

Boyle Heights Community Plan Update

Summary

Los Angeles City Planning is engaged in an update to the Boyle Heights Community Plan. Los Angeles has 35 Community Plans that address how land will be used within defined communities. These plans include forward-looking [goals and policies](#) that guide the City's decisions, ensuring they address emerging challenges such as climate change, housing affordability, and household stability. The plans also include [maps](#) and [zoning regulations](#) that stipulate what new development will look like and what type of land uses will be allowed. The City is currently updating 16 of its [35 Community Plans](#).

Background

The proposed update to the Boyle Heights Community Plan is the result of a multi-year effort undertaken by Los Angeles City Planning in close cooperation with local stakeholders. The Boyle Heights Community Plan, which generally covers the area between the Los Angeles River and the City's eastern boundary, was last updated in 1998. Since that time, the community has seen infrastructure improvements, such as the completion of the Metro Gold Line (L-Line) and the 6th Street Viaduct and related park improvements underway, and experienced dramatic pressures related to housing access and affordability. The City updates Community Plans periodically to address local opportunities and challenges such as these.

Guiding Principles

The proposed update to the Boyle Heights Community Plan focuses on the following guiding principles: Promoting housing affordability; promoting vibrant neighborhood and commercial districts; preserving and enhancing Boyle Heights' cultural heritage; fostering a thriving, healthy, and sustainable community; preserving industrial land for economic stability; and creating a network of safe and accessible streets.



Frequently Asked Questions

How is this plan update different from the one currently in effect?

The [1998 Community Plan](#) envisioned that the majority of new growth within Boyle Heights would take place along the Cesar E. Chavez corridor. The 1998 Plan also continues to allow for significant redevelopment of residential neighborhoods throughout the community, as well as heavy industrial uses along the Los Angeles River. The proposed Community Plan would refocus new growth along transit corridors such as First Street, Soto Street, and Whittier Boulevard, moderate the redevelopment potential of lower-scale residential neighborhoods, and create a more environmentally friendly mix of land uses along the River.

How does the plan incentivize the production of affordable housing?

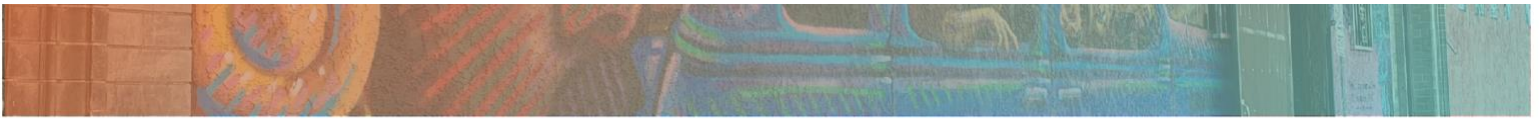
In addition to refocusing future growth along transit-served corridors, the Community Plan proposes a Community Benefits Program under which new development provides protected affordable housing anywhere development rights are increased. This program would build on the City's existing Transit Oriented Communities Incentive Program, established as part of Measure JJJ, but would require higher levels of housing affordability and approach the neighborhood's built environment with greater sensitivity.

What types of affordable housing does this plan actually encourage?

The Community Benefits Program proposed as part of the Community Plan focuses on Lower Income households, whose incomes are 50%-80% of the area median; Very Low Income households, whose incomes are at 30%-50% of the area median; and Extremely Low Income households, whose incomes are at 0%-30% of the area median. According to the provisions of the plan, new projects that seek increased development rights would have to set aside 25% of dwelling units for Lower Income households, or 15% for Very Low Income households, or 11% for Extremely Low Income households.

How does the plan safeguard existing households?

Today, approximately 40% of Boyle Heights is zoned for lower-scale multi-unit housing, and 75% of the households in Boyle Heights are renters. In an effort to ensure stability for existing households, the Community Plan proposes zoning that moderates the redevelopment potential of this existing housing stock by reducing the square footage that can be built. In addition, the proposed zoning makes it easier to [build or permit existing rear-yard dwellings](#). The Community Plan also proposes a number of [policies and programs](#) aimed at preserving existing rent-stabilized and covenanted affordable dwellings.



How does the plan address the Los Angeles River?

The Community Plan builds on the vision of the Los Angeles River Revitalization Master Plan, and seeks to improve linkages to the River, as well as address land use compatibility in the vicinity. The Community Plan incorporates the provisions of the existing River Improvement Overlay, and proposes new development standards aimed at maintaining visual connections to the River. In addition, the plan envisions that heavy industrial uses would not be allowed in the future.

How does the plan encourage the production of jobs?

Today, approximately 26% of the land in Boyle Heights is zoned for industrial/manufacturing uses. The Community Plan envisions preserving this land for future employment uses, including a range of living-wage and skilled labor jobs. The existing industrially-zoned land at the south end of the community bordering Vernon will continue to allow heavy industrial uses—however, to address compatibility with nearby neighborhoods, the zoning will incorporate the standards of the [Clean Up Green Up Ordinance](#) adopted in 2016.

The plan envisions rezoning the western edge of Boyle Heights from heavy industrial uses to lighter and smaller-scale manufacturing, office, and production uses. It also proposes policies and programs that support local workforce development and training.

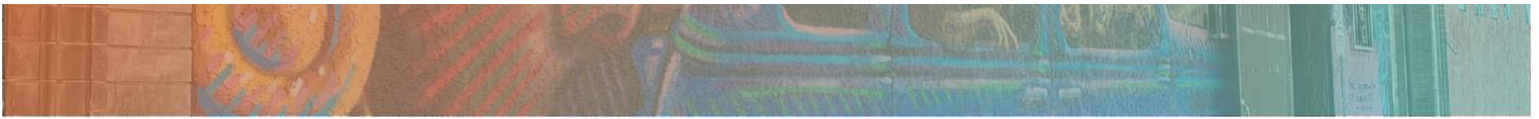
Are measures being taken to encourage more local businesses in the area?

The Community Plan seeks to maintain zoning for neighborhood-oriented commercial uses along major corridors. On corridors such as Wabash Avenue and Cesar E. Chavez Avenue, the Community Plan proposes limitations on the size of ground-floor commercial establishments, to prioritize local businesses over large-scale or “big box” establishments. Additionally, the Community Plan’s zoning would recalibrate parking standards, making it easier for small businesses to occupy existing buildings.

What does the plan do to preserve local cultural assets?

One of the City’s oldest neighborhoods, Boyle Heights is home to over a century of important cultural assets. The Community Plan proposes new zoning tools aimed at preserving this heritage. For example, the Community Plan proposes decreasing the redevelopment potential of properties in the “Brooklyn Corridor” on Cesar E. Chavez Boulevard, and proposes development standards to ensure that new development is visually compatible with this beloved, neighborhood-serving commercial district. The Community Plan also includes policies that support the future designation and protection of various identified historic neighborhoods, buildings, and murals, should local stakeholders wish to pursue such protections.

How are environmental justice and health issues being addressed?



In 2016, the City adopted the Clean Up Green Up pilot program, which addresses land use incompatibilities and provides development standards aimed at addressing the effects of various industrial land uses on local communities. The Community Plan proposes to make these standards a permanent part of the zoning. In addition, the Community Plan proposes lighter industrial zoning in existing heavy industrial areas, resulting in greater distance between heavy industrial uses and nearby residential neighborhoods.

How will the Community Plan use the City's new zoning code?

Boyle Heights will be among the first communities to use a proposed new zoning system. This system has been developed around the unique goals of the Boyle Heights Community Plan, and provides better tools to implement the plan: such as the affordable housing incentive system, the right-sizing of neighborhood zoning, and size limitations that promote small businesses. Many of the new zoning tools developed for Boyle Heights can be applied in future Community Plan updates elsewhere in the City. In addition, new zoning tools can be added to the growing zoning system to meet the needs identified in other Community Plan update processes.