

DEPARTMENT OF REGIONAL PLANNING

PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO COUNTY CODE TO CREATE ADDITIONAL LAND USE CONTROLS FOR THE PLACEMENT AND ENLARGEMENT OF OUTDOOR ADVERTISING SIGNS IN THE UNINCORPORATED AREAS OF LOS ANGELES COUNTY

Staff Report

SUMMARY

The proposed ordinance will limit the placement or enlargement of new outdoor advertising signs to M (Industrial) Zones and will require the approval of a conditional use permit (CUP) prior to the placement or expansion of any outdoor advertising sign. The proposed ordinance also creates an annual inspection fee for all legally established outdoor advertising signs built after August 31, 1973. The ordinance will cover all unincorporated areas in the County of Los Angeles.

BACKGROUND

On May 14, 2002, the Board of Supervisors requested that the Department of Regional Planning conduct a comprehensive study of potential additional land use controls which would protect neighborhoods from the negative impacts of outdoor advertising signs. On that date, the Board also adopted Interim Urgency Ordinance No. 2002-0031U, which temporarily prohibited the placement and expansion of outdoor advertising signs in the unincorporated areas of the County of Los Angeles. The Board's actions were prompted by numerous constituent complaints about the visual clutter and safety hazards resulting from the proliferation of outdoor advertising signs. On June 25, 2002, the Board of Supervisors extended Interim Urgency Ordinance No. 2002-0031U for a period of ten and one half months, and the Department of Regional Planning submitted the requested study to the Board of Supervisors on January 13, 2003.

The moratorium was extended a second time on April 22, 2003, when the Board of Supervisors adopted Urgency Ordinance No. 2002-0045U. This urgency ordinance extended the prohibition on the placement or enlargement of outdoor advertising signs in the unincorporated County of Los Angeles for a period of 12 additional months. The purpose of the urgency ordinance is to prevent the further proliferation of outdoor advertising signs while the above-mentioned study is being reviewed.

PROPOSED ORDINANCE

The proposed ordinance will limit the placement and enlargement of outdoor advertising signs to M (Industrial) Zones and will require a CUP to be obtained before the placement or enlargement of such signs. The ordinance will also

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establish an annual inspection fee for all legally established signs built after August 31, 1973. The proceeds from this fee will be used to finance the costs of compiling and maintaining a database on outdoor advertising signs, and to monitor ordinance compliance and related costs, including but not limited to, reviewing site plans, commuting to and from inspection sites, performing inspections and preparing related reports. Staff has determined that the proposed ordinance effectively addresses the constituents' concerns regarding the effects of proliferating outdoor advertising signs in the unincorporated areas of the County of Los Angeles.

ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTATION

An Initial Study was prepared for the proposed ordinance in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act. The initial study showed that there is no substantial evidence that the proposed ordinance will have a significant effect on the environment. Based on the Initial Study, the Department of Regional Planning has prepared a related Negative Declaration for this project.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends approval of the draft ordinance amendment to place further land use restrictions on outdoor advertising signs.

We will be present at the January 7, 2004 Regional Planning Commission public hearing to answer any questions your Commission may have on the proposed ordinance.