

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Historic Preservation Overlay Zone (HPOZ)

- Specified geographic area containing structures, landscape, natural features, or sites with historic, architectural, cultural or aesthetic significance
- Development standards for protecting and enhancing these historic and cultural resources



Historic Preservation Overlay Zones (HPOZ)



Community Design Overlay (CDO)

- Specific Geographic Area
- Improve Quality of Building and Site Design through Design Standards and Guidelines



Miracle Mile CDO



Implementing the Community Plans

- **Zoning Code** – sets forth regulations for each zone and processes for variances, conditional use permits, subdivisions, etc.
- Projects which comply with the Zoning Code may be built **BY RIGHT**
- By right projects do not require Planning Department approval, just a building permit from the Department of Building and Safety



By-Right Development

Conforms to the General Plan and zoning
For the property

- < than 50 units
- < 50,000 square feet of non-residential floor area
 - They need no special City Planning approvals.
 - Directly approved by Building and Safety





Discretionary Actions Require Planning Department Approval

- Land Use Legislative Actions (Zone changes, establishment of specific plans, etc.)
- Changes to General Plan Elements or Community Plans
- Conditional Uses
- Variances
- Revocations
- Specific Plan Exceptions
- Site Plan Review
- Subdivision of Land (tracts and parcel maps)



Discretionary Processes

- Application for Entitlement / Dept. Proposal
- Early Notification Report to Neighborhood Councils
- Review of Project or Proposal
- Staff Report
- Public Hearing
- Decision
- Appeal



ENTITLEMENT PROCESSES

PROCESS 1 LAND USE LEGISLATIVE ACTIONS (Zone changes, specific plans, etc.)

PROCESS 2 GENERAL PLAN (Elements and community plan changes and amendments)

PROCESS 3 CITY PLANNING COMMISSION (Conditional Uses, plan approvals & other similar quasi-judicial approvals)

B-PUBLIC BENEFIT PERMIT PROCESS

A-ZONING ADMINISTRATOR (Conditional Uses, plan approvals & other similar quasi-judicial approvals)

B-OTHER ACTIONS (Building and safety appeals)

G-OTHER ACTIONS (Revocations & nuisance use abatement)

PROCESS 5 VARIANCES

PROCESS 6 AREA PLANNING COMMISSION (Conditional Uses, plan approvals, specific plan exceptions & other similar quasi-judicial approvals)

A-DIRECTOR OF PLANNING APPROVALS (Site plan review & design review)

B-DIRECTOR OF PLANNING APPROVALS

A-SUBDIVISION OF LAND (Above threshold)

B-SUBDIVISION OF LAND (Below threshold)



Who Are the Decision-Makers?

- Office of Zoning Administration (conditional use permits; variances; revocations)
- Advisory Agency (tracts, parcel maps, condo conversions)
- Area Planning Commissions (appeals, Specific Plan exceptions, zone changes)
- Citywide Planning Commission (citywide conditional uses; zone changes; General Plan Amendments; code changes)
- City Council (appeals; zone changes; General Plan amendments; code changes)
- Mayor



Early Notification Report

- All cases filed within previous 2 weeks
- Sent by e-mail to every CNC Board Member
- Questions/Concerns?
 - a) Contact the Applicant
 - b) Open the Dialogue
 - c) Help Shape the Project



Certified Neighborhood Council -- Boyle Heights							
Application Date	Case Number	Address	CD#	Community Plan Area	Project Description	Request Type	Applicant Contact
01/05/2006	AA-2006-83-PMLA	777 S MISSION ROAD 90023	14	BOYLE HEIGHTS	PRELIMINARY PARCEL - 1 LOT INTO 2 LOTS (INDUSTRIAL USE).	PMLA-PARCEL MAP	GEORGE BERNHARTH (310)277-7337
01/05/2006	ENV-2006-84-EAF	777 S MISSION ROAD 90023	14	BOYLE HEIGHTS	PRELIMINARY PARCEL - 1 LOT INTO 2 LOTS (INDUSTRIAL USE).	EAF-ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT	GEORGE BERNHARTH (310)277-7337
01/04/2006	ENV-2006-46-EAF	3527 E WHITTIER BLVD 90023	14	BOYLE HEIGHTS	SWAP MEET IN PARKING LOT	EAF-ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT	FRANCISCO G ANDRADE (714)881-8440
01/04/2006	ZA-2006-45-CU	3527 E WHITTIER BLVD 90023	14	BOYLE HEIGHTS	SWAP MEET IN PARKING LOT	CU-CONDITIONAL USE	FRANCISCO G ANDRADE (714)881-8440
CNC Records: 4							

Certified Neighborhood Council -- Central Hollywood							
Application Date	Case Number	Address	CD#	Community Plan Area	Project Description	Request Type	Applicant Contact
01/06/2006	AA-2006-124-PMLA	6543 W LELAND WAY 90028	13	HOLLYWOOD	4 RESIDENTIAL CONDOMINIUMS	PMLA-PARCEL MAP	ALEX MOORE (818)251-1200
01/05/2006	APCC-2006-87-ZC-ZAA	6543 W LELAND WAY 90028	13	HOLLYWOOD	4 UNIT TOWNHOUSE	ZC-ZONE CHANGE ZAA-AREA, HEIGHT, YARD, AND BUILDING LINE ADJMNTS 20% (SLIGHT MODIFICATIONS)	JENNIFER SACCO SMITH (213)956-6844
01/05/2006	ENV-2006-89-EAF	6543 W LELAND WAY 90028	13	HOLLYWOOD	4 UNIT TOWNHOUSE	EAF-ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT	JENNIFER SACCO SMITH (213)956-6844
12/29/2005	ENV-2005-9465-EAF	1115 N WILCOX PL 90038	4	HOLLYWOOD	CONVERT WAREHOUSE TO AUTO REPAIR	EAF-ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT	MARK BROWN (310)473-7424
12/29/2005	ZA-2005-9464-CU	1115 N WILCOX PL 90038	4	HOLLYWOOD	CONVERT WAREHOUSE TO AUTO REPAIR	CU-CONDITIONAL USE	MARK BROWN (310)473-7424
CNC Records: 5							



Discretionary Actions Require an Environmental Review (CEQA)

- To develop & maintain high quality environment
- Identify environmental effects of a project
- Avoid or Mitigate adverse impacts of a project, where feasible
- Provide decision-makers with information about environmental impact of a project



CEQA Process

- Determine if project is exempt from CEQA
- Initial Study to determine what level of environmental review is required
- **Categorical Exemption**
- **Negative Declaration** - no adverse impacts
- **Mitigated Negative Declaration** - adverse impacts can be mitigated
- **Environmental Impact Report** - required if there are significant impacts that for which there may be no mitigation



THE END

- Questions?
- Check out the handouts
- Thank you for attending

