



DEPARTMENT OF CITY PLANNING

RECOMMENDATION REPORT

City Planning Commission

Date: March 8, 2018
Time: After 8:30 a.m.
Place: Los Angeles City Hall
Council Chambers – Room 340
200 North Spring Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Public Hearing: December 7, 2017
Appeal Status: N/A
Expiration Date: N/A
Multiple Approval: N/A

Case No.: CPC-2017-4365-ZC
CEQA No.: ENV-2017-4366-CE,
ENV-2003-1922-EIR-ADD1
Incidental Cases: None
Related Cases: None
Council No.: 11 – Bonin
Plan Area: Westchester – Playa del
Rey
Specific Plan: N/A
Certified NC: Westchester - Playa del Rey
GPLU: Various
Zone: Various
Applicant: City of Los Angeles
Representative: N/A

PROJECT LOCATION: The majority of properties zoned for commercial use in the area generally bounded by Sepulveda Blvd. to the west, 96th St. to the north, La Cienega Blvd. to the east, and 102nd St. to the south within the Westchester – Playa Del Rey Community Plan area.

PROPOSED PROJECT: Westchester Community Plan Implementation Overlay (CPIO), Century/Aviation Subarea.

REQUESTED ACTION:

1. Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines, Section 15308, an Exemption from CEQA, given that there is no substantial evidence demonstrating that an exception to a categorical exemption pursuant to CEQA Guidelines, Section 15300.2 applies.
2. Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3), a Common Sense Exemption, based on the whole of the administrative record, that the project is not subject to CEQA because it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the project may have a significant effect on the environment.
3. Based on the independent judgement of the decision-maker, after consideration of the whole of the administrative record, the project was assessed in Environmental Impact Report No. ENV-2003-1922-EIR adopted on April 13, 2004; and pursuant to CEQA Guidelines 15162 and 15164, as supported by the addendum (ENV-2003-1922-EIR-ADD1) dated February 15, 2018, no major revisions to the Environmental Impact Report is required; and no subsequent EIR or negative declaration is required for approval of the project.
4. Pursuant to Los Angeles Municipal Code Section 12.32-S, adoption of the Westchester – Playa Del Rey Community Plan Implementation Overlay (CPIO) and establishment of the Century/Aviation Subarea with corresponding development standards (Exhibits A and B).
5. Pursuant to LAMC Section 12.32-F, adoption of a zone change from [T][Q]C2-2 to [T][Q]C2-2-CPIO, C2-2 to C2-2-CPIO, and M2-1 to M2-1-CPIO for select parcels identified (Exhibit C).

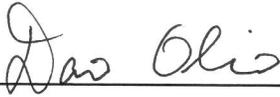
RECOMMENDED ACTIONS:

1. **Approve and Recommend** that the City Council **adopt** the Westchester Community Plan Implementation Overlay (CPIO), Century/Aviation Subarea establishing development standards for subject properties (Exhibit A).
2. **Approve and Recommend** that the City Council **adopt** a Zone Change from [T][Q]C2-2 to [T][Q]C2-2-CPIO, C2-2 to C2-2-CPIO, and M2-1 to M2-1-CPIO as detailed in the proposed Ordinance Map (Exhibit C).
3. **Find**, based on the independent judgement of the decision-maker, after consideration of the whole of the administrative record, the project was assessed in Environmental Impact Report No. ENV-2003-1922-EIR adopted on April 13, 2004; and pursuant to CEQA Guidelines 15162 and 15164, as supported by the addendum (ENV-2003-1922-EIR-ADD1) dated February 15, 2018, no major revisions to the Environmental Impact Report is required; and no subsequent EIR or negative declaration is required for approval of the project.
4. **Determine** that, based on the whole of the administrative record, the Project is exempt from CEQA pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15308, and there is no substantial evidence demonstrating that an exception to a categorical exemption pursuant to CEQA Guidelines, Section 15300.2 applies.
5. **Determine** that, based on the whole of the administrative record, the Project is exempt from CEQA pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15061 (b)(3), because it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the Project may have a significant effect on the environment.
6. **Approve** this Staff Report as the City Planning Commission Report.
7. **Approve and Recommend** that the City Council **Adopt** the attached Findings.

VINCENT P. BERTONI, AICP
Director of Planning

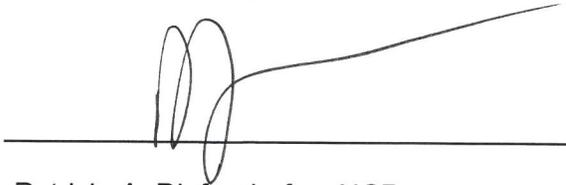


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PROJECT ANALYSIS

Project Summary

The proposed Community Plan Implementation Overlay (CPIO) Century/Aviation Subarea establishes development standards for commercially and industrially zoned properties in the Westchester – Playa Del Rey Community Plan, adjacent to Los Angeles International Airport.

The purposes identified in the CPIO are as follows:

- A. *To provide supplemental development regulations tailored to the Community Plan Area to ensure that development enhances the unique architectural, environmental, and cultural qualities of the Community Plan Area, integrates improvements and enhancements to the public rights-of-way, and maintains compatible land uses, and appropriate development scale, intensity, and density.*
- B. *To develop a unique sense of place and identity for Century Boulevard as one of Los Angeles' premier gateway experiences for domestic and foreign visitors.*
- C. *To activate Century Boulevard by creating a more walkable and pedestrian-friendly environment.*
- D. *To encourage new and infill development of amenities such as retail, entertainment, restaurants, and public spaces for businesses, visitors, and the local workforce.*
- E. *To complement the Century Boulevard Streetscape Plan which aims to improve and enhance the public right-of-way.*
- F. *To create approval processes, including a ministerial administrative clearance process that promotes infill development that will positively affect the area.*

The proposed ordinance establishes a CPIO for the Westchester – Playa Del Rey Community Plan and creates the Century/Aviation Subarea that would be applied to parcels located in the following areas: parcels and portions thereof located in the area generally bounded by Sepulveda Blvd. to the west, 96th St. to the north, La Cienega Blvd. to the east, and 102nd St. to the south within the Westchester – Playa Del Rey Community Plan, as shown on the attached map (Exhibit A).

Background

The CPIO is a regulatory land use ordinance as permitted by Section 13.14 of the Los Angeles Municipal Code, entitled “ ‘CPIO’ Community Plan Implementation Overlay.” The City establishes CPIOs to ensure that: development enhances the unique architectural, environmental, and cultural qualities of each Community Plan area, integrates improvements and enhancements to the public right-of-way, and maintains compatible land uses, scale, intensity, and density; and, create an approval process to enable infill development that will positively impact communities. The CPIO is the result of several years of planning and community engagement that involved a community workshop; numerous meetings and conversations with employers, property owners, and community business organizations; as well as staff input from numerous City departments.

In 2012, the Los Angeles Department of City Planning was awarded a Transit-Oriented Development Planning Grant from the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro) to do station area planning around five Exposition Line Light Rail Transit (LRT) stations and six Crenshaw/LAX Line LRT stations, including the Century/Aviation station which this CPIO focuses on. The goal of the grant is to encourage cities to develop regulatory changes that are supportive of transit as a means to foster transit ridership, reduce automobile dependence and improve regional air quality.

The Crenshaw/LAX Line LRT's Century/Aviation station (which will begin operations in 2019) and the Airport Metro Connector station near Aviation/96th station (which will begin operations in 2021) are part of several upgrades to the transportation infrastructure and other modernization efforts under way or proposed for the Los Angeles International Airport (LAX) area that are intended to improve access and circulation around the airport. These improvements include the Automated People Mover (which will connect to the Aviation/96th station), Intermodal Transportation Facilities, and a Consolidated Rent-A-Car facility. A proposed Streetscape Plan for Century Boulevard provides a blueprint for improvements to the public right-of-way that will improve the pedestrian environment and complement development on adjacent lots.

For the Century/Aviation station, the Department of City Planning is proposing the creation of the subject CPIO. The purpose of the CPIO is to create a safer, more attractive pedestrian environment with more active visitor- and employee-serving uses along Century Boulevard.

This CPIO does not propose to change the allowable uses, densities, or heights of buildings, nor does it propose any new development projects. It is intended to better guide future development on the corridor by:

- encouraging active ground floor and visitor-serving uses that lead to an enhanced pedestrian environment;
- improving the visual character and design of new commercial development by imposing various requirements that will ensure consistency in: setback and yard requirements; street wall; mid-block passageway requirements; and, the treatment of ground floors, including standards for entrances, window transparency, and entrances;
- requiring that buildings be oriented to the street to improve pedestrian circulation and to minimize vehicular and pedestrian conflicts;
- breaking up building massing;
- encouraging the provision of publicly accessible open space in new developments; and,
- including design requirements for parking structures to improve the aesthetic quality of the area and pedestrian safety.

This planning effort builds on and seeks to implement policies related to creating a more active corridor in this area as identified in the Westchester – Playa Del Rey Community Plan, adopted in 2004. On April 13, 2004, the Los Angeles City Council adopted the Westchester-Playa Del Rey Community Plan Update and certified its Final Environmental Impact Report (SCH# 2002061090) (FEIR). The FEIR evaluated substantial revisions to the Community Plan (namely changes to the land use and zoning within the Community Plan area (CPA), the reclassification of streets within the CPA, and the implementation of portions of the City's General Plan Framework) and included policies related to the Century corridor, which the proposed CPIO implements (see a more detailed explanation in the Findings section of this staff report.)

Key Plan Components

Pedestrian-Oriented Development and Active Uses

Uses within the subject area today consist largely of hotels and office uses that are interspersed with airport-related uses and often seek to serve travelers, including car rentals, long-term parking, and limited fast-service dining. Some hotels in the area incorporate sit-down restaurants; however, these are often inward-facing and primarily serve hotel guests. Furthermore, this area was developed largely in the 1960s and 70s and reflects the built form of the time, with buildings often set back from the street with large amounts of inaccessible landscaping and/or parking and vehicular access adjacent to the street. This combination of building form coupled with numerous undesirable uses discourages pedestrian activity. The urban design of the area and the orientation of buildings to the street was designed for automobile use and lacks the fine-grained, street-level active uses (such as retail and restaurants) that create a more hospitable walking environment.

Staff analysis of the area revealed that visitors, airport, and office employees do walk on Century Boulevard and its intersecting streets, but encounter harsh conditions. Additionally, there is a documented lack of amenities that would better serve visitors and employees that patronize the area.

The CPIO is intended to create a better environment for pedestrians and encourage walking. The objective is to promote new development that creates a pleasant experience and supports pedestrian activity by guiding thoughtful site planning, building articulation, and urban design. The CPIO will ensure that new development is oriented towards the street and minimizes conflicts between pedestrians and vehicles by locating vehicle access and loading areas where these will have minimal physical or visual impacts. The development standards will also encourage well-designed, active ground floors that contribute to a pedestrian-friendly environment by reinforcing a consistent streetwall, transparent storefronts, and pedestrian amenities, such as publicly accessible open spaces.

Regulations intended to encourage active uses and a pedestrian-oriented environment include:

- reinforcing the reduced parking ratios permitted by the existing State Enterprise Zone;
- encouraging small tenant spaces for Active Uses (such as retail, restaurant, entertainment, and personal services) in new developments by not requiring parking for tenant spaces less than 2,000 square feet;
- exempting changes of use to an Active Use from additional parking requirements and allowing existing parking spaces to be converted to an Active Use or publicly accessible without requiring replacement of those spaces;
- requiring projects with large additions (greater than 5,000 sf) on sites that are set far from the curb to add Active Uses or publicly accessible open space closer to the property line;
- requiring new construction and additions (including parking structures) to build out a minimum percentage of the building's frontage for Active Uses.
- providing well-designed spaces, often with outdoor dining, for pedestrians in setback areas adjacent to the sidewalk in coordination with the Century Boulevard Streetscape Plan;
- requiring substantial amounts of publicly accessible open spaces in new developments, which must include trees and seating;
- requiring high levels of ground floor transparency; and,
- ensuring entrances for all storefronts on public rights-of-way.

Parking and Transportation

Long-term airport parking is a very prevalent and profitable use for many property owners in this area, including both parking-only operators and the many hotels which lease out a substantial number of their spaces. However, as discussed above, the location and access to these parking

areas detracts from the area's ability to foster a vibrant pedestrian orientation, and generally discourages use of modes of transportation other than the car. In addition, the continued provision of large amounts of relatively inexpensive parking is likely to encourage greater levels of driving and lower levels of ridership on the Crenshaw/LAX Line LRT and Automated People Mover. To that end, the CPIO contains regulations that disincentivize the provision of large amounts of parking that degrade the pedestrian environment and discourage transit. The proposed regulations aim to create a built environment that fosters transit ridership and supports the substantial public investment in transit projects like the Crenshaw/LAX Line LRT and Automated People Mover, and to alleviate traffic congestion in the area.

The CPIO includes the following additional regulations intended to encourage a wide range of mobility options:

- requiring the provision of electric vehicle (EV) charging stations at 10% of a project's parking spaces;
- allowing parking reductions for the provision of spaces for car share vehicles;
- allowing projects to reduce the required parking by demonstrating that parking will be shared among a building's uses (i.e. an individual is likely to park once and visit multiple uses within a building);
- requiring unbundled parking so that parking spaces are leased or sold separately from the tenant space, which can then be provided to the public and allow for more efficient use of available parking; and,
- counting parking areas at or above ground level as floor area to encourage underground parking and discourage over parking.

Development Review

Projects (as defined in the CPIO) that do not require site plan review or otherwise trigger a discretionary process will be eligible for a administrative, staff-level review process to ensure compliance with the CPIO regulations. The objective is to streamline review of projects within the corridor that will contribute to creating a more compact, sustainable development pattern and help stimulate vibrancy and pedestrian activity around the stations. Per the Los Angeles Municipal Code, projects which request relief from the plan's provisions are able to request a CPIO Adjustment (a Director-level approval for deviations up 20% from quantifiable standards) or Exception (an Area Planning Commission decision for all other deviations from the CPIO), provided they substantially comply with design guidelines included as an appendix to the CPIO. The CPIO will not create a discretionary process where none exists today.

As a result of input following the public hearing, the definition of a project in the CPIO was modified to clarify that projects shall be reviewed for compliance only with those regulations that are applicable to the proposed scope of construction or use. Per the CPIO, a project does not include signage or construction that consists solely of interior and/or exterior remodeling, rehabilitation, or repair work that does not increase floor area or increase the required number of parking spaces.

Proposed Century Boulevard Streetscape Plan

In 2013, Los Angeles World Airports (LAWA) was similarly awarded a Transit-Oriented Development Planning Grant from Metro to do station area planning around the Crenshaw/LAX Line LRT transit stations in the airport area that will foster transit ridership. To accomplish these goals, LAWA, in coordination with the Department of City Planning, opted to prepare a streetscape plan for Century Boulevard that aims to improve the pedestrian orientation of Century Boulevard and complements ongoing Departmental efforts to update land use plans for the area.

The Century Boulevard Streetscape Plan (Streetscape Plan) guides streetscape improvements in the public right-of-way and a Pedestrian Amenity Area on private properties along Century Boulevard. The guidelines facilitate: the creation of expanded sidewalks; the introduction of new street trees; the placement of tailored street furniture and street lights; and, the opportunity for new public gathering spaces. By establishing such guidelines, the Century Boulevard Streetscape Plan aims to improve the pedestrian experience along Century Boulevard by creating a more amenity-rich area for employees and visitors. It is intended to be implemented over time as properties are developed with projects as defined in the Streetscape Plan.

The Streetscape Plan and the CPIO are independent of one another and can be implemented separately. However, they are consistent with one another. The Streetscape Plan focuses on the public right-of-way, while the CPIO is intended to improve the uses and built environment adjacent to the right-of-way on private property, including the requirement for the aforementioned Pedestrian Amenity Area.

The CPIO also functions as the mechanism for implementing the full sidewalk width specified in the Streetscape Plan. The CPIO does this through establishing a Build-To Line on the north side of Century Boulevard where additional sidewalk width is specified in the Streetscape Plan. The Build-To Line is set at 23 feet from the curb, which is intended to create a 20 foot sidewalk area and a 3 foot landscape buffer to accommodate the canopy of a double row of trees called for in the Streetscape Plan. The area of private property between the property line and the Build-To Line is designated as Pedestrian Amenity Area. This area is required to be built out consistent with the Streetscape Plan as part of a project approval and is intended to contain pedestrian amenities such as outdoor dining, landscaping, and seating.

Conclusion

The Department recommends that the proposed CPIO be adopted to place additional regulations on new development in the Century/Aviation subarea established in the CPIO. The proposed CPIO will implement a variety of design standards and parking regulations which will encourage transit use through an improved pedestrian environment. It will also require new developments to better interact with the street at a pedestrian scale, improve the design of new buildings, and disincentivize high levels of automobile parking. Future development along Century Boulevard will promote pedestrian activity and contribute to the visual and aesthetic quality of the greater LAX area, consistent with the City and County's substantial investment in creating a transit-friendly gateway to Los Angeles.

FINDINGS

Project Location

The proposed CPIO would be applied to parcels located in the following areas: parcels and portions thereof located in the area generally bounded by Sepulveda Blvd. to the west, 96th St. to the north, La Cienega Blvd. to the east, and 102nd St. to the south within the Westchester – Playa Del Rey Community Plan.

City Charter Findings

Charter Section 556

In accordance with Charter Section 556, the proposed Westchester – Playa Del Rey Community Plan Implementation Overlay (CPIO), Century/Aviation Subarea, along with the proposed zone change, is in substantial conformance with the purposes, intent, and provisions of the General Plan. The Proposed Ordinance is consistent with and helps to further accomplish the goals, objectives, and policies contained in portions of the General Plan, including the General Plan Framework Element, as outlined below. The General Plan Framework Element establishes the standards, goals, policies, objectives, programs, terms, definitions, and direction to guide the establishment of overlays.

Charter Section 558

In accordance with Charter Section 558 (b)(2), the proposed CPIO, along with the proposed zone change, will have no adverse effect upon the General Plan, specific plans, or any other plans being created by the Department of City Planning in that the CPIO and zone change ordinance are consistent with the City's General Plan and directly implements the policies of the Framework Element. In addition, the CPIO, inclusive of the proposed zone change ordinance, will be in conformity with public necessity, convenience, general welfare and good zoning practice. The CPIO encourages compact, pedestrian-friendly design within the transit corridor in order to increase mobility choices and promote transit ridership within the corridor. The CPIO and associated zone change ordinance follows good zoning practice in implementing these objectives through targeted incentives for Active Uses; increased publicly accessible open space requirements; urban design standards applicable to all development within the corridor; and restrictions on the location and design of parking areas and vehicular access.

LAMC Determinations

LAMC Section 12.32 C.2 (Land Use Legislative Actions)

In accordance with LAMC 12.32 C.2, the proposed zone change ordinance including the CPIO will have no adverse effect upon the General Plan, specific plans, or any other plans being created by the Department of City Planning in that the proposed land use ordinances are consistent with the City's General Plan and directly implement the policies of the Framework Element. In addition, the proposed zone change ordinance will be in conformity with public necessity, convenience, general welfare and good zoning practice. This ordinance promotes economic well-being and public convenience through the encouragement of active uses to satisfy the commercial, retail, and service needs of the area's visitors and employees. The ordinance follows good zoning practice in implementing General Plan policies by including development incentives to encourage new active uses adjacent to transit, and by including design regulations such as streetwall, frontage, and parking screening to encourage a more pedestrian-friendly environment.

LAMC Section 12.32 S (Supplemental Use District) and LAMC 13.14 (“CPIO” Community Plan Implementation Overlay)

LAMC Section 12.32 S requires initiation of a Supplemental Use District by the City Council, City Planning Commission, or the Director of Planning. The establishment of design regulations for the Century Boulevard corridor, as implemented by the CPIO, is an identified program found in the Westchester – Playa Del Rey Community Plan. The proposed CPIO is undertaken as a follow-up implementation program of the community plan, which was adopted by City Council on April 13, 2004.

The proposed CPIO is in conformance with the provisions of LAMC Section 13.14, in that it ensures that development enhances the unique architectural, environmental, and cultural qualities of the Westchester – Playa Del Rey Community Plan, integrates improvements and enhancements to the public right-of-way, and maintains compatible land uses, scale, intensity, and density by ensuring that new development provides a pedestrian-friendly mix of Active Uses and design.

The proposed CPIO and accompanying Zone Change boundaries are established in accordance with the provisions of Section 12.32 S of the Los Angeles Municipal Code (LAMC), and are consistent with the purpose of a CPIO as set forth in Section 13.14 of the Municipal Code. The establishment of the CPIO will enhance the physical and aesthetic environment and help implement the goals of the General Plan.

General Plan Framework

Land Use

Distribution of Land Use

With respect to the distribution of land use, the General Plan Framework Element states the following:

Objective 3.1: Accommodate a diversity of uses that support the needs of the City’s existing and future residents, businesses, and visitors.

Objective 3.2: Provide for the spatial distribution of development that promotes an improved quality of life by facilitating a reduction of vehicular trips, vehicle miles traveled, and air pollution.

The CPIO provides parking incentives and design requirements that would encourage a finer grain of active uses accessible to pedestrians which encourages a greater amount of pedestrian and trips through design and more walkable destinations. This shift in mobility patterns can lead to a reduction in automobile dependence and consequently reduced GHG emissions, consistent with policies in the SCAG RTP/SCS as well as state laws.

Mixed-Use Boulevards

With respect to Mixed-Use Boulevards, the Framework Element states the following:

Goal 3I: A network of boulevards that balance community needs and economic objectives with transportation functions and complement adjacent residential neighborhoods.

Objective 3.13: Provide opportunities for the development of mixed-use boulevards where existing or planned major transit facilities are located and which are characterized by low-

intensity or marginally viable commercial uses with commercial development and structures that integrate commercial, housing, and/or public service uses.

The Century Boulevard corridor, while zoned and planned for a broad mix of uses as a Regional Center, is not a typical mixed-use boulevard due to its lack of traditional residential uses. However, it does contain a mix of office and hotel uses, while lacking many of the uses, such as restaurants and retail, which often serve these visitors and employees. The CPIO encourages the development of more active ground floor uses by requiring a minimum percentage of all building frontages to be devoted to pedestrian-friendly active uses, such as retail and restaurant uses, while allowing a mix of uses to be built above the ground level, including hotel and office uses.

Transit Stations

With respect to transit stations, the General Plan Framework Element states the following:

Goal 3K: Transit stations to function as a primary focal point of the City's development.

Objective 3.15: Focus mixed commercial/residential uses, neighborhood-oriented retail, employment opportunities, and civic and quasi-public uses around urban transit stations, while protecting and preserving surrounding low-density neighborhoods from the encroachment of incompatible land uses.

Policy 3.15.1 Prepare detailed plans for land use and development of transit-oriented districts consistent with the provisions of the General Plan Framework Element and the Land Use/Transportation Policy.

Policy 3.15.4: Design and site new development to promote pedestrian activity and provide adequate transitions with adjacent residential uses.

Policy 3.15.5: Provide for the development of public streetscape improvements, where appropriate.

The CPIO would serve to better integrate land uses within the Century Boulevard Corridor area with the planned Crenshaw/LAX LRT's Century/Aviation and Century/96th stations. The CPIO includes urban design standards, which would ensure that new development promotes pedestrian activity by requiring buildings to be oriented to the street, with ground floor activity and transparency; limiting building length and requiring large blocks to be permeated with mid-block passageways; and limiting the visual impact of vehicular circulation and parking on building design.

Together, the Active Use incentives and urban design standards would create a mix of active uses along the corridor, in order to more efficiently use the land closest to the stations, foster transit ridership, better serve the needs of visitors and employees, and make the area more walkable.

Pedestrian-Oriented Districts

With respect to pedestrian-oriented districts, the General Plan Framework states the following:

Goal 3D: Pedestrian-oriented districts that provide local identity, commercial activity, and support Los Angeles' neighborhoods.

Goal 3E: Pedestrian-oriented, high activity, multi- and mixed-use centers that support and provide for Los Angeles' communities.

Policy 3.15.4: Design and site new development to promote pedestrian activity and provide adequate transitions with adjacent residential uses.

Policy 3.15.5: Provide for the development of public streetscape improvements, where appropriate.

Goal 3L: Districts that promote pedestrian activity and provide a quality experience for the City's residents.

Objective 3.16: Accommodate land uses, locate and design buildings, and implement streetscape amenities that enhance pedestrian activity.

The proposed design standards would ensure that future development within the project area is pedestrian-oriented. The standards require buildings to be oriented to the street, with convenient pedestrian entries, reduced front yard setbacks, and requirements for active uses and transparency (windows and doors) along the ground floor. The standards also require large sites to be permeated with paseos, streets, or other mid-block passageways that allow for more convenient pedestrian movement within the project area. Finally, the standards contain numerous regulations that limit the impact of driveways and parking on the pedestrian environment, thus making it safer and more pleasant to walk.

Urban Form and Neighborhood Design

With respect to urban form and neighborhood design, the General Plan Framework includes the following goals, objectives, and policies:

Goal 5A: A livable City for existing and future residents and one that is attractive to future investment. A City of interconnected, diverse neighborhoods that builds on the strengths of those neighborhoods and functions at both the neighborhood and citywide scales.

Objective 5.1: Translate the Framework Element's intent with respect to citywide urban form and neighborhood design to the community and neighborhood levels through locally prepared plans that build on each neighborhood's attributes, emphasize quality of development, and provide or advocate "proactive" implementation programs.

Objective 5.5: Enhance the livability of all neighborhoods by upgrading the quality of development and improving the quality of the public realm.

Objective 5.6: Conserve and reinforce the community character of neighborhoods and commercial districts not designated as growth areas.

Objective 5.8: Reinforce or encourage the establishment of a strong pedestrian orientation in designated neighborhood districts, community centers, and pedestrian-oriented subareas within regional centers, so that these districts and centers can serve as a focus of activity for the surrounding community and a focus of investment in the community.

The CPIO encourages higher quality development to occur within the area served by the Crenshaw/LAX Line LRT and other transit, consistent with a set of design standards. These design standards include maximum front yard setbacks, minimum streetwall standards, required direct entrances from the street, and limitations on parking and driveways in the front of a property, as well as requirements for ground floor activity and transparency. Compliance with these

standards would contribute to the creation of a vibrant urban environment. The design standards also regulate building materials and architectural details to ensure that there is a high standard of design quality in new development. Finally, the design standards address the design of publicly accessible open space, ensuring that such space is of sufficient size, easily accessible, and incorporates sustainable practices in to order to encourage comprehensive placemaking and serve the primary users of the area.

Economic Development

With respect to economic development, the General Plan Framework states the following:

Policy 7.2.3 Encourage new commercial development in proximity to rail and bus transit corridors and stations.

The CPIO would serve to better integrate land uses within the Century Boulevard Corridor area with the planned Crenshaw/LAX Line LRT's Century/Aviation and Century/96th stations. The CPIO encourages a finer-grain grain of active uses to serve employees and visitors along the Century corridor and provides targeted incentives and design requirements for these uses.

Objective 7.4 improve the provision of governmental services, expedite the administrative processing of development applications, and minimize public and private development application costs.

Policy 7.4.1 Develop and maintain a streamlined development review process to assure the City's competitiveness within the Southern California region.

Policy 7.4.2. Maximize opportunities for "by-right" development.

The Proposed Ordinance includes a more streamlined development review procedure in which projects that comply with the CPIO regulations would be eligible for Administrative Clearance. This would facilitate the development process for new development and potentially reduce development costs, assuring that the City, and Century Boulevard in particular, remains competitive with surrounding areas.

Westchester – Playa del Rey Community Plan

As a Community Plan Implementation Overlay, the pedestrian-friendly design and parking standards of the CPIO explicitly serve to implement the following goals, objectives, policies, and programs of the Westchester – Playa Del Rey Community (which, along with the other Community Plans comprises the Land Use Element of the General Plan):

Goal 2: Encourage a strong and competitive commercial sector that promotes economic vitality and serves the needs of the Westchester-Playa Del Rey Community through safe, accessible, and well-designed commercial districts, while preserving the historic and cultural character of the community.

Objective 2-2: Strengthen and enhance the major commercial districts of the community into distinctive, pedestrian-friendly areas providing shopping, civic, social and recreational activities.

Objective 2-3: Enhance the land use compatibility, visual appearance, design, and appeal of commercial development.

Policy 2-3.1: Enhance the visual appearance and appeal of commercial properties by

regulating design, signage, landscaping, and similar issues wherever possible.

Objective 2-4: Further improve and enhance the Century Boulevard/98th Street Corridor as a hotel, shopping and entertainment district serving airline travelers and visitors.

Policy 2-4.1: Develop the Century Boulevard/98th Street Corridor to offer a wide variety of hotel accommodations, shopping, dining, and entertainment opportunities and other services for air travelers and other visitors to the area.

Policy 2-4.2: Coordinate the future development of the Century Boulevard/ 98th Street Corridor with the development and access to the Los Angeles International Airport and its ancillary facilities.

Objective 5-1: Preserve existing open space resources and wherever possible develop new open space.

Policy 5-1.4: Where possible, encourage the provision of open space within large privately-owned projects.

The CPIO is consistent with, and intended to implement, the Westchester – Playa Del Rey Community Plan. The CPIO proposes to accomplish these goals, objectives, policies, and programs through various tools.

The CPIO's parking regulations incentivize active, pedestrian-friendly uses in small storefronts to establish a finer grained rhythm of uses throughout the corridor, as well as minimizing the prominence of parking uses at street level. Active uses including retail, restaurants, entertainment, and other visitor-serving uses are encouraged through parking reductions. The parking incentives are designed to foster an environment that supports and offers amenities to the visitors and employee who are the heaviest users of the corridor. One goal of providing these uses, beyond the impact they have in creating a vibrant pedestrian environment, is to capture spending and tax revenue in the City of Los Angeles, which current leaks out to neighboring cities which have amenities that better cater to visitors that patronize airport-area hotels.

The design standards would serve to create buildings with a more substantial presence on the ground floor by requiring a minimum width and height of streetwall along all frontages, as well as requiring a minimum depth and width of the building to be able to accommodate active uses. Compliance with these standards would contribute to the creation of a vibrant urban environment. The design standards also regulate building materials and architectural details to ensure that there is a high standard of design quality in new development. The design standards address the design of publicly accessible open space, ensuring that such space is of sufficient size, easily accessible, and incorporates sustainable practices.

By the boundaries in the project area and the types of uses that are incentivized, the CPIO is also intended to complement the airport facilities and development opportunities identified in the recent amendment to the LAX Plan through the LAMP project. Urban design standards and guidelines are also consistent with those in the recently adopted LAX Plan amendments.

Chapter 5 Urban Design; Design Considerations for Special Areas; D. Century Boulevard/98th Street Corridor.

The Community Plan also contains several guidelines for the Century Boulevard/98th Street Corridor such as the creation of pedestrian paths, the creation of a long-term plan to guide development, and the implementation of design guidelines for pedestrian amenities, building orientation, access, and landscaping. The design standards and guidelines in the CPIO are

intended to be consistent with and to implement the urban design guidelines in this chapter of the Community Plan.

Mobility Plan 2035

The City's Mobility Plan 2035 (Circulation Element) contains a number of important policies related to the Proposed Ordinance, including:

Policy 1.2 Complete Streets: Implement a balanced transportation system on all streets, tunnels, and bridges using complete streets principles to ensure the safety and mobility of all users.

Policy 2.3 Recognize walking as a component of every trip, and ensure high quality pedestrian access in all site planning and public right-of-way modifications to provide a safe and comfortable walking environment

Policy 3.3 Promote equitable land use decisions that result in fewer vehicle trips by providing greater proximity and access to jobs, destinations, and other neighborhood services.

Policy 3.5 Support "first-mile, last-mile solutions" such as multi-modal transportation services, organizations, and activities in the areas around transit stations and major bus stops (transit stops) to maximize multi-modal connectivity and access for transit riders.

Policy 4.8 Encourage greater utilization of Transportation Demand Management (TDM) strategies to reduce dependence on single-occupancy vehicles.

Policy 5.2 Support ways to reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT) per capita.

The CPIO is consistent with the Mobility Plan of the General Plan in that it encourages a finer-grained mix of uses accessible to the Crenshaw/LAX LRT transit stations, thereby helping to minimize increases in vehicle trip generation and improve air quality while providing visitors and employees with greater proximity and access to jobs and services.

Although most development within the project area would be subject to current code-required parking minimums, though at a lower level than most of the City due to the presence of a State Enterprise Zone, the CPIO includes some flexibility to facilitate certain types of uses and development with the project area. The CPIO exempts small tenant spaces devoted to Active Uses from minimum parking requirements. The CPIO also allows for reduced parking ratios for car share vehicles, and allows for various uses in new development to take advantage of shared parking to provide less parking than would otherwise be required if each use was parked separately. Additionally, the CPIO requires unbundling of parking space costs from rents, to both lower costs and provide flexibility for the parking spaces to accommodate district-wide parking needs.

The design standards in the CPIO are written so as to ensure new development within the Project Area is pedestrian-oriented and results in a more walkable built environment. Similarly, the companion Streetscape Plan includes features – i.e. wider sidewalks, street trees, street furniture, curb extensions, and crosswalks - that will help create an improved pedestrian experience along Century Boulevard, while maintaining roadway capacity for vehicle circulation and future on-street bicycle facilities.

California Environmental Quality Act Findings

Based on the independent judgement of the decision-maker, after consideration of the whole of the administrative record, the project was assessed in Environmental Impact Report No. ENV-2003-1922-EIR adopted on April 13, 2004; and pursuant to CEQA Guidelines 15162 and 15164, as supported by the addendum (ENV-2003-1922-EIR-ADD1) dated February 15, 2018, no major revisions to the Environmental Impact Report is required; and no subsequent EIR or negative declaration is required for approval of the project.

Based on the whole of the administrative record, the Project is exempt from CEQA pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15308, and there is no substantial evidence demonstrating that an exception to a categorical exemption pursuant to CEQA Guidelines, Section 15300.2 applies.

Based on the whole of the administrative record, the Project is exempt from CEQA pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15061 (b)(3), because it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the Project may have a significant effect on the environment.

PUBLIC HEARING AND COMMUNICATIONS

Outreach

The Proposed Ordinance is the result of a multi-phase public participation process to receive input and feedback. Over a four-year period, beginning in September 2013, numerous public meetings and workshops were held with Certified Neighborhood Councils, community groups, area residents and business owners. Notifications of the public workshops were distributed to all owners and occupants within 500 feet of the plan area, for a total of approximately 1,300 mailers. Through various events, as well as the online sign-up at latnp.org, staff has collected an email interest list of more than 350 people.

- Gateway to LA BID – September 2013
- Gateway to LA BID – December 2015
- Coastal Chamber of Commerce – January 2016
- Neighborhood Council of Westchester/Playa – March 2016
- Parking operators – March 2016
- Public Workshop – June 2016
- Gateway to LA BID Board of Directors – March 2017
- Gateway to LA BID – December 2017
- Open House/Public Hearing – December 2017

Digital Outreach Channels

To support outreach and provide any member of the public with the most up to date information, staff maintained an informative website that provided background information about the Los Angeles Transit Neighborhood Plans program, announcements of upcoming meetings, and other pertinent information about the CPIO (<http://www.latnp.org>). Over the last year, the project website has averaged 700 users a month. From the website, stakeholders may add their email to an interested parties list to receive project-specific emails regarding newly published documents and upcoming meetings. In addition, staff maintained an active Facebook page and Twitter account for the Transit Neighborhood Plans program. Together, these social media accounts have a combined following of approximately 500.

Supplemental Materials

In addition to materials developed for specific public meetings such as presentations and presentation boards, staff developed supplemental materials to explain the concepts and components of the CPIO. Staff developed an “About the Project” document summarized the concepts behind the project, and a “Frequently Asked Questions” document that provided easily accessible responses to commonly asked questions. The “Frequently Asked Questions” also highlighted important maps and proposed regulations. Additionally, staff developed a “Planning for Transit” brochure that summarized the key conceptual underpinnings of the City’s vision to direct growth to transit neighborhoods.

Open House and Public Hearing

An Open House and Public Hearing was conducted on Thursday, December 7, 2017 at the Westchester Community Room located at 7166 West Manchester Avenue, Los Angeles CA, 90045. An official Public Hearing Notice was mailed to all occupants and owners within 500 feet of the project area, and a notice of public hearing was published in the “Daily Journal” on November 9, 2017. Additional interested parties were also emailed about the meeting. The Open House started at 6:00pm and the Public Hearing started at 6:30pm. The Public Hearing ran simultaneously with the Open House. The Open House consisted of stations with DCP staff

answering questions about various portions of the regulations and a Hearing Officer was onsite taking public testimony.

Four community members signed in during the open house. During the Public Hearing, one person provided public testimony to the Hearing Officer and no people provided written comments.

Public Testimony:

- The commenter did not support reduced parking ratios, feeling that traffic is heavy in the area due to the proximity to the airport.
- In spite of the availability of transit options, there are lots of people who will continue to drive to the airport, which necessitates parking.

Post Hearing Outreach

In addition, staff provided a presentation and status update on the CPIO and Streetscape Plan to the Century Boulevard Business Improvement District on December 19, 2017.

Communications Received

Public testimony on this proposed ordinance was open until December 14, 2017. Staff received one letter from representatives of The Parking Spot, located at 5701 W Century Blvd, which expressed concerns with the CPIO's definition of a Project and potential effects it may have on uses of and access to their site, which are a result of future LAWA Landside Access Modernization Program requirements for 98th Street.

