



BLUEPRINT 2010-11

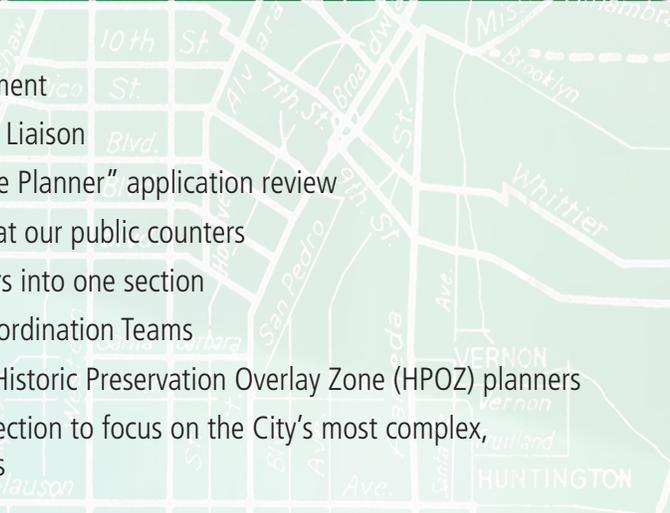
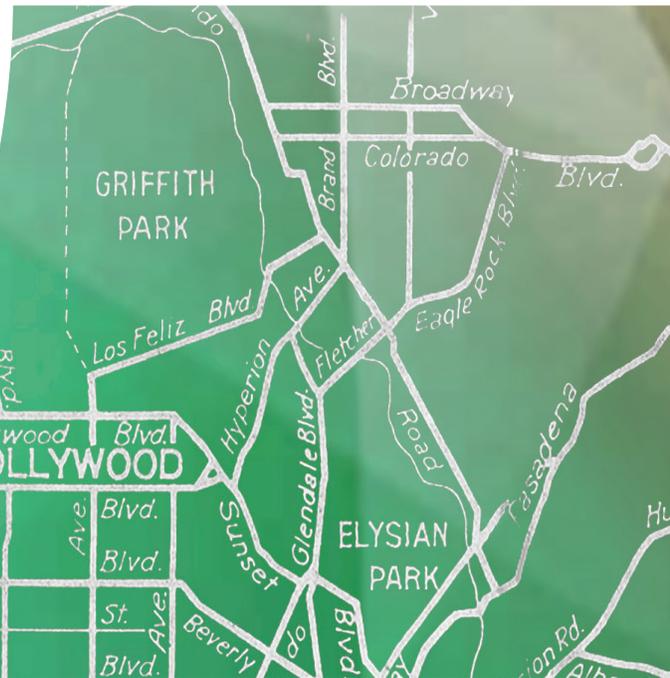
DOING MORE WITH LESS

As Los Angeles continues to grow, so does our need for smart, forward-thinking, community-based planning. Sound plans and effective implementation of those plans are essential for shaping neighborhoods that improve the quality of life of our City's residents.

But recent budget shortfalls and early retirements have led to a smaller Planning Department with fewer resources. In the face of this challenge, the Department's new leadership recognizes that bold steps are needed. The result is Blueprint 2010-11: eight strategic changes that will enable us to do more with less.

EIGHT STRATEGIC CHANGES

- ❑ Increase community involvement
- ❑ Create a new Neighborhood Liaison
- ❑ Implement "One Project, One Planner" application review
- ❑ Expand the services offered at our public counters
- ❑ Organize long-range planners into one section
- ❑ Establish ten Geographic Coordination Teams
- ❑ Create a specialized unit of Historic Preservation Overlay Zone (HPOZ) planners
- ❑ Assemble a major projects section to focus on the City's most complex, regionally significant projects



1 COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

A key focus of the Planning Department is to engage the community in new ways. **We are committed to making it easier for the community to get involved. Each community has its own unique voice and priorities and we need to listen in order to plan for and protect the future of our neighborhoods.** Over the next year, the Department will create new programs that are targeted to improve the communications process between the City and area residents. Through an updated website, e-newsletters and increased outreach efforts we will create a more transparent and open dialogue to engage neighbors in Community Plans and project review.

2 NEIGHBORHOOD LIAISON

Understanding the City’s various planning and permitting processes can be challenging for those who wish to be involved in the public review of a proposed project or planning policy. To further improve our service to the public, a new Neighborhood Liaison position will serve as an easily accessible point of contact for community and neighborhood groups who need specialized assistance with planning processes and pending plans and projects. Based within the Executive Office, the Neighborhood Liaison will troubleshoot particularly challenging planning issues and questions on behalf of the community.

3 “ONE PROJECT, ONE PLANNER”

Each project, whether it involves one or several different types of cases, (e.g. Zoning Administrator cases, Subdivision cases) will have a single Project Planner throughout its review and determination. This Project Planner will be able to field all planning-related questions about that particular project. Questions about the environmental review of a project can also be directed to the same point of contact, as Project Planners will also conduct or coordinate the environmental analysis for the projects they are reviewing. **This shift towards a “one project, one planner” approach will enable the Department to provide more accessible, consistent, and personalized service to the public.**

4 SERVICE TO THE PUBLIC

The process of applying for building permits and Planning Department review can be confusing for builders and property owners, who must often travel to numerous locations to obtain various types of permit review. An expanded Development Services Center will simplify this process by providing all pre-application and post-determination services at the Downtown and Valley Public Counters.

Enhanced Project Review Process

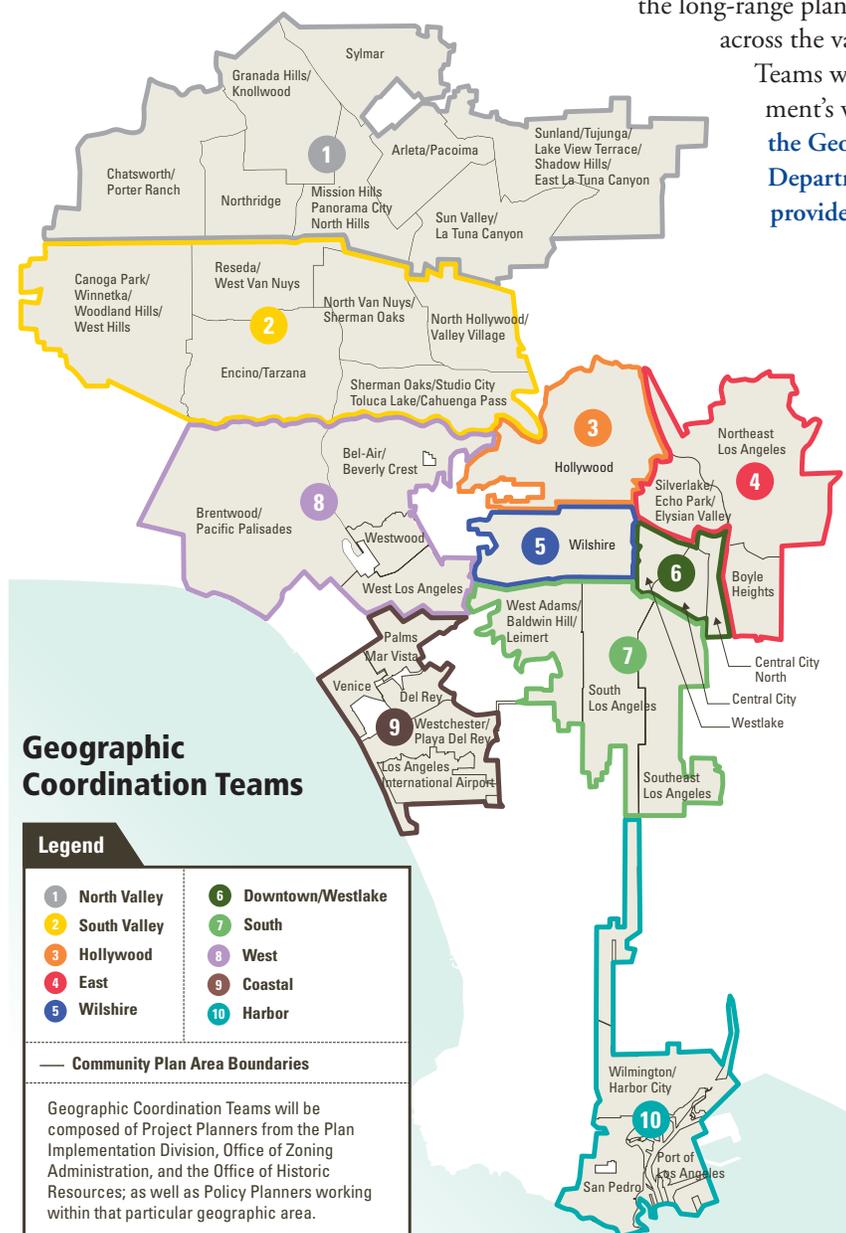
Pre-Application	Application Review and Determination	Post-Determination
<p>DEVELOPMENT SERVICES CENTER</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide consultation to City residents, community groups, business owners, developers and general public Accept applications and fees for development review Coordinate with the Department of Building and Safety regarding applications for land use approvals 	<p>PROJECT PLANNER</p> <p><i>Plan Implementation Division, Office of Zoning Administration, and Office of Historic Resources</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review case to make sure it’s accurate and complete Conduct environmental review to comply with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Work with Environmental Analysis Section if project requires an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) Attend hearing and present recommendations as needed Write staff report/draft determination 	<p>DEVELOPMENT SERVICES CENTER</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct detailed review of plans to ensure conditions of approval and environmental mitigations have been incorporated into project Review planning clearance items for building permits <p>PROJECT PLANNER</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advise Development Services Center on complex condition clearances

5 LONG-RANGE PLANNING

The work of long-range planning, such as new Community Plans and General Plan updates, will be handled by Policy Planners. These planners will be organized into one section within the Policy Planning and Historic Resources Division, where they will benefit from close coordination with colleagues working on similar or related plans. This centralized section will enable the Planning Department to more quickly complete the plans that our communities and neighborhoods so urgently need.

6 GEOGRAPHIC COORDINATION TEAMS

The Planning Department will establish ten Geographic Coordination Teams, composed of Project and Policy Planners whose work focuses on one of ten geographic areas. The goal is to ensure that we are looking at the big picture of how individual issues, projects and decisions affect the neighborhood as a whole. These teams will help ensure that planners stay up-to-date on neighborhood issues and maintain a local context for the projects they are reviewing and the long-range plans they are developing. By facilitating communication across the various functional sections of the Department, the Teams will foster a greater level of consistency in the Department's work within each geographic area. **Most importantly, the Geographic Coordination Teams will better enable the Department to create plans and guide developments that provide tangible benefits to the City's diverse neighborhoods.**



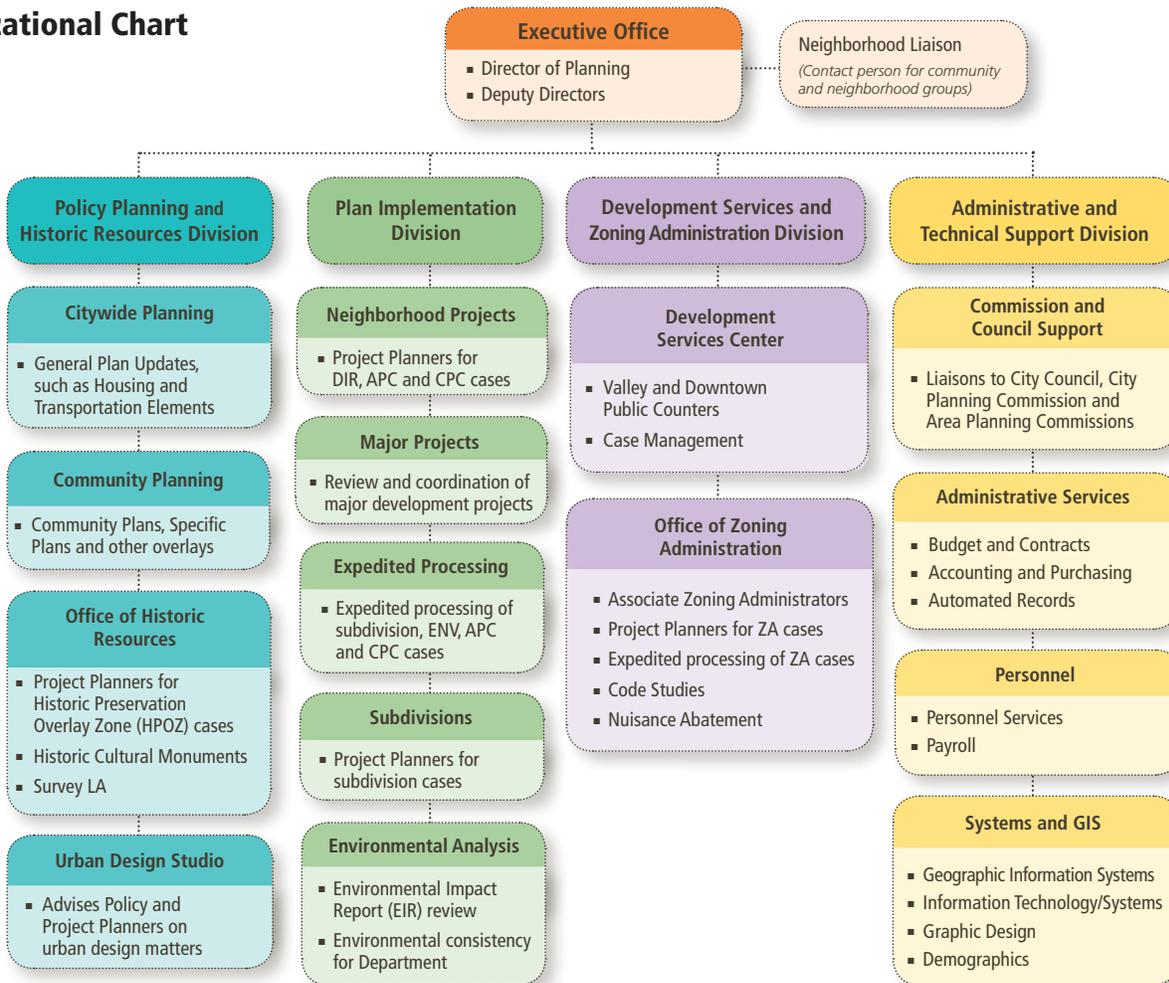
7 HISTORIC PRESERVATION

Traditionally, the staff who handle Historic Preservation Overlay Zone (HPOZ) cases have been dispersed throughout several units. Now, for the first time, HPOZ planners will work together within the Office of Historic Resources (OHR) to more closely benefit from the expertise that OHR has to offer. Centralized HPOZ review will more effectively facilitate the preservation of our City's historic neighborhoods.

8 MAJOR PROJECTS REVIEW

The City's most complex, regionally significant projects are currently managed by planners dispersed throughout the Planning Department. Under the new organizational structure, a consolidated major projects section will be established within the Plan Implementation Division. The new section will help us to focus our efforts to more effectively identify and mitigate the impacts of major projects in a way that preserves, protects, and improves neighborhood character and quality of life.

Organizational Chart



Project and Policy Planners are members of Geographic Coordination Teams and are generally assigned work based on geography.

- Type of case (DIR, APC, etc.) indicates the case's decision-maker: DIR (Director of Planning); APC (Area Planning Commission); CPC (City Planning Commission); and ZA (Zoning Administrator).
- All CE (Categorical Exemption), ND (Negative Declaration), and MND (Mitigated Negative Declaration) environmental cases will be reviewed by the same Project Planner as that of the primary case.
- Incidental ZA cases bundled with another case are handled by the Plan Implementation Division.



Michael J. LoGrande
Director of Planning

DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

November 2010

As your new Director of Planning, I am honored to have the opportunity to partner with the Mayor, City Council, City Planning Commission and Area Planning Commissions on helping to guide our City's future growth and development.

Today, the Planning Department faces the challenge of doing more for Los Angeles, but with fewer resources. The eight changes outlined in Blueprint 2010-11 are a strategic response to this challenge. I am confident that these changes will result in better, more transparent planning processes, and an improved level of service to the public.

Blueprint 2010-11 will be implemented in phases over the next 12 months. I encourage your thorough review of this report and look forward to working with you on fulfilling the Planning Department's mission to make great communities happen.

Sincerely,

Michael J. LoGrande
Director of Planning