

# Planning '101'

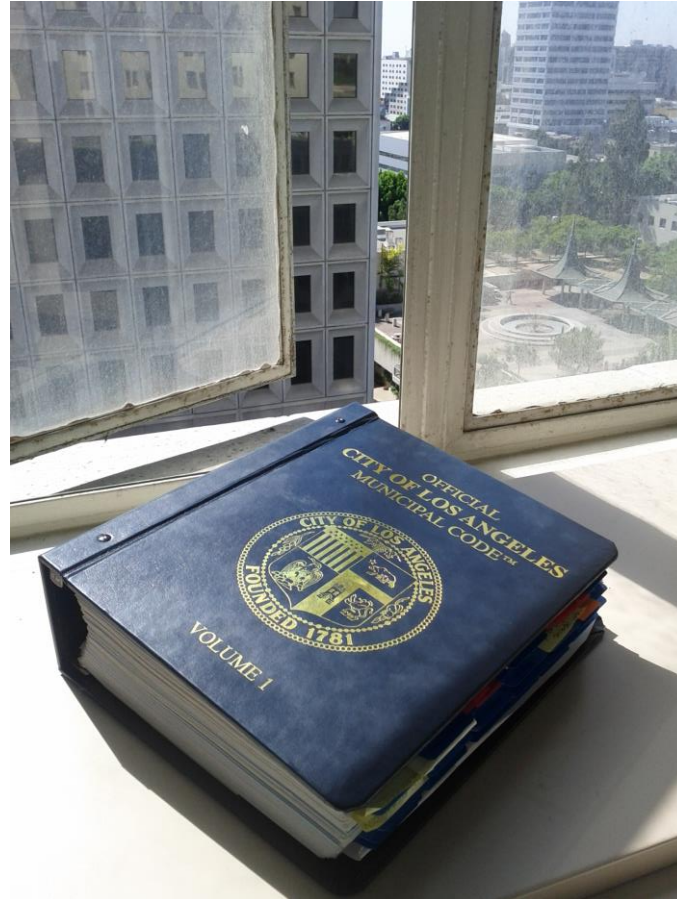


# Zoning in Los Angeles

## General Plan - Policy



## Zoning Code - Regulation

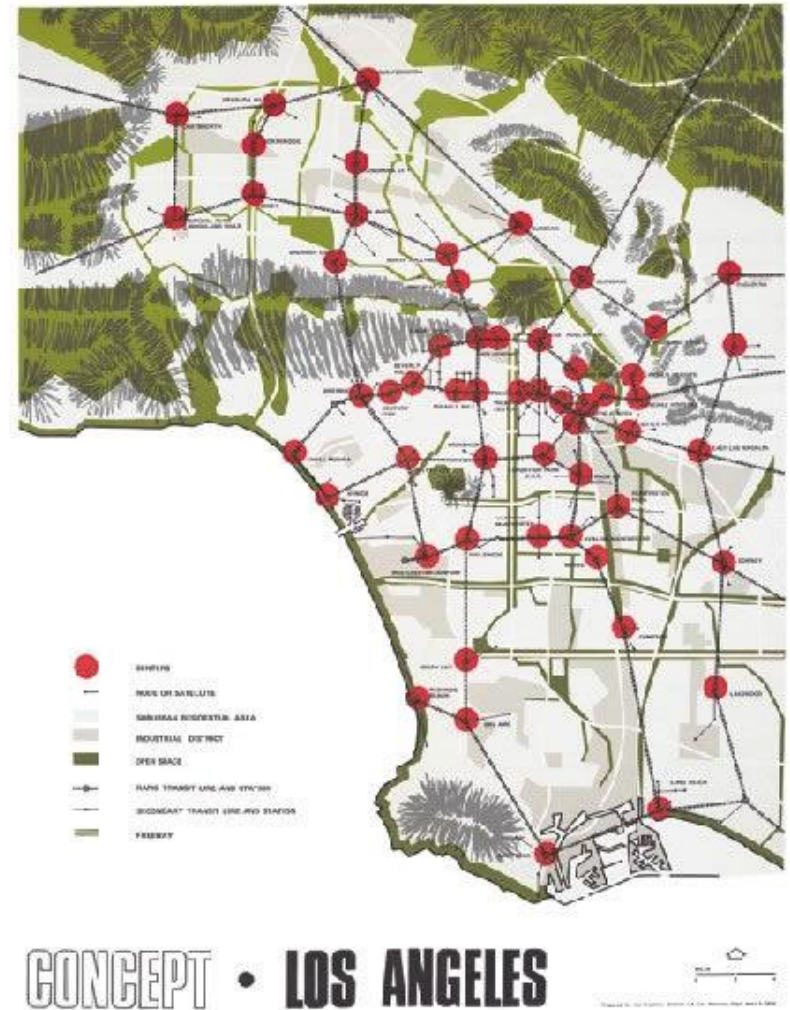


# The General Plan

- 'Constitution' for local development
- Foundation for all policies and land use decisions

## State Required 'Elements':

- **Land Use**
- Open Space
- Conservation
- Circulation
- Housing
- Noise
- Safety



The 1970 Concept Los Angeles Plan Map, also known as the "Centers Concept."

# Land Use Element

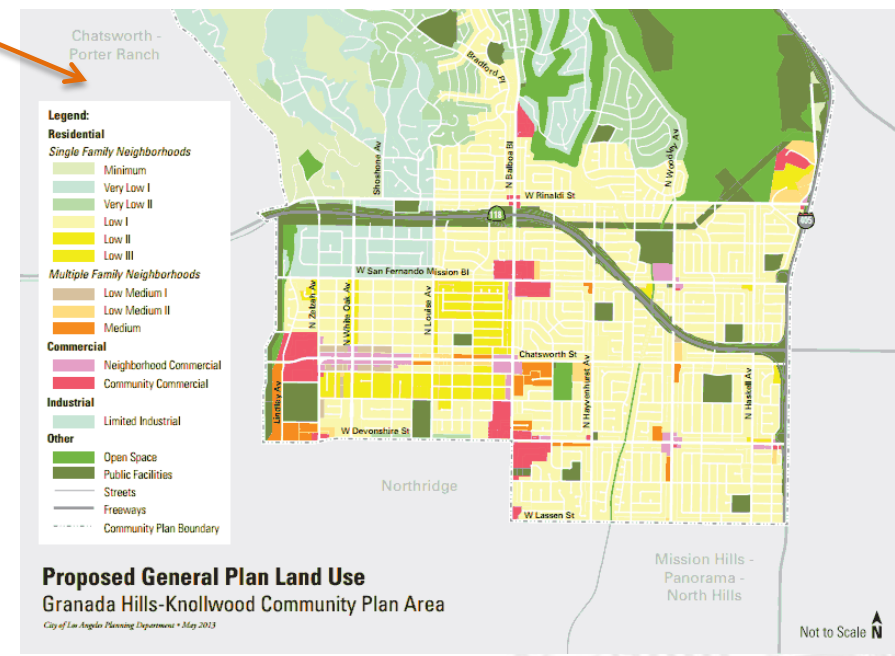
## 35 Community Plan Areas

- Guide physical development of neighborhoods



## Community Plan Update Process

- Determines the type of development that will take place on actual parcels
- Achieves this through zoning



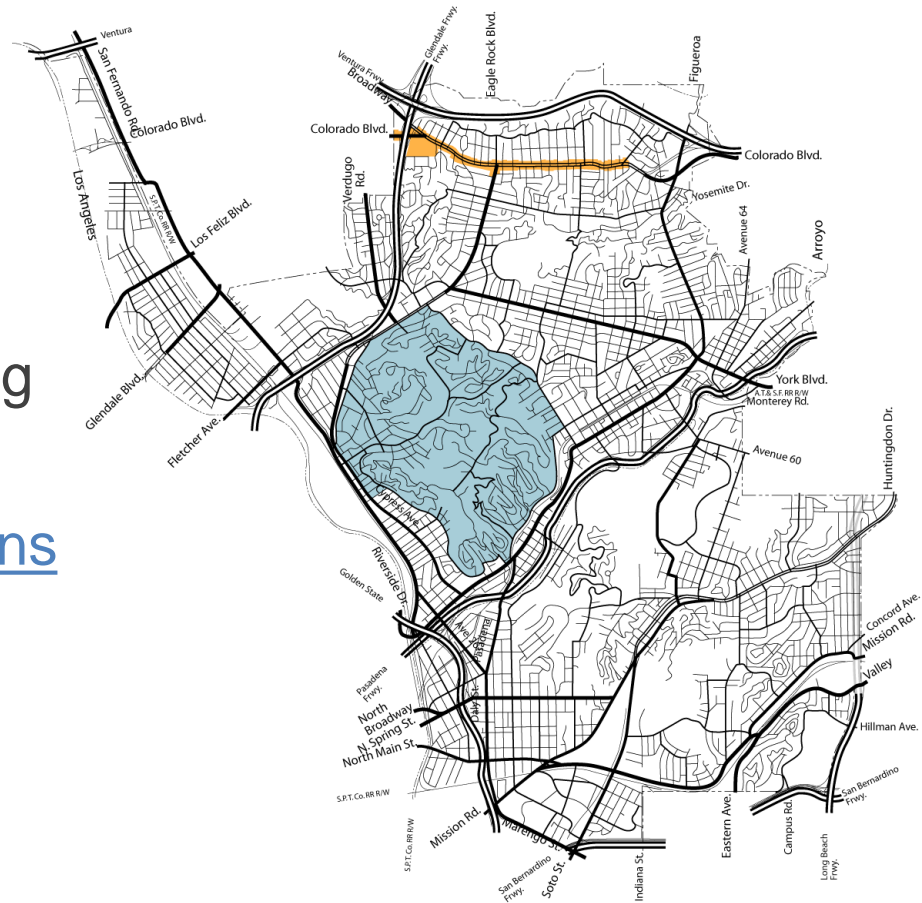


# Specific Plans



- Mini-community plans
- Mini-zoning codes
- Combine planning and zoning

## Entitlements within Specific Plans

1. Project Permits
2. Adjustments
3. Modifications
4. Exceptions
5. Amendments
6. Interpretations



FOR DETAILS REFER TO:

-  Colorado Boulevard Specific Plan, Ord. No. 168046
-  Mount Washington/Glassell Park Specific Plan, Ord. No. 168707

Specific Plan Areas  
Northeast Los Angeles Community

  
Not to Scale



# Supplemental Use Districts (SUD)

- Historic Preservation Overlay Zone (HPOZ)
- Community Plan Implementation Overlay (CPIO)
- Community Design Overlay
- River Implementation Overlay
- Residential Floor Area (RFA) District
- Oil Drilling District
- Animal Slaughtering District
- Surface Mining Operations District
- Equinekeeping District
- Fence Heights District



# T, Q, and D Conditions

Special conditions on parcels that have requested a zone change  
Ensure appropriate and context-sensitive development

## 'T' tentative classification

guarantee that required dedications and improvements are made on new development

## 'Q' qualified classification

may limit the uses allowed on a property or may define more stringent development standards than normally exist in that particular zone

## 'D' development limitation

define specific limitations on height, lot coverage, setback, and floor area



# Project Approvals

- Applicants first meet with Department of Building and Safety (DBS)



## By-Right Projects

- Conform with the Zoning Code
- Get building permit from DBS
- No DCP review required

## Discretionary Projects

- Deviate from Code
- Require special review
- Process usually involves a public notice, staff report, environmental review, public hearing, and a Decision Maker (Zoning Administrator, Planning Commission, Council, etc.)
  - Variance
  - Conditional Use Permit
  - Site Plan Review
  - Etc.





# Variance

Request Zoning Code standards be waived due to special circumstances

Decision-maker: Zoning Administrator

## Findings:

1. that the strict application of the provisions of the zoning ordinance would result in practical difficulties or unnecessary hardships inconsistent with the general purposes and intent of the zoning regulations;
2. that there are special circumstances applicable to the subject property such as size, shape, topography, location or surroundings that do not apply generally to other property in the same zone and vicinity;
3. that the variance is necessary for the preservation and enjoyment of a substantial property right or use generally possessed by other property in the same zone and vicinity but which, because of the special circumstances and practical difficulties or unnecessary hardships, is denied to the property in question;
4. that the granting of the variance will not be materially detrimental to the public welfare, or injurious to the property or improvements in the same zone or vicinity in which the property is located; and
5. that the granting of the variance will not adversely affect any element of the General Plan.



# Adjustments / Slight Modifications

Deviate slightly (between 10 and 20%) from established Code provisions  
Generally for fence height and side yard setbacks

Decision-maker: Zoning Administrator

## Findings:

1. that while site characteristics or existing improvements make strict adherence to the zoning regulations impractical or infeasible, the project nonetheless conforms with the intent of those regulations;
2. that in light of the project as a whole, including any mitigation measures imposed, the project's location, size, height, operations and other significant features will be compatible with and will not adversely affect or further degrade adjacent properties, the surrounding neighborhood, or the public health, welfare, and safety; and
3. that the project is in substantial conformance with the purpose, intent and provisions of the General Plan, the applicable community plan and any applicable specific plan.



# Conditional Use Permit

For uses allowed on a case-by-case basis

Decision-maker: Depends on the activity (12.24 U, V, and W)

**U:** City Planning Commission (sea water desalination facilities, airports, stadiums)

**V:** Area Planning Commission (mixed commercial-residential use developments)

**W:** Zoning Administrator (churches in residential zones, drive-through fast food restaurants, pawnshops)

## Core Findings:

1. that the project will enhance the built environment in the surrounding neighborhood or will perform a function or provide a service that is essential or beneficial to the community, city, or region;
2. that the project's location, size, height, operations and other significant features will be compatible with and will not adversely affect or further degrade adjacent properties, the surrounding neighborhood, or the public health, welfare, and safety; and
3. that the project substantially conforms with the purpose, intent and provisions of the General Plan, the applicable community plan, and any applicable specific plan.

Additional findings can be required



# Zoning Administrator Determination

Quasi-judicial, similar to a conditional use permit  
Less stringent public notification requirements

**Examples:** Farmer's Markets, Radio Antennas, Alcohol Sales and Consumption

Decision-maker: Zoning Administrator

## Core Findings:

1. that the project will enhance the built environment in the surrounding neighborhood or will perform a function or provide a service that is essential or beneficial to the community, city, or region;
2. that the project's location, size, height, operations and other significant features will be compatible with and will not adversely affect or further degrade adjacent properties, the surrounding neighborhood, or the public health, welfare, and safety; and
3. that the project substantially conforms with the purpose, intent and provisions of the General Plan, the applicable community plan, and any applicable specific plan.



# Public Benefit

## Ministerial:

Public benefit uses not otherwise allowed may be provided, so long as they comply with performance standards

## Discretionary:

May request to provide a benefit not otherwise listed, using the Alternative Compliance Procedure

**Examples:** Cemeteries, libraries, fire stations, homeless shelters

Decision-maker: Planning Director or designee



Source: <http://www.barlar.org/LosAngelesCemeteryIrg.jpg>



Source: [http://www.httib.com/images/LAC\\_FS136.jpg](http://www.httib.com/images/LAC_FS136.jpg)





# Site Plan Review

For projects over 50 units or greater than 50,000 square feet  
Ensure projects properly relate to their surroundings

## Findings:

1. that the project is in substantial conformance with the purposes, intent and provisions of the General Plan, applicable community plan, and any applicable specific plan;
2. that the project consists of an arrangement of buildings and structures (including height, bulk and setbacks), off-street parking facilities, loading areas, lighting, landscaping, trash collection, and other such pertinent improvements, that is or will be compatible with existing and future development on adjacent properties and neighboring properties; and
3. that any residential project provides recreational and service amenities to improve habitability for its residents and minimize impacts on neighboring properties.



# Zone Changes, General Plan Amendments, and Ordinances

Legislative actions that require City Planning Commission and City Council approval

Zone Changes involve redesignating a parcel as a different zone.

General Plan Amendments modify the Zoning Map to take account of Zone Changes.

Ordinances create new policies or regulations that apply citywide or else in specific areas.

Decision-maker: APC or CPC, via Hearing Officer

## Findings:

1. action is consistent with the General Plan
2. is in conformity with public necessity, convenience, general welfare, and good zoning practice



# Division of Land per State Subdivision Map Act

Break parcels into smaller properties

Includes new condominiums and condominium conversions

**Parcel Map:** four or fewer parcels/units

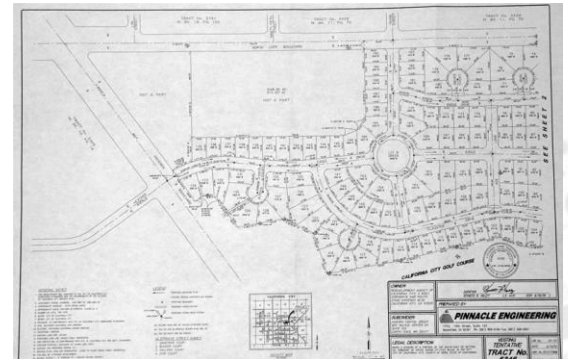
**Tract Map:** five or more parcels/units

**Preliminary / Tentative:** until finalized through the City Engineer and City Council

**Vesting:** allows subdivision to occur using policies that were in effect at time of approval

**Final:** division has been approved

**Recorded:** subdivision has officially been recorded with the county



Source: <http://www.californiacity.com/081407pcae10map1.jpg>



# Additional Resources



Further reading available at [cityplanning.lacity.org](http://cityplanning.lacity.org)

More about Zoning and the General Plan at [recode.la](http://recode.la)



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