

CITY OF LOS ANGELES
CALIFORNIA

EXECUTIVE OFFICES
200 N. SPRING STREET, ROOM 525
LOS ANGELES, CA 90012-4801
(213) 978-1271

DEPARTMENT OF

CITY PLANNING

COMMISSION OFFICE
(213) 978-1300

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**NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY OF
DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT**

**Downtown Community Plan Update/New Zoning Code for Downtown Community Plan
City EIR No. ENV-2017-433-EIR
CPC -2017-432-CPU
CPC-2014-1582-CA
State Clearinghouse No. 2017021024**

TO: Affected Agencies, Organizations and Other Interested Parties

PROJECT NAME: Downtown Community Plan Update (Proposed Plan) and Amendments to the Los Angeles Municipal Code (LAMC) to Adopt a New Zoning Code for the Proposed Plan (as part of the re:code LA program)

COMMENT REVIEW PERIOD: August 6, 2020 to October 20, 2020

PROJECT LOCATION:

Downtown Plan Project Area:

The Downtown Community Plan consists of the Central City Community Plan, and Central City North Community Plan. The Central City Community Plan Area (CPA) encompasses approximately 2,161 acres and is generally bounded on the north by Sunset Boulevard/Cesar Chavez Avenue, on the south by the Santa Monica Freeway (Interstate 10), on the west by the Harbor Freeway (Interstate 110), and on the east by Alameda Street. Immediately to the east of Alameda Street is the Central City North Community Plan Area, which encompasses approximately 2,005 acres and is generally bounded on the north by Stadium Way, Lilac Terrace, and North Broadway, on the south by the City of Vernon, on the west by Alameda Street, and on the east by the Los Angeles River. The Downtown Plan Area is bordered by the communities of Boyle Heights, Silver Lake-Echo Park, Westlake, Southeast and South Los Angeles, and the City of Vernon

New Zoning Code Project Area:

The Project includes the implementation of the New Zoning Code regulations applicable within the Downtown Plan Area with adoption of the Downtown Plan. The New Zoning Code regulations adopted with the Proposed Project could be applied or implemented elsewhere in the City through the community plan update process or other future

planning and zoning efforts. This would require future legislative action to adopt plan amendments and zoning changes, as well as environmental review. Thus, the New Zoning Code component of the Proposed Project could affect all areas within the City's jurisdictional boundaries. The City of Los Angeles encompasses roughly 478 square miles including about 5 square miles of water area for the Port of Los Angeles and just under 472 square miles of land area within the County of Los Angeles. The City is generally defined by the San Gabriel Mountains in the north, the Santa Susana Mountains, Santa Monica Mountains, and Pacific Ocean in the west, Pacific Ocean in the South, and Verdugo Mountains, San Rafael Hills, and Repetto Hills in the east. The Santa Monica Mountains and Los Angeles River bisect the City, separating the San Fernando Valley in the north from the Los Angeles metropolitan basin in the south.

COUNCIL DISTRICTS: Downtown Community Plan: 1, 14, 9 New Zoning Code: Citywide

PROJECT BACKGROUND: The Downtown Community Plan consists of two of the City's 35 Community Plans, which comprise the Land Use Element of the General Plan, specifically, the Central City and the Central City North Community Plans. The Land Use Element is one of the eight State-mandated elements of the General Plan that also include open space, circulation, conservation, housing, noise, and safety. The Central City and the Central City North Community Plans are being updated consistent with California Code Section 65302, which identifies the eight required elements of a General Plan. Community Plans are intended to promote an arrangement of land uses, streets, and services in the Project Area to encourage economic vitality, social and physical well-being, and promote the general health, safety, welfare and convenience of people who live and work in the Project Area.

The Project is part of the City of Los Angeles New Community Plan Program, a program to update each of the City's 35 Community Plans. The Central City Community Plan was last updated in 2001, and the Central City North Community Plan was last updated in 2000. Since then, substantial changes have occurred, most notably, completion of the Metro Gold and Expo Lines, and implementation of the Metro Bike share system; completion of large-scale commercial and residential developments; future plans and infrastructural improvements to be accommodated such as the Los Angeles Streetcar, Metro Regional Connector, and High Speed Rail; and new growth forecasts through the year 2040, released by the Southern California Association of Governments. As further described below, the Downtown Plans will rezone land in the Downtown Plan Area to make the New Zoning Code operative.

The New Zoning Code component of the Proposed Project is to adopt and implement part of the New Zoning Code in the Downtown Plan area. The New Zoning Code is part of a citywide program (the re:code LA program) to comprehensively update the City's zoning ordinances through amendments to the Los Angeles Municipal Code (LAMC). These amendments will add a new Chapter 1A to the LAMC, which will establish a new zoning code for the City. The existing zoning code is found in Chapter 1 of the LAMC. Adoption of the full text of the New Zoning Code is expected to occur over multiple projects and is beyond the scope of the Proposed Project. Implementation of the New Zoning Code outside the Downtown Plan Area will occur through future zone changes to re-designate land utilizing the zoning designations from the new Chapter 1A and is expected to occur through the community plan update process, or other future planning and zoning efforts. As part of the Proposed Project, the City intends to adopt that portion of Chapter 1A that will allow the City to utilize and implement the New Zoning Code in the Downtown Plan Area. This component of the Proposed Project will require adopting or amending regulations in the new Chapter 1A that include at minimum: (i) the new zone districts to be used in the Downtown Plan Area, including substantive requirements for those zone districts, and (ii) adopting all of the background parts of the New Zoning Code that do not already exist that would allow the new zoning to be implemented, which may include definitions, processes, development standard rules, rules for non-conforming uses, and zoning incentive programs, among others.

Even when adopted into the LAMC, the New Zoning Code is not effective until it is implemented through zone changes that apply the New Zoning Code zone designations (zone districts) on the City's Zoning Map for particular parcels of land in the City. The timing of the re:code LA program in relation to the Downtown Plan provides an opportunity to use the proposed New Zoning Code structure as part of the Downtown Plan and implement the New Zoning Code in the Proposed Plan Area. This Proposed Project will apply the New Zoning Code solely within the Downtown Plan Area. The application of the New Zoning Code outside of the Downtown Plan Area will be an incremental process over time. Ultimately, the New Zoning Code is intended to apply to the entire City of Los Angeles

when all community plans and other applicable planning and regulatory documents are amended and adopted through the New Community Plan program.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

The proposed Project includes the updates to the Central City and Central City North Community Plans, adoption of the New Zoning Code, and the adoption of necessary revisions and any other amendments necessary to implement the above, including amendments to other General Plan elements (such as, Mobility and Framework), the LAMC, specific plans, and other ordinances to implement those updates. The following describes in more detail the updates to the Downtown Plan and the adoption of the New Zoning Code:

Downtown Community Plan

The updates to the Downtown Community Plan will reflect a future vision for Downtown, and are intended to guide development through the year 2040, and revise the existing Central City Community Plan and Central City North Community Plan. Community Plans are also intended to guide development by informing the general public of the City’s broad planning goals, policies, and objectives, as well as specific development standards for the Project area. The Downtown Plan would allocate land for the range of uses that Downtown will need through 2040, including land for jobs, housing, parks and open space (as available and feasible), and civic functions, and would improve the link between land use and transportation in a manner that is consistent with the General Plan Framework Element. Collectively, the Downtown Community Plans’ goals, objectives, policies, and programs articulate the policy direction that the City will promote for the duration of the Plan. It includes amending the Zoning Map to rezone the Plan Area with new zone classifications developed for the Downtown Plan.

The Proposed Plan goals and policies seek to address challenges facing Downtown and the larger region, such as climate change, housing affordability, and a shifting economy, through strategies that will guide thoughtful growth. The General Plan Land Use Designation Map includes the proposed general plan designations in the Plan Area, as well as a corresponding zone table to identify the zoning types that are allowed for each type of land use designation. The Plan will also include amendments to the General Plan Framework Element to introduce new land use designations of the Downtown Plan. The proposed designations, along with implementing zoning actions, would reinforce a pattern of development that directs future growth to already urbanized and transit-served areas.

The Downtown Plan articulates a strategy for land use planning that will accommodate projected growth by encouraging higher intensity development and the most expansive mix of uses in areas that are served by high-frequency transit service. This strategy promotes flexibility of uses over time, and a high-quality built environment, while reinforcing the range of unique places within the Plan Area. These strategies will guide the physical development in the Downtown Plan Area in a sustainable manner that will promote increased access to jobs, housing for all income levels, open space, services, and cultural resources while also implementing policies of SB 375 and SCAG’s Sustainable Communities Strategy to reduce overall VMT and greenhouse gas emissions.

The table below identifies the reasonably anticipated population, housing and employment of the Proposed Plan and compares this 2017 Baseline, Existing Plan, and Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) 2040 projections.

2040 REASONABLY ANTICIPATED DEVELOPMENT OF THE DOWNTOWN COMMUNITY PLAN				
	2017 Baseline /a/	Existing Plan Reasonably Expected Development /b/	Proposed Plan Reasonably Expected Development /b/	SCAG 2040 Growth Forecast /c/
Housing	34,000	59,000	133,000	96,000

Population	76,000	112,000	252,000	189,000
Employment	219,000	278,000	305,000	257,000
Notes: Numbers are rounded to the nearest thousand, and percentages are calculated from the rounded values. /a/ 2017 Baselines – SCAG 2016-2040 RTP/SCS /b/ LADCP 2020 /c/ SCAG 2016-2040 RTP/SCS.				

New Zoning Code

As discussed above, the Project also includes the adoption of the New Zoning Code.

The new zoning system is modular, requiring the bundling of multiple districts to make a zone. The zoning system includes the following five (5) districts, referred to collectively as the “base zoning”: Form, Frontage, Development Standards, Use, and Density districts. The first five (5) components of the zone string are mandatory. An optional sixth district, Overlay, may also apply when there is a policy need to regulate aspects not covered in the base zoning. A brief summary of each of the five mandatory districts of the new zoning system is provided below:

- Form Districts generally govern the shape and size of buildings.
- Frontage Districts govern how a site or building addresses abutting street(s) or right-of-way(s).
- Development Standards Districts regulate pedestrian and motor vehicle access, automobile parking quantities, parking design treatments, and on-site signs.
- Use Districts establish which uses are permitted, permitted with limitations, conditionally permitted, or not allowed on a property.
- The Density District sets either the amount of lot area required for a Dwelling Unit or Guest Room, or the number of Dwelling Units permitted per lot.

To implement the Downtown Community Plan and to apply the New Zoning Code in the Downtown Plan Area, certain Form, Frontage, Development Standards, and Density districts are proposed to be added to the LAMC. These districts will be used for rezoning property in the Downtown Plan Area. As the system is modular, it is possible for some of the districts developed for application within the Downtown Plan Area to be used in other parts of the City in various combinations in the future when community plans are updated and properties rezoned.

Due to the size and scale of the City and the current Zoning Code, the re:code LA program is a substantial undertaking. It is expected that parts of the re:code LA program will be adopted and implemented incrementally. Specifically, the complete New Zoning Code (proposed to be in Chapter 1A of the LAMC) will not be adopted as a whole or all at once as a part of this Project. Only the new regulations specifically applicable to the Downtown Plan and the general regulations necessary to implement the Proposed Plan are being adopted at this time.

The general regulations of the New Zoning Code that will be adopted as part of the Proposed Project will also be available for use citywide through discretionary review processes, zone changes and general plan amendments, but would not be expected to be used at this time without a community plan update, amendment, and other future planning and zoning effort. These elements include definitions, administrative rules, development standard rules, and general use standards, among others. Consistent with the intent of the re:code LA program, these regulations will be adopted before or simultaneously with the first ordinance to implement the new zone districts of the Proposed Plan. When the New Zoning Code content is adopted into the LAMC as part of this Project, none of the new zone districts, and their respective development standards and requirements, will be operative for any property in the City until the relevant community plan is updated or amendments are completed to utilize the new zoning, which would require environmental review pursuant to CEQA.

The existing Zoning Code regulations are not being repealed as part of this Project. The existing Zoning Code will continue to be in effect in Chapter 1 of the LAMC for those areas in which the new Zoning Code has not yet been applied. The existing Zoning Code would remain in place until all property in the City is rezoned and all the City's community plans are amended to apply the New Zoning Code.

Project Objectives

The primary objectives of the Proposed Plan is to:

- Accommodate employment, housing, and population growth projections forecasted through the planning horizon year of 2040 to ensure that Downtown Plan Area continues to grow in a sustainable, equitable, healthy, and inclusive manner, consistent to implement policies of the City of Los Angeles General Plan Framework Element, by focusing new job-generating uses and residential development around transit stations;
- Provide for economic diversification and reinforce Downtown Plan Area as a primary center of employment for the City and the Southern California region;
- Build upon Downtown's role as a regional transportation center by allowing for intensive development throughout the Plan Area, and concentrating development opportunity immediately surrounding the transit stations with an appropriate range of building sizes and mix of uses;
- Promote a mode-shift from private automobile usage and foster a transit, bicycle, and pedestrian supportive environment;
- Reduce vehicle miles traveled to meet the goals of the Senate Bill 375, Senate Bill 743, and California Assembly Bill 32 to reduce carbon emissions;
- Support a growing residential population by expanding the areas where housing is permitted and allowing for a full range of housing options;
- Celebrate and reinforce the character of each of the neighborhoods in the Plan Area;
- Provide a set of implementation tools that are responsive to the range of physical and functional needs across the Plan Area, and enable the creation of similar tools across the City.

Elements of the Proposed Project to implement these objectives include the following:

- Amendments to the General Plan, consisting of the Central City Community Plan and Central City North Community Plan text and land use maps (including changes to the footnotes and map symbols);
- Adoption of the New Zoning Code as Municipal Code Chapter 1A ;
- Amendment of the Zoning Map to rezone Downtown with zone classifications from the New Zoning Code;
- Adoption of the Downtown Community Plan Implementation Overlay (Downtown CPIO)
- Repealing the Bunker Hill Specific Plan ;
- Amendments to the Downtown Design Guide Urban Design Standards and Guidelines (Downtown Design Guide), the Broadway Theater and Entertainment District Community Design Overlay (Broadway CDO) and Little Tokyo Community Design Overlay (Little Tokyo CDO), and the Greater Downtown Housing Incentive Area
- Minor amendments to the Los Angeles River Improvement Overlay (RIO) to address consistency with the New Zoning Code
- Amendments to the General Plan Framework, Circulation Map, Mobility Plan and other Citywide General Plan Elements, and ordinances, as necessary.
- Amendments to all other relevant ordinances and actions as necessary to ensure consistency of regulations and implementation of the Community Plan amendments.

ANTICIPATED SIGNIFICANT ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS: Based on the analysis contained in the Draft EIR, the Proposed Plan would result in unavoidable significant environmental impacts with regard to: Air Quality (Exceedance of Criteria Pollutants—Construction and Operations, and Exposure of Sensitive Receptors to Toxic Air Contaminants – Operations); Cultural Resources (Historical Resources); Noise (Construction Noise and Vibration); Recreation (Park Deterioration); Transportation (Highway Off-Ramp Safety). The Draft EIR has also identified the following significant impacts that are anticipated to be reduced to less than significant with identified mitigation measures:

- **Air Quality:** Construction-related emissions of toxic air contaminants
- **Biological Resources:** Habitat Modification (nesting birds)
- **Cultural Resources:** Archaeological Resources
- **Geology:** Paleontological Resources
- **Hazards and Hazardous Materials:** Hazardous Materials within ¼-Mile of School, Hazardous Materials Sites
- **Tribal Cultural Resources:** Tribal Cultural Resources

Government Code Section 65962.5 Notice: The Project area includes sites listed under Government Code Section 65952.5. These are described in Section 4.8 of the Draft EIR, Hazards, Existing Setting.

DOCUMENT REVIEW AND COMMENT:

COMMENT PERIOD: START DATE AND TIME: August 6, 2020 AT 9 A.M.

END DATE AND TIME: October 20, 2020 AT 5 P.M.

The Draft EIR and all documents referenced in the EIR are available for public review and a 75-day comment period. At this time, there are no scheduled public hearings during the Comment Period.

If you wish to review a copy of the Draft EIR or the documents referenced in the Draft EIR, you may do so at the City of Los Angeles Department of City Planning Records Management at 221 N Figueroa St, Room 1450, Los Angeles. Appointments must be made in advance by emailing planning.recordsmgmt@lacity.org or calling (213) 847-3732

For an electronic copy, the Draft EIR can be downloaded or reviewed at the Department of City Planning's website at: <http://planning4la.com/development-services/eir>. Due to COVID-19 pandemic, printed copies of the Draft EIR will not be available at a public library.

If you wish to submit comments on the Draft EIR, please submit your written comments (including a name, telephone number, and contact information and the following file number ENV-2017-433-EIR) during the Comment Period, via mail or e-mail to the following addresses:

Mail: Brittany Arceneaux, City Planner
City of Los Angeles Department of City Planning
200 North Spring Street, Room 667, Los Angeles

Email: brittany.arceneaux@lacity.org

Comments that are sent to the City before or after the Comment Period provided above or that fail to comply with the above instructions for the manner or submission of comments may not be included in the Final EIR and receive a response to comments under CEQA Guidelines Section 15088.