

REPORT FROM

OFFICE OF THE CITY ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

Date: May 9, 2024

CAO File No. 0220-06213-0000
Council File No. C.F. 12-1549-S18
C.F. 23-0600
Council District: 4

To: The City Council

From: *for* Matthew W. Szabo, City Administrative Officer 

Reference: C.F. 12-1549-S18 and C.F. 23-0660

Subject: **COUNCIL DISTRICT 4 PERMANENT AFFORDABLE AND SUPPORTIVE
HOUSING – 1905 N. HIGHLAND AVENUE**

RECOMMENDATION

That the City Council determine that the property at 1905 N Highland Avenue (APN 5549-018-900) in Council District 4 is infeasible for permanent affordable and supportive housing due to geotechnical restrictions.

SUMMARY

On August 25, 2021, City Council adopted a motion ([C.F. 12-1549-S18](#)) directing the City Administrative Officer (CAO), with the assistance of the General Services Department (GSD), the Bureau of Engineering (BOE), the Los Angeles Housing Department (LAHD), and any other relevant departments, to review the City-owned property at 1905 N. Highland Avenue in Council District 4 (CD 4) to determine the suitability of developing 100 percent permanent affordable or supportive housing at the property. This report outlines the result of this assessment, which determines it is infeasible to use the site for permanent housing due to the property being in an earthquake fault zone and the inability to conclusively define the location and activity of a fault.

Review of Site for Permanent Affordable or Supportive Housing

Using the City's Asset Evaluation Framework (AEF) approved by the City Council in May 2016 ([C.F. 12-1549-S3](#)), the CAO and BOE assessed the property, which is in an Alquist-Priolo (AP) Zone adjacent to the Hollywood Fault Zone (HFZ). In order to build permanent structures in an AP Zone, the California [Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act](#) requires property owners to demonstrate that active faults are not present within the footprint of the proposed structure. To determine the feasibility of constructing a permanent structure on the City-owned property at 1905 N. Highland Avenue the presence and location of active fault lines needed to be clearly defined.

In June 2023, Mayor and Council approved ([C.F. 23-0660](#)) transferring the use of \$234,367.75 from Local Early Action Planning (LEAP) Grant reimbursable funds from LAHD for geotechnical

studies and associated City staff costs to determine whether the City-owned property is suitable for development as 100 percent permanent affordable or supportive housing. WSP USA Environment & Infrastructure Inc. (WSP), performed a geotechnical study at the site which included a liquefaction evaluation and surface fault rupture hazard (fault) investigation by means of drilling twelve (12) borings at the property.

In a [November 2023 report](#), WSP stated that with the geologic data they collected, they were unable to conclusively determine if an active fault existed on the property or the location of such a fault. Additionally, the report noted the potential for liquefaction at the site. The data collected would not be sufficient to permit permanent structures for human occupancy in accordance with the Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act and Los Angeles Department of Building and Safety (LADBS) guidelines on Surface Fault Rupture Hazard Investigations ([IB/P/BC 2023-129](#)) and Exemptions from Liquefaction, Earthquake Induced Landslide, and Fault-Rupture Hazard Zone Investigations ([P/BC 2023-044](#)).

In subsequent discussions between BOE, CAO, CD 4, LADBS, and LAHD, it was determined that the cost and scope of work required to clearly identify and define the location of an active fault at this 10,268 SF property would not be cost-effective, particularly considering the size of the property and location of faults defined on nearby properties. Further analysis of permanent housing construction at this property is not recommended at this time.

Feasibility Review for Interim Housing

Mobile homes and other interim housing typologies that do not sit on permanent foundations may be exempted from the Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act. This Office will release a report under a separate cover and Council File, which will provide findings and possible funding recommendations on the feasibility of using 1905 Highland Avenue for interim housing. These recommendations will be based on funding availability and feasibility of the site for interim housing use, which will be supported by findings completed by BOE.

On June 14, 2022, a settlement agreement related to the COVID-19 Homelessness Roadmap was approved by the District Court, which is referred to as the Settlement. The Settlement is a five-year agreement beginning June 14, 2022 and ending June 13, 2027, in which the City will create 12,915 new shelter or housing solutions that are equitably distributed across the City. If this site is feasible for interim housing, these beds would count towards the Settlement agreement.

FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

There is no impact to the General Fund as a result of the recommendation in this report.

FINANCIAL POLICIES STATEMENT

The recommendations in this report comply with the City's Financial Policies.