

**REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION**  
**Summary of Public Hearing Proceedings**  
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**Rowland Heights Community Standards District Amendment – Prohibiting Living Suites**  
**Project No. RPPL2016000614**

The Regional Planning Commission (Commission) conducted a public hearing on March 23, 2016, at 9:00 a.m. to consider the proposed Rowland Heights Community Standards District (CSD) amendment, which would amend Title 22 (Planning and Zoning) of the Los Angeles County Code to prohibit living suites within Rowland Heights.

Staff made a presentation which included a description of the Living Suites Ordinance approved by the Board of Supervisors in September 2015, a discussion of the community character in Rowland Heights, an explanation of the proposed ordinance provisions and why they are necessary at this time, an evaluation of the proposed ordinance's consistency with the Rowland Heights Community General Plan and Countywide General Plan, and a discussion of how the proposed ordinance would achieve community goals to preserve its single-family residential character, industrial areas, and open spaces. The presentation included photographs of various residential areas and existing developments in the Residential Planned Development (RPD) Zone, and maps showing the locations of residential, industrial, and commercial zoning. The Commission was informed of the public notice procedures followed for the hearing and given a tally of comments received on the project. The environmental review process undertaken for the proposed ordinance was also explained.

Commissioners asked staff for clarification on several issues. These included how an RPD Zone would be authorized for development of living suites, the approval and entitlement process required for living suites, the relationship between living suites and second units on a given parcel, and whether residents of other County unincorporated areas could request a prohibition on living suites in their community. Staff explained that a zone change to RPD would be required to authorize a development including living suites and that the zone change requires a public hearing before the Commission, that living suites also require the approval of a conditional use permit, that second units and living suites cannot be placed on the same parcel, and that residents of County unincorporated areas outside Rowland Heights could request that living suites be prohibited in their communities.

After the staff presentation and Commissioner's questions, four speakers provided testimony to the Commission. Two speakers supported the proposed ordinance and two opposed it. The speakers supporting the proposed ordinance were concerned that living suites would become rental units, changing the character of their community from owners and stable families to a transient population that would lead to an increase in criminal activity, and that there would be an increase in the number of cars parking on the street and taking up the available parking spaces. The speakers related that people staying at existing homes already utilized as rental properties often park in front of fire hydrants and trash carts, blocking access by emergency and service personnel. Commissioner Pedersen asked these speakers if garages were being converted and if those renting their properties were advertising on the Internet. The speakers responded affirmatively in both instances.

The speakers opposing the proposed ordinance were concerned about prohibiting development of living suites. They stated that living suites are a popular and in-demand housing type that increases the value of the property on which the living suite is located, that allowing living suites

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supports free-market principles and promotes families staying together, and that living suites can provide additional income to a property owner. The speakers believe that the approved Living Suites Ordinance provides ample protections for communities.

After the testimony, the Commissioners asked questions of staff and engaged in a discussion about the possible conversion of living suites to second units, the perceived protections built into the 2015 Living Suites Ordinance, the ability to rent out a living suite, and concerns that other unincorporated communities will also seek a prohibition on living suites. There was some discussion that the proposed ban is unnecessary because a conditional use permit would be required for any living suite development in the RPD Zone, and that community character and site-specific issues such as parking would be analyzed and addressed through that process.

There being no further testimony, the Commission closed the public hearing and recommended that the Board of Supervisors conduct a public hearing and adopt the proposed ordinance.

**VOTE:**

Concurring: Commissioners Louie, Pedersen, and Modugno

Dissenting: Commissioner Smith

Abstaining: None

Absent: Commissioner Pincetl

Action Date: March 23, 2016