

## UCLA Comprehensive Project 2020

# Analysis and Recommendations for the Culver City General Plan Update:

Public Engagement, Housing, Transportation,  
Environment, and Urban Design

Client  
**City of Culver City**



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## Author Bios

**Ulises Aleman** is interested in the expansion of alternative housing models like land trusts and cooperative housing associations. His goals are to work for an affordable housing developer in his hometown of Long Beach, CA and later start his own practice of researching and funding alternative housing models.

**Bradley Bounds II** is concentrating in design and development and has experience working in the public sector planning field. After graduation, he intends to work in the public sector to better inform public policies towards equity, community engagement, and sustainability for underrepresented communities.

**Lennox Chaiveera** is concentrating in design and development and has work experience in community planning and transportation planning. He is committed to making the planning process more accessible to vulnerable communities - particularly low income and immigrant communities.

**Angel Chen** completed her undergraduate studies in Sustainable Urban Environments at NYU, and is concentrating in Regional and International Development within the MURP program. Her interests include real estate development, urban infrastructure provision, and sustainable design.

**Yidan Chen** has long-standing and wide-ranging interest in transportation, and looks forward to becoming an agent of change as a practitioner in China. She is also a foodie, coffee lover, traveller, and a fan of Scandinavian design.

**Patrick Dexter** is a planning student studying the intersection of housing and labor policies. He has a background in community organizing and has produced research on behalf of housing, labor, and community organizations.

**Anna Geannopoulos** is studying transportation policy and planning and is interested in making streets safer while combating climate change and systemic racism.

**Esther Huang** is an east coast transplant and resident of neighboring Palms. Pre-covid you would likely find her hunched over class readings in Bar Nine or wandering the aisles at Sprouts in Culver City.

**Guadalupe (Lupita) Huerta** is a transportation policy and planning student. She is interested in the intersection of public space and transportation, and fighting for more equitable cities.

**Nyang Bing Lin** is a design and transportation policy and planning student. She envisions the future of streets to be lively and diverse places for gathering, interaction and movement.

**Yiye Lin** is concentrating in design and development and particularly interested in affordable housing and inclusive urban design.

**Liliana Morales** is concentrating in design and development and has work experience in transportation planning. She is committed to working with underserved communities and creating spaces that are inclusive, accessible, and representative of the residents that use them.

**Carla Vásquez-Noriega** is a student in the Community Economic Development and Housing concentration. She currently works in housing development at the Community Corporation of Santa Monica, where she hopes to increase access to affordable housing on the Westside.

**Erika Pinto** received her Bachelor's Degree in Growth and Structure of Cities from Bryn Mawr College. She later worked as a community organizer for four years in the neighborhoods of Southeast and East Los Angeles before beginning graduate studies at UCLA Luskin. She is concentrating in the areas of Community Economic Development & Housing as well as Transportation Policy & Planning.

**Daniel Ruiz** is concentrating in community economic development and housing. After graduating, he plans on working in some capacity within community development or city planning with the goal of improving economic and social opportunities for those most marginalized.

**Yue Shen** is an environmental policy and planning student. She is interested in multimodal access and city planning for climate change adaptation.

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## Preface

Each year, a team of urban planning master's students at UCLA research and analyze planning challenges to produce a high-quality report with recommendations for action for a client organization. Known as the Comprehensive Project, in the 2019-2020 academic year UCLA collaborated with the City of Culver City on topics connected to the City's General Plan Update. I am grateful to Councilmember Daniel Lee for initiating the relationship between the City of Culver City and Luskin. Being a Luskin Alum, Councilmember Lee recognized the potential for a mutually beneficial relationship between the small municipality that is eager for change and new ideas, and the School of Public Affairs.

As a member of Culver City's General Plan Advisory Committee and a long-time resident of Culver City, it is clear that the city must change if it is to live up to its ideals of kindness, inclusion, and sustainability. If not, it will continue to be an exclusionary city and a force for displacement and gentrification in the larger urban area.

Like many small cities and neighborhoods in California, a combination of its location and actions by the city council, Culver City has become the site of an economic boom. Yet the city's zoning prevented housing from being built for the dramatic growth in employees. The last update of the Culver City General Plan was in 1995. Since then, Culver City's population has been stagnant – it grew by less than 1 percent – while its larger metropolitan area grew by more than 20 percent.

This combination of factors has greatly benefitted homeowners in Culver City through skyrocketing housing prices. But it has meant displacement for those renters who have been unable to keep up with rising rents. And it has prevented many Culver City would be residents – including most people who grew up in the city – from buying a home near their parents or childhood friends.

Culver City does not only need to rethink and take a proactive stance on housing. The street infrastructure remains firmly lodged in planning visions of the mid-20th century, and needs updating. An urban oil field looms over the city. Traffic congestion clogs many of the city's major boulevards (and is unaddressed by cutting-edge travel demand management policies). The new metro station remains disconnected from downtown and several strategically important parcels near it and severely underutilized.

The city must change its built environment so that it can maintain and make its community more equitable and inclusive. Moreover, it needs to change the way its planning processes engage its community, to make them more representative and equitable, and less directed by the loudest voices or most affluent.

The six reports by UCLA students in this comprehensive project address these pressing issues facing the city: housing affordability, complete streets, the oil field, traffic congestion, the design of the expo station area, and community engagement in planning. They do this through an analysis of existing conditions and trends, and an evaluation of best practices and case studies to produce recommendations that advance the ideals of inclusion, equity, and sustainability but also will improve the quality of life for Culver City residents and visitors alike.

It is my hope that the City will listen to and act upon the recommendations outlined in these six reports, and their authors and myself are available to aid with their implementation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Paavo Monkkonen', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

**Paavo Monkkonen**

Associate Professor of Urban Planning and Public Policy  
UCLA Luskin School of Public Affairs