

10-30-2016

Hermitage illegal street relinquishment, destruction of existing affordable housing, removal of public parking, removing sustainable property for unaffordable and unreasonable project that has no standing.

CouncilMembers Huizar, Price Jr., Englander, Cedillo, Harris-Dawson,

The public records for this case have provided proof that the developers don't own all of the land.

The City is giving away Weddington Street to the developers which is against state law. When use is provided as evidence, that rejects any request for secondary use in this case, privatization.

The City believes the site location is in a public transportation area which is why you may feel free to add density.

The public records for this case have provided proof that other high density buildings in public transportation areas still have cars, don't take public transportation, don't have enough parking and park on the street.

The public records for this case fail to provide any evidence that density in public transportation areas minimize traffic and overcrowded parking conditions in these neighborhoods.

There is also no evidence to support any bizarre notion that the individuals who may purchase these unaffordable homes take the orange line.

Have any of you ever been on the Orange line?

Because it's no high luxury experience. There is no evidence to support this fantasy.

If the proper studies and research were done in the community for the proposal, it would find the location is completely inappropriate.

Additionally no mitigation measures have been taken to replace the affordable housing units. Tenants rents begin at **\$440. a month up to \$1200.00 a month.**

The records for this case also fail to provide available housing units in the area with equal or better conditions which tenants have been accustomed to and required by their life standards.

Please consider these and other factors before you when playing with peoples lives.

Ahmed Kazarian

***“..Planners who seek to emulate Boston or New York, or to avoid the less desirable elements of LA, will go astray if they simply focus on increasing density., “***

***“in the future planners and policymakers might find it useful to assess the perceived density of the places they are trying to improve. Policymaking is about people, after all, so perhaps we are better off examining density as people experience it. ”***

***“Eventually, with degraded service and longer wait times, even many of the poor may stop riding the bus.”***

***“Once people buy cars, they probably will not return to public transportation. “***

***What Density Doesn't Tell Us About Sprawl  
ERIC EIDLIN***

Oct 24, 2016

Council File -16-1048

Hermitage / Weddington Valley Village

Dear Councilman Huizar, Councilmember Englander, Councilmember Price Jr., Councilmember Cedillo and Councilmember Harris-Dawson.

I would like to tell you that as an Armenian living in Valley Village I have seen a lot of things I would preferred not to see. The Armenian developers choose this neighborhood because of one reason. There is an understanding between Paul Kerkorian and any Armenian that wants to demolish in his district area.

I did not want believe for a very long time this was the case but I have personally witnessed these myself. It made me feel disgust.

It should mean nothing whether an Armenian or a Latino or a Asian, why does this matter? This matters very much in the Armenian community especially between officials like Paul Kerkorian and Adrin Nazarian.

District 2 is not Paul's district. This is the peoples district. Paul moved to the area so he could run for office at the time a seat because available. Anything I am telling you needs to be public information because now the district 7 is in danger of Karo Torossian inflicting the same harm.

I find this inexcusable that your vote would be just because of your fear of not voting for what somebody else wants. What Paul wants is more finances for himself. Paul remains to be seen. He remains to be heard from. No one has heard a word from this man when thousands of gone to him asking for support.

When a district councilmember fails its community and the people have no choice but to reach out to the other district members you have a responsibility to treat them like your own.

It is time to set the lesson that so many have come to you because the choice has been his to choose neighborhood destruction. The choice has always been his.

I hope this committee can understand what this means and why upholding this appeal is so important. I have been a regular visitor to this corner and user of the public street for a very very long time.

I have family in all of your districts. You represent me as well.  
Armen.

Pursuant to Section **66473.5 of the Subdivision Map Act**, A proposed subdivision **shall be consistent with a general plan or a specific plan** only if the local agency has officially adopted such a plan and the proposed subdivision or land use is **compatible with the objectives, policies, general land uses, and programs specified in such a plan.**<sup>1</sup>

The Valley Village Specific Plan was adopted in 1993 for one purpose. That purpose was in response to residents who expressed their concerns regarding what was happening in their environment. Their concerns were addressed with the initiation of the specific plan.

The **SOLE objectives** were to ensure character and compatibility were followed.

The Specific Plan was NOT initiated to uproot **already in place residents**.

The Specific Plan was NOT initiated to demolish **already in place affordable housing**.

The Specific Plan was NOT initiated so an applicant can apply what he or she chooses from the plan and request exceptions for the rest.

The Specific Plan has **objectives, policies** and programs clearly outlined which are defined by the residents in the community who have come this far as a result of having those guidelines followed.<sup>2</sup>

65567. No building permit may be issued, no subdivision map approved, and no open-space zoning ordinance adopted, unless the proposed construction, subdivision or ordinance is **consistent with the local open-space plan**.

The Subdivision Map Act is just one reference to a Government Code defining requirements, which the proposed fails to meet.

Please also see:

California Government Codes: 65030., 65030.1., 65033., 65041.1., 65302.(d), 65400., 65560., 65561., 65562., 65564., 65567., 65580., 65584., 65589.5, 65915..

Los Angeles Municipal Codes: SEC. 11.5.6, SEC. 11.5.7.

**B. Relationship To Provisions of Specific Plans. If any procedure established in a specific plan conflicts with any procedure set forth in this section, the provisions of this section shall prevail.**

Existing neighborhood staples; properties which have been the foundation of what developed the community to begin with are not disposable.

## **GENERAL PLAN ELEMENTS<sup>3</sup> - - intended to be reviewed when reviewing projects that potentially jeopardize existing communities.**

- Air Quality Element
- Conservation Element
- Historic Preservation and Cultural Resources
- Housing Element
- Infrastructure Systems Element
- Noise Element
- Open Space Element
- Safety Element

### **~ Chapter 1 The General Plan System**

*“Framework Element strategies build upon the historic physical form and character of Los Angeles in a manner that enhances, rather than degrades”*

#### ***Environmental Quality***

***Environmental quality means cleaner air, enhanced mobility, and accessible open space, and is a foundation for attracting and retaining economic investment and improving neighborhood liveability. Limited resources should be used wisely so that the needs of today can be met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet the needs of tomorrow.***

### **COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT**

*Community involvement in the preparation of the Framework Element consisted of 60 neighborhood and two citywide public workshops. Over 3,000 persons participated in these events.*

### **~ Chapter 2 Growth and Capacity**

*“The General Plan Framework Element is population growth neutral: it is not the intent of the Framework Element to cause any specific level of population growth to occur. It is a plan to accommodate whatever growth does occur in the future, which could include loss of population”*

#### **FRAMEWORK ELEMENT THEORETICAL BUILDOUT**

*“Theoretical Buildout” will not happen. Experience indicates that many properties would not be developed to their maximum permitted densities.*

### **~ Chapter 3 - Land Use GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES / ISSUE TWO: USES, DENSITY, AND CHARACTER**

#### **MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL**

##### **Overview**

***It is the intent of the Framework Element to maintain existing stable multi-family residential neighborhoods. Permitted densities may be reduced to levels consistent with the character of the entire area in order to minimize impacts on infrastructure, services, and/or maintain or enhance the residents' quality of life.***

### Council File: 95-0830



Council adopt the Resolution amending the parking area on the a Plan Map from Neighborhood Commercial and Public / Quasi Public to Neighborhood Commercial for the entire 10.84 acre site located at the northwest corner of Vineland Avenue and Victory Boulevard.

3-2-98 - File to Planning and Land Use Management Committee Clerk OK

3-5-98 - File in files

9-14-99 - This day's Council session - Motion - Wachs Mover 1999 / Ferraro / Feuer - The Valley

Village Specific Plan was adopted by the City Council in 1993 in order to curtail adverse impacts created by commercial and multiple residential uses in a traditionally single family zoned neighborhood. Such impacts have been excessive traffic, crowded parking on adjoining resident all streets, inappropriate and undesirable commercial uses that are incompatible with the surrounding area, and commercial and residential developments built to a scale that are incompatible with adjoining residential neighborhoods.

To curtail such negative impacts, the plan prohibits certain commercial uses, restricts the height of any building near single family zone neighborhoods, restricts the use of balconies and rooftop recreation area,s prohibits ay new off-site or roof top signs, provides landscape standards for new development, and guarantees street improvements for any new project to be at standards as set up in the municipal code.

Members of the Valley Village community have indicated that further protections are necessary, including: language to provide more parking for multiple family and commercial projects, further restrictions on signage, building design standards, utility under grounding, prohibitions of certain commercial uses, additional provisions for landscape improvements, and restrictions on the location and camouflaging of satellite dishes and cellular telecommunication facilities in Valley Village. THEREFORE MOVE, that the Planning Dept consult with representatives of the Valley Village community, and the Council Offices representing Valley Village, to address the above mentioned concerns, and, with the assistance of the City Attorney, amend the Valley Village Specific Pan accordingly.

9-14-99 - Ref to Planning and Land Use Management Committee

9-14-99 - File to Planning and Land Use Management Committee Clerk

9-23-99 - Set for Planning and Land Use Management Committee on September 28, 1999

9-28-99 - Planning and Land Use Management Committee Disposition - Referred to Plan staff

9-29-99 - File to Plan; Attn: Community Planning per Planning and Land Use Management Committee Clerk req

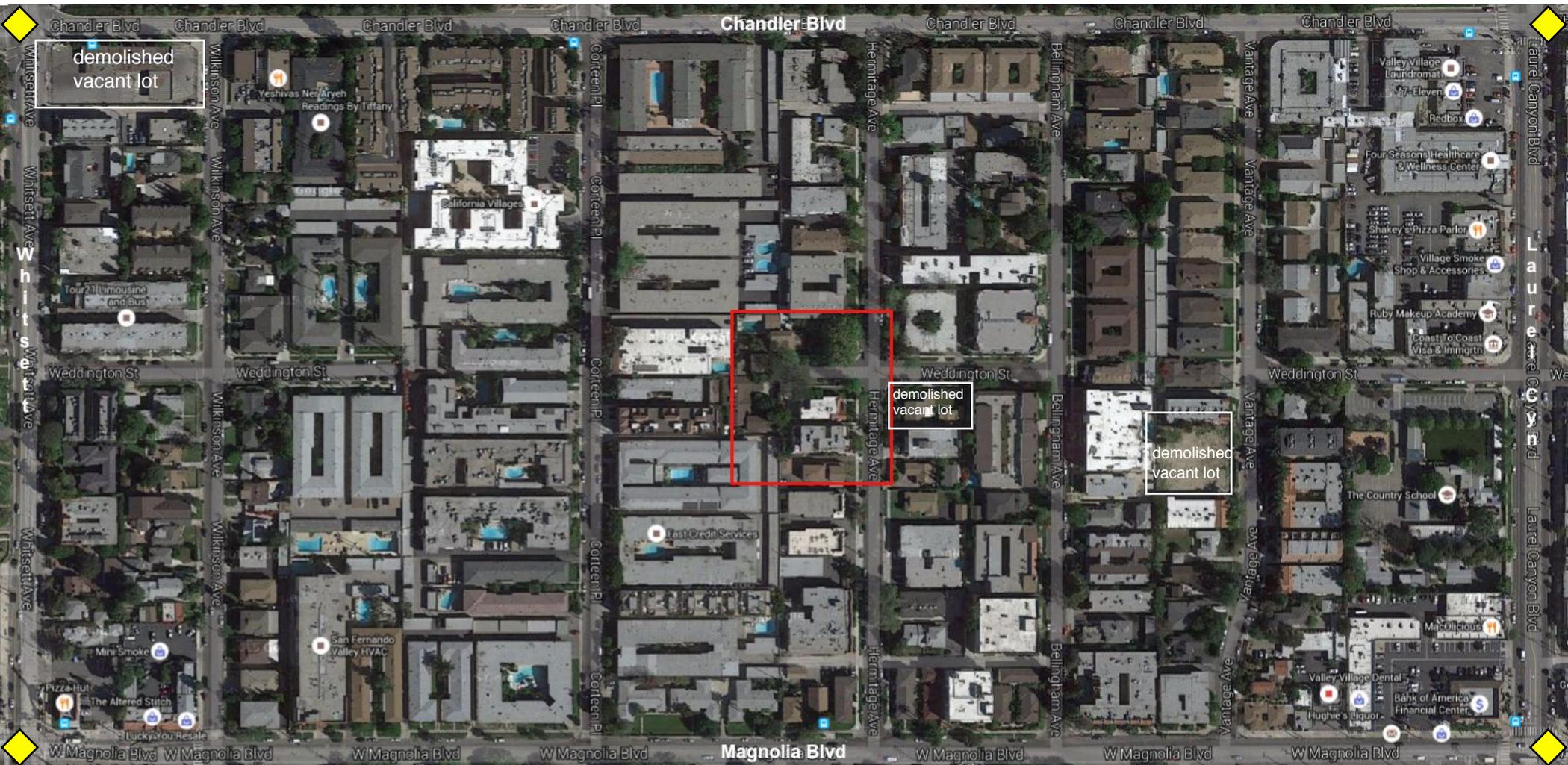
### Online Documents (Doc)

Title	Doc Date
Final Ordinance No. 171867	01/30/1997
Final Ordinance No. 171096	07/07/1996

### Council Vote Information

No votes were found.

Below is an ariel photo taken from Google maps covering a 1.4 total mile radius. (1280 acres)  
3,261,209.66 ft<sup>2</sup> / 327,6000 sf radius (76 acres)



National Recreation and Parks Association recommends 10 acres of open space for every 1,000 residents.  
The above area is less than one.

Park Score for all Los Angeles: 46/100

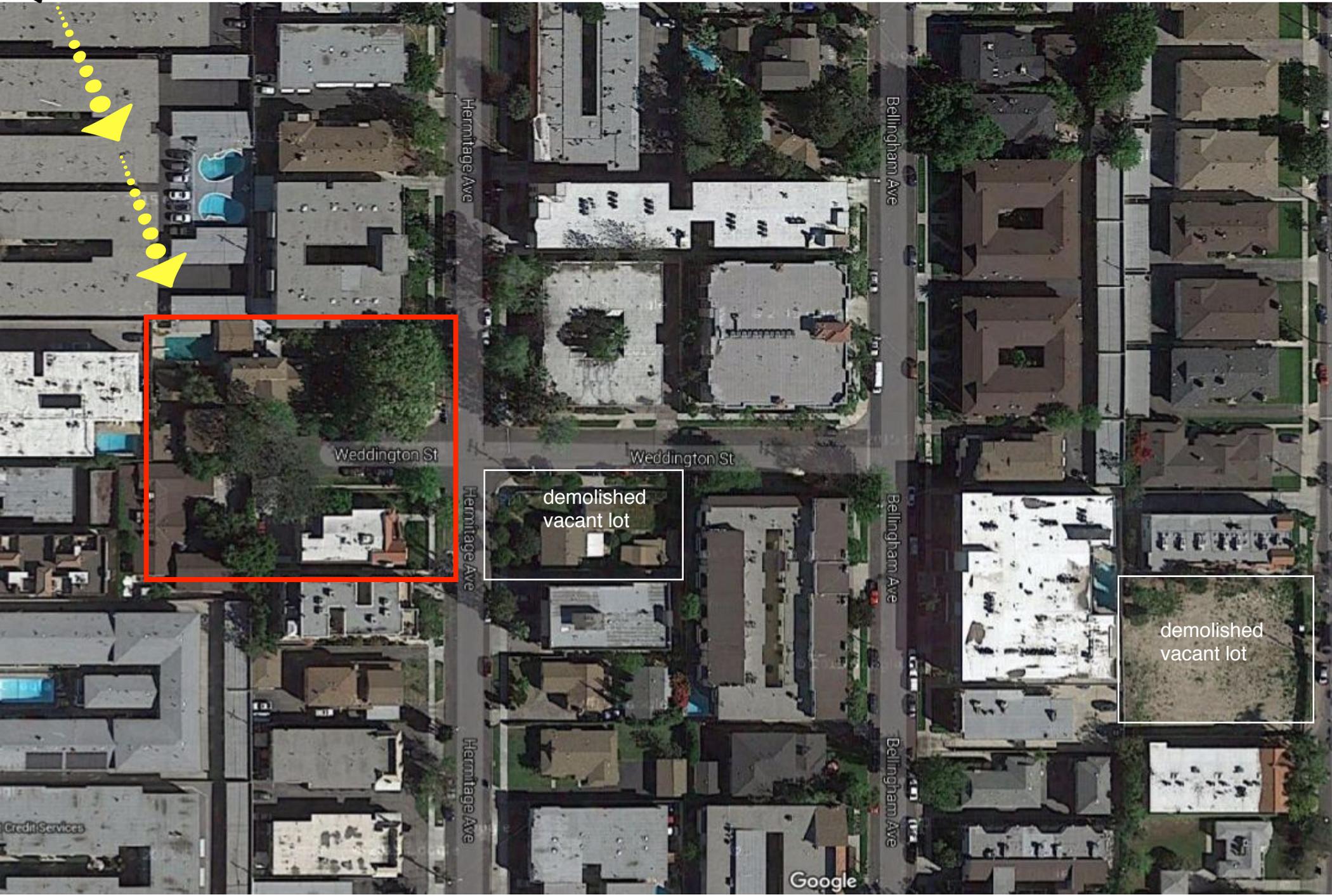
Zip Code 91607= 2.5 sq. miles

Estimated population in zip code 91607: 27,927

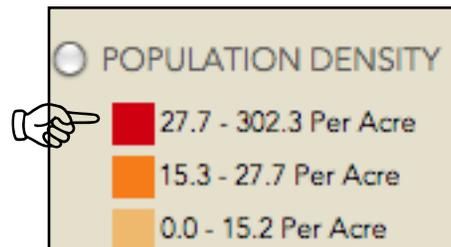
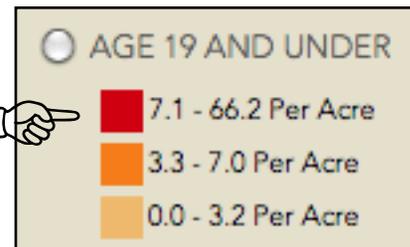
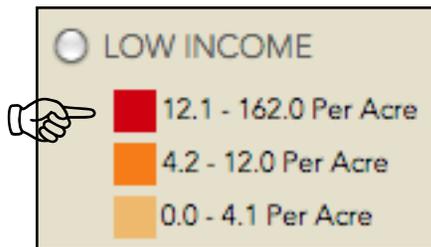
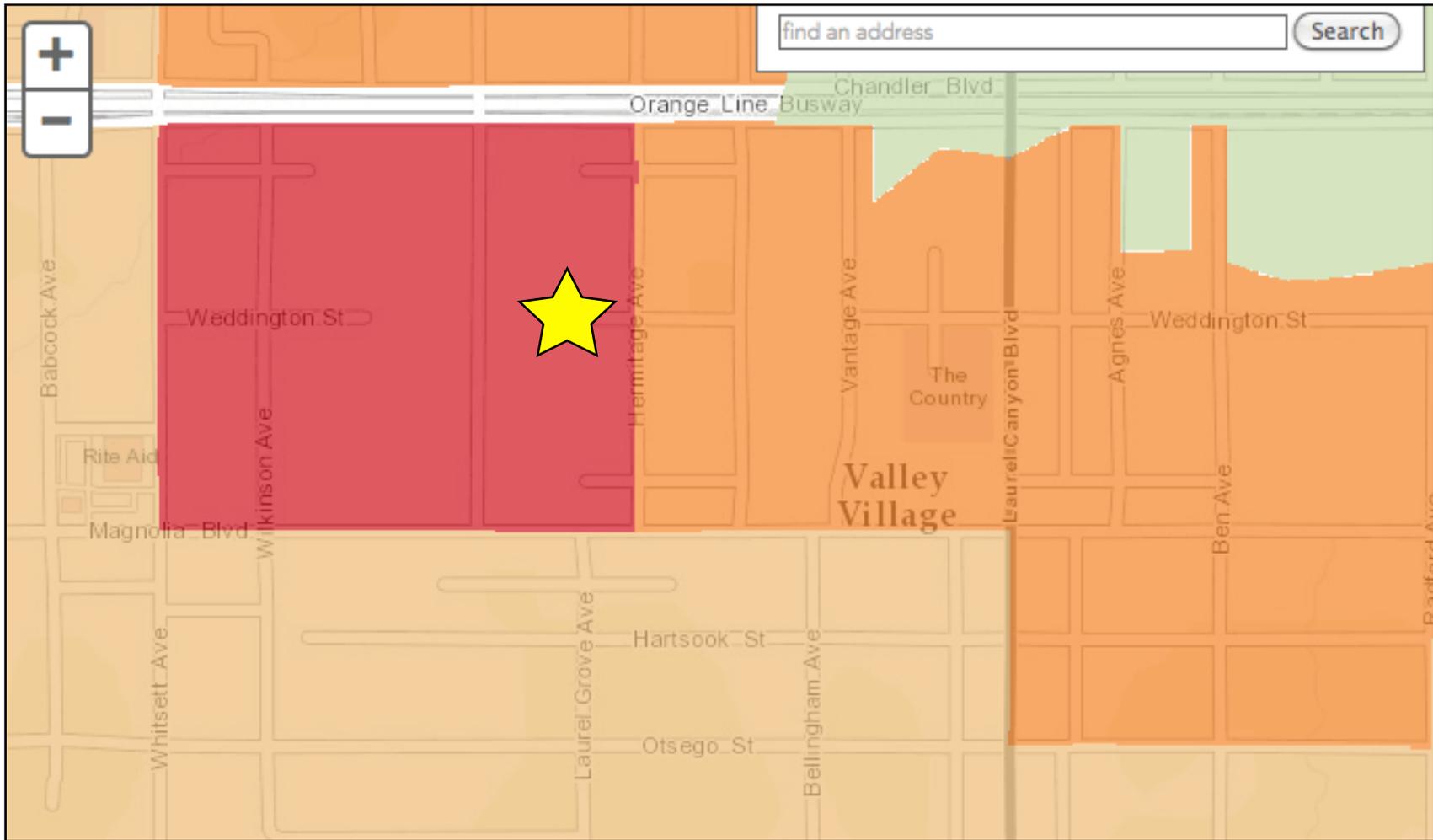
1 acre= 43,560 sf

source: GoogleMaps  
iTree

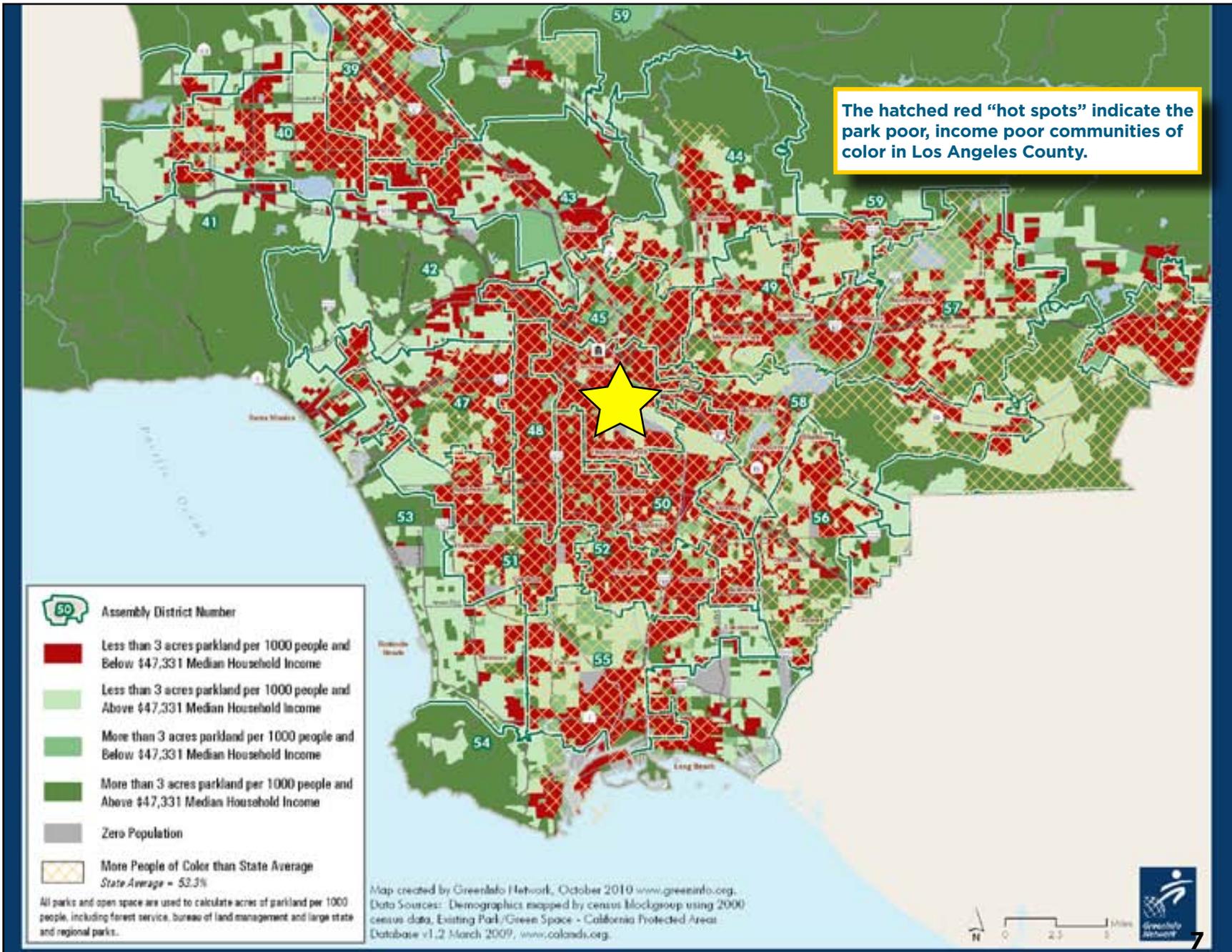
ONLY area left with any **green density** is the corner at Hermitage and Weddington, which has taken nearly a century to establish and form.



RED indicates there is an open and green space emergency.

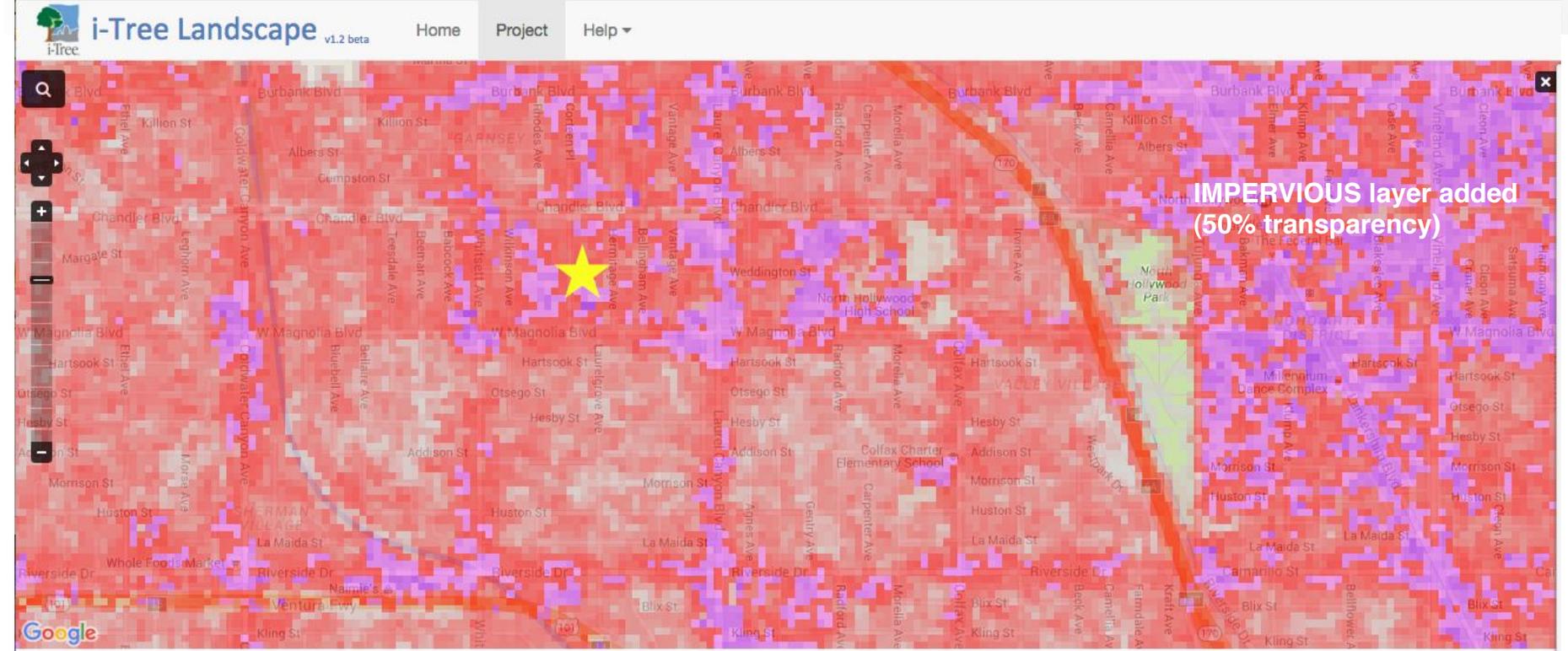
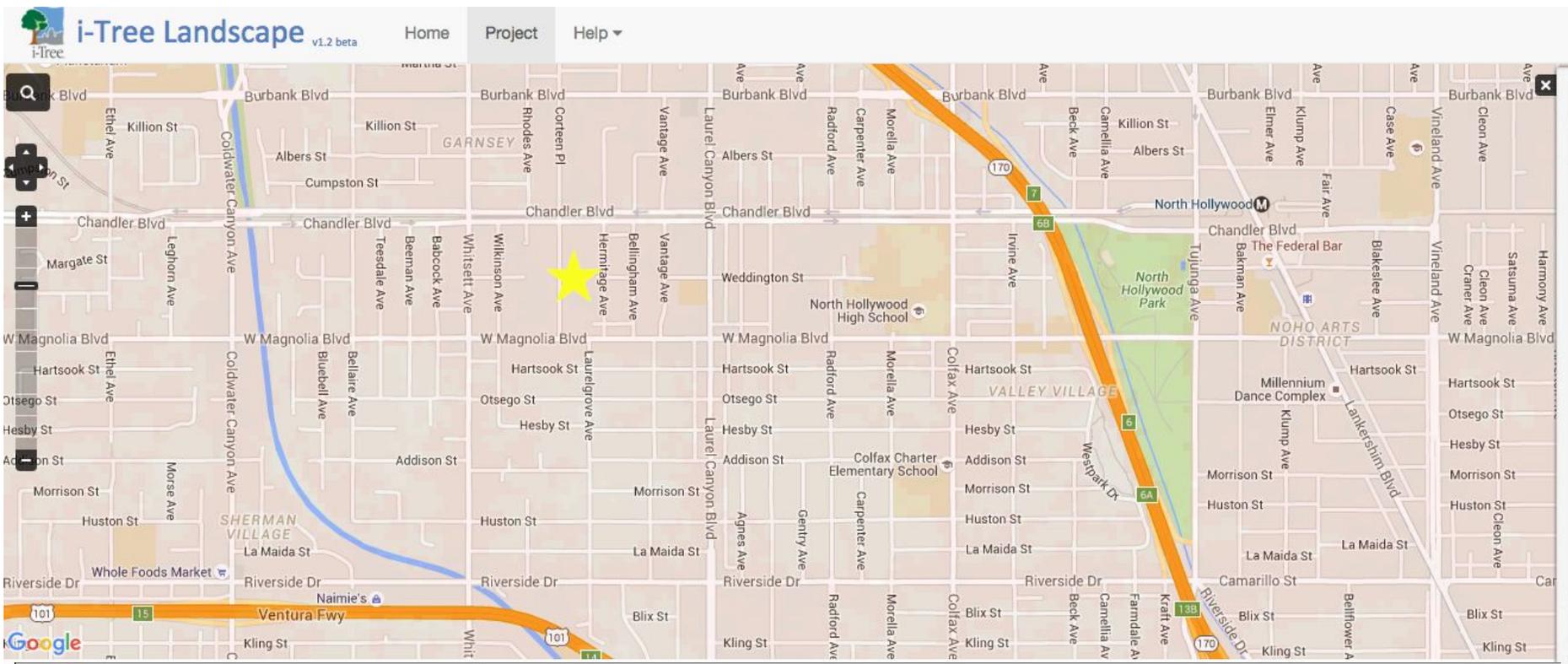


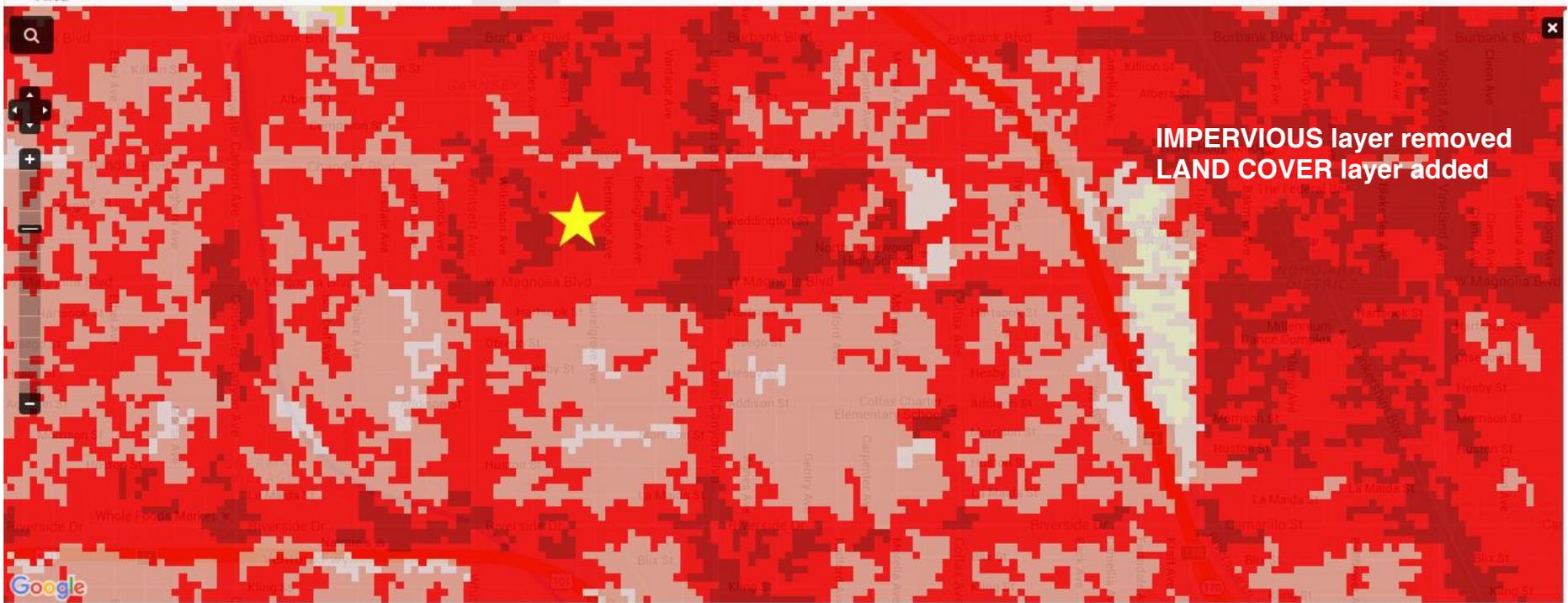
 = corner of Hermitage and Weddington



**Our area is between 0 and 1 acre of open space per 1,000 residents.**

 = corner of Hermitage and Weddington





Land Cover Classifications

Developed, Open Space	Areas with a mixture of some constructed materials, but mostly vegetation in the form of lawn grasses. Impervious surfaces account for less than 20% of total cover. These areas most commonly include large-lot single-family housing units, parks, golf courses, and vegetation planted in developed settings for recreation, erosion control, or aesthetic purposes.
Developed, Low Intensity	Areas with a mixture of constructed materials and vegetation. Impervious surfaces account for 20% to 49% percent of total cover. These areas most commonly include single-family housing units.
Developed, Medium Intensity	Areas with a mixture of constructed materials and vegetation. Impervious surfaces account for 50% to 79% of the total cover. These areas most commonly include single-family housing units.
Developed, High Intensity	Highly developed areas where people reside or work in high numbers. Examples include apartment complexes, row houses and commercial/industrial. Impervious surfaces account for 80% to 100% of the total cover.
Deciduous Forest	Areas dominated by trees generally greater than 5 meters tall, and greater than 20% of total vegetation cover. More than 75% of the tree species shed foliage simultaneously in response to seasonal change.
Evergreen Forest	Areas dominated by trees generally greater than 5 meters tall, and greater than 20% of total vegetation cover. More than 75% of the tree species maintain their leaves all year. Canopy is never without green foliage.
Mixed Forest	Areas dominated by trees generally greater than 5 meters tall, and greater than 20% of total vegetation cover. Neither deciduous nor evergreen species are greater than 75% of total tree cover.

is a big problem and will not get solved or put in the right direction without the preservation of our EXISTING TREES AND OPEN SPACE. The above image is supposed to show green.

The aforesaid are the FACTS that have been proven in black and white before you. When there are attempts made at disproving so many brazen facts, the reasonable conclusion would be to ask why. What is personally gained by attempting to falsify factual elements of our city and neighborhoods.

There has been a substantial amount of documentation previously submitted into the record for this case reciting over and over how and where our community is guaranteed to never fulfill the needs of the proposed enterprise. Previous attempts at such an undertaking resulted in immediate failure, forcing the owners to file bankruptcy due to a 75% vacancy rate.

More importantly, you have sufficient evidence revealing there is a complete lack of fulfilling the existing communities needs; not mentioning the abuse and manipulation of city and state regulations that is exhibited.

The 2012 study *Tree and impervious cover change in U.S. cities* proved Los Angeles to have the highest increase of impervious cover a year at 500 hectares! Projects like this that are permitted to supplant residential established areas is why.

Should the applicants choose to move forward with their 'plans', it is self-evident that a 200 page MND fails to provide sufficient and realistic data. There would be no reason to not enforce the proper requirements of a full EIR. Existing flora is responsible for currently removing **30 short tons of carbon per year and more than 20 pounds of Air Pollution.\***

As you have already been made aware there is a substantial amount of trees, shrubbery, open space and valuable resources that have been omitted in the existing report, thus giving the department a completely falsified hypothesis on impact.

In addition to the foregoing, residents and members of the general public are finding it difficult to provide input on proposals so out of compliance with our specific and community plans that appear to be much more of a pipe-dream than anything else. Considering the presumption of successfully obtaining a street vacation of a valuable public street produces an entirely new collection of impacts, that again, are positioned well outside of the specific and community plan. Please reference the provided and attached documentation which are clearly identified.

The community thanks and appreciates the departments time in reviewing our submissions.

Sincerely,

Peter Salzmann and Roger Garris, Valley Village

pr.salzmann@sociologist.com  
rogerthat@graduate.org

*sources index:*

<sup>1</sup> CALIFORNIA GOVERNMENT CODE; TITLE 7. PLANNING AND LAND USE; DIVISION 2. SUBDIVISIONS; CHAPTER 4. REQUIREMENTS ; Article 1. General

<sup>2</sup> ORDINANCE 168613; COUNCIL FILE 91-0911-S2; VALLEY VILLAGE SPECIFIC PLAN

<sup>3</sup> City of Los Angeles General Plan Framework

<sup>4</sup> LACity Council File 95-0830

<sup>5</sup> HEALTHY PARKS, SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITIES: Green Access and Equity for Los Angeles County 2011; The City Project-Park Communities, p 5

Those donors gave more than \$600,000 to support Hahn, Mayor Eric Garcetti and other L.A.-area politicians between 2008 and 2015, as Leung was seeking city approval for the \$72-million development in L.A.'s Harbor Gateway neighborhood, north of the Port of Los Angeles, The Times found.

Donors **directly or indirectly linked** to developer **Samuel Leung** gave more than \$600,000 over eight years. Among those who benefited from the money were:



**Janice Hahn**  
U.S. Congress  
\$203,500



**Joe Buscaino**  
City Council  
\$94,700



**Mitchell Englander**  
City Council  
\$65,800



**Eric Garcetti\***  
Mayor  
\$60,000



**Jose Huizar**  
City Council  
\$30,400



**Nury Martinez**  
City Council  
\$7,700

\*Contributions went to an independent campaign committee that supported Garcetti, but was not controlled by him.  
Photos: Irfan Khan, Francine Orr, Al Schaben / Los Angeles Times

More than \$30,000 went to Councilman Jose Huizar, who heads the powerful council committee that reversed the Planning Commission's decision and approved Leung's project. At least \$65,800 went to Councilman Mitch Englander, who sits on that committee with Huizar.

# A focus on fundraising 16-1048

With Sea Breeze heading for a vote, the contributors with ties to Leung focused their fundraising efforts on the three members of the City Council’s planning committee — Englander, Huizar and Councilman Gil Cedillo.

[thics.lacity.org/disclosure/campaign/search/public\\_search\\_results.cfm?showall=yes&requesttimeout=1000&](https://thics.lacity.org/disclosure/campaign/search/public_search_results.cfm?showall=yes&requesttimeout=1000&)

05/19/14	<b>Universal Waste Systems, Inc.</b> (Other, non-individual) Santa Fe Springs, CA 90670-2532	<b>Mitchell Englander</b> Council Member - District 12  1362652 - Mitchell Englander for City Council 2015
02/24/15	<b>Urban Blox</b> (Other, non-individual) Los Angeles, CA 90069-1709	<b>Mitchell Englander</b> Council Member - District 12  1362652 - Mitchell Englander for City Council 2015
11/11/14	<b>Urban Concepts</b> (Other, non-individual) Los Angeles, CA 90010-2811	<b>Mitchell Englander</b> Council Member - District 12  1362652 - Mitchell Englander for City Council 2015

[pf&cand\\_per\\_id=7730&rept\\_type=AllCon&SCHEDULE=A%...](#) ☆ ⋮

A - Monetary Contribution Received	\$700.00
<i>Period: <a href="#">01/01/14 to 06/30/14</a> Election: 03/03/15</i>	
A - Monetary Contribution Received	\$700.00
<i>Period: <a href="#">02/15/15 to 02/25/15</a> Election: 03/03/15</i>	
A - Monetary Contribution Received	\$700.00
<i>Period: <a href="#">10/01/14 to 12/31/14</a></i>	

05/01/14	<b>Urbana Inc.</b> (Other, non-individual) Los Angeles, CA 90004-2498	<b>Jose Huizar</b> Council Member - District 14  1360239 - Huizar for LA City Council 2015
06/16/14	<b>Urban Blox</b> (Other, non-individual) Los Angeles, CA 90069-1709	<b>Jose Huizar</b> Council Member - District 14  1360239 - Huizar for LA City Council 2015
A - Monetary Contribution Received	\$500.00	
<i>Period: <a href="#">01/01/14 to 06/30/14</a></i>		
A - Monetary Contribution Received	\$350.00	
<i>Period: <a href="#">01/01/14 to 06/30/14</a></i>		

Firm/Employer	Clients	Lobbyists	City Agencies
<a href="#">Glaser, Weil, Fink, Howard, Avchen &amp; Shapiro, LLP</a> Los Angeles, CA 90067-5010  2016 Registration (01/04/16-12/31/16)	1045 Olive 1100 Wilshire Commercial AltaSea at the Port of Los Angeles Bill, Tony BLDG Partners LLC Blue Shield of California Brookfield Office Properties Chen, Kevin Compton and Simpson LLC Edison Water Resources Floor and Decor Franklin, Jeff Hollywood International Regional Center Hooman Automotive Group LA Taxi Cooperative Lion Boylston, LLC Marina Pacific Hotel and Suites, Inc. Merlone Geier Partners Modern Parking Inc Nederlander of California, Inc. New Roads School Ocean Terminal Services Paramount Contractors & Developers Paris West Companies Summit Media SunCal Companies The Management Group The Taubman Company TraPac LLC Urban Blox Vopak Terminal Los Angeles, Inc. West 7th Street Property LLC Wildwood School Wynkoop Properties, LLC Xyvest Holdings Inc.	Brajevich, Joseph Bronowski, Clare McOsker, Timothy Paster, Elisa Patibanda, Charuni	<b>Clients authorized to lobby</b> ANY CITY AGENCY  <b>Lobbyists authorized to lobby</b> ANY CITY AGENCY



So are you guys going to keep on with this buying your vote process?

When you ran your campaign and wanted to be our Council man what are some of the things you said to get our votes? (check one)

- A. Listen to the needs of the voters?
- B. Take private meetings and allow lobbyists to determine my vote?
- C. Make decisions based on the needs of constituents?
- D. Vote the way they want me to vote?

Date ▲▼	Contributor▲▼	Candidate/ Officeholder ▲▼	Schedule▲▼ (Type)	Amount▲▼
05/14/14	<b>Urban Blox</b> (Other, non-individual) Los Angeles, CA 90069	<b>Mitch O'Farrell</b> Council Member - District 13  1360328 - COUNCILMEMBER O'FARRELL OFFICEHOLDER ACCOUNT 2013	A - Monetary Contribution Received  <i>Period: <a href="#">04/01/14 to 06/30/14</a></i>	\$500.00
02/24/15	<b>Urban Blox</b> (Other, non-individual) Los Angeles, CA 90069-1709	<b>Mitchell Englander</b> Council Member - District 12  1362652 - Mitchell Englander for City Council 2015	A - Monetary Contribution Received  <i>Period: <a href="#">02/15/15 to 02/25/15</a> Election: 03/03/15</i>	\$700.00
08/21/15	<b>Urban Blox</b> (Other, non-individual) Los Angeles, CA 90048	Mayor  1234351 - Friends of Eric Garcetti Officeholder	A - Monetary Contribution Received  <i>Period: <a href="#">07/01/15 to 09/30/15</a></i>	\$400.00
09/22/16	<b>Urban Blox</b> (Other, non-individual) Los Angeles, CA 90048	<b>Gregory Martayan</b> LAUSD  Martayan for LAUSD 2017	A - Monetary Contribution Received  <i>Period: <a href="#">07/01/16 to 09/30/16</a> Election: 03/07/17</i>	\$700.00
06/16/14	<b>Urban Blox</b> (Other, non-individual) Los Angeles, CA 90069-1709	<b>Jose Huizar</b> Council Member - District 14  1360239 - Huizar for LA City Council 2015	A - Monetary Contribution Received  <i>Period: <a href="#">01/01/14 to 06/30/14</a></i>	\$350.00
<b>Total Monetary Contributions (A):</b>			<b>\$2,650.00</b> (does not include unitemized)	
<b>Total Amount Received:</b>			<b>\$2,650.00</b>	

**Disclaimer:** EFS data is input by candidate committees. The Commission does not amend information to edit variations in spelling, punctuation, use of abbreviations or inaccuracies. Therefore, search results may not be 100% accurate or inclusive.

Dear Plum Committee Councilmember Gil Cedillo,

I'm writing to you with great concern about the proposal for Hermitage Ave. and Weddington Street.

By upholding this appeal you are abstaining from setting a very **dangerous precedence**.

This may not reflect well on your office and is sure to start a **viral outbreak**.

You were obviously tricked. The applicants have chosen to mislead you this entire time and we are offering you an out.

The issues we've got highlighted in front of us involve some very serious facts:

- ELDER ABUSE
- FINANCIAL ELDER ABUSE
- FORGERY
- FRAUD
- MISREPRESENTATION
- MALICIOUS AND FRIVOLOUS FILINGS

Putting aside for now the findings made by the Appellants which have yet to even be addressed.

I wouldn't assume the general public cannot afford to lobby your offices in the same manner hired firms do, to buy your vote. I would bet it just doesn't occur to most citizens that is even an option. Citizens who have previously avoided the P word (politics) are more involved then ever before since it has been such an obvious issue, as to how proposals like this get approved.

Illegal evictions and demolishing our decreasing affordable housing stock isn't the best representation of a councilmember, who has in the past done a good job at working with the people. Does the \$1050.00 contribution to two members of the plum committee seal this deal? If it does, I will contribute \$1100.00 just to make it fair.

I respectfully request and am urging you to do what 2 members of the APC did and vote for the appeal.

Jonathan Hanes

1/2

Donors directly or indirectly linked to developer Samuel Leung gave more than \$600,000 over eight years. Among those who benefited from the money were:



**Janice Hahn**  
U.S. Congress  
\$203,500



**Joe Buscaino**  
City Council  
\$94,700



**Mitchell Englander**  
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**Eric Garcetti \***  
Mayor  
\$60,000



**Jose Huizar**  
City Council  
\$30,400

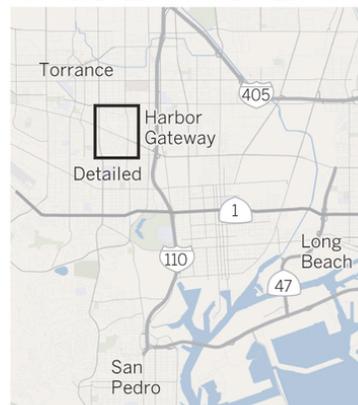
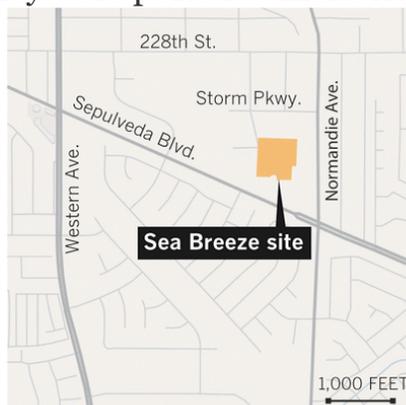


**Nury Martinez**  
City Council  
\$7,700

\*Contributions went to an independent campaign committee that supported Garcetti, but was not controlled by him.  
Photos: Irfan Khan, Francine Orr, Al Schaben / Los Angeles Times

The fundraising effort is a case study in the myriad ways money can flow to City Hall when developers seek changes to local planning rules. The pattern of donations from unlikely sources, some of whom profess to have no knowledge of contributions made in their name, suggests an effort to bypass campaign finance laws designed to make political giving transparent to the public.

At one critical point, Garcetti invoked a mayoral prerogative — which he has used only twice — to reduce the number of council votes required to approve the project. In several cases, elected officials received the money as they were poised to make key decisions about the development, known as Sea Breeze.



Sources: MapBox, OpenStreetMap

Lorena Elebee / @latimesgraphics



## Vote Trading is a Crime and It's Ruining Los Angeles

**CORRUPTION REPORT-** Each week CityWatch has more articles that could be categorized as "Organized Crime is Ruining Las Angeles." The technical name of the vehicle which the Mayor and City Council use in their destruction of Los Angeles is called "Accounting Control Fraud." The biggest problem with Accounting Control Fraud is that the name puts everyone except certified public accountants to sleep. An alternate name is Criminal Accounting.



Many readers will remember Enron whose wunderkind, CEO Ken Lay, was the toast of Dallas until he made toast of Enron through massive frauds. Los Angeles has its own wunderkind in Eric Garcetti. Garcetti's mastery of Criminal Accounting is prodigious.

The characteristic feature of Criminal Accounting is that the company or the city itself is the target of the fraud which is orchestrated by the executives. In a city, the insiders are the mayor and city council. Rather than using a Ponzi scheme to dupe individuals out of their money, the mayor and city council steal money from their own city and divert tax dollars to their buddies.

A city like Los Angeles is no different from a company like Enron; it can be bilked into ruin by transferring the city's wealth to a handful of thieves.

**Organized Crime in the DTLA Hotel Market** --In 2013, the City commissioned PKR Consulting to study how to divert city revenues to a few friends of the Mayor and City Council. PKR Consulting (which is now CBRE Group) specializes in helping the hotel industry become more profitable. Habitually, the City retains consultants which cater to the desires of a particular industry in order to obtain "independent" studies identifying which private person(s) should receive huge gifts of public money. Here's what the lobbyists for the hotel industry found.

Hotels were doing exceedingly well in Los Angeles with the DTLA hotels showing an 80% occupancy rate. In an economy which is not dominated by organized crime, one expects ample investment money to flow into that portion of the economy which is doing very well. Since the DTLA hotels were doing fantastically well, no subsidies were necessary. Yet, PKR Consulting found that the City should give new hotels hundreds of millions of dollars in tax rebates. We hasten to add that providing a silly opinion is not a criminal act.

When a city solicits foolishness and then relies on the silliness in order to divert tax dollars into the pockets of its cronies, the city itself is the criminal enterprise.

**The Legal Function of a City**--People form governments in order to provide public services. I cannot construct the streets, nor can I build the water system, nor can I maintain the parks. The function of city government is not to make the friends of the mayor and city councilmembers wealthier by diverting tax dollars into their pockets. Yet, that has been happening for over a decade in Los Angeles and it is the reason that Los Angeles is rapidly becoming a "failed city." →

Readers of CityWatch will remember the criminal appraisal fraud with the CRA project at 1601 N. Vine, i.e. Cesspool on Vine. In that case, the City obtained an appraisal of the property for \$4 million, but the developer obtained an appraisal in the same month for \$5.4 million. In recommending that the City pay his buddy an extra \$1.4 million for the property, Garcetti withheld from the City Council the lower \$4 million appraisal. Thus, nobody questioned the \$5.4 million purchase price.

Later, Garcetti arranged for the City to sell back the same piece of property to the developer for only \$835,000. In addition to the \$4,564,000 which the developer made on these exchanges, he did not have to make any mortgage payments on the property for the time during which the City "owned" 1601 N. Vine. Now that's organized crime, LA style.

**Organized Crime Favors Its Own while Harming Everyone Else**--When a hotel gets to keep between 40 to 100 percent of all the hotel taxes for 30 or 40 years, it has a great advantage over its competitors. Just look at a Trivago.com advertisement. Hotel rooms are booked on the basis of price and any hotel that doesn't have to pay taxes has a competitive advantage over hotels that must pay the hotel tax.

Is there anyone so naive as to think that these hundreds of millions of dollars in gifts by the mayor and city council do not result in money flowing into the political campaigns of the mayor and councilmembers?

The economic malarkey fed to the City by the mayor and city council is astounding. The public thinks that it benefits them to give their tax dollars to billionaires because the billionaires' businesses are doing fantastically well. The hotels have over 80% occupancy rate, and therefore, we need to give them hundreds of millions of tax dollars!

With criminal accounting, the crooks devise a bunch of false and misleading studies to deceive people into thinking that the city is making sound investments when in reality the city treasury is being looted. The foregoing has illustrated a couple penny-ante scams showing City Hall's use of Criminal Accounting. But it gets worse.

**The Sophisticated Organized Crime Syndicate that Rules LA** --When Judge Goodman ruled in January 2014 that Garcetti's Hollywood's Community Plan 2012 Update had knowingly used fatally flawed data, Judge Goodman did not go farther to describe how the entire criminal enterprise operated. Judge Goodman stopped short because the lawsuit was a civil lawsuit, and thus, he had no power to advance into criminal matters. Nonetheless, his ruling did reveal the widespread criminality.

When one intentionally makes materially false representations of fact on which the deceiver expects other people to rely, that is criminal fraud.

**The Subways are an Example of Criminal Fraud**--But let's look a little deeper into how this massive fraud works. The history of Metro subways shows how a multi-million dollar criminal scam becomes a multi-billion dollar criminal enterprise. Subways and trolleys are not inherently criminal, but in the hands of sophisticated fraudsters, any public agency can become a criminal enterprise.

In the CityWatch article on July 28, 2016, "[Expo Line Expansion Fails to Make Up for LA Transit Loss](#)," by Wendell Cox, we see how Organized Crime has manipulated Metro to divert money away from bus services (which actually benefit Angelenos) toward subways and fixed-rail transit which benefit developers. Mr. Cox's article links to an extraordinarily important analysis by Thomas Rubin showing how Metro's decisions have devastated bus service. When one understands how organized crime operates, one can see the rationale behind many of Metro's current decisions.

Here's the essence of the complex criminal scam to divert tax dollars away from public services in order to benefit the friends of Garcetti and the City Council. Once a subway or fixed rail system has a station at a particular development project, that mass transit will never deviate one inch from that location to service another project. The purpose of LA's subways and trolleys is not to provide better public transportation but to maximize the value of certain private projects over other real estate projects. →

When there is a subway station in the basement of a high rise, that project has a huge competitive advantage over all projects which do not have their own subway station.

We are not saying that the mayor's office and the city council are stupid; we are saying that they constitute a sophisticated Organized Crime Syndicate. LA is not dominated by criminals from outside City Hall. Los Angeles City Hall itself is The Crime Syndicate. The city operates in violation of Penal Code, § 86 which criminalizes all Vote Trading Agreements at any city council. Thus, by definition, Los Angeles City Council is an organized criminal enterprise. (The RICO statute does not apply to city councils.)

The fact that law enforcement turns a blind eye does not mean that Los Angeles City Hall has not morphed into an Organized Crime Syndicate. The Duck Test reveals its criminality. Are the mayor and the city council looting the public treasury to benefit their friends? Yes.

**The Lynchpin of the Criminal Enterprise**--City Hall's criminal enterprise operates through a Vote Trading Agreement where each councilmember is required to support each other's individual criminal scam. Although Penal Code § 86 criminalizes Vote Trading, law enforcement and judges all turn their blind eyes, while Organized Crime grows stronger each day.



**SZwartz** • 15 days ago

The housing wars are becoming dangerous for citizens

would you want this thug in your back yard?

<http://bit.ly/2bfVJ6I> August 13, 2016 Zwartz Talk, Garcetti Goons Attack Valley Village, by Scott Zwartz

1 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›



**Matti CA.GOP** → SZwartz • 10 days ago

Wait, you mean Los Angeles isn't a Livable/Sustainable City? But but that's what Garcetti told *Time* that it was....

11 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›



**SZwartz** • 17 days ago

The newest thing in the Garcetti war on poor Angelenos can be termed "Garcetti Goons." A couple friends ran into some today. If you use legal means to prevent the destruction of poor people's homes, apparently you can expect to be hassled and intimidated by the Garcetti Goons. And, we thought there was only white collar crime. I guess Garcetti's Commissioner Dierking's desire to destroy poor people's homes in Valley Village so that his employer Metro can make more money by crowding more people closer to bus lines wasn't proceeding fast enough, so now they've got goons staking out the place to intimidate citizens. They're diminutive putzes who drive around in a new small black BMW with paper plates.

If you live in housing threatened by Garcetti Goons, take a photo and call the police.

^ | v • Reply • Share ›



## Zwartz Talk

# Garcetti Goons Attack Valley Village

by Scott Swartz August 13, 2016

Below is video of a guy we caught in the act of being himself, a Garcetti Goon. This is just a snippet how Garcetti manufactures homelessness for his photo-ops

As Garcetti's Commissioner Dierking told everyone in July 2016 at the South Valley Area Planning Commission, Garcetti wants to tear down as many rent controlled units near bus lines in order to create much higher residential projects. The purpose is to make Metro buses more profitable.

Notice how the goon has already broken into the apartment to the left and has removed the screen door and he has some pliers in his left hand. He's eyeing the video camera and looks right into it. This Garcetti Goon is a candidate for world's dumbest thief. He knows he's staring into the video camera and he has to realize that it is recording him.

Garcetti's continuing to destroy poor people's homes is inconsistent with Garcetti's claims that he wants to help poor people secure decent housing. If Garcetti wants to help poor people, the appearance of Garcetti Goons to intimidate poor people, to vandalize their property, to threaten them with guns and to harass people who visit them is a strange type of help.

The Goon is destroying the video camera so that he can later burglarize the place. This can be anyone's backyard when they're not home. If you've got a camera showing construction of an unlawful McMansion, don't be surprised when a Garcetti goon comes over your back fence and rips out your video equipment. Maybe Garcetti Goons freelance on the side. There are a lot of nice homes in the Valley and as long as goons roam free, it's doubtful anyone else is safe. This one arrested on July 26th but with \$35,000.00 bail, he was back on the street. So where does a goon like this get \$35,000.00 bail or was it waived? He brags of friends in high places.

Do you feel the name "Garcetti Goon" is too pejorative? When the resident called the police, the police said it was a civil matter. Really? Someone's tearing down your security camera is a "civil matter." Then, the guy comes around and tells the residents he got friends in high places. Well, at least he's a truthful goon.

But, in reality, that's just more intimidation to make residents feel helpless. That's how Garcetti works. It is classic developer intimidation to force poor people out of their homes.

Let's remember, billions of dollars are at stake. Garcetti needs as many people to be homeless as possible in order to con voters into voting for his \$1.2 BILLION bond for building affordable housing on the November ballot. We know the money will actually go for the luxury units in Hollywood just as Garcetti stole all the Promise Zone money from the minorities communities and gave it to his developer buddies in Hollywood. Now, you see some of the Garcetti Goons behind the destruction of affordable housing.

We just found this snippet on another video camera. He is wiggling through a window. You cannot see the window itself, you can tell what he's doing. It's nice to know that Garcetti's got your home "protected" while you're picking up the girls from dance class.

Let's see what the goon looks like a closer closer.

All rent controlled homes are not blighted. Some are very nice places where often the elderly on fixed income live or people on disability. They keep their apartments clean and neat and hope to live out their years in decent surroundings — until Garcetti wants their modest apartment complex.

Why do these lovely places have to be destroyed? This is one of the places that Garcetti is destroying in Valley Village. Why? Is there no decency left at City Hall?

<https://zwartztalk.wordpress.com/2016/08/13/garcetti-goons-attack-valley-village/>

In the San Fernando Valley, in a middle-class enclave known as Valley Village, residents are under siege by developers who destroy affordable housing units in order to build [small-lot subdivision condominiums](#) and other luxury housing — a [troubling pattern that's happening across Los Angeles](#) in both working- and middle-class neighborhoods.

When one visits [Valley Village](#), which sits east of Sherman Oaks, the vacant lots of torn down residential buildings look eerily similar to Venice, where [developers are also sending in demolition crews](#) to make way for luxury projects at an extraordinary rate.

Whether it's Valley Village or Venice, the same result takes place — working- and middle-class residents are shoved out of their affordable units and often find themselves forced away from their longtime neighborhoods. At the same time, developers make millions in profits.

The most recent example is a Valley Village block at [Hermitage Avenue and Weddington Street](#), which is represented by L.A. City Councilman Paul Krekorian of District 2. The intersection became a major news story when [a developer demolished the former home of Marilyn Monroe](#) days before the city of L.A. was set to decide upon its historical status.

Now only a cyclone fence stands at the property. Another cyclone fence surrounds a large empty lot where residential units once stood down the street.

Then there's [Urban-Blox](#), a development firm based in L.A. It wants to demolish a number of affordable residential buildings across the street from the former home of Marilyn Monroe. It's where longtime Valley Village resident Jen Getz lives.

"All it takes is one project," says Getz, "and there goes the neighborhood. It's a domino effect."

She adds, "We feel we're completely under siege. Valley Village is under attack."

Urban-Blox wants to replace the affordable dwellings with 26 small-lot subdivision condominiums, which will go for at least \$600,000 each. That's too much money for Getz and her neighbors, but the developer may end up with a minimum of \$15.6 million in condo sales.

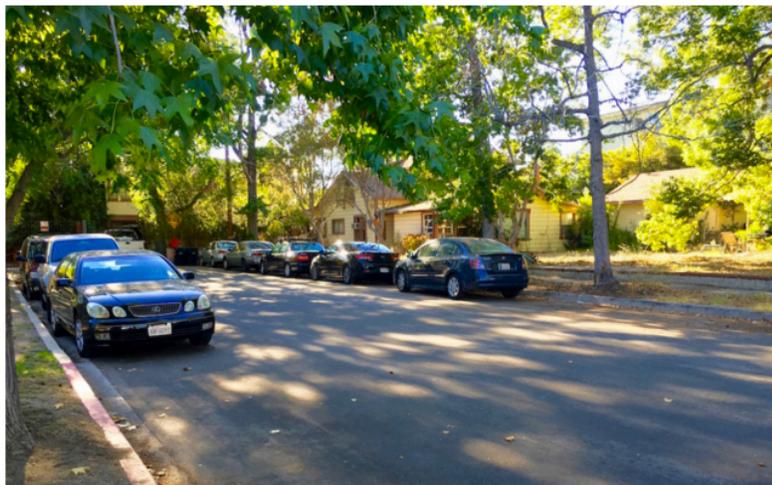
Urban-Blox also wants the city of L.A. to hand over a public street so the developer can link two properties and build the 26 condos — and make huge bucks off the project. It's a crazy transaction made worse since street parking is limited in the neighborhood, and, so far, it appears city officials are not seeking any form of compensation for the street.

"It's criminal what's going on," says Getz, who's been fighting the project with the help of community activist Rick Abrams and others.

"The city is no longer an independent arbiter," says Abrams, who's undertaken land-use battles in Hollywood. "They lie and deceive on the behalf of the developer."

The South Valley Area Planning Commission recently approved Urban-Blox's project, including giving the public street to the developer. Now it'll work its way through L.A. City Hall — Krekorian officially supports the project.

"There are people's lives at stake," says Getz. "We're not little dots on a map."



The city of Los Angeles wants to hand over this public street to a deep-pocketed developer

## Hermitage/Weddington Project: Squatters Threatening Neighbors, Lawsuits Filed, City Hall Snoozes

**THIS IS WHAT I KNOW-** Back in May, I wrote about the Hermitage/Weddington project proposed by Urban-Blox. A structure built in the 1930s would be replaced with a small lot subdivision of 26 condos with an expected purchase price of \$600,000 each. The project had been granted a density bonus and would have environmental impact, as well as eliminating existing rent control, according to Save Valley Village.

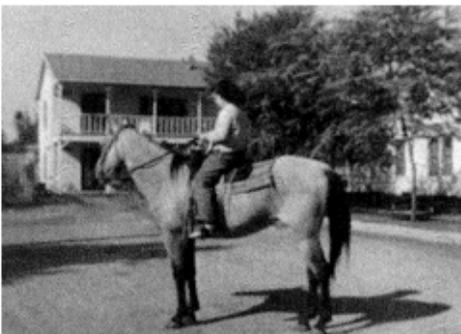
Since I first started covering grassroots activism, I've listened to homeowners, tenants and neighbors express their frustration, anger and disappointment that their neighborhoods were being taken over by often unscrupulous developers with accomplices in City Council and on the Planning Commission.

I've heard neighbors blind-sided by slipshod planning approvals that have permitted an adjacent house to be demolished without the next door neighbors consent, exposing neighbors to asbestos and knocking down trees on their properties. Houses at the cusp of receiving Historic-Cultural Monument Status have been destroyed; tenants with disabilities and those on fixed incomes have been evicted from their longtime homes to make space for more expensive condos. Properties have been demolished under a loophole that allows "renovation" to mean stripping a property to a single board and some nails.

Although all of these scenarios are mind-boggling, none of these situations quite reaches the level of shock value as the scenario a tenant shared with me this week.

The story features lawsuits to determine property rights, plans to privatize what is now a public street, a handful of squatters who are believed by neighbors to be involved in criminal activity, drug dealing and stealing utilities.

An activist shared with me that council members have ignored thousands upon thousands of pages of evidence on planned projects, as well as the legalities of giving away a public street to a developer. The street issue has elicited the attention and support of State Assembly Member Patty Lopez who has written a letter on the activists' behalf, although the property is not in her district.



Let's start at the beginning. In 1934, Clinton Lathrop, Sr. and Jean Lathrop purchased the land on which the property at 5303 1/2 Hermitage sits. (Photo left.) This property now contains four residential units.

Upon their parents' deaths, Sydney Edwards and now deceased Clinton Edwards each owned half interest in the property. Sydney's interest is now held in The Edwards Living Trust. Upon Clinton's death, his interest has been held by his wife, Marta Lathrop, who currently holds one-half ownership of the interest.

The sole remaining paying tenant of the property, Jennifer Getz, has been living at the property for over 20 years and claims she entered into a property management agreement with Clinton in 2009. Getz is currently in litigation over what she says was the expectation of first right of purchase, should the owners decide to sell the property, per the property management agreement. Instead, the property was sold to Urban-Blox, the developer that plans to demolish the structures as part of a larger 26-unit small lot subdivision.

UB Valley Village, LLC (Raffi Shirinian, co-founder and principal of Urban-Blox) filed a suit on September 7 against Sydney Edwards (Trustee of the Edwards Living Trust), Marta Lathrop and “Doe’s” 1 through 20 for Specific Performance for Breach of Contract to Sell Real Property and Damages. The suit states that the escrow was to close within 15 days after Getz has been evicted and removed from the property but on September 1, 2016, the defendants had communicated their intention to offer Getz the option to purchase the property. That case is in litigation.

(Neither Urban Blox nor Mr. Shirinian responded to my request for comment.)

If this scenario weren’t eye-opening enough, a posse of squatters has moved into the property. My source says, “We’ve done everything we can to get them off the property and are upset that it’s not working. A larger group joined the original two squatters, unloading trucks on September 2. They’ve been terrorizing and threatening the neighbors. Law enforcement has said this was a civil matter.”

(I confirmed with a spokesperson from LAPD North Hollywood Division that the eviction of squatters is a civil matter. The spokesperson also confirmed the property was currently in litigation.)

On September 29, Sydney Edwards and the trustees of the Edwards Living Trust filed a forcible detainer suit against the squatters, who include Brandon Lee Gregg, Sean M. Mahavik and “Does” 1-10. In 2014, Mahavik was indicted on drug trafficking charges, possession to distribute a Class B Drug and trafficking in methamphetamine in Massachusetts, where he was allegedly connected with a Cape Cod meth lab.

According to my source and a [Los Angeles Times](#) neighborhood crime mapping app, there has been an increase in violent and property crimes in the neighborhood. “*The squatters are already going through the eviction process,*” says my source. “*We are not expecting LAPD to remove them, as that must go through the court system. What we DO expect is accountability for the drugs, the vandalism, the break-ins, the damage and harassment to members of the community. Just because they are squatters doesn’t mean they get to break all the other laws. The entire community has been compromised for no other reason.*”

“*At some point, someone does have to stop this. It’s completely unacceptable. It’s not unreasonable for a constituent to ask a council person to follow the guidelines that have been clearly outlined,*” said my source. “*Nobody seems to understand how permanent these decisions are. Removing a public street changes the grid and the layout of a community that was planned by planners who knew what they were doing. Councilmembers are silent. There’s not a word, despite so many people contacting them. Nobody is stopping the developers. The council people are giving these people an inch and they’re literally taking it all the way.*”

*What’s next? The two cases are in litigation and the PLUM Committee/City Council will have a final appeals hearing on October 25. Two of the South Valley Planning Commissioners (Maher and Beatty) have voted to uphold the appeal to stop the Urban-Blox development.*

***My source is appealing to as many concerned citizens as possible to attend the hearing. We’ll keep you posted.***

**savevalleyvillage.com** • 6 days ago

Holy s\*\*t. This is a new level entirely. Retaliation is more aggressive than ever but this is just way below the belt. There is so much to say about this but I am literally without words.

7 ^ | ▾ • Reply • Share ▸

**AJ Llewellyn** • 6 days ago

I am horrified by all of this. I live on Weddington near the cul de sac and I have photos and security footage of two of the squatters marching around with weapons - rifles, actually. I can't imagine them going quietly when the sheriff's marshals come round to lock them out. That will happen when they are finally taken to court.

3 ^ | ▾ • Reply • Share ▸

**Hilary Steinberg** • 6 days ago

This article is both eye opening and mind blowing at the same time. Another example of the corruption and lack of protection for the citizens of Los Angeles. An entire community has been left vulnerable and unprotected by the police and council office which is a clear message to us that we are voiceless and left to our own devices. Everyone in power either passes the buck or simply chooses to ignore the pleas for help from law abiding citizens who fear for their safety. No enforcement, no respect for the laws, no ethics exists anymore.

3 ^ | ▾ • Reply • Share ▸

**anonymous** • 7 days ago

Yep, it's Mr. Cochran and the south valley planning commission again! Cd2 mob bosses, and all the works! What a damn shame the next round is Huizar and the crooked PLUM. No one in CD2 represents the non-campaign donors.

3 ^ | ▾ • Reply • Share ▸



**ThePublic** → anonymous • 6 days ago

Surprisingly enough, Commissioner Mather and Commissioner Beatty actually voted to uphold the appeal. It very well could have gone in the appellants favor if Commissioner Dierking, who works for Metro voted on the merits of the evidence. But then you have Commissioner Janny Kim, who works for SoCal Edison who's excuse for not supporting the appeal was off the charts ridiculous and made no sense..

3 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›



**AJ Llewellyn** → ThePublic • 5 days ago

Janny Kim ate her way through the two council hearings I attended. She wasn't listening to a thing that was going on.

1 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›



**Dr. Jake S.** → AJ Llewellyn • 4 days ago



1 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›



**AJ Llewellyn** → Dr. Jake S. • 4 days ago

yep! Had a total munch fest right through the proceedings!

^ | v • Reply • Share ›



**LACityCommittee@clerk.com** • 6 days ago

Your elected officials at their finest.

2 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›



**Penny** • 6 days ago

The Applicants actually said they start at \$750,000. Which if course means another project all for nothing. 8 INCHES APART FROM EACH OTHER?! How that is even legal is beyond me.

We need to support these residents as best we can. Every renter out there needs to know this could be you tomorrow going through all of this.

I hope everyone goes to bang on PLUM Committees door on this one.

2 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›



**anonymous** • 4 days ago

Janny kim quit the SVpc. It has 4 members now. The two ladies recently voted down a project. But since only 3 people were present the 2-1 vote means the project still gets approved!

1 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›



**I am Sam** → anonymous • 2 days ago

Seriously? She just quit? Interesting timing...Or maybe she didn't like everyone calling her on what she did and does.

Charter 552. states the APC must have 5 members. That of course when following the Charter Code and laws..

Either way - whether it was Dierking or Cochran, they both are bought and paid for and would never be caught dead upholding an appeal.

So how can they even be permitted to vote on projects when they don't even meet the legal requirements!! UGH!

BTW, how do you know she quit?

^ | v • Reply • Share ›



**anonymous** → I am Sam • 2 days ago

At a meeting recently it was told she won't be conning because she has resigned. The quorum was only 3 that day. An appellant "won" 2-1 but the charter says it's a LOSS BECAUSE A BARE QUORUM MUST VOTE 3-0 to sustain an appeal! As for the charter--these 5 member commissions are allowed to move forward with less than 5! As long as 3 are present for each meeting. What crooks!

1 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›



**I am Sam** → anonymous • a day ago

Ugh. Charter Code mentions that for Council and the Ethics Commission...I couldn't find anywhere that says what the APC says they can vote with less than 5.

Unless Mathers and Beatty are at every hearing they will always be outvoted by Cochran and Dierking.

^ | v • Reply • Share ›



**AJ Llewellyn** → anonymous • 3 days ago

oh no....I am glad she quit though...she had zero interest in the community. She not only motor-boated her way through a sandwich, a bag of chips, an apple, and a yogurt, she then started doing leg lifts in her chair and rolled her eyes when people stood up to speak.

^ | v • Reply • Share ›



**I am Sam** • 5 days ago

This is absolutely crazy! WHAT ARE THE POLICE DOING??? NOTHING????

1 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›

## LA Politics: Mother to All Kinds of Crime and Corruption

**CORRUPTION WATCH**-The word “crime” is one of those terms which we use all the time without taking the time to think about it too deeply. According to Merriam-Webster, crime means: (1) a gross violation of law, (2) a grave offense especially against morality, (3) something reprehensible, foolish, or disgraceful.

The Los Angeles City Council’s behavior satisfies all definitions of a crime. It operates in violation of Penal Code 86 which forbids vote trading among members of a city council. Its actions are morality offensive especially when it comes to the theft of billions of tax dollars and the destruction of poor people’s homes. Finally, its behavior is reprehensible, foolish and disgraceful.

Yet, these words fail to convey the great harm which the ‘criminal’ Los Angeles City Council has brought upon us.

Let’s take a deeper look at how a city council which is a criminal enterprise destroys a great city – one injustice at a time.

Case in point is one tiny section of Valley Village, a place so small and so out of the way, that the vast majority of Angelenos do not even know that it exists. Zooming in closer, we see a most remarkable intersection at Hermitage and Weddington – or, at least, what is left of it. On the southeast corner once sat a modest home (demolition photo above) where Marilyn Monroe lived during the end of WW II.

Rather than allowing the modest structure be moved, Mayor Eric Garcetti and Councilman Paul Krekorian wanted the home destroyed. So a couple days before a Cultural Heritage Commission hearing, [Marilyn’s home was demolished](#) (just as Garcetti demolished the facade of the Spaghetti Factory in Hollywood in defiance of a court order.)

From a neighborhood standpoint, the properties on the westside of Hermitage across from Marilyn’s home were significant in their own right. Directly opposite from Marilyn’s home was a beautiful Spanish-style apartment and to the north of Weddington was one of Valley Village’s most unique properties.

Because Valley Village was a mixture of these unique low density places in an area where mega-apartments were encroaching, the Valley Village Specific Plan was enacted in order [to preserve the character](#).

The fascinating aspect of these Valley Village properties at 5621 to 5303 Hermitage is that they had an extra measure of protection from being destroyed. Weddington Avenue runs ½ block westward between the beautiful Spanish style apartment home at 5621 Hermitage and unique grouping of cottages at 5303 Hermitage.

With the state owned street separating the two parcels, neither parcel was large enough to attract attention of developers who increasingly want to construct larger projects. In a city run by criminals, however, laws are impotent. Councilmember Krekorian and Mayor Garcetti see nothing wrong with giving the street to the developer so that Urban Box will have an extra-large area on which to construct its project – after destroying all the rent-controlled units and throwing the elderly and disabled on the streets.



Criminals, however, do not care who owns property. It can be you, it can be me, or it can even be the State of California. When a criminal syndicate operates with the force of law, they take whatever they need. And, everyone else better shut up or else.

### **This Is the Evil of Criminality**

In Los Angeles, greed rules and decency is in exile. If a developer wants to destroy your home, no law will stop him. Los Angeles City Council is a criminal enterprise where every unlawful demolition, where every unlawful gift

of public property, where every corrupt commission decision always receives unanimous approval.

We need to be very clear about this: in Los Angeles, the law counts for nothing, for zero, for nada. The criminal vote trading pact requires that each councilmember give unanimous approval without any regard to lies, deception, physical intimidation, vandalism or theft of public funds. There is no crime significant enough for a councilmember to refuse to go along. The criminal regime at City Hall is strict: not even allowing a single protest vote against the destruction of Marilyn Monroe's home.

Yet, the District Attorney finds nothing nefarious is afoot when all projects unanimously receive "Yes" votes. The odds of flipping a coin 100 times and getting 100 heads is  $1/1.2676506 \times 10^{30}$ . Okay, so you don't even know how to name that number because it is so large. We are talking about 15 coins being simultaneously flipped and getting all heads. Oh yeah, we're supposed to believe that number, whatever it may be, is not the product of a vote trading agreement.

### **The Rise of the Garcetti Goons**

After some goons tried to intimidate an attorney who had come to the property at 5303 Hermitage prior to the August 11, 2016 South Valley Area Planning Commission meeting, the attorney complained to the Commission. He wrote to Councilmember Krekorian and to Mayor Garcetti that the intimidation had to stop. Neither of them bothered to reply.

Silence in the face of an accusation is an adopted admission. There is a rule of law that says when someone is accused of bad behavior and they say nothing, their silence is a sign that the charge is true.

*Dear Councilmember Krekorian and Mayor Garcetti:*

*The intimidation and threats in connection with your desire to demolish the rent controlled units at 5303 Hermitage in Valley Village must cease and desist immediately. Brandishing firearms, tampering with the gas lines and having thugs try to intimidate the tenant's attorney has brought the City's "war" on poor people's homes to a new low. As I told the South Valley Area Planning Commission yesterday, this criminal behavior has to stop. Furthermore, no police officer should ever tell a person who has been assaulted with a fire arm that he will arrest her if she calls 911 for protection. We expect this criminal behavior to cease and desist forthwith.-- Richard MacNaughton, Attorney at Law, State Bar 77258.*

When the city council becomes a criminal enterprise, we all live in a lawless society. And when white collar criminality at City Council becomes physical intimidation, it threatens of intolerable violence at the home owner level.

Let's remember that this Valley Village instance is not the first situation involving Garcetti, development and criminals. Garcetti's fundraiser, Juri Ripinsky, spent two years incarcerated in Federal prison at Leavenworth for real estate and bank fraud. Yet, Garcetti got unanimous approval from the City Council for Ripinsky to have the lucrative Paseo Project at the old Sears site in Hollywood. Two years at Leavenworth and he gets a multi-million dollar real estate project!

Just like the poor people who are desperately trying to save Valley Village, all Angelenos face a criminal enterprise. When criminals with absolute immunity want something, they just take it. And, people wonder why employers and the middle class are leaving Los Angeles.

12 Comments

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**Melanie** • 5 days ago

Ah yes! Another RAFFI SHIRINIAN lawsuit in the making. DAVID DUEL, REBECCA DUEL and STEVE NAZEMI. Getting sued left and right. They can't seem to do anything right anywhere. Raffi's greed is catching up with him.

3 ^ | ▾ • Reply • Share ▸



**Armen** • 5 days ago

As to the Planning Commission - Janny Kim works for social edison. Dierking works for Metro. Cochran is an attorney. Mayor appointed Mr. Abrams. What do you expect.

1 ^ | ▾ • Reply • Share ▸



**Justus?** • 5 days ago

LAFH has announced there is no more housing. They cannot help anyone who has been evicted. For every demolition there is an eviction. For every eviction the odds are they will end up homeless. Way to go Krekorian. You have created your legacy.

1 ^ | ▾ • Reply • Share ▸



**jo** • 3 days ago

All the wrecked, corrupt cities are run by liberals: Detroit, Chicago, Baltimore. How's that working out for you voters? I supported conservatives that were running against my councilman and they didn't have a chance due to most LA City and CA residents being liberal Dems. Stop voting for same ole same ole and maybe you'll get a change. Check out <http://transparentcalifornia.c...> to see the outrageous pensions that are wrecking the city and state. Pensions + retiree benefits were 3% of the City's budget 10 years ago and now they are 20 % and rising fast as the boomers are retiring. These CC and mayor politicians gave away lavish pensions in exchange for unions' campaign donations. I wonder why you are not outraged by lavish pensions? I beg you to look at that pension website. Also read articles on [pensionsunami.com](http://pensionsunami.com)

^ | ▾ • Reply • Share ▸



**jo** → SZwartz • 3 days ago

You know they all vote (actions) unanimously for just about everything; they are all corrupt. I don't care what you call them, I call them all corrupt liberals because they gave away lavish unsustainable pensions + retiree benefits to the unions who supported their campaigns. Pensions are what wrecked Detroit, San Bernardino etc., and that line item is now wrecking Chicago and LA. Check out <http://transparentcalifornia.c...> to see just how lavish the pensions are in CA; if you are not outraged, you should be. Lavish pensions and extremely high taxes are what wrecked Greece. Also, read about pensions wrecking cities across the country at [pensionsunami.com](http://pensionsunami.com)

^ | v • Reply • Share ›



**The City Erred???** → jo • 4 days ago

We are more scared of the city being run my Armenian mafia than Democrats right now.

^ | v • Reply • Share ›



**jo** → The City Erred???

Common denominator is Democrat, not Armenian. Lavish give-aways to unions: <http://transparentcalifornia.c...> and [pensionsunami.com](http://pensionsunami.com)

^ | v • Reply • Share ›



**SZwartz** → The City Erred???

Labels mean nothing and can be very harmful to people. Should we pretend that the Italians are behind this mob rule at City Hall because Garcetti's great grand father came from Italy? Such labels do not help. If you want to be an American, then follow the Declaration of Independence and treat each man independently based on his/her actions.

^ | v • Reply • Share ›

## Save Valley Village: 'Councilman Krekorian Only Represents Those Who Agree With Him'

THIS IS WHAT I KNOW--The rumble between pro-development interests and those who support neighborhood integrity takes a possible new turn with members of the Coalition to Preserve LA stating although they have enough signatures to qualify for the March 2017 ballot, they'd be willing to withdraw the initiative if Mayor Garcetti would agree to an alternative plan. As written, the measure would place a temporary ban on projects outside the existing zoning and land use rules for the area. If Garcetti does not agree with the group's terms, it's All Systems Go for the petition, per Jill Stewart, the Coalition's campaign director.

Most of you probably know the scenario; developers who often have a cozy relationship with City Council members typically plead their case for general plan amendments from the city to move these mammoth projects forward.

"That's a wake-up call for the City Council," Stewart told reporters. "No more mischief, no more backroom meetings with developers during a two-year period. Take all that wasted time you've spent creating a luxury housing glut in Los Angeles and instead, do your job, create a plan for LA that involves the public."

The Coalition sent a letter to Garcetti, signed by several dozen reps of grassroots groups, businesses, HOA's, and celebs including Leonardo DiCaprio, Kirsten Dunst, Chris Pine, Joaquin Phoenix, Chloe Sevigny, and Garrett Hedlund. The new proposal in front of Garcetti would ban "ex parte" meetings between council members and developers, would make the process of updating the General Plan move more transparent and would reduce "spot zoning," now standard practice. Developers and lobbyists would also be banned from hand-selecting the consultants responsible for Environmental Impact Reports (EIR's.)

Arguments in favor of streamlining development point to "affordable housing" but more typically, the projects maximize profits for developers, setting aside the minimal required affordable units. Existing tenants are often tossed aside to make room for shiny new development projects and that include small lot subdivisions in areas throughout the city.

••

One area particularly hit by the rush to develop has been in Council District 2, represented by Council Member Paul Krekorian. The activists of Save Valley Village are frustrated with Krekorian who they say consistently ignores their interests.

Case in point, a duplex on Tujunga that houses section 8 and HUD tenants --developer Apik Minnossian is seeking approval of eight units in three-story terraced buildings, along with 16 parking spaces. Neighbors say the building does not fit the criteria for a "small lot subdivision and is not in keeping with the integrity of the neighborhood."

"We're seeing a disturbing trend of deep complicity from Councilman Krekorian's office and his Planning and Land Use Commissioner Karo Torossian who signed off on it in direct opposition to the Neighborhood Council's Land Use Commission recommendations," said an activist. →

I've been in talks with the Save Valley Village activists and other concerned with development in their neighborhood for several months, sitting in on living room meetings and engaging in phone conversations. Hearing the personal stories of those impacted by the takeover of their streets has been compelling, taking the issue to a new level.

The proposed Tujunga project would impact the tenants of the existing building. The aunt of an existing tenant wrote this email:

“My nephew lives in the triplex at 4531 Tujunga. He is on social security disability income. If these triplexes get demolished there is nothing comparable in the whole LA County for him to go. There is no affordable housing available. I have been researching and I don't see any affordable housing available. I am very much afraid my nephew will be homeless not to mention the other tenants.

The city keeps letting the developers demolish all the affordable housing without replacing comparable units. It's creating our homeless epidemic. I don't know where my nephew will live. HUD and Housing nonprofits have 4 year waiting lists. It's insane. Please, please reconsider and not allow more people to become homeless.”

Activists say they want Krekorian to put a “Q” provision on the Tujunga block that would limit buildings to 31 feet and to match the architectural integrity or look of the neighborhood. “General and community plans are very specific about new construction conforming to height, aesthetics, and density of the neighborhoods,” said a spokesperson for the neighborhood, which is 95 percent single-story. Instead of serving the interests of developers, the group is asking Krekorian to take into account property values, privacy, environmental impact, and other issues that impact neighbors.

It's easy to forget at the end of the day that the surge in development and the City Council's rather lax approval process affects people's lives, whether those displaced from affordable housing or neighbors who wish to maintain their property values and quality of life. Under the current conditions, development is not adding affordable housing as much as lining the already deep pockets of developers who may continue their cozy, symbiotic relationship with council members without some oversight.



## **It's Time to End LA's Secret Meetings: What Do City Council Members and LA's County Supervisors Have to Hide?**

THE BROWN ACT IS WRONG-- According to the Congressional Research Service, the U.S. House of Representatives has met behind closed doors four times during the past 186 years—in 1979, 1980, 1983, and 2008. That's about one closed session per half-century. By contrast, the LA City Council and the LA County Board of Supervisors average about one closed session per week.

Since August 1st, the City Council has placed nineteen items on its closed-session agenda. This coming week the Board of Supervisors will meet behind closed doors three times in a 24 hour period. Why all the secrecy?

Congress managed to keep its debate open during both World Wars. All it takes to send our local leaders into the bunker is an update from their real estate agent. Why? Because the Brown Act permits them to do so?

The truth is that the Brown Act is wrong to allow for any exceptions to California's open meeting requirements. The sky will not fall if 'pending litigation' or 'real estate acquisitions' or any of the other issues deemed top-secret by the Brown Act are discussed during open sessions of the City Council or County Board of Supervisors. On the contrary, doing away with closed-session meetings will strike a blow to those who would abuse the public's trust.

Into closed-session is the first place the LA City Council scurried in 2012 upon learning from HUD that scores of developers under the City's purview were defrauding taxpayers, by taking federal money designated for the inclusion in affordable housing projects of apartments for people with disabilities, and then willfully neglecting to build those apartments.

Disabled residents reported going to apartment buildings that were advertised as accessible, [according to the LA Times](#), only to find they weren't. HUD warned the Council that it had ten days to agree to voluntary corrective compliance or face possible federal enforcement action.

Rather than comply with HUD's directive, the City Council embarked on a four year legal misadventure which entailed four major lawsuits, including the one recently settled by the city for \$200 million (\$20 million of which is going to the plaintiff's attorneys). All this in addition to at least \$6 million in legal bills paid to the [white-shoe law firm of Byrne and Nixon](#), not to mention the in-house costs to the City Attorney's office.

This entire horror story played-out in a series of closed-session meetings which denied the public its right to weigh in on the matter.

Would most Angelenos have wanted the City Council to comply with the original directive from HUD instead of fighting it in court? Would they have considered that the prudent and ethical thing to do? It's not for us to say, but it wasn't for the City Council to say either back in 2012. By going into closed-session and deciding what they thought was best for the public, the City Council cheated Angelenos.

What's more, it wasn't just one set of closed-session meetings by which the Council waged its legal war. As we will discuss in a future article, the Council used a series of underhanded tricks to conceal the huge amounts of money it was pouring into its legal battle. Instead of keeping all actions of the Council in the matter in one Council file, they dispersed it into at least five separate files—all under different names, making it virtually impossible for the public to know what was going on.

It's time to put an end to closed-session meetings.

## Valley Village: Corruption Out of Control ... Lopez Meeting Vetoed

**CORRUPTION WATCH**-Power corrupts, and corruption destroys, but corruption breeds something worse – a grandiose sense of hubris. The attitude that “I can do whatever I want and screw you” describes Valley Village’s Councilmember Krekorian.

Councilmember Krekorian’s hubris is not misplaced. He is the absolute ruler of Council District 2 where there are no laws. Rather it operates at the whim of the councilmember. If you want to destroy historic homes? No problem, someone in CD 2 will ring up City Planning’s Office of Historic Preservation and you can be certain the historic home will be bulldozed.

Concerned about the loss of affordable housing in established neighborhoods? No matter who you are, Krekorian ignores you. Assemblywoman **Patty Lopez**, who district is contiguous to Valley Village and who therefore will be directly impacted with a rise of homelessness in this area, requested that the City Planning Department take the time and effort to meet with her so that the housing crisis will not worsen. With Krekorian’s blessing, Garcetti’s Commission rejected out of hand Assemblywoman Lopez’ request for a meeting.

Assemblywoman Lopez’ focus on the needless loss of affordable housing is allegedly shared by the Mayor, Councilmember Krekorian and the LA City Council in general which declared homelessness to be a crisis. That is all propaganda PR for the March 2017 re-elections. All the units which Raffi Shirinian’s Urban Blox will destroy are rent-controlled units and none of the new units are affordable. However, the behind-the-scenes secret dealings with politicians to push through Raffi Shirinian’s Urban Blox destruction of affordable homes is more nefarious.



### The Theft of State Property

The long established rule in California is that city streets belong to all the people of the State. “It is settled that the public streets of a municipality belong to the people of the State,” it is stated in *Keller vs. City of Oakland* (1921 Calif Supreme Court) 54 Cal.App. 169.

Krekorian and his cohort Raffi Shirinian recognize that Shirinian’s destruction of poor people’s homes requires the theft of state property. According to City documents, Shirinian’s entire project is 42,342 square feet and about 14,070 square feet (33% of the land) is being stolen from the State of California. Weddington does not even belong to the City of Los Angeles and certainly it is not the personal property of Councilmember Krekorian, even though he treats it as such.



Weddington Street (photo left) sits between Shirinian’s south side of Weddington and the parcel to the north. Weddington Street is 60 feet wide. That means that without Krekorian’s ripping out all of Weddington Street’s 14,070 square feet and giving all that land to his buddy Raffi Shirinian, there is no viable project.

Instead, Raffi Shirinian has a small parcel south of Weddington and a small parcel north of Weddington which are unconnected to each other. Neither parcel is large enough to support the cost of destroying the nine homes of the poor and disabled people now at stake, but with Krekorian’s gift of the connecting State property, Raffi Shirinian now has enough acreage to construct his 26 high-end homes. →

## **Giving Away State Property Makes Money for Corrupt Politicos**

It has become quite the rage for councilmembers to give away city streets to their friends and campaign donors. (More about how that works later.) The target can be any dead-end street or cul de sac. A councilman like O'Farrell declares that the street is no longer necessary and councilmember's friends get to incorporate what used to be a public street into their property. This ploy is favored by the wealthy who want to live in illegal gated communities. Because gating off a public street is unlawful, the councilman simply gives the entire dead-end street and -- like magic -- the landowners now have a private driveway where there used to be a public street.

But Weddington Street is used all the time as a street. The residents have showed how it is being used by the neighborhood children as a play area – and as a dead-end street, it lacks the dangers of a through street. It provides on-street parking for about fourteen cars. After this project is constructed, none of these current residents will have any place to park; there will be no play area for children. The street also serves the function of providing open space in a residential neighborhood. In fact, any city that cared one whit about the quality of life of its citizens could make the intersection of Weddington and Hermitage much safer by installing a modest roundabout.

A roundabout is a circle often filled with flowers which is placed in the middle of an intersection so that cars cannot speed directly down the street, but rather, when they come to the roundabout, they must slow down and drive counter-clockwise around the circular garden.

## **We Know that this is Corruptionism**

We know that this gift of Weddington Street to Raffi Shirinian is slow-motion corruption which could be stopped dead in its tracks – except for the overwhelming hubris that the unanimous vote trading pact has created in city councilmembers like Krekorian. Krekorian knows that no councilmember will mention the fact that there is no basis – other than cronyism - to give Raffi Shirinian 14,000 sq feet of state land. Rather, the City Council will unanimously approve this additional bit of corruptionism.

Judges are very familiar with how this delayed compensation-bribery system functions. While on the bench, many judges are very nice to insurance companies, real estate developers, and other business interests. Then when they retire on fat pensions, the judges go to work as arbitrators and mediators for insurance companies, real estate developers and large “downtown” law firms. These ex-judges can pull in \$750 an hour. How does anyone tie their bizarre rulings on the bench with the generous compensation which they receive after their “retirement?” There is no way.

There is no way to trace future campaign contributions to Krekorian or to his deputy Karo Toussian, who is running for Council District 7, to this deal with Raffi Shirinian or to the deal whereby Krekorian needlessly destroyed Marilyn Monroe's home.

## **The Los Angeles City Council's Unlawful Vote Trading Pact Makes Los Angeles Safe for Criminals**

This gift of state land to Raffi Shirinian is the result of LA City Council's unlawful vote trading pact. Each councilmember agrees to vote YES for every construction project no matter how corrupt, and in return, each councilmember is guaranteed the same “respect.” This type of “respect” is also known as “omerta.” In other words, “I won't talk about your illicit deals if you don't speak about mine.”

COUNCILMEMBER HUIZAR  
COUNCILMEMBER ENGLANDER  
COUNCILMEMBER PRICE JR.  
COUNCILMEMBER HARRIS-DAWSON  
COUNCILMEMBER CEDILLO

# L.A.'s Small Lot Homes: Destroying Low-Rent Housing

COURTESY OF RAFFI SHIRINIAN



## URBAN-BLOX + BEACHWOOD CANYON

January 2015 VTT-72899-SL-2A (Council File #14-1746) - Urban-Blox Beachwood Canyon project-Community files an appeal after **Urban-IBox's adamant refusal to work with their board and PLUM Committee.**

***"This appeal has been filed because we, as citizens of Los Angeles, believe that the Project will not contribute to a 'healthy and sustainable neighborhood', will not provide the neighborhood with a 'distinct sense of place', and will do nothing to improve the quality of life for the residents of the neighborhood. All City Planning Department projects, large or small, should conform to these standards."***

## URBAN-BLOX + SILVERLAKE



December 29, 2014

Councilmember Mitch O'Farrell - On August 13th the SLNC Urban Design and Preservation Committee **voted down supporting Raffi Shirinian and Urban Blox's** proposed development at 846-856 Coronado St.

*The quaint 1905 bungalow at 852 N. Coronado is the only home 35-year-old Rachel Arias has ever known. She grew up there, and is raising her son James there. She thought she would live there her entire life, but a developer has changed that, leaving Rachel and her parents scrambling to find housing -- a search complicated by the fact James, age 4, is severely disabled, confined to a wheelchair, and must stay in the same basic geographical area to ensure continuity of medical services.*

*The Arias' are just one of the many families falling victim to the Small Lot Ordinance, the legislation that some consider the solution to the so-called "housing crisis". This ordinance allows single lots to be broken up into many lots, decreases or eliminates yard space, and allows developers to build to the edges of each tiny lot. It also encourages developers to build high, skinny units, often 3 or 4 stories, a style of architecture that some see as "agism by design" since the elderly and people with families find the vertical aspect difficult or, in Rachel's case, impossible. One developer offered that these units are inappropriate for families or the elderly because of the lack of yards and the abundance of stairs. The Small Lot Guidelines tout the importance of neighborhood compatibility, yet why have so many incompatible Small Lot projects sprouted up all over Los Angeles? The answer lies in an ordinance loophole, one line on page 5, that allows an advisory agency the right to approve a project regardless of whether it adheres to the guidelines.*

*This in effect means that the guidelines do not need to be followed in order for a project to be approved. It also leaves the community with no recourse to fight inappropriate developments in their neighborhoods. If the City Council voted to remove this one sentence, LA development would radically change. It would turn the guidelines into actual guidelines, and developers would be required to submit designs accordingly.*

*On Aug. 28, 2014 Rachel invoked the Ellis Act, which entitles her to live in her home for one more year. At that time, her bungalow and **4 other affordable homes will be demolished to make way for 11 new units on these two lots; they will be the largest and most expensive homes on the smallest lots of any residential corner of Silver Lake, towering over existing buildings half their size.***

***Hundreds of people within a 500' radius signed a petition to protest the inappropriateness of the project, pointing out the utter lack of compatibility to the existing neighborhood. A letter was also submitted to the the Advisory Agency, informing Jae Kim that the developer had **falsified rents** in order to meet Housing Department requirements that say a tenant must be able to find similar rents in the area before demolition is approved. The developer, Raffi Shirinian of Urban Blox, claimed that the 4 occupied units were all paying around \$1500, making it seem likely that Rachel's family could find similar housing in the neighborhood. None of the tenants paid over \$600. At the subsequent hearing, the project was approved.***

***The community wants to know why was this information was ignored.***

*The story of Rachel and her son has sparked an outcry;*

//////////

**Are you seeing a pattern?**

This is just a glimpse into Raffi Shirinian's world and the business conduct of Urban-Blox.

They have relations with Planners who are assigned to review their projects, such as the one before you.

They have relations with the district Councilmember, who continues to offer his undying support to his fellow contributors and has remained silent to his voters.

Urban-Blox HAS NO PLANS TO BUILD ANYTHING. THIS IS WHAT THEY DO AND UP UNTIL NOW YOU HAVE PERMITTED IT.

By not upholding this appeal, **you increase homelessness, you remove housing you, erase history, you give the community a big empty lot which will be loitered upon and filled with trash. You have then significantly reduced the quality of EVERYONES LIVES.**

By not upholding this appeal **the public is forced to file unnecessary and avoidable lawsuits.**

2 Area Planning Commissioners voted IN FAVOR of this appeal. The others refused to look at evidence and did what they always do. Had they reviewed the record, findings would have been made that indisputably support the appeal.

PLUM COMMITTEE MEMBERS - I RESPECTFULLY URGE YOU to uphold this appeal.

What is it you think is going to happen by playing by the rules?

Travis

Vantage Ave. Valley Village