MORE PLANNING, LESS REACTING
A Plan for a Comprehensive Zoning Code Revision

April 2012
PROJECT OVERVIEW

Proposed 5-Year Budget Plan & Work Program
Project Proposal

Five-Year Work Program, Three Deliverables:
- Dynamic Web-Based Zoning Code
- Layperson’s Guide to Zoning
- Unified Downtown Development Code

Project Team made up of City Employees and Planning, Environmental, & Web Consultants
Project Financing – No New General Fund Impact

Construction Services Trust Fund

- Planning/Design Consultant
- Environmental Consultant
- Web Development Group

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General Plan Maintenance Surcharge

- 6 Existing Employees (No New Funding Needed)
- 7 New Employees

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## Preliminary Project Phasing Plan

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Consultant Selection

Process & Procedures

Unified Downtown Development Code

New Zoning System

Citywide Standards
Project Staff & Oversight Committees

Oversight Committees
- Policy Advisory Committee
  - Vehicle for Public Meetings
- Technical Advisory Committee
  - Vehicle for Process Improvement

City Staff
- City Planning
- Building & Safety
- City Attorney

Project Consultants
- Planning
- Environmental
- Web Development
Public Participation

- Policy Advisory Committee Meetings
- Regional Forums
  - Based on 7 Area Planning Commission Boundaries
- Stakeholder Group Meetings
- Project Website
  - Desktop & Mobile
- Other Supplemental Methods
  - Electronic Mailing List, Quarterly Newsletters, Social Networks, etc.
Implementation Strategies

Agricultural, Single-Family, Open Space, and Public Facility Zones: 67%

Multi-Family, Commercial, and Industrial Zones: 33%
HISTORY & BACKGROUND

How did we get here?
History & Background

- Last comprehensive revision to Zoning Code was in 1946
- Consolidated 11 separate Zoning Ordinances into 1
- “... thus ending much confusion.”
History & Background

- Grown from 84 small-format pages to over 600 standard-format pages
Current Problems

- Thousands of Zoning Code Interpretations
- Countless Memos
- These make up the “Phantom” Code
## Over 70 Different Entitlements

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60% of the City is covered by special overlays, and site-specific conditions (Qs, Ts, & Ds) shown in dark brown on the left.

Majority of properties have 2 or more different sets of regulations.
Current Problems

- Majority of resources are now devoted to Cases, Administration and Support (86%)

**Department Budget Allocation**

- Case Processing: 61%
- Admin and Support: 25%
- Community Planning: 10%
- Citywide Planning: 4%
50 Largest U.S. Cities

- Between 1999 and 2011, 33 of the largest 50 U.S. cities* have either completed, or have completely revised their Zoning Codes


- Of these 50 cities, Los Angeles has the second oldest Zoning Code in effect
  - City with the oldest code is Cleveland, Ohio
PROJECT BENEFITS

What are the benefits of a New Zoning Code?
Accessible & Streamlined Code

New Denver Zoning Code
Accessible & Streamlined Code

New Downtown Fresno Code
R1 ZONE SETBACKS

1. **Front Yard.** There shall be a front yard of not less than 20% of the depth of the lot, but such front yard need not exceed 20 feet; provided, however that where all of the developed lots which have front yards that vary in depth by not more than ten feet comprise 40% or more of the frontage, the minimum front yard shall be the average depth of the front yards of such lots. Where there are two or more possible combinations of developed lots comprising 40% or more of the frontage, each of which as front yards that vary in depth by not more than ten feet, the minimum front yard depth shall be the average depth of the front yards of that combination which has the shallowest average depth. In determining the required front yard, buildings located on key lots, entirely on the rear half of lots, or on lots in the “C” or “M” Zones, shall not be counted; provided, however, that nothing contained in this paragraph shall be deemed to require front yards which exceed 40 feet in depth. (Amended by Ord. No. 139,155, Eff. 10/16/69.)

On key lots the minimum front yard may be the average of the required front yard for the adjoining interior lot and the required side yard along the street side of a reversed corner lot, such minimum front yard may apply for a distance of not more than 65 feet from the rear lot line of the reversed corner lot, beyond which point the front yard specified in the above paragraph shall apply. Where existing buildings on either or both of said adjoining lots are located nearer to the front or side lot lines than the yards required by this article, the yards established by such existing buildings may be used in computing the required front yard for a key lot.

2. **Side Yards.** (Amended by Ord. No. 169,775, Eff. 6/2/94.)

(a) For a main building not more than two-stories in height, there shall be a side yard on each side of the building of not less than five feet, except that where the lot is less than 50 feet in width, the side yard may be reduced to ten percent of the width of the lot, but in no event to less than three feet in width. For a building more than two-stories in height, one-foot shall be added to the width of each yard for each additional story above the second story.

(b) In lieu of the additional one-foot side yard for each story above the second story as required above, for new construction of a main building or a ground floor addition to the main building on a lot not located in a Hillside Area or Coastal Zone, one-foot shall be added to each required side yard for each increment of ten feet or fraction thereof above the first 18 feet. [See Figure 1 below]

(c) Side yard requirements in specific plans, Historic Preservation Overlay Zones or in subdivision approvals shall take precedence over this subdivision. This subdivision shall apply in these areas, however, when there are no such side yard requirements.

3. **Rear Yard.** There shall be a rear yard of not less than 15 feet in depth. (Amended by Ord. No. 121,925, Eff. 6/4/62.)

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<th>Table 1</th>
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<tr>
<td>Not less than:</td>
<td>20% of LD</td>
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<tr>
<td>Need not exceed:</td>
<td>20 ft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Side Yard</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not less than:</td>
<td>5 ft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need not exceed:</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The required side yard may be reduced to 10% of the Lot Width, but in no event to less than 3 ft, if the lot is less than the following widths:</td>
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<tr>
<td>For buildings or structures with a height larger than 18 feet:</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Rear Yard</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Not less than:</td>
<td>15 ft</td>
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<tr>
<td>Need not exceed:</td>
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*Only applicable for lots which are of record prior to July 1, 1966.
Accessible & Streamlined Code

- Simpler Review Process for All Stakeholders
- Easy to Read & User-Friendly
- More Tables & Graphics
- Written & Designed as Interactive On-Line Document
- Support/Consistent with BuildLA Efforts
More Effective Community Planning Tools

- More Planning, Less Reacting; Predictable Outcomes for All Stakeholders
- More Zoning Options that Better Address Community Vision & Concerns
- More Effective Integration of Private Property & Public Realm
Downtown Revitalization

- Ensure that Downtown Los Angeles poised to take advantage of ongoing economic recovery
- Maximize on transportation infrastructure investment in Downtown
Economic Development Tool

- Faster approval of projects consistent with community vision and plans
  - Prolonged project timelines act as disincentive to new development/investment
- Better set of community planning tools to establish more responsible “by-right” development
  - Predictable outcomes for developers and community alike
- Create more Jobs and expand the City’s Tax Base through increased land value

- Better Code, best Economic Development Tool available in a Post-Redevelopment California
Thank You

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