

Zoning Code and Specific Plan Amendments

**City Council
October 27, 2025**





List of Code Amendments

Planning & Community Development Department

- 1) Predevelopment Plan Reviews (PPRs).**
- 2) Design Reviews.**
- 3) Signs and Awnings.**
- 4) Outdoor and Temporary Uses.**
- 5) Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs).**
- 6) Parking and Transit-Oriented Developments (TODs).**
- 7) Implementation of New State Legislation:**
 - > Parking for Single-Family Additions, Secondhand Stores and Donation Facilities, Notices for Public Hearings, and Employee Housing.
- 8) Other Miscellaneous Updates:**
 - > Meeting Continuances, Animal Grooming and Hospital Uses, and Definitions.



Previous Meetings

Planning & Community Development Department

- **June 18, 2024 – Economic Development and Technology City Council Committee (EdTech):**
 - > Staff presented changes to the PPR Section. Supported changes.
- **December 10, 2024 – Design Commission:**
 - > Staff presented changes to the Design Review Section. Supported changes.
- **August 27, 2025 – Planning Commission:**
 - > Recommended the City Council adopt the proposed Amendments with the following changes:
 - 1) Design Review: For new multifamily projects, maintain the existing threshold of 10 units for projects to be reviewed by the Design Commission.
 - 2) Parking: For existing buildings that are greater than 50 years old, do not require additional parking for additions needed to meet building, safety or fire requirements.



Development Review Process

Planning & Community Development Department

Consists of three main phases:

1

Predevelopment
Plan Review (PPR)

Preliminary
Consultation
(DR Step 1)

2

Zoning Review

Concept
Design Review/CEQA
(DR Step 2)

Final Design Review
(DR Step 3)

3

Building Plan
Check

Construction
Occupancy



PPR Process

Planning & Community Development Department

- **PPR Summary:**
 - > Zoning Code last updated in 2004. Administrative Guidelines updated by EdTech in 2024.
 - > Required for most multifamily and larger nonresidential projects.
 - > Main objective is to achieve better projects through early consultation between City staff and applicants.
 - > Informational only and are not formal applications.
- **PPR Process:**
 - > Application submitted and routed to City departments for review.
 - > Comments are compiled into one document and provided to the applicant; optional meeting held with the applicant.
- **Issues with Current Process:**
 - > Significant overlap with the first step of design review.
 - > Process can delay projects.



PPR Thresholds

Planning & Community Development Department

Current Thresholds	Proposed Amendments
1. Multi-family projects with 10+ units	Make optional – Combine task with Preliminary Consultation (Design Review Step #1)
2. Nonresidential projects with 25,000+ SF	No change
3. Master Plans or Master Plan Amendments	Only require when new construction occurs
4. Projects with street vacations	
5. Projects in the HD overlay that require a Hillside Development Permit (HDP)	No changes
6. Subdivisions in HD overlays of 2+ lots and all other subdivisions of 5+ lots	
7. Affordable housing on religious facilities sites	
8. Other projects as determined by the Director	
9. Currently no threshold for projects with General Plan or Zoning Map Amendments	Projects that include a General Plan or Zoning Map Amendment with new construction



Design Review Process

Planning & Community Development Department

- **Design Review Summary:**
 - > Zoning Code last updated in 2009.
 - > Required for multifamily projects and most nonresidential projects.
 - > Director (staff level) or Design Commission approval.
- **Design Review Process:**
 - 1) Preliminary Consultation: High-level design items such as site design, massing, architectural concepts and zoning.
 - 2) Concept: Main step in the process. Reviews the architectural design and compliance with applicable design guidelines. CEQA conducted.
 - 3) Final: Reviews building material, colors and landscaping.
 - Consolidated Design Review: Combines Concept and Final.
- **Issues with Current Process:**
 - > Senate Bill 330 limits the number of public meetings.
 - > Lack of public input on larger projects early in the process.



Design Review Process

Planning & Community Development Department

Current Thresholds	Proposed Amendments
New Construction – Nonresidential <u>Central District</u> ≤5,000 SF – Director >5,000 SF – Design Commission <u>Outside the Central District</u> 5,000 to 25,000 SF – Director >25,000 SF – Design Commission	New Construction – Nonresidential No changes
New Construction – Residential <10 units – Director ≥10 units – Design Commission	New Construction – Residential Staff recommended to increase threshold to 20 units. Planning Commission recommended to keep threshold at 10 units.
Major Rehabilitations to Existing Structures <u>Central District</u> ≤10,000 SF – Director >10,000 SF – Design Commission <u>Outside the Central District</u> ≤25,000 SF – Director >25,000 SF – Design Commission	Major Rehabilitations to Existing Structures <u>Central District</u> ≤25,000 SF – Director >25,000 SF – Design Commission <u>Outside the Central District</u> 5,000 to 50,000 SF – Director >50,000 SF – Design Commission



Design Review Process

Planning & Community Development Department

- **Multi-Family Proposed Amendments:**
 - > Automatically qualify projects for Consolidated Design Review when 50% or more of units are designated as affordable.
- **Preliminary Consultation Proposed Amendments:**
 - > Add language to code to formalize the step.
 - > Mail meeting notices to all property owners within 500 FT for projects that are presented to the Design Commission.
- **Findings and Conditions for Project Approvals:**
 - > Current: The findings focus on architecture, landscaping and historic preservation.
 - > Proposed: Add the following to clarify Design Review purpose:
 - 1) Complete environmental review.
 - 2) Ensure conditions with regards to mobility, accessibility, public safety, landscaping/ tree, and infrastructure.



ADUs

Planning & Community Development Department

- **City Ordinance:** Adopted on April 15, 2024.
- **HCD Findings:** Provided comments in February and September 2025.
- **Proposed Amendments:** Address all of the HCD findings:
 - 1) Multifamily: Allow additional detached ADUs provided they do not exceed existing number of units (up to a maximum of 8 ADUs).
 - 2) Government Code Sections: Correct referenced sections that were recently removed or renumbered.
 - 3) Number of Units, Single-Family Lots: Specify 1 Junior ADU, 1 new ADU (attached or detached) and 1 converted ADU are allowed.
 - 4) Front Yard Setbacks (Exempt ADUs): Per Ordinance, attached ADUs cannot encroach in the front yard. Per state law, they can encroach.
 - 5) Height for New Construction Attached ADUs: Clearly state 2nd stories are permitted. Also, 2nd story windows are permitted in exempt ADUs.
 - 6) Parking for Multifamily: Clarify parking is not required for ADUs.
- > Other Comment: Allow applicants to use Zoning Code or Building Code when measuring height or floor area.



Parking and TODs

Planning & Community Development Department

- **Parking Requirements for New Uses and Changes in Use:**
 - > Current: The new specific plans provide the following flexibility:
 - 1) 2 parking spaces per 1,000 SF of gross floor area for most office, retail, restaurant, service and industrial uses; 0.5 space per hotel room for lodging; and 1.5 spaces per work/live unit.
 - 2) Removed additional parking requirement for a change of use for historic resources and **structures built prior to 1970**.
 - > Proposed: Expand #1 and #2 to all specific plan areas and nonresidential zones Citywide, with the following changes to #2:
 - 2) Remove additional parking requirements for a change of use for historic resources and **structures greater than 50 years old**, except for the following:
 - Require parking for additions and for Recreation, Education and Assembly uses.
 - Parking can be reduced to provide disabled parking/access and to meet building or fire code requirements.



Parking and TODs

Planning & Community Development Department

- **Parking and TOD Areas:**
 - > Current: TOD areas include most of the Central District and the areas surrounding light-rail stations. Areas include reduced parking requirements and parking caps.
 - Within TODs: Minor CUP and parking study is required to deviate from the parking standards.
 - Outside TODs: Have parking caps. Variance is required to deviate from the parking standards.
 - > Proposed: State has removed most parking requirements within ½-mile of a major transit stops, negating the need for additional parking reductions in TOD areas.
 - Remove the reduced parking requirements in TOD areas and apply one Citywide standard for parking caps.
 - Require an Administrative Minor CUP and parking study to deviate from the parking standards.



New State Legislation

Planning & Community Development Department

- **Assembly Bill 1308 – Parking for Single-Family Additions:**
 - > Current: Parking requirements must be met for larger additions throughout the City.
 - > State Bill: Prohibits cities from requiring parking for any addition, regardless of size, unless the house exceeds size limits of the base zone.
 - > Proposed: Remove parking requirement unless the resulting house exceeds the size limits of the base zone.
- **Assembly Bill 2904 – Public Noticing:**
 - > Current: 14-day notice for Planning Commission public hearings for Zoning Code Amendments (more if required per CEQA review).
 - > State Bill: 20-day notice for Commission public hearings for Zoning Code Amendments that affect the permitted uses on a property.
 - > Proposed: Require 20-day notice as outlined in bill.



New State Legislation

Planning & Community Development Department

- **Assembly Bill 2632 – Secondhand Stores & Donation Facilities:**
 - > Current: Secondhand Clothing is considered a Retail Use and permitted by-right in commercial zones. Donation Facilities considered a Charitable Institution and requires a Conditional Use Permit (CUP).
 - > State Bill: Requires cities to allow secondhand stores with donation facilities by-right. Can adopt reasonable operational standards.
 - > Proposed: Add new definition for Retail Use, with Donation Drop-Off and permit by-right in commercial zones. Add operations standards.
- **Employee Housing Act – Employee & Farmworker Housing:**
 - > Current: Program #23 of the Housing Element:
 - 1) Treat Employee Housing with 6 or fewer residents in a single-family zone the same as any single-family residence.
 - 2) Permit Employee Housing for Farmworkers with up to 12 units or 36 beds the same as other agricultural uses in the same zone.
 - > Proposed: Update Zoning Code to implement program.



Miscellaneous Updates

Planning & Community Development Department

- **Meeting Continuances:**
 - > Current: Public hearings can be continued 2 times within a 90-day period and then must be re-noticed.
 - > Proposed: Remove the 2-hearing limit and only require re-noticing when an item is continued to a date uncertain.
- **Animal Grooming and Animal Hospital Uses:**
 - > Current: New specific plans allow Animal Grooming and Animal Hospital uses by-right in most commercial zones. Not consistently permitted by-right in other specific plans or in other commercial zones.
 - > Proposed: Add the uses by-right in all specific plans and commercial zones Citywide.
- **Glossary:**
 - > Proposed: Update or add definitions for Accessory or Incidental; alter or Alteration; Charitable Institutions; Employee; Hospitality Housing; and Retail Sales with Donation Drop-off.



Recommendation

Planning & Community Development Department

- **Find** that the proposed action is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3), the “Common Sense” exemption that CEQA applies only to projects which have the potential for causing a significant effect on the environment;
- **Adopt** the Findings for the Zoning Code and Specific Plan Amendments;
- **Approve** the Zoning Code and Specific Plan Amendments as presented; and
- **Direct** the City Attorney to prepare an ordinance for the Zoning Code and Specific Plan Amendments as presented within 120 days.

Zoning Code and Specific Plan Amendments

**City Council
October 27, 2025**





Implementing the General Plan

Planning & Community Development Department

- **2015 Land Use Element:**
 - > Program C-2: Analyze the efficiency of the development review and entitlement process and identify expectations for planning, designing and reviewing development proposals.
 - > Program C-9: Analyze the entitlement process for affordable housing and reduce barriers to ensure consistency with the General Plan goals and policies.
- **2021-2029 Housing Element:**
 - > Program #9: Examine how modifications to development review procedures and requirements –design review, permit processing, commission review, and other features– can be improved to streamline the process.
 - > Program #23: Amend the zoning ordinance to address current laws applicable to ADUs...and the application review processes.



PPR Process

Planning & Community Development Department

- PPR Guidelines – Revised 2024:**

Former PPR Guidelines	Revised PPR Guidelines
1. Applicant submits the application and case manager routes plans	No change
2. Optional “Internal Review Meeting” for complicated projects or those with major issues	No change
3. Comments forward to the applicant	No change
4. Requires “Formal PPR Meeting”	Optional “Formal PPR Meeting”
5. Projects of Communitywide Significance: • Nonresidential: >50,000 SF • Residential: >50 units • Projects presented to the City Council as an informational item at a future City Council meeting	Projects of Communitywide Significance: • Nonresidential: >75,000 SF • Residential: >75 units • Summary of project forwarded to the City Council through the City Manager’s Weekly Newsletter • A Councilmember or the Director may request a project be presented to the City Council



Design Review Process

Planning & Community Development Department

- **Findings for Design Review:**
 - 1) Project is consistent with the purpose of the Design Review Section.
 - 2) Project is consistent with design guidelines adopted by the City.
- **Purpose of Design Review:**
 - 1) Applies Citywide urban design principles to ensure that new construction supports the best of the City's architectural traditions.
 - 2) Shows creativity and imagination and variety to the community and are environmentally sustainable.
 - 3) Promotes architectural and design excellence.
 - 4) Reflects values of the community, enhance the surrounding environment and avoid nostalgic misrepresentations.
 - 5) Provides a visually pleasing setting for structures.
 - 6) Protects and retain landmark, native and specimen trees.
 - 7) Signs are consistent with the character and scale of the structures.
 - 8) Conserves, enhances and protects historic resources.



Signs and Awnings

Planning & Community Development Department

- **Sign Exceptions:**
 - > Current: Type of variance to sign regulations with the Hearing Officer as the review authority.
 - > Proposed: Have the Director as the review authority; can still be appealed or called up for review.
- **Sign Ordinance:**
 - > Current: Existing sign tables lack details in many cases.
 - > Proposed: Clarify standards for building ID signs, standards for office and commercial zones, how sign area is calculated, etc.
- **Design and Awnings:**
 - > Current: Design review required for new wall signs and awnings in the Central District and projects that require design review Citywide.
 - > Proposed: Incorporate design standards for signs and awnings in Zoning Code and allow staff level review.



Signs and Awnings

Planning & Community Development Department

- **Signs and Awning Design Standards:**

Proposed Design Standards for Signs:

- > Drill attachments into mortar joints on brick façades.
- > Restore façades and conceal all equipment and conduit.
- > Use routed or push through lettering for projecting and freestanding signs.
- > Establish standards for electronical raceways (e.g., require slim designs, have a minimum sign height to raceway height ratio, match the color of the building wall).
- > Remove requirement for sign to be in middle 70% of elevation.

Proposed Design Standards for Awnings:

- > Require shed awnings to have open ends.
- > Install within individual windows and door openings.
- > Mount within openings.
- > Install awning below the transom (when applicable).



Outdoor and Temporary Uses

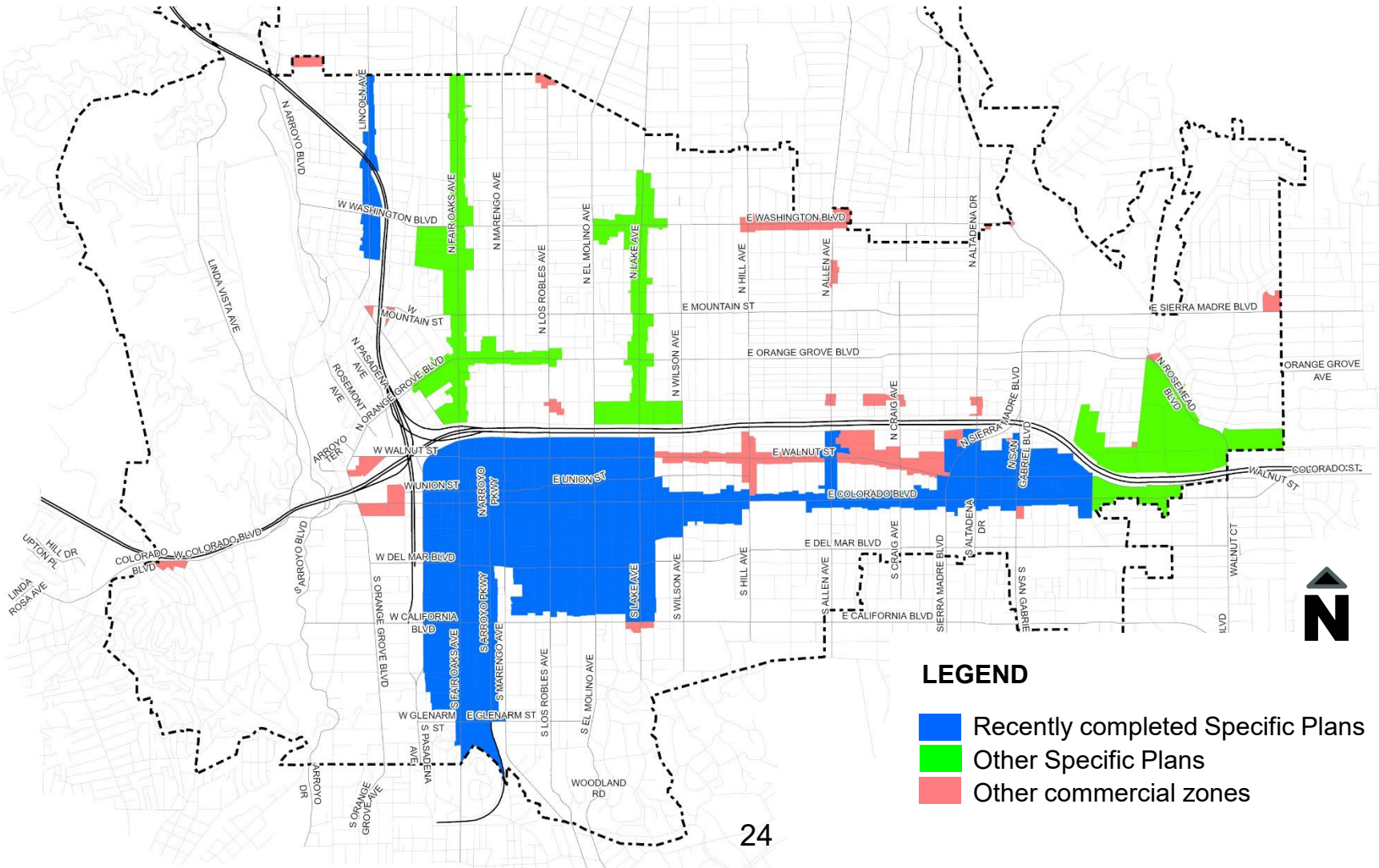
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- Proposed Amendments:**

Current Sections Content	Proposed Amendments
<u>Section 17.50.180</u> – Outdoor Display, Storage & Seasonal Sales. • Includes outdoor display & storage, which are ongoing uses. • Includes outdoor seasonal sales, which are temporary uses.	<u>Section 17.50.180</u> – Outdoor Display & Storage. • Include outdoor display & storage, which are ongoing uses. • Provide development and operational standards.
<u>Section 17.50.320</u> – Tents. • Includes information on temporary tents.	<u>Section 17.50.320</u> – Temporary Uses. • List all temporary uses, including outdoor seasonal sales & tents. • Include timeframes for uses. • Identify if a TUP is required.
<u>Section 17.61.040</u> – TUPs. • Lists temporary uses that may or may not require a TUP. • Outlines the TUP process.	<u>Section 17.61.040</u> – TUPs. • Outline the TUP process. • Allow TUPs during emergencies. • Allow Zoning Administrator to defer decisions to the Hearing Officer.



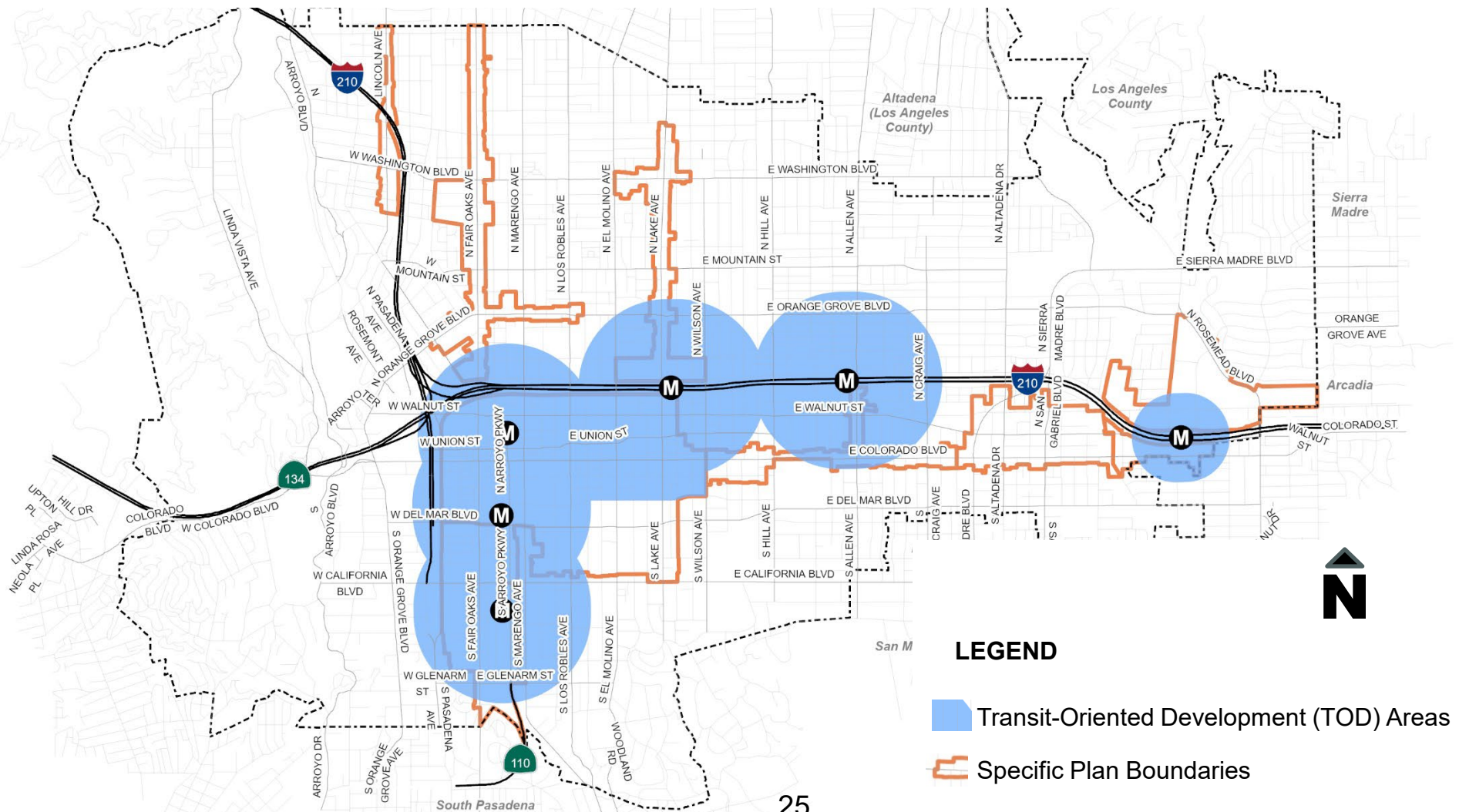
- **Map of Specific Plan Areas:**





Parking and TODs

- Map of TOD Areas:





Parking and TODs

Planning & Community Development Department

- Update TOD Parking Section and Citywide Parking Caps:**

Current Parking in TOD Areas	Proposed Parking Citywide
Office (minimum required): 3/1,000 SF Reduction (voluntary): -25% to -35% of PMC Cap (mandatory): -25% of PMC	Office, Retail, Medical and Restaurant (minimum required): 2/1,000 SF All Other Uses: Varies Reduction: None Cap (voluntary): +50% of PMC Deviation: Administrative Minor CUP and parking study required.
Retail: 3/1,000 SF Reduction: -10% to -20% Cap: -10%	
Medical: 4/1,000 SF Reduction: -10% to -20% Cap: -10%	
Restaurant: 10/1,000 SF Reduction: -10% to -20% Cap: -10%	
All Other Uses: Varies Reduction: -10% Cap: -10%	
Current Parking Outside TOD Areas	
All Uses: Varies Reduction: None Cap (voluntary): +50%	All Uses: See Above



New State Legislation

Planning & Community Development Department

- **Assembly Bill 2632 – Secondhand Stores & Donation Facilities:**
Proposed Operational Standards:
 - > Prohibit the sale or drop-off of vehicles, automotive parts, chemicals, hazardous materials and large household appliances.
 - > The drop-off facility shall not occupy more than 25% of the gross floor area of the retail use.
 - > Donations shall only be accepted during business hours.
 - > The drop-off facility shall be staffed by employees of the retail use.
 - > Exterior lighting shall be provided at the drop-off facility entrance.
 - > Signage shall be placed strictly prohibiting the drop-off of goods outside the building during nonbusiness hours.
 - > Parking spaces may be reserved for the drop-off of goods.
 - > Do not allow Retail Sales with Donation Drop-off and Donation Collection Facilities on the same property.