

14-1478

MOTION

Improving the energy and water efficiency of the City's buildings is critical to achieving goals of environmental and economic sustainability. In Los Angeles, the energy used in buildings accounts for 51% of the City's total greenhouse gas emissions, the single largest contributor.

The City of Los Angeles has been a national leader in setting high sustainability standards for new construction. All new municipal built buildings 7,500 square feet or larger must meet the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) "silver" standard. The City in 2008 adopted a Green Building Program for the private sector, requiring certain new buildings to meet the LEED certified standard, and the City has since incorporated the California Green Building Standards Code into the municipal code.

A large portion of energy is consumed by a relatively small percentage of users. For example, preliminary analysis by the California Center for Sustainable Communities at UCLA and the nonprofit City Energy Project shows that half of the City's electricity demand comes from just 4% of its buildings. A strategy to help reduce energy consumption for these major users of energy could provide proportionately high returns for the City's conservation and sustainability goals.

Many have already taken significant steps to improve efficiency, through LEED compliance or other site-specific actions. Any such strategy must also recognize the importance of these customers to the financial base of the City of Los Angeles. A package of policies and programs to address energy and water efficiency in existing buildings could include financing support, incentive programs, regular benchmarking and performance tracking, and an expansion of the Los Angeles Better Buildings Challenge; or development of similar such programs.


Reducing energy and water consumption in the built environment will significantly decrease the stress on both the power system and the water supply network. The City will be able to recover more quickly from a natural disaster or other system disruption if the City's overall need for energy and water is less.

Enhancing the efficiency of our existing buildings also makes economic sense. Investing in energy and water upgrades saves building owners and tenants on their monthly utility bills, while increasing the buildings' value in the real estate market. Improving building operations has proven to increase tenant comfort and overall productivity. In addition, performing work on existing buildings generates new green jobs, helping to grow the local workforce.

I THEREFORE MOVE that the Department of Building and Safety, in coordination with the City Energy Project and other departments as needed, convene a stakeholder process to develop a program to improve the energy and water efficiency of existing buildings which are the largest users of energy and water.

I FURTHER MOVE that the Department of Building and Safety conduct a review of any relevant state actions as part of this effort; and that the Department provide the Council a status update on the matter in 60 days.

PRESENTED BY:

  
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ORIGINAL

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