

Mott Smith, Principal, Civic Enterprise

# Top Roadblocks to Infill Development in California

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Panel:

**Smart and Green: Could Housing Trends Bolster Sustainable Building Patterns?**

NEW PARTNERS FOR SMART GROWTH CONFERENCE

FEBRUARY 2, 2012

SAN DIEGO



Civic Enterprise Associates LLC

## **Barrier #1: Inadequate Infrastructure**

- Deteriorating, inadequate and/or ugly public realm
- Lack of transit alternatives
- Insufficient/aging utilities
- Low-performing schools
- Addiction to one-off negotiations with private developers to fund public improvements
- Public realm planning is essentially dead



## **Barrier #2: Uncertain regulatory process**

- Addiction to one-off negotiations with private developers to fund public improvements
- Public realm planning is essentially dead
- CEQA
- Bad actors
- Vicious cycle of planning and failure

- S-3. That the following improvements be either constructed prior to recordation of the final map or that the construction be suitably guaranteed:
- (a) Construct on-site sewers to serve the tract as determined by the City Engineer.
  - (b) Construct any necessary drainage facilities.
  - (c) Install street lighting facilities to serve the tract as required by the Bureau of Street Lighting.
  - (d) Plant street trees and remove any existing trees within dedicated streets or proposed dedicated streets as required by the Street Tree Division of the Bureau of Street Maintenance. All street tree planting's shall be brought up to current standards. When the City has previously been paid for tree planting, the subdivider or contractor shall notify the Street Tree Division ((213) 485-5675) upon completion of construction to expedite tree planting.
  - (e) Repair or replace any off-grade or broken curb, gutter and sidewalk satisfactory to the City Engineer.



Photo: Don Shoup

acknowledge, Developer shall pay attorney fees and related costs to BWA by cashier's check or wire transfer of immediately available funds as follows:

A. Developer shall pay to BWA Sixty-Two Thousand Dollars (\$62,000.00) within thirty (30) days of the Effective Date of this Agreement.

B. If the City approves the Revised Project, Developer shall pay to BWA and additional Seventy-Eight Thousand Dollars (\$78,000.00) within thirty (30) days following the final approval. If the City does not approve the Revised Project, the payment obligations in this sub-paragraph (B) are null and void, except as set forth in Sub-paragraph (C) below.

## **Barrier #3: Higher economic costs**

- Land
- Construction
- Process
- Politics



## **Barrier #4: Skewed tax incentives**

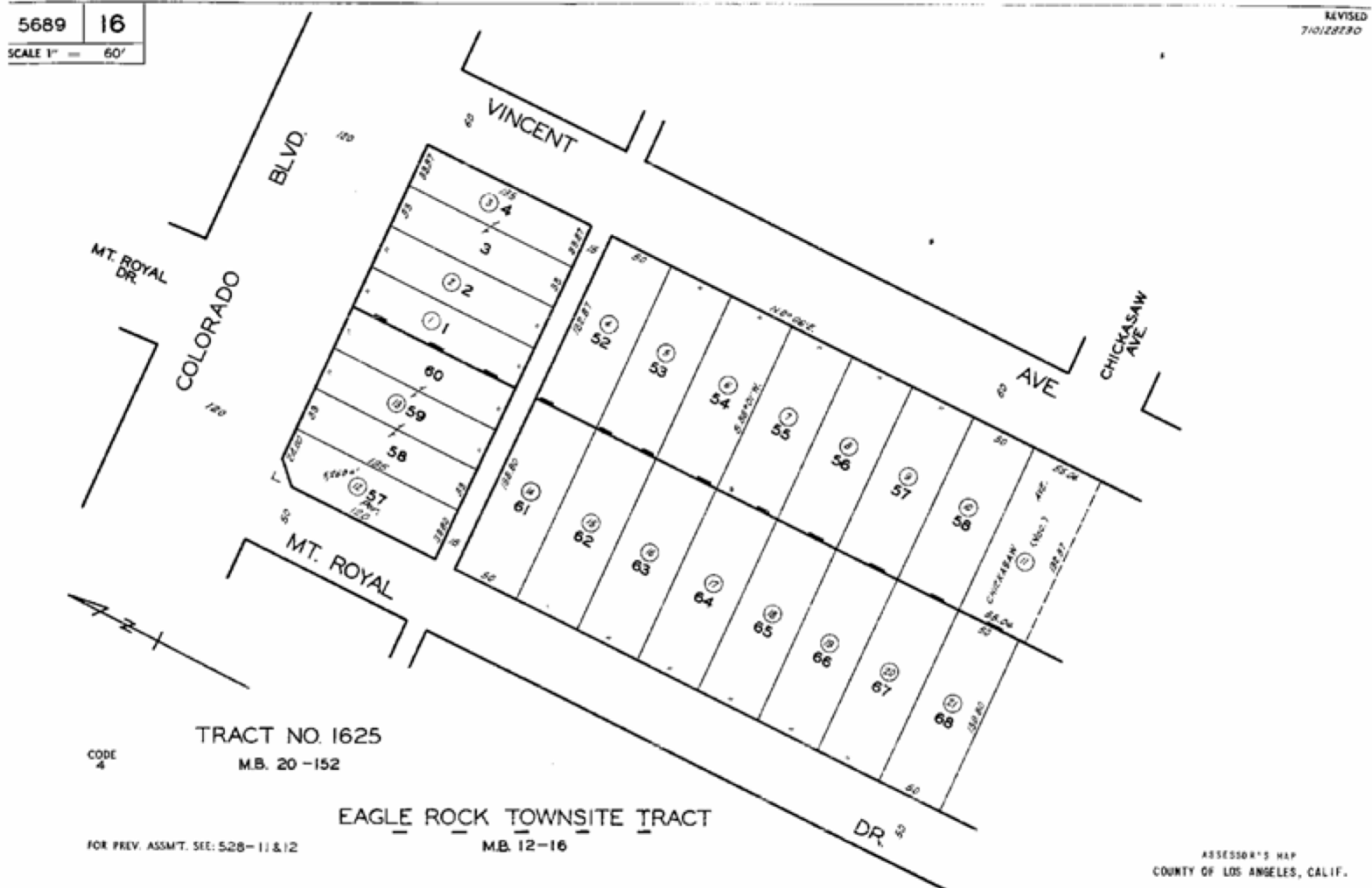
- Prop. 13 and owner inertia
- Fiscalization of land-use

## **Barrier #5: Restrictive local land-use policies**

- Parking minimums
- Ineffective and/or harmful zoning
- Building code challenges
- Lack of clear pathway for good projects in good locations
- Cycle of hope and failure in planning

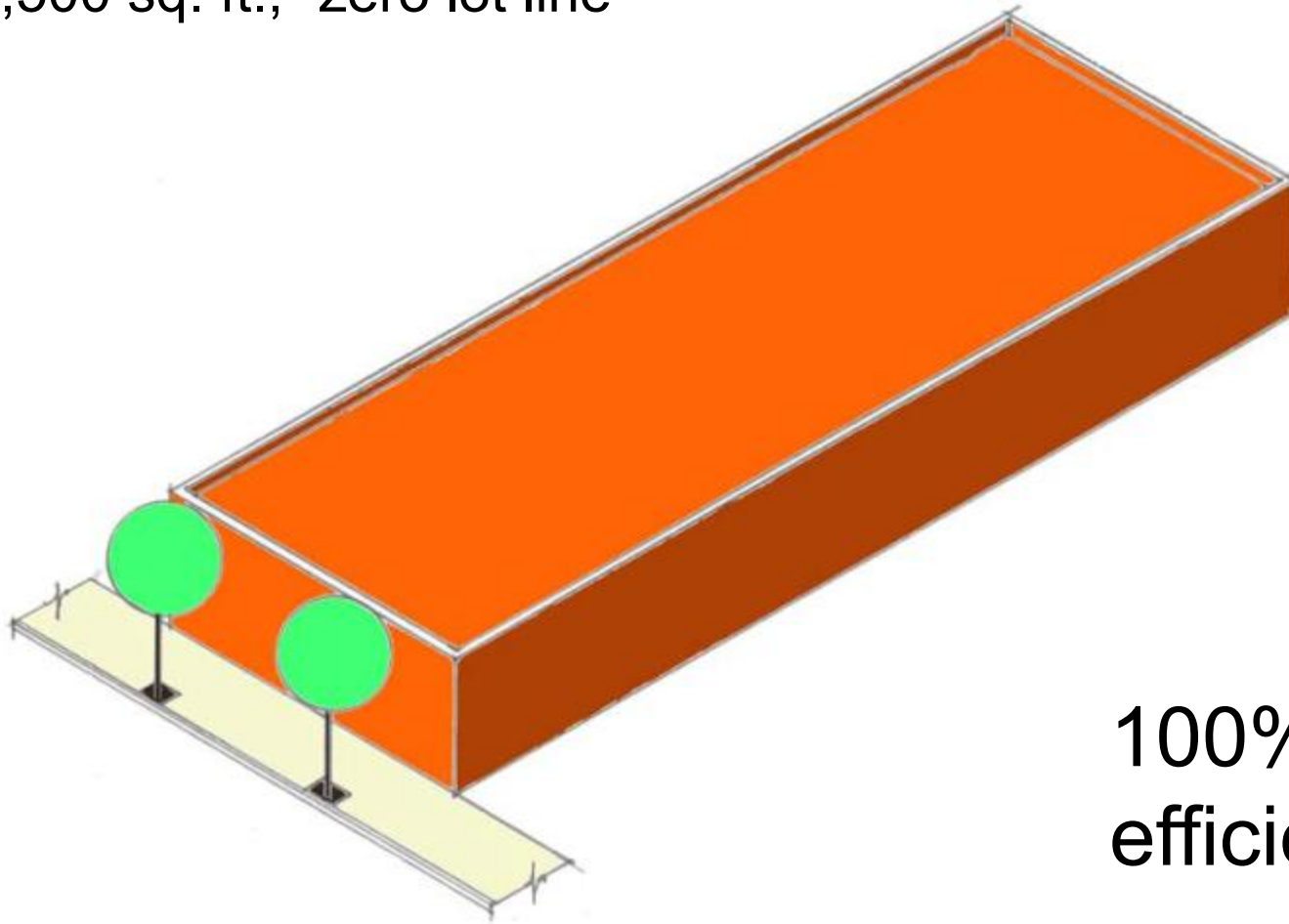
# Typical Commercial Blvd. Parcels

County of Los Angeles: Rick Auerbach, Assessor



Typical Pre-WWII Building: Great Infill!

7,500 sq. ft., “zero lot line”

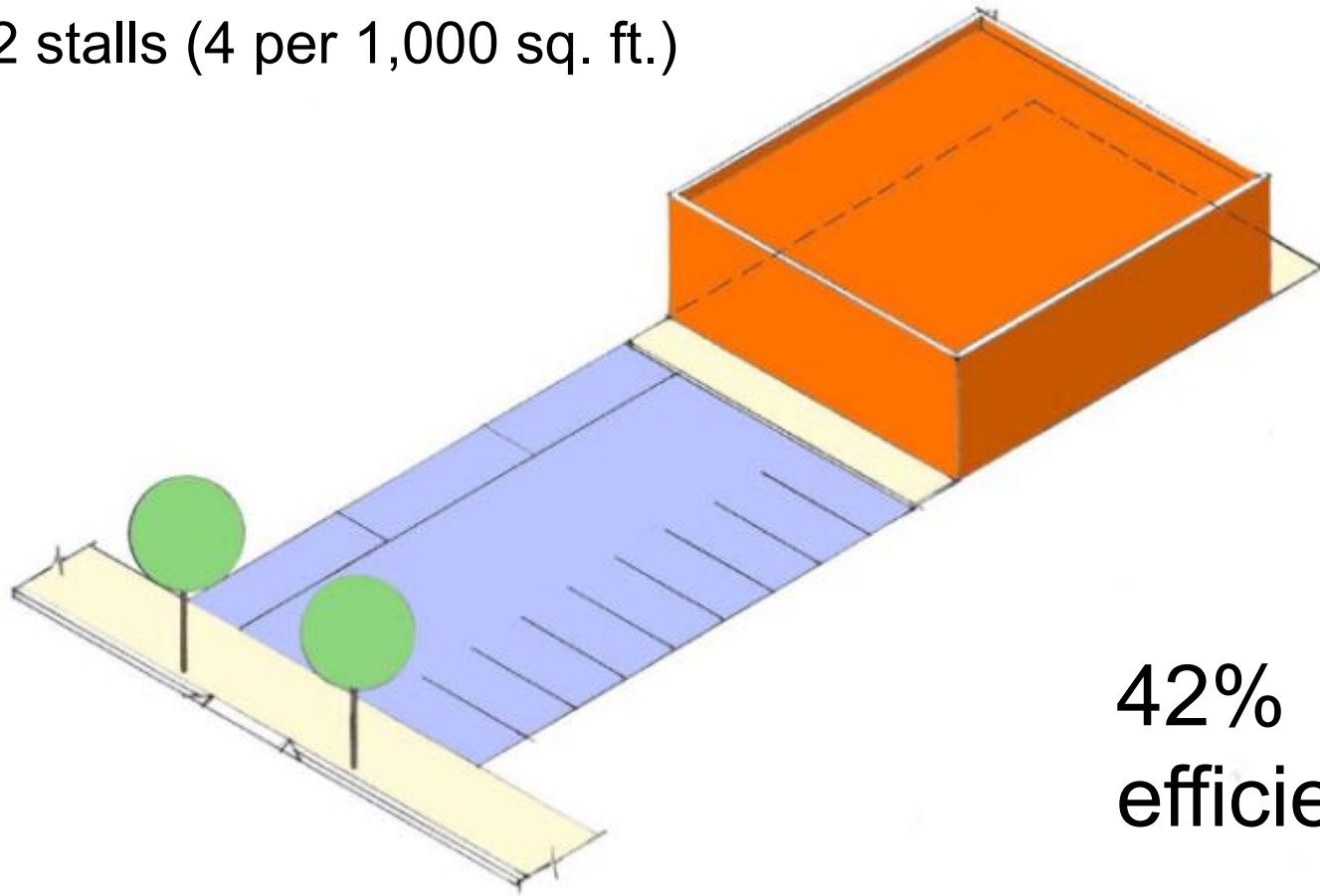


100%  
efficiency

“By-Right” Retail Building:

3,125 sq. ft. (improvements)

12 stalls (4 per 1,000 sq. ft.)

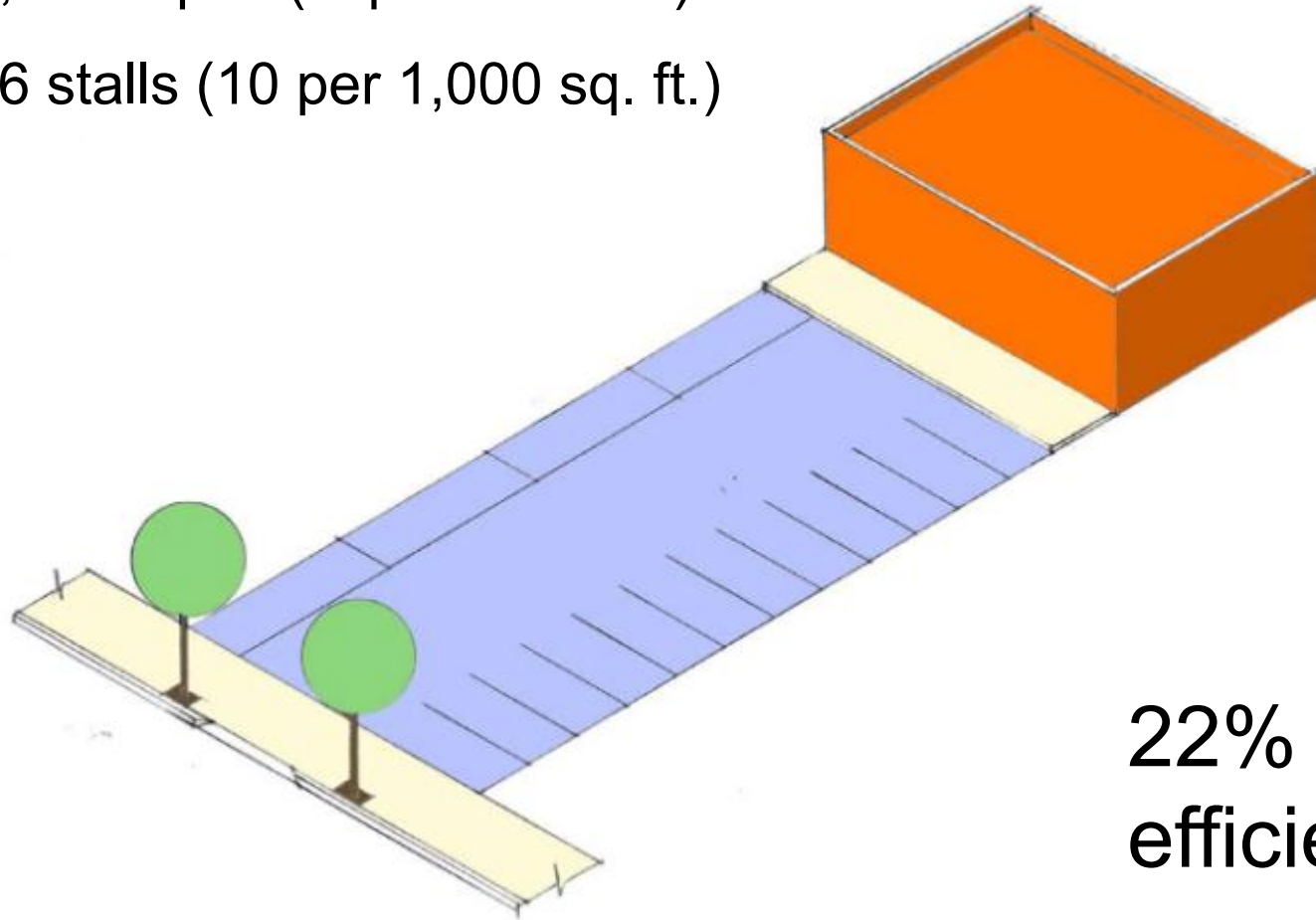


42%  
efficiency

“By-Right” Restaurant Building:

1,665 sq. ft. (improvements)

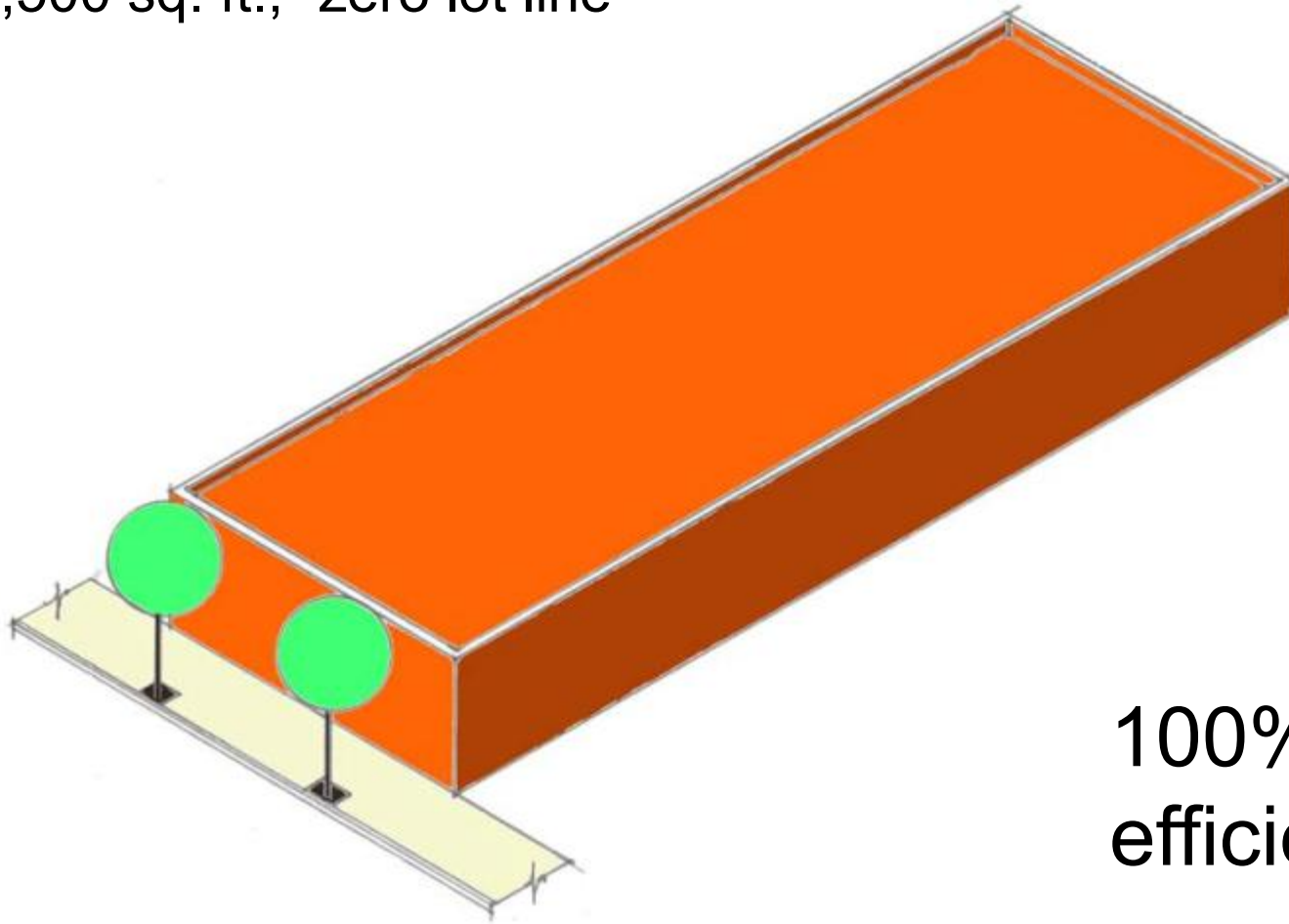
16 stalls (10 per 1,000 sq. ft.)



22%  
efficiency

Typical Pre-WWII Building: Great Infill!

7,500 sq. ft., “zero lot line”



100%  
efficiency

## **Proposed Solutions**

- TIF for TOD, TIF for Infill
- Realign State funding infrastructure funding formulas
- Create a new infill CEQA process
- Reduce parking requirements
- Plan the public realm in a meaningful way
- Legislate pathways for good projects in the right locations