

SUBJECT: ZONE TEXT AMENDMENT TO ADOPT NEW GREEN BUILDING REQUIREMENTS

PREPARED BY: PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES DEPARTMENT
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The purpose of this item is to receive feedback from the Planning Commission Long Range Projects Subcommittee on a proposed zone text amendment to update the City's green building requirements. The proposed amendments introduce new local green building mandates, reconcile codes and policies with State law, and reestablish high-value incentives for high-achieving projects.

BACKGROUND

In October 2007, West Hollywood adopted one of the nation's first mandatory green building ordinances to ensure that new buildings will be healthier for residents, and use energy and resources more efficiently. It established new development standards that apply to all development, consisted of a point system with incentives for projects that achieve exemplary status, and included a green building education and outreach program. Flexibility, responsiveness to local conditions, and cost-effectiveness were also key features of the ordinance. In 2015, the City Council directed staff to reassess the City's green building standards and environmental programs and, with the help of a working group, identify ways to align with and/or go beyond State law.

PROPOSED GREEN BUILDING PROGRAM

The purpose of the proposed zone text amendment (Attachment A) is to update the City's green building standards. The ZTA repeals and replaces the current green building requirements found in Chapter 19.20 of the Zoning Code with the following:

1. Updated mandatory green building standards for all applicable project types
2. A menu of high-achieving green building measures and eligible incentives for projects that seek to go above and beyond the mandatory requirements
3. Requirements for Specific Plans and Development Agreements
4. Project application requirements

Since the Green Building regulations found in Chapter 19.20 reference several other sections in the Zoning Code, the proposed amendment also modifies some of these related sections of Title 19 to ensure they appropriately supplement the new green building requirements, reference State law as necessary, and/or reflect the latest terms and trends of the green building industry.

The overall green building program will include amendments to Title 13 and 15 of the Municipal Code to modify requirements for water fixtures and fittings specifications, outdoor water submetering, and requirements for public green buildings. Since these amendments are not in the Zoning Ordinance, they are not under the purview of the Planning Commission, and are provided for reference only in Attachment B.

Approach to the Green Building Program Update

The intent of the Green Building Program Update is to maintain a best-in-class green building program, recognizing the evolution of the green building industry since the adoption of 2007 ordinance, while still responding to the unique physical characteristics of the City of West Hollywood.

Throughout 2018, staff worked with a consultant team to research and evaluate the latest green building industry trends and held several feedback sessions with a City Working Group and Community Stakeholder Working Group to establish priorities for the program update. Table 1 below provides the major themes and recommendations from these working groups, along with how they are reflected in the revised program.

Table 1: Summary of Working Group Feedback

Major Theme	Recommendations	Feedback reflected in Revised Program
Local Characteristics	Take advantage of West Hollywood’s unique physical elements (i.e. east-west orientation, topography, passive design, etc.)	All new program requirements consider and build upon West Hollywood’s unique characteristics.
Energy	Promote solar, battery storage readiness, building automations, daylighting, higher standards for building insulation and air tightness, etc.	2019 Energy Code will require and/or incentivize recommendations on energy; Local code language on energy now better aligns with State Energy Code
Water Management	Promote graywater use, separate water meters (submeters) per unit, and water efficiency and conservation measures	New water submetering requirements for landscaping included; One of high-achieving measures promotes graywater reuse
Solid Waste Management	Prepare for future organics storage & collection	Revised storage & collection requirements for solid waste, recycling, and organics included
Vegetative Space	Protect and increase vegetation, trees, and green infrastructure in private and public realm spaces	New vegetative roof requirements and ground-level vegetative space allowances included
Administration & Implementation	Integrate with existing city process; Consider “task force” or special team for oversight and verification	Integration program requirements with the State’s compliance process (see Table 3)

Program Metrics	Establish program indicators to measure impact over time	Staff will input and monitor progress indicators using internal tracking platform
Education & Awareness	Establish public repository of green building best practices and resource guides for developers and building community	New webpage will host program requirements and informational materials (see Table 3)

From the collective effort above, staff confirmed that the large majority of the existing green building program is now covered by California Green Building Standards (CALGreen) and the Title 24 Building Energy Efficiency Standards (the California Energy Code). Attachment C provides a detailed comparison of the 2007 program checklist compared with the latest versions of CALGreen, the Energy Code, and the proposed West Hollywood green building amendments.

Rather than introduce a new iteration of a point-based system, it was evident that the best approach is to align the city’s green building requirements with CALGreen and the Energy Code, modify the existing local building and zoning codes based on local conditions and the feedback received from the working groups, and reestablish high-value incentives for high-achieving projects. This approach recognizes that the State is increasingly raising the bar on green building. It also allows for: (1) better clarity and consistency of state and local requirements; (2) more efficiency for applicants; (3) the ability to prepare the local market now for upcoming changes in the 2019 State Code; (4) applicability to all buildings – new construction, major remodels, tenant improvements, and additions; and (5) ease of administration and enforcement by staff.

Proposed Green Building Standards

Table 2 summarizes the proposed amendments to the existing Green Building Ordinance provided in Attachments A and B and outlines the associated environmental benefits. While only the recommended new requirements to the Green Building program are shown below, the ordinance also keeps existing green building measures that are locally-specific and/or already exceed the State’s requirements, and thus should remain unchanged.

Additionally, the table summarizes the list of high-achieving green building measures and eligible incentives for projects that seek to go above and beyond the mandatory provisions. Projects seeking approval of a specific plan or a development agreement must comply with one of several high-achieving measures and would not be eligible for incentives.

Table 2: Mandatory Provisions, High-Achieving Measures, & Incentives

Mandatory Provisions		
<i>Topic Area</i>	<i>Recommendations</i>	<i>Benefits</i>
<p>Open Space Flexibility</p> <p>Sustainable Roof Measures</p> <p>Increased Vegetation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Mandates minimum requirements for solar PV, solar collectors for hot water, or vegetation on the roof ● Allows for the transfer of private open space to common open space and vice versa ● Allows projects to install vegetative space on the ground level for every one required standard parking space not constructed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Promotes urban cooling, stormwater management, increased vegetative space, renewable energy ● Promotes better air quality ● Reduces GHG emissions ● Promotes flexibility in development standards
<p>Energy Efficiency</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Defers to Energy Code requirements ● Updates section on energy efficiency outdoor lighting to align with Energy Code ● Prepares owners to monitor energy use in buildings post-construction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Supports clean energy, energy-efficient appliances, use of battery storage systems ● Considers ongoing building energy performance ● Reduces GHG emissions
<p>Water Efficiency & Conservation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Specifies more stringent requirements in flow and flush rates for water fixtures and fittings ● Requires outdoor water submetering beyond State mandates ● References State’s water-efficient landscaping requirements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Influences fixture selections to conserve more water ● Influences behavior change by bringing awareness to water use for landscaping
<p>Waste Diversion & Future Food Waste Collection</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Revises waste collection and storage requirements for solid waste and recycling and introduces such requirements for organic waste ● Requires projects to submit a waste collection & operations plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Increases waste diversion from landfills ● Reduces GHG emissions ● Clarifies waste collection and operational procedures for each project
<p>Public Green Buildings</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Raises minimum certification level from LEED Certified to LEED Gold for public green buildings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Reduces municipal GHG emissions ● Improves building operations & performance

High-Achieving Measures & Incentives		
<i>Topic Area</i>	<i>Recommendations</i>	<i>Benefits</i>
High-Achieving Measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Achieve the highest thresholds in 3rd party green building programs (LEED, etc.) ● Install indoor and/or outdoor greywater systems ● Achieve a minimum of 50% improvement in building energy performance over Energy Code Standards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Promotes higher standards in green building within city ● Supports use of alternative (nonpotable) water sources ● Encourages net zero, resiliency, renewable energy, and optimal energy efficiency in buildings
Incentives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Allows for a reduction in parking spaces, an additional unit, or 0.1 additional FAR for high-achieving projects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Supports the achievement of higher environmental building standards

Alongside new code requirements, the Green Building Program Update includes revisions to the compliance and verification processes, as well as changes to the City’s Green Building webpage and online educational materials. The table below outlines some of the steps to facilitate implementation and administration:

Table 3: Implementation & Administration

Recommended Changes to City’s Implementation & Administration Process	
Enhanced multistep compliance process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Detail the overall steps for compliance for the new Green Building standards during Planning Review, Plan Check, and Field Inspections ● Modify existing CALGreen checklists to include local standards
Enhanced city inspection and verification process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Require that all projects undergo a city inspection of their insulation and ventilation systems, per the Home Energy Rating (HERS) standard, to ensure building systems are properly installed and will perform as intended ● Require detailed city inspection card to include additional green building code requirements to facilitate enforcement and verification
Green building webpage modifications & detailed educational collateral	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Modify the City’s webpage to host new program materials, procedures, and required forms ● Include visual examples and descriptions of the green principles and concepts online

Collectively, the updated requirements and administrative processes will ensure that new and remodeled buildings in West Hollywood reflect and exceed the current state of the practice in sustainable building design and construction. The program changes are aspirational, yet achievable, and respond to local and regional climate action priorities. Furthermore, the new format will allow the City to keep better pace with an ever-evolving green building industry and continue to exhibit leadership in establishing sound environmental policies and practices.

ATTACHMENTS

- A. Proposed Zone Text Amendment
- B. Proposed Municipal Code Amendments (for context only)
- C. Green Building Standards Comparison