

REPORT TO THE REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

DATE ISSUED: October 7, 2024

HEARING DATE: October 23, 2024 AGENDA ITEM: 5(a)

PROJECT NUMBER: **PROJECT NO. PRJ2023-001700**

PROJECT NAME: Westside Area Plan

PLAN NUMBER(S):
General Plan Amendment No. RPPL2023002433
Zone Change No. RPPL2023002450
Advance Planning Project No. RPPL2023002448
Environmental Assessment No. RPPL2023002449

SUPERVISORIAL DISTRICT: 2, 3

PROJECT LOCATION: Westside Planning Area

PROJECT PLANNER: Julie Yom, AICP, Principal Planner
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RECOMMENDATION

LA County Planning staff (staff) recommends that the Regional Planning Commission (RPC) adopt the attached resolution (Exhibit A) recommending **APPROVAL** to the County of Los Angeles Board of Supervisors (Board) of the Westside Area Plan Project, Project Number PROJECT NO. PRJ2023-001700, General Plan Amendment No. RPPL2023002433, Zone Change No. RPPL2023002450, Advance Planning Project No. RPPL2023002448, and Environmental Assessment No. RPPL2023002449.

Staff recommends the following motion:

I MOVE THAT THE REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION CLOSE THE PUBLIC HEARING AND RECOMMEND CERTIFICATION OF THE FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT ALONG WITH THE REQUIRED FINDINGS OF FACT AND STATEMENT OF OVERRIDING CONSIDERATIONS WITH CHANGES AS RECOMMENDED BY STAFF AND ADOPT THE MITIGATION MONITORING AND REPORTING PROGRAM FOR THE WESTSIDE AREA PLAN 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 WESTSIDE AREA PLAN, PROJECT NO. PRJ2023-001700, GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT NO. RPPL2023002433, ZONE CHANGE NO. RPPL2023002450, ADVANCE PLANNING PROJECT NO. RPPL2023002448, AND ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT NO. RPPL2023002449 WITH THE REVISIONS AS RECOMMENDED BY STAFF.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

A. Project Summary

Project No. 2023-001700 is an amendment to the General Plan and Title 22 of the Los Angeles County Code (Title 22) to establish the Westside Area Plan (WSAP) and the Westside Planning Area Standards District, combined, the WSAP Project, for the seven unincorporated communities of the Westside Planning Area (Planning Area).

The Planning Area is located in the western portion of the County and covers the coastal communities, including Marina del Rey. With a population of approximately 32,000, the Planning Area includes seven unincorporated communities totaling approximately 7.4 square miles, which encompasses the eastern extension of the Santa Monica Mountains to the north and is bounded by the Pacific Ocean to the west, Los Angeles International Airport to the south, and an irregularly shaped boundary generally running along Eastern Avenue, Centinela Boulevard, Crenshaw Boulevard, and the 405 freeway to the east. The communities are predominantly residential neighborhoods and commercial corridors and centers, civic and educational facilities, parks, and open spaces.

The seven unincorporated communities within the Planning Area are: Ladera Heights, View Park and Windsor Hills; Marina del Rey; Ballona Wetlands; and Westside Islands, which includes West Los Angeles (Sawtelle Veterans Affairs [VA]), West Fox Hills, Franklin Canyon, and Gilmore Island.

The WSAP Project promotes active, healthy, and safe intergenerational neighborhoods where residents are well connected to great places to live, work, shop, recreate, and gather; economic vitality while serving local needs; protection and preservation of natural resources and open spaces; and sustainable mobility options in an enhanced built environment. To achieve this vision, the WSAP Project is shaped by the following five guiding principles. For additional details on the Project's vision statement, see Exhibit B.

Guiding Principles

1. Community Character
2. Growth and Land Use Development
3. Environment
4. Economic Health
5. Mobility

The Project proposes the following changes to the General Plan and Title 22:

1. Amend the General Plan to incorporate the WSAP or Area Plan and its accompanying Land Use Policy Map; and
2. Amend Figure 5.45: Westside Planning Area Map in the General Plan to update the name change of unincorporated West Fox Hills to Del Rey; and
3. Redesignate land use and zoning categories for 1,005 properties in the Planning Area to encourage walkable communities, diverse housing and land uses in proximity to transit, and sources of economic development, while preserving community character and culture. Proposed changes include corrections to parcels with inconsistencies between the land use and zoning designations and parcels with split land use or zoning categories. The WSAP Project also implements land use policy and zone changes identified in the Housing Element Rezoning Program; and
4. Amend Title 22 to establish the Westside Planning Area Standards District (PASD), adopt areawide standards, and incorporate standards applicable to communities in the Planning Area.

B. Project Background

The Project was initiated in winter 2022 to implement the General Plan Planning Areas Framework, which outlines 11 Planning Areas. The Planning Areas Framework provides a mechanism to respond to the unique needs and diverse character of the local unincorporated communities within a Planning Area. This is achieved through the development of an area plan and its components that tailor countywide objectives to the local context, geography, and needs.

The Project is informed by background reports on existing conditions and needs assessments, both at the areawide and community scale, on the topics of mobility, environmental resources and climate change, historical cultural context, market and economics, along with community profiles for each unincorporated communities in the Planning Area. The reports identify areas of opportunity for housing, commercial activities, proximity between diverse land uses, mobility improvements, conservation of natural and scenic resources, hazard avoidance, cultural resources, and economic development. The background brief is available on the WSAP Project website (<https://planning.lacounty.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/WSAP-Background-Brief-Oct2023.pdf>).

On July 31, 2024, staff gave an overview to the Commission on the background and development of the project, as well as engagement efforts undertaken to date.

C. Major Elements and Key Components

Westside Area Plan (WSAP)

As a policy document and a component of the General Plan, the WSAP (Exhibit D) directs future development and land use decisions to achieve a shared vision for managing growth and the built environment within the Planning Area.

The vision of the WSAP, which was informed through extensive stakeholder engagement, guides the Planning Area toward sustainable development while recognizing and celebrating history, people, diversity, and culture. The WSAP includes six elements (*Chapters 2-7, Historic Resources Element; Land Use Element; Mobility Element; Economic Development Element; Conservation and Open Space Element; and Public Services and Facilities Element*), which include goals and policies to address the unique conditions and needs of the seven individual communities in the Planning Area. The WSAP also includes Chapter 8, *Implementation Programs*, which contains actions to implement policies from the six elements at both the areawide and community-specific scales.

General Plan Land Use Policy and Zoning Maps

The following describes the changes to General Plan Land Use Policy Map (Appendix A-D of the WSAP):

1. Housing Element Rezoning Program

These changes are required to meet the Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) as identified in the Housing Element, which includes a list of sites to be redesignated by 2024 to accommodate the County's RHNA shortfall, pursuant to Government Code section 65583(c)(1)(A).

A total of 62 lots are proposed to be redesignated to accommodate 5,548 potential housing units. These lots are generally located along major commercial corridors and proposed to be redesignated to Mixed Use (MU). The proposed MU land use designation allows for pedestrian-friendly and community-serving commercial uses that encourage walking, bicycling, and transit use, residential and commercial mixed uses, and multifamily residences. The MU land use designation allows a residential density of 50 to 150 dwelling units per net acre and a maximum FAR of 3.0 for non-residential and mixed-use development.

2. Administrative Changes

State law requires that the General Plan be consistent with zoning. A total of 810 Administrative Changes are proposed for the Planning Area, which is approximately 80%

of the proposed changes. The changes include fixes to inconsistencies between existing land use/development or land use category and zoning to better reflect the existing, on-the-ground uses; and fixes to unnecessary split-zoning.

3. Opportunity Sites

The land use changes for the Opportunity Sites implement the WSAP’s and General Plan’s goals to increase housing diversity and commercial options along major corridors and near transit, increase housing opportunities, bring diverse land uses in proximity to residential neighborhoods, promote walkable communities, and focus growth in areas with existing infrastructure while preserving the community’s character and culture. There are 10 Opportunity Sites.

The Opportunity Sites were selected based on comprehensive research, community input, and mostly sites identified in the Housing Element. In project surveys and comments during public meetings, community members expressed their desire to preserve the characteristics of single-family residential neighborhoods and their preference to see growth along the commercial corridors (i.e., Slauson Avenue). Staff held a series of Opportunity Sites workshops to inform the community about the potential sites and reflected community feedback to finalize the selection process.

The land use and zone changes in the Opportunity Areas include the following categories of changes:

Existing Land Use Category	Proposed Land Use Category
CG (General Commercial)	MU (Mixed Use)

Existing Zoning Category	Proposed Zoning Category
C-3	MXD (Mixed Use Development)

Zoning Code/Title 22 – Westside Planning Area Standards District (PASD)

The Westside PASD is established to enhance the character of the seven unincorporated communities within the Planning Area. The PASD implements the goals and policies of the WSAP. New areawide and community-specific standards were developed in response to community feedback. The Ordinance is attached as Exhibit M. For a detailed summary of the Ordinance, please refer to Exhibit H.

1. PASD Areawide Development Standards

This section contains new standards applicable to the Planning Area. New standards include height limits, requirements for visually unobtrusive service areas and mechanical equipment, and provision of landscaped buffer and screening.

2. PASD Zone Specific Development Standards

New standards are proposed to apply to all mixed-use zones. New standards include requirements for the placement of loading spaces, utilization of decorative fencing or landscaping, and restrictions to loading and unloading time.

3. Baldwin Hills Community Standards District (CSD)

The existing standards in the Baldwin Hills CSD are moved to the PASD. The figure maps are renumbered.

4. Ladera Heights CSD

This section contains new standards applicable to the Ladera Heights CSD. New standards include requirements for a height limit for all mixed-use zones as well as shielding of lighting, provisions for fence transparency, and establishment of front yard setback overlays for all residential zones.

5. View Park/Windsor Hills CSD

This section contains new standards applicable to the View Park/Windsor Hills CSD. New standards include requirements for a height limit for all mixed-use zones as well as shielding of lighting, provisions for fence transparency, and establishment of front yard setback overlay zones for all residential zones.

D. General Plan Consistency

The Project implements the General Plan's Planning Area Framework Program No. LU-1 for the Westside Planning Area. The Project is consistent with and helps to implement the following applicable goals and policies of the General Plan at the sub-regional level:

• **Land Use Element:**

- Goal LU 1: A General Plan that serves as the constitution for development, and a Land Use Policy Map that implements the General Plan's Goals, Policies and Guiding Principles.
- Goal LU 2: Community-based planning efforts that implement the General Plan and incorporate public input, and regional and community level collaboration.
- Goal LU 3: A development pattern that discourages sprawl and protects and conserves areas with natural resources and SEAs.
- Goal LU 4: Infill development and redevelopment that strengthens and enhances communities.
- Goal LU 5: Vibrant, livable and healthy communities with a mix of land uses, services and amenities.
- Goal LU 7: Compatible land uses that complement neighborhood character and the natural environment.
- Goal LU 9: Land use patterns and community infrastructure that promote health and wellness.

- Goal LU 10: Well-designed and healthy places that support a diversity of built environments.
- **Mobility Element:**
 - Goal M 1: Street designs that incorporate the needs of all users.
 - Goal M 2: Interconnected and safe bicycle- and pedestrian-friendly streets, sidewalks, paths and trails that promote active transportation and transit use.
 - Goal M 4: An efficient multimodal transportation system that serves the needs of all residents.
 - Goal M 5: Land use planning and transportation management that facilitates the use of transit.
- **Air Quality Element:**
 - Goal AQ 2: The reduction of air pollution and mobile source emissions through coordinated land use, transportation and air quality planning.
 - Goal AQ 3: Implementation of plans and programs to address the impacts of climate change.
- **Parks and Recreation Element:**
 - Goal P/R 1: Enhanced active and passive park and recreation opportunities for all users.
- **Economic Development Element:**
 - Goal ED 1: An economic base and fiscal structures that attract and retain valuable industries and businesses.
 - Goal ED 2: Land use practices and regulations that foster economic development and growth.
- **Housing Element:**
 - Goal HE 1: A wide range of housing types in sufficient supply to meet the needs of current and future residents, particularly for persons with special needs, including but not limited to: extremely low, very low and low income households, seniors, persons with disabilities (including those with developmental disabilities), large households, female-headed households, people experiencing homelessness and at risk of homelessness, and farmworkers.
 - Policy HE 1.1: Identify and maintain an adequate inventory of sites to accommodate the County's RHNA.

- Goal HE 3: A housing supply that ranges broadly in costs to enable all households, regardless of income, to secure adequate housing.
- Policy HE 3.1: Promote mixed-income neighborhoods and a diversity of housing types throughout the unincorporated Los Angeles County to increase housing choices for all economic segments of the population.
- Goal LU 4: Infill development and redevelopment that strengthens and enhances communities.
- Policy LU 4.1: Encourage infill development in urban and suburban areas on vacant, underutilized, and/or brownfield sites.
- Policy LU 4.2: Encourage the adaptive reuse of underutilized structures and the revitalization of older, economically distressed neighborhoods.
- Goal LU 5: Vibrant, livable and healthy communities with a mix of land uses, services and amenities.
- Policy LU 5.1: Encourage a mix of residential land use designations and development regulations that accommodate various densities, building types and styles.
- Policy LU 5.3: Support a mix of land uses that promote bicycling and walking, and reduce Vehicle Miles Traveled.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

Staff has determined that an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) (Exhibits I.1-I.3) was necessary for the Project. A Program Environmental Impact Report (PEIR) was prepared in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and County environmental guidelines to identify and mitigate any environmental impacts from the Project.

The Notice of Preparation was available for public review from November 16 to December 15, 2023. Staff held a scoping meeting on November 30, 2023 to provide project information and receive public comments.

The PEIR (Exhibit I.1) concludes that the Project would result in less than significant impacts to the following areas: Aesthetics; Air Quality; Biological Resources; Cultural Resources; Energy; Geology and Soils; Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions; Hazards and Hazardous Materials; Hydrology and Water Quality; Land Use and Planning; Noise; Population and Housing; Public Services; Recreation; Transportation; Tribal Cultural Resources; Utilities and Service Systems; and Wildfire.

The PEIR concludes that the Project would have potentially significant impacts that could be reduced, avoided, or substantially lessened through implementation of mitigation measures to the following areas, requiring a Mitigation Monitoring Program (Exhibit I.1): Biological Resources, Cultural Resources, Geology and Soils, and Tribal Cultural Resources.

The PEIR concludes that impacts to Air Quality, Noise, and Transportation are significant and unavoidable, requiring a Statement of Overriding Considerations (Exhibit I.2). The Final PEIR and CEQA Findings of Fact and Statement of Overriding Considerations are included as Exhibits I.1 and I.2.

OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT

A. County Department Comments and Recommendations

County departments including Arts and Culture, Beaches and Harbors, Public Works, Fire, Public Health, Sheriff, Library, and Parks and Recreation were consulted throughout the preparation of the project. Comments received from the departments were considered and incorporated into the project where appropriate.

B. Project Outreach and Engagement

The goal of the engagement process was to gain local perspectives on community needs, opportunities, local assets, and valued community features. Staff incorporated various strategies and methods to engage a diversity of community members. Staff provided opportunities and used a variety of approaches to engage stakeholders in the decision-making process.

Throughout the process, staff met with local agencies and community organizations, such as United Homeowners Association, Ladera Heights Civic Association, Baldwin Hills & Urban Water Conservancy, cities of Los Angeles and Culver City, to garner feedback.

Staff organized and/or attended 46 events with stakeholders. Notably, staff hosted an Open House event at the Kenneth Hahn State Recreation Area, which was attended by 55 people; a virtual community meeting on the availability of the draft WSAP documents, which was attended by 283 people; and a community meeting at Knox Presbyterian Church, which was attended by over 300 people. In addition, staff participated in community events and celebrations to engage with community members. Among these were the annual Taste of Soul community fair, Ladera Community Safety Event, CicLAvia bike event, and the County Juneteenth resource fair.

On June 15, 2023, a total of 6,170 postcards were mailed out to property owners in the Ladera Heights View Park/Windsor-Hills, and West Fox Hills (Del Rey) regarding the availability of the two community surveys. Also, on July 8, 2024, in anticipation of the public release of the Draft Plan and PEIR, a total of 6,300 postcards were mailed out to all property owners in the Planning Area regarding the availability of draft documents for public review and comment. In addition, staff emailed a courtesy RPC public hearing notice (Exhibit K) on September 16, 2024 to 6,327 interested parties, local agencies, and local organizations. Staff also noticed the RPC public hearing in two local newspapers, the Los Angeles Sentinel and the Argonaut.

Staff regularly sent newsletters, notices, documents, and updates to 1,161 email addresses, and posted information on the project website. Staff also regularly held virtual appointments. For additional details on the WSAP Project outreach efforts, please refer to Exhibit J.

C. Public Comments

At the time of report preparation, staff has received 4 letters and emails. See Exhibit N for copies of the public correspondence. In addition, staff is including public comments received before September 23, 2024 for reference (Exhibit L), which some of those comments related to CEQA are also included as Appendix D of the FEIR.

ADDITIONAL STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS

To correct technical errors, staff recommends revisions to the Ordinance as shown in Exhibit N.

Notably, the existing Baldwin Hills CSD is moved to the WSAP PASD. The figure maps are renumbered. In addition, minor changes have been made for clarification to standards.

Report
 Reviewed By: Edward Rojas
 Edward Rojas, AICP, Assistant Deputy Director

Report
 Approved By: Connie Chung
 Connie Chung, AICP, Deputy Director

LIST OF ATTACHED EXHIBITS	
EXHIBIT A	Draft Resolution of the Regional Planning Commission
EXHIBIT B	WSAP Vision Statement and Guiding Principles
EXHIBIT C	Proposed Amendments to the General Plan
EXHIBIT D	Westside Area Plan (WSAP) with Appendices (Public Hearing Draft)
EXHIBIT E	WSAP Land Use Change maps
EXHIBIT F	WSAP Zone Change maps
EXHIBIT G	WSAP Ordinance (Public Hearing Draft)
EXHIBIT H	Detailed Summary of WSAP Ordinance

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GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT NO. RPPL2023002433
ZONE CHANGE NO. RPPL2023002450
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ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT NO. RPPL2023002449

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EXHIBIT I.1	WSAP Final PEIR with Appendices and MMRP
EXHIBIT I.2	WSAP Findings and SOC
EXHIBIT I.3	WSAP Draft PEIR with Appendices
EXHIBIT J	WSAP Community Outreach Summary
EXHIBIT K	Public Hearing Notice
EXHIBIT L	Public Comments Received before 9/23
EXHIBIT M	Public Comments Received on and after 9/23 (30 day Public Hearing Draft Review period)
EXHIBIT N	Revised WSAP Ordinance