

# Los Angeles Times

December 10, 2024 2:28 PM PT

## L.A. City Council votes to boost housing developments, while leaving out single-family-home zones

By Andrew Khouri  
Staff Writer

The Los Angeles City Council on Tuesday voted to boost housing development in existing high density residential neighborhoods and along commercial corridors, while leaving [single-family zones](#) largely untouched.

In a 15 to 0 vote, the council asked the city attorney to draft an ordinance to carry out that plan, which provides incentives to build both market rate and affordable units. Once the ordinance is drafted, it will come back to council for final approval.

The rezoning effort is in response to state housing mandates that seek to alleviate the housing crisis by requiring the city find land where an additional 255,000 homes can be built and have the plan in place by mid-February.

Last month, a city council committee [approved](#) a plan that allowed for more building in existing high density residential neighborhoods and along main streets in areas with jobs and good schools.

Under the plan, developers would be able to build more than they currently can in those areas if they include a certain percentage of affordable units.

Incentives to build in single-family zones would only apply if the property is owned by a public agency or a faith-based organization, which accounts for just a sliver of the city's single-family lots.

On Tuesday, the council approved that plan after briefly debating whether to allow denser housing in single-family areas, which some housing advocates have argued is needed to meaningfully reduce economic and racial segregation that single-family zoning has helped maintain.

Homeowner groups have opposed doing so, saying allowing apartments in their communities would increase traffic and reduce opportunities to buy a house.

Councilmember Nithya Raman, who represents a district that spans from Silver Lake to Reseda, put forth a motion that would have allowed mixed income and 100% affordable apartment

buildings within some single-family zones near transit, but developers would have been restricted to smaller sized projects which Raman referred to as “gentle density.” This plan was less than some advocates called for, but council members rejected it by a 10 to five vote, choosing to leave single-family zones mostly untouched.

In a speech to fellow council members, Raman said that by not allowing more housing in single-family zones, the city was directing too much development into existing multifamily areas, which would result in the frequent demolition of existing apartments and [displacement](#) of tenants.

“What this plan is doing right now is putting a target on their backs,” Raman said of tenants. Some councilmembers who voted against Raman’s proposal expressed interest in allowing more housing in such areas at a future time, but wanted a more tailored approach.

“I’d like us to keep the conversation going,” said Councilmember Bob Blumenfield, who represents the central San Fernando Valley. “But that is a complicated question.”