



## **STAFF REPORT**

**DATE:** APRIL 28, 2021

**TO:** PLANNING COMMISSION

**FROM:** DAVID M. REYES, DIRECTOR OF PLANNING & COMMUNITY  
DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

**SUBJECT:** STUDY SESSION ON THE LINCOLN AVENUE SPECIFIC PLAN UPDATE

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### **RECOMMENDATION:**

This report is a study session item related to a City-initiated program to implement the General Plan and update the Lincoln Avenue Specific Plan (LASP). The Planning Commission will receive a presentation by Planning Department staff and the City's consultant, AECOM, on the update to the LASP, including plan boundary, vision, goals, policies, standards, and guidelines to regulate future development in the area. This report provides background information on the Lincoln Avenue corridor and the planning and community engagement process that informed the preparation of the draft plan for Lincoln Avenue. It also includes a comparison of the 2013 LASP (current plan) and the draft plan. The current and the draft plan documents are attached to this report (Refer to Appendix A and B). The Planning Commission will be asked to discuss the update to the LASP and provide feedback.

There is no action required at this time. Subsequent to this study session, staff will return to the Planning Commission next month with the proposed LASP for review and recommendation to City Council.

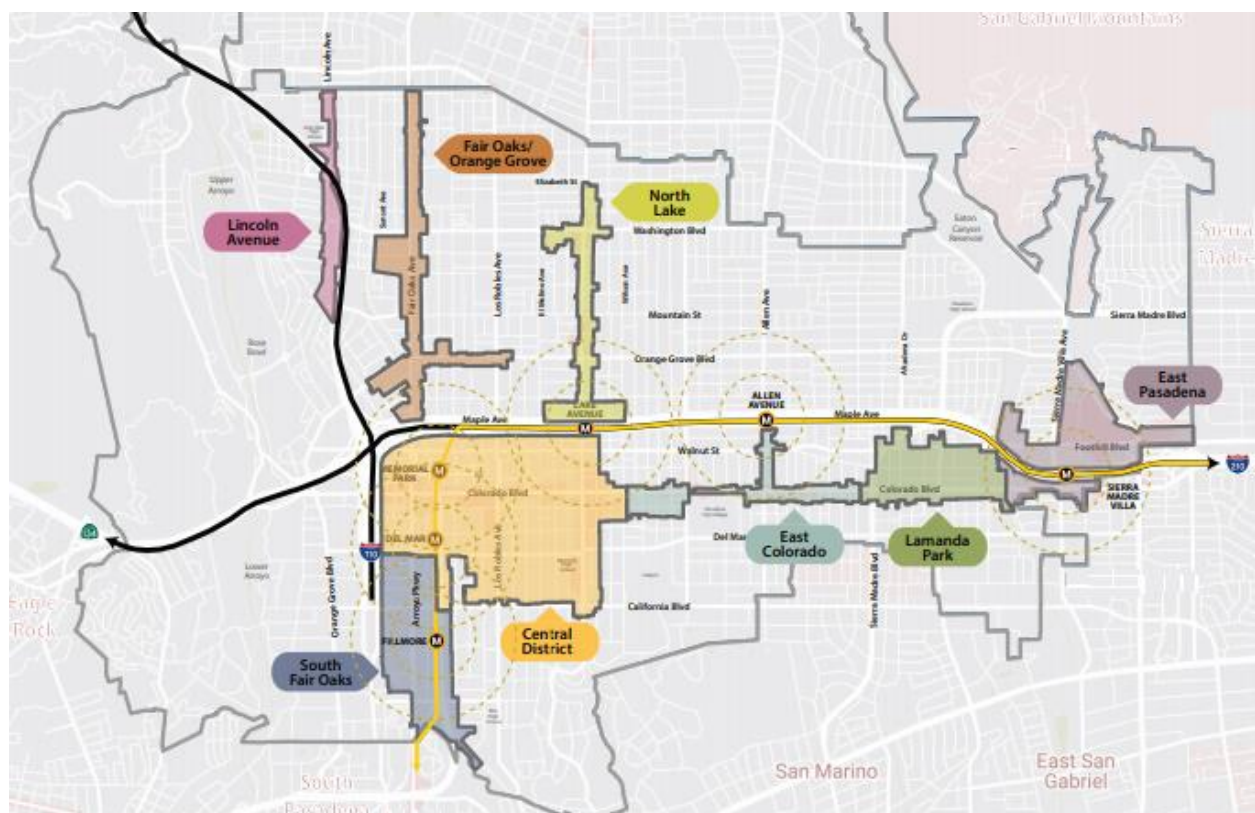
### **BACKGROUND:**

In 2015, the City adopted a comprehensive update to the Land Use and Mobility Elements of the General Plan, which updated specific plan boundaries, plan vision, goals, and policies, land uses, densities and intensities, and development caps within each of the eight specific plan Areas. The update also included a list of tools to implement the General Plan. Specifically, it required the City to review and update seven existing specific plans, Central District, East Colorado, East Pasadena, Fair Oaks/Orange Grove, Lincoln Avenue, North Lake, and South Fair Oaks, and create a

new Specific Plan for Lamanda Park (See Figure 1). In addition, the City certified the General Plan Final Environmental Impact Report (EIR) which analyzed the update of the General Plan and specific plan amendments, and identified potential citywide impact and programmatic mitigation measures. The Land Use and Mobility Elements, together with the other General Plan elements, guide the overall physical development of the City through horizon year 2035.

In 2018, the City initiated a program, *Our Pasadena – Putting the Plan in Motion*, to review and update the City's eight specific plan areas. The program's primary objective is to establish neighborhood-specific design and land-use goals resulting in a refined set of permitted uses, residential densities, buildable area, and development standards and guidelines that will shape the built environment along the City's major commercial and mixed-use areas within the eight planning areas in accordance with the City's General Plan and Guiding Principles. The first specific plan to be presented to Planning Commission as part of the General Plan Implementation Program is the LASP, which is the focus of this report.

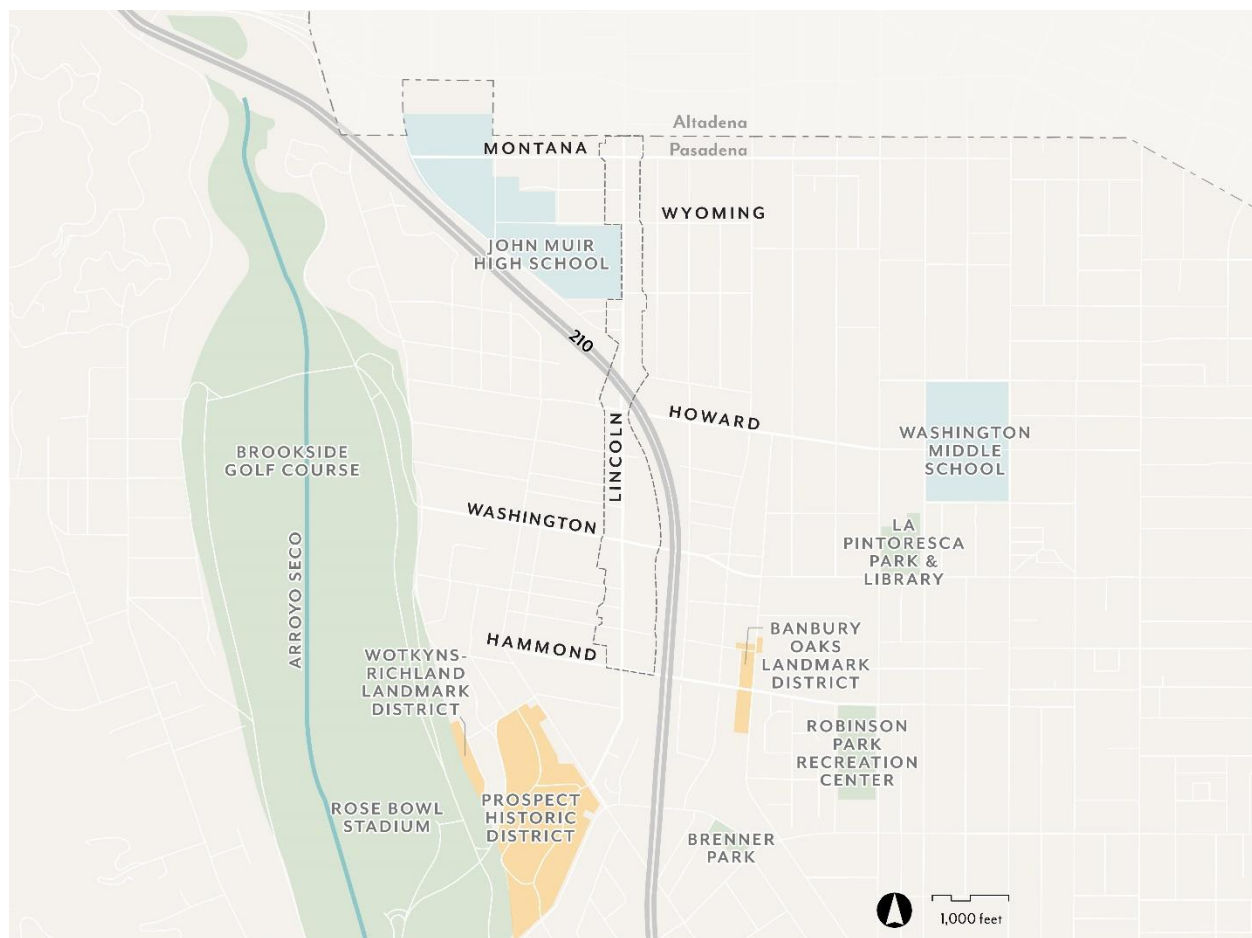
Figure 1. Pasadena Specific Plan Areas



Lincoln Avenue is a mixed-use corridor located a half-mile east of the Arroyo Seco (See Figure 2). The street is bisected by the I-210 freeway and surrounded primarily by single-family residential neighborhoods. While originally a residential neighborhood

serving the early subdivisions of northwest Pasadena, many residential and commercial parcels transitioned to industrial uses throughout the 20th Century, due to a stifled economic recovery from the Great Depression and permissive industrial zoning policies in the area.

Figure 2. Lincoln Avenue Context



Much of the Lincoln Avenue corridor and surrounding residential neighborhood is located within one of Pasadena's few historically "redlined" communities, meaning residents were systematically blocked from mortgage or home improvement loans between 1939 and 1968 due to the Home Owners' Loan Corporation (HOLC) investment risk-grading documents. The explicitly racist and discriminatory HOLC documents, which referred to the Lincoln neighborhood as a "blighted" area with "subversive racial elements," are now infamous for their long-term influence on housing policy and access to services including banking, insurance, and healthcare within racially and economically marginalized communities throughout the United States. The construction of the I-210 freeway in 1966 contributed further to the area's fragmentation and isolation from the City's economic center.

After decades of permissive zoning, a growing number of industrial uses such as the cement plant and auto repair shops detracted from the residential character of the area. In an effort to prevent the development of additional industrial uses and their associated impacts on the surrounding community, a group of neighborhood residents appealed to the City Council to address these issues. As a result, and after extensive community planning and outreach, the City revised the zoning along Lincoln Avenue from Industrial to General Commercial to reduce industrial conflicts with surrounding neighborhoods and limit industrial activity. The Lincoln Avenue Redevelopment Project Area, adopted in 1986, contributed to the development of several office buildings and townhome complexes throughout the late 1980s and into the 1990s, some of which successfully replaced heavy industrial uses. However, as redevelopment projects were scattered throughout the area and lacked neighborhood-serving uses, they did not lead to a cohesive revitalization of the corridor. As development slowed and industrial uses continued to operate throughout the 2000s, the City identified Lincoln Avenue as the location for an eighth specific plan area.

In 2013, City Council approved the first LASP as a tool to catalyze a shift in land use patterns and guide development along the Lincoln Avenue corridor. The current plan focused on repurposing the industrial and limited commercial corridor into a vibrant district offering more retail storefronts and neighborhood services, and increasing opportunities for housing and mixed-use development. In addition to new zoning designations and development standards, the plan included a revitalization strategy that focused on identifying and facilitating development of specific catalytic sites for growth.

## **LASP UPDATE:**

### Planning Process and Community Engagement

The update to the LASP is the result of an extensive three-year planning and public outreach process led by the Planning Department. The outreach and planning efforts are supported by AECOM, a consultant team of urban planners, urban designers, outreach specialists, economists, architects, and landscape architects. The planning process also involved coordination with staff from various City departments, including Public Works, Transportation, Economic Development, Northwest Programs, and the Accessibility Coordinator, as well as feedback from the Northwest and Design Commissions.

Throughout the planning process, the Planning Department solicited input from residents, business and property owners, community leaders, and other stakeholder groups through a variety of outreach events, public meetings, and online engagement tools. The following list provides a summary of public outreach opportunities and an overview of key recurring feedback themes from the outreach process:

- Online Community Survey (February through April 2018) – As the first public

outreach activity, the Planning Department prepared an online survey to gather thoughts about Lincoln Avenue from community members and others familiar with the area, including positive and negative elements of building design and development, the pedestrian environment, and other community planning issues. City staff used the survey responses to begin identifying places of interest and topics for discussion in the Round 1 Workshop. The online survey also served as a way to introduce the community to the Specific Plan process and spread awareness of the City's Specific Plan Update Program, Our Pasadena – Putting the Plan in Motion.

- Round 1 Community Workshop (June 14, 2018) – In the Round 1 Workshop, the Planning Department facilitated a listening and learning session to find out more about participants' experience living and/or working in, or visiting the Lincoln Avenue area, and their ideas for how the Specific Plan could improve the area. The workshop began with a brief interactive visioning activity, and an introductory presentation on the Specific Plan Update program, the General Plan vision for the plan area, and background information. For the majority of the workshop, participants were divided into small groups with facilitated discussions on specific topics such as appropriate land uses and housing types, streetscape and public amenities, and mobility and parking. The main objective of the workshop was to solicit feedback from the community, rather than reach consensus on any particular topic. This workshop was followed by a second online survey.
- Virtual Walking Tour (February 2, 2019) – Although originally scheduled as an outside walking tour of the area, due to heavy rains participants took part in a virtual walking tour at John Muir High School. The virtual tour helped to gather participants' observations and experiences throughout the intended route of the walking tour. Participants wrote comments on walking tour worksheets/guides as staff navigated through portions of Lincoln Avenue, beginning at the intersection of Wyoming and Lincoln and ending at John Muir High School. At the end of the tour, participants identified specific locations on large maps with image cards depicting desired uses.
- Round 2 Community Workshop (February 28, 2019) – The Planning Department hosted a second community workshop to present preliminary land use and urban form concepts that considered a number of factors, including community feedback received since the first workshop. Input received helped to refine these concepts and guide the drafting of goals, policies, and development standards. In an opening icebreaker activity, participants were able to reaffirm what we heard so far from the community by placing stickers next to those comments. Next, City staff gave a PowerPoint presentation covering background information on the program, an overview of the existing Specific Plan area, emerging themes and draft vision, and preliminary concepts. Lastly, participants broke out into small groups to discuss the preliminary concepts. Each table reported back to the larger group with a summary of main points.

- Round 3 Virtual Community Open House (June 2020 through March 2021) – For the third and final round of community workshops, the Planning Department hosted an interactive virtual open house website and live webinar. Through an introductory presentation and a series of informational materials, staff presented the refined Lincoln Avenue Specific Plan vision and concept, along with full draft standards for the Land Use, Public Realm, and Development & Design chapters of the plan. Participants were encouraged to provide detailed input through an online survey, and to submit questions in the Q&A portion of the live webinar event. While the community was unable to gather in person due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the virtual format allowed participants to visit and provide feedback at their convenience, download materials, and easily share the open house site with family, friends, and neighbors.
- Northwest and Design Commissions (November 10 and December 22, 2020 respectively) – Following the Round 3 Virtual Open House, the Planning Department presented at the Northwest Commission and Design Commission to solicit feedback on the draft Lincoln Avenue Specific Plan, respond to clarifying questions from commissioners, and discuss various issues to be considered in the development of standards, policies, and implementation strategies for the next draft of the plan.
- Council District 1 Community Meeting (March 10, 2021) – Prior to Planning Commission, Councilmember Hampton hosted a virtual meeting for members of the community to discuss the LASP update and the process so far. The Planning Department presented the plan's draft vision and standards, and answered a number of questions from residents. Attendees also had access to the Round 3 virtual open house to download the draft plan and get further details.

Participants shared a wide range of input throughout Rounds 1 through 3 of the outreach process, including the following recurring themes:

- Maintain low-density character with two- to three-story scale with appropriate transitions to adjacent residential neighborhoods;
- Create opportunities for affordable, family-sized homes;
- Help “mom and pop” shops and local retailers and restaurants, especially those that cater to youth and families;
- Encourage walking with development standards that contribute to a more pleasant and safer street environment including wider sidewalks;
- Provide more places to walk to and a variety of public spaces, incorporating seating, outdoor dining and parklets;
- Create a more pleasant environment to stroll around the neighborhood and to the

Arroyo Seco with native or drought tolerant landscaped parkways and trees that provide more shade;

- Desire for additional pedestrian crosswalks and bike racks at key intersections;
- Reconnect the north and south portions of the plan area through streetscape improvements such as trees, benches, lighting, bike lanes, crosswalks, wayfinding signage, and public art;
- Desire for underground parking and more on-street parking or shared parking solutions;
- Support clean, creative industry for future employment opportunities, but beautify building facades and require setbacks for landscaping; and
- Continue to limit liquor stores and alcohol sales.

Specifically, the Northwest Commission provided the following comments:

- Interest in strengthening the connection between the northern and southern parts of the plan area;
- Noted the lack of easily-accessible open space and support for increasing park/open space throughout the plan area; and
- Interest in murals and public art within the freeway underpass.

In addition, the Design Commission provided the following comments:

- Interest in connecting the northern and southern portions of the plan area, which is bisected by the I-210 freeway, such as through art and wayfinding signage;
- Support for making the corridor more friendly to bicyclists;
- Support for outdoor dining and other amenities;
- Support for incentivizing new businesses rather than limiting business opportunities; and
- Commissioners noted that the area currently lacks a design identity.

Participants at the Council District 1 Community meeting expressed interest in:

- Increased safety throughout the area;
- Information on specific properties such as Chan's Market and Kettle's Nursery;
- Building heights and the preservation of mountain views;
- Limitations on certain uses such as liquor stores;

- Interest in eateries and restaurant malls; and
- Support for a more walkable area with spaces for families and pets.

### Specific Plan Area

The current plan area consists of properties mostly fronting the 1.3 mile section of Lincoln Avenue between Mountain Street on the south and the northern City boundary, just north of Montana Street (See Figure 3). The draft plan refines the plan boundary, removing three areas from the specific plan, as follows.

- A cluster of developed single-family residential properties on Anderson Place, south of John Muir High School;
- Land owned by Caltrans located below the I-210 freeway overpass; and
- A few blocks of developed single-family residential properties, a Planned Development, and a commercially-developed parcel on Lincoln Avenue, south of Hammond Street.

The two residential areas are currently regulated by the City's Zoning Code single-family regulations, as Specific Plans do not typically regulate these uses. The Caltrans-owned properties are not regulated by the City. Removing these areas from the LASP area would not affect how these uses are regulated.



Figure 3. Specific Plan Area



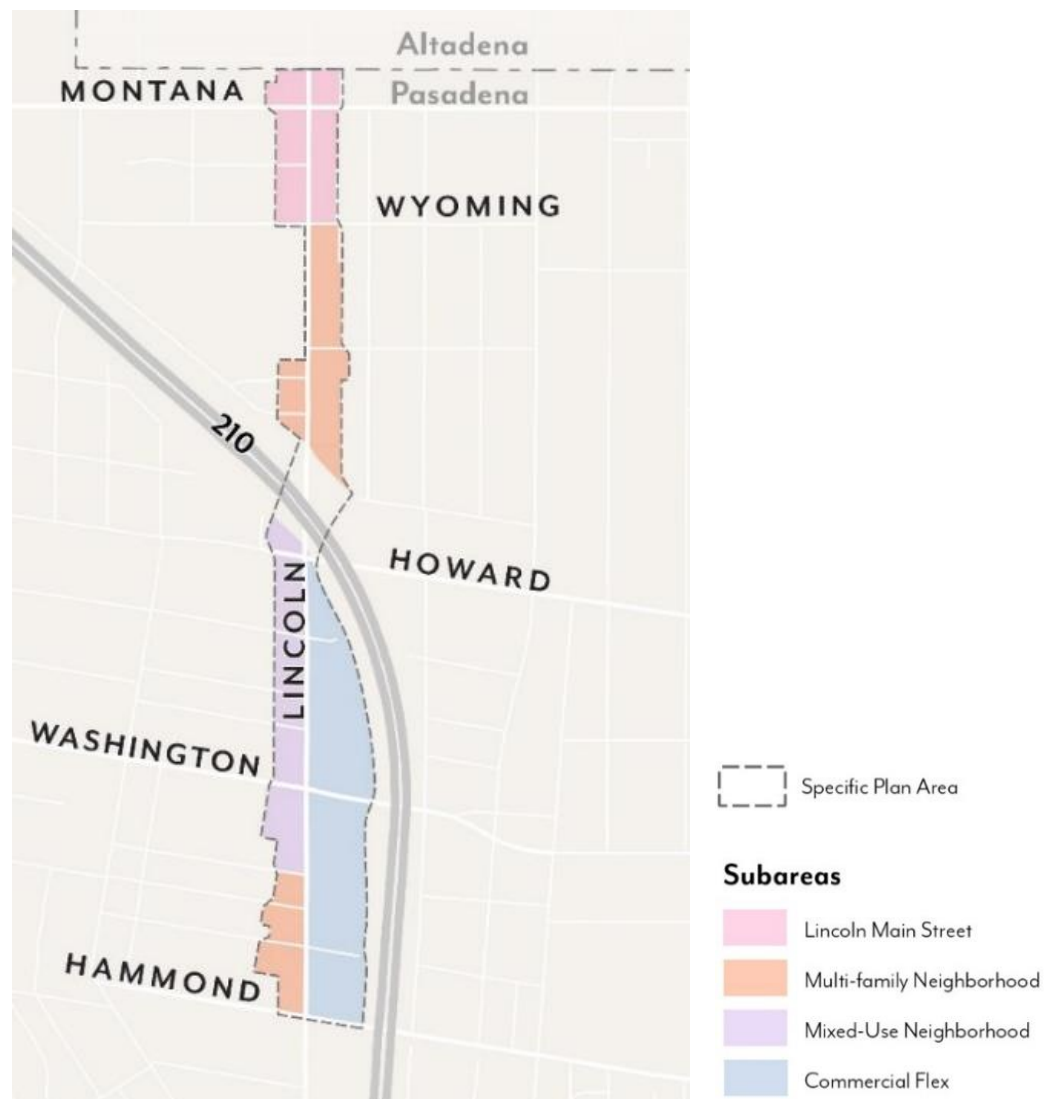
### Vision for Lincoln Avenue

The vision for the LASP, as drafted, characterizes the intended future of the Lincoln Avenue corridor, as shaped by both the General Plan and community input during the plan update process. The draft vision contains an overarching statement and six supporting objectives, as follows.

- Lincoln Avenue will be the heart of the greater residential neighborhood where commercial and multifamily uses co-exist in a walkable, vibrant environment with public realm improvements that create a cohesive and well-connected corridor.
  - Neighborhood Character - To encourage compatible development that adds to the rich cultural history of the community;
  - Commercial Core - A strong spine of retail and services north of Wyoming Street, supported by reuse of existing buildings and targeted infill development;
  - Housing Choices – A variety of new housing options that complement existing neighborhoods;
  - Connected Neighborhood – Enhanced sidewalks that support pedestrian comfort and safety, and create a cohesive sense of place;
  - Greening & Open Space – A more livable and sustainable community with rich landscaping and open space; and
  - Innovation Hub – Clean industrial commercial uses that provide future-friendly jobs.

The draft plan area is organized into four subareas, distinguished by existing conditions, the General Plan Land Use designations, and the plan's vision (See Figure 4). The purpose of these subareas is to group properties with similar conditions and land uses in order to facilitate the development of zoning and land use policies and standards in the specific plan.

Figure 4. Plan Subareas



- Lincoln Main Street – the area north of Wyoming Street is a commercial district consisting of mostly older single-story buildings that line the sidewalk. This traditional storefront setting provides the most pedestrian-friendly segment of the corridor. Building entries open onto the sidewalk with parking hidden in the rear. The most inviting buildings incorporate individual and frequent storefronts, large expanses of windows that face the street, and articulation that makes for a visually interesting façade. The area's land uses include an eclectic mix of retail and neighborhood services, such as coffee shops, a restaurant, a nursery, and a gym. The area also includes several office uses, some of which have blank walls or facades facing the street that detract from the vision of a more pedestrian-friendly environment. Recent development at the northwest corner of Lincoln and Montana Avenue has brought some new life to the area, but tall fencing and the

siting of the building away from the street detracts somewhat from the existing form of the district.

The draft plan builds on the existing urban form of this subarea, enhancing the public realm and allowing for a diverse mix of active, pedestrian-friendly uses including retail, restaurants, offices and services. The streetwall would be reinforced with some flexibility in setbacks to accommodate open space, outdoor dining, or architectural variation. Ground floor design treatments, like minimum transparency and a limit on blank walls, would invite a connection between the public and private realms, and a shading requirement would also help improve pedestrian comfort. Finally, standardization of parking requirements aims to reduce the financial burden on new businesses of building new spaces, particularly for parcels built-out with older structures where space for new parking is limited or impossible.

- Multi-Family Neighborhood – there are two residential pockets with a mix of single- and multi-family homes, one between the I-210 freeway and Wyoming Street to the north, and the other between Pepper Street and Hammond Street the west side of Lincoln to the south. They include one- and two-story homes, townhomes, and apartments. Though they vary in shape and style, these areas have consistent landscaped setbacks generally between 15 to 20 feet along Lincoln Avenue. The most recent new construction is a series of low-density townhomes in the Craftsman style at the corner of Idaho Street. John Muir High School, a significant community anchor, lies just across the street on the west side of Lincoln Avenue. The historic school building is also set back from the street, with a large, shaded green space running along the length of the corridor.

The draft plan preserves existing lower-density multi-family housing in this subarea. Future multi-family development would continue to be subject to the citywide City of Gardens requirements for many standards. The draft plan proposes small refinements to address local character, such as front and rear setbacks, as well as a slight reduction in front yard fence height and a slight increase in the fence setback requirements.

- Mixed-Use Neighborhood – the area south of the I-210 freeway and north of Washington Boulevard is designated for mixed-use and is currently comprised of one-story commercial uses, including auto repair shops, construction supplies, a fabrication company, a motel, and some vacancies. The lots are small and narrow, though many have been consolidated. Where there are buildings, they are generally built to the sidewalk, but frequent breaks in the streetwall detract from an overall sense of cohesion as many of the sites are underdeveloped. Many parking lots and blank walls line the sidewalk, making this section of the corridor more auto-oriented and less friendly to pedestrians.

The draft plan seeks to stimulate redevelopment of these underutilized parcels and encourage housing production by increasing the residential density permitted

in this subarea, consistent with the General Plan, while still allowing ground floor commercial uses. The draft plan would not require any particular use: projects would be allowed to be 100-percent residential, 100-percent commercial, or a mix of the two; however, only residential uses are would be allowed on upper floors. Market research of current conditions indicates that if a site redevelops, it is likely to be a largely residential product.

Though the General Plan allows for greater floor area ratio (FAR) and density in this area, the draft plan reflects the community vision for a lower-scale corridor, approximately three-story, and would allow for a development product that is more appropriate immediately adjacent to single-family homes. In addition, because underground parking may not be economically feasible in this subarea at this time, higher density developments would likely result in greater building massing in order to accommodate above-ground parking, which could detract from the lower-scale character of the neighborhood.

- Commercial Flex – the area south of Howard Street, east of Lincoln Avenue, includes a variety of one-story commercial uses, mostly on large lots, as well as older industrial uses that are not permitted under existing zoning, but are allowed to remain until the site redevelops. Uses include churches, offices, storage facilities, production spaces, research and development light industrial offices, and a cement mixing plant. Block sizes are large and uninterrupted by east-west through streets because of the I-210 freeway, which serves as the eastern boundary to this area. The urban form is not currently pedestrian-oriented due to uneven building setbacks, a prevalence of blank facades or fences, and uses that are generally auto-oriented in nature.

The draft plan seeks to capitalize on its close freeway access and proximity to institutions like the Jet Propulsion Laboratory which makes this area uniquely situated to become a hub for start-ups, innovative spinoff businesses and related industries. The success of the Pasadena Business Center, which leases to several incubator businesses, has also demonstrated demand for these types of uses as well as an intention to expand. The draft plan would continue to allow these use types along with complementary retail and services while phasing out incompatible industrial uses such as the cement mixing plant, which would be allowed to remain but not expand.

### Zoning Districts

The draft plan proposes to modify existing Zoning Districts in order to implement the plan's vision by regulating uses of land and development (See Figure 5 and Table 1). The Zoning Districts largely align with the subareas described in the previous section; however, the Multi-Family Neighborhood Subarea includes two zoning districts—LASP-RM-16 and LASP-CL. The Zoning Districts would largely remain the same, except that LASP-CG2 becomes LASP-CF and much, though not all, of LASP-CL becomes LASP-MU-48.

Figure 5. Zoning Districts

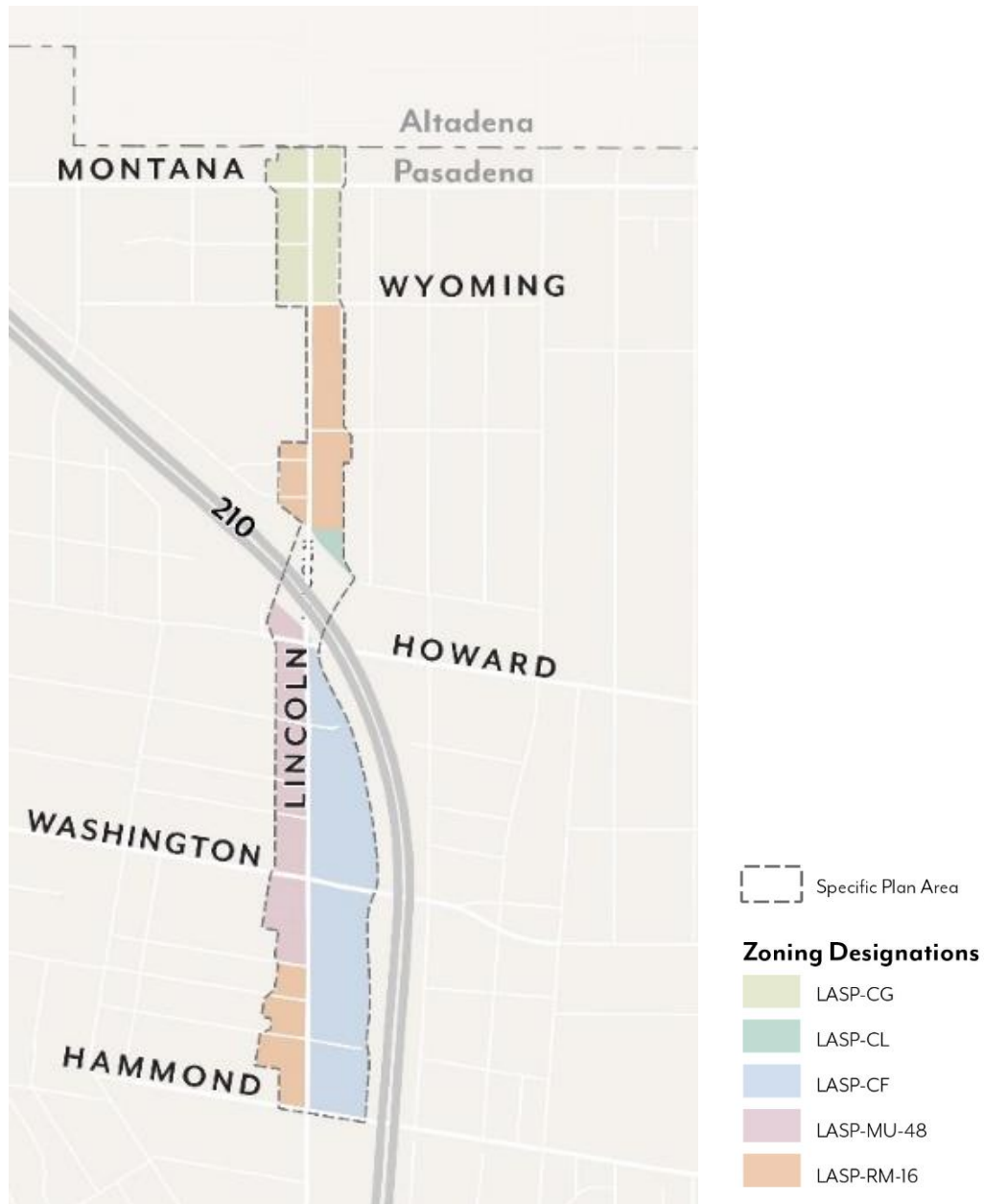


Table 1. Zoning Districts

Subarea	Zoning Districts	
Lincoln Main Street	Current Zoning District	LASP-CG1 (General Commercial)
	Proposed Zoning District	LASP-CG (General Commercial)
Multi-Family Residential	Current Zoning District	LASP-RM-16 (Multifamily Residential)
	Proposed Zoning District	LASP-RM-16 (Multifamily Residential)
	Current Zoning District	LASP-CL (Limited Commercial)
	Proposed Zoning District	LASP-CL (Limited Commercial)
Mixed-Use Neighborhood	Current Zoning District	LASP-CL (Limited Commercial)
	Proposed Zoning District	LASP-MU-48 (Mixed-Use)
Commercial Flex	Current Zoning District	LASP-CG2 (General Commercial)
	Proposed Zoning District	LASP-CF (Flex Commercial)

## Land Use

The draft plan proposes minor changes to the general distribution of land uses within the plan area. The changes include customizing the list of uses permitted within specific zones. Within the LASP-CF and LASP-CG zones, certain uses such as catering services, charitable institutions, indoor commercial recreation, community gardens, offices on the ground floor, only in LASP-CF, and schools/specialized education and training would be permitted without a Minor Conditional Use Permit (CUP) or CUP to streamline processing for uses that do not present special challenges.

In the LASP-CF zone area, the sale of beer and wine and full alcohol sales would continue to require a CUP. However, the draft plan would establish the same threshold for both the sale of beer and wine and full alcohol sales and conditionally permit alcohol sales as an accessory use to retail food sales in commercial spaces equal to or greater than 15,000 square feet, the size of a small grocery store (i.e. a typical Trader Joe's), with no more than five-percent of the floor space occupied by alcohol sales. For on-site consumption, restaurants are currently allowed both beer and wine and full alcohol. The draft plan would also conditionally permit the sale of alcohol as an accessory use at

alcohol manufacturing facilities, such as a brewery or distillery. This would allow for a tap or tasting room on the premises; stand-alone bars would continue to be prohibited.

In the LASP-MU-48 zone, commercial uses would be restricted on the upper floors of a mixed-use residential project. In addition, single-family residential uses would be prohibited. These proposed changes seek to promote new housing production in the area. In the LASP-CL zone, more permissions would be removed due to the reorganization of zones. The current use list was based on a zone that included the west side of Lincoln Avenue south of the I-210 freeway. Since that area is included in the new LASP-MU-48 zone, the new LASP-CL has been reduced to two parcels surrounded by low-density residential. Uses such as commercial entertainment, electronic game centers, general markets, printing and publishing, and restaurants with limited live entertainment would not be appropriate for this constrained site next to residential. Housing would also be prohibited in this zone due to its adjacency to the freeway and off-ramp.

For a complete list of allowed uses and permit requirements refer to Chapter 4 of the draft LASP.

#### *Residential Density and Non-Residential Intensity*

The draft plan proposes refinements to the amount of residential density and non-residential floor area permitted within the plan area (See Table 2). The refinements aim to maintain existing and encourage a variety of new housing options, including family and affordable housing that complement existing neighborhoods. In the Mixed-Use Neighborhood Subarea, the proposed residential density is increased from 16 to 48 du/ac with and FAR from 0.7 to 1.5 in order to encourage the redevelopment of existing properties and provide new housing options with some commercial amenities without overdeveloping the area. In the Multi-Family Neighborhood Subarea the draft plan maintains the residential density at 16 du/ac to preserve existing affordable housing units while allowing some moderate upgrades or infill opportunities. Together, these density standards help to achieve the objectives of the General Plan.

Market and proforma testing were performed for the LASP-MU-48 zone indicating that residential development is potentially feasible, but will likely be sensitive to variety of factors, such as parking type (above vs. below grade), number of parking spaces required, market rents or sales prices, and lot consolidation. Physical feasibility of sites was also tested to determine whether densities and FAR could be achieved assuming proposed development standards are met for height, setbacks, open space, and parking. It was determined that 48 du/acre could be achieved on larger lots; on smaller lots with above-grade parking assumed, 48 du/acre density could be achieved but may be more challenging unless small unit sizes are assumed. It is possible that lower-density townhome-style development that typically ranges from 20 to 30 units per acre will be more attractive for developers on some sites. An FAR of 1.5 was determined to be sufficient to allow a density of 48 du/acre to be achieved, even with large unit sizes assumed.



Table 2. Density and Intensity

Subarea	Zoning District		Density	Intensity
Lincoln Main Street	Current Zoning District	LASP-CG1 (General Commercial)	N/A	0.8 FAR
	Proposed Zoning District	LASP-CG (General Commercial)	N/A	1.0 FAR
Multi-Family Neighborhood	Current Zoning District	LASP-RM-16 (Multifamily Residential)	16 du/ac	N/A
	Proposed Zoning District	LASP-RM-16 (Multifamily Residential)	16 du/ac	N/A
Mixed-Use Neighborhood	Current Zoning District	LASP-CL (Limited Commercial)	16 du/ac	0.7 FAR
	Proposed Zoning District	LASP-MU-48 (Mixed-Use)	48 du/ac (General Plan allows up to 87 du/ac)	1.5 FAR
Commercial Flex	Current Zoning District	LASP-CG2 (General Commercial)	N/A	1.0 FAR
	Proposed Zoning District	LASP-CF (Flex Commercial)	N/A	1.0 FAR

### Development, Design, and Public Realm Standards

The update to the LASP primarily focuses on refining and establishing objective development standards to achieve the goals and vision of the General Plan, thereby enabling a vibrant neighborhood-oriented district, with potential for new housing options and a complement of local serving retail and service businesses, office spaces, and community uses that would be supported by public improvements that facilitate an enjoyable pedestrian environment. The draft plan also includes urban design standards, such as modulation and stepbacks, to help refine building mass and scale, reinforce existing urban character, and improve the aesthetic and design quality of new development.

#### *Building Height and Rear Setback*

The draft plan maintains similar building height limits as the current plan (See Table 3). The draft plan proposes to allow an additional three feet in height, from 36 to 39 feet, in the LASP-MU-48 and LASP-CF zoning districts. In the LASP-MU-48 district, 39 feet is required to accommodate the desired three-story scale with a 15 foot ground floor,

required for mixed-use buildings with ground floor commercial, and 12 foot upper floors. While residential stories can be less than 12 feet, there is a trend towards taller residential stories due to market demand for high ceilings in residential products. In the LASP-CF district, commercial flex spaces often require tall first stories of 18 feet or more and upper floors will vary depending on the type of commercial uses. The proposed 39 foot heights would accommodate a three story development, allow for symmetrical building height to the LASP-MU-48 district directly across the street, and encourage building heights that create a visual buffer with the I-210 freeway.

Table 3. Building Height and Rear Setback

Subarea	Zoning District		Height	Rear Setback
Lincoln Main Street	Current Zoning District	LASP-CG1 (General Commercial)	36 feet	5 feet + encroachment plane
	Proposed Zoning District	LASP-CG (General Commercial)	36 feet	15 feet + encroachment plane
Multi-Family Neighborhood	Current Zoning District	LASP-RM-16 (Multifamily Residential)	36 feet (2 stories in rear 40% of lot )	5 feet + encroachment plane
	Proposed Zoning District	LASP-RM-16 (Multifamily Residential)	36 feet (2 stories in rear 50 feet of lot)	5 feet (1 <sup>st</sup> story), 15 feet (2 <sup>nd</sup> story), 50 feet (3 <sup>rd</sup> story)
Mixed-Use Neighborhood	Current Zoning District	LASP-CL (Limited Commercial)	36 feet	5 feet for residential or 15 feet for non-residential + encroachment plane
	Proposed Zoning District	LASP-MU-48 (Mixed-Use)	39 feet	5 feet for residential or 15 feet for non-residential + encroachment plane
Commercial Flex	Current Zoning District	LASP-CG2 (General Commercial)	36 feet	None required
	Proposed Zoning District	LASP-CF (Flex Commercial)	39 feet	None required

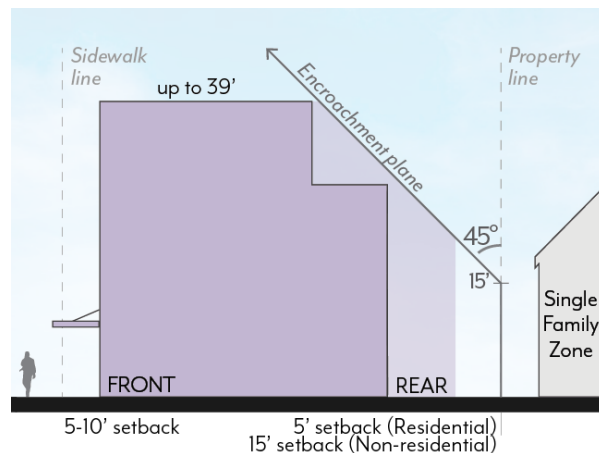
The draft plan also includes slight changes to the current rear setback requirements, specifically changing the angle of the encroachment plane to minimize the massing and scale of the upper floors of new development adjacent to single-family residential neighborhoods (See Figure 6). The refinements to the encroachment plane would push development of upper floors towards the middle of the development site and away from

single-family zones. The 45-degree encroachment plane angle is stricter than the 30-degree angle that is currently allowed but in-line with citywide standards for nonresidential buildings next to residential districts. The plane starts at 15 feet, higher than the citywide standard, because upper stories in this zone are required to be residential. The draft plan also includes additional prohibitions on projected balconies or roof decks within 50 feet of an RS zone.

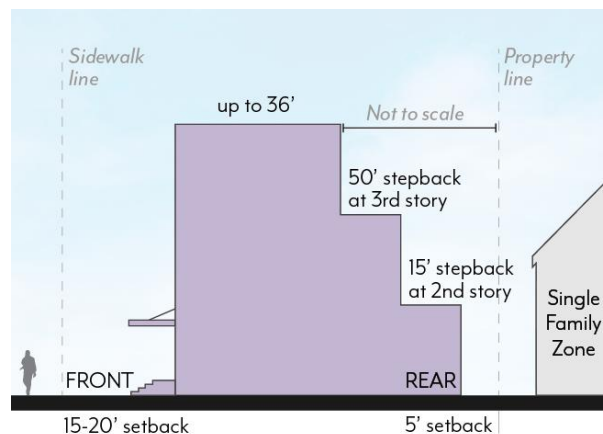
In the LASP-RM-16 district, rear setbacks were refined slightly to make the setback measurement approach consistent with other subareas in the draft plan. The draft plan includes a 15 foot stepback at the second story, consistent with citywide standards, and a 50 foot stepback at the third story, more restrictive than the 25 foot citywide standard, but slightly less restrictive than the current plan.

Figure 6. Rear Setback

#### *LASP-MU-48 Zone*



#### *LASP-RM-16 Zone*



#### *Front Setback*

The draft plan maintains a similar setback approach to the current plan with some refinements (See Table 4). In the LASP-RM-16 zone area, the proposed setback requirement is greater fronting Lincoln Avenue to better reflect the existing prevailing setback and to support more greening and open space. Proposed setbacks in the LASP-CG zone are reduced slightly; however since street setbacks would be measured from a new sidewalk line, instead of the property line, the setbacks are effectively the same, or within a few feet depending on the parcel, when compared to the existing plan. The setback proposed in the LASP-CF zone is reduced from 12 feet to a range of 5 to 10 feet to encourage a symmetrical streetwall with development across the street and to create a more enclosed street environment consistent with pedestrian-oriented urban design principles.

Table 4. Front Setback

Subarea	Zoning District		Front Setback
Lincoln Main Street	Current Zoning District	LASP-CG1 (General Commercial)	1.5 to 5 feet
	Proposed Zoning District	LASP-CG (General Commercial)	0 to 5 feet
Multi-Family Neighborhood	Current Zoning District	LASP-RM-16 (Multifamily Residential)	10 to 20 feet
	Proposed Zoning District	LASP-RM-16 (Multifamily Residential)	15 to 20 feet
Mixed-Use Neighborhood	Current Zoning District	LASP-CL (Limited Commercial)	1.5 to 5 feet
	Proposed Zoning District	LASP-MU-48 (Mixed-Use)	5 to 10 feet
Commercial Flex	Current Zoning District	LASP-CG2 (General Commercial)	12 feet
	Proposed Zoning District	LASP-CF (Flex Commercial)	5 to 10 feet

### *Design Standards*

The draft plan seeks to create inviting and pedestrian-oriented neighborhoods by refining existing and requiring new standards that regulate the mass and scale of development. Proposed standards include façade length and modulation, ground floor height and elevation, transparency, and primary entrance requirements. The intent of the new standards are to create objective standards that regulate building massing and facades to improve building design outcomes. The draft plan also includes minor revisions to existing design standards, for example, transparency requirements, to improve clarity and consistency with language and measurement in other specific plans.

Proposed modulation standards are intended to reduce the scale and “blockiness” of new construction with variation in façade planes and limits on building length. The standards are written to be general enough as to not mandate a particular building architecture and have been analyzed to ensure feasibility with both revival and modern styles. These standards have been designed to work together with height, setback, stepback, and open space standards to encourage high-quality design and appropriately scaled building forms.

While the draft plan is focused on objective standards, it also includes a limited number of guidelines, including guidelines for the redevelopment of the Kettle Nursery site at Lincoln Avenue and Wyoming Street, for the design of commercial facades in the Main Street area. The guidelines are intended to encourage contextual design and are

consistent with the City's *Neighborhood Commercial and Multi-Family Districts Design Guidelines*.

For the proposed design standards and guidelines, refer to Chapter 6 of the draft LASP.

### *Open Space*

The draft plan proposes to increase open space requirements for both residential and non-residential projects throughout the plan area (See Table 5). For residential uses, the draft plan would update the combined private and common open space requirement from 150 square feet per unit to a per bedroom requirement ranging from 200 to 275 square feet per bedroom. For example, a 24-unit building with an even mix of studios, one, two, and three bedroom units, this requirement would increase the required open space from a total of 3,600 square feet to 5,700 square feet, or about 238 square feet per unit.

The updated requirement better aligns the amount of open space with the number of people living in a building with the objective of improving quality of life and open space access for multi-family residents. Higher open space requirements would also create building modulation opportunities through the need for balconies, upper floor terraces, patios, and courtyards. More recently, since the onset of the COVID pandemic, community members have expressed the desire for more outdoor private and common open spaces within multi-family development for added flexibility and wellness during stay-at-home restrictions. The draft plan also includes new common open space design requirements related to indoor/outdoor space, location, hardscape, landscaping, and trees, which would encourage the design of successful, usable open spaces within development.

The draft plan also introduces a commercial open space requirement of five percent for developments above 40,000 square feet. The intent of the requirement is to require developers to create outdoor plazas, terraces, or other open space amenities that contribute to greening and provide space for employees to have lunch or gather outside. Similar to residential open space, the requirement may also increase building modulation. The new requirement was tested on prototypical lots for a 40,000 square feet development and the five percent requirement was determined to be feasible given proposed FAR, setback, and parking requirements for the district. The requirement would be limited to larger projects because more constrained development on smaller parcels may affect project feasibility.

Table 5. Open Space Requirements

Subarea	Zoning District		Open Space
Lincoln Main Street	Current Zoning District	LASP-CG1 (General Commercial)	No requirement
	Proposed Zoning District	LASP-CG (General Commercial)	5% of non-residential projects over 40,000 sq ft
Multi-Family Neighborhood	Current Zoning District	LASP-RM-16 (Multifamily Residential)	City of Gardens requirements
	Proposed Zoning District	LASP-RM-16 (Multifamily Residential)	City of Gardens requirements
Mixed-Use Neighborhood	Current Zoning District	LASP-CL (Limited Commercial)	150 sq ft per unit
	Proposed Zoning District	LASP-MU-48 (Mixed-Use)	200 sq ft per studio 225 sq ft per 1-bed 250 sq ft per 2-bed 275 sq ft per 3+bed
Commercial Flex	Current Zoning District	LASP-CG2 (General Commercial)	No requirement
	Proposed Zoning District	LASP-CF (Flex Commercial)	5% of non-residential projects over 40,000 sq ft

### *Public Realm*

The draft plan includes public realm standards and guidelines to implement the General Plan vision for the plan area and achieve objectives of the Pasadena Street Design Guide and Pasadena Master Street Tree Plan (See Table 6). The draft plan introduces the concept of minimum sidewalk widths to the LASP area, consistent with the Pasadena Street Design Guide. Existing sidewalk widths along the corridor range from 8 to 15 feet but are commonly about 12 feet. The draft plan would establish minimum sidewalk widths of 15 feet in the LASP-CG zone area and 12 feet in other districts to support appropriate pedestrian mobility and amenities within the sidewalk relative to adjacent land uses. The draft plan also includes street tree requirements that are consistent with the City's Master Street Tree Plan, however it includes recommendations to refine street tree requirements to better support an enhanced tree canopy, sustainability objectives, and streetscape design. The adoption of new street tree types are not included in the draft plan, but implementation program IMS-1 includes near-term coordination between Public Works and the community to

update the Master Street Tree Plan for the Lincoln corridor. The draft plan also introduces a tree well minimum length of six feet and a new requirement to construct an expanded root zone cell when planting new trees to support better tree health and larger tree canopies.

The draft plan also maintains the existing parkway requirements from the current plan which requires a portion of the sidewalk to be landscaped as measured by a percentage of the parcel frontage. The draft plan introduces a minimum and maximum range for parkways to ensure parkways are constructed, but that adequate room for pedestrian access and other amenities or utilities is also provided within the amenity zone. The draft plan would decrease the percentage requirement in the LASP-RM-16 zone from 60 to a range of 20 to 30 percent in order to provide adequate room for pedestrian access and other amenities in this multi-family zone.

For more information, including public amenities and landscaping requirements, refer to Chapter 5 of the draft LASP.

Table 6. Minimum Sidewalk and Parkway Requirements

Subarea	Zoning District		Sidewalk Width	Parkway Standard
Lincoln Main Street	Current Zoning District	LASP-CG1	No requirement – only a guideline	30% frontage
	Proposed Zoning District	LASP-CG	15 feet	20-30% frontage + perpendicular streets
Multi-Family Neighborhood	Current Zoning District	LASP-RM-16	No requirement – only a guideline	60% frontage
	Proposed Zoning District	LASP-RM-16	12 feet	20-30% frontage + perpendicular streets
Mixed-Use Neighborhood	Current Zoning District	LASP-CL	No requirement – only a guideline	60% frontage
	Proposed Zoning District	LASP-MU-48	12 feet	20-30% frontage + perpendicular streets
Commercial Flex	Current Zoning District	LASP-CG2	No requirement – only a guideline	60% frontage
	Proposed Zoning District	LASP-CF	12 feet	20-30% frontage + perpendicular streets

### *Vehicular Parking*

The draft plan intends to reduce the visual impact of parking, regulate appropriate parking supply and location in a manner that prioritizes pedestrian access and multimodal activity, and encourage change of use and adaptive reuse of existing buildings through parking reductions and exemptions (See Table 7). A major component of incentivizing the reuse of existing buildings along the corridor is ensuring that the parking requirements are feasible for the types of uses the community desires. For example, a challenge facing Lincoln Avenue, and other commercial main street areas in Pasadena, is the greater parking requirement for restaurants compared to retail and neighborhood services. This greater requirement can prevent retail uses in existing older buildings with limited parking from transitioning to restaurant or café uses, sometimes leading to vacancy, particularly in a softening retail market. In order to support more flexibility for property owners to transition between uses, the draft plan's parking requirement was standardized at 3 spaces per 1,000 square feet within the retail, restaurant, and services sectors, which is a reduction from the current plan where requirements range from 3 to 4 spaces per 1,000 square feet. The draft plan also provides an exception for businesses of less than 5,000 square feet and changes of use for properties with structures older than 1970 from providing parking.

The draft plan also seeks to reduce the cost of housing for those who do not need a parking space, in support of the draft plan's housing objectives, and offer flexibility for developers to lease spaces to other tenants. The draft plan introduces a requirement for developers to unbundle the cost of parking from the sale or lease of residential units. It also proposes to allow guest parking to be shared with commercial spaces within mixed use buildings.

Similar to the current plan, the draft plan prohibits parking from being located along the parcel frontage to encourage a pedestrian-oriented character along the corridor. Up to one story above-grade parking may be provided within mixed use buildings, as below grade parking is not likely to be feasible for developers according to proforma testing. Multi-story podium parking is also prohibited due to the potential for increased building massing that would be out of character with the existing adjacent single-family neighborhood. However, multi-floor parking structures is permitted in the LASP-CF zone if they are surrounded by commercial square footage in the draft plan.



Table 7. Parking Requirements by Use

Use	Number of Spaces Required	
Retail Sales	Current	3-4 per 1,000 sq ft per specific use, except Restaurants: 4-10 per 1,000 sq ft
	Proposed	3 per 1,000 sq ft
Services	Current	3- 5 per 1,000 sq ft per specific use
	Proposed	3 per 1,000 sq ft
Offices	Current	3 per 1,000 sq ft, except Medical: 4 per 1,000 sq ft
	Proposed	3 per 1,000 sq ft
All other uses – Refer to Pasadena Municipal Code; no change		

#### Program Implementation

The updated LASP would primarily be implemented through the adoption of the plan's new land use, public realm and development regulations, which align private sector investment with the plan's vision, goals, and policies. New development projects within the plan area will be subject to the updated specific plan. The draft plan also includes targeted implementation actions intended to help guide and prioritize the implementation of the plan.

For more information refer to Chapter 7 of the draft LASP.

#### Environmental Analysis

An addendum to the General Plan Final Environmental Impact Report (GP EIR) is being prepared to evaluate the environmental effects associated with the LASP update and to determine whether these impacts are consistent with the evaluation presented in the GP EIR in compliance with CEQA (Public Resources Code Sections 21000 et seq.) and the State CEQA Guidelines (California Code of Regulations Section 15000 et seq.). The LASP Update Addendum will be presented to the Planning Commission at the next commission meeting, along with the proposed LASP.

**CONCLUSION:**

The City's General Plan vision for Lincoln Avenue is to repurpose this corridor from an industrial and limited commercial area into a vibrant neighborhood-oriented district, with new housing options and a complement of local-serving retail and service businesses, office spaces, and community uses, all tied together with public improvements that create a vibrant and enjoyable pedestrian environment. The purpose of the LASP update is to implement the General Plan vision for the area by creating community-driven development and design standards that are intended to encourage new high-quality and context-appropriate development, reinforcing and building upon the area's existing character. The update includes standards related to the public realm, introducing minimum sidewalk widths, parkway standards, and a focus on increasing the tree canopy to provide a more comfortable pedestrian experience along the corridor and further achieve climate change-related goals. Additionally, the update includes revised parking standards to encourage existing structures to be adaptively reused by allowing changes of use to occur within smaller and older buildings without requiring additional parking, thereby encouraging the preservation of existing neighborhood character and incentivizing the reuse of such structures for small businesses.

The Planning Department anticipates presenting the proposed update to the LASP, and associated amendments to the Zoning Code and Plan Map, and the addendum to the General Plan EIR to the Planning Commission for its review and recommendation to City Council in late May or early June of this year.


Respectfully submitted,

  
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Attachments:

Attachment A – Lincoln Avenue Specific Plan – Planning Commission Study Session Draft  
Attachment B – 2013 Lincoln Avenue Specific plan

Attachments are available at the following link: <https://www.ourpasadena.org/LASP-PC-SS-042821>

**ATTACHMENT A**  
**LINCOLN AVENUE SPECIFIC PLAN – PLANNING COMMISSION STUDY SESSION DRAFT**

**Can be viewed at:**

**[https://www.ourpasadena.org/managed\\_files/Document/865/210422\\_LASP\\_PCSS\\_Draft.pdf](https://www.ourpasadena.org/managed_files/Document/865/210422_LASP_PCSS_Draft.pdf)**

**ATTACHMENT B**  
**2013 LINCOLN AVENUE SPECIFIC PLAN**

**Can be viewed at:**

**<https://ww5.cityofpasadena.net/planning/wp-content/uploads/sites/56/2017/07/Lincoln-Avenue-Specific-Plan.pdf>**