

REPORT TO THE REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

DATE ISSUED: June 4, 2026

MEETING DATE: 6/17/2026 AGENDA 12
ITEM:

PROJECT NUMBER: PRJ2025-006185-(1-5)

PROJECT NAME: Modification Ordinance

PLAN NUMBER(S): Advance Planning Case No. RPPL2025005046

SUPERVISORIAL DISTRICT: 1-5

PROJECT LOCATION: Countywide

PROJECT PLANNER: Alyson Stewart, Principal Planner
astewart@planning.lacounty.gov

RECOMMENDATION

LA County Planning staff (“staff”) recommends the Regional Planning Commission (“Commission”) adopt the attached resolution recommending **APPROVAL** to the County of Los Angeles Board of Supervisors the Modification Ordinance (“Ordinance”), Advance Planning Case No. RPPL2025005046, and find that the Ordinance is categorically exempt from CEQA.

Staff recommends the following motion:

I MOVE THAT THE REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION CLOSE THE PUBLIC HEARING AND FIND THAT THE CATEGORICAL EXEMPTION QUALIFIES PURSUANT TO STATE AND LOCAL CEQA GUIDELINES.

I ALSO MOVE THAT THE REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION ADOPT THE ATTACHED RESOLUTION RECOMMENDING APPROVAL TO THE COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES BOARD OF SUPERVISORS THE MODIFICATION ORDINANCE, PROJECT NO. PRJ2025-006185, ADVANCE PLANNING CASE NO. RPPL2025005046 [WITH THE REVISIONS RECOMMENDED BY STAFF (IF APPLICABLE)].”

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

A. Project Summary

Advance Planning Case Number RPPL2025005046 is a proposed ordinance (Ordinance) to amend Title 22 (Planning and Zoning) of the Los Angeles County Code to restructure and streamline procedures for modification of development standards throughout Title 22. The Ordinance (Exhibit A), Draft Resolution (Exhibit B), Public Correspondence (Exhibit D) are attached to this report. To assist with reviewing the Ordinance, a list of code sections to be amended is also attached (Exhibit C).

B. Project Background

The Ordinance revises the process for modifying development standards to create clear and consistent procedures and requires amendments to the specific plans so that these procedures can be implemented Countywide. Additional amendments pertaining to side yard setbacks on narrow lots in the specific plans are necessary to provide flexibility for modifications and ensure properties are regulated consistently across all transit-oriented-district specific plans.

The Technical Update to Title 22 in 2019 categorized most case processing procedures into Type I through IV Reviews, established a uniform format for all community standards districts in Division 10, and integrated all specific plans in Division 11. However, the Technical Update to Title 22 disclosed consistency issues with existing regulations for modifications of development standards throughout the code, including countywide provisions, community standards districts and specific plans. This Ordinance aims to address those inconsistencies by introducing a new three-tiered Modification review procedure.

On January 21, 2026, staff presented to your Commission an overview of the Ordinance and explained that existing procedures for modifying development standards often required one of several types of applications, including use permits, which result in implementation concerns for planners and applicants. Staff also presented excerpts of state law pertaining to the approval of modifications that can be approved without a public hearing when a Zoning Administrator is the decision maker. Staff explained that this approach provides flexibility for applicants if there are little to no impacts nor concerns to surrounding property owners.

C. Major Elements and Key Components

The Ordinance includes the following:

New provisions:

- Introduces a new Ministerial Modification Review application for the Director to process ministerially if the modifications do not result in impacts to surrounding

properties and complies with all other regulations. Currently, there are procedures in Title 22 that give the Director authority to approve modifications, but there is no clear pathway for such approval.

- Introduces a new Modification Permit application to authorize modifications of development standards with a discretionary review if the modification would result in minor or minimal impacts to surrounding properties. Existing provisions in Title 22 to modify standards with a Minor Conditional Use Permit application are proposed to be replaced with a Modification Permit application.
- Establishes the role of the Zoning Administrator, in accordance with state law, as the Review Authority for Modification Permit applications.

Removed provisions:

- Removes chapters and provisions in Title 22 on Yard Modifications, Minor Parking Deviation, Parking Permit, Revised Exhibit “A,” Modifications of Conditions on Conditional Use Permits, Community Standards District (“CSD”) Modifications, and Specific Plan Substantial Conformance Review for modifications of development standards.

Streamlined provisions:

- Moves procedures for modifying parking requirements to the new Modification Permit.
- Realigns and removes duplicative findings for modifications in CSDs and Planning Area Standards Districts (“PASD”) with the findings for a Modification Permit or Variance. Unique findings specific to a CSD or PASD will remain within its section.
- Removes duplicative application procedures for CSD modifications, so only the Modification Permit or Variance procedures will be used. Unique procedures specific to a CSD or PASD will remain within its section.
- Changes the requirement for a Minor Conditional Use Permit or Conditional Use Permit application to authorize modification of development standards for Specific Uses, CSDs, and PASDs to either the Modification Permit or Variance application.
- Changes the requirement for a Specific Plan Conformance Review application for modification of development standards in a Specific Plan to either the Modification Permit or Variance application.
- Streamlines procedures and amends findings to the Variance chapter for consistency.

Other changes:

- Updates Division 3, Zones and Division 7, Standards for Specific Uses – outdoor dining, live entertainment, wineries, and wireless facilities – that currently require a Minor Conditional Use Permit or Condition Use Permit to modify development standards to conform to this new framework.
- Standardizes policies for modification of side yard setbacks, including those on narrow lots, in four Transit Oriented District Specific Plans. Clarifies that the side

yard setback may be modified to no less than three feet from the lot line with a Modification Permit.

- Clarifies that a use permit, such as the Conditional Use Permit, is not to modify development standards, and also clarifies that decision makers may not make any modifications to standards less stringent than as prescribed for the use by the zone without a separate Modification Permit or Variance application.

The Ordinance simplifies, streamlines and standardizes modification procedures. Currently, Title 22 allows modifications of development standards with either a Conditional Use Permit, Minor Conditional Use Permit, or Variance. In addition to these permits, there are several other modification processes, such as Yard Modification, CSD Modification, Parking Permit, Minor Parking Deviation, and conformance reviews within specific plans for modification of specific development standards. A request for modification of a particular development standard may require a different application depending on the project's location. Furthermore, Title 22 also allows the Director to approve minor modifications of a few standards, such as fence material substitutions, but does not specify an application for the Director to act on this type of modification request. Lastly, notification radius is not uniform Countywide, with 300 to 500 feet in certain areas, and 1,000 feet in other areas and the radius does not always align with rural and urban boundaries.

Existing procedures create ongoing complexity for applicants, planners, and property owners due to inconsistencies in how modifications are reviewed and approved. Conditional Use Permits and Minor Conditional Use Permits are intended to approve the establishment or continuation of a land use and are not intended to modify development standards. Nothing in Title 22 authorizes the decision-makers to consider making one or more development standards less stringent for the same use permit authorizing the land use. A Variance is intended to approve modification of development standards, as delineated by state law, but is seldom requested or issued. With the implementation of this Ordinance, all modifications will be managed through either a Modification Permit for minor impacts or a Variance for significant impacts, with the Variance being the default option for additional protection of impacted neighbors or communities.

Different procedures regarding side yard setbacks, particularly on narrow lots, in recently adopted transit-oriented district specific plans create inconsistency and result in implementation issues. The specific plans prescribe specific side yard distances but do not consider Section 22.110.080 of Title 22 for narrow lots. The Ordinance implements a Department policy memo and standardizes these side yard setbacks across these specific plans and links the applicability of Section 22.110.080 to narrow lots.

D. General Plan Consistency

The Ordinance is consistent with the General Plan. The following are goals and policies of the General Plan that are applicable to the Ordinance:

- Economic Development Element
 - Policy ED 2.8: Streamline the permit review process and other entitlement processes for businesses and industries.
 - Policy ED 4.7: Support expedited permitting for green building retrofits.
- Land Use Element
 - Policy LU 1.14: Allow specific plans to include implementation procedures for flexibility, such as development phasing, and redistribution of intensities and uses, as appropriate.
 - Policy LU 1.15: Require a specific plan amendment for any deviation from the procedures and policies established by a specific plan.
 - Policy LU 2.10: Ensure consistency between land use policy and zoning by undergoing a comprehensive zoning consistency analysis that includes zoning map changes and Zoning Code amendments, as needed.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

A Categorical Exemption (Class 5 – Minor Alterations In Land Use Limitations) was prepared under the California Environmental Quality Act (“CEQA”) and the County environmental guidelines. The Project is broadly administrative in nature and focuses on procedures which do not change existing ministerial and discretionary case processing and are consistent with State law. There is one aspect of the Project where modifications to side yard setbacks on narrow lots in transit-oriented district specific plans are clarified, which is considered minor in nature and does not result in changes in land use or density.

OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT

A. County Department Comments and Recommendations

Fire and Public Works reviewed the ordinance and had no additional comments or recommendations.

B. Project Outreach and Engagement

Three outreach events were held to explain the ordinance.

Virtual Meeting April 8, 2026

Five participants attended the virtual meeting that was open countywide, most represented the development side. After the presentation, there was only one question from a participant regarding modifications for subdivision cases.

Acton Town Council May 4, 2026

Approximately 20 people attended the monthly town council meeting at Acton-Agua Dulce Library, and three people observed the meeting virtually. After the presentation, there were questions regarding sign posting and appeals for Type II Reviews, the role of the Zoning Administrator in state law, and the expansion of the public hearing notification radius.

Agua Dulce Town Council May 13, 2026

Twenty-two people attended the monthly town council meeting on Zoom. There were a couple of questions regarding significant ridgeline protection and modifications for Agua Dulce CSD.

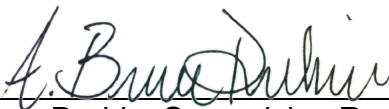
Furthermore, handouts with project summary and FAQs were provided during DRP office hours at Rowland Heights and Hacienda Height Libraries during April and May 2026, as well as one community engagement meeting in Ladera Heights on April 17, 2026.

C. Public Comments

A total of two letters were received by Acton Town Council and Save Our Rural Towns expressing concerns about the ordinance and would like some additional language to clarify those concerns. See Exhibit D for copies of correspondence(s).

Report

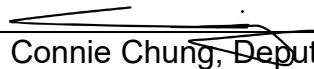
Reviewed By:



Bruce Durbin, Supervising Regional Planner

Report

Approved By:



Connie Chung, Deputy Director

LIST OF ATTACHED EXHIBITS

EXHIBIT A	Ordinance
EXHIBIT B	Draft Resolution
EXHIBIT C	List of Sections Amended in Ordinance
EXHIBIT D	Public Correspondence