

## Planning East San Gabriel Valley: An introduction to planning and development

This document is intended to provide facts and information as to the planning and land development process as it applies to the unincorporated communities of the East San Gabriel Valley. This document is not intended to provide any guidance toward the development of a specific property. For more land use information about a specific property, please visit: <https://planning.lacounty.gov/contact>

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### Helpful Resources

Name	Description
<a href="#">Los Angeles County Code Title 22 (Planning and Zoning)</a>	Planning in unincorporated Los Angeles County is subject to Title 22 of the Los Angeles County Code
<a href="#">Los Angeles County Regional Planning Commission</a>	The Los Angeles County Regional Planning Commission is a decision-making body for Los Angeles County
<a href="#">Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors</a>	The Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors is the highest decision-making body for Los Angeles County
<a href="#">Los Angeles County General Plan</a>	Adopted in 2015, the Los Angeles County General Plan is the primary local land use document for unincorporated Los Angeles County.
<a href="#">East San Gabriel Valley Area Plan</a>	The forthcoming East San Gabriel Valley Area Plan is a regional land use policy document for the unincorporated communities of the East San Gabriel Valley.
<a href="#">LA County GIS-NET</a>	GIS-NET is a publicly available Geographic Information System (GIS) that contains maps including zoning, land use, and other important data layers.
<a href="#">LA County Open Data Portal</a>	The LA County Open Data Portal is an archive of data available to the public. This portal includes important demographic information among other types of data.

For More Information about the East San Gabriel Valley Area Plan visit our project website: <https://planning.lacounty.gov/site/esgvap/>

## **Frequently Asked Questions about the East San Gabriel Valley Area Plan**

### **What is the East San Gabriel Valley Area Plan?**

The East San Gabriel Valley Area Plan (ESGVAP) is a long-range planning and policy document for the unincorporated communities of the East San Gabriel Valley. The ESGVAP will guide the growth and development of the planning area for several decades. In Los Angeles County, Area Plans are developed according to the Planning Area Framework of the Los Angeles County General Plan. The General Plan was adopted by the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors in 2015.

### **What does “unincorporated” mean?**

Unincorporated communities are places in Los Angeles County that are not a part of an incorporated city. Communities not located within a city are under the jurisdiction of Los Angeles County and are provided municipal services (like planning) from County Departments. Planning for unincorporated communities is administered by the Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning.

For a list of unincorporated communities in the East San Gabriel Valley, visit our [communities page](#).

### **Where is the East San Gabriel Valley?**

The East San Gabriel Valley area is generally located east of I-605 freeway, west of the San Bernardino County line, south of Angeles National Forest, and north of the Orange County line and Puente Hills.

For maps of the project area, visit our [maps page](#).

### **What topics does the Area Plan cover?**

Similar to the Los Angeles County General Plan, The East San Gabriel Valley Area Plan covers a variety of topics, including the following elements:

- Land Use
- Economic Development
- Community Character and Design
- Cultural and Historic Resources
- Conservation and Natural Resources
- Mobility
- Public Services and Facilities
- Health and Safety
- Environmental Justice

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## East San Gabriel Valley Area Plan (ESGVAP)

Goals, policies, and implementation actions related to these elements are being analyzed at the areawide and community level, providing a planning document with a regional focus, at a local scale.

### **Is there development or construction proposed as part of this Project?**

**NO**. No specific development or construction projects are proposed or approved as part of the East San Gabriel Valley Area Plan. All development in Los Angeles County is subject to submitted, complete, applications by property owners.

### **Will the East San Gabriel Valley Area Plan include changes to zoning and land use policy?**

Proposed changes to zoning and land use policy are included in the East San Gabriel Valley Area Plan. These proposed changes are intended in part to implement existing County policies and to comply with State law. All proposed changes to zoning and land use policy are ultimately subject to approval by the Los Angeles County Regional Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors.

### **Where in the East San Gabriel Valley are zoning and land use changes proposed?**

A list and maps of proposed changes to zoning and land use will be posted on the [project website](#) once they are prepared.

### **I would like to see data related to the East San Gabriel Valley Planning Area, where can I find that?**

Community specific data is summarized in Community Profiles for each of the unincorporated communities in the planning area. Visit the [communities page](#) and click on the links to view these profiles.

The Department of Regional Planning maintains a virtual mapping service, [GIS-NET](#), that is available to the public. You can use this tool to identify existing zoning and land use on your property.

Los Angeles County publishes and makes available a substantial amount of data, all accessible to the public, through the County's [Open Data Portal](#).

### **I own property in the East San Gabriel Valley, how can I check my existing zoning?**

The Department of Regional Planning maintains a virtual mapping service, [GIS-NET](#), that is available to the public. You can use this tool to identify existing zoning and land use on your property.

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## **Are there any related projects that are part of the East San Gabriel Valley Area Plan?**

Yes. [The East San Gabriel Valley Mobility Action Plan](#) is a grant-funded project that will provide recommendations and strategies to improve mobility in the East San Gabriel Valley Planning Area. The Mobility Action Plan will ultimately be adopted along with the East San Gabriel Valley Area Plan by the Los Angeles County Regional Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors.

## **How is the East San Gabriel Valley affected by State and Federal law?**

All County ordinances and plans must abide by all local, state, and federal laws. No policies, standards, or zone changes can be implemented that violate existing law. In cases in which there is a conflict between local law and law at the State and Federal level, the local law is invalidated.

## **How can I get involved in the East San Gabriel valley Area Plan?**

Public participation in the planning process is vital in the creation of a planning document that meets the needs of current and future residents of the East San Gabriel Valley Area. The Area Plan is a long-range document that will guide the growth and development of the planning area for decades, affecting the current population as well as those who will move to or grow up in these communities.

To get involved in the project and to make your voice heard, visit our ["Get Involved" page](#).

## **Who approves of the East San Gabriel Valley Area Plan including any proposed changes to zoning and land use policies?**

The East San Gabriel Valley Area Plan is subject to approval by the [Los Angeles County Regional Planning Commission](#) and the [Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors](#)

## **Fundamentals of Planning and Development in Los Angeles County**

### **The Planning Puzzle.**

Planning is the process of organizing and administering the use of land. Have you ever walked down a vibrant main street, bustling with people? From where you live, are you able to walk to a park, school, or corner store? These are just a couple of examples of the types of places and activities that planners aim to help create. All types of places, from homes, main streets and parks, to roads, hospitals and factories, fit together like a puzzle. Some of these puzzle pieces usually don't fit together well, like a house and a factory. Other puzzle pieces fit together quite nicely, like schools and parks. A great community is created when the puzzle pieces come together in just the right way. These communities then become great places to live, work, and enjoy.

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To make sure that the puzzle pieces fit just right, planners meet and work with communities to understand challenges and opportunities in the area. They take this information and develop policies (or, “courses of action”) and guidelines that will help the community grow and develop over time. These policies and guidelines, when put together in one document, is called a “plan.” A plan can cover a wide variety of topics, from housing and transportation, to industry and open space. In other words, a plan allows for community members, as well as the government, help solve the puzzle!

You are already an expert in recognizing places that are well-planned. Pleasant streets, convenient places to shop, amenities that are close by; these are all examples of good planning. The role of planners is to help figure out how a community or an area wants to look and feel like. This process is sometimes referred to as “visioning.” After the visioning process, where planners work with community members to envision the future of their community, our Department develops the tools to help make that vision a reality. The process takes time, and sometimes the community may have different visions for their future, which is why it’s important to hear from everyone that lives, works, and enjoys the community. Individuals such as residents, property owners, and businesses, all have perspectives, or “stakes” in their community. Sometimes we refer to community members as “stakeholders,” and they each have different parts of the directions to help solve the planning puzzle. When you put all these directions together, the solution to the puzzle becomes much clearer. It’s that simple.

### **Planning with History in Mind**

#### *Changing Communities*

When helping plan communities with stakeholders, context provided by local histories of the area are important. By understanding how a community was formed, planners and community members can use this information to gain insight as to how a community will change and grow over time. As people move into, grow, and leave communities, they bring and leave behind legacies that shape the future of where they live. This means that all communities experience change. Some communities change slowly over time, while others change quite quickly.

#### *History and Planning*

Historical accounts of communities provide a “roadmap” of how these places have gotten to where they are today. Not all historical accounts may include all sides to the growth of communities over time, which is why it is important to consult multiple historical sources. This historical information must also be put in context with modern ideas, such as inclusion and equity, to ensure that communities become great places for everyone. Local histories do not make up the entirety of plans, but they are an important piece of the puzzle!

### **Zoning and Land Use Policy**

Land Use policy, and related land use categories, largely dictates the intent and intensity of development. These policies and categories are implemented through local plans,

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particularly the Los Angeles County General Plan and the forthcoming East San Gabriel Valley Area Plan. Feedback from the community is an important factor in the determination of land use policies and categories. The final decision to establish these policies and categories is made by the Los Angeles County Regional Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors. Local land use plans must abide by State and Federal law, and any policies instituted in local plans that are not in line with existing laws are void.

Zoning refers to a collection of zoning ordinances, which is another term for laws. Zoning ordinances are a part of the Los Angeles County Code, Title 22. All development and uses must abide by the zone in which it is in, otherwise it is in violation of the law. All zoning ordinances, which includes the standards that the zoning enforces, must abide with State and Federal law. Any ordinances that do not act in accordance to State and Federal law are void.

Land Use Policy (LUP) and zoning work together to filter the uses, intensities, and standards that a property is subject to. It is important that both land use policy and zoning are consistent with each other so that the outcomes of development are harmonious with the intent of the land use plan.

### **Ministerial and Discretionary Review**

When applications for development come to the Department of Regional Planning, the application is subject to either ministerial or discretionary review. Ministerial review is for projects that are allowed “by-right” or subject to a Site Plan Review (“SPR”). Projects reviewed ministerially must meet objective standards in the Los Angeles County Code (Title 22) to be permitted. Projects subject to ministerial review cannot be denied or forced to provide any additional concessions if the project meet the standards in the code. Community feedback or meetings with members of the public cannot be imposed on the applicant if the project is reviewed ministerially.

Discretionary review is when specific findings are required on behalf of the applicant to show that the project is in line with the existing land use policy and applicable plans. When discretionary review is warranted for a project, it shall be explicitly stated in Title 22. State law dictates what types of projects The Department of Regional Planning can subject to ministerial review and which are subject to discretionary review. Ultimately, Regional Planning Hearing Officers, the Los Angeles County Regional Planning Commission, and the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors, authorize the appropriate permitting of discretionary projects.

Link to access planning standards in Los Angeles County Title 22: [https://library.municode.com/ca/los\\_angeles\\_county/codes/code\\_of\\_ordinances?nodeId=TIT22PLZO](https://library.municode.com/ca/los_angeles_county/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=TIT22PLZO)

### **Residential Development in Commercial Zones**

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Fundamentally, new development must abide by existing zoning and land use policy According to Title 22 of the Los Angeles County Code, which is the County's Planning Code. Applications for the development of housing in the unincorporated communities of Los Angeles County are subject to either ministerial or discretionary review. The differences in these types of review are detailed above. Housing is allowed in all zones that explicitly allow residential development. The intensity of this development, and the standards that it must follow are a product of the local land use plans and the zoning code.

Per State law and existing County ordinances, housing can be developed on property zoned for commercial uses, if it meets the standards of the applicable zone and land use category.

For the purposes of this section, the most prevalent commercial zones in the East San Gabriel Valley will be highlighted. These include:

- (C-1) Restricted Commercial
- (C-2) Neighborhood Commercial
- (C-3) General Commercial

There are additional types of commercial zones in the East San Gabriel Valley, and this section is intended to provide a basic overview of information. This document is not intended to provide any guidance toward the development of a specific property. For more land use information about a specific property, please visit: <https://planning.lacounty.gov/contact>

To provide examples of housing development types allowed in commercial areas, the following uses will be highlighted:

Use Type	Additional Regulations (Title 22)
Joint live and work units	<a href="#">22.140.320</a>
Mixed use developments	<a href="#">22.140.350</a>
Apartment houses	
Townhouses	<a href="#">22.140.600</a>
Two-family residences	

**Other types of development.** The above uses do not reflect the full extent of housing developments allowed in commercial areas, for more information about what developments are allowed, reference Title 22: [https://library.municode.com/ca/los\\_angeles\\_county/codes/code\\_of\\_ordinances?nodeId=TIT22PLZO](https://library.municode.com/ca/los_angeles_county/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=TIT22PLZO)

**Additional regulations.** The additional regulations listed are for sections with standards that are specific of that use type. Depending on the specific parcel, a variety of additional regulations may be applicable.

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For Apartments, Townhouses, and Two-family residence uses, these housing types may all be subject to Title 22 sections:

- [22.120 \(Density Bonus\)](#),
- [22.121 \(Inclusionary Housing\)](#), or
- [22.166 \(Housing Permits\)](#)

As shown so far, a variety of regulations, at the local, State, and Federal level ultimately dictate the uses and intensity of development. At times these regulations work as a “constellation” of standards that must be met, while for other standards there is a strict hierarchy of applicability.

### **Use Type: Joint live and work Units**

#### **Where is it allowed?**

Joint live and work units are allowed in C-1, C-2, and C-3 zones

#### **Does it require a Site Plan Review (SPR) or a Conditional Use Permit (CUP)?**

Only a site plan review (SPR) is needed for joint live and work units in commercial zones if it meets the following conditions. The lot(s) shall be:

1. outside of a **Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone**, as depicted in the General Plan, in its entirety;
2. outside of the **Coastal Zone**, as defined in Division 2 (Definition), in its entirety;
3. outside of a **Significant Ecological Area**, as depicted in the General Plan, in its entirety;
4. outside of a **Hillside Management Area**, as depicted in the General Plan, in its entirety;
5. outside of the 70 or above decibel Community Noise Equivalent Level (dB CNEL) noise contour of an **Airport Influence Area**, as depicted in the General Plan, in its entirety;
6. served by a public water system;
7. served by a public sewer system;
8. fronting a highway or a public street.

If all the above conditions are not met, then this use is subject to a conditional use permit (CUP), which is a discretionary review process.

### **Use Type: Mixed use developments**

#### **Where is it allowed?**

Mixed use developments are allowed in C-1, C-2, and C-3 zones.

#### **Does it require a Site Plan Review (SPR) or a Conditional Use Permit (CUP)?**

Only a site plan review (SPR) is needed for mixed use developments in commercial zones if it meets the following conditions. The lot(s) shall be:

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1. outside of a **Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone**, as depicted in the General Plan, in its entirety;
2. outside of the **Coastal Zone**, as defined in Division 2 (Definition), in its entirety;
3. outside of a **Significant Ecological Area**, as depicted in the General Plan, in its entirety;
4. outside of a **Hillside Management Area**, as depicted in the General Plan, in its entirety;
5. outside of the 70 or above decibel Community Noise Equivalent Level (dB CNEL) noise contour of an **Airport Influence Area**, as depicted in the General Plan, in its entirety;
6. served by a public water system;
7. served by a public sewer system;
8. fronting a highway or a public street.

If all the above conditions are not met, then this use is subject to a conditional use permit (CUP), which is a discretionary review process.

### **Use Type: Apartment houses**

#### **Where is it allowed?**

Apartment houses are allowed in C-1, C-2, and C-3 zones.

#### **Does it require a Site Plan Review (SPR) or a Conditional Use Permit (CUP)?**

Only a site plan review (SPR) is needed for apartment houses in commercial zones if it meets the following conditions. The lot(s) shall be:

1. outside of a **Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone**, as depicted in the General Plan, in its entirety;
2. outside of the **Coastal Zone**, as defined in Division 2 (Definition), in its entirety;
3. outside of a **Significant Ecological Area**, as depicted in the General Plan, in its entirety;
4. outside of a **Hillside Management Area**, as depicted in the General Plan, in its entirety;
5. outside of the 70 or above decibel Community Noise Equivalent Level (dB CNEL) noise contour of an **Airport Influence Area**, as depicted in the General Plan, in its entirety;
6. served by a public water system;
7. served by a public sewer system;
8. fronting a highway or a public street.

If all the above conditions are not met, then this use is subject to a conditional use permit (CUP), which is a discretionary review process.

In addition to the above list, the use must also meet the following conditions:

- Where use is subject to Section 22.128.200 (Supportive Housing Streamlining) and Chapter 22.166 (Housing Permits).

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- Use permitted on lots outside of the Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone, as depicted in the General Plan, in its entirety, and where use is subject to Section 22.130.200 (Motel Conversions, Permanent) and Chapter 22.166 (Housing Permits).

### **Use Type: Townhouses**

#### **Where is it allowed?**

Townhouses are allowed in C-1, C-2, and C-3 zones.

#### **Does it require a Site Plan Review (SPR) or a Conditional Use Permit (CUP)?**

Only a site plan review (SPR) is needed for townhouses in commercial zones if it meets the following conditions. The lot(s) shall be:

1. outside of a **Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone**, as depicted in the General Plan, in its entirety;
2. outside of the **Coastal Zone**, as defined in Division 2 (Definition), in its entirety;
3. outside of a **Significant Ecological Area**, as depicted in the General Plan, in its entirety;
4. outside of a **Hillside Management Area**, as depicted in the General Plan, in its entirety;
5. outside of the 70 or above decibel Community Noise Equivalent Level (dB CNEL) noise contour of an **Airport Influence Area**, as depicted in the General Plan, in its entirety;
6. served by a public water system;
7. served by a public sewer system;
8. fronting a highway or a public street.

If all the above conditions are not met, then this use is subject to a conditional use permit (CUP), which is a discretionary review process.

In addition to the above list, the use must also meet the following conditions:

- No more than six townhouses shall be confined within a single building.

### **Use Type: Two-family residences**

#### **Where is it allowed?**

Two-family residences are allowed in C-1, C-2, and C-3 zones.

#### **Does it require a Site Plan Review (SPR) or a Conditional Use Permit (CUP)?**

Only a site plan review (SPR) is needed for two-family residences in commercial zones if it meets the following conditions. The lot(s) shall be:

9. outside of a **Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone**, as depicted in the General Plan, in its entirety;
10. outside of the **Coastal Zone**, as defined in Division 2 (Definition), in its entirety;

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11. outside of a **Significant Ecological Area**, as depicted in the General Plan, in its entirety;
12. outside of a **Hillside Management Area**, as depicted in the General Plan, in its entirety;
13. outside of the 70 or above decibel Community Noise Equivalent Level (dB CNEL) noise contour of an **Airport Influence Area**, as depicted in the General Plan, in its entirety;
14. served by a public water system;
15. served by a public sewer system;
16. fronting a highway or a public street.

If all the above conditions are not met, then this use is subject to a conditional use permit (CUP), which is a discretionary review process.