

WLASNC Board FY 2022-2023

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Planning Dept.

Re: Resolution – Opposition to West LA Community Plan update residential re-zoning proposal

To the City,

At the Jun. 28, 2023, meeting of the West Los Angeles Sawtelle N.C., the Board of Directors voted 10-0-0, to oppose the City's Apr. 2023 proposal, and to request that the Planning Dept. revise General Plan Land Use designations/ zoning to preserve interior neighborhoods and channel new housing to the commercial corridors/ nodes, per previous WLASNC Resolutions, and authorize the Chair to submit a Community Impact Statement.

No decisions on upzoning shall be made until the City provides the following data, which our NC has requested for 3 years:

1. Current zoning capacity of the WLA Community Plan Area.
2. Additional population targeted for the WLA Community Plan Area.

WLA 1 & 7: R1 with 2-3 stories and 0.5 FAR (2,500 sf house) to be upzoned to Low Medium Residential with 3-4 stories, 1.0-1.25 FAR (5,000-6,250 sf for 1-4 houses).

- City should apply lesser Low Residential zoning with 3 stories and 1.0 to 1.25 FAR.

WLA 2, 3, 5, 6 & 8: R2 with 3 stories to be upzoned to Medium Residential with 3-5 stories and 1.5-2.5 FAR (12,500 sf for high-density apartments - 10-20 units on 1 parcel).

- City should apply lesser Low Medium Residential zoning with 3-4 stories and 0.45 to 1.00 FAR.

WLA 4 corridor (both sides of Idaho): Upzoned to Low Neighborhood Residential (allows commercial store in interior blocks) with 3-5 stories and 1.25-1.75 FAR.

- City should apply lesser Low Medium Residential zoning with 3-4 stories and 0.45 to 1.00 FAR only to the north side of Idaho.

WLA 9 corridor (both sides of Missouri): Upzoned to Medium Neighborhood Residential (allows commercial store in interior blocks) with 4-6 stories and 1.5-2.5 FAR.

- City should apply lesser Low Medium Residential zoning with 3-4 stories and 0.45 to 1.00 FAR, only to the north side of Missouri.

Facts and background:

1. The proposal eliminates almost all of the current R1 and R2 zoning in our neighborhood, after the City already eliminated all R1 zoning south of the Bundy Station in the Expo Station Transit Neighborhood Plan.
 - a. R1 (neighborhoods west of Centinela and south of Stoner Park) will be replaced by Low Medium Residential, which allows small apartments with no yards.
 - b. R2 (neighborhoods west of Sawtelle) will be replaced by Medium Residential, which allows 3-5-story apartments with no open space or real trees/greenery.
2. Our NC unanimously proposed to channel new housing to the commercial corridors and nodes, and preserve the interior neighborhoods. The City's proposals are the exact opposite of that (9/23/2020 and 1/27/2021).
 - a. The City's locations are located away from the major transit lines (Expo Line, BRT lines on Wilshire and Santa Monica).

Findings and justifications:

1. The City consistently ignores our compromise resolutions from our NC that we pass unanimously and reflect the community's opinions.
2. The City ignored our NC's unanimous compromise suggestions for a mix of balanced zoning for the Expo TNP (6/2017).
3. The City ignored our NC's unanimous compromise suggestions for more affordable housing, public open space and more trees for the Carmel Partners' Bundy/Expo apartments (10/2022, 1/2023).
4. The City has not demonstrated that upzoning has required, and will not provide the existing zoning capacity despite us requesting it for 3 years, which may demonstrate that no upzoning is actually needed.
5. The Housing Element's various upzoning programs would create 1,400,000 new units. If the TOC Expansion, R2 Expansion and Affordable Housing Overlay (in R1) programs are eliminated, then 700,000 units can be built via the other programs. That far exceeds the 260,000 units for which the city must rezone (490,000 units with the required 7% buffer).
6. The City cherry-picks comments from developer front groups and high-density development advocates to claim that the community supports upzoning its traditional neighborhoods and eliminating most R1 and R2 zones with houses.

WEST LOS ANGELES Proposed Draft General Plan Land Uses (GPLU)

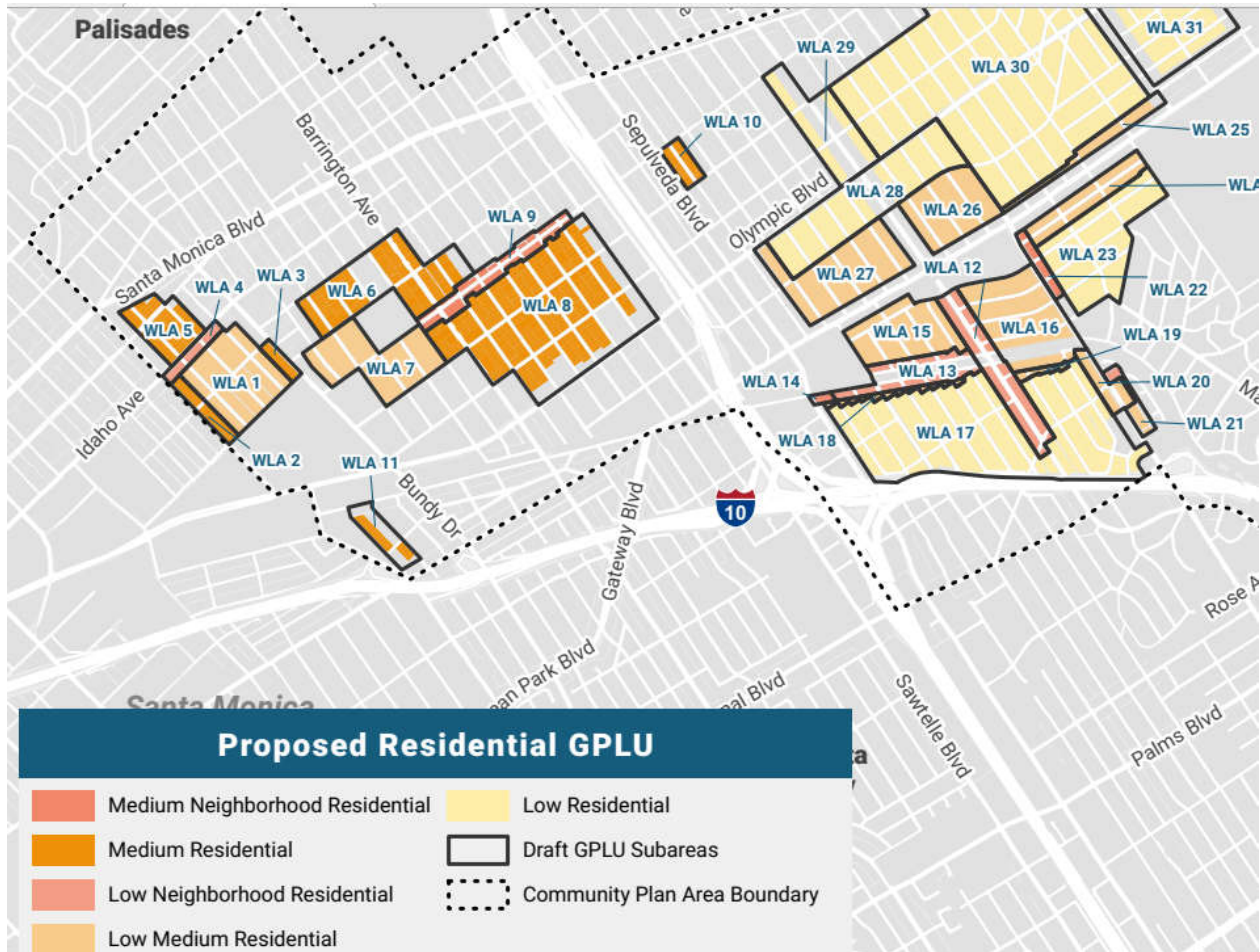
Proposed GPLU & Subareas	Proposed Density Base	Proposed Height Base (Stories/Feet)	Proposed Height Bonus (Stories/Feet)	Proposed FAR Base (Floor Area Ratio)	Proposed FAR Bonus (Floor Area Ratio)
Low Residential					
WLA: 17, 28, 29	4L	3	no bonus	1.0	no bonus
WLA 23	2L	33'	no bonus	0.75	no bonus
WLA: 30, 31	1L	33'	no bonus	0.45	no bonus
Low Medium Residential					
WLA: 20, 24	10	3	5	1.25	1.75
WLA: 1, 2, 7, 15, 16, 18, 19, 25, 26, 27	12	3	4	1.0	1.25
Low Neighborhood Residential					
WLA: 4, 12, 13, 21, 34, 35	10	3	5	1.25	1.75
WLA 32	12	3	4	1.00	1.25
Medium Residential					
WLA: 2, 3, 5, 6, 8, 10	8	4	6	1.5	2.5
WLA: 11	10	4	6	1.5	2.5
Medium Neighborhood Residential					
WLA: 11, 33	4	4	8	2.0	4.0
WLA: 9, 14, 22	8	4	6	1.5	2.5

Ex parte communications: None disclosed by any committee members.

Disclosures and conflicts of interest: None disclosed by any committee members.

To government agencies: Only the Chair and designated Boardmembers may testify to public agencies on behalf of the West L.A. Sawtelle NC. The Board requests that the Council Office and private/non-profit entities do not testify or speculate on behalf of the NC.

City’s map of proposed upzones (interior neighborhoods, with few that are along Wilshire and Santa Monica BRT lines, and few near the Expo Line and Purple Line stations).



WLASNC Resolution: Channel housing to nodes and corridors (9/23/2020).

Re: Suggestions and comments for West L.A. Community Plan update

At the Sept. 23, 2020, meeting of the West Los Angeles Sawtelle N.C., the Board of Directors voted 7-0-0, to support the following suggested planning concepts in the West L.A. Community Plan, request the following additions, and authorize the Chair to submit Community Impact Statements in the future.

NC supports the conceptual ideas presented at its July webinars:

1. Higher-density buildings shall be allowed only on major commercial corridors of Wilshire Blvd., Santa Monica Blvd., Olympic Blvd. and Pico Blvd.
 - a. Bundy Ave., Barrington Ave., and Sawtelle Ave. are not major commercial corridors, and should have a lower density.
2. The low-density neighborhood west of Sawtelle Blvd. shall be preserved.

These additional planning concepts shall be enacted:

1. Preservation of other R1 and R2 residential areas in full in the current West L.A. Community Plan, which are located south of Santa Monica between Centinela Ave. and Barrington Ave., and north and south of Pico Blvd. (see yellow and light orange land use designations on map).
2. Increases in density and height on corridors/perimeter should be matched with downzoning and shorter height/FAR in the interior neighborhoods.
3. Higher-density buildings on Sawtelle shall have stricter, codified development standards that allow better design and prevent the construction of stucco cubes -- including more stepbacks and open space, more space for large trees, and more open space at ground level.

These general concepts shall be enacted:

1. Utilities shall be fully analyzed to determine if sufficient capacity exists for any upzoning: Electric, gas, water, sewer, storm drain, telecommunications (needed to encourage telecommuting and at-home schooling).
2. The City shall establish metrics to determine if residents of TOC projects actually drive less, and therefore, if the density bonuses are justified.
3. Pedestrian paths, and bicycle and transit facilities shall be funded and constructed immediately, to encourage residents of TOC projects to ride transit upon move-in.
4. Determine the impact of the MTA's reduction of bus and Exposition Line service on residents of TOC projects.
5. Preservation of M (Industrial) zoning to allow for jobs for middle-class residents, so they have short commutes.
6. Population projections with zoning capacity that accounts for density bonuses and ADUs shall be established prior to upzoning areas, to determine if upzoning is actually required.
7. TOC projects design standards shall be revised to protect the existing community and reduce the impact on smaller neighboring buildings.
8. To date, the City has allowed levels of pollution that exceed state and federal regulations and under the reasoning of "appropriate mitigation" that courts have regularly rejected. A consistent and appropriate level measurement of water, air, and soil contamination must be applied so that health of residents and neighbors is subverted or ignored under the reasoning of "overriding considerations".



WLASNC Resolution: Channel housing to nodes and corridors (1/27/2021).

Re: West L.A. Community Plan update – Development standards and zoning regulations – nodes, corridors and interior neighborhoods

At the Jan. 27, 2021, meeting of the West Los Angeles Sawtelle N.C., the Board of Directors voted 9-0-0, to submit the following development standards and zoning regulations for the West L.A. Community Plan Update, and authorize the Chair to submit Community Impact Statements in the future, and authorize the Chair to submit Community Impact Statements in the future.

Nodes (1,000 ft. radius)

Purple Line Subway (V.A.): Wilshire/Bundy, Wilshire/Barrington.

Current: Height - No limit (HD-2 on Wilshire east of Granville).

Proposed: Height - 75 ft. or 7 stories.

Big: Wilshire/Federal, Santa Monica/Bundy, Olympic/Bundy, Pico/Bundy, Pico/Sawtelle.

Current: Height - 75 ft. or 6 stories (HD-1L on Wilshire east of Bundy and on Olympic).

Height - 45 ft. or 3 stories (HD-1VL on Wilshire west of Bundy, Santa Monica, & Pico).

Proposed: Height - 55 ft. or 5 stories.

Medium: Santa Monica/Barrington, Santa Monica/Federal, Santa Monica/Sawtelle, Olympic/Barrington, Olympic/Sawtelle.

Current: Height - 45 ft. or 3 stories (HD-1VL).

Proposed: Height - 55 ft. + half 45 ft. or 4 stories.

Corridors (does not include TOC and Density Bonus incentives) - C2 zones

Big: Wilshire, Olympic. (red dashed boxes)

Current: Height - No limit (HD-2 on Wilshire east of Granville).

Height - 75 ft. or 6 stories (HD-1L on Wilshire east of Bundy and on Olympic).

Height - 45 ft. or 3 stories (HD-1VL on Wilshire west of Bundy).

Proposed: Height - 45 ft. or 4 stories.

Medium: Santa Monica, Pico. (blue dashed boxes)

Current: Height - 45 ft. or 3 stories (HD-1VL).

Proposed: Height - 45 ft. + half 34 ft. or 3 stories.

Low: Sawtelle-east side. (purple dashed boxes)

See the NC's Sawtelle Corridor Overlay Plan for more detailed proposed heights.

Current: Height - 45 ft. or 3 stories (HD-1VL).

Proposed: Height - 35 ft. or 3 stories.

- *See the NC's Sawtelle Corridor Overlay Plan for more detailed proposed heights.*

Interior neighborhoods

Single-family, duplexes (no incentives allowed)

R1: Current: Height - 33 ft., FAR 3.0 (HD-1).

Proposed: Height - 33 ft., FAR 0.5.

R2: Current: Height - 33 ft., FAR 3.0 (HD-1).

Proposed: Height - 33 ft., FAR 0.8.

Multi-family (does not include TOC and Density Bonus incentives)

RD1.5: Current: Height - 45 ft., FAR 3.0 (HD-1)

Proposed: Height - 33 ft., FAR 1.75 (HD-1XL 30 ft. or 3 stories).

R3: Current: Height - 45 ft., FAR 3.0. (HD-1)

Proposed: Height - 33 ft. + half 45 ft., FAR 1.75.

R4: Current: No height limit, FAR 3.0. (HD-1)

Proposed: Height - 45 ft., FAR 2.0 (HD-1VL 45 ft. or 3 stories).

All: Stepbacks - 15 ft. for 4th level and taller levels.

Setbacks - 15 ft. minimum rear setback inclusive of incentives and alley.

Industrial

M: Current: Height HD-1 on Olympic.

- *Proposed: See the NC's Resolution re: the Exposition Station Transit Neighborhood Plan for detailed heights, including transitional heights adjacent to R1 zones.*

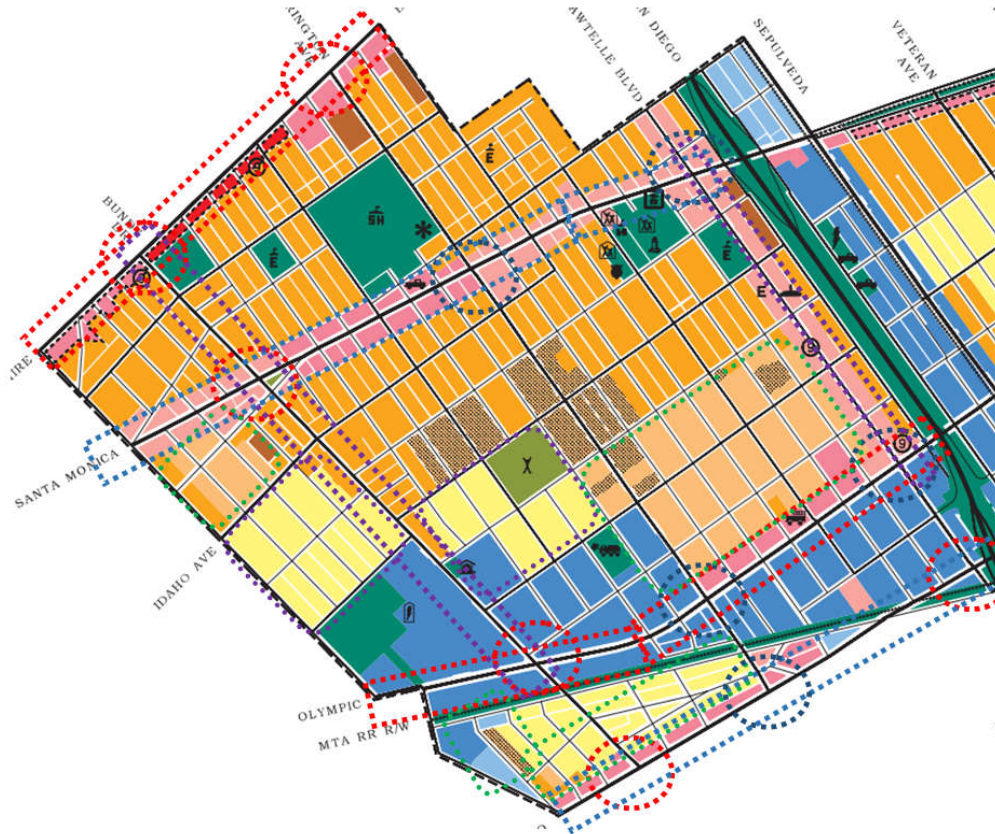
Facts and background:

1. The WLA Community Plan update completed its "Conceptual Design" phase and will now selected specific zones and development regulations for specific areas.
2. As of now, the community will not see the draft Community Plan before it is prepared for CEQA review.

Findings and justifications:

1. Larger densities and heights should be directed to the corridors with transit and services, and shall be balanced with lower densities and heights in interior neighborhoods, which will allow for buildings in character with the neighborhoods and more open space.
2. The community must submit specific zoning and development standards proposals now, to be included in the drafting of the actual Community Plan zones.

West L.A. Community Plan update – Nodes and Corridors



/s/ Walton Chiu

Walton Chiu, Chair WLASNC

cc: Michael Amster, Gabriela Medina, Jeff Khau, Council District #11