

**Frequently Heard
Misconceptions and Concerns**

Response

“These Maps are final and cannot be changed”

The City is currently collecting feedback and gathering input on requested map modifications. Public comments collected during the outreach events, provided on comment cards, and online survey responses will be the foundation for updated maps.

“If this plan is adopted, we will start seeing new buildings almost immediately.”

The City of Long Beach General Plan 2040 is a long-range plan and buildout of new housing and commercial areas are expected to occur over the next 23 years. To alleviate stakeholders fear of rapid over-development, the City could implement an annual reporting program and further issue a moratorium on development if growth levels exceed acceptable thresholds.

“This plan will replace my favorite shopping center with housing.”

- » Some stakeholders expressed a preference for stand-alone retail over mixed-use centers. Others were concerned they will not have access to goods and services in their community if housing is permitted.

The General Plan 2040 does not propose eliminating shopping centers to be replaced with housing. Commercial areas will remain part of the Land Use Element. In key locations, such as transit oriented areas, primary corridors, and Downtown, housing may also be permitted within an existing commercial area, thus allowing shopping centers to redevelop in the future to incorporate both shopping opportunities and housing options.

“The Plan does not require any new parking for new development.”

- » Some stakeholders were concerned that passage of the Land Use Element would mean that no new developments would be required to provide parking
- » Others had concerns about the potential impacts of recently passed state legislation, such as SB35, may have on parking requirements
- » Some stakeholders are not interested in multimodal mobility choices and prefer exclusively auto-oriented design.

Parking requirements are regulated through the zoning code. The Land Use Element does not change any parking regulations.



Frequently Heard Misconceptions and Concerns

“Height near single family neighborhoods is unacceptable as it will negatively impact single family properties with shade, parking, ocean views and breezes, traffic, and privacy.”

- » There is disagreement about what a high-rise is, and some stakeholders are concerned about allowing any structures over two stories adjacent to single-family homes.



“The City does not have a housing shortage.”

- » Many stakeholders feel Long Beach is full and should not accommodate population growth.

Response

- » Goals of the Plan include:
 - » Preserve our existing single-family areas without change from how they exist today.
 - » Improve housing supply - giving people new opportunities to live in a comfortable apartment or buy a condo.
 - » Make this City more livable, walkable, enjoyable.
- » General Plan 2040 focuses low, mid, and some high-rise buildings in Downtown, where appropriate.
- » Other areas, such as Artesia Boulevard in North Long Beach or 7th Street through Central Long Beach, could see new 3-5-story mixed-use structures over time. While these buildings may be taller than others on these streets, they will not be high-rise or tower structures.
- » High-rises will not be allowed in single-family neighborhoods.
- » General Plan 2040 contains clear development policies and includes height restrictions throughout the City.
- » Long Beach does have a housing shortage. Between 2011-2014, 16.2% of renters and 6.1% of homeowners experienced overcrowding, for a total of 12.2% of Citywide households.
- » The Southern California Association of Governments projects 3.9% growth (18,230 new residents) between 2012 and 2040.
- » Per the State, the City must be able to accommodate at least 7,048 housing units by 2021.
- » Additional housing is needed to address existing overcrowding.



Frequently Heard Misconceptions and Concerns

A common comment questioned what impact Senate Bill 35 (SB 35, Wiener) would have on the City and its planning efforts. Part of the concern was related to the streamlining of projects and a perception that future development would occur with no environmental review. In addition, many comments asked why the City should comply with SB35 or any other state mandate, including housing requirements. A reference to other cities' rejection of such mandates was raised in several comments.

Response

SB 35 was approved by the Governor on September 29, 2017. The bill is intended to address the State's housing shortage and provides various incentives intended to facilitate and expedite the construction of affordable housing. The bill establishes a streamlined, ministerial review process for certain multifamily affordable housing projects that are proposed in local jurisdictions that have not met regional housing needs. However, the proposed development must satisfy a long list standards including paying construction employees elevated prevailing wages, prohibition of removing existing housing units and other restrictions in order to qualify for the streamlined approach. Streamlined projects are still required to adhere to the City's zoning and general plan provisions under SB35.

"This seems very similar to the cracker boxes."

During the 1980s the City of Long Beach made a series of damaging and poor decisions that allowed for the construction of low-quality apartment buildings in and adjacent to single-family neighborhoods (cracker boxes). The proposed Land Use Element takes a completely different approach.

- » Single-family areas will be protected and will not be changed. These areas (Founding and Contemporary Neighborhood PlaceType) account for more than 34 percent of the City's land area and.
- » The Urban Design Element will hold all new developments to very high standards of design and quality thus prohibiting future cracker box development.



Frequently Heard Misconceptions and Concerns

“The Plan is based on the idea that people will walk, bike, and use public transit.”

Response

General Plan 2040 targets modest growth in certain areas, such as along commercial streets, Downtown, near transit stops, and at large shopping centers. The goal over time is to have people choose more often to walk, bike, take the bus, or use a rideshare service. Like our existing Mobility Element, General Plan 2040 is about giving people choices and making it easier to choose a healthier and sustainable lifestyle.

- » Long Beach continues to improve transportation options, such as making the Metro system safer for riders or through the City’s Bike Share program.
- » General Plan 2040 is also realistic and recognizes many residents and visitors will continue to choose driving as their preferred mode of transportation and that is why accommodations for cars, bikes, transit, and pedestrians are all made in the plan.

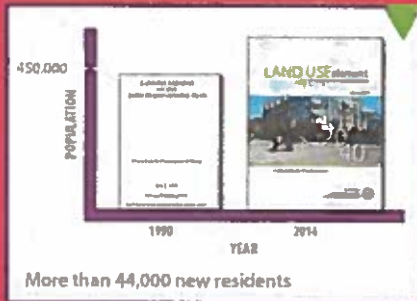
“The City is seeking to forcibly destroy churches and replace them with high-density housing.”

- » The City respects all religious institutions; they are a part of the glue that holds our community together.
- » The City cannot, and will not, use eminent domain against any owner of land for the benefit of new private development.
- » While the City anticipates that all religious institutions will remain operating in their current locations, the Plan provides individual property owners with the opportunity and flexibility to move, sell or redevelop if they choose.



Frequently Heard Misconceptions and Concerns

"Our community would benefit more from keeping the current plan in place."



Response

- » The existing Land Use Element was last updated in 1989 and was written to provide policy direction and population growth forecasts up to the year 2000. Without a revised General Plan, the City cannot set new goals to improve the community.
- » A failure to update the General Plan does not mean there will be a suspension of new development. Growth will continue to occur, but in a haphazard manner because there is no comprehensive plan.

"If no action is taken, there will be no change in the City and people won't move here."

- » Some stakeholders are skeptical of future population projections and population growth.
- » Some stakeholders believe not building new housing will curb population growth.

- » The City of Long Beach is a desirable place to live. Despite only 4,000 new housing units being built since 1989, Long Beach has experienced 44,000 new residents. Increases in population will continue. The City's housing needs stem from population growth and a housing shortage that already impacts existing residents and leads to unaffordable housing prices.
- » General Plan 2040 is one of the tools available to shape where growth opportunities occur. The City does not control population growth, but we can all work together to plan for current and future generations.

"We don't have the infrastructure for new development (water, parks, trash, etc.)."

- » Some stakeholders feel all new infrastructure should be built before any new construction is contemplated.
- » Some stakeholders do not feel impact fees are sufficient for needed infrastructure.
- » Some stakeholders are concerned with infrastructure maintenance.

- » New development is required to pay substantial impact fees that will cover the cost of upgrading roads, police, fire, storm water, and school facilities for new buildings.
- » Additionally, the City is currently making a historic investment upgrading the City's infrastructure for the benefit of existing residents, thanks to residents' support of Measure A as well as new State and local transportation dollars.



Frequently Heard Misconceptions and Concerns

"This plan is part of a statewide plot to override zoning and force neighborhoods to accept low-income residents."

- » Some stakeholders expressed concerns about lower-income renters destabilizing established neighborhoods.
- » Some stakeholders associate increased housing and density with crime.
- » Some stakeholders believe the City has too much low-income housing already.



"The City has not done any engagement to the community."

- » Some stakeholders feel more outreach is needed.



Response

- » General Plan 2040 encourages a variety of housing types to serve the City's unmet needs regardless of income level. In actuality, the vast majority of new housing built over time will be market rate housing for a variety of family types.
- » The long-term goal of the General Plan 2040 is to:
 - » Expand the number of jobs.
 - » Expand the amount of housing.
 - » To elevate design standards for new development.
- » The Urban Design Element provides policies to encourage Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CEPTED) for all future development. CEPTED is an approach to deterring criminal behavior through environmental design.
- » This major planning effort involved over 150 community meetings.
- » By late 2008, over 100 community meetings and events had been held to promote and inform the Plan.
- » Since March 2016, another 58 engagement events and meetings have taken place, in addition to the lengthy public CEQA process conducted from May 2015-November 2016.
- » Given that Long Beach is the second most diverse city in the Country, a variety of engagement techniques were needed to reach diverse populations throughout the General Plan Update process including traditional town hall Q&A formats, as well as drop-in open house workshops, pop-up events, focus groups, surveys and research of the entire City; population, traffic and economic modeling; as well as multi-agency review and coordination to create the plans.



Frequently Heard Misconceptions and Concerns

"There is no legal requirement to incorporate plans to improve housing or reduce greenhouse gas emissions." "What can the State or SCAG do if the City doesn't comply? What is the penalty?"

Response

- » State law requires every City to have a current and compliant General Plan. General Plan 2040 reflects legal requirements and good planning practices and is written to comply with local, regional, and State laws including:
 - » State of California Planning and Zoning Law.
 - » Office of Planning and Research General Plan Guidelines.
 - » Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) Regional Transportation Plan and Sustainable Communities Strategy.
 - » SCAG Regional Housing Needs Assessment.
- » Other State laws pertaining to global warming, reducing vehicle miles traveled and promoting transit, environmental justice, and climate change adaptation.
- » Noncompliance with State regulations and regional requirements can cause costly litigation and eliminate City eligibility for grant funding.

