

Building Moratorium Sought in North Hollywood Rezoning

By DEAN MURPHY, *Times Staff Writer*

Fearing massive construction projects in residential areas, a homeowners' group Tuesday asked the City of Los Angeles to impose a building moratorium in North Hollywood while the city is undertaking a complex rezoning.

Members of the North Hollywood Homeowners Assn. said that the moratorium, which city planners said would affect about 25% of the community, would prevent speculative landowners from exploiting a lengthy rezoning that is under way throughout the city and is scheduled to begin next week in North Hollywood.

A 1978 state law requires the citywide revision of zoning requirements imposed almost 40 years ago so that zoning conforms with more restrictive community plans developed by residents in the early 1970s. The law affects more than 200,000 parcels of property, including 4,000 in North Hollywood, and has already been implemented in parts of Van Nuys, Sherman Oaks, Studio City and Toluca Lake.

City planning officials estimate that rezoning North Hollywood, which in most cases will place greater limitations on land use, may take as long as three years. Homeowners fear that developers, eager to sidestep potentially more restrictive zoning requirements, may launch projects before the new zoning ordinances are implemented.

"We want to prevent someone from rushing a project through in a location where the community plan says that kind of a project is not suitable," said

Tom Paterson, president of the homeowners' group.

Paterson said that representatives from the homeowners' group contacted Councilman Joel Wachs' office Tuesday to request that he seek City Council approval of a temporary building moratorium. A spokesman in Wachs' office said he is out of town until Friday, and he could not be reached for comment.

City officials estimated it would take four to eight weeks for the moratorium proposal to work its way through the bureaucracy and to the City Council.

Members of the homeowners' group voted at a meeting Monday night to request the building moratorium as well as a communitywide information hearing on the rezoning process. The Planning Commission has scheduled several public hearings in individual neighborhoods, specifically for those residents living within 300 feet of each proposed change. But the homeowners said the moves have a communitywide impact and should be explained to all residents.

"The maps (designating the proposed changes) are confusing because of the complexity of the kinds of zoning changes," Paterson said. "There are a lot of changes that people simply don't understand. It is a little bit of gobledygook."

The citywide move to rezone communities to conform with land-use plans has been under way for about five years, Landini said. Plans are under way to extend the process to neighborhoods in Chatsworth, Canoga Park, Winnetka, Woodland Hills, Encino and Tarzana.