
Livable Communities Initiative (LCI) City Council Motion Report Back

August 28, 2024
Housing and Homelessness Committee

What is LCI?

The Livable Communities Initiative is a program identified in **Los Angeles' 2021-2029 Housing Element** (Program 131)

The LCI advances a **holistic vision** for livable, healthy, and sustainable communities along the City's transit-rich corridors utilizing mixed-use, mixed-income housing combined with opportunities to transform the street and public realm through enhancements such as wider sidewalks, tree canopy, outdoor dining, bicycle infrastructure, transit shelters, fast and frequent transit, and public seating and plazas.



What is LCI?

131. LIVABLE COMMUNITIES INITIATIVE

Goal #: 1, 3, 4

Lead Agencies: LACP, LADOT

Supporting Agencies: BOE, Bureau of Street Services (Streets LA), LAHD

Funding Source: General Fund, Potential State grant funds

Objective: Secure funding to identify opportunities. Coordinate with agencies to ensure effective responses to federal, state, and regional funding opportunities around efforts to holistically plan for housing, mobility and sustainability improvements.

Respective Policy: 3.2.2, 3.2.3, 3.2.4, 3.2.5

Identify opportunities to advance a holistic vision for livable, healthy, and sustainable communities along the City's transit-rich corridors utilizing mixed-use, mixed-income housing combined with opportunities to transform the street and public realm by adding or improving wide sidewalks, tree canopy, outdoor dining, bicycle infrastructure, transit shelters, fast and frequent transit, and public seating and plazas.



LCI Motion (CF 21-1230-S2)

- Motion introduced 9/16/2022
 - Sponsored by Council Districts 4 (Raman), 8 (Harris-Dawson), 11 (Bonin), and 14 (De Leon)
- City Council action 12/7/22
- Lead Departments named:
 - Planning, LADOT, Streets LA, and EWDD
 - Supporting Depts: DBS, Public Works, CAO, and CLA
- Referred to multiple Council committees:
 - Housing and Homelessness, PLUM, Transportation, Economic Development and Jobs, Budget and Finance

LCI Motion (CF 21-1230-S2)

Creation of Housing Incentives and Development Standards

- Waivers/reductions of setback, unit floor area, and other development standards for smaller commercially zoned lots
- Inclusionary affordable housing requirement
- Minimum density requirement to promote smaller, more naturally affordable multifamily and mixed-use development
- Incentives to encourage greater lot density: micro-units, shared housing, or increasing floor area ratio (FAR) allowances
- Elimination/reduction of parking minimums in HQ transit areas

Exclusions of LCI:

- Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone (VHFHSZ), historic districts, or open space areas; and
- Projects that result in demolition of buildings subject to RSO or the loss of covenanted affordable units

LCI Motion (CF 21-1230-S2)

Streamlining of Projects

- Administrative clearance procedure for LCI projects with Objective Design and Development Standards
- Administrative review process for LCI projects to require public right-of-way amenities and infrastructure improvements in order to encourage transit ridership, pedestrian and cyclist safety, and placemaking

Community Process

- Community-driven outreach and engagement strategy to identify transit rich corridors

New regulatory tools, fees, grants, or other strategies to finance public improvements which may include:

- Enhanced Infrastructure Finance Districts (EIFD)
- Community Revitalization and Investment Authority (CRIA)
- Social Impact Bonds, etc.

Report Recommendations

An aerial photograph of a densely populated urban area, likely Los Angeles, with numerous multi-story apartment buildings and houses. In the background, a range of mountains is visible under a clear sky. The image has a warm, orange-tinted overlay on the left side, which fades into a blue-tinted overlay on the right side.

LCI Pilot Program

A two-year pilot program that aligns housing opportunities with public realm investments and sets the stage for future infrastructure financing.

Year 1: Utilizing an **equity framework** for identifying candidate locations, the Pilot will build upon active work programs, including the Citywide Housing Incentive Program and Community Plan Program, and evaluate new candidate areas for inclusion, including existing areas with high concentrations of housing and affordable housing.

Establish a list of candidate LCI corridors (ranging in scope from 1/4 mile up to 2 mile segments) meeting established criteria. 10-15 LCI corridors will be selected through a robust **community engagement** process



The Department of Public Works Bureau of Street Services' Connecting Canoga Park project on Sherman Way is an example of a corridor-based planning project that can lay the groundwork for an LCI approach. Improvements included were based on concepts developed in the Sherman Way Station Urban Cooling and First/Last Mile Strategies Plan ('Urban Cooling Plan') completed in early 2020.

LCI Pilot Program

Year 2: Develop both zoning and public realm plans interdepartmentally

- Plans will be of an appropriate level of detail for capital improvement grant applications
- Street improvement plans and objective design standards for new development will address roadway and sidewalk enhancements that support active transportation, prioritize pedestrian and cyclist safety, and promote neighborhood placemaking for each selected pilot corridor
- Cost estimates for each pilot LCI corridor plan (low-to high-range) will be provided



The Department of Public Works Bureau of Street Services' Western Our Way Project will transform almost 11.76 miles of streets in the heart of South Los Angeles with a focus on 4.5 miles of pedestrian and transit rider improvements on the Western Avenue corridor.

LCI Pilot Program

Years 3 through 5, Departments will coordinate to pursue grant funding opportunities or other funding mechanisms, such as EIFDs, to realize corridor improvements.

- Preliminary design can begin for more intensive street improvements
- Construction can be initiated for potential quick-build improvements



LADOT's Eastern Avenue Multi-Modal Transportation Improvement Project is a 1.5-mile-long neighborhood corridor connecting the critical transit corridors of Huntington Drive and Valley Boulevard and is an example of a complete street project.

Equitable Corridor Selection

If LCI is approved and staffing resources allocated, Departments will coordinate during Year 1 to identify corridor selection criteria which may include, but not be limited to:

- Housing Opportunity Areas
- Mobility and Safety Strategies
- Climate and Equity Targets
- Economic Vitality, including Olympic Legacy
- Relevant City equity metrics and indices endorsed by the City Council and relevant City Departments

Through a robust community engagement program, eligible corridors will be narrowed down to 10-15 selected corridors.

From there, Departments will work with community groups in Year 2 on the development of alternative design conceptualizations

Housing Opportunity Areas

- Citywide Housing Incentive Program, Opportunity Corridors
- New Community Plans
- Transit Neighborhood Plans
- Targeted Overlay Amendments

Mobility and Safety

- LADOT's Mobility Investment Program Strategy
- Vision Zero/High Injury Network
- Measure M: First/Last Mile Active Transportation

Climate and Tree Canopy/ Shade Equity

- Safe, Clean Water Program
- STAP Program
- Urban Forest Management Plan

Economic Vitality + Olympic Legacy

- LA28 Olympic Legacy Investments
- Opportunity Zones

Pilot LCI Program Timeline



Assess Community Needs

FY '24-'25 and FY '25-'26

- Secure staffing and funding resources
- Define corridor selection criteria
- Identify 10-15 LCI corridors to accelerate
- Community-led engagement to identify needs and vision



Draft LCI Concepts

FY '25-'26 and FY '26-'27

- Prepare initial conceptual design alternatives for public realm improvements
- Reach consensus on improvements, complete technical feasibility analysis and cost estimates



Funding / Implementation

FY '27-'28 and beyond

Identify and submit joint budget requests for resource needs to design and implement the public realm and infrastructure elements identified during the two-year Livable Communities Initiative Pilot.