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April 5, 2018

Los Angeles City Council  
c/o Office of the City Clerk  
City Hall, Room 395  
Los Angeles, California 90012

Attention: PLUM Committee

Dear Honorable Members:

**STATUS OF COMMUNITY PLAN PROGRAM, EIR CONSULTANT PROCUREMENT,  
GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT BATCHING; CF 16-0422**

The Department of City Planning is undergoing a significant expansion of its Community Plan program. As part of the FY 2016/17 and FY 2017/18 budget, the City Council and Mayor endorsed an overall strategy for the Department to bring all 35 of the City's Community Plans up-to-date by the year 2024. Acceleration of the Community Plan program was considered in concert with a number of other measures that were intended to bring greater certainty to the Community Plan program, and greater transparency to the development review process as it pertains to the consideration of General Plan Amendments (GPAs), and to the selection and use of environmental consultants engaged in completing environmental impact reports for private party development proposals. The following is an update on each of these topics, and this report is intended as a supplement to the Department's reports to the City Council's Planning and Land Use Management Committee (PLUM) submitted in May 2016, August 2016, January 2017, and February 2017.

**Community Plans**

The Department's strategy to update all 35 of the City's Community Plans within a six-year timeframe involves the establishment of multiple Community Planning teams comprised of a range of planning staff, and supporting staff such as GIS specialists, graphic designers, transportation engineers, and city attorneys. To create geographic parity, the Department has created teams that are assigned to geographic regions across the City, and are involved in the concurrent update of groups of two-to-four contiguous Community Plans over a three-year work program, at which point the regional team would rotate to the remaining two-to-four Community Plans within the same region.

The City's efforts to see all of the 35 Community Plans brought up-to-date in an accelerated six-year timeframe is funded, to a substantial degree, through an increase in the General Plan

Maintenance Surcharge, which is charged on development fees. This surcharge was increased from 5% to 7% in August, 2017, allowing the Department to permanently fund various positions created in support of the Community Plan program. To date, most positions within the program have been filled, including Principal City Planners in the Department's downtown and valley offices, a Public Information Director, six Senior City Planner positions each managing a geographic team, and various other planning and support positions across the program.

In order for the Department to succeed in updating all 35 Community Plans by the year 2024, it is important to provide some focus as to what work will be included with the scope of a Community Plan Update, and what the general process to update a Community Plan entails. A Community Plan update includes: 1. A revision of the goals, policies, and programs for each Community Plan (i.e. the Community Plan Text), 2. Any needed revisions to the Community Plan Map, which provides parcel-level designations for land use and building types, and 3. An update to the zoning across the Community Plan, to implement the plan's goals and policies, and to effectuate the Department's pending new zoning code (i.e re:codeLA). Every Community Plan update work program is also supported by in-depth environmental analysis, consistent with the California Environmental Quality Act.

The three-year process to update a Community Plan includes the following general components:

Year 1:

- Completion of a consensus-built outreach strategy, and subsequent outreach across the Community Plan area;
- Research and analysis of existing zoning, land use, environmental issues, etc.;
- Preparation of an initial concept plan.

Year 2:

- Preparation of the draft Community Plan text, map, and zoning implementation tools (using newly created zoning tools per the Department's re:codeLA program);
- Preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Report;
- Ongoing outreach to address stakeholder issues, and vet developing plan concepts.

Year 3:

- Finalization of the draft Community Plan text, map and zoning implementation tools;
- Community Plan Open House events and Public Hearings;
- Completion of a Final Environmental Impact Report;
- Preparation of a Staff Recommendation Report;
- City Planning Commission (CPC) consideration and transmittal of the CPC's recommendation to the Mayor and City Council.

In order to update all of the City's Community Plans, the Department has organized its work across four regions. Following is an overview of the Department's Community Planning work within each region.

## **South & Harbor Region**

### *Community Plans*

The Department successfully oversaw the adoption of updated Community Plans for West Adams-Baldwin Hills-Leimert, San Pedro, South LA, and Southeast LA in 2016 and 2017. Each of these Community Plans provides for anticipated housing and job growth around roughly 35 transit stations, in transitioning industrial districts, and in San Pedro's burgeoning waterfront downtown district. Following the adoption of the Community Plans, the Department has been working with the Office of the City Attorney to complete the Community Plan Implementation Overlay (CPIO) ordinances. It is anticipated that these ordinances will be made available for adoption in May for San Pedro, and July, for South LA and Southeast LA, following the adoption of the West Adams-Baldwin Hills-Leimert CPIO ordinance in 2017.

Following the completion of the CPIOs, the Department intends to begin the update of the two remaining Community Plan areas in the region in the second half of the 2018 calendar year. This Community Plan update effort will include the Harbor Gateway and Wilmington-Harbor City Community Plans. Within this work program the Department will consider ways to build upon the recently adopted "Clean Up-Green Up" program that applied environmental protections in-and-around industrial districts, ways to reinforce investment in the waterfront district, and apply general policies and zoning tools to provide access to housing and employment, reinforce neighborhood identity, and address local issues identified through stakeholder outreach.

In as much as all of the Department's future Community Plan work efforts will involve applying new zoning tools per the City's re:codeLA program, this work effort will also include the application of these new zones in the recently updated San Pedro Community Plan, consistent with that recently updated San Pedro Community Plan's goals and policies. Following completion of all three Harbor area Community Plans, the Department envisions the application of new zones in the West Adams-Baldwin Hills-Leimert, South LA, and Southeast LA Community Plans, consistent with those recently updated Community Plans' goals and policies.

### *Community Plans at a Glance*

Number of Community Plans in Region: 6

Number of Community Plans Currently Up-to-Date: 4

Estimated Year for All Community Plans in Region to be Up-to-Date: End of 2021

### *Neighborhood Planning Initiatives*

In addition to efforts to update Community Plans outlined above, various other work programs are ongoing within the South & Harbor Region. These include:

- Metro grant-funded Slauson Rail-to-River Transit Neighborhood Plan
- Support of Goodyear Tract Urban Land Institute Technical Advisory Panel recommendation implementation efforts
- South Los Angeles Faith-based Organization Housing Opportunities
- Mello Act Replacement Housing Ordinance (Coastal only)

## **Central & East Region**

### *Community Plans*

The Department currently has two staff teams working on the update of Community Plans for Hollywood, Boyle Heights, Central City, and Central City North, and anticipates that each of these Community Plans will be moving through the City's adoption process in late 2018 and early 2019. While each of these Community Plans envisions providing for anticipated growth around roughly 20 transit stations, the Boyle Heights, Central City, and Central City North Community Plans will be the first to utilize new zoning tools from the City's re:codeLA program.

Following the completion of four Community Plans underway within the region, the Department intends to begin the update of the two remaining groups of Community Plan areas in the region in the second half of the 2019 calendar year. These two separate Community Plan update efforts will include the Wilshire and Westlake Community Plans, and the Northeast LA and Silver Lake-Echo Park-Elysian Valley Community Plans respectively. Within these work programs the Department will consider ways to provide for additional housing and employment around expanding public transit infrastructure, while addressing issues of housing affordability and housing access, cultural and historic preservation, and hillside protection, in addition to applying general policies and zoning tools to reinforce neighborhood identity, and address local issues identified through stakeholder outreach.

### *Community Plans at a Glance*

Number of Community Plans in Region: 8

Number of Community Plans Currently Up-to-Date: 0 (4 are currently underway)

Estimated Year for All Community Plans in Region to be Up-to-Date: End of 2022

### *Neighborhood Planning Initiatives*

In addition to efforts to update Community Plans outlined above, various other work programs are ongoing within the Central Region. These include:

- Metro grant-funded Purple Line Transit Neighborhood Plan
- Various Neighborhood Conservation zoning efforts
- Hillside Construction Regulations for hillside neighborhoods

## **West Region**

### *Community Plans*

The Department has staffed a team that will begin work to update a group of four Community Plans within the West region, beginning in the second half of the 2018 calendar year, followed by an update to the remaining three Community Plans within the region beginning in 2021. In addition to allowing the Department to apply general policies and zoning tools to reinforce neighborhood identity and address local issues identified through stakeholder outreach, Community Planning efforts within this Region may provide opportunities to address the issues noted below:

The Department will begin its West region Community Planning efforts in the southern half of the West Region, which consists of the Westchester-Playa del Rey, Palms-Mar Vista, Venice, and West LA Community Plans. Community Planning efforts in the southern half of the region would allow the Department to build upon current City initiatives to improve access to LAX, certify a Local Coastal Plan for the Venice community, and provide greater capacity for neighborhood-scaled housing and job creation within the Expo Corridor Transit Neighborhood Plan, as well as providing an opportunity to plan for new public transit infrastructure, consistent with recently adopted Measure M.

The Department will conclude its West region Community Planning efforts in the northern half of the West Region, which consists of the Brentwood-Pacific Palisades, Bel Air-Beverly Crest, and Westwood Community Plans. Community Planning efforts in the northern half of the region would allow the Department to address issues related to hillside development (building off of current work to address wildlife and ridgeline protection), and plan for the future extension of rail transit infrastructure in the Westwood community.

### *Community Plans at a Glance*

Number of Community Plans in Region: 7

Number of Community Plans Currently Up-to-Date: 0

Estimated Year for All Community Plans in Region to be Up-to-Date: End of 2024

### *Neighborhood Planning Initiatives*

In addition to efforts to update Community Plans outlined above, various other work programs are ongoing within the West Region. These include:

- Metro grant-funded Expo Transit Neighborhood Plan
- Westside Mobility Plan
- Venice Local Coastal Plan
- Landside Access Modernization and other LAX-supporting initiatives
- Ridgeline Protections
- Wildlife Corridors
- Mello Act Replacement Housing Ordinance (Coastal only)

## Valley Region

### *Community Plans*

The Valley Region consists of 14 Community Plan areas, and for the purposes of updating Community Plans is divided into four groupings: Southwest, Southeast, Northwest, and Northeast. The Department currently has one staff team working on the update of three Community Plans for the Southwest Valley: Canoga Park-West Hills-Winnetka-Woodland Hills, Encino-Tarzana, and Reseda-West Van Nuys. This work program began in July, 2017, and is anticipated to be complete in the second half of 2020, at which time that team would begin the update of another group of Community Plans in the region.

The Department has staffed a second team that will begin work to update three Community Plans for the Southeast Valley: Sherman Oaks-Studio City-Toluca Lake-Cahuenga Pass, Van Nuys-North Sherman Oaks, and North Hollywood-Valley Village. This work program will begin in the second half of the 2018 calendar year, and will allow the Department to build upon its current Orange Line Transit Neighborhood work, in addition to addressing opportunities around the pending Van Nuys transit corridor. Community Planning efforts would also allow the Department to coordinate initial efforts to update the Ventura-Cahuenga Boulevard Corridor Specific Plan. This effort is anticipated to conclude in late 2021, at which time that team would begin the update of the fourth and final group of Community Plans in the region.

Remaining groupings in the Valley Region, to begin in 2020 and 2021 respectively include the Northeast, and Northwest Valley. The Northeast Valley group of Community Plans consists of Sun Valley-La Tuna Canyon, Arleta-Pacoima, Sunland-Tujunga-Shadow Hills-Lakeview Terrace-East La Tuna Canyon, and Sylmar (Sylmar was recently updated in 2015). Community Planning efforts within this region will allow the Department to consider ways to build-upon the recently adopted "Clean Up-Green Up" program that applied environmental protections in-and-around industrial districts, address opportunities around the pending Van Nuys transit corridor, and address equestrian, hillside, and open space conservation efforts in foothill communities.

The Northwest Valley group of Community Plans consists of Mission Hills-Panorama City-North Hills, Northridge, Chatsworth-Porter Ranch, and Granada Hills-Knollwood (Granada Hills-Knollwood was recently updated in 2015). Community Planning efforts in this area of the Valley region would allow the Department to explore ways to bolster investment in existing industrial manufacturing districts, revitalize commercial corridors, and address hillside, and open space conservation efforts in foothill communities.

### *Community Plans at a Glance*

Number of Community Plans in Region: 14

Number of Community Plans Currently Up-to-Date: 2 (3 are currently underway)

Estimated Year for All Community Plans in Region to be Up-to-Date: End of 2024

### *Neighborhood Planning Initiatives*

In addition to efforts to update Community Plans outlined above, various other work programs are ongoing within the Valley Region. These include:

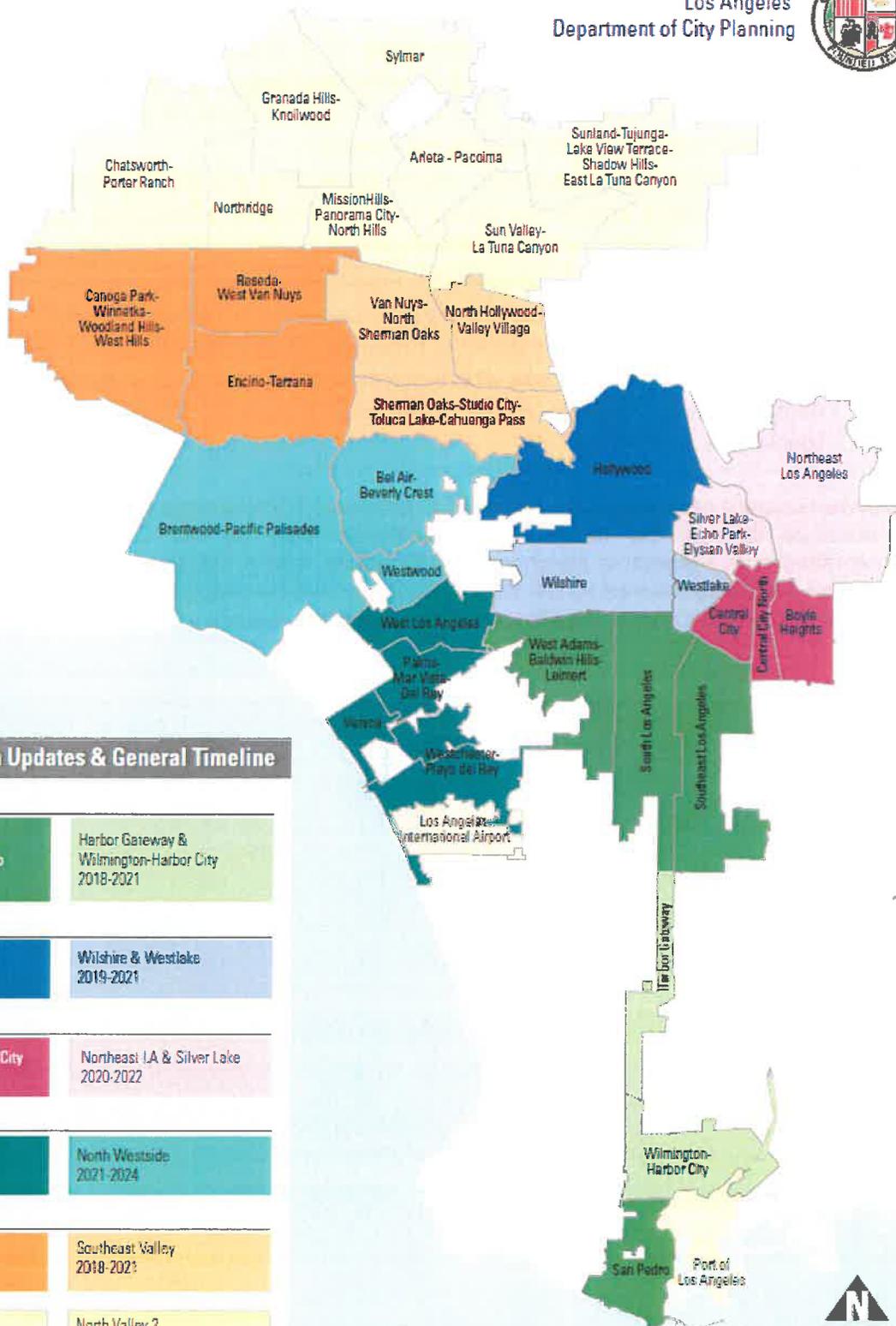
- Metro grant-funded Orange Line Transit Neighborhood Plan
- Ventura-Cahuenga Boulevard Corridor Specific Plan Amendment
- Van Nuys Transit Corridor study

*Community Plan Prioritization*

As the Department moves forward with the initiation of community plans, consideration is given to a range of factors, the totality of which can be summarized into four general topic areas:

1. **Housing Production:** Areas where there is a critical demand for additional housing production, and where the current Community Plans may not provide adequate capacity for housing, consistent with the City's larger General Plan goals and policies, and consistent with reasonably anticipated growth.
2. **Social and Environmental Equity:** Areas where there are opportunities to craft policies and tools to address community issues such as housing affordability and housing access, exposure to pollution, and diminished access to essential community services.
3. **Mobility:** Areas where future mobility investments (such as future bus rapid transit and light rail transit stations) are already planned, and corresponding neighborhood planning will be appropriate and beneficial to reduce car trips and greenhouse gases.
4. **Development Trends:** Areas where current and desirable development trends appear to demonstrate a need to revisit or reconsider existing land use policies and zoning regulations.

Commencement of any specific group of Community Plans in any of the regions above will be announced through the release of an initiation letter by the Director of Planning, staff presentations to respective Neighborhood Councils, and a series of kick-off, educational, and outreach events sponsored by the Department, and will be preceded by coordinating efforts with respective Council Offices, the Mayor's Office, and City agencies.



Community Plan Updates & General Timeline	
<b>South LA &amp; Harbor</b>	
West Adams, South LA, Southeast LA, San Pedro Completed in 2017	Harbor Gateway & Wilmington-Harbor City 2018-2021
<b>Central</b>	
Hollywood Completed in 2019	Westshire & Westlake 2019-2021
<b>East / Central</b>	
Boyle Heights & Central City Completed in 2019	Northeast LA & Silver Lake 2020-2022
<b>Westside</b>	
South Westside 2018-2021	North Westside 2021-2024
<b>Valley</b>	
Southwest Valley 2017-2020	Southeast Valley 2018-2021
North Valley 1 2020-2023	North Valley 2 2021-2024



## **EIR Preparation for Private Party Development Proposals**

Following presentation of the Department's February, 2017 report to PLUM, the committee endorsed measures whereby future applicants for development proposals that require CEQA analysis with participation from an environmental consultant would be required to hire consultants from a vetted list of environmental professionals. Since that time, the Department has taken steps to institute this policy by June of 2018. The Department has released a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for environmental consultants, has reviewed all Statements of Qualifications (SOQ) submitted, and is in the process of administering contracts with those firms that have met qualification screening. Once the Department has finalized its "bench list" of qualified consultants it will begin requiring applicants to hire consultants from that list.

To ensure a broad and diverse bench list of qualified consultants, the Department has conducted rigorous outreach within the field. Prior to the release of the RFQ, advertisements were sent to over 100 professional associations and chambers of commerce in support of efforts to diversify the prospective consultant pool. In keeping with the City's goal to provide equal opportunities to participate in the performance of City contracts, the advertisements were sent to organizations representing Minority-owned Business Enterprises (MBEs), Woman-owned Business Enterprises (WBEs), Small Business Enterprises (SBEs), Emerging Business Enterprises (EBEs), Disabled Veteran-Business Enterprises (DVBES), and Other Business Enterprises (OBEs). After the RFQs were released, Planning followed standard contractual outreach procedures by ensuring that consultants submitting qualifications were registered on the Los Angeles Business Assistant Virtual Network (LABAVN) and identified their certifications as applicable. The Department received 33 SOQs following release of the RFQ in 2017, compared to 19 SOQs that were submitted as part of the 2013 RFQ process.

## **General Plan Amendments**

Following presentation of the Department's February, 2017 report to PLUM, the committee endorsed measures whereby the Department would pursue amendments to the Zoning Code to ensure that there is an orderly arrangement for the consideration of General Plan Amendments by geography, and to promote an ongoing structure and commitment to maintain up-to-date Community Plans across the City. The Department is in the process of comprehensively updating the various processes and procedures of the Zoning Code, and is incorporating language in the revised code that accomplishes the following:

- Requires that the Director of Planning maintain a schedule whereby the intake of General Plan Amendment requests are batched geographically. This proposal ensures that the Department has the ability to assess the merits of potential General Plan Amendment requests in concert with other requests within the same geography, while allowing for the Director of Planning to adjust potential geographic batching windows based upon demand and necessity over time. It should be noted that the Department has seen a significant decline in the number of requests for General Plan Amendment following the certification of Measure JJJ.
- Requires that the Director of Planning maintain a schedule whereby the City's Community Plans are reviewed and/or updated on a ten-year cycle.

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The Department anticipates that the revised Zoning Code processes and procedures will move through the City's adoption process during the second half of 2018.

Sincerely,

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Director of Planning



Kevin J. Keller, AICP  
Executive Officer

VPB:KJK:crw