Session Outline
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What is ‘Civic Technology’ and how does it help you reach and engage your audience?
re:code LA

A comprehensive zoning code revision with an emphasis on creating an interactive, customized experience

For more information visit recode.la
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
Original Zones In Heavy Use

1946 Zones
(50% of City’s acreage, not including streets)

- "A1" Agricultural Zone (6%)
- "A2" Agricultural Zone (1%)
- "RA" Suburban Zone (5%)
- "R1" One-Family Zone (17.9%)
- "R2" Two-Family Zone (2.7%)
- "R3" Multiple Dwelling Zone (3.8%)
- "R4" Multiple Dwelling Zone (1.1%)
- "R5" Multiple Dwelling Zone (0.1%)
- "C1" Limited Commercial Zone (0.2%)
- "C2" Commercial Zone (3.4%)
- "C3" Commercial Zone (no longer exists)
- "C4" Commercial Zone (0.8%)
- "CM" Business Zone, now Commercial Manufacturing Zone (0.4%)
- "M1" Limited Industrial Zone (1.1%)
- "M2" Light Industrial Zone (2.5%)
- "M3" Heavy Industrial Zone (4.2%)
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
Code Interpretations & Memos

• Thousands of Zoning Code Interpretations

• Countless Memos

• These make up the “Phantom” Code
Department Case Stats for 2014

- 3,100 Cases Filed
- 2,150 Letters of Determination Released
- 2,700 Current Active Cases
- 65,000 Customers Served at Counter
- 31,000 Building Permit Clearances
Project Deliverables & Timeline

• Citywide Zoning Code
• Downtown Development Code
• Interactive Web-Based Code System
More Zones, Fewer Overlays

- More zoning options that better address community visions and concerns
- Incorporating overlays into base zones will address inconsistencies
Case Processing Procedures

- **Streamline and Consolidate**
  - Eliminate obsolete or redundant procedures
  - Identify and incorporate common Conditions of Approval into regulations
Designing A Modern, Visual Code

What are the challenges and opportunities from designing a zoning code to work in an interactive web-based system
A Modern Code . . . is VISUAL

### Div. 8.4. Cottage Court

#### 8.4.1 Description

**Definition**
A building type that accommodates 5 to 9 detached dwelling units organized around an internal shared courtyard.

**Districts Allowed**
- Single Family Dom. (R-1, R-2, R-3, R-4)
- Townhouse (T-1, T-2, T-3, T-4)

---

#### 8.4.2 Lot and Placement

**Site**
- Site area: 22,600 SF min
- Site width/depth: 150' min
- Dwelling units per site: 5 min / 6 max
- Additional site area per dwelling unit beyond 6 units: 4,600 SF min

**Lot**
- Area: 1,200 SF min
- Width: 20' min

**Coverage**
- Lot coverage: Does not apply
- Principal building footprint: 1,200 SF max

**Building and Structure Setbacks**
- Primary street: set by district
- Side street: set by district
- Side interior: set by district
- Rear: set by district

**Build-to-Zone (BTZ)**
- Building facades in primary street BTZ (% of lot width): Does not apply
- Building facades in side street BTZ (% of lot width): Does not apply

---

#### 8.4.3 Height and Form

**Height**
- Principal building: 1.5 stories / 24 max
- Building wall plate height: 18' max
- Accessory structure: 18' max
- Ground floor elevation: 2' (R-1)

**的高度和形式**
- 主要建筑高度: 1.5层 / 24层 max
- 建筑墙面板高度: 18' max
- 附属建筑: 18' max
- 地面层高度: 2' (R-1)

**Courtyard**
- Area: 3,000 SF max
- Width: 40' min
- Additional site area per dwelling unit beyond 6 units: 600 SF min

**Entrance facing primary street**
- Required for units facing street

**Building Elements Allowed**
- Balcony: see Sec. 8.14.3
- Porch: see Sec. 8.16.6
- Stoop: see Sec. 8.16.7

**Parking Location**
- Front/owner yard: Not allowed
- Garage door restrictions: see Sec. 8.17.1
Basis of the Problem

• What a codifier does:
  - Tracks legislative changes (history)
  - Inserts new ordinances (revisions) into full code
  - Publishes hard copy and website

• What a codifier typically does NOT do:
  - Present your beautifully laid out code the way it was originally formatted . . .
1. Housing Types

In order to allow for a variety of housing options in the City and to establish a common housing terminology, the following housing types are established.

**Single-Family Detached**
A building containing one dwelling unit located on a single lot with private yards on all four sides.

**Zero Lot Line**
A building containing one dwelling unit located on a single lot with private yards on three sides, and the building located on or very near the remaining lot line.

**Single-Family Attached**
A building with two attached dwelling units located on two lots that share a common wall along a lot line.

**Two-Family**
A building with two attached dwelling units located on a single lot or parcel (often called a duplex). The units may be located on separate floors or side-by-side.
The Codified (Web) Results:

**Single-Family Detached.** A building containing one dwelling unit located on a single lot with private yards on all four sides.

**Zero Lot Line.** A building containing one dwelling unit located on a single lot with private yards on three sides, and the building located on or very near the remaining lot line.

**Single-Family Attached.** A building with two attached dwelling units located on two lots that share a common wall along a lot line.

**Two-Family.** A building with two attached dwelling units located on a single lot or parcel (often called a duplex). The units may be located on separate floors or side-by-side.

**Townhouse.** A building with at least three attached dwelling units consolidated into a single structure. Each unit is separated by a common side wall. A townhouse is more than one story in height, however units are not vertically mixed. Each unit has its own external entrance.

**Multifamily.** A building or buildings consisting of three or more dwelling units located on a single lot or site. Dwelling units within a multifamily building may be situated either wholly or partially over or under other dwelling units. The building often shares a common entrance.
Nobody Seems to Do It Right!

- PDF’s served up on web and searchable seems to be the best the industry can do . . .

- Can’t we do better? Publish our beautiful, graphically rich codes with more finesse?
• Complete Zoning Code revision

• WebCode as part of original request

• Synchronized creation of WebCode for digital use, along with hard copy publication

• Integrated team of planners, lawyers, designers and web experts
Key Features

• Intended for full spectrum of users:
  • Casual code browser
  • Design professionals
  • City staff

• Browse the code, with hyperlinks to chapters, sections and cross-references

• Create a personalized code
  • Pull all relevant sections of the full code
  • Subset of all regulations – just those that apply
  • Based on different elements, including zone, use
  • Enter system from map, typed address, or search
Challenges of Webcode Creation

• Every paragraph needs to be “smart” – know whether or not it applies to a specific zone, so that it can be “pulled”

• This task usually relies on human administrator, interpretation

  • EXAMPLE: Do the landscape buffer standards apply in the “Suburban Two-Unit” zone?

    If so, they are consolidated with all other applicable regulations
Challenges of Webcode Creation

• InDesign “Tagging”
  • Code paragraphs are “tagged” with customized InDesign styles

  • **EXAMPLE:** all standards that apply specifically to “mid-rise” building form

• WebCode system reads tags into database, can pull Chapter, Division, Section based on specific tags

• Requires greater focus on applicability of text during drafting
Challenges of Webcode Creation

• Rethinking page layout
  • Instead of consolidating zones into large tables, publish smaller tables pulled for specific zones
  • Accept more pages with less information
  • Resist the urge to consolidate
  • Allow duplication, since WebCode will pull select materials
Challenges of Webcode Creation

• Code Drafting Responses:
  • Separate use from building form
WebCode Toolkit

A demonstration and discussion about lessons learned creating the new WebCode Toolkit developed and used by the City of Los Angeles
Goal

• Develop a modern, web-based version of LA’s new code that is **interactive**, elegant, **personalized**, and optimized for **mobile** devices.
The Zoning Code regulates all land, buildings, structures and uses within the City of Los Angeles.

BROWSE ZONING CODE
Read the Code online, or download the Code.

CREATE SUMMARY
See how the zoning code affects your property.
Example: 421 N Vista Street

SEARCH
Search the Code and common questions

SEARCH

FAQS
- Residential Administration
- Home Business
- General Zoning Code
- HPOZs

ZONING MAP
Find and map your property, or see a map of the City's zones.

Section 1.2.1. Establishment of Official Zoning Map

This section of the zoning code contains Zoning Administrator Interpretations. Please review the following notes:
ORD-142642  
CPC-23667  
ORD-165331-SA270

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A</th>
<th>Lot Dimensions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A1</td>
<td>Area (min)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A2</td>
<td>Width (min)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>B</th>
<th>Principal Building Setbacks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B1</td>
<td>From primary street (min)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B2</td>
<td>From side street (min)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B3</td>
<td>From side lot line</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B4</td>
<td>Sum of side setbacks</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Side Lot Line  
Duis autem vel eum iure dolor in hendrerit in vulputate velit.
Section 1.2.1.
Establishment of Official Zoning Map

Video: How to estimate your floor area ratio
Download Zoning Code

Choose sections to download.
- Select all
- Chapter 1. Introductory Provisions
- Chapter 2. Residential Districts
- Chapter 3. Mixed Use Districts
- Chapter 4. Special Districts
- Chapter 5. Overlay Districts
- Chapter 6. Use Regulations
- Chapter 7. General Development Standards
- Chapter 8. Subdivision & Site Plan Standards
- Chapter 9. Natural Resource Protection
- Chapter 10. Administration
- Chapter 11. Building and Housing Code
- Chapter 12. Definitions

Select format.
- PDF
- Kindle
- iBook

Download  Cancel
Create Zoning Summary

Tell us about your property or use, and we'll highlight sections of the Zoning Code that apply to you.

Step 1

- By Address
  Search for your zoning information by entering your property’s address.

- By Assessor’s Parcel Number
  Get your zoning information with your property’s designated APN.

- By Type of Use
  See what zones your intended use is allowed in.
Create Zoning Summary

Tell us about your property or use, and we'll highlight sections of the Zoning Code that apply to you.

Step 1

My address: 421 N Vista St

Note: Directionals (N, S, W, E) and suffixes (Ave, Blvd, etc) are ignored.
Example: For W Van Nuys Blvd, enter "van nuys".

Terms and conditions:
The service provided herein is not intended to constitute, nor should be construed as, professional services of any kind, nor does it represent a final determination or assurance of the issuance of permits or entitlement approvals by the City of Los Angeles. Before proceeding with any project, the user is solely responsible for seeking legal, accounting, real estate, business, tax or other professional advice.

I agree to terms and conditions.

Next
Create Zoning Summary

Tell us about your property or use, and we'll highlight sections of the Zoning Code that apply to you.

Step 1

We found multiple results from the information you provided. Please select the specific address you wish to get information on.

Select your address

- 421 N VISTA ST (Community Plan Area: Wilshire, ZIP: 90038)
- 419 N VISTA ST (Community Plan Area: Wilshire, ZIP: 90036)

Next
Create Zoning Summary

Tell us about your property or use, and we’ll highlight sections of the Zoning Code that apply to you.

We have a match and determined that your property is zoned R2. Please select any additional interests you want included in your zoning summary.

I am interested in

- Enclosing a patio
- What my setbacks are
- Allowable fence height
- Permitted driveway materials
- Building a front or back yard patio
- Building an addition to a house
- Building a second unit
- Building a new home
- Something not listed here
Your zoning summary is being built.
Create Zoning Summary

Table of Contents
- Article 3. Mixed Use Districts
  - Division 3.1. General Provisions
    - Section 3.1.1. District Intent Statements
    - Section 3.1.2. District Components
  - Division 3.2. Base Dimensional Standards
    - Section 3.2.1. Detached House
  - Appendix
    - Zoning Administrator Interpretations (5)
    - Frequently Asked Questions (11)

Download Zoning Summary

FAQs for this property
Q: What are the lot line designations for the Property?

Zoning Summary
for 421 N Vista over Enclosing a Patio

Current Version: 1.3.0.
Effective Date: 01/01/2011
Search Results

Q: What are the lot line designations for the Property?
A: Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, **keyword** consectetur adipiscing elit, sed diam nonummy nibh euismod tincidunt ut laoreet dolore magna aliquam erat volutpat...read more

Section 1.2.1. Establishment of Official Zoning Map
Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, **keyword** consectetur adipiscing elit, sed diam nonummy nibh euismod tincidunt ut laoreet dolore magna aliquam erat volutpat...read more

Section 4.2.2. Open Lot
Ut wisi enim ad minim veniam, quis nostrud exerci tation ullamcorper suscipit lobortis nisl ut aliquip **keyword** ex ea commodo consequat...read more

Section 2.2.1. Detached House
Manage Use Terms

You can reorganize the terms in Tags using their drag-and-drop handles, and group terms under a parent term by sliding them under and to the right of the parent.

Create Term

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Operations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agricultural</td>
<td>edit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farm</td>
<td>edit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Livestock</td>
<td>edit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Animal Keeping</td>
<td>edit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial</td>
<td>edit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail</td>
<td>edit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office</td>
<td>edit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical</td>
<td>edit</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Section 1.4.1. Building Type Descriptions

A. Detached House
A building constructed to accommodate 1 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 2 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.
Section 1.4.1. Building Type Descriptions

Create Personal Note

Title: Sample Note

Body: This is the sample body content
Section 1.4.1. Building Type Descriptions

This section of the zoning code contains public notes.

This section of the zoning code contains staff internal notes.
- CPC-23117

This section of the zoning code contains your own personal notes.

A. Detached House
A building constructed to accommodate 1 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

B. Attached House
A building constructed to accommodate 2 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
Create Zoning Summary

Use the options below to create a customized zoning code for your needs.

I am interested in a specific ...
- Property or address
- Assessor's parcel number (APN)
- Type of use

My property address is ...
- Number
  Example: Enter "14400".
- Street
  Note: Do not use prefixes or suffixes.
  Example: For W Van Nuys Blvd, enter "van nuys".

I would like to know ...
- None selected

SEARCH

FAQs for R1 Zoned Properties
- What is the allowable height and number of stories on the Property?
- How do you determine the number of habitable rooms?
- What are the lot line designations for the Property?
**Article 2.2. Conventional Development**

**Section 2.2.1. House**

### A. Lot Dimensions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>RX</th>
<th>DX</th>
<th>NX</th>
<th>CX</th>
<th>DX</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A1</td>
<td>Area (min)</td>
<td>4,000 sf</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A2</td>
<td>Width (min)</td>
<td>45'</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### B. Principal Building Setbacks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>RX</th>
<th>DX</th>
<th>NX</th>
<th>CX</th>
<th>DX</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B1</td>
<td>From primary street (min)</td>
<td>10'</td>
<td>5'</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B2</td>
<td>From side street (min)</td>
<td>10'</td>
<td>5'</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B3</td>
<td>From side lot line (min)</td>
<td>5'</td>
<td>3'</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B4</td>
<td>Sum of side setbacks (min)</td>
<td>10'</td>
<td>5'</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B5</td>
<td>From rear lot line (min)</td>
<td>20'</td>
<td>10'</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### C. Accessory Structure Setbacks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>RX</th>
<th>DX</th>
<th>NX</th>
<th>CX</th>
<th>DX</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C1</td>
<td>From primary street (min)</td>
<td>50'</td>
<td>30'</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C2</td>
<td>From side street (min)</td>
<td>10'</td>
<td>5'</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C3</td>
<td>From side lot line (min)</td>
<td>5'</td>
<td>3'</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C4</td>
<td>From rear lot line (min)</td>
<td>5'</td>
<td>3'</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C4</td>
<td>From alley</td>
<td>4' or 20' min</td>
<td>4' or 20' min</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### D. Height

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>RX</th>
<th>DX</th>
<th>NX</th>
<th>CX</th>
<th>DX</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>D1</td>
<td>Principal building (max)</td>
<td>40/6 stories</td>
<td>40/6 stories</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D2</td>
<td>Accessory structure (max)</td>
<td>25'</td>
<td>25'</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### E. Floor Heights

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>RX</th>
<th>DX</th>
<th>NX</th>
<th>CX</th>
<th>DX</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>E1</td>
<td>Ground floor elevation</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E2</td>
<td>Ground story height, floor to ceiling (min)</td>
<td>2'</td>
<td>2'</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E3</td>
<td>Upper story height, floor to ceiling (min)</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### F. Transparency

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>RX</th>
<th>DX</th>
<th>NX</th>
<th>CX</th>
<th>DX</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>F1</td>
<td>Ground story</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F2</td>
<td>Upper story (min)</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F3</td>
<td>Blank wall area (max)</td>
<td>35'</td>
<td>35'</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### G. Allowed Building Elements

- Porch, stoop
- Balcony

See Sec. 1.5.11 for specific building element requirements.
Download WebCode Toolkit

• Open Source!

https://github.com/cityoflosangeles

Estimated Sep 2015
Challenges

• Zoning Code Source
• Print v. Web Printing
• Los Angeles is BIG!
Thanks!

• Chris Steins
Urban Insight
steins@urbaninsight.com
Discussion | Q&A

An opportunity for discussion and questions with the panelists