

**ADMINISTRATIVE MANUAL  
LOS ANGELES COUNTY PUBLIC WORKS  
GEOTECHNICAL AND MATERIALS ENGINEERING DIVISION**

## RESTRICTED USE AREAS

Each lot of a subdivision must have, or bonds must be provided to establish, a geotechnically safe buildable area and access free of geotechnical hazards at the time of recordation of the Final Map. Exemptions include, but may not be limited to, "Open Space Lots," "Ungraded Site Lots," and "Remainder Parcels." If any portion of a division of land is subject to geologic hazard, dedication of building-restriction rights [i.e., Restricted Use Area (RUA)] over the geological hazard area is required. A "Restricted Use Area" is recorded on the final map giving the County of Los Angeles the right to restrict building within this area. The dedication is made during the Final Map process (see County of Los Angeles Subdivision Code Section §21.44.320 and Government Code Section 25367). Divisions of land in which each resultant parcel has a gross area of 40 acres or more do not require the recordation of "Restricted Use Areas." If a "Restricted Use Area" or any other dedication is to be made for a minor land division, then that minor land division is ineligible for a parcel map waiver (County of Los Angeles Subdivision Code §21.48.140).

Onsite soils susceptible to hydroconsolidation, highly expansive soils, excessive settlement, lateral spread, liquefaction, or seismically induced settlement are not considered geologic hazards for the purpose of Code enforcement, and therefore, are not designated as RUAs.

However, if a portion of a subdivision is identified as having soils subject to hydroconsolidation, highly expansive soils, excessive settlement, lateral spread, liquefaction, or seismically induced settlement, the consultant must recommend corrective work. If the subdivider is not proposing to complete or bond for corrective work, the following "Geotechnical Note" (GN) is required on the Final Map:

"According to the Geotechnical Consultants of Record, parts or all of Lot(s) (*lot numbers*) are subject to hydroconsolidation, highly expansive soils, excessive settlement, lateral spread, liquefaction, or seismically induced settlement. For location of geotechnical hazards and corrective work requirements for access and building areas of Lot(s) (*lot numbers*), refer to geotechnical reports by (*consultants*) dated (*date*)."

Geologic hazards include, but are not limited to, areas subject to landsliding, debris flows, and active fault traces. Unmitigated geologic hazards shall be the basis for determining "Restricted Use Areas" and their delineation on the Final Map.

On a very limited basis, an area suspected of having a geologic hazard that has not been geotechnically explored and is not likely to affect the proposed development, may be designated as a "Restricted Use Area" in lieu of exploration, at the request of the geotechnical consultant(s) and the property owner.

Geotextiles used in the support of slopes or retaining walls are also required to be designated as "Restricted Use Areas." An additional 10 feet beyond the area of the geotextiles must be included within the RUA to allow for potential future maintenance or replacement of the geotextiles. Excavations in the geotextile areas for swimming pools and footings, planting of trees, etc., can damage the geotextiles and negatively impact the stability of slopes, retaining walls, and potentially off-site properties.

"Restricted Use Areas" must be designated and shown on the Final Map prior to approval and may be shown on the tentative map and grading plan. The geotechnical consultant(s) shall show the extent of "Restricted Use Areas" and geotechnical hazards that warrant the use of "Geotechnical Notes" on the geotechnical map. Extent of RUAs and GNs shall be based on substantiating geotechnical data. Prior to Final Map recordation, the geotechnical consultant must indicate and delineate in their report/letter whether or not "Restricted Use Areas" or "Geotechnical Notes" are required.

Geotechnical Development Review Unit reviewers shall consider the following for evaluation of "Restricted Use Areas" and "Geotechnical Notes":

1. Geotechnical hazards must be properly identified, defined, and mapped.
2. Geotechnical hazards that pose a threat to adjoining parcels must be corrected in accordance with established criteria in order to eliminate the threat and may not be placed in "Restricted Use Areas" (see GS086.0).
3. Unmitigated geologic hazards must be designated as "Restricted Use Areas."
4. Future development in a recorded "Restricted Use Area" may be permitted upon submittal and approval of corrective work plans for the geological hazard and additional geotechnical information. Removal of the "Restricted Use Area" designation from the recorded Final Map is not required.
5. Modification and abandonment of "Restricted Use Areas" can be made after the Final Map is recorded by filing a request through Survey/Mapping & Property Management Division. A report and geotechnical map are required to describe the proposed corrective work and delineate the change. Corrective work plans shall be supported with geotechnical data and analyses when RUA modifications or abandonments are proposed.

6. Final Maps with "Restricted Use Areas" shall be processed and reviewed as follows:
- Boundaries of the "Restricted Use Area" shall be shown on the map, as required by the Subdivision Mapping Section.
  - A Portable Document Format (PDF) copy of the map is required to be approved by the geotechnical consultant(s), by electronic signature, date, and an approval statement on all sheets.
  - Approved maps shall be uploaded to the Epic-LA plan case and distributed by the Geotechnical Development Review Unit to the appropriate Building Official's District Office, and/or the Subdivision Mapping Section of Land Development Division, and the applicant.
  - Transmittal of the map to the Building Official's District Office shall include a letter with an explanatory statement that "Restricted Use Areas" are included on the map. Utilize Form 12 to transmit the map.
7. Final Maps with "Geotechnical Notes" shall be processed and reviewed as follows:
- A PDF copy of the map is required to be approved by the geotechnical consultant(s), by electronic signature, date, and an approval statement on all sheets.
  - Approved maps shall be uploaded to the Epic-LA plan case and distributed by the Geotechnical Development Review Unit to the appropriate Building Official's District Office and/or the Subdivision Mapping Section of Land Development Division, and the applicant.
  - Transmittal of the map to the Building Official's District Office shall include a letter with an explanatory statement that "Geotechnical Notes" are included on the map. Utilize Form 12 to transmit the map.

Approved By:



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William Man  
Division Head