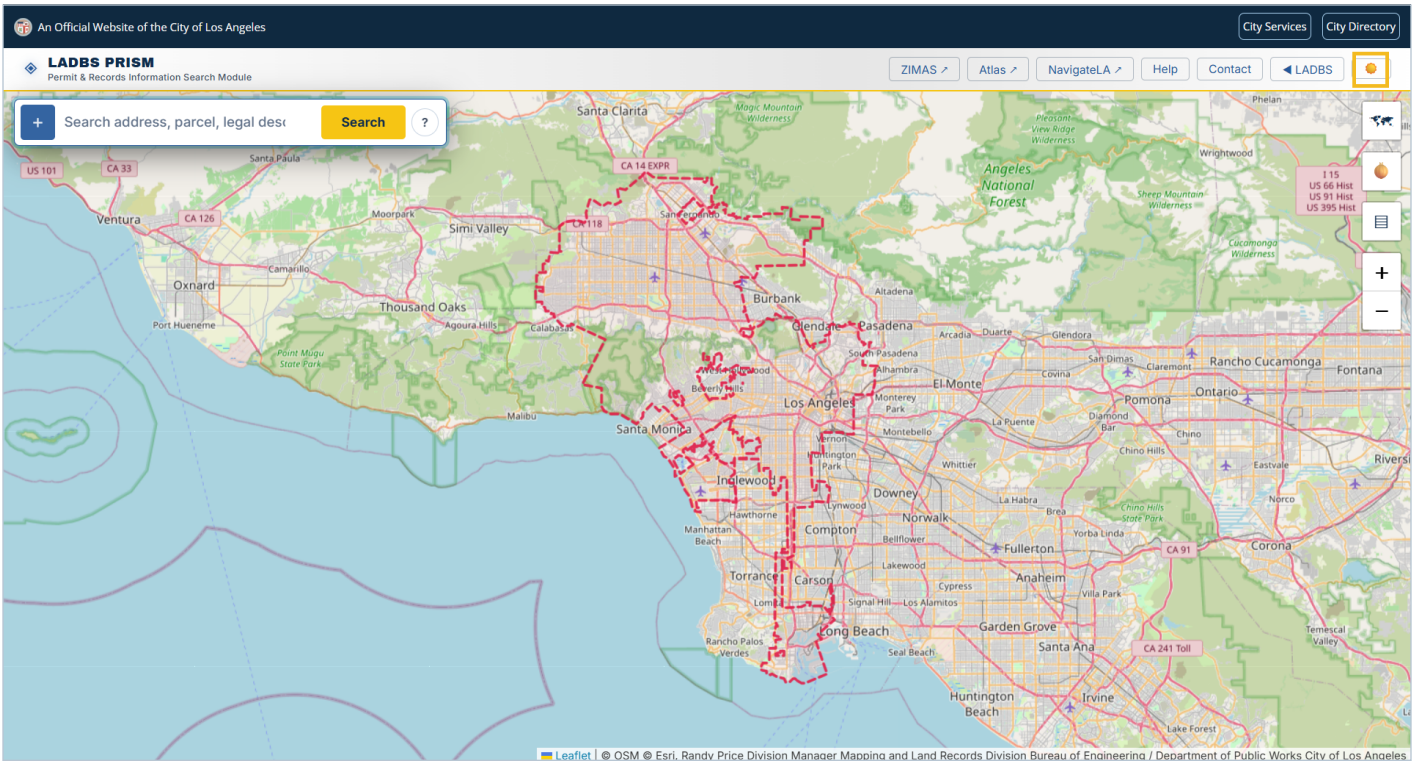
# Getting started

**Permit & Records Information Search Module**

Open https://prism.dbs.lacity.gov/ to begin. This guide covers the controls and workflows demonstrated in the video.




Launch page. The highlighted sun icon changes the interface to dark mode.

## Switch to dark mode

Select the **sun icon** in the upper-right corner of the launch page.

## Find a topic

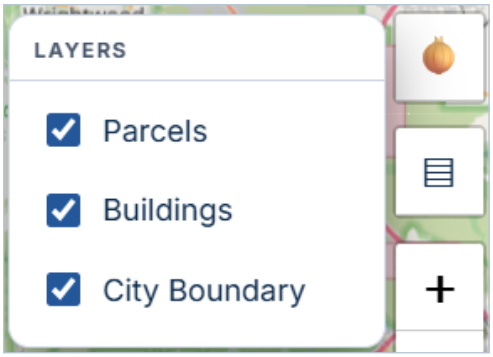
02 Map controls
03 Search methods and dates
04 Legal, assessor, and document search
05 Address search example
06 Filters and sorting
07 Metadata and PDF documents
08 Timeline and Cards views
09 Summary reports and RBF
10 Contact and records requests
11 Appointments and locations

Examples come from the supplied screenshots and recordings. Available records and counts may change.

# Map layers, legend, and views

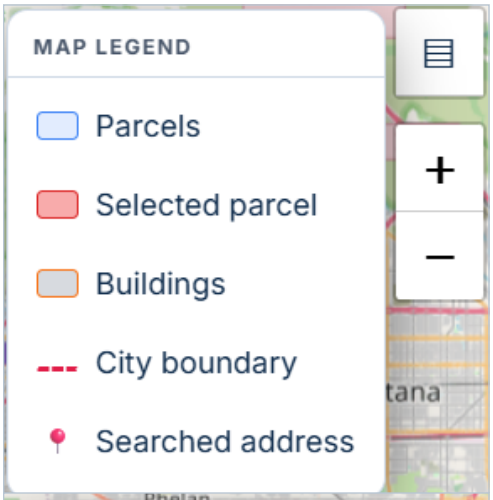
## 1. Add or remove map layers

Select the **onion icon** on the right. Use the switches to show or hide **Parcels**, **Buildings**, and the **City Boundary**.



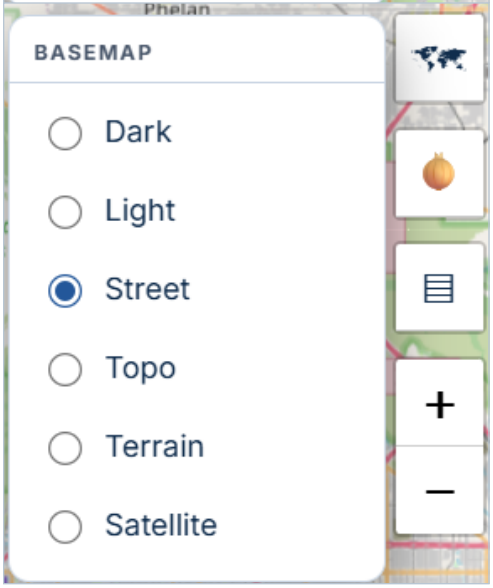

## 2. Read the map legend

Select the **map legend icon**. The legend explains the symbols for parcels, the selected parcel, buildings, and the city boundary.




## 3. Change the basemap

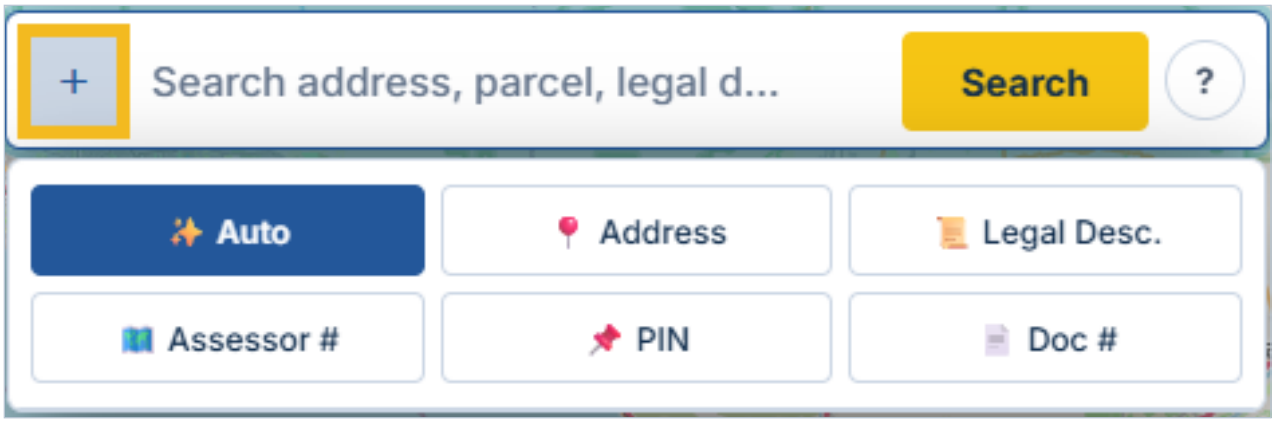
Select the **map icon** at the top of the right-hand toolbar to choose a map view. **Street** is the default.




> Map layers control what is drawn on the map. The basemap controls the map background.

# Choose a search method

Select the **plus (+)** next to the search box to display the available search methods. If you do not select a method, **Auto** tries to detect what you entered.

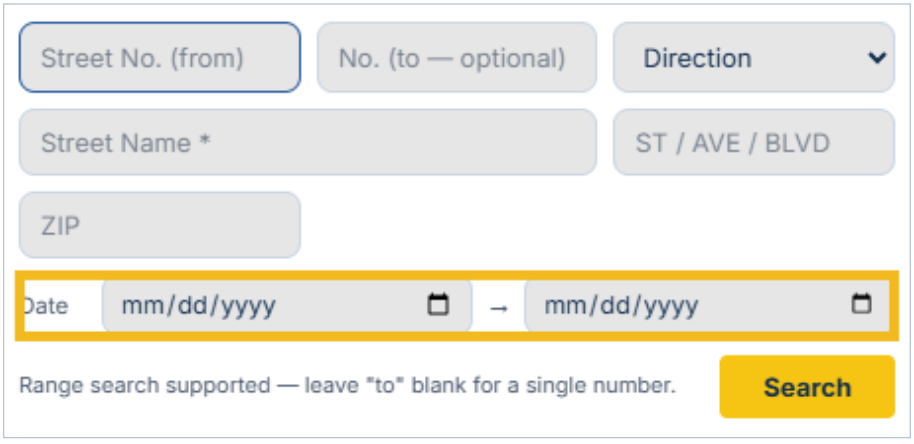



## Limit results by document date

Every search form includes a **From / To date range**. Use it to limit results to documents recorded within a specific period.

## Search by address

Choose **Address** to search using a **single address** or an **address range**.



# Other ways to search

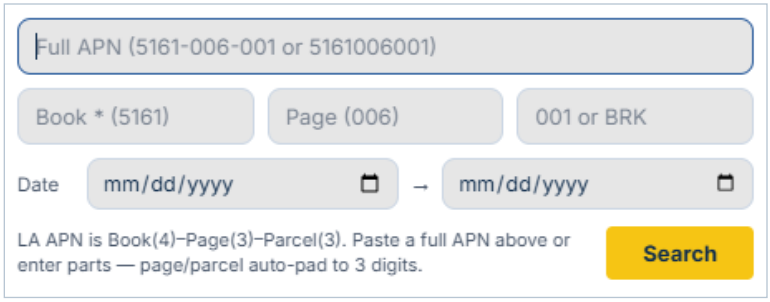
## Legal description

Choose **Legal Desc.** to search by **tract, block, lot, and ARB**. Enter the details in the matching fields, then select **Search**.

## Assessor number

Choose **Assessor #** and enter the **Book, Page, and Parcel**. Keep the leading zeros.

**Example:**
Book **5161** Page **006** Parcel **001**

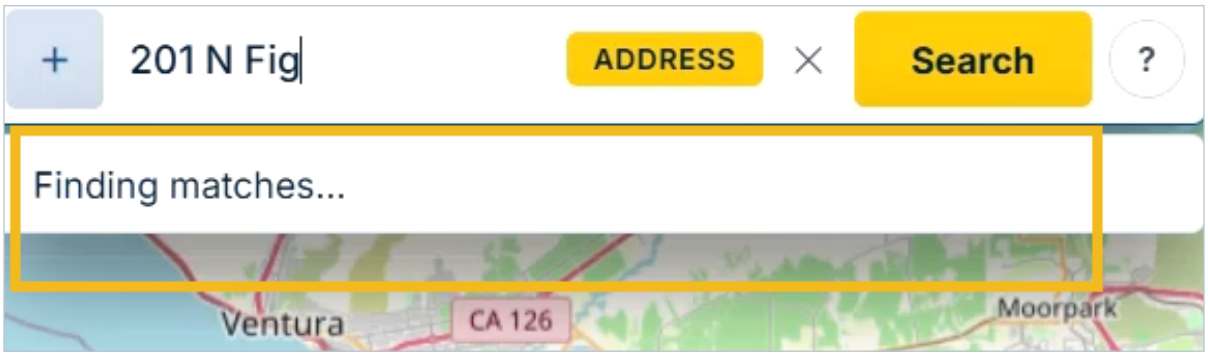



## Document number

Choose **Doc #** to look up a specific record by its document number.

# Address search: a worked example

**1. Start typing the address.** You do not need to type the entire street name. Choose the matching address from the autocomplete dropdown.

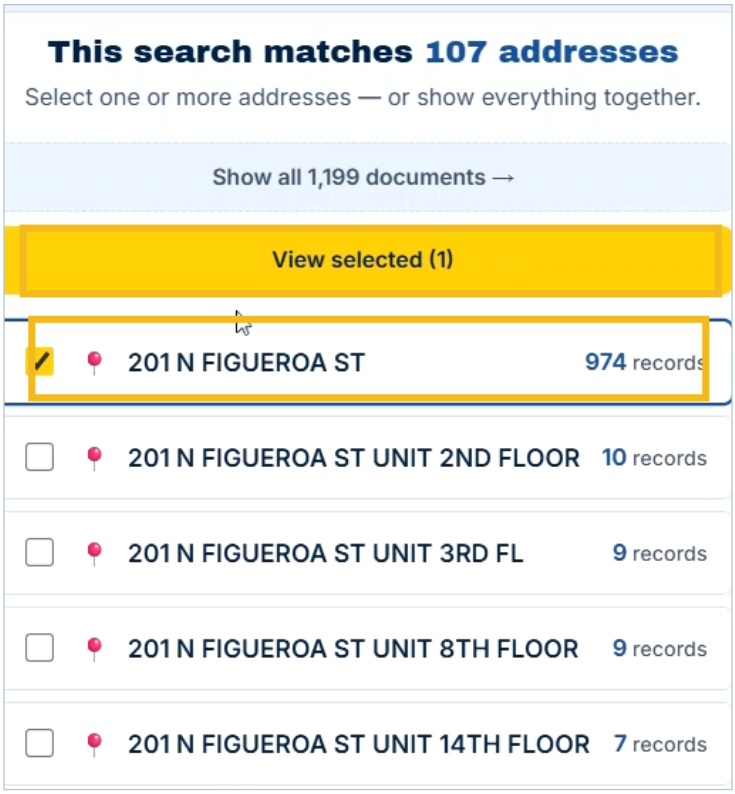



## Choose the records you need

**2.** Review the matching addresses. Results can include the main street address as well as specific units and floors.

**3.** Select a unit or floor, or choose **Show all** to combine the matching documents.

**4.** In this example, select **201 N FIGUEROA ST**, then choose **View selected**.

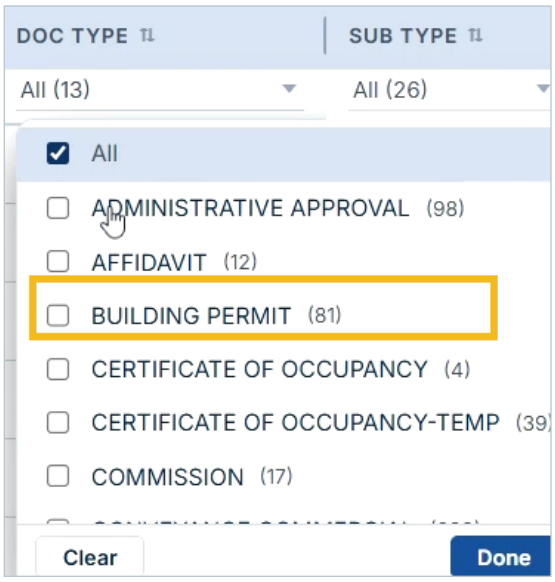


# Filter and sort the results

## Filter by document type

Use the filters to narrow results by **document type, subtype, date**, and other fields.

For the example shown, open the **Doc Type** filter and choose **Building Permit**.




## Change the sort order

**Default:** results are sorted by date, newest first.
Select the **Sub Type** column heading to sort the results alphabetically by subtype.

| DOC TYPE | SUB TYPE | DATE | ADDRESS | STATUS | DOC NUMBER |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 selected | All (5) | All (65) | 1 selected | All (1) | All (73) |
| BUILDING PERMIT | ALTERATION | 1997-10-07 | 201 N FIGUEROA ST | | 1997LA68328 |
| BUILDING PERMIT | ALTERATION | 1995-01-12 | 201 N FIGUEROA ST | | 1995LA29904 |
| BUILDING PERMIT | ALTERATION | 1997-08-18 | 201 N FIGUEROA ST | | 1997LA66589 |
| BUILDING PERMIT | ALTERATION | 1997-11-19 | 201 N FIGUEROA ST | | 1997LA69835 |
| BUILDING PERMIT | ALTERATION | 1997-11-19 | 201 N FIGUEROA ST | | 1997LA69838 |

Building Permit results with the Sub Type column highlighted.

# Record details and PDF documents

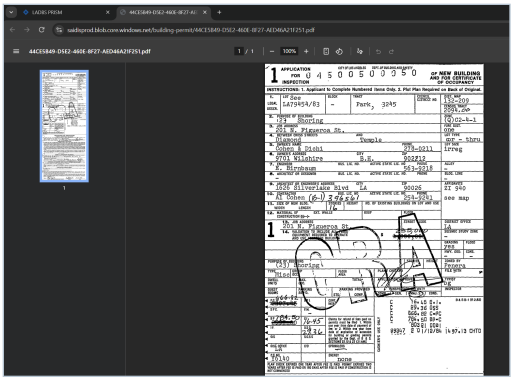
## Expand a record's metadata

Click a record to expand its **metadata** for additional details.

## Open an available PDF

Select the **PDF icon** on the record's row. The document opens as a PDF in a **separate browser tab**.

Use the PDF action on the record's row.



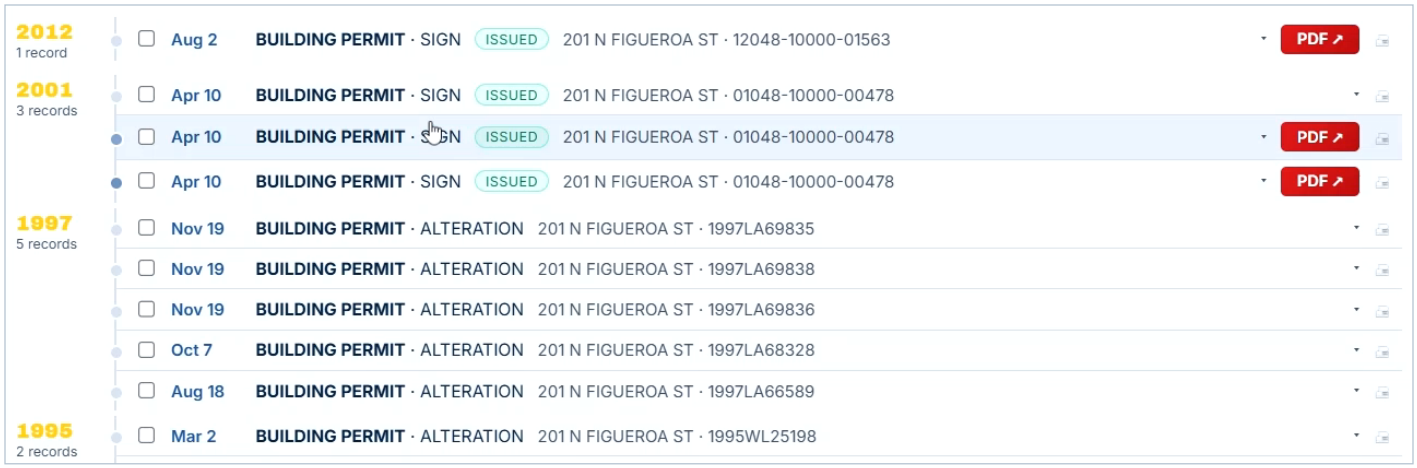
Document open in a separate tab.

> Opening a record's metadata and opening its PDF are separate actions. Use the PDF icon when an online document is available.

# Timeline and Cards views

## Timeline view

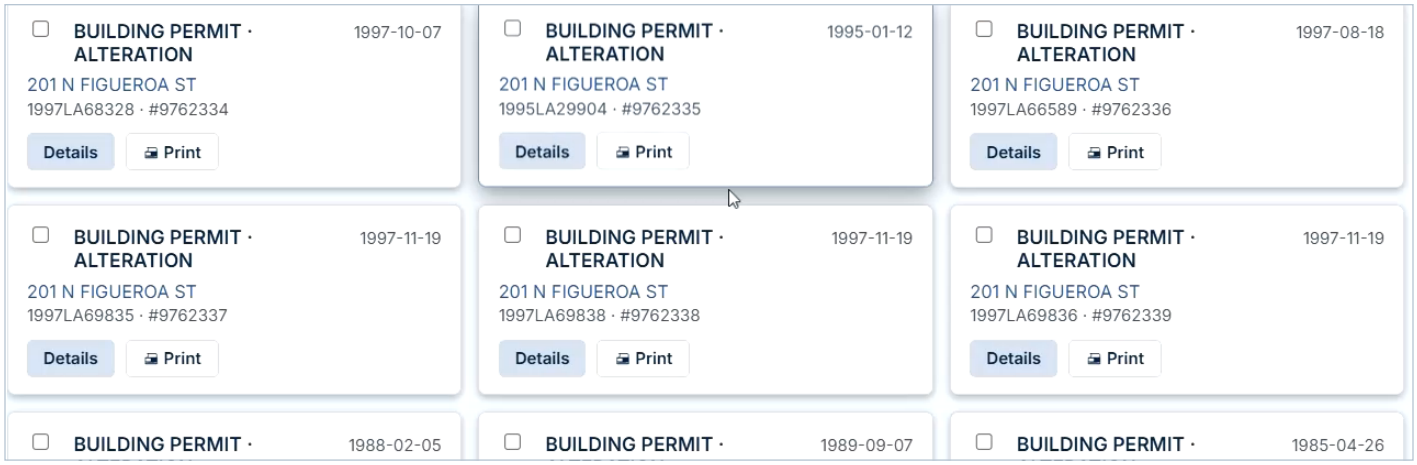
Choose **Timeline** to display the records from **most recent to oldest**.




The example timeline groups results by year, with the newest years first.

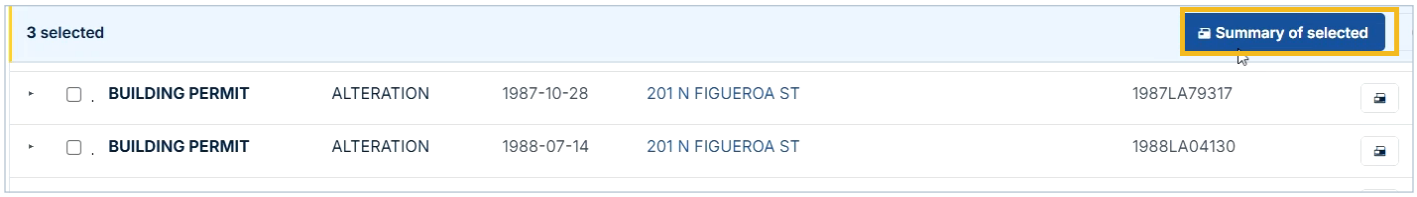
## Cards view

Choose **Cards** to display each record as a separate card. This view is designed primarily for **mobile users**.



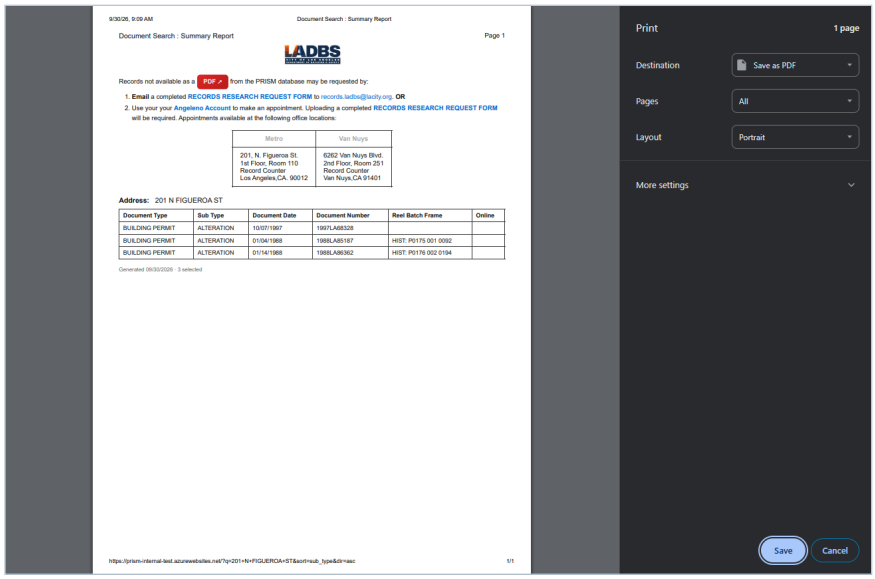
# Create a summary report

**1.** Return to **Table** view and check the boxes beside the records to include.
**2.** Select **Summary of selected**.




Selected-record count and Summary of selected action.

**3.** PRISM opens a **print preview** with a summary of the selected records.




**4. Review RBF information.**

The report includes **Reel Batch Frame (RBF)** information for selected records **where available**.

**Address:** 201 N FIGUEROA ST

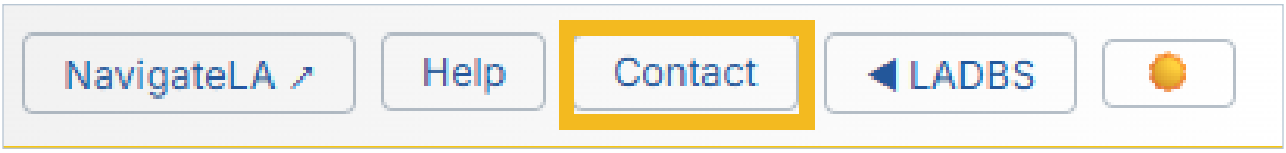
| Document Type | Sub Type | Document Date | Document Number | Reel Batch Frame | Online |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| BUILDING PERMIT | ALTERATION | 10/07/1997 | 1997LA68328 | | |
| BUILDING PERMIT | ALTERATION | 01/04/1988 | 1988LA85187 | HIST: P0175 001 0092 | |
| BUILDING PERMIT | ALTERATION | 01/14/1988 | 1988LA86362 | HIST: P0176 002 0194 | |

Generated 09/30/2026 · 3 selected

Enlarged report detail. RBF values are listed in the Reel Batch Frame column.

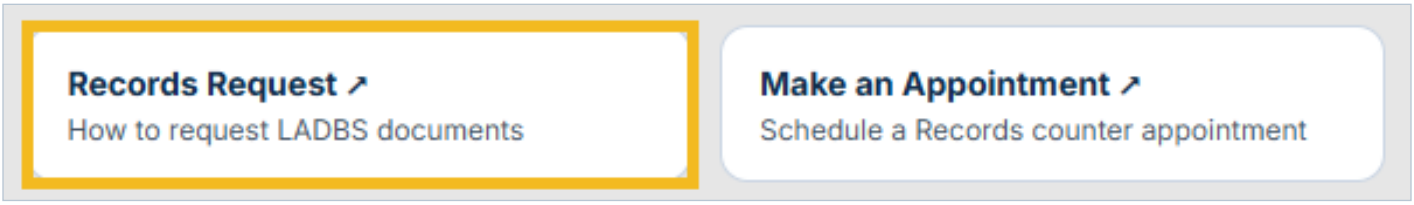
# Contact the Records group

Can't find an available PDF for your record? Reach out to the **Records Group** for assistance. Select **Contact** in the top-right corner.




The Contact link is highlighted in the upper-right navigation.

## Submit a records request

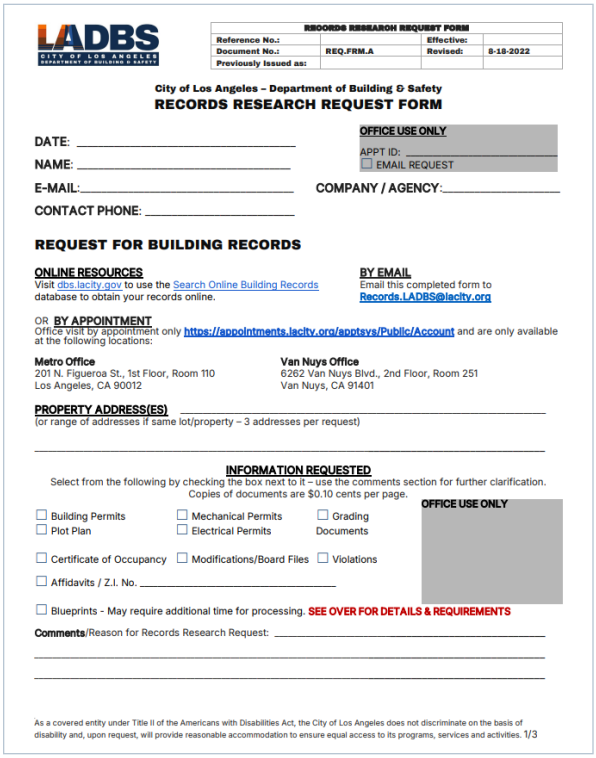



Select Records Request on the Contact page.

To submit a request to the Records Group, fill out a **records request form** and email it to:

records.ladbs@lacity.org

**Records request form**
https://dbs.lacity.gov/sites/default/files/efs/forms/research-request-form-ad-form-01.pdf



LADBS
CITY OF LOS ANGELES
DEPARTMENT OF BUILDING & SAFETY

| RECORDS RESEARCH REQUEST FORM | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Reference No.: | | Effective: | |
| Document No.: | REQ.FRM.A | Revised: | 8-18-2022 |
| Previously Issued as: | | | |

City of Los Angeles – Department of Building & Safety
**RECORDS RESEARCH REQUEST FORM**

DATE: _____
NAME: _____
E-MAIL: _____
CONTACT PHONE: _____

OFFICE USE ONLY
APPT ID: _____
☐ EMAIL REQUEST

COMPANY / AGENCY: _____

**REQUEST FOR BUILDING RECORDS**

**ONLINE RESOURCES**
Visit dbs.lacity.gov to use the Search Online Building Records database to obtain your records online.

**BY EMAIL**
Email this completed form to Records.LADBS@lacity.org

OR **BY APPOINTMENT**
Office visit by appointment only https://appointments.lacity.org/apptsys/Public/Account and are only available at the following locations:

**Metro Office**
201 N. Figueroa St., 1st Floor, Room 110
Los Angeles, CA 90012

**Van Nuys Office**
6262 Van Nuys Blvd., 2nd Floor, Room 251
Van Nuys, CA 91401

**PROPERTY ADDRESS(ES)** _____
(or range of addresses if same lot/property – 3 addresses per request)

**INFORMATION REQUESTED**
Select from the following by checking the box next to it – use the comments section for further clarification.
Copies of documents are $0.10 cents per page.

☐ Building Permits ☐ Mechanical Permits ☐ Grading
☐ Plot Plan ☐ Electrical Permits Documents
☐ Certificate of Occupancy ☐ Modifications/Board Files ☐ Violations
☐ Affidavits / Z.I. No. _____

OFFICE USE ONLY

☐ Blueprints - May require additional time for processing. SEE OVER FOR DETAILS & REQUIREMENTS

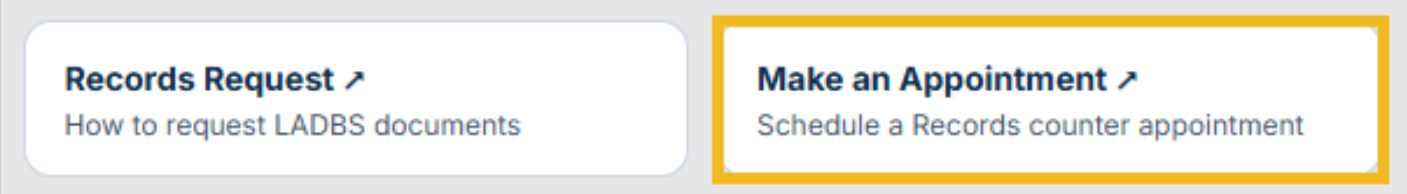
**Comments**/Reason for Records Research Request: _____

As a covered entity under Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act, the City of Los Angeles does not discriminate on the basis of disability and, upon request, will provide reasonable accommodation to ensure equal access to its programs, services and activities. 1/3

Records Research Request Form (page 1).

# Appointments and locations

To visit one of our physical locations for a records request, please **schedule an appointment**. Select **Make an Appointment** on the Contact page.



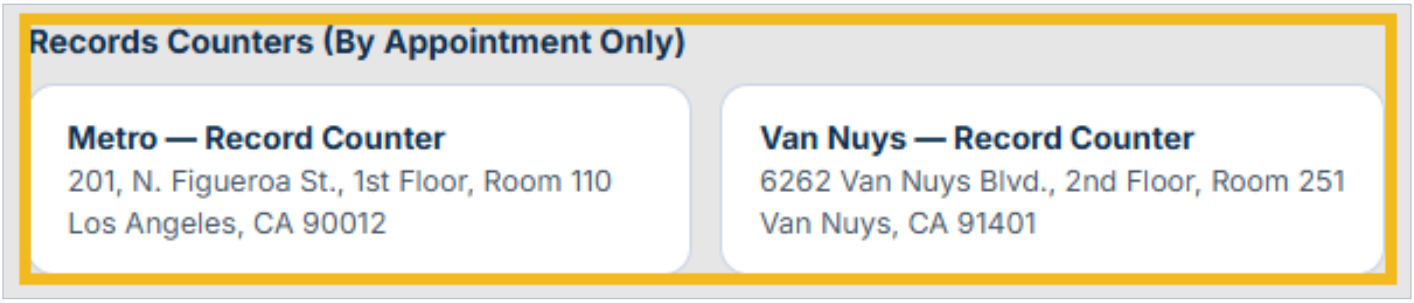

Make an Appointment is highlighted on the Contact page.

**Appointment website**
https://appointments.lacity.org/apptsys/Public/Account

**Please note:** A completed records request form must be attached when scheduling your appointment.

## Record counter locations

The locations of our records counters can also be found on the Contact page.




Metro and Van Nuys record counter locations.

Records counters are **by appointment only**.