



July 30, 2014

The Honorable Herb J. Wesson, President
Los Angeles City Council
200 North Spring Street, Room 430
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Re: Support for Procedural Fixes to the Small Lot Subdivision Ordinance, CF 13-1478-S2

Dear Council President Wesson:

I am writing on behalf of the Council of Infill Builders, a statewide organization of developers and other real estate professionals committed to improving California through infill development. We stand behind the principle that small lot development will be one of the most important tools cities have to meet changing demand for housing as well as the mandated outcomes of AB 32 and SB 375.

Los Angeles has been a leader in the state in legalizing and facilitating small lot development. Now it has the opportunity to close some important gaps in the Small Lot Subdivision (SLS) Ordinance, which, while they remain open, create significant barriers to high-quality, cost-effective development.

The SLS Ordinance Increased Housing Supply While Being Mindful of Design and Compatibility

The SLS Ordinance has increased the available housing supply in the City of Los Angeles and at the same time offered an alternative to traditional multi-family residential construction. The Ordinance does not increase density or height guidelines, and the mass and scale of SLS Ordinance projects are much more compatible with surrounding communities than traditional multi-family development.

The Proposed Changes Will Alleviate Case Processing Times and Reduce Housing Costs

City Planning staff's recommended changes will allow construction of SLS projects to commence prior to the recordation of final maps, which is currently not possible without requesting additional entitlements from the Planning Department. The proposed procedural and technical changes will streamline the development process and thus reduce housing costs.

We Urge the City Council to Move Forward With These Technical Changes Now

The City Council should approve these procedural and technical changes to the SLS Ordinance to ensure the Ordinance remains a useful tool for the development community. Given the current housing boom, now is the time to enact the procedural changes to ensure that we increase the City's housing supply and reduce housing costs.

Further Revisions of the Ordinance can be Addressed through the City's Zoning Code Reform

We understand that some communities would like further revisions to the ordinance. However, any further "tweaks" to the ordinance will require additional environmental review and public hearing. Therefore, these should not be reason to delay changes which have already completed the environmental

review process. The Planning Department is already undertaking a zoning code reform effort, and that may be the right vehicle to address further issues.

The Council of Infill Builders greatly appreciates Planning staff's efforts to improve implementation of the Small Lot Subdivision Ordinance and increase predictability of development.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Curt Johansen", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Curt Johansen
Chairman, Council of Infill Builders

Cc: The Honorable Gil Cedillo
The Honorable Paul Krekorian
The Honorable Bob Blumenfield
The Honorable Tom LaBonge
The Honorable Paul Koretz
The Honorable Nury Martinez
The Honorable Felipe Fuentes
The Honorable Bernard Parks
The Honorable Curren Price
The Honorable Mike Bonin
The Honorable Mitchell Englander
The Honorable Mitch O'Farrell
The Honorable Jose Huizar
The Honorable Joe Buscaino
Gerald Gubatan, Office of Councilmember Gil Cedillo
Karo Torossian, Office of Councilmember Paul Krekorian
Cesar Diaz, Office of Councilmember Bob Blumenfield
Renee Weitzer, Office of Councilmember Tom LaBonge
Shawn Bayliss, Office of Councilmember Paul Koretz
Alexis Marin, Office of Councilmember Nury Martinez
Claudia Rodriguez, Office of Councilmember Felipe Fuentes
Noel Pallais, Office of Councilmember Bernard Parks
Rob Katherman, Office of Councilmember Curren Price
Michael Bai, Office of Councilmember Herb Wesson
Tricia Keane, Office of Councilmember Mike Bonin
Hannah Lee, Office of Councilmember Mitchell Englander
Marie Rumsey, Office of Councilmember Mitch O'Farrell
Tanner Blackman, Office of Councilmember Jose Huizar
Alison Becker, Office of Councilmember Joe Buscaino
Michael LoGrande, Department of City Planning
Alan Bell, Department of City Planning
Deborah Kahen, Department of City Planning