



PPCC Land Use Committee (LUC) Introductory Report re Proposed Project at 15113 W. Sunset Blvd.

Executive Summary

The following introductory report by the Pacific Palisades Community Council (PPCC) Land Use Committee (LUC) examines a proposed mixed-use development at 15113 W. Sunset Boulevard, a vacant parcel within the Palisades commercial Village. The project is governed by the legal framework of California’s Density Bonus Law (DBL). The project owners propose a three-story building with ground-floor commercial space and six residential units above, including one “very-low-income” unit, and seek multiple DBL incentives and waivers that deviate from the Pacific Palisades Commercial Village and Neighborhoods Specific Plan, including increased height, an additional story and reduced parking requirements.

The LUC report underscores that the DBL is a state mandate that supersedes local zoning and specific plans, limits local discretion and entitles qualifying applicants to density increases and development concessions as a matter of right. While the project site lies within the Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone, the DBL does not exempt such areas, raising significant community concerns about cumulative density impacts on evacuation safety following the 2025 wildfire. Although the six-unit project alone may not materially affect evacuation capacity, the LUC highlights for Palisadians the inherent “slippery slope” risk posed by potential multiple similar DBL projects on newly vacant lots along the Sunset Blvd. corridor.

The report also outlines PPCC’s long-standing policy position: support for lawful property development paired with firm opposition to increased density that compromises public safety, evacuation capacity and infrastructure resilience in fire-prone areas. It notes our advocacy for emergency pauses on the enforcement of state density laws such as SB 9, while acknowledging the legal and political constraints that make suspension of the DBL unlikely at this time. The LUC also flags the applicant’s request for a statutory CEQA exemption under AB 130, further limiting or eliminating environmental review

Finally, the report describes the anticipated review path going forward, emphasizing that approval will be largely administrative and ministerial, with limited appeal rights. The LUC has not yet taken a position on the project, instead making this report available as foundational context ahead of a planned public LUC meeting, expected Pacific Palisades Design Review Board proceedings, and eventual City Planning Commission review. The document is intended to inform the community, clarify governing law and ground future PPCC deliberations in an evolving post-fire recovery landscape.

See the full LUC Introductory Report on pp. 2-4, following.

PPCC LUC Introductory Report – 15113 W. Sunset Blvd.

Introduction/Key Points:

A project has been proposed for 15113 W. Sunset Blvd. on a now-vacant lot in the commercial Village (the “15113 Project”). California’s **“Density Bonus Law” (DBL)** applies to the Project. Key points about the DBL:

- The DBL is a **state mandate** that supersedes local zoning rules.
- The City of Los Angeles **must** follow the DBL mandate in considering the 15113 Project.
- An applicant for a project permit who meets the requirements of the DBL is entitled to receive benefits under the DBL **as a matter of right**.
- The DBL does **not exempt the Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone (VHFHSZ)**.

The owners of the 15113 Project have applied for a permit to build a **three-story mixed-use building**, with ground-floor commercial space and six apartment units on the second and third floors. One of the six units will be reserved for “very-low-income” tenants (under the DBL). The 15113 Project is within the boundaries of the Pacific Palisades Commercial Village and Neighborhoods Specific Plan (the “Specific Plan”). Concerns and questions have been raised as to the height and other aspects that deviate from Specific Plan requirements, about the laws and rules that govern the Project, and about the clash between the DBL mandates and the community’s serious, very real concern with the dangerous impact of *additional* housing density (more people, more cars) on emergency evacuation (capacity of our limited ingress & egress routes) during future wildfires.

The 15113 Project owners and a representative of Crest Real Estate (the owners’ consultant) have agreed to attend a public LUC meeting to present details and answer questions about the proposed Project. The LUC has prepared this introductory report to provide the community with basic information about relevant governing rules and PPCC policies.

What is Density Bonus Law (DBL)?

First, “density” in the context of land use refers to the number of units/persons living in housing developments. For public safety reasons, PPCC has long opposed efforts to increase density in our low-density neighborhoods *beyond the level present before the devastating 2025 fire*.

The current, controlling DBL is the cumulative result of numerous and increasingly expansive bills introduced and enacted by the state legislature, from 1979 to the present, intended to streamline approvals for needed housing in California. The DBL allows a developer to **increase density** on a property above the maximum set under a city’s zoning laws, including Specific Plans. In effect, **the DBL supersedes our Specific Plan**. The DBL provides that in exchange for increased density in a project, a certain number of new affordable dwelling units must be reserved at below market rate (BMR) rents. Qualifying applicants can also receive reductions in required development standards. Besides granting rights to increase density in projects, the DBL provides three provisions that *require local governments to grant qualifying projects*: 1) incentives or concessions that provide cost reductions; 2) waivers of development standards that would physically preclude the development of a project at the density permitted and with the incentives granted, and; 3) reductions in parking requirements.

The 15113 Project seeks several incentives/concessions or waivers under the DBL, including increased height (from a maximum 30 ft. under the Specific plan to 41 ft.), more stories (3 stories rather than 2 under the Specific Plan) and reduced parking (from 9 spaces under the Specific Plan to 6 spaces). As noted, the Project in

exchange offers one affordable (very-low-income) unit. The owners are also seeking a “statutory exemption” (per Assembly Bill 130) from review under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

Has the DBL been applied before in Pacific Palisades? Yes. A mixed-use project at the old Jack-in-the-Box (JIB) site on Sunset near PCH – to include some low-income units in exchange for concessions and waivers from the Specific Plan – was approved several years ago as a DBL project, over objections by PPCC and nearby residents.

Are more DBL projects coming in the Palisades going forward? Likely, yes. Due to the tragedy, we sadly now have dozens of vacant lots in areas zoned for multi-family or mixed use, especially along the Sunset corridor between the commercial Village and PCH, where owners may determine that building a DBL project is financially more feasible than building a smaller structure akin to what existed before the fire.

While the 15113 Project alone does not appreciably increase density (*i.e.*, six units may not have much impact on emergency evacuation capacity overall), there are legitimate concerns about the “slippery slope” effect of this and other DBL projects – potentially scores of new housing units, in projects with only a limited number of affordable units under the DBL, which are likely to be proposed as the community’s recovery and rebuilding continue.

What is PPCC policy regarding density, public safety & land use?

PPCC has long supported the right of owners to build according to applicable land use laws, although also insisting that development *must be safe for the community*. We have repeatedly expressed our concerns about unsafe emergency evacuations, based on real, harrowing, first-hand community experience during the catastrophic fire; about the lack of and critical need for an emergency evacuation plan for the Palisades; about our opposition to legislation that increases housing density without a complete exemption for the VHFHSZ; and about legislation that includes *unfunded mandates* for streamlined permitting of dense development projects, without regard to impacts on infrastructure or public safety.

PPCC also requested and strongly supported recent emergency orders by the Governor and Mayor to pause application of SB 9 (state law that would result in more density via streamlined permitting of duplexes in single-family residential areas) while the state of emergency remains in place in the burn area (note: a lawsuit was recently filed against the Governor and Mayor to rescind the SB 9 emergency orders; we are monitoring).

The DBL conflicts with PPCC’s policies as explained above. Realistically, however, we note that emergency orders by the Governor or Mayor to suspend application of the DBL in the Palisades (akin to the recent SB 9 orders) may be unlikely at this time, given legal hurdles and political realities.

What are next steps?

We look forward to the Project owners’ presentation to the community at the upcoming public PPCC LUC meeting. We are advised by Planning officials that the 15113 Project will then be reviewed at a public hearing of the Pacific Palisades Design Review Board (PPDRB; hearing date TBA); thereafter, the Project is expected to go before the City Planning Commission at another public hearing. We also understand that the review will effectively be administrative/”ministerial” in nature, *i.e.*, limited to whether DBL mandates and objective local zoning requirements have been met. Appeal rights are limited: certain incentives/ concessions and waivers under the DBL cannot be appealed, and only adjacent property owners may appeal.

The PPCC LUC will not decide whether to make a recommendation to the Board about the 15113 Project until

discussion has taken place at the upcoming public LUC meeting; the Committee may also decide to await the expected PPDRB hearing and decision before making a final recommendation to the PPCC Board (TBD).

For more information about governing laws and PPCC policies, see links to Resources below. To learn more about the PPCC LUC, visit: <https://pacpalicc.org/index.php/ppcc-land-use-committee/>.

Prepared by the PPCC LUC

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Resources: PPCC LUC Preliminary Report re 15113 W. Sunset Blvd.

ZIMAS page about the Project permit application/environmental (*click on “Initial Submittal Documents”*):
<https://planning.lacity.gov/pdiscaseinfo/search/casenumber/CPC-2025-7020-DB-DRB-SPPC-HCA>

Planning Dept. info. to the LUC: “Density Bonus & Streamlined Review” (*state and city laws/rules*):
https://pacpalicc.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/01/1_15_2026-PPCC-DB-presentation.pdf

More info. about California Density Bonus Law:

https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/codes_displaySection.xhtml?sectionNum=65915&lawCode=GOV (CA Gov. Code §§65915-65918)
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/California_Density_Bonus_Law
https://scag.ca.gov/sites/default/files/2024-05/density_bonus_law_-what_are_incentives_concessions_and_waivers.pdf
https://www.meyersnave.com/wp-content/uploads/California-Density-Bonus-Law_2021.pdf
<https://www.superlawyers.com/resources/land-use-and-zoning/california/what-is-californias-density-bonus-law/>
<https://www.crestrealestate.com/california-density-bonus-law/> (by 15113 Project consultant Crest Real Estate)

The Pacific Palisades Commercial Village and Neighborhoods Specific Plan:

<https://pacpalicc.org/index.php/about/community-specific-plans/>

Info. about AB 130/Statutory Exemption from CEQA:

<https://ascent.inc/new-infill-exemption/> (*note that AB 130 was a “trailer bill”, similar to the bill a few years ago that resulted in streamlined review of the Gladstones project in the Palisades*)

Past PPCC positions/policies on land use, density and public safety:

Evacuation Routes & Density (2023 – present):

<https://pacpalicc.org/index.php/vhfhsz-evacuation-density/>

Planning & Density (2023 – present):

<https://pacpalicc.org/index.php/planning-density-from-2023/>

SB9 and Density:

<https://pacpalicc.org/index.php/documents-related-to-sb-9-density/>

Evacuations & Density (2020-21):

<https://pacpalicc.org/index.php/vhfhszevacuation-density-2020-2021/>

Planning & Density (2016-22):

<https://pacpalicc.org/index.php/planning-density-2016-2022/>

PPCC Land Use Tenets:

<https://pacpalicc.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/01/PPCC-Land-Use-Tenets.pdf>

LUC Report & Recommendation re former JIB Site Project:

<https://pacpalicc.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/PPCC-Land-Use-Committee-Recommendation-nondraft.pdf>