



COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

"To Enrich Lives Through Effective and Caring Service"

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March 7, 2013

IN REPLY PLEASE
REFER TO FILE: LD-2

TO: John Gutwein
Land Use Regulation Division
Department of Regional Planning

Attention Mitch Glaser

FROM: Anthony Nyivih 
Land Development Division
Department of Public Works

SB

DRAFT HILLSIDE MANAGEMENT AREA ORDINANCE

Thank you for the opportunity to review the Draft Hillside Management Area (HMA) Ordinance dated December 2012. Our understanding is that the intent of the Hillside Management Area Ordinance is to provide a comprehensive set of development standards to protect scenic hillside views; conserve natural hillside character and significant geological features through sensitive hillside site design, provisions of open space; and to avoid excessive grading and landform alteration to protect hillside resources from incompatible development and land uses.

For specific revisions, additions, or deletions of wording directly from the project document the specific section, subsection, and/or item along with the page number is first referenced then the excerpt from the document is copied within quotations using the following nomenclature:

Deletions are represented by a strikethrough.

Additions are represented by *italics* along with an underline.

Revisions are represented by a combination of the above.

Prior to Regional Planning's approval of the specific plan, the following items need to be addressed, updated, or revised:

General Comments

1. Further discussion between Public Works and Regional Planning should take place regarding the applicability and enforcement of this Ordinance as it relates to public facilities. This comment also applies to other ordinances currently being processed by Regional Planning.

Please contact Steve Burger of Public Works' Land Development Division at (626) 458-4943, or sburger@dpw.lacounty.gov, to coordinate a meeting regarding general comment No. 1.

2. The draft HMA Ordinance should have an exemption to minimal grading, if it is adjacent to existing structures. The HMA's are defined as "any terrain with natural slopes of 25 percent or greater." Clarify if there is a minimum lot size or acreage at 25 percent or greater to avoid unnecessary regulation on-site with only very small portions of sloped land that are not truly "hillsides."

General comment No. 2 was provided by Youssef Chebabi of Public Works' Watershed Management Division. However, if you have any questions regarding this comment, please contact Ruben Cruz of Land Development Division at (626) 458-4921 or rcruz@dpw.lacounty.gov.

Water Resources

1. The draft HMA Ordinance does not contain the definition for "Earth-toned." The term "earth-toned" should be standardized and just a few colors identified as acceptable so that future repairs or maintenance can be done at ease and be within the standards.

Water Resources comment No. 1 was provided by Art Vander Vis of Public Works' Flood Maintenance Division. However, if you have any questions regarding this comment, please contact Ruben Cruz of Land Development Division at (626) 458-4921 or rcruz@dpw.lacounty.gov.

Development Services

1. Section 22.56.215.D.1.c.iv (within Section 3 of Draft HMA Ordinance), Hillside Management Areas-Additional Regulations, Design Standards, Priority Open Space, page 7: Define "Natural Watercourses" in detail or make reference to an established map (e.g., County Flood Way Map) similar to Subsections D.1.c.i and D.1.c.ii. In addition, any flowline from a ridge, even if it is a minor ridge, could be considered a natural watercourse under the wording in the HMA Ordinance.

If you have any questions regarding the Development Service comment No. 1, please contact Toan Duong of Land Development Division at (626) 458-4921 or tduong@dpw.lacounty.gov.

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2. Section 22.56.215.D.4.a (within Section 3 of Draft HMA Ordinance), Hillside Management Areas-Additional Regulations, Design Standards, Street and Access Design, page 10: Modify the language as follows: "Public streets and private and future streets shall meet all County requirements with the exception that permissible longitudinal grades may be up to 12 percent grade (for local streets only), subject to approval by Public Works, if allowing such longitudinal grades creates a superior project design that reduces grading."

If you have any questions regarding Development Service comment No. 2, please contact Mr. Ruben Cruz of Land Development Division at (626) 458-4912 or rcruz@dpw.lacounty.gov.

If you have any other questions or require additional information, please contact Ruben Cruz of Land Development Division at (626) 458-4912 or rcruz@dpw.lacounty.gov.

RC:tb

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