



Los Angeles is in the midst of an affordable housing crisis: the city's renters pay on average nearly half of their disposable income on rent alone. This threatens the city's social and economic health: you simply cannot have a great city and hollow out its middle class.

But NIMBYs never rest, and in the midst of this crisis have proposed [this](#):

The Coalition to Preserve L.A. announced plans for a [ballot measure](#), titled the Neighborhood Integrity Initiative, that would put a moratorium of up to 24 months on development projects that cannot be built without votes from elected officials to increase density.

The proposal also would make it harder for those officials to change the city's General Plan — the document that spells out the city's policies on land use and

traffic — for individual real estate developments.

The coalition's announcement comes amid a real estate boom in Los Angeles, with multistory projects being approved in downtown, Hollywood and elsewhere. Opposition groups have filed lawsuits challenging some of those projects, including the Millennium skyscraper towers in Hollywood.

A key member of the ballot measure coalition is Michael Weinstein, president of the AIDS Healthcare Foundation, which is fighting the proposal for two 30-story towers next to the Hollywood Palladium. The project, which goes before the Planning Commission on Thursday, would add 731 homes to the neighborhood. It needs both a zoning change and an amendment to the General Plan, according to city documents.

Note that while the Orwellian-named "Coalition to Preserve LA" claims that it is just about "mega-projects," it would apply to anything that needs a zone change or a General Plan Amendment to increase density.

It's better not to call these protests NIMBYism, but rather BANANA: Build Absolutely Nothing Anywhere Near Anybody. Banana Republic might be a decent (if somewhat overpriced) clothing store, but it is no way to run a city.

And observe two more critical points:

1) So much of the protest over development occurs in Hollywood, which is precisely where development *should* occur, because it is on the Red Line Subway. This is planning 101: put density near transportation infrastructure. The Hollywood Palladium project is two blocks from the Hollywood and Vine subway stop.

2) And of course, slowing residential construction in the City of Los Angeles will mean that people will move to the suburbs. They will then take their cars to work, increasing congestion, VMT, and carbon emissions.

Many NIMBYs and BANANAs cast themselves as environmentalists, arguing that development harms the environment. Not so. It depends upon where development is built, and projects in the city are where development should occur. I hope that the Los Angeles environmental community quickly speaks up and says: Not In Our Name.