

## September 13, 2016 Joint VNC Board & Discussion Forum Committee Meeting

### Discussion Generator

Since it is the beginning of a new one-year DFC term, it is an opportune time to consider options for our work during this coming year.

This will be the topic of discussion at our September 13, 2016 Discussion Forum Committee meeting.

One option I would like us to consider is as follows:

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The attached [LA Times OpEd](#) – contributed by two individuals who clearly understand the history of US land use and its zoning underpinnings – challenges both the mayor's **Hoover Style Development** & the protectionists' **Neighborhood Integrity Initiative** strategies for dealing with the current LA Housing Crisis. It has implications for the VNC's LUP and Homeless Committees among others.

The authors of the attached propose the following alternative integrated strategy:

- Instead of trying to preordain exactly what is or isn't allowed on every single piece of land, we should abandon micromanagement and — simultaneously — think big by funding improvements to infrastructure.
  - We should begin by eliminating parking requirements and easing up restrictions on commerce in residential areas, which can make neighborhoods more walkable and diverse.
  - We should reverse the bans on density that hindered L.A.'s ability to absorb new housing units in the early 1970s, resulting in today's affordability crises.
  - We should undo community planning policies that exclude low-income residents from "high opportunity" neighborhoods by limiting where multi-family housing can be built.
  - Opening up the city to more small and medium scale projects can empower families, building groups, co-ops and community corporations to become their own developers and city shapers, rather than trying to block change in order to feel heard.
  - But such tweaks will only take us so far. If we want a better city, we as a community need to build a framework for productive growth, more equitable access to opportunity, and a more sustainable future. A safer street grid, expanded transit, well-maintained and shaded sidewalks, sustainable water and energy systems, more parks and adequate city services are the real pathways to a city that works for everyone.
  - If we focus on public projects that benefit us all, a better city will evolve around them.
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This is clearly a 'long-term' strategy. It is the only one that makes sense to me. It is 'urban design' based on 'visions' and it will not be easy to implement politically – but it seems that it could achieve the results currently being sought by the existing political forces but at a much cheaper cost.

I'd like the VNC's [Discussion Forum Committee](#) to explore strategies that could further this urban design approach to LA's land use and zoning laws.

The DFC is well positioned to do this since its mission is:

**... to promote a more proactive, collaborative vision for VNC Committees to include in their deliberations as they formulate recommendations for Board consideration. The intent is to create a working framework of integrated strategies capable of achieving, over time, broader consensus and increased (see listing of referenced VNC Vision Goals [here](#)).**

Sincerely,

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