

# Introduction

- There are **two different ways** that projects get approved in the City of Los Angeles.

# “By Right”

- The term “**By right**” means that what the developer is proposing is already allowed within the current zoning regulations for that property.
- All they have to do is get their plan approved and follow the building codes and zoning when they build it.
- There is nothing neighbors can legally do to stop or change a by-right project.
- The only way to prevent by-right projects that are inappropriate for our community is to **change what the regulations allow by right**. More on that later.





# Discretionary Approval

- If the developer wants something that he doesn't automatically have the right to do, like a subdivision or a building that is taller than the allowable height, he has to go through a public process – discretionary approval.
- The developer has to **ask the city** to allow him to build what he wants to build even though it doesn't follow the current rules. He needs to provide some **good reasons** for them to allow this.
- The city has to follow strict state laws about how they approve subdivisions. Usually this means that **something** will be built, but there are still ways for residents to influence the process.

# You can influence the process!

- Remember, the Planning Dept. can be influenced by residents and the developer needs to get the City's approval in order to do his project.
- An example of this is the tower on the building proposed for the Ford property. It exceeded the allowed height so **the developer worked with the community** to get the support they needed.
- If he is smart, the developer realizes it is in his best interest to listen to the community and avoid having 20 or even hundreds of people at the hearing to oppose his project.

# This is what happens!

- A developer wants to subdivide a large parcel and build six big houses on small lots.
- He goes to the subdivision hearing in Van Nuys well-armed with data to support his project.
- The Planning Dept. is more likely to say “No problem” unless members of the community show up at the hearing and show that it is not a good idea after all.
- When there is little or no neighborhood participation in the discretionary approval process, sometimes residents of a neighborhood are surprised or dismayed and wonder “How did this get approved?”

# How You Can Influence This Process

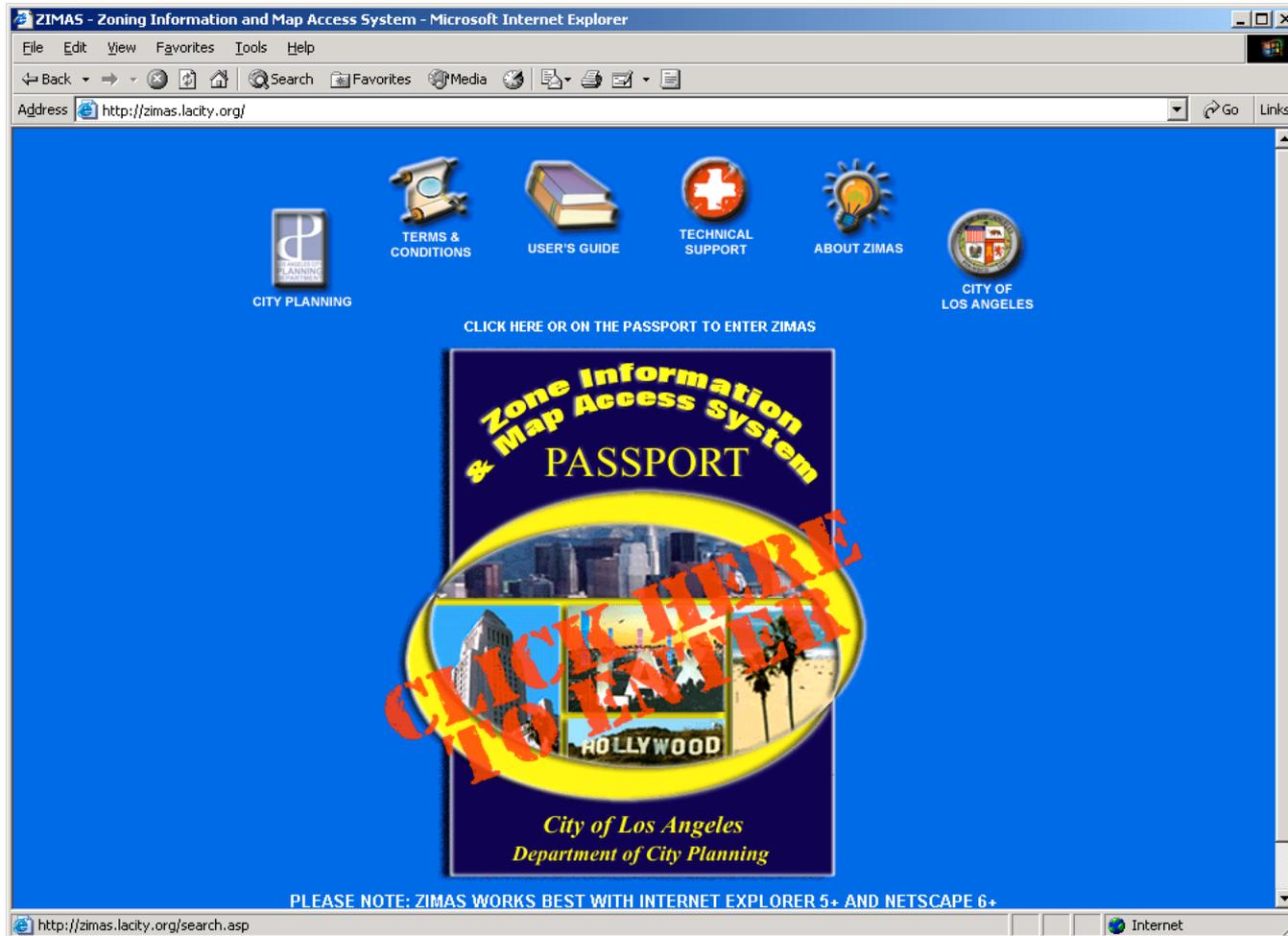
- Get on the STNC e-mail list to get the meeting agendas so you will be aware when a developer has a project in your neighborhood. Remember, if you live more than 500 feet away from the proposed project you will not receive any official notice.
- Come with your neighbors to the **DAC meeting** when the developer is going to present his proposal.
  - You can ask questions and speak directly to the developer and/or his representatives.
  - The DAC and Council District Officials (Wendy Greuel's staff) will also hear your concerns.
- Go to the **subdivision and other hearings** in Van Nuys.
- If you can't attend the hearing in the middle of a weekday, **write a letter** and have someone read it and submit it at the hearing as part of the public record.

# Just the facts, ma'am! (or Sir!)

- The Planning Dept doesn't have time or personnel to find out all about your neighborhood so they may take the developer's information as fact.
- **Speak at the hearing.** It's not that bad. Planning knows you are not a professional speaker and they don't expect a polished performance. They are interested in new facts presented by affected residents. State your information, don't repeat yourself and don't yell or cuss. Fumbling, shaking voices and cottonmouth are OK! It's also their job to listen to people other than developer's lobbyists!
- **If you don't show up at the hearing with a different picture of your neighborhood than the developer presented, you will not have any influence over what is built in your neighborhood!**
- Since the hearing must deal with the facts, how do you find the kind of facts and figures that show what your neighborhood is really like?

# How do you find out **for free** what is already in your neighborhood and on your street?

<http://zimas.lacity.org/>



# What can you find out on ZIMAS?

The screenshot displays the ZIMAS (Zoning Information and Map Access System) web application. The interface includes a search bar, navigation tools (Zoom In, Zoom Out, Pan, Identify Parcel), and a map showing various zoning districts (RA-1, RA-3, R1-1, R1-1q). A property information panel is open on the right, displaying details for a specific parcel.

**PROPERTY INFORMATION:**

ADDRESSES:	1. 11104 N ORO VISTA AVE
DATA TABS:	Address/Legal Information
Item Name	Address/Legal Information
Site Address	Jurisdictional Information
Site Address	Planning and Zoning Information
Site Address	Case Numbers
Zip Code	Citywide/Code Amendment Cases
PIN Number	Additional Information
Area (Calculate)	Economic Development Areas
Area (Calculate)	Assessor Information
Thomas Brothers Grid	PAGE 503 - GRID G2
Assessor Parcel Number	2551019005
Tract	WESTERN EMPIRE TRACT
Map Reference	M B 18-150/151 (SHT 1)
Block	None
Lot	FR 115 1/2
Arb (Lot Cut Reference)	1

Drop down to the information you need. By using the **Identify Parcel** tool, you can find out things such as whether lots are joined together with a single house on a parcel of more than one lot. This is very common in Sunland-Tujunga

# Now This Is Interesting!

The **Assessor Information** gives you the size and age of the home and the size of the property. This information halted a 5 house subdivision on Hillhaven Ave. Residents showed that large lots were the norm on their street and proved that many small lots were tied together.

The screenshot displays the ZIMAS (Zoning Information and Map Access System) interface in a Microsoft Internet Explorer browser. The address bar shows the URL: <http://zimas.lacity.org/map.asp?Cmd=zoomToPIN&PIN=210B189%20%20%20%20658&MultiSelPin=210B189%20%20%20%20658&SelectedMultiAddress=11104%20N%20>. The interface includes a search bar, navigation tools (Zoom In, Zoom Out, Pan, Identify Parcel), and a toolbar for selecting parcels (Point, Line, Box, Poly) and measuring (Distance, Area). The main map area shows a green-colored parcel (RA-1) and a yellow-colored parcel (R1-1) with a blue box highlighting a specific area. The map is overlaid with a grid and street names: Oro Vista Ave, Grove St, Quill Ave, Eldora Ave, and Scoville Ave. A scale bar indicates 111 Feet. The bottom of the map area shows 'LA City Planning' and 'Background Display: Generalized Zoning'. On the right side, the 'PROPERTY INFORMATION' section is visible, showing the address '1. 11104 N ORO VISTA AVE' and a table of property details.

Item Name	Value
Assessor Parcel Number	2551019005
Parcel Area (Approximate)	31,711.7 (sq ft)
Use Code	0100 - Single Residence
Building Class	D45B
Assessed Land Val.	\$495,000
Assessed Improvement Val.	\$40,000
Year Built	1950
Last Owner Change	10/20/04
Last Sale Amount	\$0
Number of Units	1
Number of Bedrooms	2
Number of Bathrooms	1
Building Square Footage	756.0 (sq ft)
Tax Rate Area	13
Deed Reference No.	807585





# Some Permanent Solutions

- That was a Robert Hall home built from the Jim Jebejian design we have all come to know and love.
- The STNC has proposed an ordinance to prevent further mansionization, which is the building of huge houses on small lots. The ordinance has been approved by City Planning and the City Council's land use committee.  
**Remind your Council Member that this ordinance is still urgently needed.**
- There is **no law to protect mature oaks on lots smaller than one acre.** There is also interest in preserving other native trees such as sycamores.
- Contact the DAC if you are interested in working on this worthwhile protection for trees in our neighborhood.