A New Zoning Code for a 21st Century Los Angeles

To create livable communities, encourage sustainable development and foster economic vitality, we need a modern and user-friendly zoning code – we need to re:code LA.

Quarterly Report & Code Evaluation

City Council: September 10, 2014
History & Background

• Grown from 84 small-format pages to over 600 standard-format pages
Code Interpretations & Memos

• Thousands of Zoning Code Interpretations

• Countless Memos

• Community Plan Footnotes
Department Resources

• Majority of resources are now devoted to Cases, Administration and Support

Department Budget Allocation

- Case Processing: 61%
- Admin and Support: 25%
- Citywide Planning: 4%
- Community Planning: 10%
Overlays & Site Specific Conditions

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

- Majority of properties have 2 or more different sets of regulations
Project Deliverables & Timeline

• Citywide Zoning Code
• Downtown Development Code
• Interactive Web-Based Code System
More Effective Community Planning Tools

B. Neighborhood Local

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Width</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. Right-of-way width</td>
<td>59'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Back-of-curb to back-of-curb</td>
<td>81'</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Streetscape</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C. Utility placement, easement (min)</td>
<td>5'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. Maintenance strip (min)</td>
<td>2'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. Sidewalk (min)</td>
<td>6'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F. Planting area (min)</td>
<td>5'</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Travelway</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>G. Parallel parking/travel lane</td>
<td>15.5'</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Walkway type</td>
<td>Sidewalk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planting type</td>
<td>Tree lawn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tree spacing</td>
<td>40' o.c. avg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parking type</td>
<td>Parallel</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A. Permitted Building Types
- Mixed Use Building
- Shopfront Building
- General Building
- Civic Building
- Apartment
- Apartment Court

B. Permitted Building Heights
- MX-3: 3 stories / 45 feet
- MX-4: 4 stories / 55 feet
- MX-5: 5 stories / 67 feet

[Plan re:code Ldcp]
Case Processing Procedures

• **Streamline and Consolidate**
  
  • Eliminate obsolete or redundant procedures
  
  • Identify and incorporate common Conditions of Approval into regulations
Quarterly Report

Where are we now?

(last report: March 2014)
Since Last Report

• Regional Forums
  • 7 forums with over 500 in attendance

• Virtual Forum

• Project Website
  • Public comments via MarkUp and ongoing article series

• 3 City Planning Commission Meetings
  • May 22, 2014
  • June 6, 2014
  • June 26, 2014

• Additional stakeholder group meetings
Oversight Committees

Zoning Advisory Committee

• Met 5 times and discussed:
  • Code Evaluation Report
  • Downtown Planning & Development
  • Discretionary Process Impact
    • Affordability of housing and cost of development
    • Community point of view

Technical Advisory Committee

• Gave feedback on Code Evaluation Report
Interactive Web-Based Code System

Completed:

✓ Technical Architecture

✓ Visual Designs

✓ “Proof of Concept” aka Prototype

These images are from the approved design sets, are not the final product, and are subject to change.
What’s Next?

• Approach Report
  • Outlines structure/organization of Zoning Code

• Downtown Development Code (internal draft)
  • Preliminary proposal to be reviewed by project team

• WebCode Alpha System Testing
  • Done by programmers, reviewed by project team
  • Beta Testing will follow
Code Evaluation Report

How do we spend the next four years?
Summary of Code Evaluation

• Outlines directions & key provisions for a new citywide Zoning Code

• Guides the development of a Downtown Code and a new, first-of-its-kind web-based code
Evaluation Report Organization

1. Distinct Neighborhoods
   Provide a clearer, more prescriptive approach to promoting and preserving neighborhood character.

2. Housing Affordability and Diversity
   Expand housing options to provide a more complete range of people and incomes.

3. Centers and Corridors
   Rethink commercial corridors and centers to focus on providing accessible and healthy environments to live, work, learn and thrive in.

4. Transportation Choice
   Provide mobility choices that balance the needs and safety for all modes of transportation.
5. Jobs and Innovation
Retain jobs and attract industry to strengthen Los Angeles as a global center for employment and innovation.

6. A Strong Core
Retool Downtown regulations to create a dense, livable pattern of development that supports a vibrant daytime and nighttime economy.

7. A Healthy City
Improve the community’s health through greener, more resilient development.

8. Code Delivery
Ensure an open, transparent and responsive delivery and review process.
Background

• CPC considered the Code Evaluation on May 22, June 6, and June 26

• Staff highlighted 4 policy directives and 30 synthesized comments from ZAC, TAC, and public

• CPC discussed implementation strategies for a new Code
Implementing a New Zoning Code

How Should This New Code Work?
… to Implement ONE Zoning Code

• **Zone Conversions** consolidate layers of existing regulation and rename zones
  • Resulting “**Bridge**” Zones are placeholders until next planning update

• **Zone Changes** amend the fundamental land use regulations
  • Resulting **New Zones** are tools for community planners to implement in the future
Convert Current Zones to “Bridge” Zones

Existing zones are converted to comparable, temporary (“bridge”) zones in the new Code – needed in order to avoid two Codes

Current Zoning

- Several layers of regulation on top of base zone
- Need to consult multiple separate documents

“Bridge” Zone

- Layers of regulation collapsed/flattened into 1 zone
- Unique and discrete name
- Existing development rights remain intact (FAR, setbacks, height, density, etc.)
- No boundary changes
- Happens where planning is not occurring
Creation of a “Bridge” Zone
Creation of a “Bridge” Zone

[Q]C4-2-CDO

Qualified Conditions

Base Zone (LAMC)
Commercial Zone:
- Permitted Uses
- Setbacks
- Lot Standards

Height District (LAMC)
Floor Area Ratio:
- 6:1
Height:
- Unlimited

Supplemental Use District

Other LAMC Provisions

Section 12.21 – General Provision
Parking, Open Space, Walls/Fences, etc.

Section 12.22 – General Exceptions

Section 12.24 – Conditional Use

Section 12.37 – Dedication and Improvement

Article 4.4 – Signs

28 Pages of Design Standards:
- Building, Pedestrian,
- Open Space, Circulation,
- Parking, Landscaping,
- Signs

Sign Prohibitions:
Off-Site Signs
Pole Signs
Mural Signs
Supergraphic Displays
Creation of a “Bridge” Zone

ZONE X

- Commercial Zone:
- Permitted Uses
- Conditional Uses
- Setbacks
- Lot Standards
- Floor Area Ratio – 6:1

GENERAL PROVISIONS

- Parking
- Open Space
- Walls/Fences
- Signs
- Landscaping
- Recycling Facilities
- Bike Parking
- Sign Regulations
- Etc.
Sample Zoning Designation Layout

3.3. CX: Commercial Mixed Use

Description

CX is intended to accommodate a broader range of residential and nonresidential activity than NX. To promote walkability and compatibility, auto-oriented uses are restricted. Building type options include townhouse, apartment, live work, shopfront house, single-story shopfront, mixed use shopfront, and general building. CX should be applied in areas where the existing or proposed land use pattern promotes mixed use and pedestrian-oriented activity.

Building Types Allowed

- Townhouse see Sec. 6.2.9
- Apartment see Sec. 6.2.10
- Live work see Sec. 6.2.11
- Shopfront house see Sec. 6.2.12
- Single-story shopfront see Sec. 6.2.13
- Mixed use shopfront see Sec. 6.2.14
- General building see Sec. 6.2.15

Lot

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Width</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Townhouse</td>
<td>1,500 SF min</td>
<td>20’ min</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apartment</td>
<td>5,000 SF min</td>
<td>50’ min</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Live work</td>
<td>1,100 SF min</td>
<td>15’ min</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shopfront house</td>
<td>5,000 SF min</td>
<td>50’ min</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single-story shopfront</td>
<td>6,000 SF min</td>
<td>50’ min</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed use shopfront</td>
<td>5,000 SF min</td>
<td>30’ min</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General building</td>
<td>5,000 SF min</td>
<td>50’ min</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Coverage

Lot coverage: 80% max

Building and Structure Setbacks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Primary street setback</th>
<th>Side street setback</th>
<th>Side interior setback</th>
<th>Rear setback</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Building facade in primary street</td>
<td>0’ min / 10’ max (A)</td>
<td>0’ min / 10’ max (A)</td>
<td>0 or 5’ min (A)</td>
<td>0 or 5’ min (A)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building facade in side street</td>
<td>0’ min / 10’ max (B)</td>
<td>0’ min / 10’ max (B)</td>
<td>0 or 5’ min (B)</td>
<td>0 or 5’ min (B)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rear abutting alley</td>
<td>4’ or 20’ min (D)</td>
<td>0’ or 5’ min (D)</td>
<td>0’ or 5’ min (D)</td>
<td>0’ or 5’ min (D)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Build-to-Zone (BTZ)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>BTZ (% of lot width)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Building facade in primary street</td>
<td>70% min (C)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building facade in side street</td>
<td>30% min (C)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Parking Location

- Front yard: Not Allowed (G)
- Corner yard: Not Allowed (H)
- Side yard: Allowed (I)
- Rear yard: Allowed (I)
Remapping the City into One Code

“BRIDGE” ZONES
All in one Article which will be deleted when the whole City has migrated to New Zones

NEW ZONES
Getting to New Zones, Citywide

Without Community Plan Updates

Zone Conversion

Current Zoning → “Bridge” Zone

Zone Change

“Bridge” Zone → New Zone

With Community Plan Updates

Zone Change

Current Zoning → New Zone
DISCUSSION...