

APPENDIX

Interim Report on City Planning's Proposed Venice Community Plan/Local Coastal Program

Summary of Public Comments

There were common themes and concerns in the Public's Comments that were consistent throughout our numerous outreach meetings. The overarching concerns of the community are in the following areas:

1. Planning Process Considerations
2. Unnecessary/Inadvisable Density
3. Environmental/Resiliency Concerns
4. Affordability/Diversity
5. Parking and Transportation Issues
6. Failing Infrastructure
7. Preservation of Existing Residential Neighborhoods
8. Unnecessary Changes to Commercial Zoning
9. Enforcement Needed

Venice is considered to be "The People's Beach," a place that is accessible to all of Los Angeles and the world. Additionally, there is great concern that the current proposals differ drastically from current coastal zoning that reflects the protections afforded in the Coastal Act and the certified Venice Coastal Land Use Plan. We must understand what the updated Local Coastal Program is going to propose and ensure that it is in harmony with the Community Plan update. Venice has been designated by both the City and the Coastal Commission as one of fourteen special coastal communities that are to be protected as a Coastal Resource as per the Coastal Act, and future plans must respect and honor that designation.

The report below includes the general talking points covered in each of the above-mentioned areas of concern. This is followed by a breakdown of specific comments for each subarea. And finally, we provide a link to the summaries and transcripts from each of the meetings, for your reference.

Summary of Public Comments

A. SUMMARY for all Subareas

1. Planning Process Considerations

- It's complex for the community to understand the zoning changes and perhaps we need to create a map of our community that identifies things we want in Venice and to transmit to future generations, such as parks, public art, memorials.
- It would be great if we could do a CAD presentation so that people could see the visual/rendering of the City Planning proposals.
- Community members found the 110-page draft community plan policies cumbersome and confusing and at times containing conflicting visions for Venice. It's not a document that's useful to the community. Of the 110 pages of the draft Venice Community Plan, 107 were totally worthless, unless you wanted to read ad nauseam, "*encourage* developers to do this," *encourage* joint efforts among these groups," "*seek out* beautifying the neighborhood." It seems that the community plans are cookie cutter, the same for each plan area. As is, it's more like "welcome to Westside Village," rather than being tailored specifically to the Venice Community and the other communities.

- I'm very concerned about the impacts from these plans--what it does to the sense of community, what it does to people being able to be neighbors and their ability to be mobile in their communities, and the opportunities to build relationships and to have recreational activities within the areas in which they live. A lot of what is proposed with these plans would make it prohibitive for people to be able to do that.
- The draft community plan is looking at Venice as a commodity and not as a community. We need to shift that focus so that we can start thinking about how to build a vibrant, diverse, equitable community.
- Maybe we should ask Planning to provide us a precedent analysis, looking at the existing recent history, sort of post bungalow era, in terms of what people have been building and what Planning's goals are in terms of changing it.
- There seems to be consensus that the community is concerned about increases in height and FAR and would like to know what Venice can accommodate as currently zoned.
- Georges-Eugene Haussmann was the architect and urban planner who redesigned Paris 100 or more years ago. He built 6-story buildings, but he created huge, wide boulevards, so you don't have these narrow, dark canyons and you don't have large 5-story or 15-story buildings stealing shade and air from smaller buildings.
- We're one of the most dense parts of Los Angeles. This seems highly inappropriate. One of my friends circulated the proposal for 15-story buildings on Washington. I just was like, is this some kind of fake news or something? I had trouble believing that anybody would propose putting 15-story buildings across the street from 1- and 2-story buildings. What I expected would soon come out of this process was that on major corridors--which would be Washington, maybe Main Street, maybe Venice Boulevard, and those are the only three I really can think of--we might go from 3 to 4 stories. And frankly, I think 5 is too much because you realize that those are backing up in some cases to 1-story buildings.
- We should be looking at Venice holistically. It's important to look at the bigger picture, not just look at we're in North Venice or we're in Millwood or we're in East Venice. Look at the whole picture of what's going on. Because even if you don't live on Washington, it's going to impact you. What's going to happen with Venice? What's going to happen with Lincoln? It's going to impact you, even if it's not the change that you're looking at on your particular street.
- The city proposes 15 stories along certain areas of Washington. Why would we want that is my question. Unless it's coupled with open space or transit or infrastructure improvements, it's kind of a one-dimensional story they're telling. What would be really helpful with these things is some sort of 3D massing that shows these changes. I think people would be shocked at what's proposed. And I appreciate that most of this is built out, but there's no "why" behind what the changes really represent. If you're up zoning a portion of the Peninsula that's already built out, my question is why. I just want to understand why that's good or what the City is trying to accomplish.
- L.A. and Venice in particular is a very primitive urban structure. Zoning is a very primitive instrument to create cities. Look at many complicated cities--New York, Chicago--who deal with water, deal with infrastructure. And we are really at a very primitive state. I think we need more intelligence in how our city is planned, how our city is organized, we need to include many more elements than just zoning. The city has no tools to enforce sort of intelligent buildings for intelligent cities. Parking, traffic, environmental issues, solar access, all of these things should be considered.
- It's very primitive what the L.A. Planning Department seems to be doing--totally ignoring traffic and the infrastructure, our water table, tsunami risk, and on and on.
- Zoning is a very rough tool that was introduced last century to control health, traffic and building heights as well as use. In times like today, we face some different challenges. Now climate and gentrification have become bigger problems, and they may need different solutions.

- Where are those elements that make a community a community, that make you want to live in a certain place, that make it possible for you to live in that place, to make it livable for you to live in that place?
- I think next time we should actually receive a mailer, something so every household receives it, so it's not only the ones that are very informed or who're paying attention to what's going on in planning, but everybody can actually know about this opportunity because it is so important.
- In planning for our community, we have to think about our tourists--other Californians, in Riverside or Needles or wherever, that want to come to Venice and see Venice, because they have an image of Venice that is attractive to them, and in fact this is the case worldwide.
- Our community planning must include remembering the history of Venice, because it was the people of Oakwood that built the Venice Canal that attracted the people that led to the quirkiness that now is known worldwide.
- I would ask for no lot consolidations anywhere in Venice above ground. You can put three lots together below ground, as you see on Market Street in the 200 block where they have ramped parking and they do all that underneath the building. They can tie them together so you can park more cars, but above ground it stays with the same architectural integrity we have throughout Venice.
- You hear the "realtor speak" about the Venice vibe. They talk a lot about the Venice vibe. And it gets me because all these proposed changes by City Planning are pointed to completely destroy the so-called Venice vibe, which is, as we know, folks who have been around here a while. Even with all the changes that we've seen, it's still mixed enough culturally and economically that it's interesting and vital and it still has some of that vibe. It's been diminished a bit, but it's still something. Yet everything that we're hearing about this plan and the density is the incentivizing of destroying all the rest of the existing affordable housing to build it out to these brand-new buildings that are going to be unaffordable. Everything's pointed to just destroy that completely and create what we've all feared all along, which is the Laguna Beach-ization of Venice. That's kind of what I see this all as being. So, it's upsetting and I'm glad there's other people that are upset. We should be preserving the existing affordable and historic housing and not incentivizing the destruction of it.

2. Unnecessary/Inadvisable Density

- The plans the City is proposing don't add any more housing than we already have the ability to have with the current zoning.
- Venice is the second most dense coastal community, after Hermosa. But we have tourism! Not only do we have residents, but we have tourism. So, our communities double in population on the weekends. Where is the infrastructure for all of this?
- We need to create change from meaningful numbers. We're not being told what the requirement is for Venice, which puts everybody in a difficult position. We're being asked for an answer without being asked the right question. They ask us to make recommendations, but we don't have the information in order to make recommendations. The City needs to provide current housing capacity given DB, TOC, ADU, SB 9, etc.
- What we don't have is an inventory of what can be built. We need to know, particularly for our commercial corridors, how much could be built now, additional square footage for all of these commercial corridors, so we can see whether we actually have to go to five stories. It could be that if everybody built out to what's allowed now, we may be able to provide the units, including the affordable units that the city and the state are saying that we need. We need a baseline assessment provided by planning that tells us what the developers/property owners could build out now before we get forced into accepting, with bonuses, five stories. When you look at Thornton Lofts, you see

how dense Thornton Lofts is, which you can do under the current zoning. Every community in all the districts has been asking for this information--what can be built with the current zoning?

- If you read the 2004 Community Plan, it states there that the zoning allows for density for a population of 46,000 by 2010. And that was one of the features of the Community Plan in 2004. Venice population is now 38,000. So, the zoning as it exists apparently would allow for a population of 46,000 according to the 2004 Community Plan, and we're nowhere near that at this point.
- If density is increased, will funding be provided for streets, parks, schools, bike lanes, etc?
- I'd like to know what it is that made them reach out to try to add this density in what is already one of the most dense parts of Los Angeles.
- There is an idea that density is going to magically solve things. And it's not. We're losing population. Our businesses are fleeing. Our services are a mess. Look at this map. What do we see? We see water on every frigging side of the Marina Peninsula. What are they thinking is all I ask myself. What are they thinking with this? And we should demand an answer. It's also going to be a problem for insurance, present and future.
- I'd like to suggest that in the plan we put a limit of a maximum unit size so that you can't have more than, say, a 2,000 square foot unit. And the way the FAR ratio will work with a maximum unit size might increase the number of units and maybe help solve the housing crisis that way.
- I'm trying to balance density and scale and character with how we can provide more opportunities for people than just super expensive single-family units. So, I'm thinking that if the height is maybe a bit taller, like on the corridors such as Lincoln or some of those, maybe that's a way to get a bit more density.
- What I see going on in our neighborhood is that we went from a neighborhood of families and a lot of people living in the buildings, to a neighborhood of middle-class transients, young people who can afford to rent their one bedroom for a year or two and then when it gets too expensive, they move someplace else. Or they're really, really wealthy people who build these enormous houses that only have a few people living in them. So, the additional development hasn't increased the population density.
- My kids can't afford to live in Venice. They're very hard working. How do you protect young people who want to create a community, families who want to live in a community and be part of a community? That's a much more difficult question than simply giving developers a chance to build bigger buildings. Ultimately, I agree with the goal of providing more housing in the state, but just plunking it down willy-nilly in every community, so no particular politician has to bear the brunt of the blame, it doesn't really work for what you want to do, what you need to do.
- There's a linkage between density and equity. The more you restrict density, the more you limit equitable chances for people.
- When you up zone property, you increase the value of the property, which means the landlords sell, people lose their RSO housing, and it gets replaced with a different class of people. That is the economic reality of up zoning, and not equity.
- The City is pretending that we want equity, but they're not going to do it.
- Venice is a special coastal resource for the Coastal Commission and we're one of 13 in the state. And I kind of feel like maybe being one of 13 special coastal resource towns, we should get a decrease in the density bonus, a density deduction, a density reduction bonus for being special.

3. Environmental/Resiliency Concerns

- We are a coastal community, and we have Sea Level Rise and the propensity for storms to occur that are going to be life threatening. If the EIR (CEQA Environmental Impact Report) is done correctly,

there should be no increased density west of Lincoln. It appears that to date that has not been studied to the degree that it needs to be. Venice is the only coastal community other than Westchester/Playa del Rey (which does not have near the size of footprint within the Coastal Zone). Thus, Venice is very unique, and any increased density should be carefully analyzed in the EIR.

- Climate resiliency should be the primary goal and standard against which everything is measured.
- As most of Venice is in a flood zone and has a high-water table, building more and higher, along with the density bonuses proposed – from 5-15 stories, depending on the subarea – would require massive amounts of dewatering, which would have negative effects, not just on Venice but on surrounding communities. Thus, we should not be increasing intensity of use in Venice.
- We anticipate flooding and we need to understand what potential impact this could have on insurers refusing to insure if we ignore climate change issues such as sea level rising. We already see insurance companies pulling out of fire zones and other areas in California.
- I have a friend who does low-income tax credits and builds a lot of affordable housing. He said that in any other place in the country you would not be building in ecologically sensitive zones, in flood zones and in fire zones.
- We want trees and front yards, and we don't want construction to destroy the street trees, our green space and our urban forest that presently exist.
- I would ask you to include trees, also on public property, and actually have an element in the community plan for provision of more trees on site. Show how that element can be incorporated, because we only have a 15% canopy in the city.
- We only have 15% tree canopy. One of the proposals you'll be hearing from the Venice Arbor Committee is that instead of doing bay windows that go out, you do cut ins off of the setback and you can do a tree there unless there's no setback and you lose opportunities to include trees in your planning.
- The City's Urban Forest Management Plan must be integrated into the community plans.
- Trees and green space must be protected, and removal or reduction must not be a density bonus incentive option.
- Planning wants to build more dense buildings--wider and higher, more units. This is going to block the sea breeze coming from the ocean. Studies show that this changes the climate. The next step will be that the neighborhoods will be filled with air conditioners, which will contribute to the climate issues. These big buildings will create heat islands within the community, will restrict air flow, and will also have reflection off the glass that will be very challenging.
- Venice is a gateway to the ocean and it's also an escape route away from the ocean.
- In case of a Tsunami, earthquake, major flooding or a gas leak, there are 3,500 people who live at the beach now who would have to evacuate. Think about what that's like for you living in the Oxford Triangle, living along Venice or living along Washington, with that many people trying to get out. Then add on the proposal to change the densification of the Marina Peninsula by going from two to five stories, and from 3,400 to 8,000 square foot buildings. There's going to be a mass of people who live at the beach that will be coming east on Washington and Venice towards Lincoln. If these streets have significantly increased density, no one's getting out.
- If you increase density at the terminus, you have more people evacuating in an emergency, whether it's earthquake, tsunami, gas leaks, or major flooding, and it's happening all over California. So, we're not exempt. We've been lucky so far, but sea level is rising. That needs to be a part of this plan, a very specific part of this plan. It should be a chapter of the plan.
- When we allow these very large FARs, developers build out the entirety of the lot. That means the destruction of trees that are providing shade for their neighbors, and habitat for birds, including migratory birds, as well as the cleaning of the air. All of that dust and dirt that comes off of the roadways is caught by mature trees. When we allow the type of development that receives density

bonuses that allow coverage of the entire lot, we are decimating what makes our neighborhoods livable and beautiful.

- An increase in density usually results in a decrease in green space, things like trees and plants that actually capture and infiltrate rain and runoff that goes down the gutters to the ocean. Being a coastal town, we should be concerned with that and think about how all that additional hardscape is going to affect our water quality.
- Regarding these FAR build outs and increased density, it will cause us to lose trees and vegetation, things that make life more pleasant. Not only that but being around green space and vegetation affects our psyche and our wellbeing. Trees and plants provide what is called "eco-system services." They're doing stuff--they're cleaning the air; they're infiltrating run off when it rains--so it's not just going to the gutter and carrying pollutants to the ocean. This is very important where we live, by the ocean. All the plantable, permeable space that we lose, we're not getting it back. So, if we can't infiltrate, if we can't absorb runoff to our own properties, it's gone forever. Let's really think about that.
- We do need limits for FAR and ground coverage, in order to preserve open space. Even if it's your own backyard, it is also impacting the people who have a backyard next to you. For large homes that are two stories high and cover the entire lot, that means that the person who once had a backyard that had sunlight, now has the shading of a two-story home. And whatever plants and trees they have growing there will be challenged by that ultra-large home.
- The house next to me used to be a Craftsman. It had a beautiful backyard, and it had fruit trees back there. I used to work in my dining room, but since they demolished the Craftsman and built a new 3-story, 5,900 square foot structure next door, I have to keep lights on because there's no sunlight that comes through my windows anymore. And so, I have to keep lights on throughout my house because the whole east side of my house is shadowed by this three-story building that's a huge monstrosity.
- We must also consider the elimination of extreme amounts of sun by the increased shadow length of the higher buildings which in turn decreases solar gain and increases the use and need for more heat; and decreases the required plantings' survivability due to decreased natural light conditions.
- We accumulated three lots together and my wife was a florist and a landscaper. We built this huge garden. Isn't it ironic now as we reach the end of the line, our little paradise could be affected by a monster building they're putting up on a tiny lot next door.
- Anywhere in the Coastal Zone that's near the water, you have to look at if it's a flood zone and there're all different levels of flood zones, so I think city planning really needs to do their homework on that.
- There are solar axis shading issues. There's a famous study by USC that is called solar zoning, which allows higher on one side of the street and required lower on the other, because when you are facing north you're not giving a shadow to your neighbors. But when you're facing south you are shadowing the neighbor behind it. So, zoning can help these kinds of situations.
- Isn't there supposed to be some sort of study to determine how much an area can deal with the amount of traffic that it has, and then you build accordingly and not the other way around?
- It's hard for me to believe that the Coastal Commission will approve this kind of increased density because of sea level rise.
- Does this plan that you're talking about, that the city has, make any consideration of the fact that there are many, many oil wells, oil well sites, capped wells, and non-capped wells?
- Let's eliminate any possible discretionary adjustment out there so we don't remove setbacks that are actually critical for our greenery, for our mental health, and for our quality of life.
- We need to think about the climate change impacts. I hate to see when developers don't have to really look into the environmental impacts. It's so, so important to consider those.
- Centennial Park should get more trees because it's just a really shadowless spot.

- I have deep concerns about five stories on both Ocean Front Walk and on Abbot Kinney. To build five stories on Ocean Front Walk you would need to de-water because of sea level rise. There are lots of environmental concerns and infrastructure concerns. Our Hyperion plant is barely covering us as we are.

4. Affordability/Diversity

- It's not going to be a popular thing--but I would say either get rid of all RSOs or make every residential unit subject to the RSO restrictions, including inspections.
- Every new multi-housing infill development should have 56% affordable housing, which is according to SCAG's income level housing allocation for Los Angeles.
- If you have a density bonus, you should have it permanently for that property and not time limited. Also, there should be an increase in the amount of low-income rental unit requirements, not 10%, but closer to 25%.
- Affordable housing is done by a City formula, so it changes from neighborhood to neighborhood. Affordable housing say in South Central Los Angeles might be \$1,200 per month. In Venice it's going to be over \$2,000 per month. I don't think that's affordable housing, that's market rate. I would propose that any density bonuses for all of Venice should be Very Low-Income affordable housing. That will ensure our work force can work and live here. We need to know from the City what percentage low and very low income the units in these buildings, these 5 to 15-story buildings, are going to offer. That's a huge bearing on whether we can support this.
- Up zoning is not about creating affordable housing. It is about increasing the costs of the land with a bare minimum giveaway on affordable housing. And so that you understand the economics when we talk about these density bonuses, when you put in the density, you put in more market rate housing. And as a result, you raise the area median income. And as a result, your rents go up as well.
- Average household income is an aggregate of everybody that lives here. So, you have to remember that when you bring in a lot of the new money, that ups the average income level. And what you have to think about when you up zone—and you put in 10 affordable units and 90 are at market rate—is that you now raise the average median income of your entire community. This is what will be used when they determine the rental cost of an affordable unit.
- New development actually increases the rent for low-income people.
- There is a disparity between the description of affordable housing and actual affordable housing, which is not really called out on this plan yet, it's not really specified. And that is a concern.
- Will you please commit to having these affordable, thank you very much, affordable units specifically defined on these different planning sheets. On these plans from the city, affordable is just a generalized blanket statement.
- I don't see how we can do anything until we clear our streets of people that are living in cars and RVs. Almost 100,000 people in this city are homeless. We need to build affordable housing, and I wouldn't restrict it to two stories or three stories.
- We have had incrementally very few new units added over the last 10, 20 years. In fact, I think we've seen some disappear. And so unfortunately, all of our kids live 15 plus miles away because they're out of college, they're starting their first jobs, and they can't afford to live in a place that they grew up. And I think that's really a shame.
- There are locations that people could live, but they're not inhabited by people that live here. They are empty or they are used for temporary people coming in like Airbnb. There's a huge proliferation of that. And in East Venice, what's very common is they'll purchase a property that was in an area that was more affordable, where there were multiple people living there, and they turn it into a gigantic

compound that people don't live in, and they rent it out for business things like filming, parties, events, things like that, and it's not a residence anymore. This is happening a lot, and there's no enforcement of the laws to protect our neighborhoods from this happening. And that takes away a ton of affordable housing. What about enforcement of that? That's something that I think the city should look at, because we bleed out a lot of potential housing for people that could be living here.

- What makes Venice Venice? It's always been sort of a melting pot with economic and racial diversity. And we've lost that. How do we claw a little back? That is through truly affordable housing. That's what we really need. I want to see as much affordable housing in Venice as we can get. We're losing diversity. We're losing economic and racial diversity.
- As a result of Project Action, we began to build this community and we proposed to the federal government low-income housing. And that low-income housing produced 15 low-income apartment buildings. We didn't want it to look like "the projects" that you have read about in New York or in Saint Louis. That's why you see those 15 buildings spread throughout the Venice community. When you disperse low-income housing throughout the community and when you allow the diversity in those apartment buildings in reference to income and affordability or very low income, and it's managed in that way, then you can keep the diversity in the community that we're looking for that is that eclectic part of the Venice community.
- As we see in Oakwood, housing for low income was achieved by a collaborative effort from government, neighborhood groups and developers receiving rent guarantees. As these guarantees run out a similar effort should be restarted.
- There was no real mention of affordability for, or the need for apartments big enough for, families.
- There was lots of talk about development bonuses, but those bonuses should only be given to developers who are truly helping to solve LA's dire affordability crisis.
- I'm a bit confused about what the city is proposing for the Plan because the law says that the Coastal Act and the Density Bonus Act, both state laws, must be harmonized. And so, we need to make sure that happens on a project-by-project basis, on a discretionary level.
- The city of LA is barreling ahead as if the Coastal Act never existed. The Coastal Act requires, among other things, that the Local Coastal Plans consider the need for access for all people, not just the wealthy. So, we could insist that half the dwelling units created are restricted to tenants of low income and there should be enforcement to ensure that hotels include room rates that are accessible for all affordability levels. One affordable unit for 19 market rate units I think is unacceptable for the Coastal Zone.

5. Parking and Transportation Issues

- Require at least one off-street parking space per unit, which cannot be converted to an ADU.
- Venice already has a deficiency in parking, and reducing or eliminating parking requirements would make it worse.
- The Azzurra building is 16 stories. The only reason why it doesn't create a ton of traffic is because it's right at the end of the 90. And that's why those buildings were put there. If we significantly increase building heights along Washington, Venice, and Lincoln, the traffic congestion will be impossible. There is no way that we can add any more cars to the road. Additionally, the nature of a building of that size is so completely out of character with what I like about Venice. Maybe the Planning Department thinks we can put up more 15 story buildings because buildings like the Azzurra are there. But it has 50% occupancy as many of the units in the building are owned by foreign owners who come only periodically, for a week at a time. Planning for significantly taller buildings is not going to solve our housing problem.

- There are many solutions for creating more on-street parking--restriping some of the wider streets, increasing diagonal parking, maybe making more one-way streets where it's very tight. The way it's done now is very unimaginative.
- I don't see any provisions here on how we get people in and how we get people out. The city seems to have this notion that if we get rid of parking then people won't use cars. But we're not there yet. These are really limited streets; they were put in place before the car. If you go up Pacific, you can't even really ride a bike and drive in two lanes of traffic. It's really dangerous. And they're not paved well and they're narrow. So, I don't understand how we're supposed to get people in and out, irrespective of how many units we have on site, if we don't address traffic corridors. I don't see us getting rail or mass transit. It's not going to fit. We have a dense area with streets that are narrower than most.
- I grew up in Venice when there were two-way streets, not one-way streets. So, you had to figure out who was going to pull over or back up and let the other person by, and that still happens on some of the streets.
- Lower parking standards are important if they're coupled with mobility and access improvements.
- I am concerned we're now facing traffic congestion in the Marina and in Venice like never before. Of course, the Silicon Beach traffic flows through also, which is another problem. So, I hope we're watching traffic.
- The concern that I have, and I think most of my neighbors have, is really with traffic and the intensity of population. We already have very, very dense traffic in this whole area. There are signs posted all over the Peninsula that talk about how to egress during a tsunami, but people laugh about it because the reality is there are hardly any exits out of the area and they're all going to be horribly congested in the event of any incident. So, the question becomes, what's the plan for increasing the infrastructure that will support this kind of increase in density? Because the highways and roads and the streets are all heavily congested now. If you increase density from three floors to five floors and increase the FAR, you're going to have a huge impact on traffic in the area. What is the city's intent in terms of building additional highways and roads and streets?

6. Failing Infrastructure

- The infrastructure deficit in the area is one of the biggest concerns.
- There's nothing addressing our infrastructure. We don't have an infrastructure that can handle a lot of increased density, more people using washing machines, etc.
- Re. the infrastructure, I pay \$40,000 in property taxes. I get no street cleaning. I get no drainage on my street. The trash truck can barely get through, and all the people who own the buildings across from us are now turning their buildings into apartments, into condos, and adding ADUs. There's no more parking.
- I just want to make sure that any buildings that are being built here, that we're thinking about the rains, we're thinking about the flooding. That's something that should be a requirement in this. We need to be thinking about buildings and safety in that way.
- I've lived in Europe's most densely populated city, Barcelona, and that's a city that sort of works because they have lots of parks and lots of build out of public transportation. And if they want to put six-story buildings all up along Venice Boulevard and Washington Boulevard, so lots of different kinds of people live there, I'm sort of okay with that...if there's lots of parks, lots of access to public transportation.
- We'd like to see a public subway down the length of Venice Boulevard or Washington Boulevard.

- What about increased services? If we are talking about significantly increasing density, what about increasing our fire department and our police officers or any of these other services that are needed proportionate to the number of people that live in these neighborhoods? Do those things come congruent with these proposals? Are those things considered before these proposals are finalized?
- Yes, we can have increased housing development where we can accommodate eventually everyone. We have to allow more development. But we should also be accommodating parks, green spaces, and I'm always looking at how can we infiltrate stormwater runoff. We're going to have all this increased density and these high rises, but what about the actual infrastructure for the water, the runoff? Where does it all go and how are we going to accommodate that? There's no mention of it.
- The issue of needing the parks and the other infrastructure to go with the density is a huge issue...probably one of the biggest.
- I'm also concerned about people's utilities. Do we really have the pipes and stuff for the infrastructure?
- You're talking about creating all this new housing and height and a lot of new units, and we've already got some sewage overflows down at the breakwater. There're problems. Old infrastructure has not been upgraded. We've got some things to deal with before we start adding significant units to this area.

7. Preservation of Existing Residential Neighborhoods

- Venice is a community of neighborhoods, and we need to preserve our residential neighborhoods.
- I don't care for rooftop developments, which nobody ever uses, because when they find out how windy it is, they go down. So, it's a useless feature.
- A way they get around the FAR is using number of stories if there is no height restriction. So, you can build a story that's 20 feet floor to floor, and then you can put a loft in there, as long as your loft is something like a third less than the floor plan. If you're worried about how tall buildings are then we need a restriction on the floor-to-floor height. That is really key, more so than the number of floors.
- Height restrictions are better to talk about than floors because we know how those can be manipulated.
- The stories need to be spelled out. We need to actually have an absolute height. We need a really firm measurement. Stories is much too vague. We need transparency.
- As a matter of principle --- I am hoping that the environmental quality of the walk streets will continue to be enforceable . . . with strict parking requirements limiting parking spaces and maintaining the walk streets as 'green' corridors. Indeed, I believe that 'requirements' could be articulated that would improve the present situation, and these should be a critical part of the 'plan.'
- I want to make sure that we maintain what is called transitional heights. You're going to see that in Venice on Lincoln Boulevard because next to Lincoln there is single family residential.

8. Unnecessary Changes to Commercial Zoning

- Mixed use changes the impacts on residents because of the commercial element. Having a business below you impacts your life because of deliveries and the customers that are coming in and going out. They aren't just in the building but are going in and out. I know what it's like having a business in a residential area. We have to be so considerate of the residential neighbors. It's an impact and an inconvenience, but it's not just inconvenient, it can impact your quality of life. It's loud. There's more trash that you have to deal with. There're more services that happen. And that does impact people's

way of life. We're led to believe that mixed use is just what we get now, but maybe that should be challenged.

- Mixed use is used by the City like chicken soup for fixing everything. But retail is suffering, and it does not seem to be coming back any time in the near future. We should not put endless amounts of mixed use when there are store fronts vacant not only in Venice but city wide. It may sound good, but it's sort of magical thinking. We need a vision/plan to help the businesses that are already here and to consider commercial structures for conversion to housing.

9. Enforcement Needed

- There are a lot of violations that are not enforced. We need to call for enforcement that actually works, not enforcement on folks/the little guys, and the big guys get to run roughshod.
- For city enforcement issues that have an impact or influence on the plans that we're talking about, we definitely need to make sure that the plan has the networks involved so that all of the resources that are important to the effectiveness or the success of whatever plans are being proposed are also included in the discussion.

Summary of Public Comments

B. SUBAREAS

1. East Venice – January 24, 2024

- We're definitely opposed to what City Planning is planning for Rose/Penmar or Penmar Park neighborhood.
- We don't want this commercialization and type of change in the E. Venice neighborhood.
- We already have commercial uses in our neighborhood and do not need or want more.
- There is much vacant commercial in the area.
- Mixing residential and commercial is problematic as the business owners' priority is their bottom line and not the community and neighborhood they are inserting themselves into.

[Link to transcript of East Venice public comments:](#)

<https://www.venicenc.org/assets/documents/5/committee65beaebcd6800.pdf>

2. Southeast Venice and Oxford Triangle – January 31, 2024

Oxford Triangle Parking

- This is an area where the road infrastructure is already inadequate.
- One of the issues is that we don't have street sweeping, which has resulted in the Oxford Triangle becoming a LAX alternative parking area. People park there for a couple of weeks at a time, especially during the holidays and on long holiday weekends in the summertime. Ubers and taxis pick up and drop off people. As a result, there is a significant parking issue for us.
- Parking is scarce in the Oxford Triangle, especially on the northern end, because of all the business parking and people going to the restaurants, during the evening as well as during the day. There is also traffic that comes from the beach. It's nearly impossible sometimes to get in and out of the Oxford Triangle on a summer weekend, starting from about 3 o'clock, because everyone's exiting the beach area. Also, on weekday evenings traffic flows from Santa Monica, across Venice and up Washington Blvd.
- The Thatcher Yard development is going to be another 98 units. The Oxford Triangle is the only neighborhood that is really growing.

Oxford Triangle Residential

- The Oxford Triangle should have the protection of FAR limits. The Oxford Triangle is very low density, single-family residential, for a reason. We need significant protection that we don't presently have, to protect the type of neighborhood that it is.
- Oxford Triangle is experiencing a dearth of forest canopy and green space.

[Link to transcript of Southeast Venice & Oxford Triangle public comments:](#)

<https://www.venicenc.org/assets/documents/5/committee65cc079d83c16.pdf>

3. Southwest Venice and Venice Canals – February 7, 2024

Southwest Venice

- For Southwest Venice, we've seen a couple of major developments that snuck through that really stick out like a sore thumb. And that is a single-family, low-density neighborhood that requires probably the most protection of all. So, we need to consider what we can do to protect that neighborhood from overdevelopment.

Venice Canals

Residential

- Back in the 70s and 80s, the residents crafted building rules and ensured that the character of the Canals would be preserved. We want to maintain the existing RW-1 height limits, the side yard setbacks, front and rear yard setbacks, and especially the second story [step]backs that ensure the Canals are not walled in by the big boxes that you see built elsewhere.
- The Canals are 100 years old and the whole Canal system needs to be repaired before anything is done in any part of the Canals or adjacent properties. We currently have storm drains flowing into the Canals. The whole system is preposterous.
- Currently the Canals have a few issues. We have a leak we can't figure out. We lose about a foot a day, is what the maintenance company tells us. And so, the city has not figured out how to repair that or how to fix it, but the Canals are leaking. All the streets, not just the Canals, but in the lagoon as well, flow from the streets into the Canals, unfiltered. And right now, they're protected from flooding because we release the water prior to a rain, and then we release the water again after a rain. And we're really concerned that we may get a high tide with full Canals and not be able to release the water. But the water is going in is polluted. So, one of the things we're trying to get the council office to work on is a stormwater capture system that would clean the water before it goes into the Venice Canals or the Ballona Lagoon, and before it goes out to the pumping station, in the circle, out to the ocean, so that we get a clean ocean, clean Canals, and a clean lagoon.
- Raising the height in the Canals is a big mistake.
- Why are we adding more height in the Canals and more density in an area where they are telling us that we are under stress for future potential catastrophic events?
- I'm on a two-sided street, why should the building across be 3 or 5 or 6 stories and my house is limited to 30 or 33 feet?
- Courts A, B, C, and D have 20-foot-wide streets. Court E has a 10-foot-wide street/alley. The city calls it a street. Courts A, B, C, D are all 30 by 95-foot lots. Court E is only 30 by 80 feet. It is 15 feet shorter than the other four surrounds. As people do development with this plan that the city has, they have to take 5 feet away from this lot on the opposite side of our street. But out of 19 lots along here we only have 6 that the 5 feet has been done. We need this plan to address the 5-foot, 15-foot setback all the way along Carroll Canal.
- One of the problems we have on this street is we have no hydrants on Carroll Canal.
- Currently there're yards and about a 450 square foot permeable area. We'd like some more permeable area right now with this flooding that we're having. Our street doesn't have drainage. I know Linnie Canal doesn't have it. That's not being addressed.
- We are required to have a 450 square foot permeable area to drain from our structure. If you own a building across the street from Howland Canal, there is no requirement for a permeable area at this point. So, all the apartment buildings basically drain into the street.
- If you come along and you make a change to your apartment building, such as from apartments to condos, it is mandated that you have to then put a drain down the middle of the street, a two-foot-

wide concrete drain, but it doesn't go anywhere, not based on any actual public works plan for drainage from the area.

- It doesn't make any sense for Strong Drive to have one zoning and the opposite street another one. It doesn't make any sense for Eastern Canal and across the other side to have a different zoning. The surrounding neighbors will all be as tall as they want to be, and we'll be stuck in the middle, basically with this sort of periphery of 5 or 11 story homes.

Venice Canals – Historic Resources

- This community has a historical meaning. It's been this way for many years. It's actually an attraction for people who come to town. They want to see what the city was. Making change is necessary, but to change something that has historical value is ridiculous. And I think that they should look elsewhere to make changes.
- It's unique. It's a unique resource. It's a cultural resource of Southern California. And I think it kind of describes and shows Venice and the history of it better than any other neighborhood. Let's not ruin this unique thing by overbuilding.
- Tourists are walking around all the time, getting great joy from seeing the Venice Canals and enjoying the character. That's super important in the Coastal Zone. It's all about visitor serving areas and protecting the character of these areas for future generations.

[Link to transcript of Southwest Venice & Venice Canals public comments:](#)

<https://www.venicenc.org/assets/documents/5/committee65d37d603852a.pdf>

4. North Venice – February 12, 2024

Residential

- The buildings around the Canals on all sides should be considered with the Venice Canals plan, so that a building would be considered relative to its neighbor on the Canals, not something that's 300 feet away on the other side of South and North Venice.
- Regarding increasing density on S. Venice Blvd between Dell and Abbot Kinney, if the city wants to pursue five stories, I suggest that all auto entrances to the new five story buildings are off South Venice Boulevard and that we no longer have any driveways off Carroll Canal. Carroll Canal currently has 25 lots and we have roughly 48 cars. You can have three cars in a house, but it's basically 2 or 1. If we increase units on S. Venice Blvd who use the alley for their auto entrance, we're looking at something like 250 to 280 cars using a ten-foot-wide street/alley. Also, there's no height designation here, so five stories could be anything from between 60 to 75 feet (roughly 12 feet floor to floor to get a ten-foot clear structure, plus plumbing, etc., or 15 feet). It doesn't make a lot of sense to be building something that could be 60 to 75 feet tall in VEN 14, on S. Venice between Dell and Abbot Kinney. Also, how do you have a 60- or 75-foot building without an elevator? It's going to have an elevator by code and it's going to have fire stairs. It'll be another 10 or 20 feet. That means this area will be much higher than 60 to 75 feet. Grand Boulevard, which is a 100-foot-wide street and has 90-foot lots, or Venice Way, which is 75 feet wide and has 90-foot lots, should be considered as a more realistic location for something like a five-story building.
- We all understand that most of the North Venice subarea started as single story. We've seen a lot of three-story infiltration that is out of character with some of the blocks in North Venice, but five stories are wildly out of proportion with the other units.

- For VEN 14 on N. Venice between Alhambra Court and Grand Blvd, there's a new build that's right in the middle of that. And so, the idea of that portion being five stories leaves only two homes that would be able to be built to five stories, and those are two single story bungalows. So, it makes no sense to add five stories right there at the corner, which is a scenic corner, right across from what is now a park area. The two lots would likely be combined into a potential five-story building that, as you're driving south on any of the original historic canal streets, you would see standing out. That's what we would be looking at as everyone drives towards the beach. There would just be something that doesn't fit in. Also, I would love to see the area in VEN 14 on N. Venice between Dell and Mildred reconsidered. That's a two-story recent build in the last five years that's across from the farmer's market. If rebuilt to five stories, that also would stand out like a sore thumb as you're driving towards the beach.
- North Venice is really a touristed and a commercial area that has more traffic than other areas of Venice like East Venice or Oakwood. And so special consideration should be made when we talk about affordable housing in North Venice for the fact that we bear a huge amount of burden in terms of tourist and commercial traffic that other areas don't. So, when we're talking about those additional units on a larger scale, not a unit here or unit there in these five story buildings, I don't feel that North Venice is the place for that.
- You're looking at five stories, with affordable housing bonus, along Abbot Kinney (VEN 20). This will have a serious impact on adjacent neighborhoods, including North Venice's Lost Canals neighborhood, as right across the alley on Cabrillo you have one- and two-story craftsman bungalows. So, what I'm suggesting is you can't do this in isolation. You shouldn't be allowing for five story buildings shading and blocking light and air along Cabrillo.
- The one dominant problem that we have with the Lost Canal District is most of this was built before there were cars. You got here by rail; you got here by ox cart or a horse cart or horse, so that much of it was built with no on-site parking.

Commercial

- Market is a weird little industrial zone street, but it is historic single-story brick industrial buildings. Visually, it's one of the few preserved, industrial, original Venice streets. So, to build that up to five stories, that seems to me to be taking away one of the last areas that was about Venice being a mixed use, in character community. And it's beautiful there.
- We have very unique issues in the Coastal Zone. Up to five stories on Market Street? I can't see that happening, because I don't think they're going to allow added density right by the ocean. There's something going on called sea level rise and the Coastal Commission has historically not allowed increases in density in areas nearby the ocean and in our case also the canals. I've seen determination after determination that denies increases in numbers of units in those areas. In a tsunami evacuation gridlock happens so fast, which is just another reason why we have to be very sensitive about adding density at the terminus of Washington or Venice. There are areas that will work for increased density. We need to pinpoint those where we can find them.

Link to transcript of North Venice public comments:

<https://www.venicenc.org/assets/documents/5/committee65d37e11e3a0e.pdf>

5. Marina Peninsula – February 21, 2024

Residential

- I looked at the attached diagrams and was alarmed to see the proposed density and height increases and the elimination of the height as a measurement (in feet), substituted for height expressed in stories (from 3 - 5). I could reasonably predict that the proposed changes could be catastrophic for the character of our Peninsula West zone--a possible increase by one story or more with mezzanines, and a concomitant increase in vehicles, parking, congestion and density, and a radical decline in spatial variety, picturesque quality, ecological heterogeneity and all the values that I imagine residents of the 'zone' support.
- For VEN 3, 6, and 7, which are now single-family zoning, I don't understand why they are being changed to multi-family (Low Medium Residential), with an imposition of FAR on those lots where it doesn't exist, and a limit on stories or height that's less than what's currently built.
- It's clear that the number one objective of City Planning is to allow for as much housing as possible. It obviously makes no sense where you have single family residential in Marina Peninsula East that you would upgrade it to multifamily residential, because it's already built out as single family. Why would the city do that?
- Housing will materialize through all kinds of ways. One of them is production. We as a community need to participate in one way or another in accommodating these numbers. That being the case, it doesn't mean that the Peninsula is where you accommodate it. The Peninsula had the oil rigs 60 years ago and is now probably one of the most productive as far as housing of any area in Venice. Maybe we represent 14% of the population of District 11 on 4.6% of the acreage. So, we have a disproportionately high population already.
- To reduce height and square footage allowances and to impose a FAR where there is none or reduce FAR where there is one existing is inappropriate. I don't think that if I buy a lot that I shouldn't be allowed to build what the neighbor to my right and my left have already built, to maintain an existing look and feel. I don't think taking away what's currently allowed is appropriate.
- Increased height just destroys the character of the walk streets as does loss of proper setbacks.
- I'm looking at this map of a basically entirely constructed Peninsula, formerly a natural wetlands site, an estuary that is surrounded on all sides by water, and there's really not anywhere to easily divert runoff other than the surrounding ocean waters, tidal waters. It's a conundrum. And it makes the Peninsula an environmentally sensitive settlement just by the sake of where it is.
- Think about what happens if there's an emergency. There's a tsunami, there's an electrical issue, there's a gas issue, and there's about 2,500 people living on the Peninsula, and another 1,500 people living on the Silver Strand. This is a peninsula surrounded by water. There're not a lot of options when you need to get out of Dodge quickly. Just imagine everyone on the Peninsula getting ready to go up Pacific or around Via Marina all at the same time. If you're going to add bonus density you're going to turn the Marina into South Beach, which is essentially what this plan does, and you're going to add all those other people into this equation.
- On the Peninsula, telephone poles are really leaning. They're reinforced with little bits of metal, and they carry all the live wires. We've become so used to seeing them that we do nothing. And before we put a single person, one extra person, onto the Peninsula, we have to make it safe for us.

Commercial

- The parcels at the Washington and Pacific intersection are quite small (west of Pacific 30'x63', east of Pacific 28'x83'). This is a busy intersection in part because there is a pedestrian scramble phase. There are no driveways in and out of these parcels now. They are 1-2 stories and rely mainly on walk-in traffic. If you have larger/taller buildings on these parcels (another difficulty given lot

sizes) where are the on-site parking driveways? Driveways need to be as far away from such an intersection as possible. Otherwise, cars waiting for the light would block exiting or be caught up in right turn traffic or pedestrian traffic or both. Like Windward, the west end of Washington should be pedestrian-oriented with wider sidewalks, no street parking, and a lane in each direction to get to Speedway and beach parking. Any use that requires adding on-site parking, especially 5-story buildings, simply won't work in this area.

Density

- You have the ocean on one side, so there's a low water table pushing underneath all that from the ocean, and you have the Canals on the other side. So, you have this high-water table, and you can't just start digging down to do underground parking. So where are you going to put all the cars for these 5 to 15 stories that people are talking about? We know what happens in the summer with parking and it all bleeds into the surrounding neighborhoods.

[Link to transcript of Marina Peninsula public comments:](#)

<https://www.venicenc.org/assets/documents/5/committee65dbcae3d1acb.pdf>

6. Oakwood and Milwood – February 26, 2024

Oakwood

- Everyone who attended the meeting is in agreement that the changes recommended for Oakwood are terrible.
- Oakwood is one of the most special, and it's one of the only intentional, communities of color out of our entire 840 miles or so of California coastline. And there is nothing like it in this world. And when we really think of Venice Beach and what everyone comes here for, and the movies and everything it is, it's not this new bullshit they're building. It's the soul, it's the character, it's the people that have been there. It's the craftsman houses. It's majestic. It's like a little fairy tale that's being destroyed. So, I just want to say, and I want to put on record that I like Oakwood exactly how it is.
- So here, Venice is protecting Milwood, but here again not Oakwood.

Residential

- I live in north of Rose. I'm very concerned that the compatibility with the existing neighborhood and adjoining lots is completely being disregarded. Again, the city is only stating maxima, which are even more egregious and bigger than what they used to be, without the existing neighborhood taken into consideration. I do like that we have the FAR ratio, because that is really something that we can compare ourselves to with adjoining lots and so forth. But a FAR of 1.0 and 3 stories proposed for my little street, which is Sixth Avenue, where we have primarily single-story houses--that is egregious. What the city is proposing goes against anything that we have and what Venice should stand for.
- What is driving a lot of these changes is the requirement that's coming down from the state and from the city to provide a massive amount of new residential units because we have an incredible shortage of residential units. As a resident of Oakwood, I'm a little concerned that it seems like we are going to be tasked with providing the majority of those units, and we already provide the majority of RSOs and affordable units. I don't like the idea that we seem to be arguing between individual communities in Venice about what we don't want in the Canals, what we don't want in North Venice, so let's just shove the four stories and the increased FARs over to Oakwood.

- The question is--where does the community want to go? Does it want to remain a bedroom community or, particularly in Oakwood, do you want it all to be large, probably three lot consolidations, because that's more economical, more profit for the developer?
- In Oakwood, there is a place where a large number of people moved into one little building with no parking (742-744-746-748 Brooks). They just rent a room and then they all come with their cars and park in the neighborhood, and it's hard for the neighborhood to find any parking. I'm working on a project to redevelop our house. It hasn't had any work done to it since the 1920s and I'm trying to create two ADUs. The City is requiring me to create more parking, and it doesn't make any sense. How could a big box with all these people not have any parking requirements, but for somebody that's been in the neighborhood for so long, they require me to create enough parking for an extra ADU I need just so I can keep the lights on.
- I love the low-income buildings in Oakwood, and the reason those fit in so well into our community is because they do have really large front yard setbacks. They have courtyards. I think those are model projects. There are three stories so they're not small, and I think they're pretty good neighbors.
- We have the 15 buildings that are low income. We're going to start negotiating the contracts to be lifelong instead of 25-year increments. These are low-income buildings that service over 150, almost 200 families. We need your support. And we need letters from Ms. Bass and Ms. Parks to help us keep our community with the low-income housing on these 15 blocks. We need those low-income housing buildings. Making them market rate would put all those people out.

Density

- A little more density along the avenues might be nicer, like along 5th and 6th and 4th, potentially, because they're much wider streets. This proposed plan is so unnuanced. It's just like, slam, here, take it Oakwood, you're going to take all the density.
- It does seem incredibly unfair that Oakwood is getting the brunt of all the density.

Parking and Traffic

- I'm concerned about the traffic that cuts through our neighborhood, especially Oakwood and Milwood. You have people going up Rose, down 7th, down Oakwood, and up Palms. And during rush hours, it's bumper to bumper traffic half the time. So, I recommend the consideration of how to make our neighborhoods more of a maze so that people won't do cut through or some other type of maybe one-way streets or something to alleviate some of that activity.
- This plan is very unnuanced. It doesn't show that streets like Broadway, Santa Clara, and Westminster are really narrow. Some of them are so narrow they're one way. Can you imagine Santa Clara with a four-story building, a five-foot sidewalk? Where are all those people going to walk? I'd really like to see this more nuanced.

Environmental Justice

- What I see is institutional racism if they're going to do three lot ties in Oakwood. We all need to be treated the same. Why aren't three lot ties across the board in Venice? There's a problem here.
- There was a large population of Mexican Americans in Oakwood. And that has dwindled because of gentrification, and people moving in with a lot of money and building these big monstrosities and not really giving back to the community, not even living in those buildings, not even being a part resident of those buildings, and not understanding the community, how we feel about it. They just do what they want, and we have to stand idle because the city is allowing it because they want money. That's all the city cares about is money. And what we care about is our community, our people, our folks. And I just want to see us get together and shoot down some of this stuff that seems pretty outrageous, like those bonuses and stuff. So, hopefully we come to a good future for Venice.

Commercial

- There is an 8.0. FAR on Lincoln. If you have an 8-story building and a FAR of 8.0, that means that the entire lot is livable eight stories high, which means you don't have parking, you don't have infrastructure, you don't have stairs, you don't have corridors, you don't have utility rooms, nothing. It must be a mistake.
- Lincoln Blvd at 8 stories seems high, but where else can we put the needed units?
- For commercial, the building can come up to the property line, zero setback from the sidewalk. Let's impose a setback so everybody can put out their chairs and have very European alfresco dining or breakfasting.

Industrial

- Presently the land use is all Light Industrial. The city proposes to make a lot of that space Hybrid Industrial, which means that you have industrial on the ground floor and then residential above. Now, a lot of those areas are warehousing, trucking and other things like that. And a lot of the lots they're dividing up within the property line. I've walked around this area and what they're proposing and what actually exists is a little bit in conflict. But the idea is that, where they can, they want to put residential above Light Industrial. In the 2001 Venice Land Use Plan they point out that Light Industrial is a very important resource within Venice that needs to be protected. However, in the meantime the City hasn't protected it, and now they're really cutting into the land that's now designated as Light Industrial.

Milwood

- I want to encourage any of you who haven't seen the changes that are impacting your neighborhoods to come to the 900 block of Marco and see what's happening when you have unlimited FAR. Because we went from three single story homes to eight double and more with a deck, there is no more skyscape, the tree canopy is gone.
- We need to be sure City Planning keeps walk street height restrictions the same, at 28'.
- I'm very concerned about the city's proposed change from residential to commercial along Venice Boulevard. That's going in the wrong direction. Many of you know about the Mello Act, a state law in the Coastal Zone that prohibits demo or conversion of residential structures for nonresidential projects. Under that law, I don't think the city can even do this. They're worried about people being able to walk to stores and services, but that area already can do that because they're right there by Lincoln. So, it doesn't make any sense to change to commercial there.
- The new proposed Venice Blvd "neighborhood center," as depicted in pink, stretches a couple of blocks into the residential area adjacent to Venice Blvd. Streets like Brenta and Lucille north of Venice are quite narrow with small homes and some small (mostly 2-story) apartments. Anything higher/denser would be overwhelming. And streets like Victoria have older homes, some of which I would recommend for preservation. If the mixed use could be limited strictly to those facing Venice Blvd, that would be better.

[Link to transcript of Oakwood & Milwood public comments:](#)

<https://www.venicenc.org/assets/documents/5/committee65f38c831d785.pdf>

7. Ocean Front Walk and Abbot Kinney Blvd – March 11, 2024

Ocean Front Walk

- We don't want national chains on the boardwalk. That changes the character right there. I would like to incorporate policies or regulations in the Community Plan update that would limit, prohibit or manage national chain stores on Ocean Front Walk. Cities all over the country, including San Francisco, have enacted laws and ordinances to protect the uniqueness of certain areas, protect independent stores from not being able to compete economically with large corporations, and protect creative communities from becoming homogenized and losing their appeal. The national chains also drive-up commercial rents and make it unaffordable for new businesses, displace neighborhood serving businesses that have been viable for decades, and erode the individual feel of the area. The former councilman, Mike Bonin, put forth a motion in November 2018 that was approved by the City's Planning and Land Use Management (PLUM) Committee in April 2019. PLUM requested City Planning to study the impacts of independent retail uses on the social fabric of a community and report on the levels of economic, social, and cultural activity such uses support, including the number of jobs per square foot and the diversity of residents. PLUM also instructed City Planning, in consultation with the City Attorney, to report on the feasibility of using zoning and other land use planning tools to encourage the siting of independent retail uses on Ocean Front Walk in the Venice community. The Venice Community Plan update is the perfect time to accomplish a restriction on these kinds of companies that, left unfettered, would eventually take over and homogenize our famous walkway that is best known for being unique, creative and different.
- The new plans indicate that Ocean Front Walk is a Regional Center land use designation, which is defined as a hub of regional commerce, usually along major transportation corridors, mid-rise to high rise, active shop fronts and active streets, provides a significant number of jobs in addition to residential, retail, government, entertainment, cultural facilities, and health facilities. That sounds more like Century City than Ocean Front Walk, so it is questionable that Ocean Front Walk should be designated a Regional Center.
- Along Ocean Front Walk, I'm not sure it's going to be acceptable to increase density/living units and bring in a lot of new building to the extent that City Planning is proposing, because of sea level rise and increased flooding. It's not clear City Planning has considered that, but the Coastal Commission will consider it when they review the LCP, and so the community plan will need to match that. Thus, it remains to be seen if increased density is going to continue in the plan at that level.
- The Density Bonus law and the Coastal Act law, which are both state laws, must be harmonized. It says that specifically in the law, and that means that in the Coastal Zone, when there are density bonus projects, you have to consider protection of coastal resources. It's a very subjective review and coastal hazards also need to be considered – sea level rise, flood zones, etc. It's not a slam dunk that a project would get five stories or whatever because they added an affordable unit. There're other factors that will be considered in the Coastal Zone.
- When you look at all the photographs at the Venice Heritage Museum, so little has changed except for the clothing that people were wearing at the time. According to Jeffrey Solomon, who ran Venice Beach Walking Tours, that's what makes Venice "The People's Beach." The people of L.A. all come to Venice, every shape and size and age and political ideology and religion and everything else. And we run a terrible risk of losing that charm that brings the 10 million people a year to Venice. So, I encourage everybody to get behind these efforts to say what we want and what we need and what we deserve. So many of us have lived here for so long and want to keep the wonderful character and its characters.

Abbot Kinney Blvd

- I think we ought to propose, at the very minimum, a five-foot setback for any new buildings on Abbot Kinney, because we need the space on the sidewalk for moving safely and for being a nice experience for tourists and residents alike. It's just too narrow. It's lovely to have outdoor eating.
- In the description of Villages (the land use designation assigned to Abbot Kinney) it says that Abbot Kinney is historic and a cultural regional niche market. My concern about a lot of this is that it's going to stop being historic if we allow new building, especially up to five stories. The thing that makes Abbot Kinney so charming is all of the original architecture that's still standing, and I think that it would be great to try and put in the plan that we'd like to retain that whenever possible. Maybe there's a certain percentage that has to stay that way, or we might even want to have some of these buildings get distinctions where they cannot be changed or they cannot be torn down. Otherwise, we're going to look like everybody else. Same for the Boardwalk.
- Drive down Abbot Kinney. I drove there with my husband the other night. And I said to him, five stories--that would be the top of those palm trees. Think about whether you want buildings going up to the top of the palm trees.

Link to transcript of Ocean Front Walk & Abbot Kinney public comments:

<https://www.venicenc.org/assets/documents/5/committee65f87acb0936b.pdf>