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PUBLIC SAFETY

MOTION

In world-class cities throughout the United States, the tallest, most exciting and iconic buildings – the Chrysler Center, the Sears Tower, the Key Tower, the Transbay Terminal, Transamerica Pyramid, the Empire State Building, City Spire Center, One World Plaza, the Coit Tower – share the common purpose of existing not simply as rectangular boxes built to soaring heights, but instead as monumental symbols of their cities, visions representative of progress, creativity and community. For decades the world's visionary architects have lamented the limits the city's fire code places upon their ability to create facilities befitting Los Angeles' style and importance to world architecture.

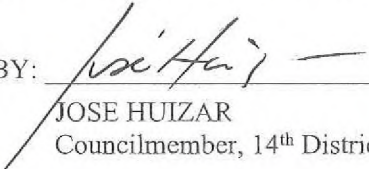
Of the 1,700 high-rises in the State of California, approximately 745 are located in Los Angeles. The Los Angeles skyline should be one full of aspiration, originality, and diversity, but current limitations hamper this vision and create a flat skyline.

As standards, technology, and best practices in engineering, fire/life safety, and design have evolved and modernized significantly over the past half-century, certain city regulations – such as the decades-old LAFD requirement that each new high-rise building to provide a rooftop emergency helicopter landing facility – have not likewise evolved. In fact, Los Angeles is the only major American city with such a helipad requirement.

Certainly, while an iconic skyline is something to be desired, the paramount consideration in our City policies must be for fire/life safety and the protection of our citizens and firefighters. New advancements in code requirements and technology that increase fire/life safety, combined with the dynamic, ever-advancing state of safety measures available and used today around the world in high-rise construction present an opportunity for the LAFD to modernize its approach to construction, and re-evaluate the need for helicopter landing areas on high-rise buildings.

Recently, in conjunction with CD14, the LAFD released "Policy No. 10" to allow modified helicopter-landing space on the roofs of new high-rise buildings on a case-by-case basis. This was an important first step that will engender an iconic roofline for the under-development Wilshire Grand project. However, more work remains to be done on this evolving policy, including engagement with the development community to ensure solutions are safe, feasible and cost effective to be constructed.

I THEREFORE MOVE that the Los Angeles Fire Department review the codes, standards, best practices and regulations implemented in other large cities in order to evaluate the ongoing need for requiring a helipad landing facility on each new high-rise building. The report should determine if current regulations remain necessary or should be adapted, and if so, what cost-effective and developmentally feasible alternatives to the current regulations can be developed to allow for a more diverse and iconic skyline for Los Angeles while ensuring a high level of fire/life safety.

PRESENTED BY: 
JOSE HUIZAR
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SECONDED BY: 


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ORIGINAL