

MOTION

PLANNING & LAND USE MANAGEMENT

A longstanding issue faced by the region's housing market is the need for more affordable "family-sized" apartments. Too often, growing middle class families are faced with either squeezing into small apartments or looking for a home whose rent, much less a down payment, is well out of reach.

One of the most significant, but long overlooked barriers to the creation of these units has been the failure to update state and local building codes to reflect modern safety improvements and building techniques. The requirement for "dual-loaded corridors" and double stairwells, which was born out of early 20th century planning concerns, has since become a hindrance to creating larger units with greater natural light and ventilation and buildings with enhanced green space.


Major cities across the country, including New York and Seattle, allow for the development of single-stairwell buildings over three stories. Among the 18 different jurisdictions between the United States and Canada that are contemplating code changes related to stairwell reforms, there is movement at both the state and local level in California, evidenced by efforts underway in San Diego, San Francisco, and the recent passage of Assembly Bill (AB) 835.

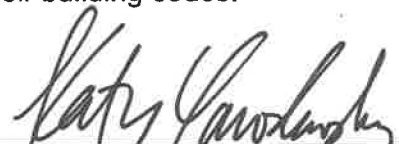
As we consider how to build a more affordable, resilient, and sustainable city, a thoughtful update to the Building Codes will allow us to develop more desirable homes that better suit the needs of all Angelenos without reducing safety or accessibility.

WE THEREFORE MOVE that the City Council instruct the Department of Building and Safety (LADBS), in consultation with the Los Angeles Fire Department (LAFD) and the Department of City Planning (DCP), and with requested input from Livable Cities Initiative (LCI) and the American Institute of Architects Los Angeles (AIA LA), to present within 90 days modifications to the City's Building Code in order to allow for single-exit, single-stairway, multifamily unit residential buildings up to six stories;

WE FURTHER MOVE that the City Council instruct DCP to report back within 90 days on jurisdictions, including but not limited to New York and Seattle, whose respective building codes allow for the single-stair buildings over three stories, as well as the efforts underway in San Diego, San Francisco, and other cities to similarly update their building codes.


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