

MOTION

PLANNING & LAND USE MANAGEMENT

The City of Los Angeles' General Plan is the blueprint for the City's built environment and land use development. Community Plans, 35 in all, comprise the unique visions and implementation plans for each community and neighborhood in Los Angeles. These Community Plans describe a range of land uses and intensities that are appropriate for each area, as well as land use policies to promote compatible in-fill development, protect existing neighborhood scale and character, and provide for orderly and well-planned economic growth.

As a Charter city, the City of Los Angeles is mandated by the state to maintain a General Plan that in part, guides the City's land use management policies into the future. While all of the other General Plan Elements are singular in nature, the Land Use Element is distinct in that it consists of separate Community Plans that all require timely review and updates. The average age of an adopted Community Plan in Los Angeles is over 17 years old, and Community Plans may not reflect current land use priorities or respond to current land use pressures and changes that have occurred since plan adoption.

Community Plans represent local neighborhood vision and are developed in close collaboration with existing residents. Due to the extensive number of Community Plans and their related implementation mechanisms (e.g. zoning overlays), timely review and updates of the Community Plans and General Plan Elements cannot reasonably be managed without a framework or input from the City Council and the Mayor. Additionally, amendments to Community Plans (e.g. General Plan Amendment) may at times need to be considered in the course of reviewing proposed developments. However, such considerations should take place within the parameters of an identified Community Plan update process framework.

A major component of any land use decision is compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), and, from time to time, compliance may require the preparation of Environmental Impact Reports (EIRs) by the City of Los Angeles. The Department of City Planning is responsible, as lead agency, for the preparation and review of EIRs for development projects. These EIRs contain a project description, an analysis of potential environmental impacts, the identification of project alternatives, and the development of mitigation measures that reduce or eliminate these impacts. An EIR also may contain a Statement of Overriding Consideration for projects that, even with mitigation, will have a significant effect on the environment.

All EIRs are City documents, and the Department of City Planning issues Environmental Impact Reports for development proposals. For private development applications, CEQA consultants hired by the project applicant prepare draft materials for city review as part of the project application.



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Currently the Department of City Planning accepts draft materials from a variety of CEQA consultants, and has no vetting or review process to create a qualified list of acceptable consultants to assist with the preparation of EIR components. Consideration and potential development of a qualified list will ensure the highest quality of CEQA work and consultant performance, and create a process by which the City of Los Angeles can establish standards for a consultant's technical expertise, responsibility, and responsiveness to strengthen the EIR development process. Adequate analyses and review of potential environmental impacts associated with any proposed development project necessitate direct oversight by the City in its role as the lead agency, and therefore it is important for the City's legislative body to understand the Department of City Planning's current practices and identify potential enhancements to that end.

Furthermore, the City of Los Angeles has been continuing to work on improvements to technology and ease of access to information for the public with respect to development and construction projects. Much like the recently updated Department of Building and Safety website, it is critical that the City quickly rebuild the technology infrastructure for the Department of City Planning as another major step toward an open and transparent City government.

Lastly, the establishment of a sustained, ongoing, community planning effort is critical to ensure Los Angeles' quality of life is maintained as growth occurs. An adequately staffed Department of City Planning with resources to accomplish the job has never been a higher priority for the City.

WE THEREFORE MOVE that the City Council INSTRUCT the Department of City Planning, with the assistance of the Chief Legislative Analyst (CLA), City Administrative Office (CAO), and the City Attorney's Office, to prepare a report within 30 days identifying a framework which would allow the City to adopt a schedule/program for the systematic review and update of the City's Community Plans and General Plan Elements. This report should include development of criteria and methodology for determining the schedule of plan updates across the City. This report should also include an analysis of the feasibility of batching General Plan Amendments to allow for the Citywide Planning Commission and the City Council to review these changes as a group to assess the total impacts to the City's built environment.

WE FURTHER MOVE that the City Council INSTRUCT the Department of City Planning to prepare a report within 30 days with an analysis of the resources and fiscal impacts of procedural options requiring that consultants that assist in the preparation of Environmental Impact Reports (EIR) be pre-qualified by the City, be selected by the City, or be hired directly by the City at the expense of the applicant. The Department of City Planning should also provide an analysis of any required administrative changes and any other policy or code amendments necessary to effectuate these options.

WE FURTHER MOVE that the City Council INSTRUCT the Department of City Planning, with the assistance of the CAO, the CLA, and the Information Technology Agency, to prepare a report within 30 days with a status update of the ongoing technology plans, projects, timelines, and sources of funding with respect to rebuilding the technology infrastructure for the Department of City Planning as a necessary step in furthering the goal of an open and transparent City government.

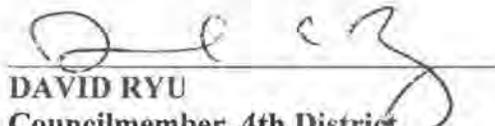
WE FURTHER MOVE that the City Council INSTRUCT the CAO, with the assistance of the CLA and the Department of City Planning, to prepare a report within 30 days assessing the resources and fiscal impacts of implementing additional cost recovery for all aspects of the Department of City Planning's activities where feasible.

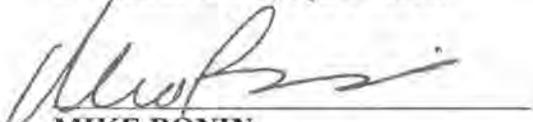
PRESENTED BY:


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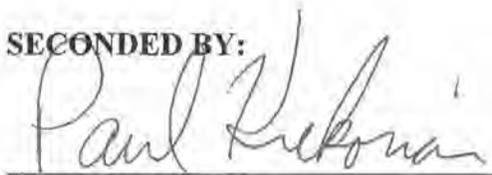

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