

The following Motions for Policy Statements 1, 2, 3, and 5 are proposed for the committee’s consideration. The Policy Statement 4 Motion re. affordable housing was approved at the committee’s June 26, 2024 meeting. However, it has been reformatted here to match the formatting for the other four policy statements, while keeping the same content. The motion is included here so that it can be seen in context with the other four motions and for the purpose of proposing two amendments, highlighted in yellow below.

This section of the report includes the detailed recommended changes by subarea to City Planning’s proposed land use parameters.

During this Committee’s extensive public outreach meetings, it became clear that there were overriding issues of community concern covering all subareas of Venice. These are listed first with the reasons the Committee feels they are important.

General Policy Recommendations:

Policy Statement 1: Community Plan and Local Coastal Program Sequence

The Venice Neighborhood Council requests that City Planning prepare the Venice Local Coastal Program (LCP) update prior to finalizing Venice’s community plan policies and any land use designation/zoning changes as the Community Plan must conform with the LCP.

Reasons:

It appears that Coastal Zone policies and other requirements have not been considered in City Planning’s current Community Plan proposals. City Planning’s intent to determine land use designations and zoning first is in the wrong sequence. The LCP certification is considered the statutory equivalent to an Environmental Impact Report (EIR); preparing the LCP first would include the needed requirements in the final Community Plan and would also obviate the need for a separate Venice Coastal EIR.

Policy Statement 2: Venice’s Existing Capacity for Growth

The Venice Neighborhood Council requests that prior to finalizing land use designations and zoning for Venice, City Planning prepare a study of Venice’s existing zoning capacity to determine what more can be built within its current zoning framework.

Reasons:

Venice is already one of the densest communities in Los Angeles, and a substantial percentage of its land uses is already dedicated to multi-family zones (excluding East Venice). The 2004 Venice Community Plan states that the zoning allows for density for a population of 46,000 by 2010 and the current population is approximately 38,000, so there appears to be substantial existing capacity. Moreover, significant opportunities already exist to increase housing units (density), including adding ADUs, making building to currently allowed density more feasible by decreasing parking requirements, utilizing the state Density Bonus Law, utilizing SB 9, stopping illegal conversion of housing to short term rentals and de facto hotels, proposing regulations to prohibit

owners from leaving units vacant, proposing regulations to stop property owners from decreasing density, and enforcing the Home Sharing Ordinance.

Policy Statement 3: Substitute Existing Density Bonus Law for Proposed Bonuses

The Venice Neighborhood Council requests that the zoning code bonuses included in the City Planning recommendations for the Coastal Zone areas of the Venice Community Plan be removed and, instead, the existing state Density Bonus Law be used. The VNC reserves the right to support, object or recommend changes to the zoning code bonuses in the future when the methodology is eventually explained and if it is decided they can be used in the Coastal Zone.

Reasons:

Without knowing what the unspecified bonuses entail or require, Venice cannot agree with or recommend changes to the proposed bonuses. In the Coastal Zone, the Density Bonus Law would be used, and a Coastal Development Permit (a discretionary decision) is required anyway. The Density Bonus Law permits development “bonuses” in return for providing a specified percentage of total units as affordable housing (as defined in the law—Extremely Low Income, Very Low Income, Low Income, Moderate Income) in a manner that is consistent with both the Density Bonus law and the Coastal Act.

Policy Statement 4: Protecting RSO and Other Affordable Housing Units

The Venice Neighborhood Council requests that prior to finalizing land use designations and zoning for Venice, a report be provided by City Planning identifying all lots in Venice with existing low- and moderate-income housing units, including all RSO/rent stabilized units, so that those units can be protected in the final Community Plan and by other appropriate land use regulatory controls.

Reasons:

While it is important to increase housing unit density in Los Angeles, Venice does not want it to be at the expense of naturally occurring affordable housing units currently occupied by long-term community members who, if displaced for new development, would be unable to afford relocation within Venice or to return when the new development is complete. RSO/rent stabilized units play a crucial role in providing stability, cohesion and socioeconomic diversity in Venice as they safeguard tenants from displacement, exorbitant rent hikes and unjust evictions. The Planning Department’s proposed increases in density consequently increase the probability of significantly decreasing RSO/rent stabilized units and other naturally occurring affordable housing and thus displacing existing tenants, which would significantly impact the housing stability of vulnerable community members in Venice. The proposed increases in density also increase the potential for homelessness, especially as the statutory relocation fees do not adequately cover ever-increasing market rate rents, nor do they equitably accommodate larger households.

The Venice Community Plan should not displace community members currently living in older housing stock that is RSO/rent stabilized or otherwise affordable or lower cost

housing. Amendment: In fact, the Los Angeles Housing Element Citywide Housing Priorities states "protect Angelenos--especially persons of color and the disabled--from indirect and direct displacement and ensure stability of existing vulnerable communities."

Venice in its entirety is already a special coastal community with a unique social diversity that the Coastal Act requires be protected, in part because it provides existing coastal housing opportunities for low- and moderate-income persons (sensitive coastal resource area). Housing stability is associated with physical, social, and psychological well-being, higher educational achievement by the young, and benefits for people of color; and RSO/rent-stabilized and other naturally occurring affordable housing play a crucial role in protecting the stability, cohesion and socioeconomic diversity of the Venice community.

Amendment: Based on the preponderance of community comments and testimony at public outreach meetings, the priority of the Venice Community Plan and LCP update must be the protection of existing RSO/rent stabilized units and other naturally occurring affordable housing, and the preservation of our existing unique, diverse community, which must take precedence, be the priority over, and supersede any desired land use designation and zoning changes.

Policy Statement 5: Need for Infrastructure Studies

The Venice Neighborhood Council requests that prior to finalizing land use designations and zoning for Venice, City Planning perform an analysis of the condition and remaining life of Venice's existing infrastructure and what is needed to replace, upgrade and/or repair it in order to support Venice's current density, as well as an analysis of what is required to support any proposed density increases.

Reasons:

In the current City Planning Community Plan documents there is no analysis of issues related to traffic and infrastructure; rising water table; the poor condition of our water, sewer, and storm drainage systems; and failing canal tidal gates. Venice has experienced significant breakdowns of its infrastructure, including sink holes, sewage plant overflows contaminating our ocean and beach, water main breakages, and overflowing storm drains contaminating our streets, ocean and beach. Moreover, Venice's infrastructure is especially impacted, more than non-Coastal Zone areas, by significant tourism.