

# GPAC Meeting #15

Dear GPAC Members,

On Thursday, April 8, 2021, at 7 PM, the City of Culver City will hold our 15th General Plan Advisory Committee (GPAC), meeting. We will review the land use alternatives for the city. This meeting will build on our discussion about land use strategies and areas of change during 2020. This memo provides background information on community engagement, summarizes what will be presented, and poses questions for you to consider before the meeting.

## Community Engagement

Throughout the General Plan Update process, the project team gathered ideas, issues, and public comment on land use. The following synthesizes some of the discussion from City Council, Planning Commission, GPAC, and community members.

### GPAC Discussion

Between August and October 2020, the GPAC reviewed a series of land use strategies in Culver City. The discussion focused on alternative approaches to expanding Culver City's housing options that are innovative and equitable to grow yet respect the history and existing scale of Culver City. GPAC reviewed maps that showcase development models ranging from concentrated growth along the commercial corridors to more distributed, incremental growth throughout the city. Highlights of that discussion include:

- Articulating or identifying the goals for the future of the city before developing the specifics maps of models for change;
- Recognizing the potential challenges to encouraging development of affordable housing along Culver City's commercial corridors, including concern of environmental and health impact burden on low-income family living in multi-family residential development along high traffic streets;
- Considering the California Department of Housing and Community Development's (HCD) Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing (AFFH) and the need to grow housing across the city;
- Encouraging more opportunities to include localize amenities, e.g., coffee shop, market) within walkable or cyclable distance;
- Considering Ballona Creek as a transportation corridor supporting commercial uses;
- Encouraging alternate forms of transit when densifying residential uses;
- Understanding the spatial relationship between schools and housing;
- Concern with speed of land use intensification and including a phasing approach to future development; and
- Redefining neighborhood character as people not the buildings.

## Land Use Strategies Community Workshop

On January 27, 2021, the City of Culver City hosted a Land Use Strategies Community Workshop. Participants learned about the “usual approach” to development, concentrating growth on a limited number of opportunity sites, usually along major corridors. They also learned about alternatives approaches, including missing middle housing and incremental densification. Participants were asked a series of polling questions related to the land use strategies and models for change. Highlights of the polling include:

- 64% of participants strongly agreed or agreed that when planning for new buildings, scale is an important consideration.
- 64% of participants strongly agreed or agreed that small developments across the city are preferable to very large developments in a few places.
- 75% of participants percent strongly agreed or agreed that missing middle housing is a good strategy to accommodate new housing in Culver City.
- 81% of participants strongly agreed or agreed that when designating areas for new development, resident health is an important consideration.
- 96% of participants strongly agreed or agreed that more housing should be allowed near transit.

## City Council and Planning Commission Land Use Strategies Study Session

On January 27, 2021, the City Council and Planning Commission participated in a joint session about land use strategies and models for change in Culver City. Highlights of that discussion include:

- General support for the models for land use change;
- Recognizing the need for housing and affordable housing but concerns around the City's ability to the meet the Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA);
- Reckoning with the exclusionary past of single-family zoning and the impacts on people of color today, with some concerns expressed around upzoning all single family neighborhoods;
- Encouraging home ownership as a key strategy for wealth building;
- Understanding that the commercial corridors provide an opportunity for housing, especially at higher densities, but concerns about those most at risk for public health concerns living in housing on the corridors which are associated with higher air quality and noise pollution and traffic;
- Understanding the need for anti-displacement and anti-discrimination policy;
- Support for an equitable distribution of housing across the city; and
- Recognizing the need for creativity in solving the housing crisis.

## Land Use Alternatives

Based on the comments and discussion to date, the project team developed land use alternatives for Culver City (see maps in Attachment 2, Slides and Maps). The project team will present the land use alternatives on 4/8 for discussion. The alternatives test different land use and urban design patterns to help illustrate and understand the trade-offs between the alternatives.

- **Alternative 0 – No Change (Existing):** This alternative represents the City's current General Plan. It maintains lower densities in both commercial districts and residential neighborhoods.
- **Alternative 1 – Concentrated Growth:** This alternative focuses new residential and commercial growth along the commercial corridors and in existing non-residential districts. Commercial corridors like Washington and Sepulveda would be allowed higher densities. There would be no change in low density single family areas. The City currently allows up to three units in low density single family areas, except for the Upper Culver Crest neighborhood, accounting for one accessory dwelling unit and one junior accessory dwelling unit per the [Accessory Dwelling Unit Ordinance](#).
- **Alternative 2 – Dispersed Growth:** This alternative distributes new growth across the city. Commercial corridors would be allowed a greater mix of uses, including standalone residential. Many low density single family areas would evolve to allow missing middle housing.

In addition to the GPAC, these alternatives will be presented to the Housing Technical Advisory Committee and the community later in April.

## Resources

**Because this meeting will not cover existing conditions, GPAC Members may wish to review these background materials on land use in Culver City and materials from previous GPAC discussions before the meeting:**

- General Plan Update Land Use and Community Design Existing Conditions Report:  
[https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5d950bfaae137b5f0cbd75f5/t/5f936f995f4c6062f85b1d27/1603498031880/LUECR\\_Web.pdf](https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5d950bfaae137b5f0cbd75f5/t/5f936f995f4c6062f85b1d27/1603498031880/LUECR_Web.pdf)
- GPAC Meeting #7 Materials (Land Use, Design, and Housing):  
<https://www.pictureculvercity.com/events-activities/gpac-meeting-7>
- GPAC Meeting #8 Materials (Areas of Change):  
<https://www.pictureculvercity.com/events-activities/gpac-meeting-8>
- GPAC Meeting #10 Materials (Areas of Change Part II):  
<https://www.pictureculvercity.com/events-activities/gpac-meeting-10>

## Guiding Questions

**This meeting will focus primarily on receiving input from GPAC members on the land use alternatives. In addition, please think about the following questions before the meeting:**

- Alternative 2 – Dispersed Growth illustrates the potential for allowing housing types like duplex and triplex in existing single unit neighborhoods (Low Density Single Family to Missing Middle Housing 1 [See maps in Attachment 2]). Do you support allowing duplex and triplex units in those neighborhoods?
- In Missing Middle Housing areas, if a project produced an affordable housing unit, do you support allowing a density bonus on the site?
- Along many stretches of Culver City's commercial corridors, such as Sepulveda, Washington, and Culver Blvds, parcels are relatively small and have shallow depths. Redeveloping parcels like these can be challenging given parcel dimensions, requirements for onsite parking, and height limits. Would you support creating a transitional zone (as shown by the hatch in the Alternative 2 – Dispersed Growth maps) if parcels are consolidated that allows more residential density but creates clear transitions to adjacent uses?
- Along commercial corridors like Sepulveda and Washington, the City requires new residential projects to contain commercial space for retail or service activities. Would you support removing commercial requirements for residential projects along the city's commercial corridors?
- Culver City maintains approximately 8% of its land area as industrial uses, and many of these industrial zoned properties provide space for an ecosystem of small businesses that support the larger businesses. These areas are located adjacent to Ivy Station and along Ballona Creek. What land use policy should the City consider for these industrially zoned areas?
  - Maintain entire area as industrial and small businesses uses
  - Allow limited areas to transition over time to housing or economic growth areas
  - Allow the entire area to transition to housing or economic growth

Should you have any questions before the meeting, please feel free to reach out. Thank you, and we look forward to seeing you on Thursday April 8 at 7 PM sharp. Please plan for the meeting to end around 9 PM.

- The GPU Team