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REPORT NO. R 1 3 - 0 3 4 9
DEC 0 9 2013

REPORT RE:

**DRAFT ORDINANCE AMENDING SECTIONS 12.03, 12.04, 12.32 AND 13.17
OF THE LOS ANGELES MUNICIPAL CODE TO ENABLE THE ESTABLISHMENT
OF RIVER IMPROVEMENT OVERLAY DISTRICTS AND THE PREPARATION OF
RIVER DESIGN STANDARDS TO ENABLE THE CITY OF LOS ANGELES
TO FACILITATE APPROPRIATE DEVELOPMENT IN DESIGNATED AREAS
ADJACENT TO THE LOS ANGELES RIVER**

**DRAFT ORDINANCE ESTABLISHING
THE LOS ANGELES RIVER OVERLAY DISTRICT**

The Honorable City Council
of the City of Los Angeles
Room 395, City Hall
200 North Spring Street
Los Angeles, California 90012

Council File No. 12-0096-S1

Honorable Members:

Pursuant to your request, this Office has prepared and now transmits for your consideration two enclosed draft ordinances, approved as to form and legality. The first ordinance will, if adopted, amend the Los Angeles Municipal Code to enable the establishment of and set forth the framework for River Improvement Overlay Districts. The second ordinance will establish the first such district, the Los Angeles River Improvement Overlay District.

Background and Summary of the Ordinance Provisions

1. River Improvement Overlay Enabling Ordinance

The first proposed ordinance amends Sections 12.03, 12.04, 12.32 and 13.17 of the Los Angeles Municipal Code to enable the establishment of a new type of supplemental use district called "River Improvement Overlay" districts. The purpose of these districts will be to regulate the use and construction upon land located adjacent to and near the Los Angeles River in a manner that supports the goals of the Los Angeles River Revitalization Master Plan, contributes to the health of the river, establishes a positive interface between river adjacent property and the river, and serves other purposes as set forth in Section A of proposed Section 13.17 of this ordinance. Throughout this report, these districts shall also be referred to as "RIO" districts.

The proposed ordinance also amends Section 13.17 to set forth a detailed regulatory framework, which may be incorporated by reference into individual RIO districts. It will be possible for the City to adopt regulations and standards for individual RIO districts that differ from those set forth in Section 13.17. It is anticipated, however, that most of the RIO districts will have similar content and be mostly consistent with one another.

The proposed ordinance also contemplates the establishment of new "Los Angeles River Design Standards" by Planning staff. These standards will focus on design characteristics that relate to the Los Angeles River and include site planning, building orientation, building entrance design, building design and materials, river paths, wayfinding, and river adjacent pocket parks. Some of these standards will apply only to projects that directly abut the river.

2. Los Angeles River Improvement Overlay Ordinance

The second proposed ordinance establishes the first of these RIO districts, a RIO district called the "Los Angeles River Improvement Overlay," or "LA-RIO."

A more detailed description of these proposed ordinances are set forth in the Planning Department's report submitted to the City Planning Commission dated January 12, 2012.

Charter Findings

Pursuant to Charter Section 559, the Planning Commission approved the draft ordinances and recommended that the City Council adopt them. If the City Council chooses to adopt these ordinances, it may comply with the provisions of Charter Section 558 by either adopting the findings prepared by the Director of Planning attached to the file or by making its own findings.

CEQA Determination

The Department of City Planning has prepared Categorical Exemption Narrative No. ENV-2008-3103-CE in connection with the proposed RIO enabling ordinance and Negative Declaration No. ENV-2007-3037-ND in connection with the proposed LA-RIO ordinance.

If you concur, you may comply with CEQA by acknowledging the Categorical Exemption and by adopting the Negative Declaration prior to, or concurrent with, your action on the respective ordinances.

Council Rule 38 Referral

Copies of the final draft ordinances were sent, pursuant to Council Rule 38, to the Departments of Building and Safety and Public Works, with a request that any comments be presented directly to your Honorable Body at the time this matter is considered.

Recommended Actions

If the City Council wishes to adopt either or both of these draft ordinances, it should:

1. Acknowledge Categorical Exemption Narrative No. ENV-2008-3103-CE and adopt Negative No. Declaration ENV-2007-3037-ND.
2. Adopt the draft ordinances.

If you have any questions regarding this matter, please contact Deputy City Attorney Kenneth Fong at (213) 978-8235. He or another member of this Office will be present when you consider this matter to answer any questions you may have.

Very truly yours,

MICHAEL N. FEUER, City Attorney

By 

DAVID MICHAELSON
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DM/KTF:zra
Transmittal