

CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT (CEQA) NARRATIVE:

ENV-2015-3581-CE

I. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

An ordinance amending Division 93 of Article 1 of Chapter IX of the Los Angeles Municipal Code¹ to require an evaluation of existing commercial and residential buildings of wood-frame construction having two or more stories, except residential buildings with 3 units or less, permitted before January 1, 1980, in which the ground floor portion of the wood frame structure contains parking or other similar open floor space that causes soft, weak or open wall lines, to determine if specific minimum structural requirements have been met and, if not, to require retrofit of structures to those minimum requirements. The ordinance further mandates that required retrofitting be completed within 7 years to the specified standards.

The mandatory retrofit of pre-1980 soft-story buildings would prevent the potential loss of affordable or rent stabilized residential units, alleviate safety concerns to the public, including loss of human life, and prevent economic disruption to the City following a catastrophic event such as an earthquake.

II. PROJECT HISTORY

The California Health and Safety Code, Section 19161(a) states that *“Each city, city and county, or county may assess the earthquake hazard in its jurisdiction and identify buildings subject to its jurisdiction as being potentially hazardous to life in the event of an earthquake.”*² Such structures include *“Woodframe, multiunit residential buildings constructed before January 1, 1978, where the ground floor portion of the structure contains parking or other similar open floor space that causes soft, weak, or open-front wall lines, as provided in a nationally recognized model code relating to the retrofit of existing buildings or substantially equivalent standards.”*³ The City of Los Angeles has taken steps to prevent and

¹ This narrative was originally prepared when the soft story ordinance was drafted as a separate ordinance from the non-ductile concrete retrofit ordinance. The week the ordinances were submitted to City Council, the soft-story ordinance was combined into one ordinance bill with the non-ductile concrete ordinance for purposes of administrative simplification and efficiency. For purposes of the analysis in this Narrative, any reference to “the” or “this” “ordinance” or “project” refers to the proposed amendments to Division 93 of Article 1 of Chapter IX of the LA Municipal Code. Otherwise, the amendments related to the soft-story buildings and the amendments to the City Building Code related to the non-ductile concrete buildings (amending Division 95 of Article 1 of Chapter IX of the LAMC), are not dependent on each other, have independent utility, and neither are the reasonably foreseeable result of the other.

² The California Health and Safety Code, Division 13, Part 3, Chapter 2, Article 4. “Earthquake Hazardous Building Reconstruction”, (1979).

³ Ibid, Section 19161(2).

reduce earthquake related damage to existing buildings with the adoption of several voluntary earthquake retrofit ordinances in conjunction with mandatory adherence to the California Building Code for new construction and additions to resist lateral earthquake loads.

On January 17, 1994, the 6.7 magnitude Northridge Earthquake occurred in the City of Los Angeles, lasting 7 seconds. The earthquake caused damage to over 115,000 buildings citywide and the loss of 57 lives. Soft-story structures caused more damage and injury than any other type of building damaged during the earthquake and caused over 20 billion dollars in property damage.⁴ In the soft-story collapse of the Northridge Meadows apartment complex, sixteen people lost their lives.

In response to the earthquake damage, a team of structural engineers from the Los Angeles Department of Building and Safety (LADBS) and the Structural Engineers Association of the Southern California (SEAOSC), called the Task Force, was formed to study seismically vulnerable buildings. The Task Force investigated many classes of buildings which were severely impacted by the Northridge Earthquake including wood-framed residential buildings. As such, the Task Force developed five seismic rehabilitation ordinances, including an ordinance affecting pre-1995 wood-framed, multi-unit residential buildings. Ordinance No. 172,018, amending Article 1, Chapter IX, adding new Division 93 to the Los Angeles Municipal Code (LAMC) was adopted named "Voluntary Earthquake Hazard Reduction in Existing Wood Frame Residential Buildings with Soft, Weak or Open Front Walls."

The purpose of the voluntary ordinance is to *"promote the public welfare and safety by reducing the risk of death or injury that may result from the effects of earthquakes on existing wood-frame multi-unit residential buildings."*⁵ The voluntary ordinance outlines minimum standards to retrofit soft-story buildings to reduce earthquake related damage and loss of life by requiring the alteration, repair, replacement or addition of structural elements and connections. The voluntary ordinance became effective in May of 1998.

In an effort to set a higher standard for earthquake resiliency, Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti appointed Dr. Lucy Jones as his Science Advisor for Seismic Safety and created the Seismic Safety Task Force consisting of experts in emergency management, law, infrastructure, housing, building safety, structural engineering, water systems and communications. In December 2014, the Mayor and Task Force, issued "Resilience by Design" a report outlining the City's vulnerability to the "Big One" and presents recommendations by the Mayoral Seismic Safety Task Force to address earthquake vulnerability to existing buildings proactively. The recommendations of the Task Force are to:

- Protect lives during earthquakes;

⁴ Seismic Safety Commission. "Turning Loss to Gain", (1995): x.
<http://www.seismic.ca.gov/pub/cssc95-01/cssc5-01b-toc.pdf>

⁵ Los Angeles Municipal Code, Article 1, Chapter IX, Division 93. "Voluntary Earthquake Hazard Reduction in Existing Wood Frame Residential Buildings with Soft, Weak or Open Front Walls", (1998).

- Improve the City's capacity to respond to earthquakes;
- Prepare the City to recover quickly after earthquakes; and
- Protect the City's economy after earthquakes.⁶

The report also determined that the most critical areas that could be addressed through City policies should be directed at four specific areas of seismic vulnerability including the retrofit of pre-1980 soft-story buildings. The main points of the ordinance are:

- The retrofit will be mandatory for all soft-first-story buildings except for single-family homes and residences with three or fewer units;
- The Los Angeles Department of Building and Safety will be responsible for identifying the buildings covered by the ordinance and notifying building owners;
- Retrofitting will address first floor structural deficiencies; and
- Retrofitting of the affected buildings will be completed within five years after passage of the ordinance.⁷

III. EXISTING ENVIRONMENT AND ORDINANCES

The City of Los Angeles faces the third greatest risk of catastrophic loss due to earthquakes in the world.⁸ The U.S. Geological Survey forecasts that the chance of a 6.7 magnitude earthquake, the same size as the 1994 Northridge, is expected to hit California once every 6.3 years while the chance of a magnitude 8 or larger hitting the state in the next 30 years is 7 percent.⁹ Although the California Integrated Seismic Network is working on a reliable system to detect seismic waves as an earthquake happens, called the Earthquake Early Warning, we are still a long way from predicting precisely when an earthquake would occur. Thus, the threat of an earthquake is imminent with the initial threat from earthquakes being loss of life and physical damage to buildings. A strong earthquake in the City would cause some buildings to collapse and many more would be left uninhabitable, making the mandatory retrofit of soft-story buildings a priority for the City.

The City has thousands of multi-family residential, soft-story buildings that are at risk of collapse during an earthquake. Most of those buildings were constructed prior to 1978 and are subject to the rent-

⁶ Jones, Dr. Lucy and the Mayor's Seismic Safety Task Force. "Resilience by Design", (2014): 4.

https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/mayorofla/pages/16797/attachments/original/1420504740/Resilience_by_Design_Full_Report_Dec_11_FINAL.pdf?1420504740

⁷ Ibid, 42.

⁸ Swiss Re. "Mind the Risk. A global ranking of cities threat from natural disasters" (2013): 11.

<http://pubs.usgs.gov/of/2008/1150/of2008-1150small.pdf>

⁹ USGS. "New Long-Term Earthquake Forecast for California" (2015).

http://www.usgs.gov/newsroom/article.asp?ID=4146#.VSL_yO7F_eo

stabilization ordinance. The potential loss of rent-stabilized buildings would be devastating to the residents who depend on this housing. The City cannot allow another tragedy such as the Northridge Meadows collapse to repeat.

Currently there are approximately 13,500 soft-story buildings¹⁰ within the City of Los Angeles that will be affected by the proposed ordinance. The ordinance would create minimum standards to mitigate loss by improving the performance of soft-story buildings. As described above, a soft-story building is any wood-framed building with a large first floor opening for tuck-under parking or retail displays. Structurally, soft-story structures are defined as building levels that have a lateral stiffness of less than 70% of the stiffness of the story above it.¹¹ Due to their open first story, soft-story buildings have little resistance to lateral (sideways) forces generated by seismic activity and may be damaged or collapse during an earthquake.

Retrofitting a soft-story building does not require major structural changes. Retrofit of a soft-story weakness involves the addition of lateral stiffness and strength on the soft level in the form of shear walls, steel moment frames, strengthening existing walls, and/or anchoring walls to the foundation.¹² It is reasonable to expect that most retrofits will be accomplished with the addition of steel "moment frames" around the perimeter of the open or "soft" areas. These frames build resistance to lateral forces and greatly reduce the life-safety hazard and potential financial loss. The alteration, repair or replacement of other structural elements and their connections to the wood frame may be necessary to meet strength and stiffness requirements. The retrofit does not generally extend to any stories above the soft first story or require any work on the interior of the building. The typical soft-story retrofit involves the addition of steel frames to brace the openings around tuck-under parking areas on the first story. Such retrofits would not require relocation of tenants, would not require demolition of existing structures, and would involve minor repairs and upgrades to existing structural elements. Required retrofits would not involve any other building additions or alterations.

As discussed above, the City has adopted a number of voluntary retrofit ordinances; however the number of buildings voluntarily retrofitted has been minimal. Some California cities have enacted mandatory retrofit ordinances such as Santa Monica (although implementation of the program ceased soon after its approval) and most recently, San Francisco. On April 9, 2013 the Board of Supervisors of

¹⁰ Approximately 13,500 soft-story buildings were identified through a 6-month process in which LADBS compiled a list of 30,000, 2-story wood buildings built before 1980, excluding 1-story buildings, single-family dwellings, duplexes and triplexes. The 30,000 buildings were then classified as possible soft-story based on document research. Staff then refined the list of 24,000 possible soft-story buildings down to 13,500 based on site inspections.

¹¹ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Soft_story_building

¹² Atteberry, Jonathan. "What is soft-story seismic retrofitting?" (2011).
<http://science.howstuffworks.com/engineering/structural/soft-story-seismic-retrofitting.htm>

the City and County of San Francisco passed an ordinance requiring the mandatory retrofit of wood buildings three or more stories in height over a basement or underfloor area extending above grade and containing five or more dwelling units where the permit to construct was applied for prior to January 1, 1978.

The San Francisco ordinance limits the required retrofitting to the soft-story or first story, as would the Los Angeles ordinance. Limiting retrofit to the first story would provide adequate benefit for minimal cost. Upper stories might be left with unaddressed deficiencies, however the first story retrofit would improve the building's overall seismic performance in a cost effective way.¹³ The retrofit of a building would cause little to zero disruption to tenants and work could be done without the need for temporary or permanent relocation. In most cases, the retrofit would only require the issuance of a building permit from the Department of Building and Safety and would be ministerial, thus exempt from the requirements of CEQA.¹⁴ In conclusion, the proposed soft-story ordinance for the City of Los Angeles would be similar to the San Francisco ordinance and would ultimately serve the same purpose; limit damage and save lives.

IV. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW UNDER CEQA

A. California Code of Regulations Title 14, Chapter 3, "CEQA Guidelines" Section 15060(c)(2) exempts an activity from CEQA review if *"The activity will not result in a direct or reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment."* In addition, "City of Los Angeles Environmental Quality Act Guidelines", Article II, Section 2, Class m states that activities such as *"the adoption of ordinances that do not result in impacts on the physical environment"* are exempt from the requirements of CEQA. Staff has concluded that the proposed ordinance would not result in any impacts to the environment. However should the ordinance be determined to not be exempt from CEQA review based on the above, the project is exempt based on the following Categorical and Statutory Exemptions.

B. State CEQA Guidelines Section 15301 consists of *"the operation, repair, maintenance, permitting, leasing, licensing, or minor alteration of existing public or private structures, facilities, mechanical equipment, or topographical features, involving negligible or no expansion of use beyond that existing at the time of the lead agency's determination"*; and

City of Los Angeles Environmental Quality Act Guidelines, Article III, Class 1 consists of *"the operation, repair, maintenance or minor alteration of existing public or private structures, facilities, mechanical equipment, or topographical features, involving negligible or no expansion of use beyond that previously existing."* Subsection 1, specifically relates to *"interior or exterior alterations involving remodeling or minor construction where there be negligible or no expansion of use."* Subsection 1 would apply to the

¹³ FEMA. "Seismic Evaluation and Retrofit of Multi-Unit Wood-Frame Buildings with Weak First Stories" (2012): 54. http://www.fema.gov/media-library-data/20130726-1916-25045-2624/femap_807.pdf

¹⁴ "California Environmental Quality Act", Article 18 Statutory Exemptions, Section 15268 (2015).

mandatory retrofit of an existing soft-story building under the proposed project. As discussed above, the scope of work for most soft-story retrofits is limited to the addition of steel "moment frames" around the perimeter of the open or "soft" areas. The typical soft-story retrofit involves the addition of steel frames to brace the openings around tuck-under parking areas on the first story. Retrofits are not expected to extend to any stories above the soft first story or require any work on the interior of the building. Retrofits do not require and are not reasonably expected to result in expansion of the existing buildings or uses. Retrofits of soft-story buildings do not require demolition or relocation of tenants.

C. State CEQA Guidelines Section 15269 (c), states that emergency projects are exempt from CEQA requirements if *"[s]pecific actions necessary to prevent or mitigate an emergency" are taken*. This Statutory Exemption would apply to any mandatory retrofit of a soft-story building because the threat of a catastrophic earthquake is imminent. While the risk of an earthquake in any given year, including in 2015 or 2016 is less than 5%, catastrophic damage from the collapse of soft-story buildings, including damage to human health and even death, is certain if a 6.7 scale earthquake occurs (as in the Northridge earthquake) in the City's populated areas. The USGS has forecasted that there is a 93% chance of a 6.7 scale earthquake (as in the 1994 Northridge earthquake) occurring sometime in the next 30 years. Based upon this, the need to adopt a mandatory retrofit ordinance is necessary to mitigate the existing emergency conditions caused by people residing in thousands of soft-story buildings in the City which pose an ongoing imminent threat to human health and life in the City.

D. State CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3), states that, *"[w]here it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the activity in question may have a significant effect on the environment, the activity is not subject to CEQA."* Based on the discussion and analysis in this Narrative, the City finds that the "common sense" exemption applies to the proposed ordinance. As discussed in the "Additional Factual Support" below, the nature of activities involved in the soft-story retrofits under the ordinance have no possibility to impact the environment.

IV. EXCEPTIONS TO THE USE OF CATEGORICAL EXEMPTIONS

Planning staff evaluated the exceptions to the use of Categorical Exemptions for the proposed ordinance listed in "CEQA Guidelines" Section 15300.2 and determined that none of the exceptions apply to the proposed ordinance as described below:

A. Location: *A categorical exemption, Class 3, 4, 5, 6 and 11 shall not be used when a project that is ordinarily insignificant in its impact on the environment may in a particularly sensitive environment be significant.*

Categorical exemptions, Class 3, 4, 5, 6 and 11 have not been considered for the proposed ordinance. Therefore, this exception is not applicable. Additionally, the evidence included in the Additional Factual Support section supports the finding that any impacts from the project would continue to be insignificant even in a sensitive environment.

B. Cumulative Impact: The exception applies when the cumulative impact of successive projects of the same type in the same place, over time is significant.

As set forth in this Narrative, based on the expected work conducted under the proposed Ordinance, the soft-story retrofits are not expected to have any cumulatively considerable impacts. Work conducted under this ordinance is expected to consist of minor repairs, involving no demolition work, no displacement of people and no interior work. There is another Citywide ordinance concurrently proposed that will affect existing non-ductile concrete buildings that would require mandatory retrofit, however the activities expected under that ordinance are not of the same type expected under the subject soft-story ordinance.¹⁵ Finally, as discussed in the narrative supporting the categorical exemption for the non-ductile concrete buildings ordinance, there is no substantial evidence to support that the ordinance would result in any cumulatively considerable impacts. The City is not aware of any basis or evidence that would support finding that the impacts from the soft-story ordinance and the non-ductile ordinance, individually or collectively, will result in cumulative impacts.

C. Significant Effect Due to Unusual Circumstances: A categorical exemption shall not be used for an activity where there is a reasonable possibility that the project will have a significant effect due to unusual circumstances.

There is no reasonable possibility that the proposed ordinance will have a significant effect due to unusual circumstances. Soft-story buildings occur throughout the City and the type of work required by the Ordinance is not unique or different. The Ordinance requires doing the same type of work authorized and which already occurs under the existing Voluntary Ordinance and under the current Los Angeles Building Code. Additionally, any required structural upgrades, including the addition of lateral supports, shear walls and/or foundation anchors are currently required for new construction pursuant to the Los Angeles Building Code and is not the type of construction that could be categorized as unusual.

Notwithstanding the above, to the extent a court would find that there is an unusual circumstance, the Additional Factual Support provides substantial evidence that there is no fair argument that the Project will result in a significant impact.

D. Scenic Highway: A categorical exemption shall not be used for a project that may result in damage to scenic resources, including but not limited to, trees, historic buildings, rock outcroppings, or similar resources within a highway officially designated as a state scenic highway.

The proposed ordinance will not damage scenic resources within a designated scenic highway. The proposed ordinance merely mandates the retrofit of existing soft-story structures which would have a

¹⁵ As discussed in Note 1, above, the soft-story and non-ductile reinforced concrete ordinances were originally proposed as two separate ordinances, thus two separate environmental case numbers were created and two separate narratives have been prepared. The two ordinances have since been combined into one ordinance.

positive impact on the structures and their inhabitants. The retrofitting of buildings would not significantly alter a buildings appearance, height or mass and therefore not damage any scenic resource.

E. Hazardous Waste Site: A categorical exemption shall not be used for a project located on a site which is listed pursuant to California Government Code 65962.5.

It is not expected at this time, and the Department of City Planning has no reason to believe, that any soft-story buildings requiring mandatory retrofit are located on any hazardous waste sites.¹⁶

F. Historical Resources: A categorical exemption shall not be used for a project which may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource.

The proposed ordinance would not cause an adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in State CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5 because the proposed ordinance merely affects first floor structural deficiencies of existing structures that are already built-out. The Ordinance requires the alteration, repair, replacement or addition of structural elements and their connections to meet minimum strength and stiffness requirements for lateral loads. Although an existing soft-story building may be a designated historical resource, the remedy for deficient structural issues is relatively simple and would not reasonably be expected to affect any architectural or historic elements of buildings. Retrofits required under the Proposed Ordinance would be regulated by the 2013 California State Historical Building Code established under Part 8, Title 24 of the California Code Regulations as well as the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines. Finally, any designated historic building, including those subject to the regulations of the Proposed Ordinance, would be required to go through historic preservation review by the Department of City Planning's Office of Historic Resources prior to issuance of a building permit to ensure the character defining features of the building would not be adversely impacted.

V. ADDITIONAL FACTUAL SUPPORT

Below is a consideration of all categories on the Initial Study Checklist to demonstrate further that the proposed ordinance qualifies for the listed categorical exemptions and that even if a threshold test is met for any categorical exception, there is no substantial evidence supporting a fair argument that a significant impact will occur from the Project:

A. Aesthetics

This proposed ordinance will not create any aesthetic environmental effects. The mandatory retrofit of soft-story buildings will not alter any scenic vistas. Scenic vistas are generally defined as panoramic

¹⁶ See Hazardous Waste and Substance Site List on CA.Gov Site, at , http://www.envirostor.dtsc.ca.gov/public/search.asp?cmd=search&reporttype=CORTESE&site_type=CSITES%2COPEN%2CFUDS%2CCLOSE&status=ACT%2CBKLG%2CCOM&reporttitle=HAZARDOUS%20WASTE%20AND%20SUBSTANCES%20SITE%20LIST

public views to natural features, including views of the ocean, striking or unusual natural terrain, or unique urban or historic features.

The proposed ordinance would not impact scenic resources because it merely affects first floor structural deficiencies of existing structures. The proposed ordinance would have a positive potential impact on the structures themselves and surrounding environment as mandatory retrofit of the buildings would strengthen buildings that would be vulnerable to lateral loads such as an earthquake. No new construction is proposed as a result of the ordinance; therefore the ordinance would have no new impact on aesthetics.

B. Agricultural and Forest Resources

The proposed ordinance would mandate the retrofit of existing soft-story buildings and would not impact agricultural or forest uses because the retrofit would not require new construction. After adoption of the proposed ordinance, these uses can continue operating in the same fashion as they did prior to adoption.

C. Air Quality

The proposed ordinance would not be expected to conflict with or obstruct the implementation of the SCAQMD or congestion management plan, violate any air quality standard, or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation. There would not be cumulatively considerable net increases of any criteria pollutant for which the air basin is in non-attainment. The Project calls for minor construction and repair work and is not expected to require any grading or create dust. All construction in the City is required to comply with SCAQMD District Rule 403 against fugitive dust and construction equipment exhaust emissions. Therefore, the proposed ordinance would not be expected to expose any sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations, nor create any odors. No new construction is proposed as a result of the ordinance; therefore the ordinance would have no new impact on air quality. It is not expected and the City has no evidence or reason to believe at this time that the project will result in any air quality impacts.

D. Biological Resources

The proposed ordinance will not create changes in conditions that could yield an incremental increase in potential impacts to any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species or habitat to such species. No biological resources, including riparian habitat, or other sensitive natural community or federally protected wetlands, native resident or migratory fish/wildlife species that would be impacted. The proposed ordinance would not result in direct removal, filling, or hydrological interruption to any resources. This is because the proposed ordinance merely affects first floor structural deficiencies of existing structures and involves minor repair work. No new construction is proposed as a result of the ordinance; therefore the ordinance is not reasonably expected to have an impact on biological resources.

E. Cultural Resources

The proposed ordinance requires minor repairs to existing structures and is not expected to result in grading or excavation. Therefore, the proposed ordinance will not cause an adverse change in significance of an archaeological resource, paleontological resource, site, or unique geologic feature, or any human remains. As discussed above in the exceptions, the proposed ordinance would not reasonably be expected to cause an adverse change of a historical resource as defined in State CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5. Any historic buildings or buildings that are eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places, the California Register of Historical Resources, Historic Preservation Overlay Zone, or local designation will be required to comply with the requirements of the California Historical Building Code and be subject to historic preservation review by the Department of City Planning's Office of Historic Resources prior to issuance of a building permit to ensure the retrofit would not adversely impact the character defining features, which results in compliance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines.

F. Geology and Soils

The proposed ordinance will require the mandatory retrofit of soft-story buildings, however the ordinance will not expose people or structures to potential adverse effects as a result of earthquakes, landslides, liquefaction or soil erosion. As is common in the Southern California region, there will be continued risks of human injury and property damage because of potential regional earthquakes, however the mandatory requirements of the proposed ordinance will substantially reduce the risk of loss, injury or death as well as reduce potential damage to rent stabilized housing units. No new construction, excavation or grading, is proposed as a result of the ordinance; therefore the ordinance would have no new adverse impact on geological resources. The ordinance is expected to have a beneficial impact related to earthquakes.

G. Greenhouse Gas Emissions

The proposed ordinance will not generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, or conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases. No new construction is proposed as a result of the ordinance; therefore the ordinance would have no new impact on greenhouse gas emissions. Any debris from the construction would not be expected to require more than one trip.

H. Hazards and Hazardous Materials

The proposed ordinance would not result in the routine transport, use, production or disposal of hazardous materials. The proposed ordinance would merely mandate the retrofit of existing soft-story buildings and would not involve the use of potentially hazardous materials that could create a significant public hazard through the accidental release of hazardous materials into the environment. The retrofit of buildings does not involve the transport or use of hazardous materials. Soft-story buildings may be found to contain asbestos-containing materials or lead paint. This would not be expected to result in any

impacts. The operator would be required to comply with all applicable state and local regulations for the abatement, handling and disposal of asbestos and lead paint, including but not limited to, the South Coast Air Quality Management District's Rule 1403 for abatement and implement OSHA regulations for the handling and disposal of lead paint and materials.

I. Hydrology and Water Quality

No new construction is proposed as a result of the ordinance. The type of work required for retrofits is not expected to require water use. Therefore the ordinance would have no new impact on hydrology and water quality. The proposed ordinance would merely mandate the retrofit of existing soft-story buildings and would not reasonably be expected to violate any water quality standards, deplete groundwater supplies, alter existing drainage patterns, create or contribute water runoff or expose people or structures to flooding or other natural water related catastrophes. Although a standard retrofit would not generally have an impact on hydrology and water quality, any project that may have the potential to degrade water quality would be subject to the provisions of the Low Impact Development (LID) ordinance (Ordinance No. 181,899) to ensure that projects mitigate runoff and stormwater pollution. Based upon this, the project is not expected to result in any hydrology or water quality impacts.

J. Land Use and Planning

The 2013-2021 Housing Element of the City's General Plan identifies the City's housing conditions and needs and establishes goals, objectives and policies for a growth strategy with programs to achieve livable neighborhoods for all residents. Objective 1.2 states that the City should "preserve quality rental and ownership housing for households of all income levels and special needs." The following policy encourages the importance of safe housing:

Policy 1.2.1 "Facilitate the maintenance of existing housing in decent, safe and healthy condition."

Corresponding Housing Program 28 encourages the preservation of rent-stabilized housing units to include seismic work and rehabilitation of buildings.

California state law requires city general plans to include a safety element which addresses protection of its residents from unreasonable risks associated with natural disasters including fires, floods and earthquakes. The Safety Element of the City's General Plan, adopted in 1996, includes a "Seismic Events" section as well Goal 1 which envisions "*a city where potential injury, loss of life, property damage and disruption of the social and economic life of the City due to fire, water related hazard, seismic event, geologic conditions or release of hazardous materials disasters is minimized.*"

Additionally, the proposed ordinance upholds the State of California's Health and Safety Code, Division 13, Part 3, Chapter 2, Article 4 which states that "*each city, city and county, or county, may assess the earthquake hazard in its jurisdiction and identify buildings subject to its jurisdiction as being potentially*

hazardous to life in the event of an earthquake.” Therefore, the proposed ordinance is consistent with the City’s plans and would not result in an adverse impact to the environment from an inconsistency with a plan or any other impact related to land use or plans.

K. Mineral Resources

The proposed ordinance would not result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource or locally-important mineral resource recovery site. The proposed ordinance would merely mandate the retrofit of existing soft-story buildings and would not involve new construction.

L. Noise

There is no basis or evidence at this time to reasonably expect the project to result in noise impacts. As provided herein, the retrofits involved would likely require minor structural upgrades, including the addition of lateral supports, shear walls and/or foundation anchors and no demolition work. The ordinance and any activities associated with the adoption of the ordinance would be subject to the regulations of Chapter XI of the LAMC, titled “Noise Regulation”, added by Ordinance No. 144,331. Therefore, the proposed ordinance would not reasonably be expected to result in the exposure of persons to or generation of noise in levels in excess of standard levels. Furthermore, the proposed ordinance would not result in the exposure of people to or generation of excessive ground borne vibration or ground borne noise levels or create a substantial periodic or permanent increase in ambient noise levels.

M. Population and Housing

The types of repairs required under the proposed ordinance would not necessitate relocation of tenants. The proposed ordinance would not induce population growth nor displace substantial numbers of people. The purpose of the proposed ordinance is to make existing multi-family housing safer by improving resistance to lateral loads, thus reducing the risk of substantial damage to buildings and reducing the potential loss of life due to an earthquake. Therefore, the proposed ordinance will not impact residential uses. After adoption of the proposed ordinance, residential uses can continue operating in the same fashion as they did prior to adoption.

N. Public Services

The proposed ordinance will not result in substantial adverse impacts on any public services including fire protection, police protection, schools, parks or other public facilities. The proposed ordinance would merely mandate the retrofit of existing soft-story buildings and would not involve new construction or the expansion of existing buildings.

O. Recreation

The proposed ordinance will not increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks nor would it require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities. The proposed ordinance would merely

mandate the retrofit of existing soft-story buildings and would not involve new construction or the expansion of existing buildings.

P. Transportation/Traffic

The proposed ordinance would not conflict with any applicable plans or policies regarding circulation systems, conflict with any applicable congestion management programs, result in a change in air traffic patterns, increase street hazards, result in inadequate emergency access or conflict with any adopted plans or policies regarding public transit, bicycle or pedestrian facilities. The proposed ordinance would merely mandate the retrofit of existing soft-story buildings and would not involve new construction or the expansion of existing buildings. Therefore, the Project is not reasonably expected to have any impacts related to transportation/traffic.

Q. Utilities and Service Systems

The proposed ordinance does not call for new construction, grading or excavation and is not growth inducing. Additionally, the type of work associated with the retrofits is not expected to require additional discharges to the sewer system. The proposed ordinance would not exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the applicable regional water quality control board, nor require the construction of new water or wastewater treatment facilities. The proposed ordinance would not require the construction of new storm water drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities. The proposed ordinance would not have an effect on water supplies, nor affect wastewater treatment. Moreover, the proposed ordinance would not have any solid waste disposal needs or generate any solid waste disposal itself. In addition, any solid waste created as a result of compliance with the proposed ordinance would be subject to the regulations of the Los Angeles Green Building Code, Section 99.04.408 for construction waste reduction, disposal and recycling. Based on the above, there is no reason or evidence at this time to expect the project to result in any impact related to utilities or service systems.

R. Mandatory Findings of Significance

Based on all of the above, the proposed ordinance would not substantially degrade environmental quality, substantially reduce fish or wildlife habitat, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory. The proposed ordinance would merely mandate the retrofit of existing soft-story buildings and would not involve new construction, excavation, or grading and is not growth-inducing. As noted previously in the Exceptions to the Use of Categorical Exemptions section, and as supported in this Additional Factual Support section, the proposed ordinance would not have a cumulatively considerable impact. As discussed herein, the proposed ordinance is expected to have a beneficial impact to human health.

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