Project Summary

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
Core Planning Team

- **Alan Bell, AICP**
  - Deputy Director

- **Tom Rothmann**
  - Senior City Planner

- **Erick Lopez**
  - City Planner

- **David Olivo**
  - City Planning Associate

- **Deborah Kahen, AICP**
  - Planning Assistant
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
Progress Made So Far

- Council Approved Funding June 2012
- Request For Proposals released July 2012
- 6 Proposals Received August 2012
- Prime Consultant Selected October 2012; currently in Contract Negotiations
CURRENT PROBLEMS
Making Up for Shortcomings
Current Problems

- Same basic set of Zoning Classifications maintained since Post-War Era
- Scattered language results in vague, contradicting, and unnecessarily complicated regulations
- Relies heavily on Entitlements, Site-Specific Conditions, and Overlays
- Does not always promote good urban design
Code Interpretations & Memos

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

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Overlays & Site-Specific Conditions

- 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
Department Resources

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

A vision for Los Angeles’ future.
General Plan Framework

- 1990’s, City adopted the General Plan Framework Element
- Strategy to accommodate growth and development
- Zoning Code never revised to implement these policies and standards
Framework Principles

Economic Opportunity
- Improve social equity and maintain the quality of life

Equity
- Prioritize community needs

Environmental Quality
- Attract /retain economic investment and improve neighborhood liveability

Strategic Investment
- Ensure mobility and access to jobs, and
- Maintain environmental quality

Clear and Consistent Rules
- Expand economic opportunity and protect neighborhood character

Effective Implementation
- Responsive to changing needs of communities to plan for the future
Zoning Code Guiding Language

- General Plan System
- Growth & Capacity
- Land Use
- Housing
- Urban Form & Neighborhood Design
- Open Space & Conservation
- Economic Development
- Transportation
- Infrastructure & Public Services
- Implementation Programs
Land Use Categories

Zones/Uses
- Single-Family Residential
- Multi-Family Residential
- General Commercial
- Industrial
- Open Space
- Public and Institutional

Districts & Centers
- Neighborhood District
- Community Center
- Regional Center
- Downtown Center
- Mixed-Use Boulevard
- Pedestrian Overlay
- Historic Overlay
Framework Districts

- Neighborhood District
- Community Center
- Regional Center
- Downtown Center
- Mixed Use Boulevards

Figure 3-1
Long Range Land Use Diagram
Metro

Los Angeles Department of City Planning
APPROACHES

Current types of zoning codes
Types of Zoning Regulations

- Euclidean Zoning
  - Separation of land uses (single-family, multi-family, commercial, industrial, etc.) accompanied by sets of development standards (lot dimensions, yards, height, etc.)
Village of Euclid v. Ambler Realty Co. (1926)
Types of Zoning Regulations

- **Euclidean Zoning**
  - Separation of land uses (single-family, multi-family, commercial, industrial, etc.) accompanied by sets of development standards (lot dimensions, yards, height, etc.)

- **Form-Based**
  - Focuses primarily on regulating the building form (scale & design) in relation to the scale of development in the vicinity
  - Pays attention to the improvements on private property and streets & open space

- **Performance-Based**
  - Focuses on the issue of incompatible uses and development
  - Based on regulations which directly address the negative aspects of land uses such as density, traffic, noise, etc.

- **Modular Zoning**
  - “Breaks-up” zone into its fundamental parts—permitted uses, dimensional standards and development standards—and combines those components to create zones
Latest Examples

- City of Los Angeles
  - Currently utilizes a Euclidean Zoning system
- City of Miami
  - Recently adopted a Form-Based Code
- City of Denver
  - Developed a hybrid of Euclidean Zoning and Form-Based Code that they refer to as a “Context-Sensitive” Code
- City of Fresno
  - Working on a Downtown Development Code that builds on elements from the long established New Urbanist movement as well as the new Form-Based movement
VISION FOR A NEW CODE

How should this New Zoning Code work?
Zoning Needs

Zone: What is the property used for?

Form: How is the property developed?

Orientation: How does the property fit within its surroundings?
Future of Place-Making in Los Angeles

Private Property + Public Realm (sidewalk/street) = Place

Private Property
- General Plan Framework Element
- Zoning Code
  - Use
  - Form
  - Orientation

Public Realm (sidewalk/street)
- General Plan Mobility Element
  - Orientation
  - Street Width

Overlap

Community Plans
## Place-Making

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| “Neighborhood Commercial”  
“Small” Lot with local business/neighborhood serving uses (dry cleaner, restaurant, etc.) | “Low-Rise”  
Two/three-stories with entry/display windows and 2nd floor windows facing street | “Pedestrian-Oriented”  
Storefront along sidewalk with parking in a structure or located in the rear |
Place-Making

Use
Medium Density Residential
Multi-Family Residential use only; rentals/condominiums

Form
Mid-Rise
Four/Twelve-stories with entry/display windows and 2nd floor windows facing street

Orientation
“Transit-Oriented”
Reduced parking requirements, walkability features, and accessibility to transit stations
Place-Making

Use
High Density Residential
Multi-Family Residential use only; rentals/condominiums

Form
High-Rise
Twelve/Fifty-stories

Orientation
“Pedestrian-Oriented”
Entry located along sidewalk with parking in a structure or located in the rear
Place-Making

Use
“Single-Family Residential”
One dwelling unit per property

Form
“Low-Rise”
Two/three-stories with entry/display windows and 2nd floor windows facing street

Orientation
“Pedestrian-Oriented”
Front along sidewalk with parking located in the rear
Visual & Streamlined Code

1. Lot

- Lot area (min) 6,000 SF
- Lot width (min) 50'

Lot Parameters
- % of outdoor amenity space (min) 20%

2. Placement

- Primary street
- Side street
- Side interior
- Rear
- Rear, abutting protected district, RA-3 or RD-2

Building Setbacks
- Primary street (min) 0'
- Side street (min) 0'
- Side interior (min) 0' or 5'
- Rear (min) 0' or 5'

3. Height

- Building height (max)
  - MK-3: 3 stories / 45'
  - MK-4: 4 stories / 50'
  - MK-5: 5 stories / 67'

- Reduced height may be required when abutting a protected district (see Sec. 3.16.0)
- Building height (min) 2 stories

4. Activation

- Transparency
  - Ground story (min) 60%
  - Upper story (min) 20%
  - Blank wall area (max) 30%

- Pedestrian Access
  - Entrance facing primary street: Required
  - Entrance spacing along primary street: 75'

- Permitted Building Elements
  - Porch: No
  - Stoop: No
  - Balcony: Yes
  - Gallery: Yes
  - Awning/Canopy: Yes
  - Forecourt: Yes

Parking Location
- On-site parking not allowed between the building & the street

Easy to read & user-friendly format
More Effective Community Planning Tools

- More zoning options that better address community vision and concerns
- Better integration of private property and public realm
- Clear and consistent regulations
More Effective Community Planning Tools

A. Detached House
A building constructed to accommodate one principal dwelling unit on a single lot. A series of detached houses as part of a cottage court may be located on a single lot. In a mixed use district, a detached house may be used for nonresidential purposes.

B. Attached House
A building constructed to accommodate two principal dwelling units on a single lot. A series of attached houses as part of a cottage court may be located on a single lot. In a mixed use district, an attached house may be used for nonresidential purposes.

C. Townhouse
A building constructed to accommodate two or more dwelling units are horizontally integrated where each dwelling unit is separated vertically by a party wall. Units may be placed on individual lots, or the entire building may be placed on a single lot. In a mixed use district, a townhouse may be used for nonresidential purposes.

D. Apartment
A building constructed to accommodate three or more dwelling units that are vertically and horizontally integrated. A common kitchen is allowed. A limited set of nonresidential uses may be allowed in ground floor corner units in mixed use districts.

E. General Building
A building constructed to accommodate nonresidential uses on all floors.

F. Mixed Use Building
A building constructed to accommodate ground floor retail and upper-story residential or office uses.

G. Civic Building
A building that exclusively accommodates civic uses.

H. Open Lot
Open lots are used to accommodate uses with large outdoor or open areas. An open lot can also accommodate open space, parks or natural areas.
More Effective Community Planning Tools

Sec. 2.3. Mixed Use Districts (MX-3, -4, -5)

The MX- Districts are intended to accommodate a mix of compatible commercial, employment and higher-density residential in a pedestrian-friendly and walkable environment.

B. Neighborhood Local

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Width</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. Right-of-way width</td>
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<td>B. Back-of-curb</td>
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<table>
<thead>
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<th>Street scape</th>
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<td>C. Utility placement, easement (min)</td>
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<td>D. Maintenance strip (min)</td>
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<td>E. Sidewalk (min)</td>
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<td>F. Planting area (min)</td>
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<th>Travelway</th>
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<td>G. Parallel parking/travel lane</td>
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<th>General</th>
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<tr>
<td>Walkway type</td>
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<td>Planting type</td>
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<tr>
<td>Parking type</td>
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A. Permitted Building Types
- Mixed Use Building
- Shopfront Building
- General Building
- Civic Building
- Apartment
- Apartment Court
- Stacked Flat
- Townhouse
- Garden Apartment
- Cottage Court
- Detached House

B. Permitted Building Heights
- MX-3: 3 stories / 45 feet
- MX-4: 4 stories / 55 feet
- MX-5: 5 stories / 67 feet
Web-Based Zoning Code System

- Web-based Code delivery system
- Extensive use of graphics, tables & charts
- Intuitive Interaction - compile the most relevant provisions for a particular property
- Develop a “digital concierge” or TurboTax™-type system (imagine: TurboZone)
### Predictable & Effective Processes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CASE IDENTIFIER</th>
<th>INITIAL DESIGN</th>
<th>APPEAL</th>
<th>2ND APPEAL</th>
<th>FINAL RESULT</th>
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**INITIAL DESIGN**
- Hearing time: 25 days
- Appeal period: 10 days

**APPEAL**
- Hearing time: 25 days
- Appeal period: 10 days

**2ND APPEAL**
- Hearing time: 25 days
- Appeal period: 10 days

---

**ZONING ADMIN**

### Los Angeles Department of City Planning

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# Predictable & Effective Processes

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<th>APPROVAL PROCESS</th>
<th>X-ref</th>
<th>City Official</th>
<th>Historic Developer\ Commission</th>
<th>Appearance Commission</th>
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Downtown Revitalization

- Ensure that Downtown Los Angeles is poised to take advantage of ongoing economic recovery
- Ready to absorb larger share of citywide density
- Maximize on transportation infrastructure investment in Downtown
Public Participation

- Policy Advisory Committee
- 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.
Thank You for Your Time

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