



KEVIN DE LEÓN
Councilmember, Fourteenth District

September 13, 2024

Council Member Marqueece Harris-Dawson, Chair
Council Member John S. Lee
Council Member Heather Hutt
Council Member Imelda Padilla
Council Member Katy Yaroslavsky
Planning and Land Use Management Committee
Los Angeles City Council
200 North Spring Street
Los Angeles, CA. 90012

**Re: BOYLE HEIGHTS COMMUNITY PLAN UPDATE: LOS ANGELES RIVER
ADJACENT AREA
Council File No. 23-0861**

Dear Councilmember Harris-Dawson and Members of the PLUM Committee:

On December 12, 2023, the City Council unanimously adopted General Plan amendments to the Boyle Heights Community Plan, including an expansion of the Hybrid Industrial land use designation to properties along the Los Angeles River. On January 11, 2024, the City Planning Commission disapproved the City Council's modifications and recommended an alternative that would maintain most of the geography near the Los Angeles River under the Light Industrial designation, while applying a Hybrid Industrial designation to others.

I urge the Committee to recommend to full Council the appropriate actions to reconcile the City Planning Commission's Hybrid Industrial recommendation (taken on January 11, 2024) with the City Council's Hybrid Industrial modifications (made on December 12, 2023) by adopting key elements of both approaches, an approach outlined as "Option 3" in the City Planning Department's June 6, 2024, Technical Memo to the PLUM Committee.

Restoring the Hybrid Industrial designation would allow the continuation of existing light industrial and commercial uses while permitting the introduction of new housing co-located near employment-generating uses and emerging clean industries. This hybrid of uses would be authorized in concert with a mandatory inclusionary housing obligation – "policy guardrails"

- for new mixed-income residential development and a Community Benefits Program which includes both residential and non-residential incentives. New residential uses would be subject to an obligation to deliver on-site affordable units serving 13% Acutely Low-Income, 15% Extremely Low-Income, 17% Very-Low Income and 22% Lower-Income Households. Rehoming of a Legacy Small Business is a key incentive under the Community Benefits Program to facilitate the preservation of longstanding local small businesses.

I appreciate the policy rationale behind the land-use alternative to maintain the status quo and preserve industrial land in order to protect manufacturing uses as a job base. Change does not happen overnight, and industrial areas do not necessarily undergo quick transitions. The River-adjacent area is home to a number of “blue-collar” industries such as light manufacturing, food processing, warehousing and distribution and other uses.

Yet we have witnessed dramatic neighborhood change. Our office has witnessed an emerging economic sector, particularly in the entertainment and creative sectors, driving real estate development within the LA River Adjacent Area in Boyle Heights and the Downtown Arts District across the River.

I believe that the highly-skilled, high-paying jobs associated with the entertainment sector will inevitably draw outside employees seeking housing, which would add pressure on the local housing market and further exacerbate displacement pressures. This is a likely scenario which would play out unless the public and private sectors invest in the local workforce and forge linkages to secure meaningful community benefits that extend to local Boyle Heights stakeholders.

Over time, the market will inevitably facilitate new growth and development, but if left unabated, the positive benefits of new investment will not necessarily accrue to the people who live and work in Boyle Heights. The concerns around displacement of residents and businesses in a gentrifying market are real. The updated Boyle Heights Community Plan presents an opportunity to shape future development.

I am proud of the mandatory inclusionary housing policy which the City Council enacted in the adoption of DTLA 2040, which regulates development west of the Los Angeles River in downtown Los Angeles, and the mandatory inclusionary housing policy that the City Council previously approved for the LA River-Adjacent area. Here, this policy is the most aggressive the City has ever seen and represents a guardrail enacted in concert with the Hybrid Industrial land-use designation.

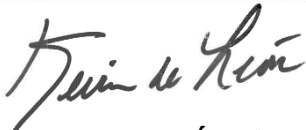
In summary, I urge the Committee to support the following items (as outlined in the Director of Planning’s technical memo):

- Reconciliation of the City Planning Commission’s Hybrid Industrial recommendation with the City Council’s Hybrid Industrial modifications (City Planning Technical Memo “Option 3”)

In addition, I request the Committee to adopt the following technical modifications and a request for a future report back:

1. REQUEST the City Attorney in consultation with the Department of City Planning to prepare modifications to the Boyle Height Community Plan Implementation Overlay District (CPIO) to allow a Local Affordable Housing Incentive Program project within the IX6 Use District with existing densities of 4 (one unit per 400 square feet of lot area) and density 8 (one unit per 800 square feet of lot area) to instead utilize a bonus density of "Limited by Floor Area (FA)."
2. REQUEST the City Attorney, in consultation with the Department of City Planning, to prepare an amendment to the zoning code to change the "special lot line" setback in Form Districts LM4 and LM6 from 15 feet to 10 feet.
3. REQUEST the City Attorney, in consultation with the Department of City Planning to prepare modifications to the Boyle Height Community Plan Implementation Overlay District (CPIO) to include an incentive for projects within the IX6 Use District and Form Districts LM4 and LM6 that are fully utilizing density bonuses to receive a reduction in Lot amenity space (minimum) from 20% to 15% as an on-menu incentive.
4. INSTRUCT the Department of City Planning to provide a report outlining how the incentives for affordable housing provided under the Boyle Heights Community Plan align with recently established Density Bonus incentives established under State Law, and with incentives that are proposed under the forthcoming the Citywide Housing Incentive Program; and provide options for modification to any Boyle Heights ordinances to ensure that the Boyle Heights incentive system is the most viable.

Sincerely,



KEVIN DE LEÓN,
Councilmember, 14th District, Los Angeles City Council

