



ANNUAL REPORT 2021



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Table of Contents

08 Incorporating Technology
in the Workplace

12 Improving Client Services

18 Advancing New Housing Opportunities

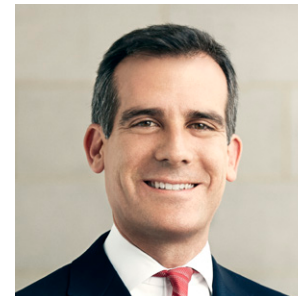
32 Centering Planning on Racial
and Social Equity

36 Redefining Environmental
and Sustainable Planning

40 Planning for Los Angeles’s Future

44 Strengthening Accountability
and Financial Reporting





Mayor's Message

Dear Friends,

In 2021, Los Angeles City Planning continued to advance our shared priorities, spurring the production of new affordable housing, assisting with the City's economic recovery from the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, and advancing long-term efforts to achieve equity and sustainability.

Despite the challenges of the pandemic, City Planning has supported a continued prioritization of housing development as well as financial and regulatory relief for small businesses through efforts such as the Local Emergency Ordinance. Through internal improvements, the Department has shortened case turnaround times, speeding up the approval process for housing and other projects, and continued to expand online services to support contactless filing and virtual project review during the pandemic.

As a City, we've adopted a transformative update to our General Plan's Housing Element, as well as amendments to our Safety Element and Health and Wellness Element, that embed the principles of Los Angeles's Green New Deal and the Resilient Los Angeles Plan within our policy framework as we move forward as a leader in addressing the global climate emergency and meet the challenges of the housing crisis from a standpoint of equity and urgency.

I want to commend City Planning's work spearheading this effort over the past two years, and ongoing collaboration across City Departments on these efforts through the Executive Directive 19 Planning Task Force.

In 2022, we will continue to recover together, invest in our communities, and embark on the implementation of this visionary plan in creating a more equitable city for generations to come. This is not an easy task, and the challenges are deep-rooted. However, the imperative is clear—we must work to build a more affordable, resilient, and just city for all Angelenos.

Sincerely,

Eric Garcetti
Mayor



Director's Message

Dear Colleagues and Friends,

In 2021, we advanced bold new housing and economic measures that will have a transformative impact on the lives of Angelenos, most notably the City's 2021-2029 Housing Element (also known as the Plan to House LA).

As Los Angeles's foundational guide on housing, the 2021-2029 Housing Element raises the bar in terms of bringing issues of equity and access to the forefront of planning. Unlike prior plans, the Plan to House LA introduces strategies that aim to prevent displacement, strengthen tenants' protections, and ensure a fair distribution of market-rate and affordable housing across our entire City.

On the economic front, even with the pandemic, we were able to implement policy changes that reduced the cost of doing business with the City—from shifting to having resources more readily available online to improving our core services.

While the worst may be behind us, Angelenos are still reeling from the impacts of the pandemic. That is why we, as a Department, need to remain resolute in the face of the current climate to chart the best possible future for Angelenos, a sense of community that ultimately enables us to thrive.

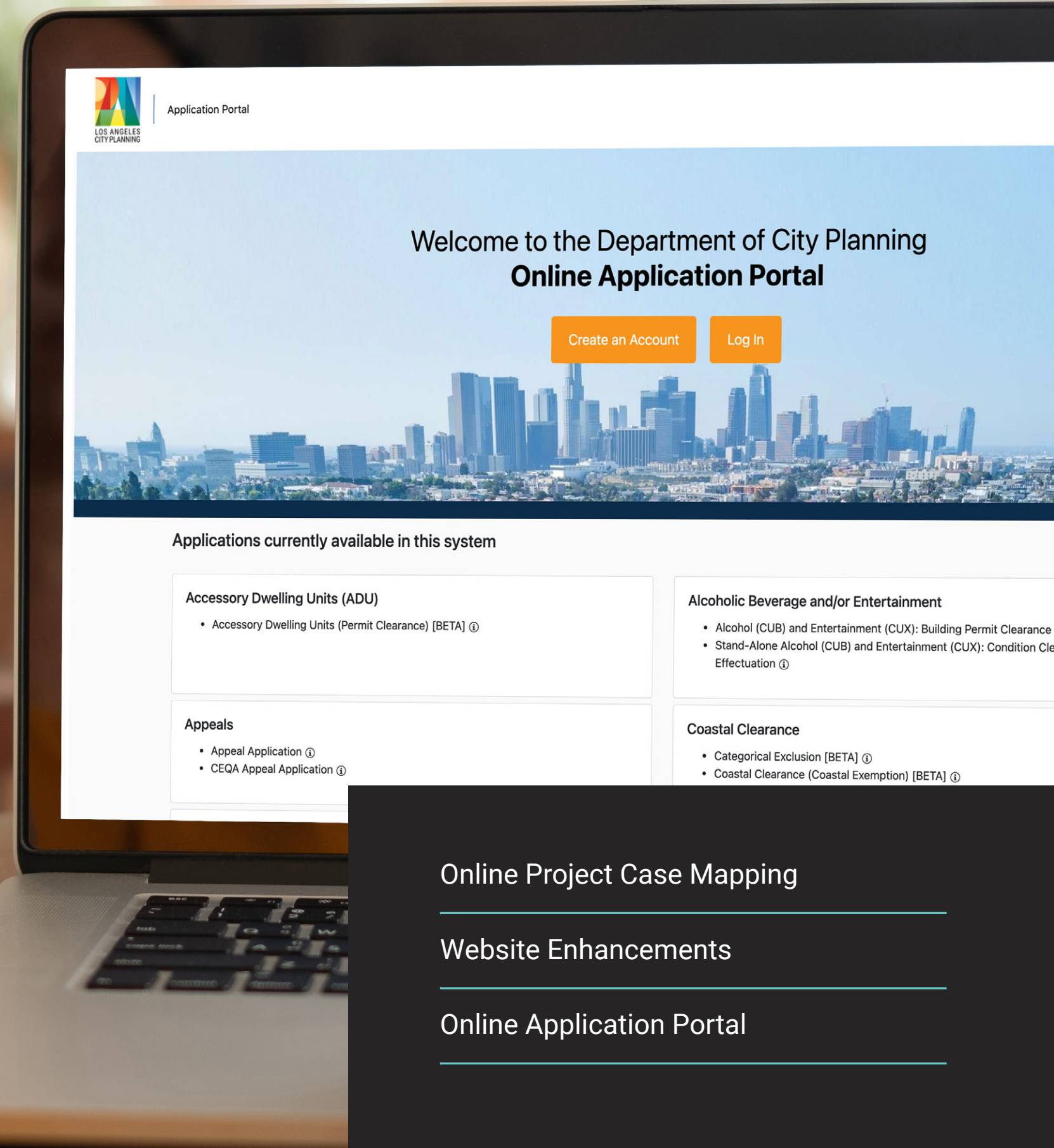
Serving as Director of Planning in Los Angeles has been a rewarding experience. Through the difficult times, we've demonstrated our resolve and affinity for this City and, working alongside our communities, have become better for it.

Together, we are *Planning4LA*.

Sincerely,

Vince Bertoni
Director of Planning

INCORPORATING TECHNOLOGY IN THE WORKPLACE



Online Project Case Mapping

Website Enhancements

Online Application Portal

Online Project Case Mapping

Using Online Mapping Technology to Make Information More Accessible

Throughout 2021, the Department expanded its online mapping capabilities to establish a dynamic and interactive information hub for community members. Today, users are able to see the exact location of a proposed, approved, or denied project that has filed for planning entitlements by using the Online Case Mapping application.

The interactive map allows users to zoom in on a parcel and identify planning entitlements associated with that property. City Planning updated the maps during 2021 to incorporate additional layers that display geographic boundaries at the Community Plan Area, Council District, and Neighborhood Council levels.

As urban populations grow, Geographic Information System (GIS) technology has made it possible for planners to visually represent vast amounts of information by using geospatial data to depict land use trends.

Website Enhancements

Improving the User Experience and Interface of the Department’s Website

City Planning enhanced its website by incorporating modern graphic touches that have helped organize and depict information in a professional yet approachable manner. Drop-down navigation menus now appear on various work programs’ webpages, making it easier to find planning-related documents. The Department also took steps to standardize the design of several projects’ webpages so that the most commonly requested documents are prominently displayed.

These improvements are visible on the pages for the 2021-2029 Housing Element Update, the Ventura-Cahuenga Specific Plan Amendment, the Cornfield Arroyo Seco Specific Plan Amendment, and the Wildlife Pilot Study.

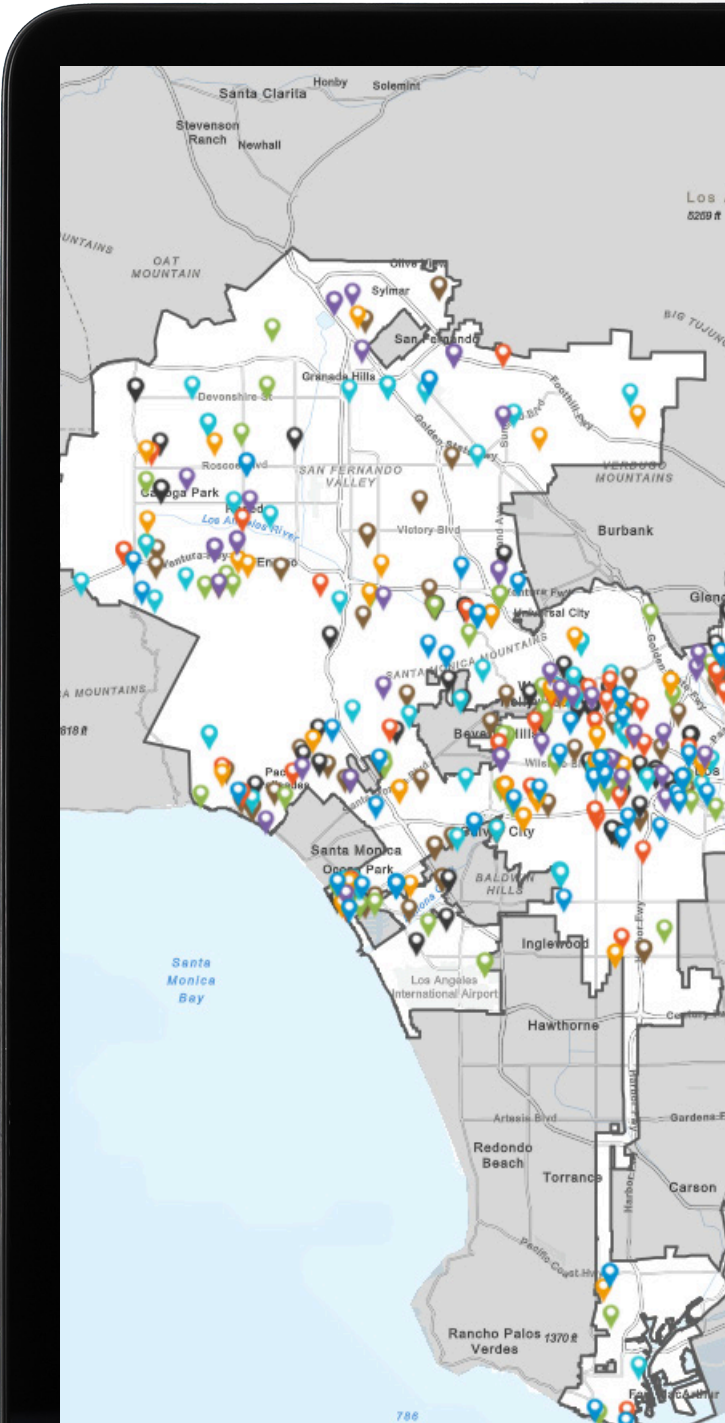
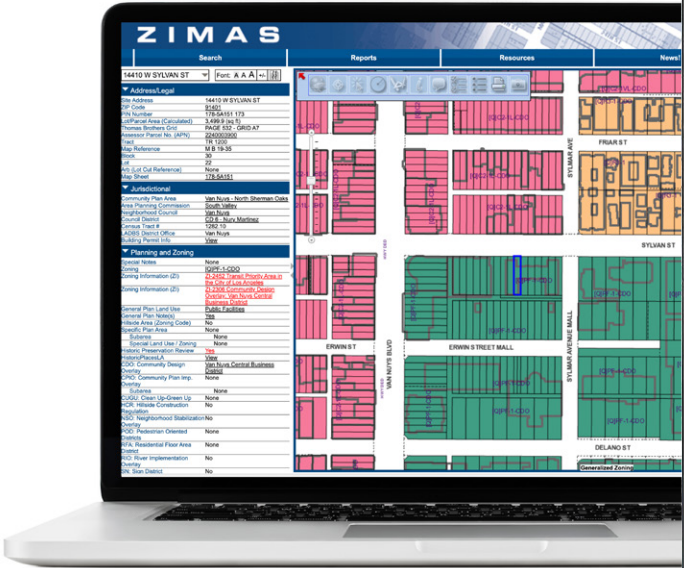
In 2022, the Department will comprehensively update its website with major changes to the project review pages, introducing increased online capabilities for planning applications, as well as helpful aids such as tutorials and instructional guides on filing applications with City Planning.

Online Application Portal

Bolstering Online Capabilities to Achieve Better Customer Service

During 2021, City Planning expanded its digital commerce capabilities through the in-house Online Application System (OAS). Launched in the weeks following the outbreak of COVID-19, the OAS portal has since expanded its range of available online development services to support planning clearances for most administrative cases. Eventually, the OAS will include planning entitlements for all ministerial and discretionary cases.

Today, more customers opt to use the OAS to upload supporting files, submit online applications, and pay for planning services—a convenient alternative to an in-person visit to the City’s Development Services Centers (DSCs).





IMPROVING CLIENT SERVICES

Local Emergency Ordinance

Mulholland Scenic Parkway Specific Plan

Processes and Procedures Ordinance

Expedited Processing Section

How the Local Emergency Ordinance Works

Imagine there is a vacant 3,500-square-foot furniture store on a commercially zoned property along a major corridor. The store owner files for bankruptcy, or is looking to sell his store due to revenue shortfalls. Someone then comes along that expresses an interest in converting the existing space into a restaurant by securing a “change of use” from the City.

When the furniture store was entitled, its approvals were conditional on the owner providing seven parking spaces for customers. Now that a restaurant is being proposed, the requirement could rise to 35 parking spaces, meaning the restaurateur would have to provide 28 new spaces. The prospective buyer may pass on this location, even though it is zoned to accommodate a restaurant, because it may not be possible to provide parking within 750 feet of the proposed site under the Zoning Code.

Under the Local Emergency Ordinance, this person could take advantage of the parking relief provisions, which would allow this otherwise vacant building to be converted and used to support local investment opportunities.

Local Emergency Ordinance

Supporting Small Business Recovery in the Aftermath of COVID-19

The City Council adopted City Planning’s Local Emergency Ordinance (LEO), which removes financial and regulatory restrictions on small businesses during a State or locally declared emergency. In addition to extending time limits for certain permits, the ordinance eliminates new parking requirements for existing buildings that request a change of use related to the establishment of a new business.

These regulatory relief measures are intended to put Los Angeles on a path to economic recovery by streamlining planning approvals to assist small business owners. Shortly after adopting the ordinance, the Los Angeles City Council activated the LEO to counter the job losses and business closures many small, local operators experienced in the months after the pandemic.

Mulholland Scenic Parkway Specific Plan

Shortening Project Sign-Off Times

City Planning issued a memo in 2021 to clarify Project Permit Compliance and Design Review procedures for “Visible” and “Non-Visible” projects located within the Mulholland Scenic Parkway Specific Plan. The Department’s new implementation guidance stipulates that “Non-Visible” projects in the plan area will no



longer be subject to Design Review. However, they will still need to file a project application and will still be subject to planning review, including the California Environmental Quality Act.

Furthermore, “Non-Visible” projects will continue to be subject to the Project Permit Compliance process, as well as other regulations, including Residential Floor Area limitations, hillside grading, and retaining wall limitations. As for “Visible” projects, they will remain subject to Design Review, in keeping with the original intent of this plan.

In recent years, nearly one-quarter of the entire Valley Project Planning staff has been dedicated to processing clearances and discretionary entitlements within the Mulholland Specific Parkway Specific Plan. The average caseload is more than 250 per year, the vast majority of which are administrative clearances. Previously, while only 12% of the total cases were subject to discretionary review, each one was routed to the Design Review Board, whether or not it was visible from the Specific Plan.

To make better use of its resources, the Department has limited Design Review exclusively to “Visible Projects,” select cases in which the applicant is seeking to alter the viewshed from Mulholland Drive. This procedural change is in keeping with the intent of the Specific Plan, which aims to preserve the scenic corridor and its unique views of the mountains, ocean, and City landscape.

By reallocating its resources, the Department has been able to take on more cases, responding to the high demand for administrative clearances within the boundaries of the Specific Plan while also serving the broader San Fernando Valley geography and its diverse mix of housing projects.

Processes and Procedures Ordinance

Centralizing and Consolidating Administrative Provisions of the Zoning Code

Early in 2021, the City Council considered the Department’s Processes and Procedures Ordinance, an amendment to the Zoning Code which consolidates many existing land use processes, in an effort to standardize the procedural rules governing the review of development projects. The ordinance has been referred to the City Attorney’s Office for form and legality review and is anticipated to be considered by the City Council for final adoption in 2022.

The ordinance is part of a larger effort to revise the City’s Zoning Code. It comprises the administrative provisions that will eventually serve as the framework for the new Zoning Code. These new provisions will make it easier to locate the procedures governing specific project applications by standardizing and aligning workflows. Additionally, they will establish a more user-friendly, transparent, and predictable set of rules for project review.

Expedited Processing Section

Helping Angelenos Get Back on Their Feet

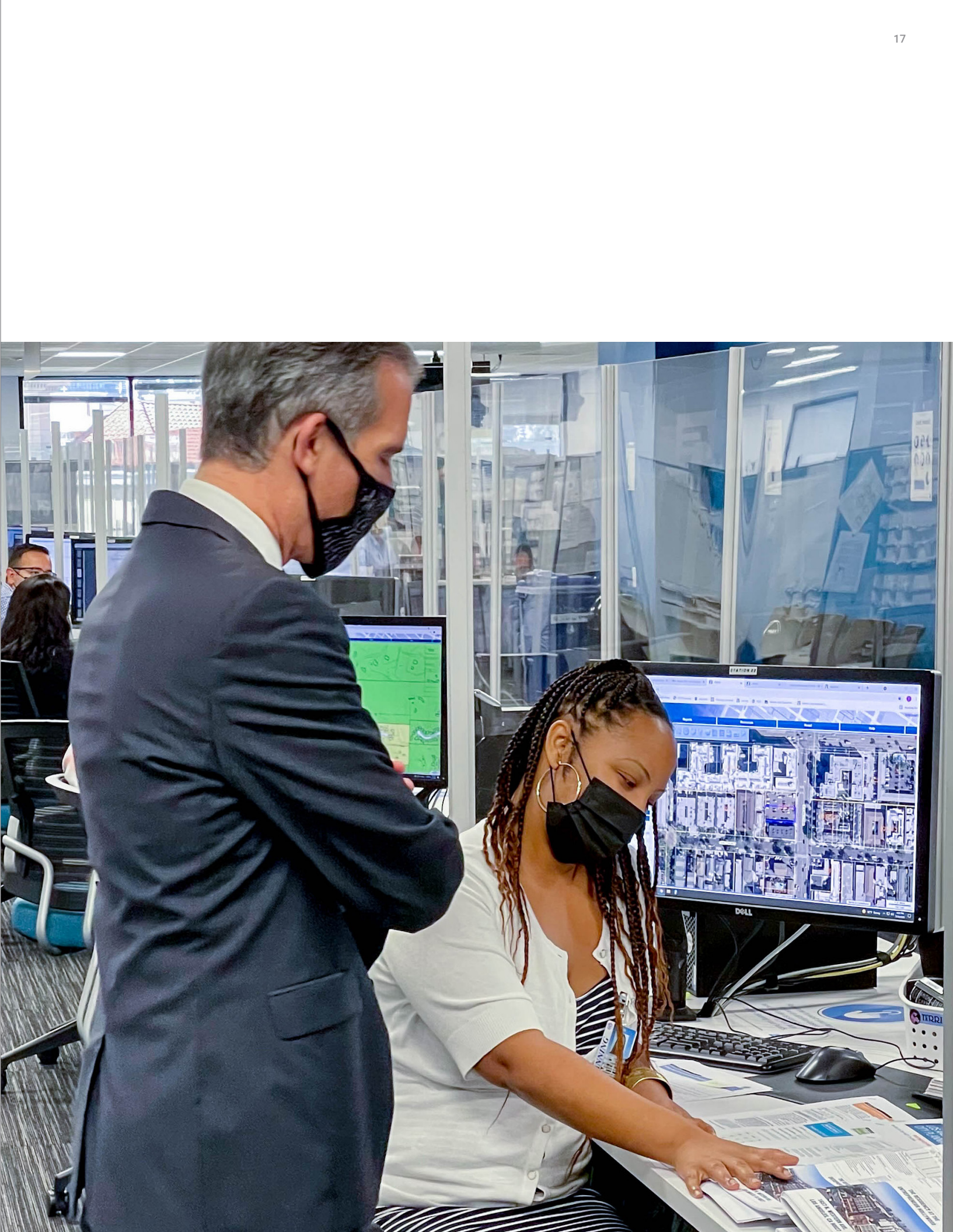
In an effort to support economic investment, City Planning expanded the range of services offered by the Expedited Processing Section (EPS). As of 2021, projects located in Redevelopment Plan Areas and Coastal Transportation Corridor Specific Plans began to take advantage of EPS's expanded services, as did small-scale residential and mixed-use projects with 10 or fewer units and select commercial and industrial projects.

Since its establishment in 2003, EPS has furthered the City's housing and economic development objectives while maintaining a streamlined review process for everything from stand-alone alcohol licenses for restaurants to entitlements for the adaptive reuse of existing buildings.

EPS's services have reduced the time it takes to advance a case to an initial hearing or decision maker by 30% to 50%. Their practice of early application review has helped applicants adhere to their project timelines by shortening case processing times for small businesses and housing developers alike.

EPS Year End Totals

Year	Market Units	Affordable Units	Hotel Rooms	Non-Residential Floor Area (SF)
2017	6,332	290	2,730	1,034,944
2018	5,062	275	1,442	1,516,518
2019	5,362	959	348	1,106,875
2020	3,657	600	961	977,579
2021	3,490	715	587	760,449
Totals	23,903	2,839	6,068	5,396,365





ADVANCING NEW HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES

Housing Element Update

Housing Production Levels

Housing Policy Unit

Mello Act Ordinance

On-Menu Density Bonus Projects

Housing Element Update

Promoting an Equitable Distribution of Affordable Units

In 2021, the City Council adopted the Housing Element Update, which will guide the implementation of the City’s housing policy from 2021 to 2029. The Housing Element Update (also known as the Plan to House LA) presents goals, objectives, policies, and programs that comprise the City’s housing action plan over an eight-year period.

Los Angeles’s Housing Element plays an important role in setting the long-range vision for the City. Through the implementation of the plan’s policies and programs, Los Angeles aims to encourage the production and preservation of its housing units.

The plan commits the City to implementing bold housing strategies that will achieve an equitable distribution of market-rate and affordable units, including an ambitious program that would rezone parts of Los Angeles by October 2024 to provide opportunities for and access to affordable housing.

Additionally, the plan focuses on preventing displacement and advancing racial equity. The Housing Element Update commits Los Angeles to strengthening anti-displacement measures through future work programs that will be jointly administered alongside the Housing Department.

The Housing Element’s citywide strategies focus on the following topical considerations:

Addressing the Housing Shortage

- Increase the production of new housing, particularly affordable units

Advancing Housing Opportunities

- Plan for nearly 500,000 housing units, with over 200,000 units reserved for lower-income residents

Preventing Displacement

- Protect Angelenos—especially people of color and the disabled—from indirect and direct displacement

Promoting Sustainability, Resilience, and Environmental Justice

- Design and regulate housing to promote health and well-being, increase future access to amenities, and plan for climate change



Safety and Health Element Updates: Strengthening the City’s Climate Mitigation and Adaptation Strategies

Two related General Plan amendments were adopted alongside the Housing Element: a targeted update of the Safety Element and technical amendments to the Plan for a Healthy LA (Health Element). The updated Safety Element provides the most current information related to hazard risk identification and preparation, while the Health Element amendment provides clarification on existing environmental justice policies.

Each update also identifies implementation programs, many of which focus on improving the health and safety of Angelenos through land use planning. Additionally, the revised Health Element Atlas maps display recent data on underrepresented and vulnerable communities, advancing efforts to ensure that these communities are engaged in the planning process by providing a data-informed snapshot of health issues and outcomes in Los Angeles.



Housing Production Levels

Addressing the Housing Crisis

Since 2015, the Department has approved more than 181,000 new housing units across Los Angeles. While the total number of housing projects proposed dipped in 2020, there was a strong rebound the following calendar year. In 2021, the total number of housing units proposed grew by nearly 27%—rising from a five-year low of 18,625 in 2020 to 23,570. Additionally, there were 5,917 units of affordable housing proposed in 2021, accounting for one-quarter of all units proposed.

The majority of the proposed housing units were generated by the Density Bonus and Transit Oriented Communities (TOC) Incentive Programs. Taken together, these two local programs were responsible for nearly 60% of the proposed housing projects that City Planning reviewed in 2021—not to mention more than half of the total amount of affordable units (2,727 units) proposed during that same period of time.

In terms of project approvals, the Department approved a total of 18,420 housing units, of which 4,681 were restricted as affordable. At 25% of the overall housing share, this is the highest proportion of affordable units City Planning has ever approved. These figures indicate progress in creating housing opportunities for working-class, middle-income Angelenos.

				2021 vs 2020		2021 vs 2019	
	2021	2020	2019	Absolute Change	Percent Change	Absolute Change	Percent Change
Application Breakdown							
Entitlement Applications							
Entitlements Filed	1,202	1,103	1,603	99	9.0%	-401	-25.0%
Entitlements Completed	1,086	1,387	1,701	-301	-21.7%	-615	-36.2%
Environmental Applications							
Environmental Filed	1,181	1,141	1,575	40	3.5%	-394	-25.0%
Environmental Completed	1,288	1,324	1,420	-36	-2.7%	-132	-9.3%
Appeal Applications							
Appeals Filed	151	153	187	-2	-1.3%	-36	-19.3%
Appeals Completed	96	105	156	-9	-8.6%	-60	-38.5%
Administrative Applications							
Administrative Filed	5,728	4,574	3,482	1,154	25.2%	2,246	64.5%
Administrative Completed	5,192	4,021	3,070	1,171	29.1%	2,122	69.1%
Pre-Applications							
Pre-Applications Filed	1,656	497	835	1,159	233.2%	821	98.3%
Pre-Applications Completed	1,423	437	662	986	225.6%	761	115.0%
Year-End Total							
Applications Filed	9,918	7,468	7,682	2,450	32.8%	2,236	29.1%
Applications Completed	9,085	7,274	7,009	1,811	24.9%	2,076	29.6%

	2021	2020	2019	2021 vs 2020		2021 vs 2019	
				Absolute Change	Percent Change	Absolute Change	Percent Change
Housing Unit Count							
Units Proposed	23,570	18,512	25,781	5,058	27.3%	-2,211	-8.6%
Affordable Units Proposed	5,917	4,378	7,539	1,539	35.2%	-1,622	-21.5%
Market-Rate Units Proposed	17,653	14,134	18,242	3,519	24.9%	-589	-3.2%
Units Approved	18,420	23,197	26,464	-4,777	-20.6%	-8,044	-30.4%
Affordable Units Approved	4,681	4,776	5,646	-95	-2.0%	-965	-17.1%
Market-Rate Units Approved	13,739	18,421	20,818	-4,682	-25.4%	-7,079	-34.0%

Housing Policy Unit

Identifying Meaningful Solutions

Los Angeles—rich in industry and creativity—has gained the unfortunate notoriety of being a major epicenter of the California housing crisis.

Despite this notoriety, Los Angeles has made significant progress in addressing the single issue that has most tormented Americans for decades: the lack of affordable housing.

During recent years, the City has created one of the most successful affordable housing incentive programs in the country, tripled overall housing production, quadrupled the percentage of affordable housing being proposed in new projects, raised nearly \$100 million in new funding for affordable housing, and led the state in producing more affordable Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs, also known as “second units”). Los Angeles has even expanded tenants’ protections.

Moreover, the City has permitted over 136,000 housing units since 2013, exceeding the goal of 100,000 units Mayor Garcetti set for 2021 toward the beginning of his term in office.

As the rate of overall housing production rose, the City also witnessed dramatic increases in the production of affordable units.

The Department approved more than 21,000 deed-restricted affordable housing units between 2019 and 2021. The 8,400 affordable units approved in 2021 alone, while a far cry from the number needed

to meet our housing needs, represents a nearly eightfold increase from the number of affordable units approved by City Planning in 2015.

This success is attributable to an increase in mixed-income projects, most of which are located in areas near the City’s public transit, where the Department has prioritized new housing projects.

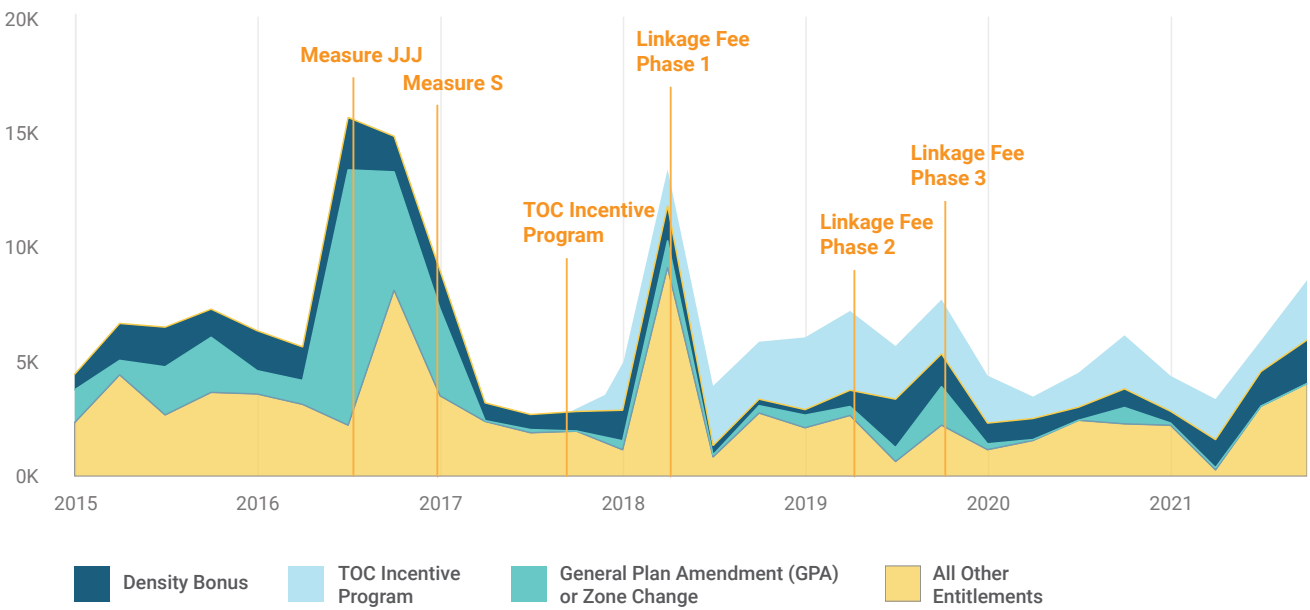
Los Angeles’s mixed-income and 100% affordable housing projects have been primarily facilitated by the 2017 creation of the Transit Oriented Communities (TOC) Incentive Program, which incentivizes the construction of mixed-income housing within a half-mile of high-quality transit.

The City has approved more than 35,000 housing units as a result of the TOC Incentive Program, almost 25% of which were reserved as affordable—mostly for Extremely Low-Income (ELI) households, such as a family of four with an annual income of \$35,450.

This program’s combination of incentives and requirements has proven highly successful at increasing housing production, while also achieving a higher percentage of affordable units each year. For example, 27% of all units proposed in 2021 by City Planning were affordable, a significant improvement from the 6% affordable rate witnessed as recently as 2016.

While the TOC Incentive Program deserves the majority of the credit for incentivizing affordable housing development, it is one of several powerful catalysts for housing production in Los Angeles.

Housing Progress Dashboard



Year	Density Bonus	TOC Incentive Program*	General Plan Amendment (GPA) Zone Change	All Other Entitlements	Total Units Proposed
2015	5,264	0	6,570	13,096	24,930
2016	7,062	0	18,387	17,075	42,524
2017	3,959	1,127	3,972	9,749	18,807
2018	3,552	7,949	1,969	13,866	27,336
2019	4,501	11,321	3,234	7,623	26,679
2020	3,210	6,883	1,012	7,429	18,625
2021	5,158	7,285	194	9,589	22,226
Totals	32,706	34,565	35,338	78,427	181,127

*The TOC Incentive Program took effect in October 2017.

The Department's Affordable Housing Linkage Fee, created in 2017, has also played a pivotal role in fostering an equitable mix of affordable units. Similar to other inclusionary programs, it requires projects that do not provide on-site affordable housing to pay a fee to fund the construction of affordable units.

The Linkage Fee has worked hand-in-hand with the City's TOC Incentive and Density Bonus Programs to produce affordable housing. Typically, new development projects subject to the Linkage Fee have opted to provide on-site affordable units, often in more affluent neighborhoods, rather than pay into the fund. Nonetheless, to date, the Linkage Fee has raised nearly \$100 million for the construction of affordable housing, while simultaneously incentivizing the production of new housing units.

Before the adoption of the TOC Incentive Program and Linkage Fee, more than 80% of all affordable housing units in Los Angeles were created as the result of federal, state, and local subsidies. Today, nearly half of all affordable housing units are produced by unsubsidized, mixed-income buildings.

Private developers went from providing virtually no affordable units before 2013 to having upwards of half of all permitted affordable units set aside as restricted affordable in 2021. This increase in on-site affordable units was the result of the Department's commitment to affordability, equity, and access to housing.

Despite the City's progress, these achievements are not enough to address present housing needs. As outlined in the 2021-2029 Housing Element

Update, the City would need to permit 57,000 units each year, with 40% of those affordable to lower-income households, to resolve the housing deficit accumulated over the past 50 years.

The newly adopted Housing Element proposes to make housing more readily available by implementing a rezoning program that will prioritize affordable housing stock throughout the City. This rezoning program will increase housing capacity for at least 255,000 new housing units.

While the work is far from over, Los Angeles is making meaningful progress on housing issues. The number of new housing units is currently exceeding population growth—and rates of overcrowding, cost burden, and rents have shown signs of stabilization in recent years.

The *Los Angeles Times* editorial board recently pointed to the City's latest Housing Element as reason for hope that an end to the housing crisis is in sight. They wrote that the policy guidelines presented in the Housing Element are "honest, ambitious and [have] the potential to make L.A. a more equitable and affordable city."

Through City Planning's efforts, Los Angeles has managed to preserve and protect housing while also opening up new opportunities that will guarantee neighborhoods' continuing economic prosperity and well-being. Collectively, these efforts will make the California housing crisis a thing of the past, and Los Angeles the center of its solutions.





Mello Act Ordinance

Strengthening Affordable Housing Regulations in the Costal Zones

In November, the Planning and Land Use Management Committee of the City Council advanced the Department’s proposed Mello Act Ordinance, and instructed the City Attorney to prepare the final ordinance for adoption. Upon taking effect, the ordinance will preserve affordable units and increase their number in the coastal neighborhoods of Venice, Pacific Palisades, Del Rey, Playa del Rey, Wilmington, and San Pedro.

Furthermore, it will better protect against the loss of residential units by mandating that each demolished unit be replaced with a unit of the same size and affordability level, even facilitate the production of affordable units with an inclusionary housing requirement for projects of a certain size.

Lastly, the Mello Act will require that units demolished or converted in the Coastal Zones be replaced onsite, with the same general guidance provided for new inclusionary units. These land use regulations, designed specifically for the Westside, Harbor, and other coastal communities, aim to increase opportunities for affordable housing while also safeguarding existing units.

Key Provisions

Policy	Existing Interim Administrative Procedures	Proposed Regulations (Mello Act)
Replacement Standard	One-for-one replacement is required	One-for-one and like-for-like replacement is required
Location of Replacement Unit	Replacement units may be located within three miles of the Coastal Zones’ boundary	Replacement units must be located onsite
Affordability Standard	The replacement unit may be offered at any level of affordability (e.g., a Moderate Income unit may replace an existing Low Income unit)	The replacement unit must be offered at the same level of affordability or lower
Inclusionary Requirement	New projects of 10 or more units shall provide a set-aside of 10% of all units for Very Low Income households or 20% of all units for Low Income households	New projects of five or more units shall provide a set-aside as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none">– A minimum of 8% of the proposed residential units reserved onsite for Extremely Low Income Households; or– A minimum 11% of the proposed residential units reserved onsite for Very Low Income Households; or– A minimum of 20% of the proposed residential units reserved onsite for Low Income Households; or– A minimum of 40% of the proposed residential units reserved onsite for Moderate Income Households.
Definition of Demolition	The demolition of one or more existing units	The removal or replacement of more than 50% of any existing walls, foundation walls, or roof framing of one or more existing residential units or a project defined as a major remodel



On-Menu Density Bonus Projects

Shortening Case Processing Times for Qualifying Affordable Housing Projects

In 2021, City Planning issued a memorandum revising the interpretation and local implementation of the State Density Bonus law to permit a ministerial review process for on-menu Density Bonus projects. This procedural change shortened application times, simplifying the process for bringing additional affordable units online.

Density Bonus is a State-mandated housing incentive program created to promote mixed-income housing with onsite affordable units. In recent years, developers have taken advantage of the Density Bonus and Transit Oriented Communities (TOC) Incentive Programs, which together are the biggest drivers of mixed-income and 100% affordable housing in Los Angeles.

While the TOC Incentive Program applies to select projects located within a half-mile of a major transit stop, Density Bonus is available to any site citywide with zoning for at least five housing units. In accordance with California Density Bonus law, Los Angeles’s program grants applicants

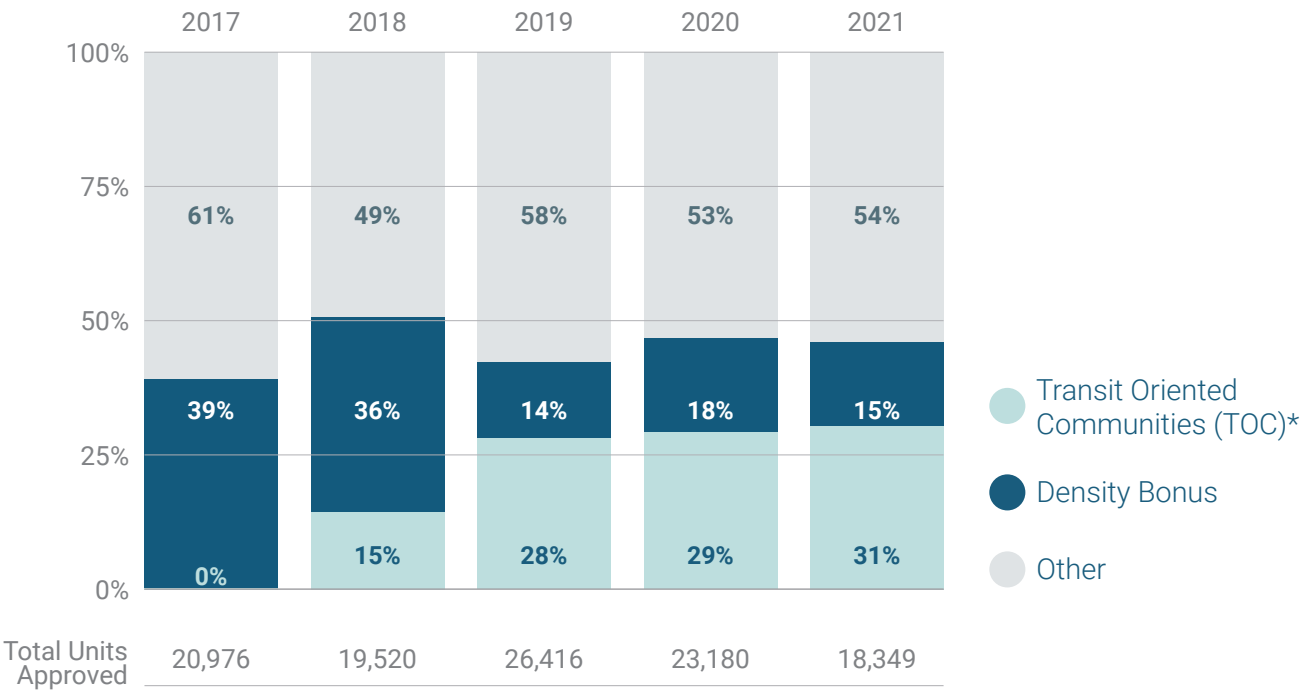
development rights to construct more housing units than would otherwise be permitted by the base zoning—provided that a percentage of the units are reserved for affordable housing.

Qualifying Density Bonus projects can request a number of on- and off-menu incentives, in addition to a by-right density increase of up to 35% and a reduction in parking requirements.


On-menu incentives are the most frequently requested. These projects range from limited increases to a building’s height and floor area to certain reductions to yard setback, open space, and lot width requirements. Previously, these on-menu incentives triggered discretionary review. City Planning now processes these cases ministerially, saving applicants time for priority projects that meet the specified threshold of onsite affordable units.

Applicants can still request additional off-menu incentives or waivers under the Density Bonus Program, beyond those enumerated in State Density Bonus law. Unlike on-menu incentives, however, projects requesting off-menu incentives are treated as discretionary and are subject to further planning review.

Local Housing Incentive Programs Density Bonus and TOC Incentive



*The TOC Incentive Program took effect in October 2017.



CENTERING PLANNING ON RACIAL AND SOCIAL EQUITY

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Office of Racial Justice, Equity, and
Transformative Planning

African American Historic Places Project



Office of Racial Justice, Equity, and Transformative Planning

Addressing the Legacy of Racism from Past Land Use and Planning Practices

The Department established the Office of Racial Justice, Equity, and Transformative Planning with the goal of addressing the legacy of racism and segregation in planning practices. Led by Principal City Planner and Chief Equity Officer Faisal Roble, the Office advanced racial justice and equity within City Planning during 2021, while preparing to engage in a larger conversation about equity with communities that have been impacted by racist zoning and land use practices.

The Office collaborated with the City Planning Commission to host two consecutive Equity Day listening sessions and hear from the public on a variety of issues pertaining to land use planning.

In 2021, the Department also facilitated a series of internal listening sessions to better understand staff orientations towards racial justice and equity, with an emphasis on how those shared definitions can be leveraged to support the Department’s various work programs.

The Office will be building on these efforts in the coming year, most notably by drafting a strategic action plan that will outline steps the City can take to achieve equitable and inclusive outcomes through land use.

African American Historic Places Project

Preserving African American Historic Places Across Los Angeles

In 2021, City Planning launched the African American Historic Places Project, an ambitious partnership with the Getty Conservation Institute that will identify, protect, and celebrate African American heritage across Los Angeles. Over the next three years, the project will work with local communities and cultural institutions to more fully recognize and understand African American experiences in Los Angeles.

Building upon City Planning’s decade-long collaboration with the Getty that produced SurveyLA, the project will identify and help preserve the places that best represent the City’s African American heritage. It will entail working with communities to develop creative approaches for placemaking, identity, and empowerment, using historic preservation to effect social justice and positive change.

The African American Historic Places Project will shed light on overlooked narratives and historic places important to Los Angeles, thereby serving as a model for other cities to follow. By partnering with local communities and cultural institutions to appreciate African American experiences in Los Angeles, the City will develop new tools and strategies that will lead the way to an equitable approach to historic preservation.

An aerial photograph of a city skyline at sunset. The foreground shows a lush green hillside with scattered houses and trees. In the middle ground, a dense urban area with various buildings is visible. The background features a prominent skyline of tall skyscrapers, including the Transamerica Pyramid, silhouetted against a warm, orange-hued sky. The overall scene conveys a sense of urban development and environmental stewardship.

REDEFINING ENVIRONMENTAL AND SUSTAINABLE PLANNING

Transportation Demand Management Program

Protected Tree and Shrub Ordinance

Wildlife Pilot Study

Transportation Demand Management Program

Increasing Transportation Options Through a New Data-Driven Program

City Planning and the Los Angeles Department of Transportation released a new proposed ordinance that would update the City’s existing Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Program. The update would require future projects that exceed minimum size thresholds to incorporate a set of TDM strategies aimed at reducing single-occupancy vehicle trips.

The program relies on a point system which scales the TDM requirements according to a project’s size. Projects will select from a menu of more than 40 TDM strategies, each of which is assigned a point value based on its effectiveness in reducing vehicle miles traveled and single-occupancy vehicle trips. Available TDM strategies include infrastructure investments, such as bicycle facilities, carpooling, and telecommuting programs, and provision of employee incentives, such as transit passes for building occupants.

Upon adoption, the ordinance will position the City to deliver on its climate and transportation goals, including achieving a reduction in the number of overall single-occupancy vehicle trips, by leveraging the latest technologies and incentives to support sustainable modes of transit.

Protected Tree and Shrub Ordinance

Adding New Protections to Preserve Los Angeles’s Native Plants

In 2021, the City Council adopted an ordinance that made modifications to the City’s existing tree protections and expanded protections for the Toyon and Mexican Elderberry shrubs.

The Toyon (also known as the Christmas berry and California holly) is a common shrub native to California. Historically, its berries provided food for local Native American tribes, such as the Chumash, Tongva, and Tataviam. The Mexican Elderberry is a tree or shrub also native to California and valued by Native American tribes, who consumed the dried berries during the winter months. Both shrubs provide habitat for native animal species, aid with soil stability, and help control erosion in hillside areas. The preservation of these shrubs helps to protect Los Angeles’s biodiversity and maintain valuable ecosystems.

In addition to extending protective measures to these two species of shrub, the ordinance also fortifies the regulations covering all locally protected trees and shrubs, in order to ensure the survival of these culturally and ecologically valuable indigenous species.

Wildlife Pilot Study

Incorporating Climate Adaptive Strategies to Achieve Greater Environmental Protections

City Planning released a draft ordinance connected with the Wildlife Pilot Study underway in the Santa Monica Mountains. The ordinance promotes habitat connectivity and preserves larger, contiguous areas in the hillsides for wildlife and native species.

The proposed regulations would minimize the disturbance of biological resources where sensitive habitat may exist, particularly around waterways, riparian areas, and highly vegetated areas. They would also restrict disturbances to soil and native vegetation, limit future

grading in the hillsides, implement new setback requirements, and regulate fencing enclosures, among other considerations.

The proposed regulations seek to incorporate more sustainable outcomes in hillside developments and promote biodiversity while also furthering the goals of climate change resilience, fire safety, and water conservation.

The Department initiated this study to inform the creation of new regulations that would protect wildlife connectivity across the City, in a manner that would balance wildlife habitat maintenance and enhancement with private property development rights.



PLANNING FOR LOS ANGELES'S FUTURE



Hollywood Community Plan Update

Downtown Community Plan Update

Hollywood Community Plan Update

Accommodating a Diverse Mix of Housing Types at All Income Levels

In March, the City Planning Commission approved and recommended adoption of the Hollywood Community Plan Update. A notable feature of the plan is its affordable housing incentive program, created to encourage the production of mixed-income and 100% affordable housing.

These tailored incentives accommodate additional housing opportunities in transit-accessible central Hollywood while offering more moderate height and Floor Area Ratio (FAR) allowances in historic and lower-scale neighborhoods.

The Hollywood Community Plan is anticipated to accommodate an additional 36,000 new housing units and 28,000 jobs upon adoption.

Downtown Community Plan Update

Streamlining Housing Development Near Transit in the City's Urban Core

In September, the City Planning Commission approved the Downtown Community Plan Update. The new zoning accompanying the plan increases capacity for future housing, with a focus on securing onsite affordable units. The plan is anticipated to accommodate 100,000 new housing units and 86,000 new jobs.

Historically, Downtown has not achieved a level of covenanted affordable units at a scale that is appropriate for the urban core of Los Angeles, prompting City Planning to develop a program that captures more affordable units from projects that request additional development rights beyond what their base zoning allows.

With respect to zoning, the plan update nearly doubles the area where housing (including permanent supportive and affordable housing) is permitted, expanding it from 33% to 60% of Downtown. Additionally, the update permits adaptive reuse in new places and creates options for live-work housing as part of a larger strategy to accommodate a variety of living situations, lifestyles, and income levels.



A person with long brown hair, wearing a white button-down shirt, is seated at a wooden desk. They are holding a yellow pen over a large sheet of paper with a table of numbers. To their right is an open laptop. In the foreground, a calculator is visible. The background is a blurred office setting with shelves.

STRENGTHENING ACCOUNTABILITY AND FINANCIAL REPORTING

Case Processing Fee Update

Fiscal Year 2020-2021 Budget

Case Processing Fee Update

Delivering on Cost-Saving Measures

In October, the City Council voted to approve the Department’s revised fee schedule for case processing, saving the City nearly \$8 million in annual expenditures. The Department anticipates that the new fee schedule will increase its level of cost recovery from 63% to 84% by right-sizing fees to more accurately reflect the current costs of services, based on recent market trends and data.

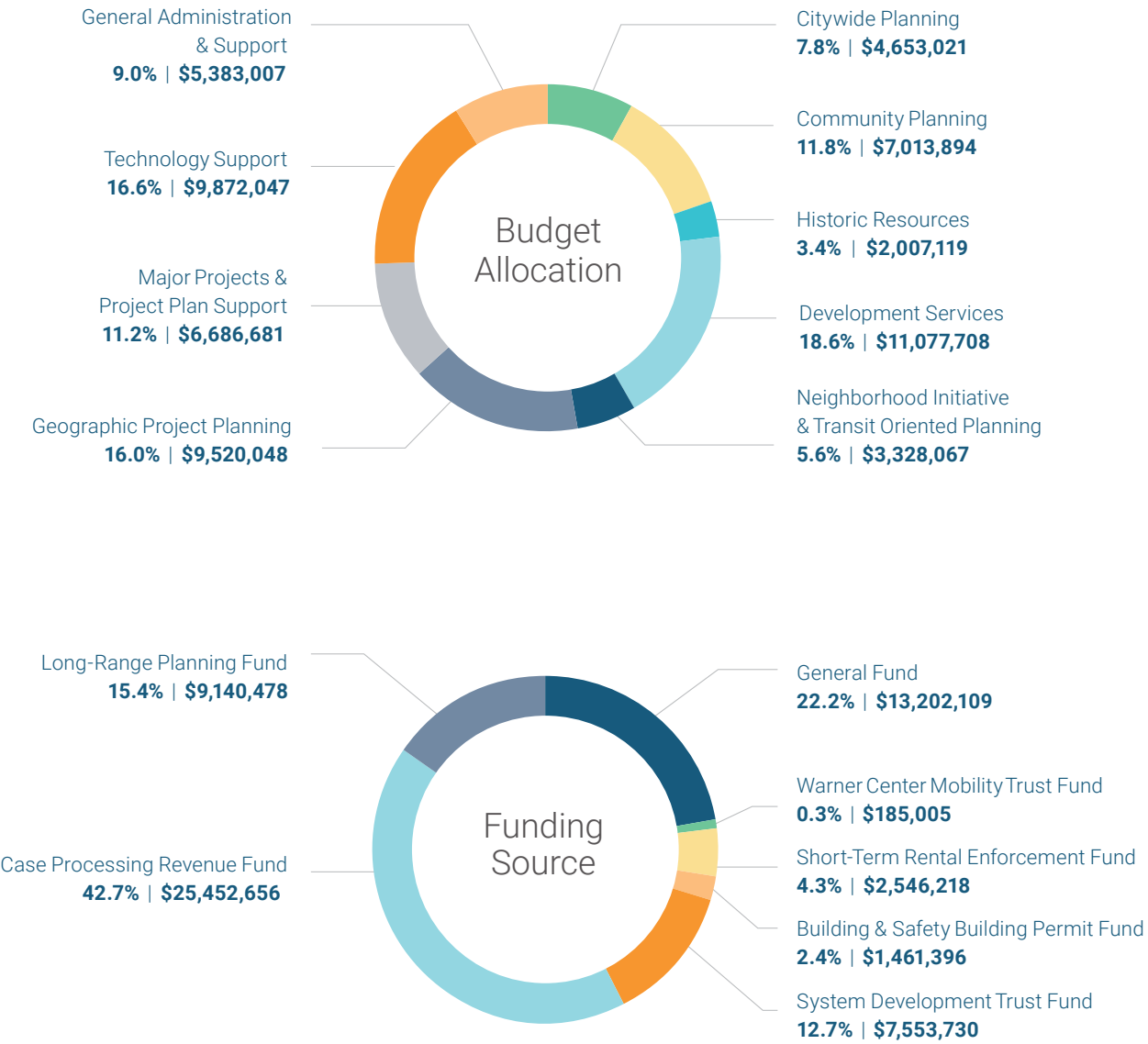
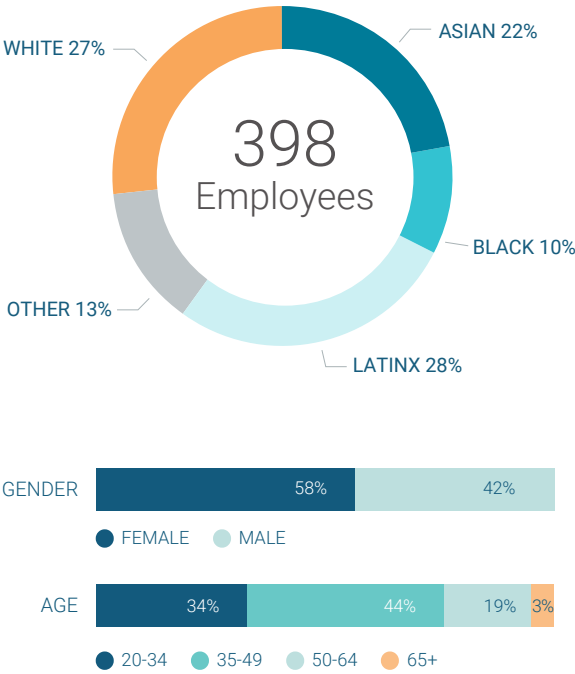
While the cost of many entitlements increased, the fee for others decreased, and several case types continue to be subsidized to support economic development interests and small business growth. By making necessary adjustments to operations, the Department reduced its reliance on General Fund dollars, helping to position the City for economic recovery.

Fiscal Year 2020-21 Budget

Preparing for the Economic Recovery

Compared to the adopted budget for Fiscal Year 2020-21, the position authorities for City Planning increased by 0.4% (resulting in 49 funded and two unfunded position authorities). During this time, the Department’s budget allocation increased by 12.5%, from \$52.9 million in FY 2020-21 to \$59.5 million in FY 2021-22.

In terms of filled positions, the Department concluded the 2021 calendar year with 398—a net increase of two employees (from 396, a gain of 0.5%), after factoring in attrition, retirements, and transfers to other departments and agencies.





Fiscal Year 2021-2022 Budget

In the months following the outbreak of COVID-19, City Planning lost nearly 5% of its workforce as a result of early retirement and attrition. When this report went to press, the Department carried a vacancy rate of nearly 20% due to hiring challenges.

This staffing shortfall places constraints on planning programs. City Planning has worked with the Personnel Department to fill these vacant positions, as well as newly funded positions approved in the FY 2021-2022 budget, to add capacity to support critical planning functions.

Through the City's budget process, the Department was able to secure additional resources, ranging from positions that support case processing in the Valley to new staff members who augment the work of the Home-Sharing Unit and its enforcement capabilities. For the first time in City Planning's history, the Department also secured funding to establish a presence in South Los Angeles.

South Los Angeles Office

These new positions will enable City Planning to open a dedicated office in South Los Angeles to assist with project clearances, neighborhood engagement, and economic development.

Secured six new funded positions:

- One Senior City Planner
- One City Planner
- Three City Planning Associates
- One Senior Administrative Clerk

Home-Sharing Program

These positions will augment existing case processing resources and support the review and enforcement of short-term rentals under the City's Home-Sharing Program.

Secured four new funded positions:

- One Associate Zoning Administrator
- One City Planner
- Two City Planning Associates

Valley Project Planning

These positions will improve the caseload distribution in the Valley, from the Mulholland Parkway Scenic Corridor Specific Plan and the Warner Center Specific Plan to North Hollywood.

Secured six new funded positions:

- One Senior Planner
- One City Planner
- Four City Planning Associates

Affordable Housing

These positions will help expedite the entitlement process for qualifying affordable projects—reducing case times without diverting resources from other critical planning work programs.

Secured three new funded positions:

- Three City Planners

This is a partial list of new programs funded this budget cycle. The Department also received additional funding and resources to support the Wildlife Pilot Study Ordinance, 710 Freeway Corridor, and East San Fernando Valley light rail project, among other programs.

Elected Officials

Mayor
Eric Garcetti

City Attorney
Mike Feuer

City Controller
Ron Galperin

Los Angeles City Council

President
Nury Martinez, District 6

President Pro Tempore
Mitch O’Farrell, District 13

Councilmember
Gilbert Cedillo, District 1

Councilmember
Paul Krekorian, District 2

Councilmember
Bob Blumenfield, District 3

Councilmember
Nithya Raman, District 4

Councilmember
Paul Koretz, District 5

Councilmember
Monica Rodriguez, District 7

Councilmember
Marqueece Harris-Dawson, District 8

Councilmember
Curren D. Price, Jr., District 9

Council District 10

Councilmember
Mike Bonin, District 11

Councilmember
John S. Lee, District 12

Councilmember
Kevin de León, District 14

Councilmember
Joe Buscaino, District 15



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Caroline Choe, Vice President
Helen Campbell
Renee Dake Wilson
Jenna Hornstock
Helen Leung
Yvette Lopez-Ledesma
Karen E. Mack
Dana M. Perlman

Cultural Heritage Commission

Barry Milofsky, President
Gail Kennard, Vice President
Richard Barron
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Area Planning Commission

North Valley

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Araz Parseghian
Victor Sampson
Gerlie Collado

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