

CATEGORY: Policy

COMMITTEE: PLUM

PURPOSE: CIS in opposition of specific plan process on the part of developers.

BACKGROUND:

A Specific Plan is defined by the Los Angeles Department of City Planning as a planning document that implements the goals and policies of the General Plan and Community Plans,¹ and, shall provide by ordinance regulatory controls or incentives for the systematic execution of the General Plan and shall provide for public needs, convenience, and general welfare.² “A Specific Plan is a popular form of a land use overlay. An overlay is an additional layer of planning control, establishing stricter standards that go beyond what the underlying zoning would normally regulate;”³ (Emphasis added.)

Utilizing a Specific Plan for the purpose of upzoning open space and/or low density residential to commercial would be in conflict with the policies, procedures and goals set forth in the city’s General Plan, Community Plans and Specific Plans. This type of inappropriate use of Specific Plans has the potential to establish negative precedent for the Westside. Such city actions are particularly egregious when the result would be to reduce much needed open space, compromise sensitive natural resources, or degrade the quality of the area’s single-family residential communities.

The Specific Plan process is not and should not be used as a means to usurp the planning process or for “spot zoning,” a practice that seeks to bypass traditional land use practices that results in:

- (1) bypassing protective codes
- (2) creating unique zoning designations in conflict with the area’s Community Plans,
- (3) resulting in dangerous precedents,
- (4) failing to provide for public needs, convenience, and general welfare as required by the code.

¹ Los Angeles Department of City Planning, What is a Specific Plan?, available at: <https://planning.lacity.org/blog/what-specific-plan>

² Specific Plan Areas: https://geohub.lacity.org/datasets/61ffdfc055e84fdb9b0860469134_0

³ Los Angeles Department of City Planning, What is a Specific Plan?, available at: <https://planning.lacity.org/blog/what-specific-plan>

During the November 2, 2021 PLUM meeting, the motion passed without objection.

THE MOTION:

The Mar Vista Community Council opposes the City's use of Specific Plans that would result in upzoning open space and/or low-density residential neighborhoods. The use of specific plans in this manner creates significant negative impacts for all residential communities, the environment and natural resources. We urge our City Councilmembers to reject land use applications for individual development projects that represent a misuse of the Specific plan process. We ask that the City Council inform Planning not to process these types of requests.