

# What is the Livable Communities Initiative?

*Neighborhoods design housing that makes neighborhoods better*



Livable Communities is a non-profit and Program #131 in LA's Housing Element

CA is 49th in US for homeownership

# Problem: LA is missing 400,000 Starter Homes with no system to build it at scale



### Multi-million Dollar Single Family Homes

Homes for millionaires, billionaires, and retirees who have lived there for decades.

### Missing Family Housing

Rowhomes, multi-plexes, garden homes, and apartment buildings with 2, 3, and 4 bedroom units, built for urban families.

Nobody builds these anymore.

### Yuppie Apartments

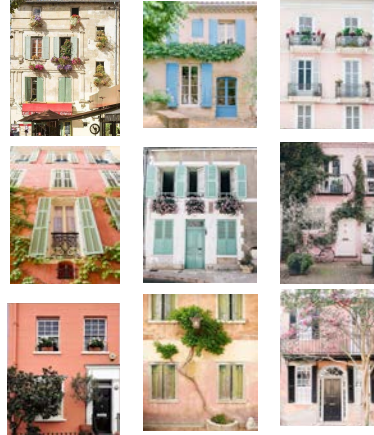
Studio and 1bd apartments for young professionals, their dogs, and sometimes couples without children.

# Solution: Walkable Communities

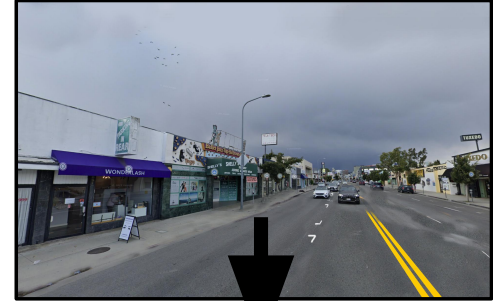
High quality housing in walkable neighborhoods



Residential-over-Retail  
Repeatable designs  
Built cookie-cutter



High quality  
aesthetics



Transform street

We can turn an underutilized commercial corridor...





Into this



Add Gentle Density, 3-5 stories  
Residential over retail

Transform street  
Trees  
Slow cars  
Keep street parking

# Why Residential-over-Retail?



## Residential-over-Retail

### *Most Affordable*

*Small units over stores with no parking*

*Prices naturally low*

*Retail creates a walkable street – backbone of a 15 min community*



## Courtyard Blocks

### *Range of \$ points*

*Large courtyard for kids*



## Townhome Blocks

### *Higher price points*

*Individual home, backyard, parking*

# How? Standard Plans



**Same-size parcels** along commercial corridors

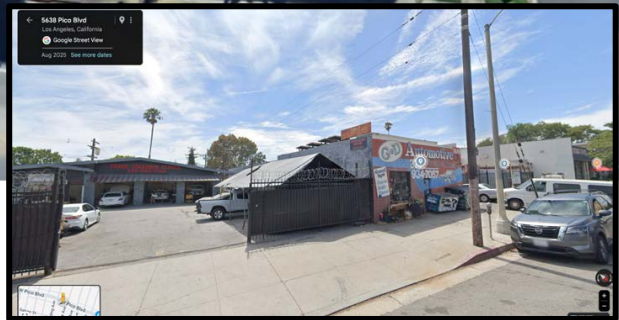
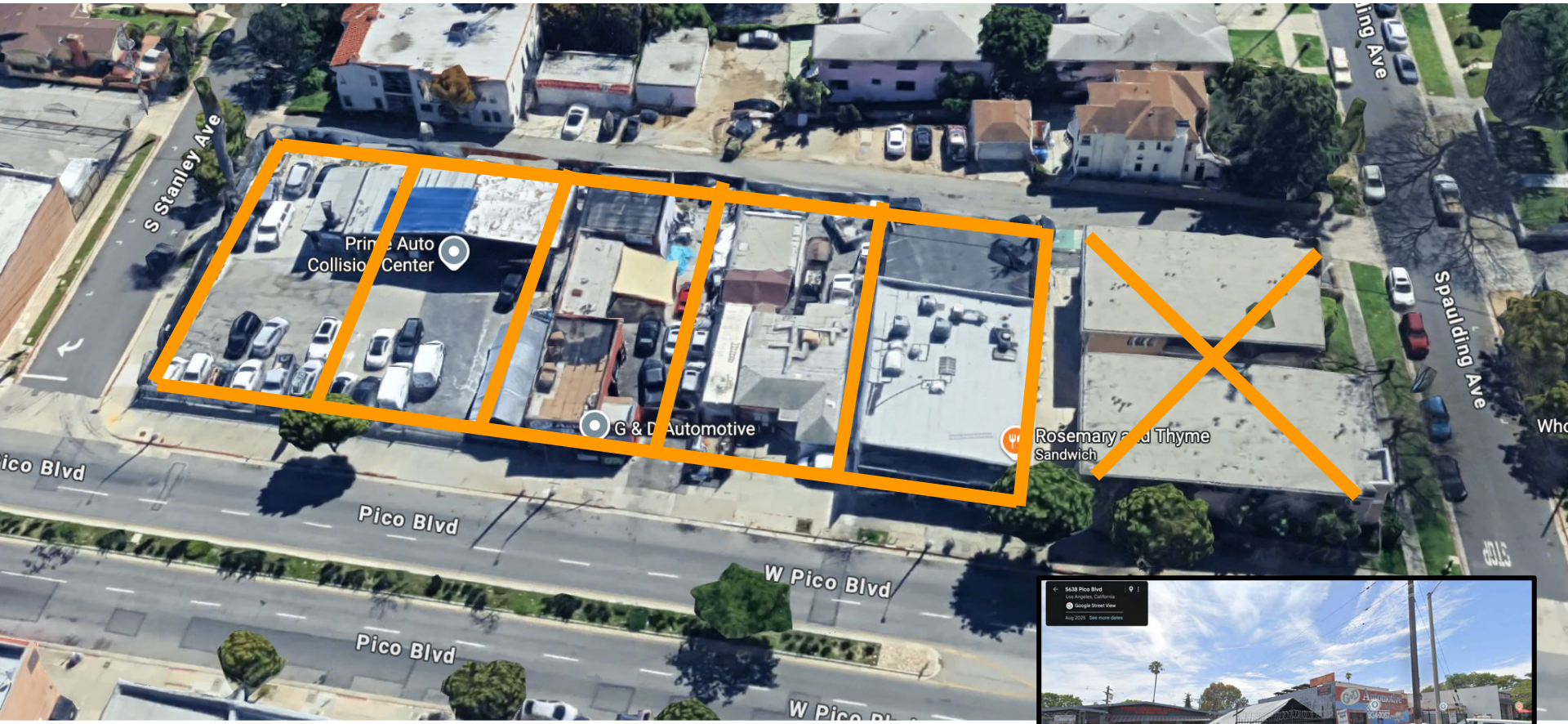


**Same design** can be reused



**Creates charming** streetwall

- Parcels on commercial corridors are the same size (by design, this is how cities are laid out.)
- Standard Plans can be pre-entitled, built cookie-cutter and have high quality.
- A neighborhood can 'adopt' any number of Standard Plans, and/or allow any facade.
- One height makes it more inviting – for vibrant retail, which protects jobs, small businesses and for the buyers.



# How do we assemble land?

Incentivize Parcel Owners to build themselves



**Parcel owners opt-in**



**Off-the-shelf solution**



**Fill out the street**

Small business people, local builders, know your neighbors

# Why do we engage the community?

## People fight this:



### Why New Apartments Look Ugly

And a solution to that problem.

 DARRELL OWENS  
SEP 18, 2019



Drawbacks can include: low light, lack of airflow. Poorly designed retail or no retail. Car-dependent. Windowless bedrooms. High carbon, high AC use. No outdoor space. Value engineered to pencil, often have low quality design and/or materials.

## They fight for this:

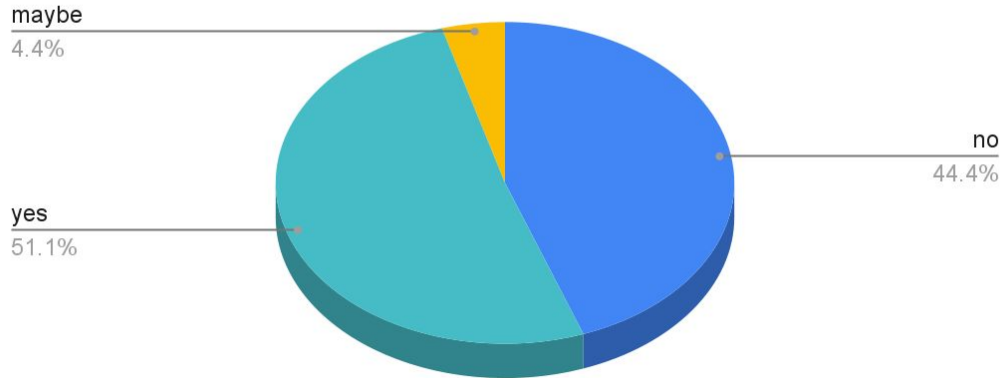


Research shows people will support housing with good aesthetics. Advantages include: Naturally affordable and sustainable homes. High quality architecture. Bright and airy homes. Courtyards that create safe and calm shared green space. 15 minute retail – daily and weekly needs.

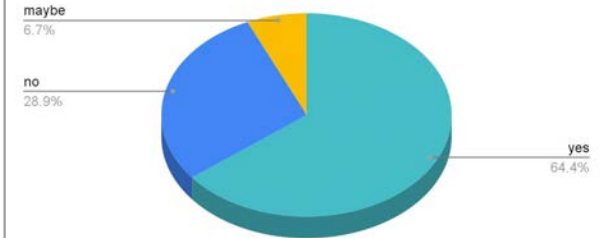


# Local Retail Employees

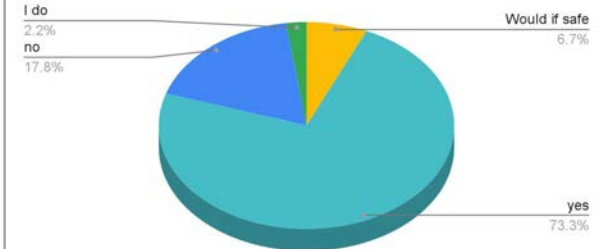
Would you want to live in an apartment above Larchmont?



Would you be willing to ditch your car?



Would you walk or bike to work?



We surveyed every store on Larchmont over 3 days and found that:

- 50% of retail employees want to live in an LCI
- 64% would ditch cars
- 75% want to walk or bike to work

Which style of housing do you prefer?

1. Bright and Airy Studios-3BRs, Courtyard, Retail on ground floor, off-site parking (paid), Rent or Own. Located on a walkable street.



44%

2. Complex with a pool, gym, and parking, near Metro. Rentals.



13%

3. Current plan 507/531: no parking, Studios/1BRs, rentals.



0%

4. Same as #1 - only Modern.

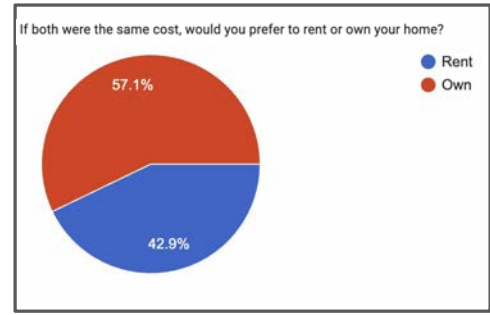
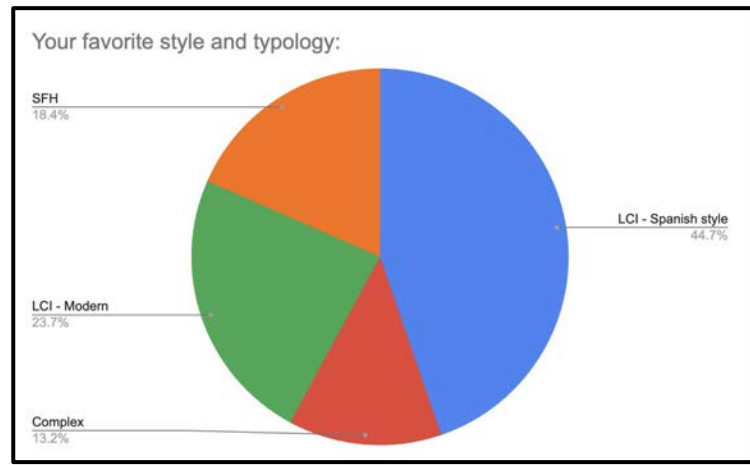


24%

5. SFH - Single Family Home



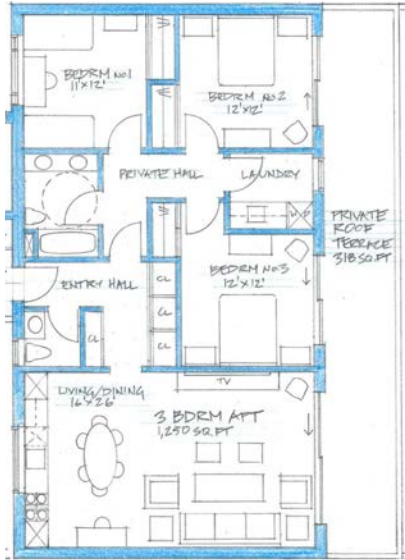
18%



Employees prefer to own their home. SFHs (orange); Complex (red). 0% wanted the buildings we are building. The most important stakeholders are buyers: 70% preferred LCI-style (green-modern; blue-Spanish).

# 100% below-market homeownership

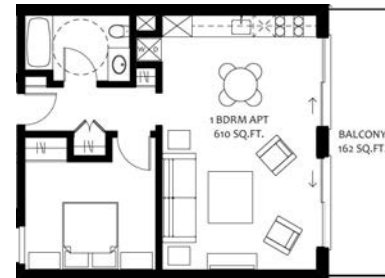
Bright and airy; in walkable neighborhoods



3 BR



2BR

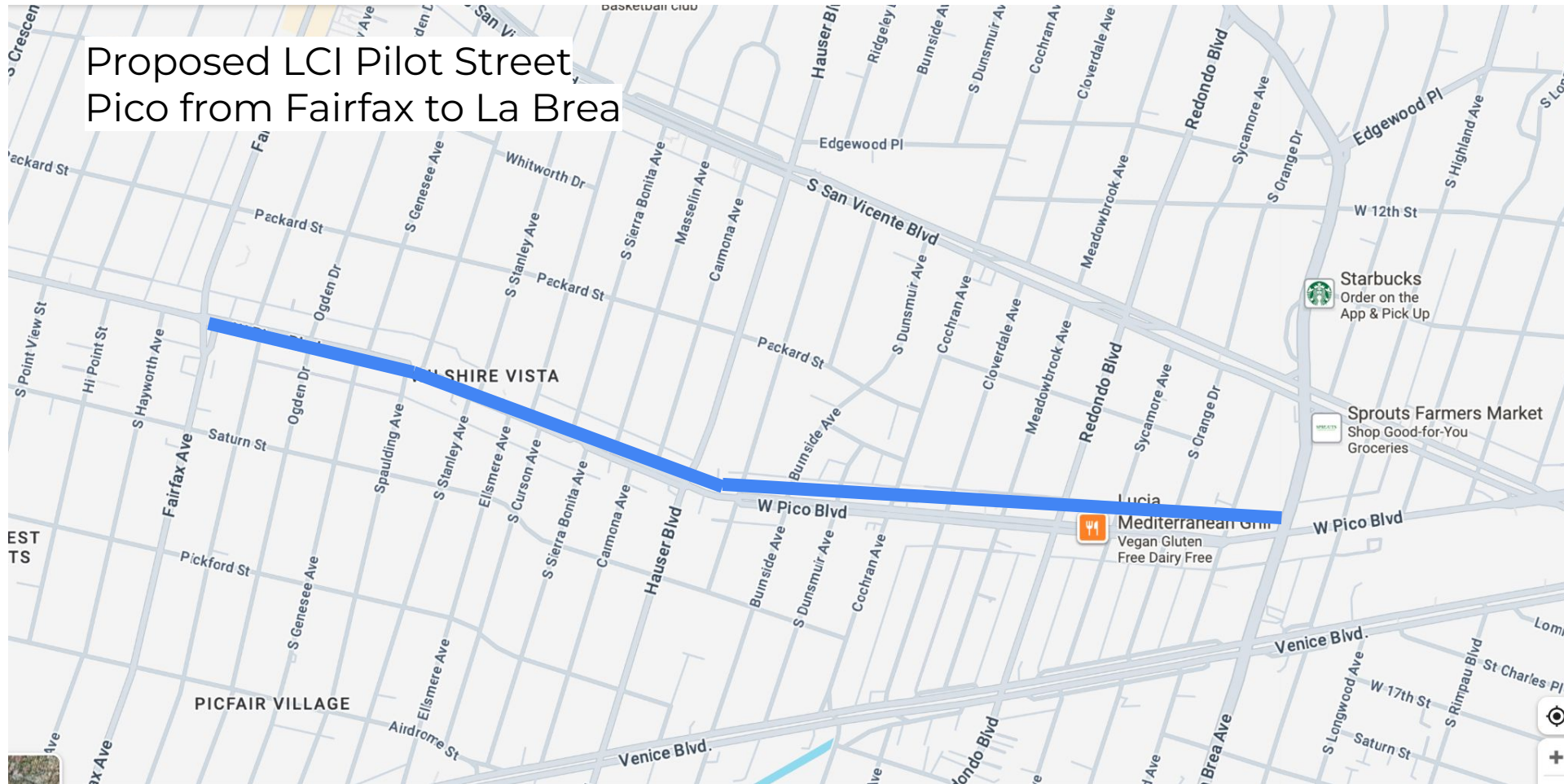


1BR



Studio

# Proposed LCI Pilot Street, Pico from Fairfax to La Brea



# How it works

<https://housing.ca.gov/standard-plans>

## California Catalog of Standard Plans



**Mexico City Modern**



**Iconic Modern**



**Lutetian Stone**



**Plaster Color Palette**

A Catalog with off-the-shelf, ready to go plans.  
*Any designs can be uploaded*

# LA Neighborhood Planning Tool

Complete Urban Planning Suite - Design, Analyze, and Optimize Your Commercial Corridor

Phase 2 - Full Features

## 1 Choose Your Building Style



**Mediterranean-Classic**

5-6 stories with street-level shops and natural stone.



**Simple-Modern**

5 story buildings with bougainvillea facades and ground-floor retail.



**Rowhouses**

4-6 story elegant townhomes with classical facades.

## 2 Select Your Neighborhood



Draw Area

Clear

Analyze Parcels

Create a design tool for neighborhoods

### 3 Smart Parcel Analysis

#### Analysis Criteria:

- ✓ Included: Low-quality 0-2 story commercial buildings (teardown candidates)
- ✗ Excluded: Schools, residential homes, historic buildings, high-end properties, recent renovations

81

Developable Parcels

48 (59%)

0-1 Story (Priority) **TEARDOWN**

27 (33%)

Low-Quality 2 Story **TEARDOWN**

25

Excluded Parcels **KEPT**

📍 Location: Hollywood

🏘 Council District: District 4

📏 Corridor Length: 2,671 ft

🏠 Total Developable Area: 267,100 sq ft

### 4 Development Configuration

#### New Building Height

5 Stories (Mid-Rise+)

#### Construction Quality

IKEA Quality

**Premium Quality**

2,016

New Housing Units

4,435

New Residents

35% 1BR  
35% 2BR  
20% 3BR  
10% Studio  
Unit Mix

### 8 RHNA Housing Target Progress

🎯 District RHNA Target: 5,900 units

🏠 Your Development Contribution: 2,016 units

34%

Contributes 34% toward district goal

Analyze density

### Step 2: Choose Building Height

How tall should the new buildings be?

4 Stories (15 units per building)

Generate Unit Count

### Development Potential

TOTAL PARCELS

23

DEVELOPABLE

5

NEW UNITS

75

NEW RESIDENTS

234

### Step 3: Choose Your Architectural Style



Pastel Ornate French



Bold Simple French



Lutetian Stone



Plaster Color Palette



Mexico City Modern



Iconic Modern

Pick any number of Architectural Designs



Generate a rendering for the neighborhood to discuss

# Neighborhood Serving Retail

Require ground floor NSR



## Research-based list of 'daily and weekly needs'

Retail / Amenity	Typical Use Frequency	Population to Support
Grocery Store	Daily to 2-3x/week	5,000-10,000
Coffee Shop	Daily	1,000-2,000
Public Transit Stop	Daily	
Restaurant	2-4x/week	2,000-4,000
Mail Shop	1-2x/week	1,000-2,000
Bookstore	Weekly to Occasionally	3,000-5,000
Credit Union / Bank	Weekly	
Hardware Store	Monthly to Occasionally	5,000-7,500
Pharmacy	Weekly to Monthly	4,000-7,000
Hair Salon / Barber	Monthly to 6 weeks	
Urgent Care Clinic	Occasionally (as needed)	5,000-8,000
Pet Supply Store	Monthly to Weekly	
Clothing Store	Monthly to Quarterly	4,000-6,000
Corner Bar	Weekly	2,000-4,000
Medical Offices	Monthly to Quarterly	5,000
Dry Cleaner / Laundry	Weekly	
Gym	3-5x/week	
Daycare	Daily (for parents)	
Park and Playground	Daily to Weekly	1,000
Library	Weekly	5,000-10,000

# Ideas for consideration

## Phase 1

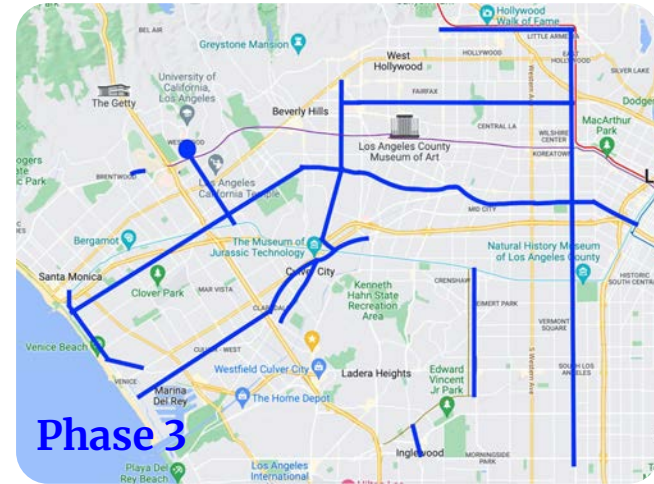
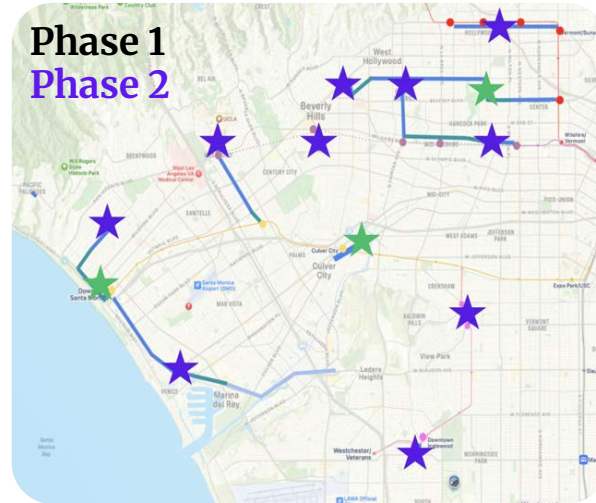
3 Communities ~3k units

## Phase 2

9 communities ~9k units

## Phase 3

Corridor Network ~250k units  
*Expandable*



\*LCI is community driven, not top down\*  
200-300 miles of LCI = 500k homes, our deficit  
It is 2% of LA's 7000 miles of streets

59% Landscaping

### 1. Landscaping

- Top choice of residents and business owners
- Top selection during interactive workshop activity

52% Safer crosswalks

### 2. Safer crossings

- Burnside crosswalk leads to two elementary schools
- Many people crossing unsafely between Hauser and Curson

47% Outdoor dining

46% Street events

42% Parks

### 3. New places to gather

- There are no parks within one mile radius
- There are no public places to sit on Pico

35% Curb extensions

34% Pedestrian lighting

### 4. Traffic calming

- 26% of drivers on Pico speed

34% Traffic calming

33% Seating

### 5. Lighting

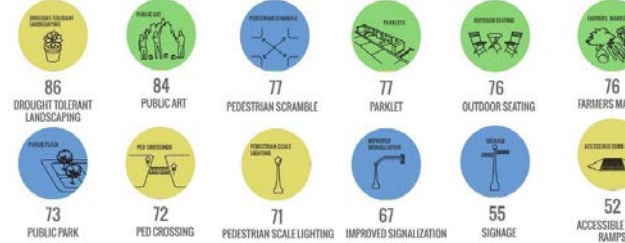
- There is no pedestrian lighting on Pico

32% Art

### 6. Art

## WHAT DO PEOPLE WANT TO SEE IN PICO?

### MOST SELECTED AMENITIES





# destination: PICO

## Our Community's Vision

**1500** conversations





**8** workshops

**700** survey responses

**170** business meetings

**70** businesses  
**130** at workshops  
**200** at restaurants  
**100** school parents  
**200** online

So far, we've brought **over \$3 million**  
in upgrades to Pico

-  • A **new crosswalk** at Masselin with pedestrian signal
-  • A **full traffic light** at Burnside
-  • The **Coloring Book plaza** at Hauser
-  • **Curb extensions** at four intersections
-  • Landscaped **parkways** with drought-tolerant plants
-  • Five blocks of **rebuilt sidewalks** and curb ramps
-  • **Seating**

The community identified **6** priorities

### 1. Landscaping

- #1 priority for both residents and business owners
- 50 trees planted on Pico in 2017



### 2. Safer Crosswalks

- No crosswalks between Hauser and Curson
- Burnside crosswalk leads to two schools

### 3. Gathering Spaces

- No parks within one mile radius
- No public places to sit on Pico



### 4. Traffic Calming

- 1/4 of drivers on Pico are speeding

### 5. Pedestrian Lighting

- Pico's street lights don't illuminate the sidewalk



### 6. Public Art



**Thank you!**

**More info at [livablecommunitiesinitiative.org](http://livablecommunitiesinitiative.org)**

**Contact us at [livablecommunitiesla@gmail.com](mailto:livablecommunitiesla@gmail.com)**

# Addendum

## Option of a Parking Ramblas



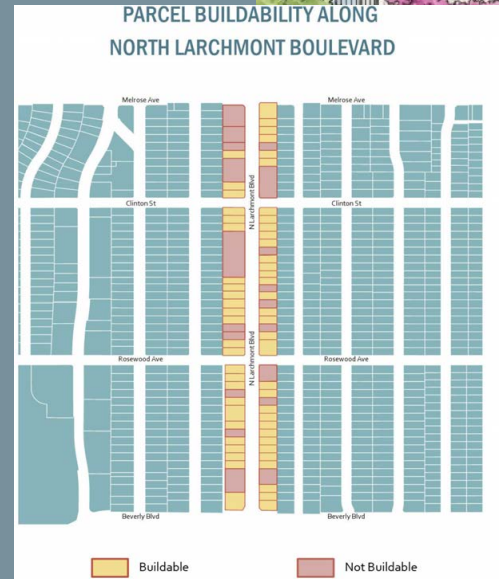
Adds trees, slows cars for walkability, and adds parking that new residents can rent, and shoppers and visitors can use.  
Space can also be used for Farmers Markets and night markets.

## What is Larchmont 2030?

It is a plan to unlock gentle density on Upper Larchmont from Beverly to Melrose. The plan has support from every group in the community – BID, LBA, HOAs/residents groups - LUNA, HPHOA, St Andrews Sq.

We want to create a Standard Plan that is pre-entitled for the entire block. There are 61 underutilized parcels. We want to facilitate every parcel owner to develop to create a vibrant streetwall like lower Larchmont, adding over 1000 new homes, over 100 new shops, a Parking Ramblas and trees.

We created a step-by-step plan and we are Program #131 in the Housing Element – and now we need the city council to implement it. We welcome your support!

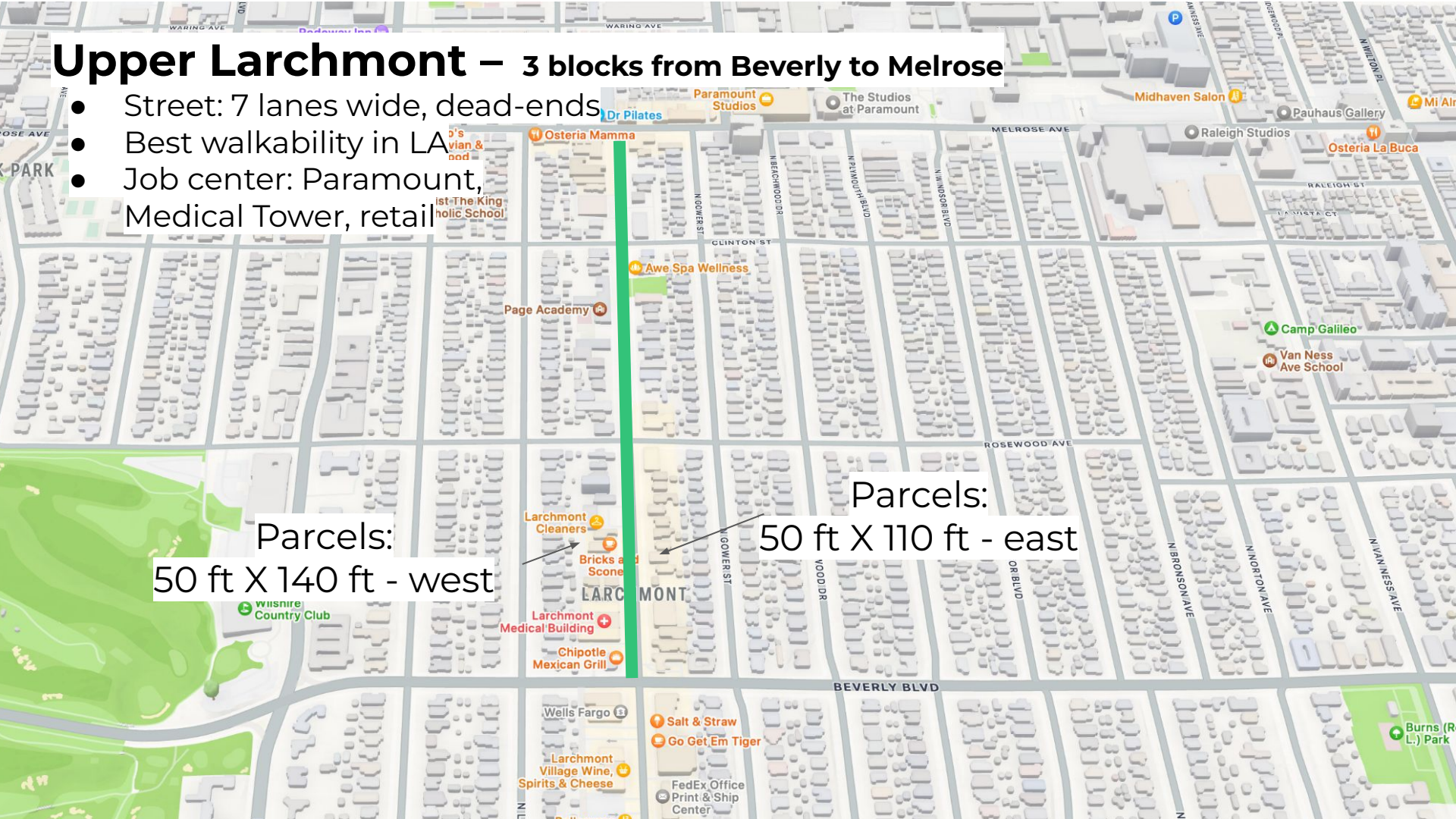


# Upper Larchmont – 3 blocks from Beverly to Melrose

- Street: 7 lanes wide, dead-ends
- Best walkability in LA
- Job center: Paramount, Medical Tower, retail

Parcels:  
50 ft X 140 ft - west

Parcels:  
50 ft X 110 ft - east



# FAQs

# Are Standard Plans a real thing?







Singapore





WINDWARD AVENUE, VENICE, CAL.

# Are Standard Plans a one type of architecture?



# Design examples

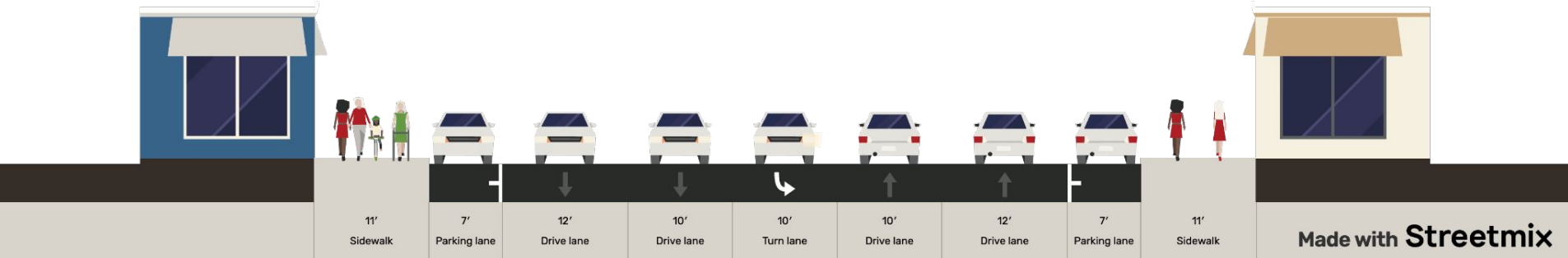




# How does the street work?



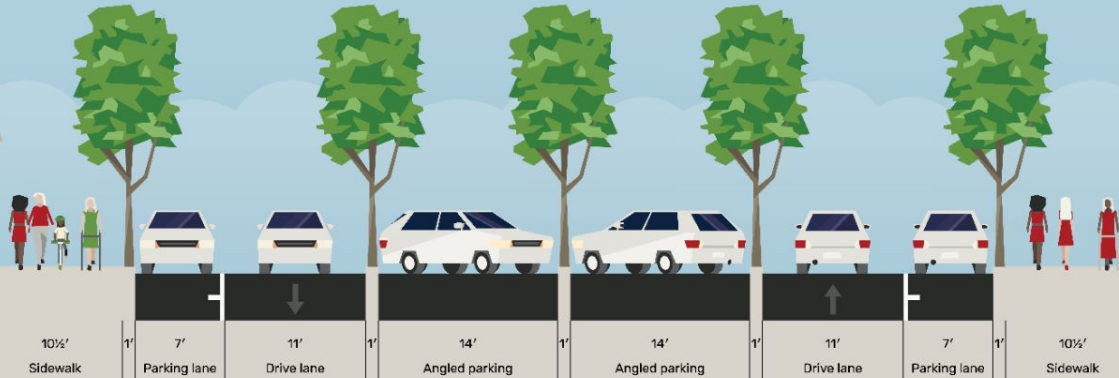
# Upper Larchmont - now



# Adding Median Parking

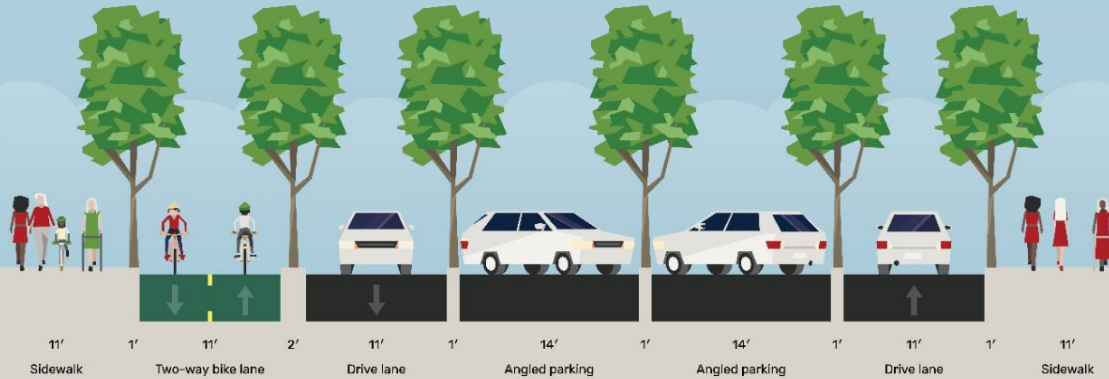


# Upper Larchmont - Median parking



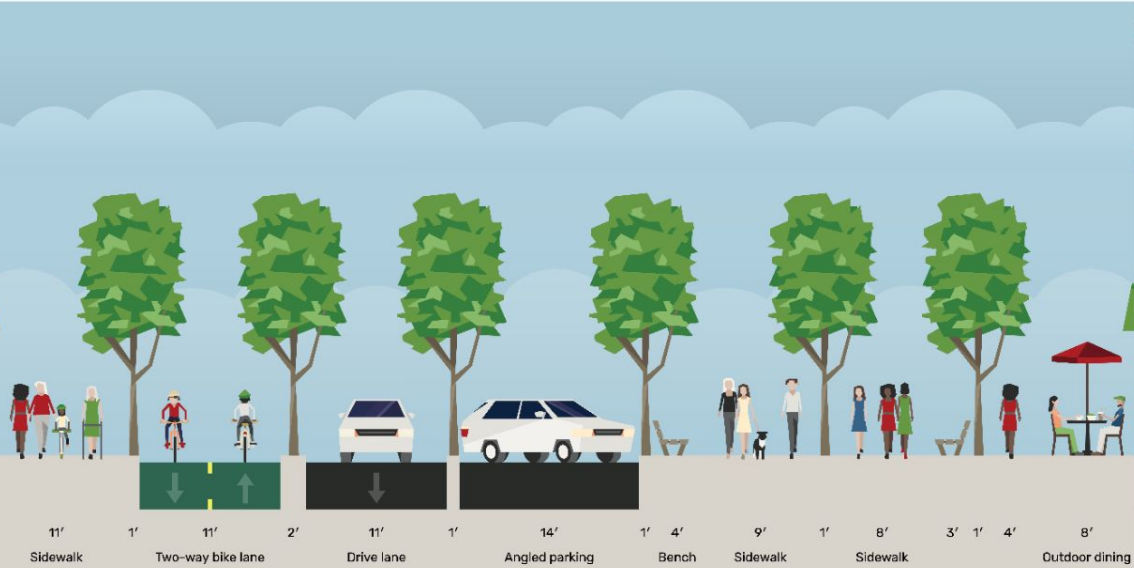
Made with **Streetmix**

# Upper Larchmont - Median parking with bike lanes



Made with **Streetmix**

# One Way + Median Parking + Promenade

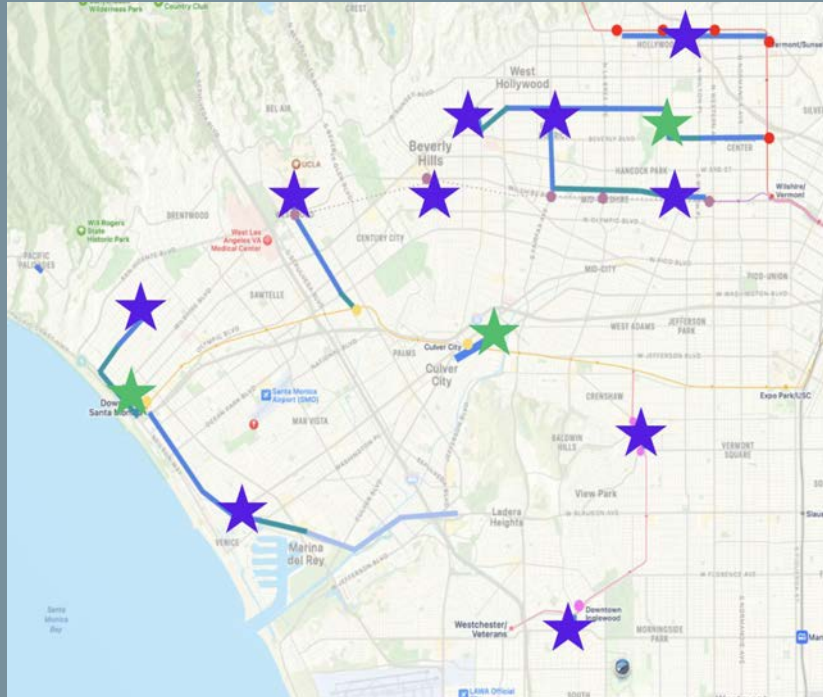


# What about cars, groceries, jobs?



# Located near jobs and transit

Along commercial corridors with existing small retail and that won't impact traffic

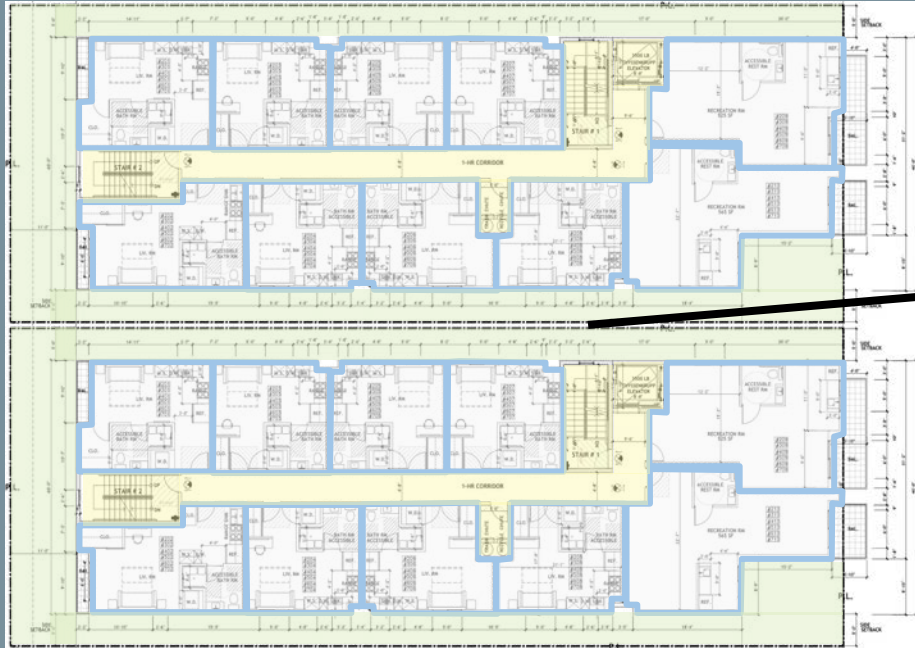


# What code changes, and what about the single stair?

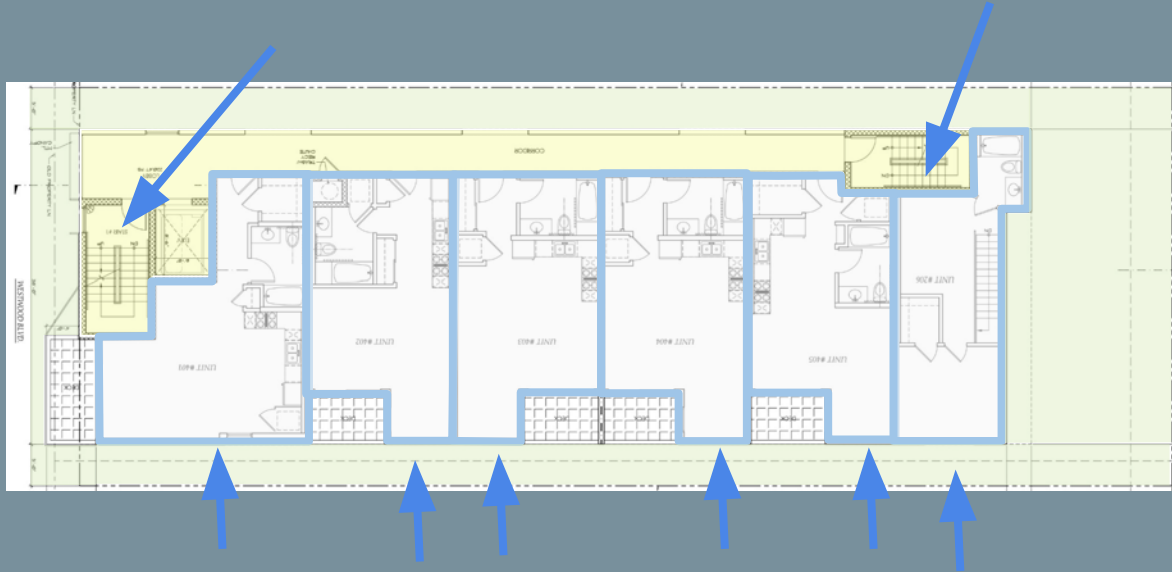




Units are low quality & lack air and light



The problem:  
Two staircase & enclosed corridor requirement:



The enclosed corridor means units only have one source of air and light

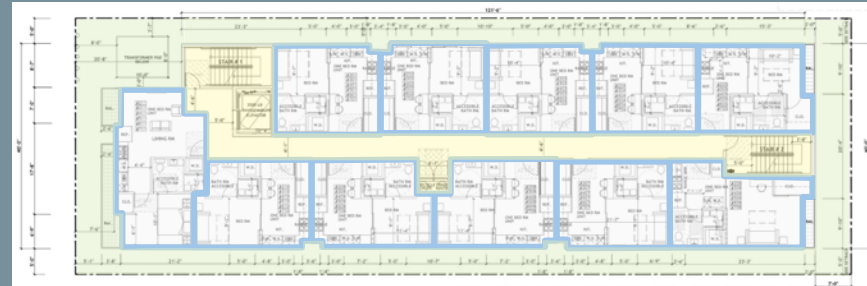


# Value engineered

Imagine three of these next to each other – no air or light



Height and 72 small units = feasibility  
(R3- 1 “ED1” Project)



- Double Loaded Corridor layout
- **72 units (no Commercial space)**
- Residential Density: **414 d/u per acre**
- **7 stories**
- Rentable space: **4,367 rentable sq. ft. per floor**
- Parcel Size: **7,558 sq. ft.**
- Building efficiency: **81%**

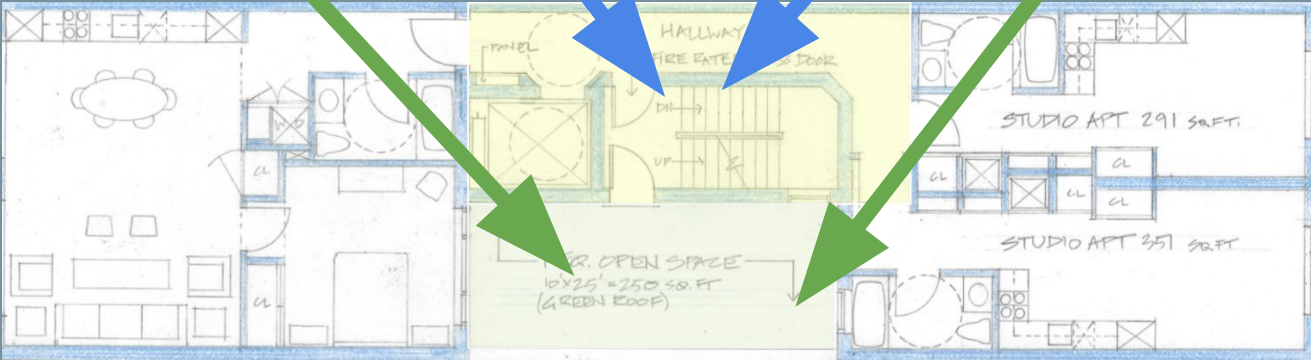


# What if two staircases become one central staircase?

Single Loaded  
Corridor  
63% efficient



Single Staircase  
70% efficient



# 50' x 100' Site - Floor Plan - Single Stair / Courtyard



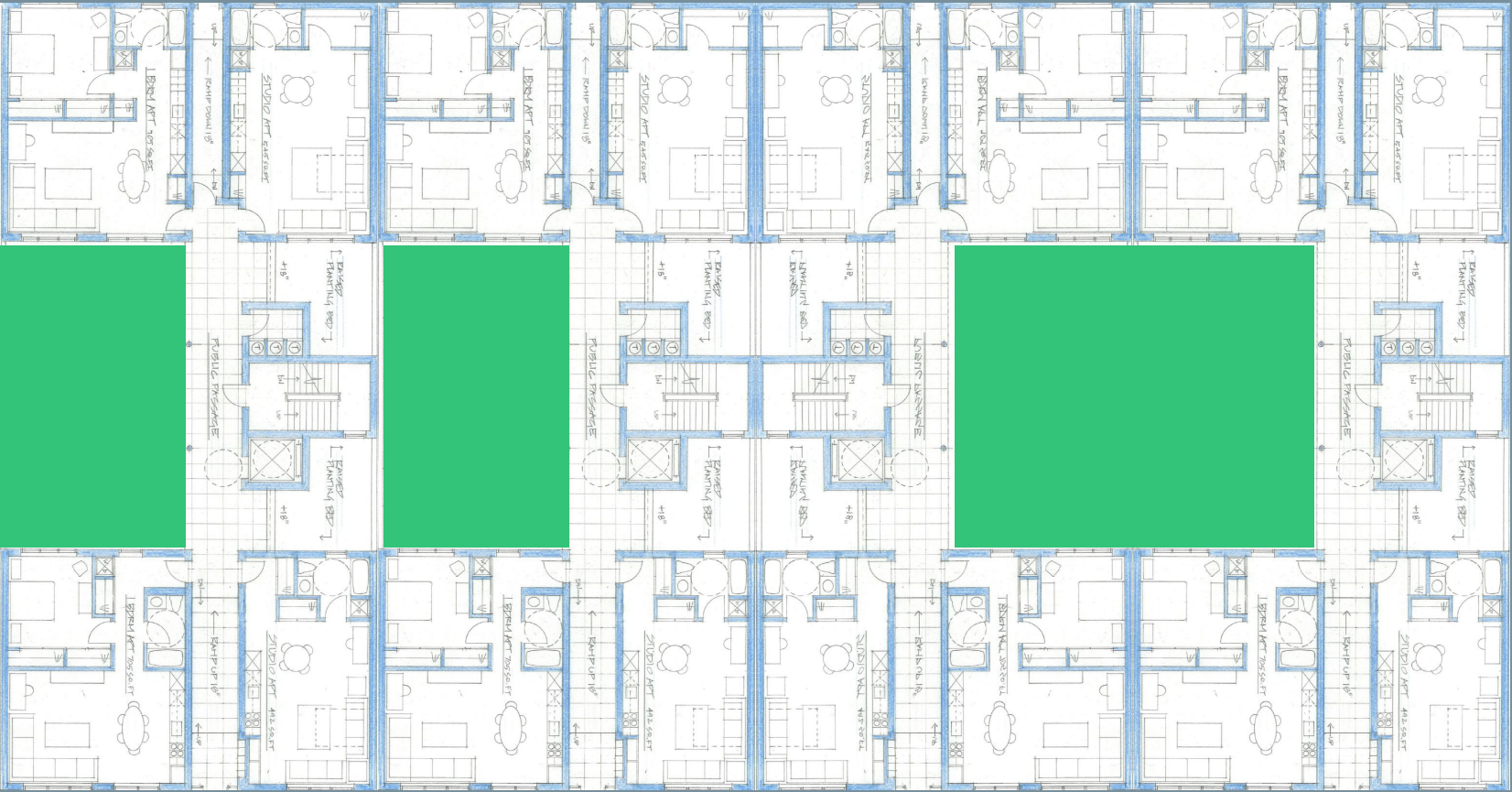
# Courtyards

Functional & inviting green space.

Safe and private shared backyard for families to gather and children to play.



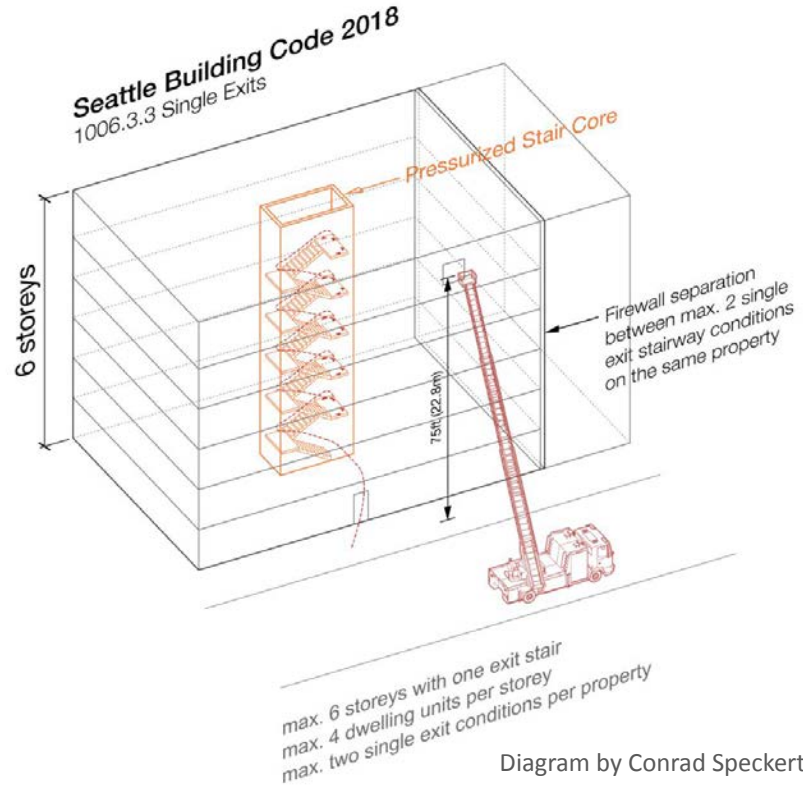






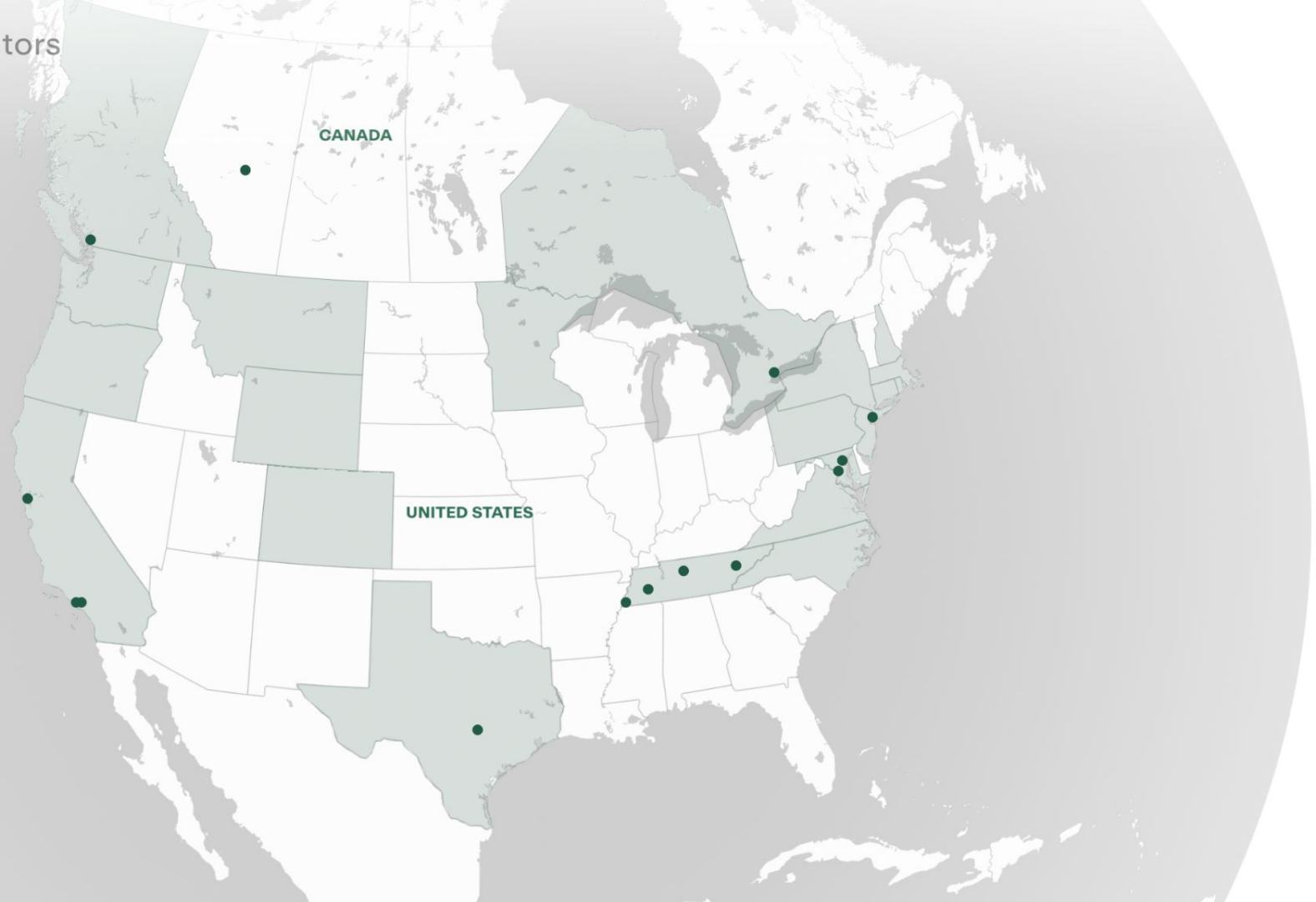
# PAB Buildings in Europe and Seattle/NYC Exceed Baseline Safety Standards

- ❑ European countries (which broadly permit single stair MF) have a better record on fire/life safety than the US
- ❑ Seattle has higher fire/life safety standards for single stair than double stair structures.
  - ❑ Max. 5 storeys for Residential Zones (R-2 [long term residential] occupancy) and 6-storeys for mixed use structures.
  - ❑ Maximum of 4 dwelling units per storey
  - ❑ Construction is minimum 60-minute fire rating
  - ❑ Equipped with an automatic sprinkler system.
  - ❑ The stairway and elevator must be pressurized or naturally ventilated.
  - ❑ Units must open on to a corridor if there is an internal stairway.
  - ❑ Maximum travel distance is limited to 124 feet.



# Single-stair Elevators

[Read more](#)



# Safety

*Along with sprinklers, pressurized stairwell & 60 minute fire rating, options for further mitigations include:*

1. Fire escapes
2. Spiral staircase
3. Balconies



# Who is the LCI?



# Who we are

## Brain Trust & Advisors

### Housing Policy

Prof Mike Manville, UCLA  
Ed Mendoza  
Matthew Thompson

### Housing Typologies

Gerhard Mayer  
John Claffin  
Neal Payton

### 15 Minute Cities

Dan Luscher  
Thomas Small  
Patricia Bijvoet

### Community & Equity

Dr. Tunette Powell

### Community Organizing

Sam Uretsky, LUNA  
Jen Levin, HODG  
Culver City:  
Martin Tomasz  
Travis Morgan  
Michael Ainslie  
James Ingram

### Transportation

Lindsay Sturman  
Sullivan Israel, MA Cal Poly  
Terenig Topjian

## Inspiration & Research

### Transportation

Chris Bruntlett & Dutch experts  
Bike Talk  
Donald Shoup

### Public Spaces

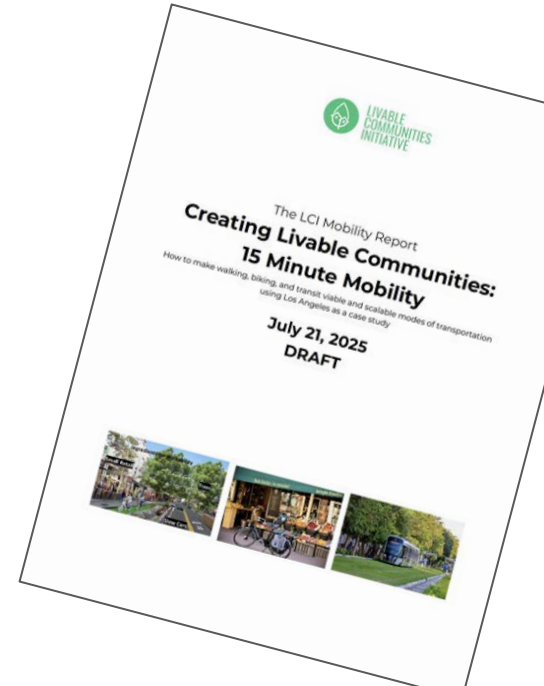
Jane Jacobs  
Jan Gehl

### 15 Minute Cities

Carlos Moreno

### Housing

Nolan Gray  
Shane Phillips



# What about neighbors' concerns?



# NEIGHBOR'S CONCERNS

Based on engagement with 5,000 stakeholders

**Height**



**Low Quality Architecture**



**Traffic/Parking**



# BROAD SUPPORT

Based on engagement with 5,000 stakeholders

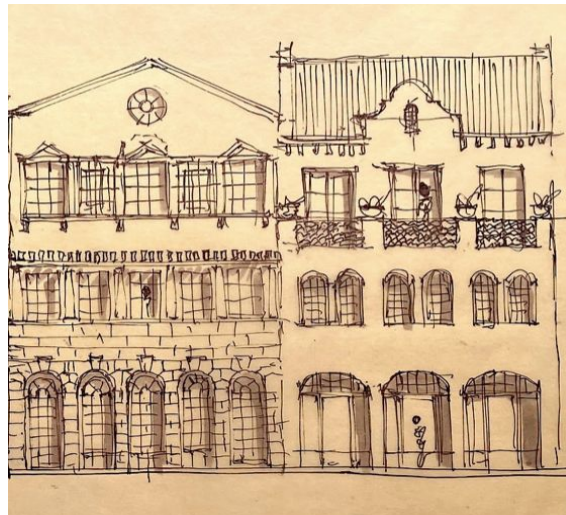
## Gentle Density

### 3-5 stories

### Residential Over Retail



## Beautiful Architecture



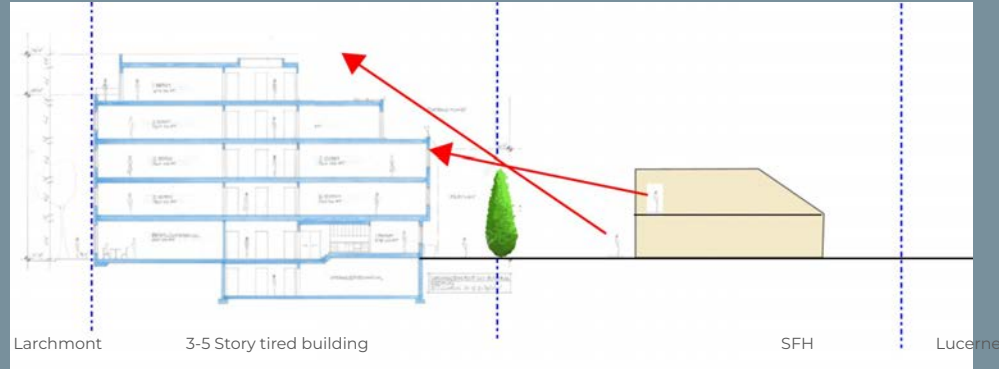
## Walkable - Near Jobs & Transit



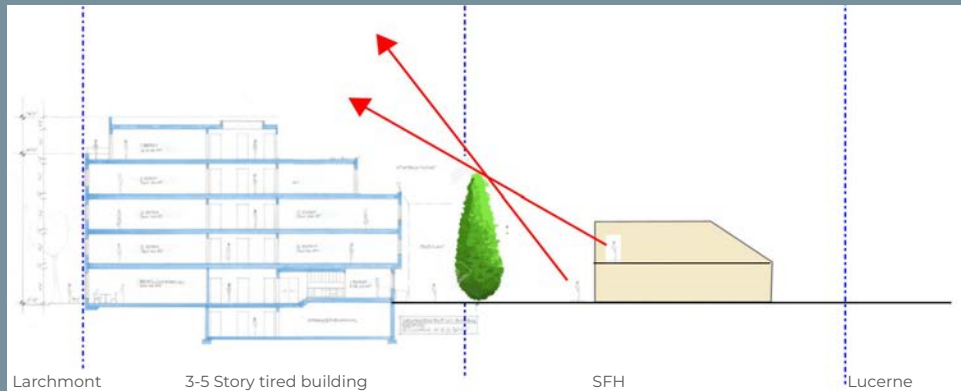
# Step-backs

Tiering the back of the building and a hedge can conceal a 5 story building next door.

Year One: Developer plants 20 foot tall



Year Three: Hedge grows 40 ft tall (6-10 ft/year)



# LA's 400 Historic Main Streets Historic Villages






**Westwood Village**

CHILLI WORLD CONVENIENCE STORE 99¢ UP

Crenshaw Blvd





 **Montana Ave**

coffee!

**SUGARED + BRONZED**

929

the sweetest way to smooth  
hardening hair removal

sugar lemon water

the healthiest way to glow  
custom eyebrow tints

green water

310.656.9055  
towagfair.com

OPEN!



# Leimert Park

*Small retail*



# San Fernando Burbank

*Revitalizing LA's historic main streets*

← 4528 E Cesar E Chavez Ave

East Los Angeles, California

 Google Street View

Feb 2023

[See more dates](#)



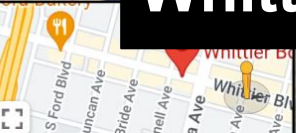
**Cesar Chavez**



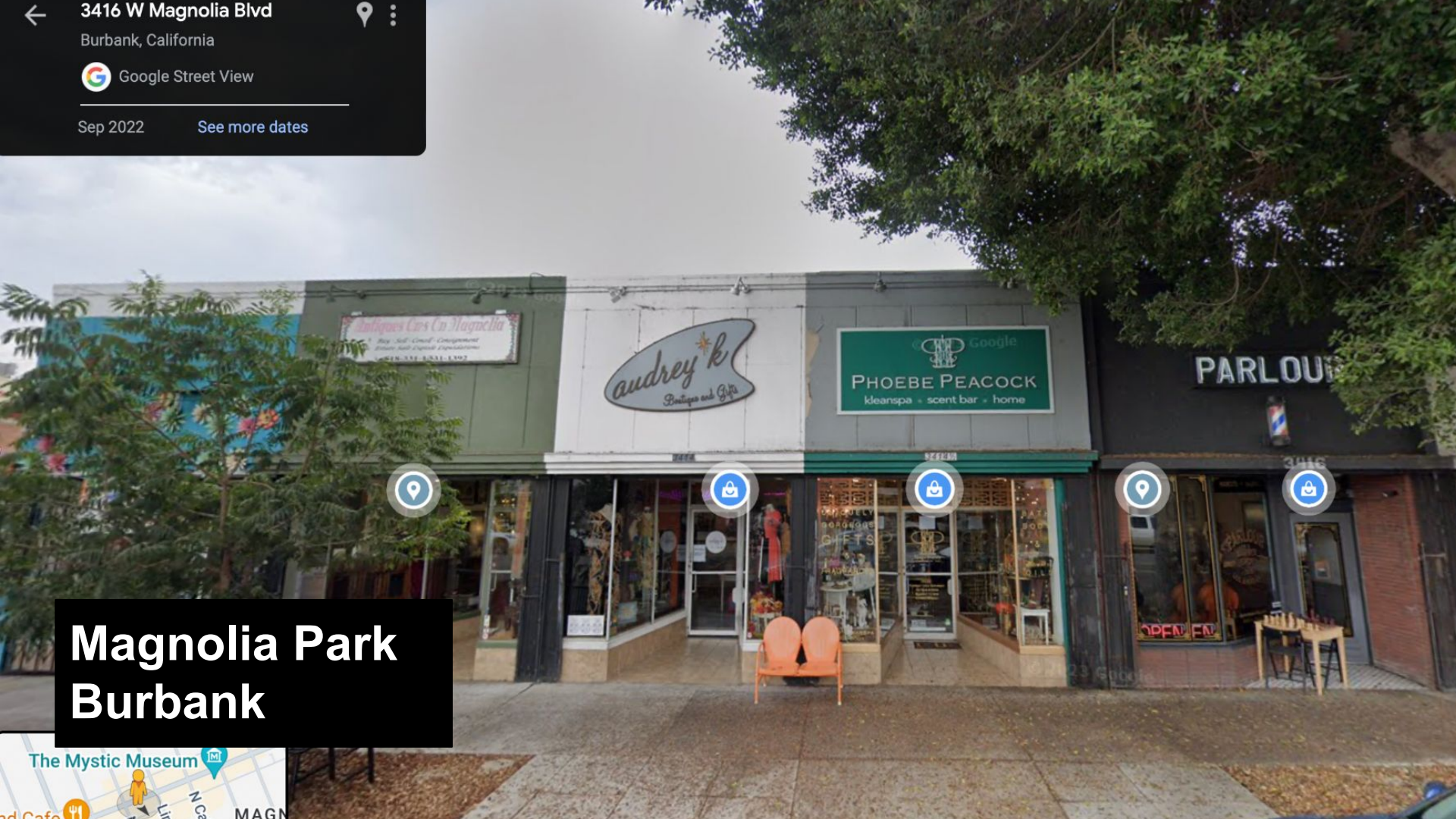
← 4750 Whittier Blvd  
East Los Angeles, California  
Google Street View  
Feb 2023 See more dates



**Whittier**



← 3416 W Magnolia Blvd  
Burbank, California  
Google Street View  
Sep 2022 See more dates



# Magnolia Park Burbank





  
groundwork  
coffee tea community

LOCALLY ROASTED ORGANIC COFFEE SINCE 1990

2908

  
MEXICAN  
FOOD

2908

  
BIKE  
ELECTRIC

  
BIKE  
ATTACK  
ELECTRIC

BIKE ATTACK ELECTRIC

Main St,  
Santa Monica

423 Pier Ave

Hermosa Beach, California

Google Street View

Jul 2022 See more dates

Share

Close

# Pier Ave Hermosa Beach

Google

214 Manhattan Beach Blvd

Manhattan Beach, California

Google Street View

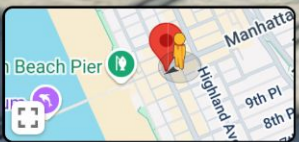
Jun 2024

See more dates

Share



Manhattan Beach Blvd



Google